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Date: January 14, 2020
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Merger Projected to Save Money for Property Owners in Kenmore, Lake Forest Park and Woodinville

KENMORE, Wash. – If approved by voters in April, a proposed merger between the Northshore Fire Department and Woodinville Fire & Rescue would save taxpayers money on emergency service costs starting in 2022.

Both agencies are approximately the same size and fund emergency services with a fire levy and fire benefit charge. Northshore property owners would save a projected \$0.11 per \$1,000 of assessed property value or 8.5% of the effective tax rate. Woodinville Fire property owners would save a projected \$0.07 per \$1,000 or 5.6%. These amounts are based on 2021 property values, which is the most current data available.

A merger would allow for economies of scale in purchasing goods and services. Capital investments such as fire stations, apparatus and equipment would be shared by more households, which further reduces costs for taxpayers.

Smaller fire agencies throughout King and Snohomish counties are partnering together to provide residents with better service and cost efficiencies. Northshore and Woodinville Fire have been sharing administrative personnel under interlocal agreements since February 2020.

“This is our opportunity to provide the same quality emergency services for lower cost to residents of both districts,” said Rick Webster, chair of the Northshore Board of Fire Commissioners. “That’s why finalizing our collaborative partnership makes sense.”

The merger proposal is scheduled for the April 27, 2021 Special Election ballot. Because the Northshore Fire Department would merge into Woodinville Fire & Rescue, Northshore voters are the ones who vote on the proposal.

More information on the proposed merger can be found on the fire districts’ websites at www.northshorefire.com or www.wf-r.org. Fire Chief Greg Ahearn is available to answer questions about the proposed merger at GAhearn@northshorefire.com.

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Northshore Fire Department provides fire and emergency medical services to approximately 37,000 people over 10 square miles, including the cities of Lake Forest Park and Kenmore. Its emergency call volumes average 3,600 a year.

Woodinville Fire & Rescue provides fire and emergency medical services to approximately 37,000 people over 30 square miles. Its emergency call volumes average 4,000 a year.