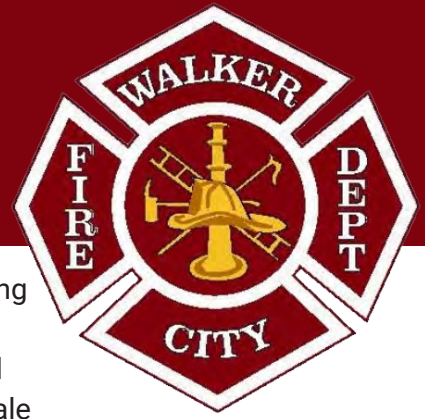


WALKER, MICHIGAN FIRE CHIEF



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The City of Walker (Pop - 25,132) covers 26 square miles within Kent County sharing a border with the cities of Grand Rapids and Grandville, Ottawa County and Alpine Township. Walker is home to a thriving business community including commercial and industrial districts along Alpine Avenue and I-96 as well as home to the Standale Business District on M-45. A community of tree-lined streets, parks and trails, shopping districts, and elite school districts makes the City of Walker a great place to live, work, and grow! It is known for its close-knit neighborhoods and strong community spirit.

Families enjoy living in a place where neighbors know one another, and community events are an ongoing invitation to engage. This creates an environment where you feel both secure and supported. Enjoying its serene suburban character, Walker is only a short drive away from downtown Grand Rapids. This proximity opens the door to cultural events, premier dining, shopping, and entertainment options—giving you the best of both worlds. In comparison to many major urban centers, Walker often offers more affordable housing options without sacrificing the quality of life.

City commission government consists of seven elected officials serving on a commission plus an appointed [city manager](#). The city government is represented by three wards, each with two elected commissioners, which are overseen by an elected mayor.

The City is seeking applicants for the position of Fire Chief. This position is the chief operating and administrative officer for the department and is responsible for planning, directing, coordinating, and staffing the work of the Fire Department, which includes policy development and implementation, development of departmental goals and objectives, budget management, and personnel management.



Education and Local Amenities

The area boasts well-regarded public schools and numerous parks, making it a nurturing ground for families and individuals alike. Outdoor spaces and recreational facilities provide not only physical activity opportunities but also venues for social interaction.

School districts serving the City of Walker include:

- [Comstock Park Public Schools](#)
- [Grand Rapids Public Schools](#)
- [Grandville Public Schools](#)
- [Kenowa Hills Public Schools](#)

Kenowa Hills schools in the Walker city limits include:

- [Kenowa Hills Early Childhood Center/Day Care & Learning Center](#)
- [Zinser Elementary School](#)
- Kenowa Hills district residents are zoned to Kenowa Hills Middle School and [Kenowa Hills High School](#) in [Alpine Township](#).
- One Grandville school, [Cummings Elementary](#), is in the city limits.
- There are two charter schools in the city limits- [Walker Charter Academy](#) and [West Michigan Academy of Environmental Science](#).

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

[Covenant Christian High School](#) and Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School are located in Walker.

LIBRARY

The [Kent District](#) Library Walker Branch is in Walker.

HIGHER EDUCATION

- [Ferris State University, Grand Rapids](#)
- [Western Michigan University](#)
- [Grand Valley State University](#)
- [Grand Rapids Community College](#)

Healthcare

- [Trinity Health Grand Rapids](#)
- [Spectrum Health Grand Rapids](#)
- [Helen DeVos Children's Hospital](#)
- [Corewell Health – Blodgett Hospital](#)

Sports and Enjoyment

Our parks are at the center of so many experiences and memories and recreation programs like our youth soccer, and adult softball allow community members of all ages to get together and have fun. Events such as Winter Fest, the Easter Egg Hunt and the Memorial Day Parade allow the community to come together as a community to celebrate! For over 20-years the fitness center has been committed to serving Western Michigan communities through sports, fitness and fun events and activities. The Walker Ice center (seating for 400), part of the overall fitness complex features skating and hockey classes, adult leagues, private parties, open ice skates and more. This includes a full pro shop for all of your equipment needs!

