


DEPARTMENT:	
	TOPIC: Battalion Chief Position
REPORT PRESENTED BY: Director Saulnier / Chief Marshall	

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council’s approval to transition an existing term operational leadership position into a full-time permanent Battalion Chief position and to formally recognize the role within the Foothills Fire Department’s organizational structure.

BACKGROUND

Over the past year, the Foothills Fire Department has relied on a term operational leadership position (B2/C2) that was originally established to advance the First Due project, including implementing the First Due platform, developing pre-incident plans, and launching the Community Connect module. While also supporting day-to-day operations, inspections, and supervisory requirements, the role has consistently performed chief-level operational functions alongside the short-term or project-specific duties associated with First Due.

As the role has been used in practice, experience with the term operational leadership position (B2/C2) has shown that it has become a key component in maintaining reliable incident command capacity for emergency response. The proposed conversion of the B2/C2 position into a full-time permanent Battalion Chief position strengthens the Department’s ability to support reliable 24/7 incident command coverage by ensuring ongoing access to qualified chief-level leadership for escalation, after-hours response, and complex or multi-agency incidents. A permanent Battalion Chief position also supports succession planning by developing and retaining experienced operational leaders, strengthening leadership continuity, and ensuring the Department maintains depth in command capacity as responsibilities evolve and senior roles change over time.

Accordingly, although the existing term operational leadership position (B2/C2) was initially established as a term role, the operational demands it now supports are permanent. The proposed change, therefore, represents a shift from a temporary staffing approach to a permanent one, providing organizational stability, continuity of leadership, and predictable operational coverage. This change formalizes an existing service level rather than introducing a new or expanded operational function.

Finally, while the permanent establishment of the position increases baseline operational expenditures, the associated costs were originally incorporated into the operating budget to support the position for its term. Those same budget adjustments have been reviewed and confirmed as sufficient to carry the position on a full-time permanent basis. Council is therefore being asked to authorize the staffing conversion based on an operating budget that has already been adjusted to support this role.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Foothills County Council pass a motion approving the conversion of the existing term B2/C2 operational leadership position into one (1) full-time permanent Battalion Chief position.

APPENDICES

- Job description attached
- Organizational chart
- Benefits observed during the term B2/C2 inspector staffing period



Position:	Battalion Chief
Department:	Community and Emergency Services, Foothills Fire Department
Reports to:	Deputy Fire Chief
Position type:	Full Time, Permanent
Work location:	Heritage Pointe Fire Hall

Position Overview

The Battalion Chief is a senior operational leadership position within the Foothills Fire Department, responsible for overseeing and managing multiple shifts including the volunteer stations within the County. This role requires strong operational, strategic, and leadership skills, with a focus on firefighter safety, emergency response effectiveness, and personnel development.

The Battalion Chief ensures the smooth day-to-day operations of the department while supporting fire suppression, emergency medical response, technical rescue, fire prevention, public education, and administrative functions.

Availability may be required for altered shifts, on-call rotations, or emergency response as needed. The Battalion Chief will also train and respond alongside personnel at volunteer and full-time fire halls as part of operational readiness and community support.

Key Duties & Responsibilities

Emergency Operations

- Assume overall command or act as Incident Commander at emergency scenes, coordinating personnel, apparatus, mutual aid partners, and external agencies.
- Oversee fire suppression, emergency medical response, technical rescue, hazmat, and wildland firefighting operations.
- Ensure all emergency operations comply with NFPA, OH&S, Alberta Fire Code, and County standards.
- Monitor and evaluate deployment of apparatus, equipment, and personnel to maximize efficiency and effectiveness.
- Train with and respond alongside both volunteer and full-time fire halls to ensure seamless operational integration during incidents.

Operational Leadership & People Management

- Lead, mentor, coach, and evaluate Fire Captains, Sr. Firefighters, and firefighters across assigned shifts.
- Conduct performance evaluations, develop training and performance management plans for assigned personnel.
- Promote a culture of safety, accountability, teamwork, and professional development.
- Assist with recruitment, scheduling, and staffing to ensure operational readiness.

- Ensure compliance with County policies, Fire Department SOPs/SOGs, and applicable legislation.

Training, Education & Development

- Plan, coordinate, and deliver operational and safety training programs for assigned personnel.
- Support ongoing professional development and mentoring for all ranks.
- Oversee fire prevention education and community outreach initiatives.
- Coordinate and deliver training with volunteer fire halls to maintain skills, readiness, and mutual aid effectiveness.

