

Littleton Fire Department

Growing into the Future

DRAFT

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About Littleton

The town of Littleton is located in Middlesex County, MA. The town was first settled in 1686 and officially incorporated into Massachusetts in 1714. The town has an area of 17.5 square miles and is surrounded by Groton, Westford, Acton, Boxborough, Harvard, and Ayer. Overall, Littleton is a rural town.

Although the IBM Company has a major base there, much of the town remains rural, however a new mixed use project will increase the commercial base.

The town is governed by a number of committees, overseen by an elected Board of Selectmen. Littleton provides convenient roadway access to Greater Boston and is a common through town for commuters.

According to the classification system of the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, Littleton is considered to be a growing suburb.¹

Littleton Population²

The town of Littleton has experienced steady growth over the past decades.

1990	2000	2010	% change 1990-00	% change 2000-10
7,051	8,184	8,924	16.07%	9.04%

Projected Population Growth³

2020	2030	% change 2010-20	%change 2020-30
11,080	12,461	19.4%	11.1%

Minority Population⁴

The racial/ethnic makeup of Littleton is predominantly White. Over the past decade the minority population has doubled. Asians are currently the most rapidly growing group.

Race	2000	2010	% of population total 2010
Black	28	46	.5%
Asian	140	350	3.9%
Hispanic	79	121	1.4%
Other	5	6	.1%
Total	336	685	7.7%

¹ Massachusetts Area Planning Council, Community Types

² 2010 US Census

³ 2010 US Census

⁴ 2010 US Census

Development

The town has undergone a number of recent changes as it has grown. Some projects have recently been completed and plans for more development are underway. Below are some recently completed/ in progress plans.

Project Name ⁵	Status	Completion Year
Mary Shepard Estates	Completed	2007
R. Chord Way	Completed	2007
West View Estates	Completed	2007
Littleton Visitors Center	Completed	2010
Littleton Ridge	Completed	2007
Hobby Horse Hills	Completed	2010
Gary Farm Road	Construction	2015
Apple D'OR	Completed	2007
Meadow View	Completed	2007
Village on the Common	Construction	2015
Shelbarne Village	Completed	2009
Highland Farms	Planning	2015
Nancy's Way	Completed	2007
White Tail Way	Completed	2008
Village at Reed Meadows	Construction	2012

The increase in population is accompanied by an increase in housing units located within the town.

Housing Units in Town⁶

	1990	2000	2010	% increase
Housing Units	2,691	3,055	3,477	14%

Littleton's Future Goals

Below are excerpts from the town of Littleton's 2002 Master Plan in which the towns current position and future direction is documented. The Master Plan was written by the Littleton Planning Board and adopted in August 2002.⁷

⁵ Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Development Database

⁶ 2010 US Census

⁷ Littleton Master Plan, 2002

- Littleton will continue to be a New England community enjoying small town life in a setting of small scale, clustered village centers with intervening open fields, woods, and low density homes.
- Littleton will continue to be a community of homes that meet the needs of economically diverse households and people of different ages.
- Littleton will promote economic development in a managed way to maintain or improve the quality of life of our people and our community.
- Littleton will highlight and celebrate the community's historic and current cultural resources
- Littleton will maintain groundwater of good quantity and quality to meet existing and future demand, taking into account both municipal and private wells.
- Littleton will achieve quality recreational facilities and adequate recreational opportunities for all town residents.
- Littleton will meet the community's current and foreseeable municipal service needs in a financially prudent manner.
- Littleton will seek to minimize the impact of regional traffic.

Traffic

Traffic is a major concern of little residents. As mentioned before, Littleton's location makes it a hotbed of commuter traffic. There are currently 6,532 registered passenger vehicles in Littleton and the daily miles travelled for these vehicles are 247,634.⁸

In November 2011, Littleton was granted \$1.8 million through the MassWorks Infrastructure Program for roadway safety and capacity improvements. This money should be invested into solving the town's traffic problems. Littleton residents are so concerned about the town's traffic problems that a portion of the 2002 Master Plan was dedicated to the topic. Below are excerpts from the Master Plan listing proposed traffic goals.⁹

- Due to its location and convenient access to Greater Boston Littleton is a common through town for commuters.
- Lack of public transportation creates reliance on car to get around town.
- Townspeople would like to minimize the impact of through traffic and increase regional and local transportation alternatives to the car.
- Strong support is voiced for a system of sidewalks, bike paths, and trails that provide residents with safe and enjoyable access to services
- Maintain the rural character of Littleton as much as possible while minimizing congestion during peak periods
- Participate actively in regional planning and development of a regional public transportation system that lessens the number of vehicular trips along Littleton's streets

⁸ Massachusetts Area Planning Council, Vehicle Ownership by Municipality

⁹ Littleton Master Plan 2002

- Accommodate traffic that has to go through Littleton as quickly as possible during peak hours, but discourage through traffic from using streets in Littleton when adequate alternatives are available outside of Littleton
- Improve safety at locations where safety is deficient, striving to design solutions that are most consistent with Littleton's New England town character
- Minimize the intrusion of through traffic on Littleton's collector and local streets
- Design and implement circulation, sidewalk, and other streetscape improvements for the Town Center
- Identify as many funding options as possible to implement roadway improvements that are acceptable to the Town

Town Budget

Below is a list of town revenue sources. The information was taken from the town of Littleton Annual Report, 2010.

FY 2011 Budget, Revenue Sources¹⁰

Revenue Source	FY11 Amount	Comments
Property Taxes	\$24,985,432	
State Aid	\$5,069,877	Includes \$1.1 million reimbursement from State for High School & Shaker Lane debt
Transfers from other Funds	\$948,705	Includes reimbursements from the Light department, Cell Funds & CPA Fund
Local Receipts	\$1,737,432	Other Town revenues & fees
Excise Taxes	\$1,040,000	Estimated receipt
Total Town Revenue	\$33,781,446	

Here is a list of town expenditures. This shows where the town spends the money it raises. This information was also taken from the 2010 Annual Report.