Van Andel Arena (seating of 10 – 12,000) is situated in downtown Grand Rapids, serving as the region's flagship multi-purpose indoor arena. Residents of Walker, MI, and other parts of Kent County frequently attend events there including concerts, sports (Grand Rapids Griffins Hockey affiliate of the Detroit Redwings) and more. Its central location in Grand Rapids makes it a cultural and economic magnet for the entire metropolitan region. For those living in Walker and surrounding areas, the arena represents easy access to major concerts, sporting events, and community events. Its reach extends beyond the city limits, fostering a shared regional identity that binds the communities of Grand Rapids, Walker, and beyond.

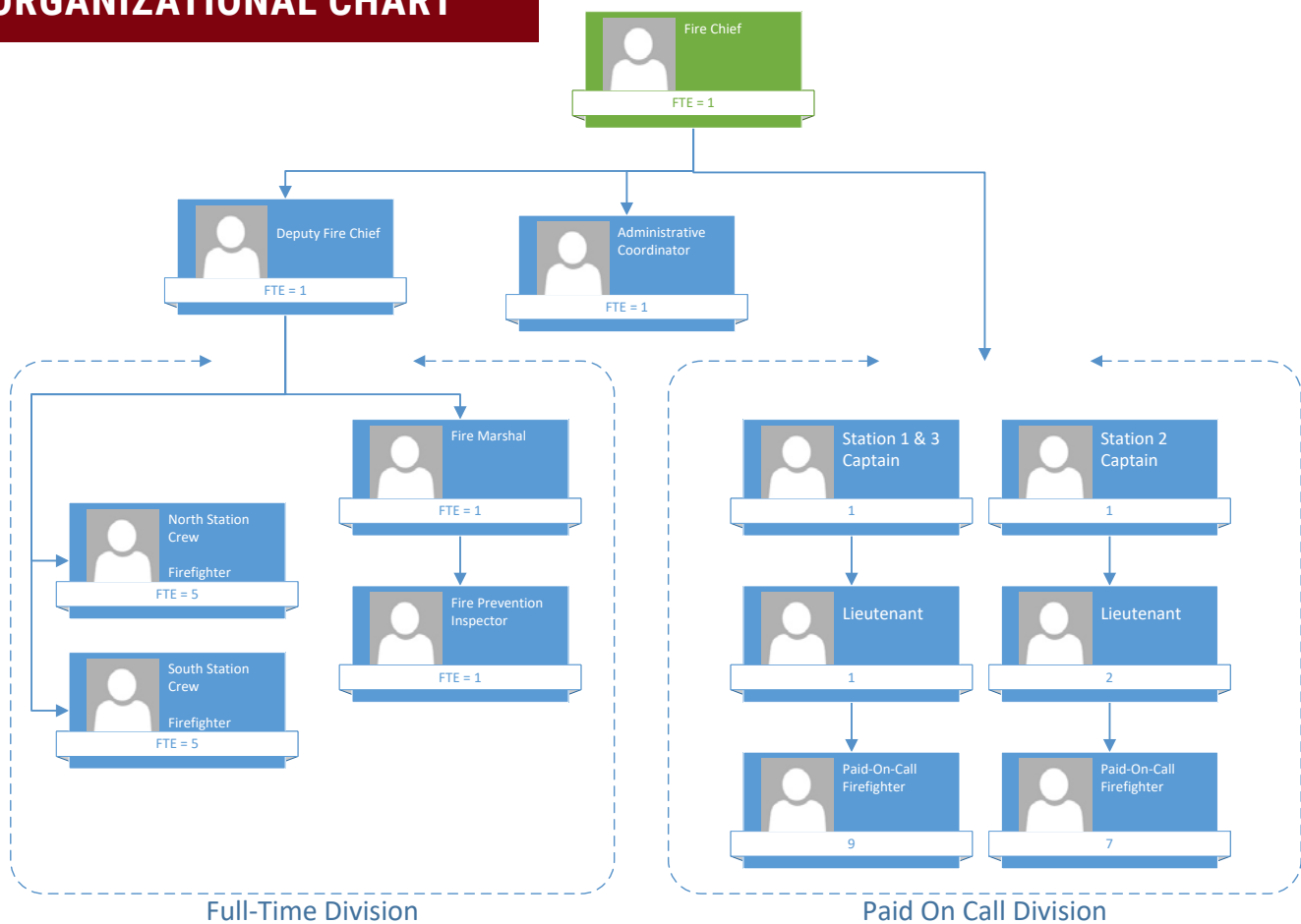
BY THE NUMBERS

- Demographics – White (85.7%), Black (2.5%), Asian (3.0%), Hispanic (5.5%), American Indian (.2%), Two or more Races (5.8%)
- Median Home Value = \$266,400
- Households = 10,329
- Median Household Income = \$72,635
- 24.58 Mi²

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

- The Walker Fire Department is a combination, proactive, community-focused all-hazards department that meets the ever-changing needs of the community through professional development, unity, and teamwork.