Fire Inspection & Code Compliance Support

- Collaborate with the Deputy Fire Chief / Fire Prevention function on operationally relevant inspections, pre-incident planning, and risk reduction initiatives, as assigned and as operational demands permit.
- Assist with fire investigations, report writing, and related administrative documentation as needed.
- Perform subdivision development and building re-designation plan reviews and provide written comments.
- Read and interpret building plans, blueprints, installation guides, construction plans and specifications as well as issue Notice of Violation, Orders or Information notices

Administration & Strategic Support

- Prepare and review incident reports, inspection records, operational logs, and statistical reports.
- Support the Deputy Fire Chief and Fire Chief with policy development, strategic planning, and budget oversight.
- Represent the department at inter-agency meetings, community events, and cross-functional projects as assigned.

Itinerant Duties

- Provide coverage for vacant shifts, including operational and administrative responsibilities as needed
- Assist with special projects and initiatives at the direction of the Deputy Fire Chief or Fire Chief.

Competencies & Skills

- Excellent public relations, presentation, supervisory, interpersonal oral and written skills are necessary.
- Supports compliance activities coordinated with fire prevention and the Inspection function.
- Strong operational and strategic leadership skills.
- Excellent mentoring, coaching, and personnel development abilities.
- Effective decision-making and problem-solving under emergency conditions.
- High-level communication, report writing, and public speaking skills.
- Ability to foster teamwork, professional development, and a positive organizational culture.
- Proficiency in Office 365 and other relevant IT tools.

Qualifications

- High School Diploma or equivalent; post-secondary education in Fire Science, Emergency Management, or related field is an asset.
- Minimum of eight (8) years of progressive fire service experience, including demonstrated supervisory and incident command experience at the officer level (e.g., Captain, Lieutenant, or equivalent).
- Experience in emergency management, multi-agency coordination, and operational planning.

Certifications

- NFPA 1001 Level 1 and 2
- Hazmat Awareness and Operations
- NFPA 1021 level 1 – Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications (level 2 preferred)
- NFPA 1041 Level 1 – Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional (level 2 preferred)
- Standard First Aid with CPR level C
- NFPA 1002 – Driver/Pump Operator
- NFPA 1006 – Technical Rescue Awareness
- ICS 100, 200, 300 (ICS 400 preferred)
- Safety Codes Officer – Level B1 & C1
- Valid Alberta Class 3 Operator's License with Q endorsement
- Successful completion of the Foothills Fire Department recruitment process

Working Conditions & Physical Demands

- Prolonged and arduous work under adverse conditions which requires agility and strength.
- Climbing, lifting, carrying, and dragging objects while using SCBA.
- As this role may support compliance and inspection activities; risks may include exposure to operational hazards, scene hazards, and occasional involvement in regulatory or investigative processes.
- Perform office-based and desk-related administrative work.
- Regular use of computers and electronic communication tools.
- Shift work
- Regular interaction and operational collaboration with volunteer fire halls

Benefits observed during the term B2/C2 inspector staffing

- Provided operational leadership ensuring coordinated response, continuity of operations, and alignment with organizational objectives.
- Participated in Chief on Call Rotation
- Developed the Pre-Plan Module within First Due
- Developed the Community Connect Module within First Due
- Filled in as Officer on the Engine as needed
- Reduced workload for other Chief Officers
- Practical application of the B2/C2 operational leadership role has demonstrated its value as a key component of reliable incident command capacity for emergency response.
- Operational experience has confirmed the role's effectiveness in supporting command escalation, after-hours response, and complex or multi-agency incidents.
- The B2/C2 position provides essential chief-level leadership coverage, enhancing operational continuity during periods of increased demand.
- Conversion of the B2/C2 role to a full-time, permanent Battalion Chief position strengthens the Department's ability to maintain 24/7 incident command coverage.
- Establishing the role on a permanent basis ensures consistent access to qualified and experienced command-level officers.
- A permanent Battalion Chief position increases organizational resilience by reducing reliance on temporary or ad-hoc command solutions.
- The position supports succession planning by developing and retaining experienced operational leaders within the organization.
- Ongoing occupancy of the role strengthens leadership continuity and institutional knowledge.
- Establishing permanent command capacity ensures the Department maintains depth and flexibility in command resources as operational complexity increases.
- The role supports long-term organizational sustainability as responsibilities evolve and senior leadership positions change.
- Public and Media Relations
- Assisted with Day-to-Day Operations