FY 2011 Budget, Expenditure Source¹¹

Expenditure Source	FY11 Amount	Comments
School Budget	\$14,428,679	Level funding from FY10
Debt Service - Schools	\$3,246,912	Shaker Lane, HS, MS & Russell St projects
School Capital Exclusions	0	
Charter/School Choice	\$966,821	Students attending other

¹⁰ Littleton Annual Report, 2010

¹¹ Littleton Annual Report, 2010

		schools
Nashoba Tech Assessment	\$590,670	Students attending Nashoba Tech HS
School Related Expenditures in Town Budget	\$2,689,350	
Total School Related Exp.	\$21,922,432	64,90% of Total Town Expenditures
Town Budget	\$8,650,540	Town Departments Only including \$555,043 for road repairs
Town Debt Service	\$1,440,178	
Light Dept Debt Service	\$189,705	Expense is reimbursed by L&W
Warrant Articles	\$289,120	Capital
Capital Exclusions -Town	0	
Other Funds	\$1,335,221	Includes \$325,000 snow & ice deficit
Total Town Expenditures	\$33,780,196	

The town of Littleton is currently earning enough revenue to cover all its expenditure needs and have a small amount (\$1250). At present school is the largest town expenditure. At present the town puts over half a million dollars into road repair. The grant Littleton received from Gov. Deval Patrick gives the town \$1.8 for roadwork. In light of this surplus, perhaps some of the town money can be aimed in other directions.

Employment Trends and Projections¹²

With the exception of manufacturing, employment numbers grew in every sector from 2000-2010. The future projections continue the upward trend of job numbers. The projection numbers were made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council as part of their MetroFuture projection plan. The increasing economy goes with the growing population and development the town is currently experiencing.

Sector	2000	2010	2020(projected)	2030(projected)
Natural Resource, Mining, Construction	486	540	606	661
Manufacturing	2,221	2,184	2,135	2,806
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,108	1,238	1,334	1,415

¹² Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), Employment Projection 2010-2030

Information	85	98	107	115
Financial Activities	180	206	225	241
Professional and Business Services	1,294	1,536	1,724	1,883
Education and Health Services	595	683	751	809
Leisure and Hospitality	114	132	145	157
Other Services	71	83	92	100
Government	96	105	112	118
Total	6,250	6,804	7,232	7,585

Fire Department

The Department sends a clear message with their mission statement that states “our mission is the protection of life and property through a combination of emergency response and loss prevention services.”

- The department is currently a combination department; this means that is comprised of both full time and on call firefighters/EMTs.
 - The department is made up of a full-time Chief (currently searching for new one), one full time Captain, five full-time firefighter/EMTs, a part-time administrative assistant, six on-call officers, 29 on-call firefighters and/or EMTs, and two reserve firefighters and/or EMTs.
- The fire station is staffed seven days a week from 6 am to 6 pm with career firefighters/EMTs. They are full time employees of the town. In the evening hours, the on-call department goes into action. On –call members live in the community and have a department issued pager that alerts them to a call and are paid an hourly wage when they respond to emergencies. They are considered part-time town employees.

Department Programs

- The Department hosts a number of fire awareness programs.
 - Active involvement with the Student Awareness in Fire Education (SAFE) program enlightens school-aged children as to fire safety practices.
- Free blood pressure checks and CPR training is offered to the general public.
- Departmental promotion of these services is believed to reduce the severity and frequency of emergencies through increased awareness of fire prevention and safety practices.
- There is also the Explorer program.

- The Explorer program is part of the Venturing scouts (Formerly Explorer Scouts) of the Boy Scouts of America. The program is for 14-21 year old men and women to learn the aspects of firefighting and emergency service.
- Many past explorers have continued on to become members of various call and career fire departments.

Department Problems

- At the present time, the department's greatest weakness is the unavailability of volunteer or call firefighters.
 - Rise in property value and construction of large homes has changed the local demographics to a point where local residents have high paying jobs and are unavailable to participate as call firefighters.
 - This is demonstrated in the predicted employment trends.
 - Average call response is seven. Often not enough.
 - If a second call comes in while all personnel are still at the first scene then nobody is available
 - This happens on 10-14% of the departments calls
- Ongoing community growth will continue to ask more of a department already operating at its maximum capacity
 - A number of problems with the facilities exist¹³
 - The floor of the main apparatus is overcrowded with trucks and equipment, presenting a hazard for times of quick emergency preparation¹⁴
- During departmental meetings, low morale was identified as a problem within the department. There were several reasons for this problem.
 - Cliques within the department
 - Busy life styles
 - People have children, many work more than one job, others have to go with higher paying jobs.
 - No recognition for extra effort or helping out
 - Explorer program, safety committee
 - Lack of follow through
 - Starts with the leadership
 - No family involvement
 - In the past there would be wife involvement and department functions.
 - EMS Training
 - More practical evaluations are needed
 - Get people working with members of other squads
 - Fire Training
 - More variety in training is needed
 - No new influx of people for years

¹³ Littleton Fire Department 2002 Master Plan

¹⁴ Littleton Fire Department 2002 Master Plan

- Slower response calls
- General lack of participation
- New types of calls contributing to increased response times
- No support from leadership to energize organization
- Increased demand on people's time due to main job
- Department development planning needs to involve the members not just officers or Chief

Potential Solutions

During the departmental meeting a number of ideas for improvement were suggested. Some suggestions were also made in the Littleton Fire Department's 2002 Master Plan. Other suggestions have been proposed after evaluation of department needs. These suggestions are listed below.

