WHEREAS, the City of Caledonia is a political subdivision, organized and existing under the laws of the State of Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 16A.86, subd. 3a(6), the City’s governing body shall pass a resolution in support of its request for an appropriation in the 2022 Capital Budget; and

WHEREAS, the Caledonia City Council previously passed a resolution on June 14, 2021, supporting a Capital Budget request for a new ambulance station; and

WHEREAS, after reviewing ambulance station projects in other communities and evaluating the needs of the City’s Fire Department and Ambulance Department, the Council believes that it is in the best interests of the Fire Department and Ambulance Department to revise that request; and

WHEREAS, the City’s Fire Department has 30 volunteer firefighters and averages 39 calls/year and 770 call hours/year; and

WHEREAS, the City’s Fire Department has a service area of 138 square miles with approximately 4,513 citizens in the City and portions of 9 townships; and

WHEREAS, the City’s Fire Department also provides mutual aid to the Cities of Brownsville, Hokah, Houston, La Crescent, and Spring Grove; and

WHEREAS, the City needs a new fire station because the current fire station is undersized and inadequate for 21st-century fire-fighting; and

WHEREAS, the existing fire station is too small for the Fire Department’s apparatus and equipment; and

WHEREAS, the existing fire station lacks safety and disaster preparedness features, such as a decontamination area, exhaust ventilation, a training room, and on-site sleeping areas; and

WHEREAS, the City’s current ambulance station is also undersized and inadequate for a modern ambulance service; and

WHEREAS, the City’s Ambulance Department has an active roster of 6 EMRs and 17 EMTs; and

WHEREAS, the City’s Ambulance Department has a service area of 5,500 citizens spread across the Cities of Caledonia and Eitzen and portions of 11 townships; and
WHEREAS, the City’s ambulance service also provides mutual aid to the Cities of Brownsville, Hokah, Houston, La Crescent, and Spring Grove; and

WHEREAS, the City’s ambulance service was upgraded to a part-time advanced life support service on February 27, 2018; and

WHEREAS, the Ambulance Department’s calls have increased 30% since 2012; and

WHEREAS, the City’s ambulance service is a state-licensed EMS training program that provides training for many ambulance services in southeast Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, the ambulance service’s current training room is undersized—having desk space for only 12 people—and is also used by the Police Department as a kitchen, break room, and hallway; and

WHEREAS, the ambulance service has no space for housing on-call staff; and

WHEREAS, the ambulance service needs space for a third garage; and

WHEREAS, the City’s ambulance service needs a new ambulance station in order to recruit, train, and retain staff, protect confidential health information, store equipment and materials, and ensure high-quality emergency services; and

WHEREAS, the City would like to construct a new joint fire and ambulance station with approximately 12,594 square feet to address the needs of both the Fire Department and Ambulance Department; and

WHEREAS, constructing a joint facility is the most cost-efficient way to address the needs of both departments because the departments can share lounge space, training/meeting space, and bunk rooms, among other things; and

WHEREAS, the City has purchased a piece of property for a future joint fire and ambulance station; and

WHEREAS, the City has retained the services of TSP, Inc. of Rochester, Minnesota, to provide architectural design and construction observation services; and

WHEREAS, due to time-sensitive staffing and training needs, the City intends to start construction on the new ambulance station in 2023; and

WHEREAS, the estimated cost of constructing a joint facility with approximately 12,594 square feet is $4,021,275; and

WHEREAS, the City does not have the funds to pay for a new joint facility without state assistance; and
WHEREAS, the City has raised the per capita charge for ambulance service from $4.00 to $16.00 since 2016, and the City has also raised the user rates, but these increases have been needed to cover basic expenses, particularly capital equipment; and

WHEREAS, the City is unable to pay for the proposed joint facility using tax revenues because the City’s total levy and LGA for taxes payable in 2022 are estimated to be $2,374,345, and the proposed 6.5% levy increase will generate only an additional $64,769 to be spread among all departments, including police, public works, parks and recreation, fire, ambulance, library, and economic development; and

WHEREAS, the City has increased the tax levy by 8% and 7.5% the past two years, but these increases have been needed to address a backlog of street maintenance and infrastructure projects; and

WHEREAS, the proposed joint fire and ambulance station would have a positive regional impact because the fire and ambulance services provide training, service, and support to many other cities and townships in southeast Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, public health and safety projects are more critical than ever due to COVID-19 and environmental concerns; and

WHEREAS, the new ambulance station is a critical project that will address life and safety issues, pursuant to Governor Tim Walz’s priorities for allocating state resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Caledonia, that the City Council supports the City’s Capital Budget request of $2,010,637.50 for a new joint fire and ambulance station and recommends to Governor Tim Walz that this request be included in his 2022 Capital Budget.

ADOPTED by the Caledonia City Council this 13th day of December, 2021.

DeWayne "Tank" Schroeder, Mayor

ATTEST:

Adam G. Swann, Clerk/Administrator
STATE OF MINNESOTA  )
COUNTY OF HOUSTON    )
CITY OF CALEDONIA      )

I, Adam Swann, city clerk and administrator of the City of Caledonia, do hereby certify that this is a true and correct transcript of the resolution that was adopted at a meeting held on the 13th day of December, 2021, the original of which is on file in this office. I further certify that 5 members voted in favor of this resolution and that 5 members were present and voting.

Signed  Adam Swann

Date    December 15, 2021