



CITY OF ROCHESTER, NY
INVITES YOUR INTEREST IN THE POSITION OF
FIRE CHIEF

THE COMMUNITY

The City of Rochester, located in Monroe County on Lake Ontario, is approximately midway between Buffalo and Syracuse and encompasses about 37 square miles.

Rochester is the fourth-most populous city in New York after New York City, Buffalo, and Yonkers, with a population of 211,328 (U.S. 2020 Census). Located in Western New York, the city forms the core of a larger metropolitan area with a population of one million across six counties.

The City is situated where the Genesee River meets the south shore of Lake Ontario. The river drops in elevation as it flows through the City, creating rapids and waterfalls that complement the area's natural beauty.

Rochester features a unique blend of history and innovation. The City rose to prominence as the birthplace and home of some of America's most iconic companies, particularly Eastman Kodak, Xerox, and Bausch & Lomb, by which the region became a global center for science, technology, and research and development. Its status has been aided by the presence of several internationally renowned universities (notably the University of Rochester and Rochester Institute of Technology) and their research programs.

Rochester has played a vital part in U.S. history as a hub for specific important social and political movements, especially abolitionism and the women's rights movement. Rochester is the former home to pioneers and independent thinkers like Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass.

According to the U.S. 2020 Census, Rochester's demographics include 38.0% non-Hispanic Black, 33.0% non-Hispanic White, 19.8% Hispanic/Latino, 3.9% Asian, 0.2% Native American or Pacific Islander, and 5.1% mixed or other. It should also be noted that Rochester has been reported as having the largest per capita deaf population in the nation.

The City of Rochester was incorporated in 1834. Many homes and commercial buildings in downtown Rochester are original, dating back a century or more, while others are undergoing renovations to



become modern lofts and workspaces.

Rochester enjoys an exceptional quality of life measured by easy access to cultural amenities, recreational activities, affordable health care and cost of living, excellent schools, and a welcoming environment. According to U.S. News, in 2022, Rochester was ranked #4 for the best place to live in New York State.

The City works hard to preserve and honor its history while capitalizing on its opportunities and bright future. The Rochester community does a great job balancing a big city's arts, culture, sports, and nightlife with a small town's ease, quiet, and comfort.

THE ORGANIZATION

The City of Rochester is governed by a Mayor, who is directly elected by popular vote to a four-year term. As the chief executive officer and administrative head of government, the Mayor is responsible for administrating all City affairs, including appointing all department heads. The nine-member City Council is responsible for the legislative affairs of the City government.

The City provides a full range of municipal services, including police and fire protection; the construction and maintenance of highways, streets, and other infrastructure; community and economic development programs; recreational and cultural activities; water production and distribution; and refuse collection.

The City has an FY2023 total budget of \$627 million, including a Capital Budget of \$76 million, and employs 2,882 full-time employees.

The Rochester 2034-Comprehensive Plan is a well-developed 15-year comprehensive plan designed to improve the community leading up to its 200th birthday. The City places a high priority on improving the health, safety, and quality of life for all who live, work, and play in Rochester. As such, the six priorities of the current Administration include the following:

- Economic Empowerment
- Promoting Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice
- Building Towards a Prosperous Future
- Strengthening Neighborhoods
- Public Safety
- Youth Development

THE DEPARTMENT

The Rochester Fire Department (RFD) has a long and rich history as a fire service agency. Today, the Department has a reputation for providing exceptional service. The Department is fully accredited and has received the highest insurance rating achievable, making it one of the most capable departments in the nation.

The Fire Department's mission is to provide professional services for life preservation, incident stabilization, and property conservation. The RFD protects life and property through fire suppression, emergency medical services, hazardous material management, technical rescue, fire prevention, disaster preparedness, public education, and community risk reduction.

The Department's values include professionalism, excellence, integrity, education, and teamwork. Its vision is to continue to lead in delivering of fire and rescue services and provide the safest environment for the personnel and the people served.

RFD is the third-largest fire department in the state of New York. The Department consists of 482 uniformed and 24 civilian personnel and has a budget of over \$55 million. It operates 13 engines, six trucks, and heavy rescue equipment from 15 fire stations throughout the city and responds to around 40,000 emergency calls annually. About 90% of RFD personnel are certified NY State EMTs, and roughly 55% of the calls each year are for EMS. Each fire company is staffed with at least one EMT at all times.

The Department is committed to service excellence through diversity and inclusion and strives to foster a climate that respects differences, encourages innovation, and welcomes contributions from all members of its workforce. Currently, 69% of the Department's employees identify as Caucasian, 31% identify as a minority, 95% identify as male, and 5% identify as female.