- The town of Littleton could hire more career fire fighters.
- A greater number of on call firefighters could be hired
 - Could recruit through the Explorer program
- Add another building or satellite location to deal with overcrowded equipment.
- Needs to be a Vision for the department and a plan in place to make it happen
- Needs to be more and effective communications so members know what is going on
- Someone needs to be an advocate for the department who pushes for staffing, pay increases etc.
- Compensate members for attending academy training where they take time off from their work
- Round the clock staffing with a per diem person from 6p-6a from the call department so members can stay active
- More recruit classes to keep new blood coming into the department. Emphasize to the town how important this is to protecting the town regardless of hiring freezes.

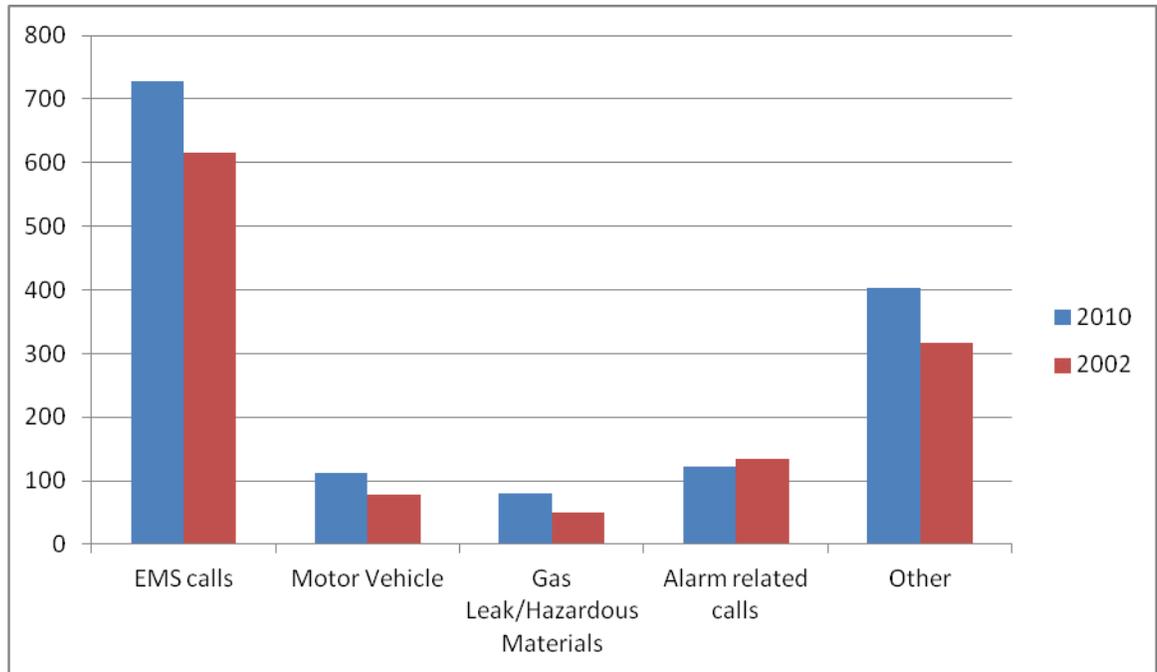
While searching for a new chief, the screening committee should seek out an individual who has the energy and the ability to reinvigorate the organization. Perhaps an individual with experience in a larger department to help with the increasing needs of the Littleton Department. An experienced individual with knowledge of working in a larger and more modern area would know how to deal with the growing requirements the Department is facing.

Current Department Statistics

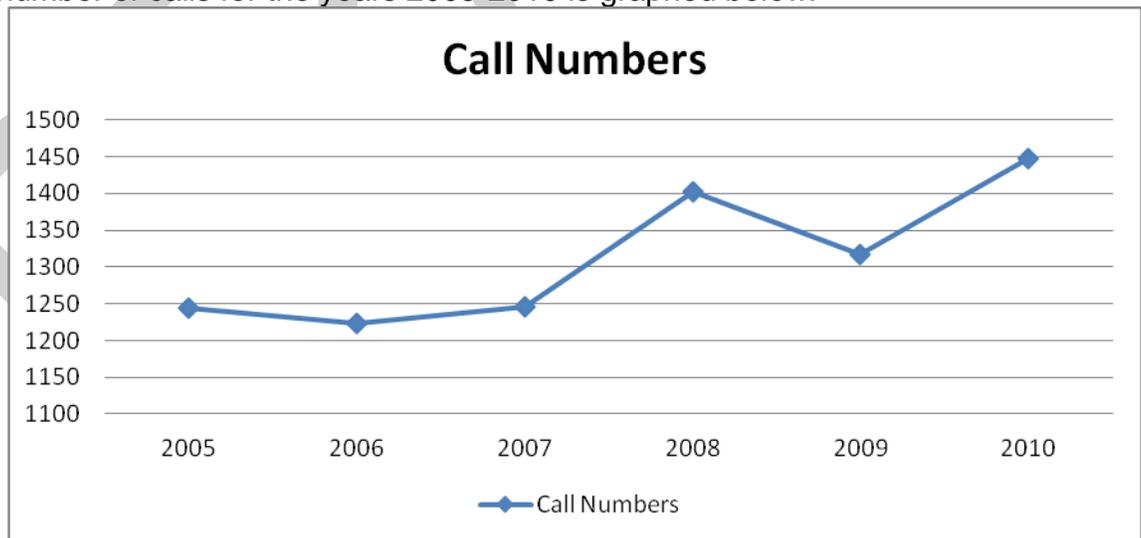
The Littleton Fire Department responded to 1448 emergency service calls in 2010, an increase of 131 calls from the previous year. This increase in calls goes in stride with the growth in the community.

The 2010 Littleton Fire Department incident analysis tracks all incidents by type as well as by day and time.¹⁵

The most common calls and their number of occurrences are displayed below, compared with the 2002 numbers.