- The department is built upon the pillars of integrity, collaboration, public education, community engagement, and dedication to the community.
- The department has three fire stations and an administrative team with 15 full-time staff and 17 paid-on-call firefighters.
- The Chief is supported by a Deputy Chief, (1) POC Captain (north – POC Stations 1 and 3), (1) POC Captain (south – Station 2), (3) POC Lieutenants (Stations 1,2 and 3), a Fire Marshal, Fire Inspector, and an Administrative Assistant.
- Full-time suppression staff (10) operates out of two stations seven days a week from 5:45 AM – 6:30 PM.
- The department operates (9) front-line emergency vehicles (5 engines, 1 platform, 1 ladder, 1 tender, 1 support unit)
- The fire prevention program hosts over 100 public education events and conducts annual business inspections.
- The department responds to approximately 1,000 calls annually both locally and regionally.
- The department is supported by an annual budget of \$2.89 million.

WALKER FIRE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



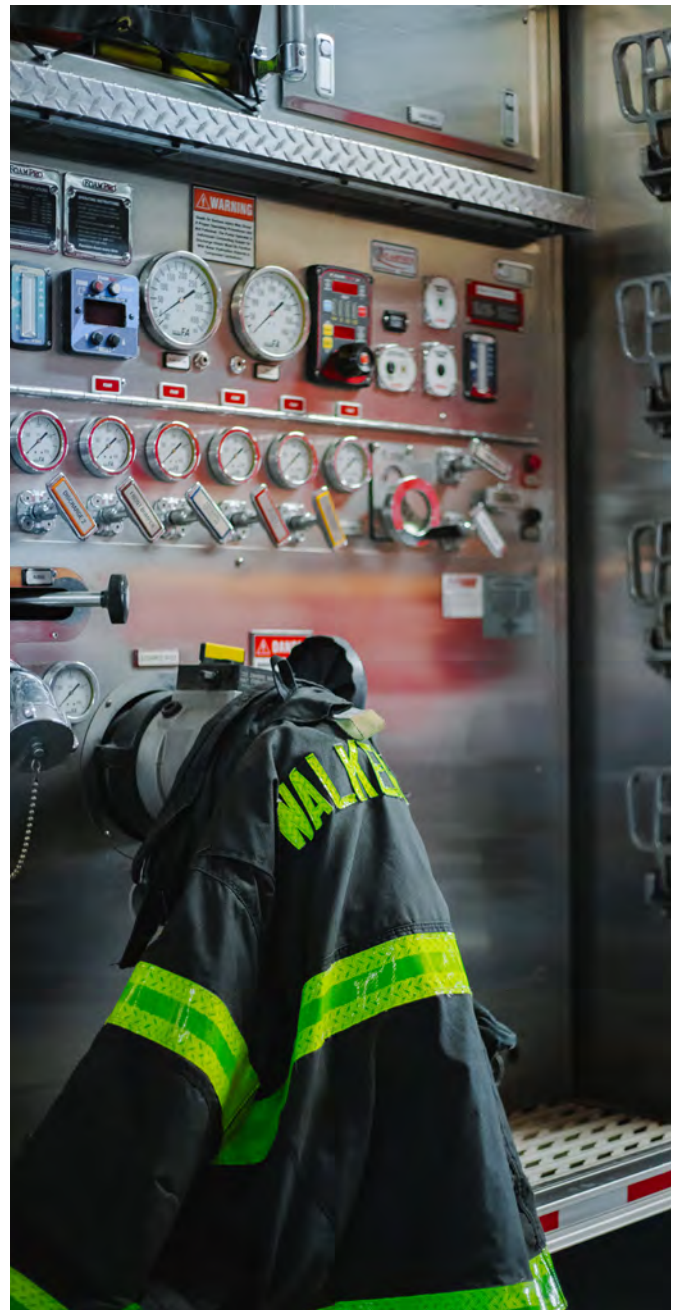
CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS & EXPECTED EXPERIENCE:

- Bachelor's Degree in Fire Science, or a closely related field.
- Increasingly responsible experience with a Fire Department of similar or larger in size to the City of Walker; including a minimum of eight (8) years upper-level administrative responsibilities within a Fire Department/Public Safety Department.
- Certification as a Firefighter Training Council Instructor and Fire Officer III required. Fire and Arson Investigator certification preferred or the ability to obtain certification as soon as possible after hiring.
- The new Fire Chief must understand the need to use data for problem solving assessing community risk and vulnerabilities as well as skilled in Strategic Planning.
- Demonstrated skills in change management, succession planning, and agency innovation and creativity
- Knowledge of current fire-fighting techniques and methodologies, first responder training and emergency extrication techniques along with a functional knowledge of a wide variety of fire-fighting equipment and apparatus.
- Knowledge of professional public management techniques involved in budgeting, personnel administration, labor relations, purchasing and operations management.
- Must be able to motivate and lead by example through honesty, integrity, openness, and transparency.
- Skill in assembling and communicating information to various city stakeholders, analyzing data, preparing comprehensive and accurate reports, and formulating policy and service recommendations.
- Proven ability to foster effective and positive working relationships with external and internal stakeholders, including employees, residents, visitors, and city officials.
- Knowledge and familiarization of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) codes and
- Building Official and Code Administrators (BOCA) codes and local, municipal and state ordinances pertaining to fire prevention.
- Must be able to successfully pass a comprehensive background investigation, physical assessment, and psychological assessment.
- Requires a valid State of Michigan driver's license, satisfactory driving record and the ability to maintain one throughout employment.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES – THE NEXT FIRE CHIEF

Develop a department staffing plan to address the current challenges with paid on call recruitment and retention and full-time staffing model to ensure appropriate service levels meeting the needs of Walker's residents, businesses and visitors.

Work with the City Commission to create a strategic plan to align department priorities with overall City goals and objectives.



SALARY/APPLICATION

This is a full-time exempt position with a salary range of \$95,608 - \$124,291, depending on experience and qualifications, and a comprehensive benefit package including medical, dental, defined contribution 401(a) retirement plan, retirement health savings account, life insurance, short and long-term disability, and fitness membership. The Fire Chief is a City Commission appointed position that reports to the City Manager.

Candidates should apply by April 29, 2025 @ 1700 hours CST with resume, cover letter and contact information for five work-related, or professional references to govhrjobs.com (electronic applications only). Questions may be addressed to the attention of T.E. Sashko, MGT, 790 Frontage Road Suite 213 Northfield, IL 60093, or (847)380-3240x123. The City of Walker, MI is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