The Fire Department is proactive and works within the community to prevent incidents from occurring in the first place through its education, inspection, community emergency response teams (CERT), and community risk reduction (CRR) program, which includes focusing on at-risk populations such as youth and older adults.

The Fire Safety Division completes building inspections throughout the city, conducts inspections and provides fire safety details for special events, and performs reviews of building permit applications and plans for NYS Fire Code Compliance, ensuring that places of public assembly are compliant with State Fire Code.

The Special Operations Division oversees eleven specialty teams: Confined Space Rescue, Foam, Gators, Hazardous Materials Response, High Rise Support, Ice Rescue, Rope Rescue, Structural Collapse Rescue, Trench Rescue, Vehicle Extrication, and Water Rescue.



The City has an Arson Task Force, a collaborative team of representatives from the Rochester Fire Department, Rochester Police Department, and the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. Additionally, RFD operates its own apparatus repair division at the Public Safety Training Facility. The Fire Department currently works with two different labor organizations.

THE POSITION

The Fire Chief is appointed by the Mayor, reports to the Deputy Mayor, and serves as an integral member of and trusted advisor to the City's Senior Management Team.

Responsibilities include planning, directing, and reviewing all activities and operations of the Fire Department. The Fire Chief is directly supported by an Executive Deputy Chief of Administration and an Executive Deputy Chief of Operations who oversee the Department's 506 staff.

Current challenges within the Department include meeting the demands of the RFD workload and diversifying the workforce. Additionally, ongoing challenges include updating and maintaining RFD structures and equipment and the need for a better water-based rescue infrastructure.

Priorities for the Department include a focused commitment to service excellence, community engagement, inclusion, and community risk reduction.

Some initiatives identified in the Rochester 2034 Plan include:

- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT): Provides basic disaster survival training and rescue skills to residents to improve the ability of community members to survive until first responders arrive.

- Career Pathways to Public Safety Program: A high school-based partnership program with Rochester City School district to increase awareness of career opportunities within the public safety fields and increase participation from underrepresented groups in the community.

- Protectives: A volunteer firefighter organization that has worked with RFD for over 150 years and assists by removing property after a fire, recovering occupant valuables, setting up emergency scene lighting, and assisting with providing ventilation.

- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detector Safety: A program whereby RFD installs pre-purchased smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in residential properties and ensures existing detectors are working properly.



residency throughout their tenure with the City. Candidates must meet the core competencies established by the State Fire Administrator for Incident Commander based upon the Recommended Best Practices for Firefighter Training. A career fire chief appointed pursuant to the Civil Service Law must also meet the minimum qualifications established pursuant to Civil Service Law §58-a and 19 NYCRR Section 426.9.

COMPENSATION

The salary is open dependent upon qualifications. The City offers an excellent benefits package. For additional information about the City, please visit:

<https://www.cityofrochester.gov>

TO APPLY

If interested in this outstanding opportunity, please visit our website at www.srnsearch.com to apply online. First review of resumes will occur on May 15, 2023. Resumes will be screened according to the qualifications outlined above. Screening interviews with the most qualified applicants will be conducted by S. Renée Narloch & Associates to determine a select group of finalist candidates who will be asked to provide references. References will be contacted only following candidate consent. Final interviews will be held with the City of Rochester. Candidates will be advised of the recruitment status following the selection of the Fire Chief.

The City of Rochester is an Equal Opportunity/ADA Employer. Pursuant to open records laws, employment applications and resumes may be subject to public disclosure.

Questions regarding this recruitment should be directed to Ms. S. Renée Narloch, President or Mr. Elliott Pervinich, Vice President.

S. Renée Narloch & Associates
info@srnsearch.com | 850.391.0000
www.srnsearch.com

Photos courtesy of the City of Rochester, NY, Communications Bureau.



IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City of Rochester seeks highly qualified and motivated candidates to serve as Fire Chief. The ideal candidate must have exceptional leadership abilities and become invested in the staff, the community, and the City's vision. An individual who gives and garners respect is needed.

A visible and approachable individual with experience collaborating with peers, citizens, and community groups is essential. Must have exceptional communication skills, both written and verbal.

To effectively meet the Department's current and future challenges, the Fire Chief must be innovative and solutions-oriented, able to form trusting relationships with a variety of stakeholders, including City officials.

The selected candidate will possess strong administrative and organizational skills and will take a fresh look at the department to assess its overall effectiveness and address any areas of needed improvement. Must have strong budgeting skills and a solid understanding of fire industry best practices.

Candidates must possess a bachelor's or master's degree and at least ten (10) years of experience in municipal fire service, including at least five (5) years at the command level. The chosen candidate will be required to establish and maintain City