The total number of calls for the years 2005-2010 is graphed below.¹⁶



¹⁵ Littleton Fire Department, Incident Analysis 2010

¹⁶ Littleton Fire Department, Incident Analysis 2005-10

There was an increase in every call type aside from alarm calls (many of which were false). The Department needs to grow in order to keep up with increased demand. The 2010 calls are spread evenly over each weekday, with the greatest number coming in between 12 PM – 7 PM.¹⁷

Call Volume, Response Times, and On-call Membership Response

Littleton has experienced a steady rise in call numbers over the past two decades. The rise in call numbers coincides with an increase in the town's population which has also grown steadily over the past two decades. In 1990 the Littleton Fire Department received 756 calls. Throughout the 90's calls slowly increased and by the year 2000 the number of calls had reached 1,142. Slow growth continued following this until after 2004. After receiving 1,323 calls in 2004 numbers slowly began to decrease in the next few years to 1,246 in 2007. In the following years the slow increase reemerged and in 2010 the Department experienced an all time high of 1,448 calls.

From 6pm-6am, the Littleton Fire Department is staffed by its on call members. The on-call members live in the community and have department issued pagers, this alerts them to the calls which they then respond to. In 2002, the average call response time for the on-call members of the Littleton Fire Department was 9.35 minutes. Since then the average response time has never been that low. The Department had 62 on-call members at this time.

From 2002-2010, the number of on-call Department members has consistently declined while simultaneously Department response time to a call has increased. By 2010, on-call membership in the Department had plummeted to 29 members and average response time had shot up to 11.51 minutes. In 2010, there were 31 calls that had a response time of over twenty minutes. In 2002, this number was zero. The importance of on-call members to the Department is evident.

In 2011, the Littleton Fire Department has begun to counter the downward trend that dominated the preceding decade. Five new on-call members were added to the Department bringing the total to 34. Response time has also begun to slowly decrease. As of August 31st 2011, average response time for the year was 11.21 minutes, a thirty second decrease from the preceding year. There was also a decrease in calls over twenty minutes, as of August 2011 there had been 16 calls of more than twenty minutes, down from 26 at the same time in 2010.

There is an obvious correlation between on-call membership and call response time. Going forward main focus of the Department should be increasing the on call membership. The more members that are added, the more the call response time will decrease.

¹⁷ Littleton Fire Department, Incident Analysis 2010

Fire Department Budget¹⁸

Listed below is the fire departments budget for the years 2010-2011. The totaled budget for the 2011 was \$79,095 greater than the 2010 budget, reflecting the growing needs of the department.

Fire Dept/EMS Budget FY 2010-2011

Personal Services	422,976	563,712	639,125
Expenses	21,948	104,841	108,523
Total	444,924	668,553	747,648

Salary Comparisons

The following information was taken from a number of towns throughout Massachusetts of similar population to Littleton. Data was collected regarding the towns fire departments. The information collected focused on the number of calls the department received, department membership, and department salaries. The towns surveyed ranged in population from 5,178-15,087.

Most of these are combination departments, meaning they are comprised of both full time and on-call members. The composition of the Littleton Department is similar to that of other towns, having a small number of full time members and a much larger on call staff. There are nine officers, both full time and on-call, on the Littleton force. This is also similar to the other departments, of which the average number of officers is seven. The average number of calls for all these departments is 1,153. At 1,448 Littleton is well above this number, despite having a smaller population than many.

Despite their higher ratio of incidents, on-call members of the Littleton Fire Department are paid only \$12.12/hr. This is the lowest amount of money on-call members of any department are paid. The on-call staff is vital to the performance of the Department. Without these members the Department could not function. The pay for the full-time Department members is comparable to the other departments (\$21.27/hr), with pay higher than some and less than others. The on-call Deputy of the Littleton Department is paid \$15.02/hr; this too is lower than every town with the exception of Upton (\$13.60). The on-call Captain in Littleton is paid \$14.81/hr; again this is the lowest amount aside from Upton. On the other hand, the full time Captain in Littleton is paid \$28.06/hr, this number is second only to Ayer. The on-call Lieutenant in Littleton receives \$14.03/hr, once again only Upton has a smaller salary.

¹⁸ Town of Littleton, Financial Statements, 2009

City	Population	Total Calls 2010 Fire EMT Motor Vehicle	FT Fire EMT Staff	On Call (O/C) Fire EMT Staff	Deputy	Cpt.	Lt.	FT Fire/EMT Salary	O/C Fire/EMT Salary	Deputy Salary	Captain Salary	Lt. Salary
Ayer	6800	2132 (no MV)	4	31	0	1 O/C, 4 FT	3 O/C, 4 FT	\$25.15	\$15.96		\$16.60 O/C, \$29.18 FT	\$16.46 O/C, \$27.29 FT
Boxborough	5178	979	2	24	1 O/C	0	2 O/C, 2 FT	\$20.10	\$16.14	\$19.52 O/C	\$18.64 O/C	\$17.78 O/C, \$27.68 FT
Holliston	15,087	1159 (no MV)	0	62	1 O/C	5 O/C	5 O/C		\$18.35	\$18.35 O/C	\$18.35 O/C	\$18.35 O/C
Ipswich	13,219	1637	12	20	0	0	1 O/C, 5 FT	\$21.34	\$14.06			\$15.17 O/C, \$27.60 FT
Lincoln	8056	539 (no MV)	13	8	0	0	4 FT	\$17.51	\$22.19			\$27.96 FT
Littleton	8924	1448	4	29	2 O/C	2 O/C, 1 FT	4 O/C	\$21.27	\$12.12	\$15.02 O/C	\$14.81 O/C, \$28.06 FT	\$14.03 O/C
Lunenburg	10,200	714	4	37	1 O/C	1 O/C, 1 FT	2 O/C, 2 FT	\$11.33	\$18.43	\$23.87 O/C	\$21.90 O/C, \$24.97 FT	\$20.09 O/C, \$22.41 FT
Rowley	6000	641	0	17	1 O/C	1 O/C, 2 FT	3 O/C		\$15.80	\$18.54 O/C	\$16.84 O/C, \$24.01 FT	\$16.83 O/C

