Dear Belgrade Taxpayers,

We have a Big decision to make!

The City of Belgrade has grown to the point where, under state law, we will no longer be able to contract with the Central Valley Fire District to provide for fire protection services and emergency medical services. We have two choices. We can annex into CVFD, or we can create and fund our own independent full-time professional fire department.

**A yes vote for annexation** is a vote to annex the City of Belgrade into the Central Valley Fire District. The net tax rate for taxpayers will remain the same as it is under the current interlocal agreement, about $165 per year, or $13.75 per month for a home with a $200,000 tax value (2018 tax values). This funds three full time engine companies, emergency medical services, fire prevention services, and fire code enforcement. The firefighters, equipment, and facilities will remain as they are now.

**A no vote for annexation** means that the City will be required to provide its own separate fire department. The cost for this option is about $756 per year, or $63 per month for a home with a $200,000 tax value (2018 tax values). This will fund one engine company, fire prevention services, and fire code enforcement. It will not fund emergency medical services.

**Why is the cost difference so big?** The tax base for CVFD and the City of Belgrade together is over five times the size of the City alone, so costs are spread over a much larger base. CVFD already has firefighters, equipment, support staff, and a new fire station in the Belgrade community. A new separate fire department would require duplicating infrastructure and staffing as part of the start up costs, and funding operations with one fifth of the tax base.

**When is the election?** Ballots will be mailed on February 12th, and must be returned by election day, March 3rd.

**Want more information?** Come to one of the events at the Belgrade Community Library, visit our web page: [www.ci.belgrade.mt.us](http://www.ci.belgrade.mt.us), and click on “Proposed City Annexation into the Fire District” , visit the library, visit city hall, e-mail the city manager tbarkley@cityofbelgrade.net or the fire chief rlindroth@centralvalleyfire.com.

**Flip this over for an invitation to learn more!**

This material was produced by Belgrade city staff for use in educating the public regarding the question of whether or not the City of Belgrade should annex into the Central Valley Fire District. It was produced using City of Belgrade resources including City staff time. The costs associated with education on this matter are tracked by the Annexation Education Committee, Diane Eagleson, Treasurer; and reported as required to the Montana Commissioner for Political Practices.