

City of Wetaskiwin Council Policy

Fire Apparatus Replacement Policy



Policy Number:	CO-062
Effective On:	June 9, 2026
Approval History:	New
Review Frequency:	Every (4) years
Division Responsible:	CPS – Community and Protective Services
Cross-Reference:	CO-013 Reserve policy CO-023 Asset Management CO-016-1 Tendering CO-024 Disposal of Surplus HR-017 Use of City Vehicles

1. Purpose

To establish a formal, standardized framework for the lifecycle management and replacement of Fire Services emergency vehicles and apparatus.

This policy strengthens the operational link between emergency apparatus governance, Fire Services delivery, and long-term lifecycle financial planning, ensuring that apparatus remain safe, reliable, and capable of meeting current and future operational demands.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 The City shall maintain a proactive, lifecycle-based emergency vehicle/fire apparatus replacement program that supports firefighter safety, operational readiness, and financial sustainability.
- 2.2 All fire apparatus replacement decisions will:
 - a. Be informed by condition, age, utilization, and total cost of ownership
 - b. Align with recognized industry standards, including those established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)
 - c. Reflect applicable insurance and risk management expectations
 - d. Support long-term capital planning under the City's Asset Management Policy (CO-023) and Reserve Policy (CO-013)

3. Definitions

'Fire Apparatus' means emergency response vehicles used by Fire Services, including pumps, tankers, aerials, rescues, and command units.

'Frontline Apparatus' means fire apparatus assigned as primary response vehicles for emergency incidents and required to meet all operational and safety standards.

'Reserve Apparatus' means fire apparatus reassigned from frontline service but maintained for backup, surge capacity, or training.

‘Surge Capacity’ means the ability of Fire Services to temporarily increase operational response capability through the use of reserve apparatus, additional personnel, and available resources during periods of elevated demand or major incidents.

‘Lifecycle Replacement’ means planned replacement of apparatus based on age, condition, utilization, and lifecycle benchmarks.

‘Service Life’ means the expected operational lifespan of apparatus based on industry standards and operational performance.

‘Refurbishment’ means a major overhaul intended to extend the service life of an apparatus.

‘Operational Readiness’ means the ability of apparatus to respond safely, reliably, and effectively at all times.

‘Fire Equipment Reserve’ means a dedicated reserve established under Policy CO-013 to fund replacement and major refurbishment of fire apparatus.

4. Standards

4.1 Scope

- 4.1.1 This policy applies to all Fire Services emergency vehicles and fire apparatus, including frontline, reserve, command, and specialized response units.
- 4.1.2 Fire apparatus are excluded from the City’s general fleet policy (CO-022) due to their specialized operational requirements and are managed under this dedicated policy and funding framework.

4.2 Lifecycle Management

- 4.2.1 Fire apparatus shall be managed through a structured lifecycle approach that integrates:
 - a. Operational requirements
 - b. Safety considerations
 - c. Financial planning
- 4.2.2 A fire apparatus lifecycle plan shall be maintained and updated regularly to support long-term capital forecasting and service continuity.

4.3 Service Life Benchmarks

- 4.3.1 Consistent with industry best practices, service life benchmarks shall be maintained as:
 - a. Frontline Apparatus: 15–20 years

b. Reserve Apparatus: 21–25 years

4.3.2 These benchmarks may be adjusted based on:

- a. Condition and performance
- b. Maintenance costs
- c. Operational demands
- d. Safety and technology advancements

4.4 Evaluation and Replacement Criteria

4.4.1 Fire apparatus shall be evaluated regularly based on:

- a. Age and service life
- b. Maintenance history and repair costs
- c. Reliability and downtime
- d. Compliance with current safety standards
- e. Operational effectiveness

4.4.2 Replacement shall be considered when one or more of the following occurs:

- a. Fire apparatus exceeds lifecycle benchmarks
- b. Maintenance costs become excessive
- c. Reliability impacts service delivery
- d. Safety features are outdated
- e. Parts or manufacturer support is limited

4.5 Refurbishment and Reassignment

4.5.1 Where appropriate:

- a. Fire apparatus may undergo refurbishment in accordance with NFPA 1912: Standard for Fire Apparatus Refurbishing
- b. Frontline apparatus units may be reassigned to reserve status

4.5.2 All decisions shall prioritize safety, reliability, and cost-effectiveness.

4.6 Capital Planning and Funding

4.6.1 Fire apparatus replacement shall be supported through a dedicated Fire Department Capital Reserve in accordance with Policy CO-013.

4.6.2 The program shall ensure financial predictability and reduce reliance on reactive funding decisions by:

- a. Utilizing lifecycle-based capital planning
- b. Maintaining a minimum 10-year replacement forecast
- c. Supporting predictable and sustainable funding

4.6.3 Funding strategies may include:

- a. Reserve contributions
- b. Debenture financing for major apparatus

- c. Grant opportunities

4.7 Procurement and Standardization

- 4.7.1 All fire apparatus acquisitions shall:
 - a. Comply with City procurement policies and applicable trade agreements
 - b. Consider total lifecycle cost and operational requirements
 - c. Promote standardization where operationally appropriate
- 4.7.2 Standardization improves:
 - a. Training consistency
 - b. Maintenance efficiency
 - c. Operational interoperability

4.8 Risk, Insurance, and Compliance

- 4.8.1 Fire apparatus management shall align with:
 - a. Insurance provider expectations
 - b. Risk management best practices
 - c. Recognized standards and guidelines including:
 - i. Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS)
 - ii. Canadian Standards Association (CAS)
 - iii. Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (CAN/ULC S515)
- 4.8.2 The City shall ensure:
 - a. Fire apparatus are safe, compliant, and roadworthy
 - b. Maintenance and inspection records are documented
 - c. Liability exposure is minimized through proactive lifecycle management
- 4.8.3 All records related to fire apparatus lifecycle management, including maintenance, inspection, and replacement documentation, shall be retained in accordance with the City's Records Management policies and applicable legislation.

5 Reporting and Governance

- 5.1 The Fire Chief shall report annually to Council in a manner that supports transparency, accountability and informed decision making by including:
 - a. A minimum 10-year apparatus replacement plan
 - b. Fleet condition and performance summary
 - c. Maintenance and lifecycle cost analysis
 - d. Fire equipment reserve status and funding projections
 - e. Identification of operational risks and mitigation strategies

*Original has been signed, sealed &
filed with Records Management*

Joseph Branco, Mayor

Sue Howard, City Manager

Uncertified