City	Population	Total Calls 2010 Fire EMT Motor Vehicle	FT Fire EMT Staff	On Call (O/C) Fire EMT Staff	Deputy	Cpt.	Lt.	FT Fire/EMT Salary	O/C Fire/EMT Salary	Deputy Salary	Captain Salary	Lt. Salary
Southborough	10,000	1296 (no MV)	13	12	0	2 FT	3 FT	\$22.62	\$18.00		\$27.43 FT	\$24.00 O/C, \$25.02 FT
Sterling	8200	1090	2	50	1 O/C	0	4 O/C, 1 FT	\$19.16	\$15.41	\$19.27 O/C		\$17.33 O/C, \$22.71 FT
Upton	7542	1002 (no MV)	4	33	2 O/C	2 O/C	3 O/C	\$25.08	\$12.56	\$13.60 O/C	\$13.08 O/C	\$13.08 O/C
W. Boylston	7669	1196 (no MV)	4	26	2 O/C	1 O/C	3 O/C, 1 FT	\$14.01	\$12.72	\$16.58 O/C	\$16.58 O/C	\$16.58 O/C, \$14.01 FT

Survey Responses

An anonymous survey collected information regarding the background and thoughts regarding the department. Twenty-six members of the department responded to the survey.

Comments appear as respondents wrote them. The summary contains all comments except those that named a person or provided information so specific that it could be linked to an individual.

Question 1

How long have you worked in Littleton?

All twenty-six respondents answered this question. Ten of them have worked for the department for a period of five years or less. Seven respondents have worked for the department between six to ten years. Two respondents have worked here for eleven to fifteen years and another two have worked here for fifteen to twenty years. Five respondents have been with the department between twenty one to twenty five years.

Question 2

How long have you worked in fire services?

All twenty-six respondents answered this question. Eight answered for the period of five years or less. Six answered for the period six to ten years. Three answered for the period eleven to fifteen years and two for the period fifteen to twenty years. Four answered for the period twenty one to twenty five years and the remaining three were more than twenty-five years.

Question 3

Please rank the following in the order of what consumes the most of your time (1) down to what consumes the least amount of your time (7).

All respondents answered this question.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mean	Median
Ambulance Runs for Medical Emergencies	10	9	2	0	2	0	3	2.5	2
Training	4	3	5	7	6	0	1	3.46	4
Paperwork	4	2	3	4	3	10	0	4.15	5

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mean	Median
Answering Fire Calls	4	6	2	5	4	1	4	3.69	4
Ambulance Runs for Traffic Crashes	2	4	9	7	2	2	0	3.35	3
Other	2	1	1	0	3	4	15	5.81	7
Meetings	0	1	4	3	6	9	3	5.04	5

Question 4

How much time, on average a month, do you spend on calls?

All respondents answered this question.

Hours Worked	Number of Responses
0-10	7
11-20	9
21-30	0
31-40	2
41-50	2
51-60	2
61-70	0
71-80	1

Mean: 25 Hours

Median: 16 Hours

Question 5

Please rate the following issues.

Twenty-four respondents answered this question: two did not. Only twenty-three responded to the question of increasing the use of per diem department members.

	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not an Issue	Consensus
Obtaining a new station	16	5	2	1	High
Increasing the number of full time department members	10	6	7	1	Medium
Increasing the salary of department members	7	13	3	1	Medium
Increasing the number of call department members	6	11	5	2	Medium

	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not an Issue	Consensus
Increasing the number of calls to which call members respond	5	7	6	6	Low/Medium
Acquiring new apparatus	4	10	7	3	Medium
Increasing the use of per diem department members	0	5	14	4	Low
Increasing the number of civilians to assist with paperwork	0	2	6	16	Not an issue

Comments:

- Full time administrative assistant.
- Eliminating favoritism where one firefighter/EMT especially out injured gets special treatment over other firefighters who work longer hours.
- Decrease number of low priority calls for on-call.
- Staffing station twenty-four hours.

Of these questions, the highest priority is obtaining a new station. The lowest priority is increasing the use of per diem department members and there was little support for increasing the number of civilians.

Question 6

How many hours a year do you train to maintain proficiency in the specialty areas which you have been trained?

Twenty-four respondents answered this question, two did not.

Hours	Number of Responses
0-20	7
21-50	9
51-99	1
100-150	1
150+	2

Mean: 46.5 Hours

Median: 30 Hours

Comments:

- Basic OEMS requirements.
- 150-200 hours on average. All department training nights and preparation, plus outside fire academy training, hazmat training and conferences.
- As much as my time allows.

Question 7

How many hours per year do you participate in general training?

Twenty four respondents answered this question, two did not.

Hours	Number of Responses
0-20	4
21-50	8
51-99	5
100-150	5
150+	0

Mean: 58.6 Hours

Median: 50 Hours

Comments:

- Just about all training they hold. 100+ hrs.
- More than 60 hours, all department EMS and fire training. Outside training when time allows.

Question 8

Please list any training you believe would enhance the capabilities of the Littleton Fire Department.

Fourteen respondents answered this question: twelve skipped it.

Many respondents identified the need for better EMS training.

Comments:

- More scenario training that integrates a number of themes that we might have worked on individually. I'd like to see a quarterly training that integrates all of the other nights from the quarter.
- Multi-company evolutions Pumps and Hydraulics (some class room, lots of hands on) Hands on EMS assessments.

- More consistent EMS training (missing a lot of CE opportunities because nothing gets planned).
- EMS training is non-existent. A call firefighter/EMT used to care of coordination and was great. Recently has been put in charge of a full time member and has been disappointing. Have to go to classes outside of department to obtain OEMS hours. It is a joke. Maintain status quo with fire training. Best fire training we have had in years.
- Search and rescue MCI's.

Question 9

How would you rate the following?

Twenty-four respondents answered this question: two skipped it. Only twenty-three answered the co-worker satisfaction, community satisfaction, and government satisfaction questions.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Median
Your satisfaction working for the LFD	12	7	5	0	0	Very Satisfied
Your co-workers satisfaction working for the LFD	7	10	5	1	0	Satisfied
Community satisfaction with services of LFD	7	10	4	2	0	Satisfied
Communication-Internal	7	12	3	2	0	Satisfied
Local Government satisfaction of services of LFD	5	12	4	1	1	Satisfied
Communication-other town departments	4	8	12	0	0	Satisfied/Neither
Communication-external/community	3	7	10	3	1	Neither

For all questions in this section vast majority of respondent answers were either neutral or satisfied.

Question 10

Please rate your satisfaction with the following:

Twenty-four answered this question: two did not.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not Applicable	Median
Work Atmosphere	8	11	3	1	1	0	Satisfied
Training Opportunities	5	13	4	1	0	0	Satisfied
Equipment-Fire Apparatus	5	13	4	0	0	2	Satisfied
Professional Growth and Development	3	8	10	2	0	0	Neither
Facility - Training Room	2	10	7	4	1	0	Satisfied/Neither
Equipment-Specialized	2	10	8	2	0	2	Satisfied/Neither
Equipment - Ambulances	2	9	6	5	2	0	Neither
Facility-Office Space	2	3	4	9	5	1	Dissatisfied
Facility-	1	9	8	5	1	0	Neither

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not Applicable	Median
Cleanliness							
Facility-Layout	1	2	6	10	5	0	Dissatisfied
Facility-Locker Rooms	1	1	5	5	8	4	Very Dissatisfied
Facility-Common Room	1	5	9	6	3	0	Neither
Equipment-Radios	1	4	6	6	7	0	Dissatisfied
Equipment-Computers	1	3	9	5	6	0	Neither
Salary	1	5	8	8	2	0	Neither
Benefits-Vacation Time	0	4	6	1	0	11	Not Applicable
Benefits-Health Insurance	0	2	5	3	1	11	Not Applicable

Comments:

- Some members treat other members very disrespectful.
- Eliminate favoritism and the nepotism. Certain rules for one individual and rules for everyone else. Most of this problem is from the previous fire chief which places the current chief in a difficult situation.
- Apparatus space is too tight when getting dressed.

Work atmosphere is the area with the highest levels of satisfaction. Training opportunities and fire equipment/apparatus tied for the second highest levels of satisfaction. There are high levels of dissatisfaction with the office space, locker rooms, and layout of the current facility.

Question 11

Since January 2012, how would you rate?

	High	Medium	Low
Your Morale	12	11	0
Morale of other department members	5	15	3

Twenty-three respondents answered these questions: three skipped it.

The overall morale of the department is medium-high.

Question 12

Compared to one year ago, how would you rate the following?

	Higher	No Change	Lower
Your Moral	12	9	2
Overall Department Morale	13	7	2

Three respondents skipped this question.

Over half of the respondents believe morale has improved.

Question 13

Please describe what you believe is the best staffing strategy for the department. Please include number of full time, on call, and per diem members.

Twenty-four respondents answered this question.

Comments:

- 24-hour full time coverage, with supplemental per diem FFs. At least 4 members on duty around the clock.
- 2 FT around the clock with higher number (current) during the day. I think we should increase the call members by about 5 members. I can't comment on the per diem numbers.
- 4 full time staff on during the day, 4 at night, 40 call members, 0-2 per diem
- Should be at least one firefighter on at night.
- 4-6 around the clock supplemented by existing on call.
- 18 full time (4 groups of 4 for 24 hour coverage, plus Captain and Fire Prevention officer Monday through Friday), existing call department members with minimal increase, remaining per diem personnel to fill gaps as needed.
- Combination of full-time and call staff.
- 4 full time around clock / minimum of 50 call members and 5 per diem.
- Minimum of two people per shift preferably three. Two days and two nights which would allow for better continuity in projects and training. Maintain per-diem status and maintain minimum staffing for call members since many do not come for the routine call backs.
- 6 full time (day) 6 on-call at night 2 per diem.
- 4 full time during the day and 2 overnight. 30 call members. 6 per diems.
- 4 full time. (2 respondents)
- 30 *active* call FF/EMTs, 4 full-time FF/EMTs, a full-time code enforcement/inspection officer (Lieutenant), a full-time Deputy Chief (day shift supervisor), a full-time Chief, and 2 to 5 per-diem members.
- 17 fulltime, and as many call as possible.
- Full time ambulance; Engine crew from 6a-6p weekdays.
- 4 full time people during the day. 2 for the ambulance, 2 for the engine. Backfill with call personnel for all boxes, highway accidents, and incidents that require additional help. Per diem should be used only if the union members refuse the over time.
- Full time as is. 15 more on-call needed.
- 18 full time 4/shift 2/admin, 30 call/per-diem.

- 24 hour coverage, 4 on during day, 3 on overnight. Call numbers less important than call member participation, which is currently low. Per diem is okay as is.

There is variety in the number of full time members recommended, ranging from one, three to four per shifts. There is also a variety of opinions on the number of on call members, however a common theme an increase would enhance operations.

Question 14

Do you feel the current command structure is appropriate for the size and make-up of the department?

Of the twenty four respondents who answered this question, two thirds answered yes.

Comments:

- I think we need one more lieutenant to backfill the position vacated by F6.
- Why do we need 2 deputy chiefs?
- Too many officers for size of the call department that are not readily available for calls, officer shifts and contact on regular basis. Few officers attend the majority of training nights and opportunities. Rank structure was promoted years ago based upon time on the department, regardless of skill sets.
- It's not something that I feel is appropriate for me to have a say in.
- Two deputy chiefs is ridiculous for a dept. our size.
- Call officers have too much power especially during the day. The day staff needs to outrank everyone up through the ranks due to the simple fact that all day to day activities are taken care of by the day staff. Too many officers per firefighter. Should reduce the officers by two positions to be effective.
- I believe that the structure can be cleaned up and reorganize
- Suggest only one Deputy Chief. Suggest each company have only 1 Captain and 1 Lieutenant.

Although two thirds answered yes to this question, among those who commented there seems to be consensus the current command structure is not appropriate for the department. Many seem to share the opinion that two deputy chiefs are unnecessary. In addition to the deputy chiefs, opinion seems to be there are too many officers overall.

Question 15

What three things do you believe would increase the participation of call department members?

Five members skipped this question. Twenty-one members listed at least one, twenty listed two, and fifteen listed three.

Comments:

- Better pay (14 answers)
- Threaten their jobs (doing away with call department)
- Higher number of 'interesting' calls/fire calls - not very actionable (5 responses)
- Fair and equal distribution of shifts
- Feeling more accepted (3 responses)
- Frequent invitations to assist with training planning to instill a better sense that they're making a contribution and their vote counts
- Better opportunities for advancement within the department (2 responses).
- Uniforms
- Better facilities
- More training
- Better Communication (3 responses)
- Better Morale
- More on call members
- Don't know (3 responses)

Reading the comments it seems easy to tell what comments come from on call members and which ones do not. The most common thought seems to be that the on call members are not paid enough. There also seems to be a shared sense of feeling underutilized, unappreciated, and alienated. There is a comment suggesting to 'threaten their jobs, doing away with the call department,' this comment would confirm that at least some full time members feel a sense of superiority over the call members.

Question 16

What three strategies do you believe would increase the interaction between the fire department and community members?

Nine members skipped this question. Seventeen provided one response, fourteen provided two, and eleven provided three.

Comments:

- Greater involvement with community events. (7 responses)

- Community education programs (CPR, first aid, fall prevention). (2 responses)
- Citizen Fire Academy. (2 responses)
- A better building, more suitable for public visitation.
- Expand the explorer program.
- Open houses. (3 responses)
- More involvement in the school systems. (4 responses)
- Educating the public about the work that we do, what goes into a medical/fire call. (4 responses)
- Better PR, newspaper, television, social media. (6 responses)
- Develop citizen auxiliary for specialized tasks/services.
- Fay park next door is a good resource that's not used. Start Friday night BBQ.
- Have sporting events i.e. softball game vs. the PD.

There was a wide variety of enthusiastic responses to this question. The variety of comments demonstrates many department members believe in the need for and have a strong desire to improve interaction with the community.

Question 17

If you had the ability to change three things in the department what would they be?

Six skipped this question. Twenty provided one answer, nineteen provided two, and fourteen provided three.

Comments:

- Staffing increase. (9 responses)
- New station. (7 responses)
- Staff the ambulance 24/7. (2 responses)
- Better equipment, radios, computers, washing machine. (5 responses)
- Change the attitude of some people. (2 responses)
- Eliminate nepotism/favoritism.
- Discipline. (2 responses)
- Distributing call shifts equally, so that one person doesn't have 2-3 regular shifts, and others have none when they want them.
- Improve EMS training - better, more formal, lectures with more practical sessions. (2 responses)
- New system for signing up for shifts.
- More community participation.
- Family participation.
- Higher call dept. participation.

- Better computers and process for writing reports (laptops or ipads) so we can write the reports in the truck on the way back to quarters.
- Higher pay. (2 responses)

Staffing is the answer that received the most responses. Not only was it mentioned the most frequently, but eight of the nine responses were listed as the highest priority. Department members believe it is important to have 24/7 staffing for both the station and the ambulance. A new station was the next most common response and it was distributed evenly among each priority response. All members who listed new equipment named it as their number two response.

Question 18

What level of importance do you place on the following for the new Fire Chief?

Two respondents skipped this question.

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Not at all Important	Median Response
Experience working in a combination call/full time department	17	5	2	0	0	Extremely
Experience working in Littleton	9	5	4	2	4	Very
Lives in town	4	6	7	7	0	Moderately
Holds an Associates degree	4	4	6	5	4	Moderately
Previous experience with managing the building of new fire stations	4	2	10	6	2	Moderately
Previous experience with	3	9	8	3	1	Moderately /Very

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Not at all Important	Median Response
negotiations						
Previous experience with developing budgets	2	9	9	4	0	Moderately
Previous experience with transitioning a department from call to full time	2	0	12	5	5	Moderately
Holds a bachelor's degree or higher	0	6	10	2	6	Moderately
Previous experience as fire chief	0	3	8	11	2	Slightly

The issue highlighted as the most important is experience working in a combination call/full time department. Over half of the respondents rated this as being 'extremely important', and the lowest rating it received was 'moderately important'.

Two questions were tied as the next level of importance, both with twenty responses of 'moderately important' or higher. These were previous experience with developing budgets and previous experience with negotiations.

Having previous experience working in Littleton received the second highest number of 'extremely important' responses; however there were four respondents that considered it 'not at all important'.

Holding a Bachelor's degree had the highest number of 'not at all important' responses; while previous experience as fire chief had the highest combination of 'not at all' and 'slightly important' responses.

Question 19

What three leadership qualities do you believe are most important for the new Fire Chief to possess?

Five respondents skipped this question. There were nineteen who provided two responses and eighteen who provided three.

Comments:

- Knowledge of the fire service and firefighting (4 responses)
- Communication with town and department members (13 responses)
- The ability to work within the constraints of the towns budget
- Ability to lead, not follow current leadership
- Fair, unbiased management (3 responses)
- Shows up to Calls (3 responses)
- Dedication (2 responses)
- Strategic thinking
- Having a fire chief that people can trust and who the membership (call/full time) feel that they have a good dialogue with. They don't have to agree, but they have to trust he has the best interest of the department.
- Team builder, teacher.

It is clear that good communication is considered an most important quality that is needed. This means both communication with members of the department and with the town. It also seems important that the chief be personable and liked by department members. In addition, department members expressed the importance of having a chief that is willing to show up to calls and get involved.

Question 20

Is it important for the next Fire Chief to have experience as a chief?

Seventeen respondents answered no to this question while only seven answered yes. These responses and the answers to question 18 show that previous experience as a chief is not considered to be important by most of the department.

Question 21

Please let us know if there is any additional information you would like to share.

Eighteen respondents skipped this question.

Comments:

- Studies and committees come and go...this department and the town historically lacks follow-through and vision for expansion into modern-era fire service.
- Equipment needs to be updated and improved, morale needs to be improved. greatly, better respect.
- I think we need to have a way to write reports in the truck on the way home from the hospital.
- Littleton is a starter community, so Chief would not [have] to be a prior Chief, many members have started full-time FF careers here.
- Full time dept. personnel morale is low for various reasons. Political correctness is an obstacle to addressing some of these problems, which is a shame.

DRAFT

Moving Forward

In order to keep pace with its current needs and meet the growing challenges of the future the Department will need to develop a strategic plan. This process must take into consideration all aspects of Littleton's current expansion.

Some priorities for the Department to focus on include:

- Improving morale
- Expanding membership
- Building needs and equipment needs
- Training
- Further investigation into the process of moving from a primary call department to a primary full time department.

Morale

The first issue that the department must address is department morale. While increasing, until this matter is taken care of effective forward progress cannot be made. Leadership must also consult with department members to get a sense of shared values. After this is complete, agreement on a shared vision of what the Department should look like going into the future should follow. The range of opinions on the direction of the department could lead to dissention.

The new chief should make an effort to get actively involved in the daily operations of the organization and increase visibility with Department members. A current source of discontent in the department is the previous lack of quality leadership that existed. One of the new chief's priorities should be to change this perception.

Expanding Membership

The biggest weakness that department currently faces is a lack of volunteer or on call firefighters. For years, there has been no influx of new members. These on call members are an essential component of the Department. For a variety of reasons mentioned earlier there have been lack responders to calls. Littleton is growing and the Fire Department must grow with it. A larger number of individuals must be hired, trained, and added to both the call and full roster. It is important to hire more career full time firefighters, however this is dependent on support for the budget.

Department members should put more time and energy into the programs run by the department such as SAFE and Explorers. These programs are effective and their continued existence creates a large number of individuals in the community with knowledge of fire safety.

Building and Equipment needs

The Littleton Fire Department 2002 Master Plan listed a number of problems with the existing Department facilities. If the problems persist, they must be dealt with immediately. If the Town wants the fire department members to be proud of their department, they must be given a department of which to be proud. An organized, up to date, and ready to go facility will improve Department efficacy. As soon as practical, the town must embark on a feasibility study to design a station that will accommodate four to five pieces of equipment.

An inventory of the Department's equipment is listed below.¹⁹

Apparatus	Year and Make	Description
Engine 1		
Engine 2	1998 HME/Ferrara	1250 gpm pump, 1000 gallon tank
Engine 3	1994 Ford/Fire Resources	500 gpm pump, 300 gallon tank
Engine 4	2007 Spartan Series II /Smeal	1500 gpm pump, 1000 gallon tank
Ladder 2	1988 Seagrave	110' rear-mount
Medical 1	2006 Ford/LifeLine	BLS Ambulance
Medical 2	2003 Ford/Road Rescue	BLS Ambulance
Rescue	2002 GMC/EVM	Medium Rescue/Command
Car 9	2008 Ford Expedition	Command/Utility
Car 11	2010 Chevrolet 2500HD	Utility
Car 12	2008 Toyota Tundra	Utility
Marine Unit 1		
Hazardous Materials Trailer	1997 Cargo Trailer	Support unit

In addition, a new ambulance will arrive in January 2013, a second ambulance is in the FY2014 budget and the department is seek a grant for a new ladder truck.

Training

More focus should be put into the training Department members receive. Fewer members of the Department are going to academy classes. One reason for this is that members would have to take time off from their main jobs. To remedy this, compensation should be provided to those individuals who take off work to attend class.

¹⁹ Littleton Fire Department

A department concern is that more variety in training is needed for both fire and EMS. This is to help with the Department's ability to cope with changing and growing community needs. If money is available, possible implementation of a new training program. A training program would require:

- Curriculum Design
- Classroom audio/visual equipment
- Computer Equipment
- Training Officer
- Specialized Equipment

In addition, every department member will attend skill based training.

Next Steps

Department statistics show a steady increase in the number of calls the department is receiving. There is also a marked increase in the type of calls, mainly EMS. Another type of incident with an increasing number of calls is gas/hazardous materials leaks. The department must shift focus to meet these growing needs.

To determine its path for the future the department should complete the following:

- Town wide survey on priorities for fire services.
- Community engagement meetings for input gathering and testing assumptions
- Comparative analysis of 3-5 agencies of similar size to include staffing, budget, apparatus, and deployment. This process needs to include interviews with the other agencies, not just a paper review of information to help develop the final plan for full staffing.
- Review of five years of IMC data to determine type and frequency of calls, response time, year over year trends and related data elements and create a process for continual data review.
- Review of five years of Littleton Fire budget data to determine the long term fiscal impact of increased staffing.
- Meetings with planning and other department heads to determine impact of planned business and residential developments.
- Review of potential efficiencies and cost sharing strategies (as appropriate).

These steps will continue to build on the initial review and allow the department to determine its best course of action.