



FIRE SERVICES IMPROVEMENT & EXPANSION BALLOT PROPOSALS

If approved, the new Fire Services Improvement and Expansion assessment will REPLACE what you are currently paying for fire protection. Your Board of Trustees has placed the following questions on the ballot this November 7:

THE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

OPERATING QUESTION

Shall the Township of Scio be authorized to annually defray its costs of providing fire protection and emergency medical services, including maintenance of buildings, acquisition of apparatus and equipment, by special assessment pursuant to Act 33 of 1951, in the amount adjusted annually that does not exceed 3.75 mills (\$3.75 on each \$1,000 of taxable value) in any single year for ten (10) years, 2023 to 2032 inclusive?

CAPITAL QUESTION

Shall the Township of Scio be authorized to annually defray its costs of purchasing property, constructing buildings, and providing apparatus and equipment for newly constructed buildings to provide fire protection and emergency medical service by special assessment pursuant to Act 33 of 1951, in an amount adjusted annually that does not exceed 0.75 mills (\$0.75 on each \$1,000 of taxable value) in any single year for twenty years, 2023 to 2042 inclusive?

Today, Scio Township has one centrally located fire station on N. Zeeb Road, staffed 24/7 with 3-4 full-time firefighters. If both proposals are approved, we plan to build a second fire station on S. Wagner Road near Liberty, and increase the staff to 9 full-time firefighters 24/7, divided between both stations. Scio Township has already purchased property for this purpose. To build and staff a second fire station, both questions must be approved by voters.

THE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS EXPLAINED

Currently, the Fire Department is funded by an annual assessment of up to 1.35 mills (\$1.35 per \$1,000 of taxable value) based on the predicted expenses of the Fire Department for the upcoming year. If approved, the Fire Services Improvement and Expansion proposals on the ballot this November 7 will replace the current 1.35 mills annual assessment with two separate assessments, posed on

the ballot as questions:

The Operating Question establishes a maximum amount (up to 3.75 mills) the

Township can assess annually for staffing, operating a building, and repairing/replacing equipment and apparatus over 10 years. The maximum amount of the operating question would not be assessed immediately but would be an amount based on the predicted, estimated need for any given year, after

a public hearing and Township Board approval of those expenses. The operating question would gradually increase funding for the Fire Department over the life of the assessment and each year residents and business owners would have input into the Fire Department operating budget during a public hearing.

The Capital Question establishes a maximum amount (up to 0.75 mills) the Township can assess to purchase property (exclusively for fire stations), construct a fire station, and provide equipment and apparatus for a newly constructed fire station over the course of 20 years. This question also provides flexibility to purchase property for future expansion if growth of the Township indicates the need for a

**ELECTION
DATE:
NOV. 7,
2023**

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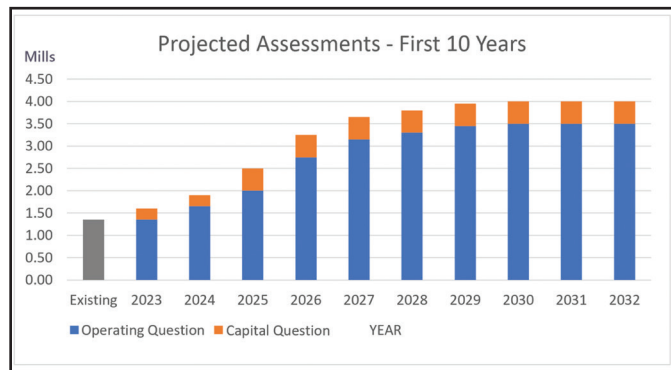
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third station. As with the Operating question, the maximum amount of the Capital question would likely not be assessed immediately but would be requested based on estimated need for any given year, after a public hearing on predicted expenses and Township Board approval of those expenses. In other words, residents and business owners would have input into the Fire Department capital budget each year.

These ballot questions are specifically designed so that voters would be able to see how their tax money is being invested in the community.

WHAT HAPPENS IF BOTH QUESTIONS PASS?

If voters adopt both assessment questions, there would be very little immediate change in your tax rate. Operations-wise, we will be able to add a fourth full-time firefighter to the N. Zeeb Road Station, fully staffing that station (and putting us at capacity for that building). We would also then begin drafting construction plans for the second station, as well as start the bidding process for fire trucks to equip the second station. Once plans are complete, we would send the project out to bid with



an expected groundbreaking of spring 2025. Estimating a 12-month build would allow us to open the new station by the springtime of 2026.

These initial plans would require only a modest increase in the operating assessment for the first few years.

As we hire and train firefighters, there would be a gradual increase in the operating portion of the assessment until we reach "full staffing" levels at both stations. Our intent is to staff a fire truck at both stations, a rescue vehicle (medical-transport capable) at the S. Wagner Road station, and a Battalion Chief (officer-in-charge of daily operations) at the N. Zeeb Road station. This would allow for 9 firefighters to serve the community, 24/7. (Firefighters work 24-

hour shifts every third day. So staffing 9 firefighters across two stations 24/7 minimally requires 27 firefighters. Our goal is to reach a staffing level of 33 full-time firefighters in order to cover injuries and time off. Our current staffing level is 3.) Ideally, we expect to reach "full

staffing" during the years 2028-2029, though if hiring proves more difficult, it may be closer to 2030-2031. This staffing estimate is based on our ability to hire, train, and retain firefighters.

This is a special publication of the Scio Township Fire Department

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WHY WE ASK FOR A SECOND STATION & ADDITIONAL STAFF

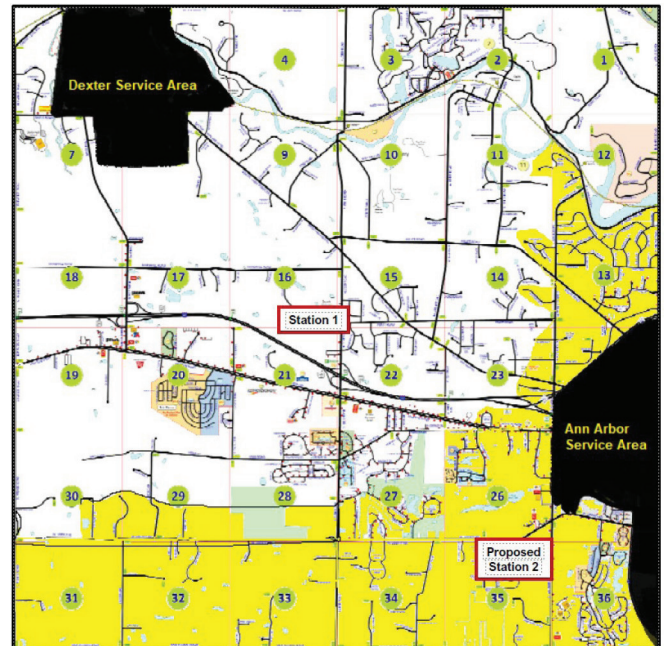
To Improve Response Times

Improved response times save both lives and property. Our goal is to arrive on the scene of any emergency within 6 minutes, 90% of the time. The quicker we can respond, the better the outcome of the emergency, whether the emergency is a fire or a medical emergency.

In the southeast corner of the Township, farthest from the existing fire station, we have an area of high population density with a significant number of service calls. Our response times to this area fall far outside our 6-minute goal. Construction of a second station in its proposed location will improve response times to approximately 40% of the residents of Scio generally, while greatly improving response times along the southern and eastern edges of the Township.

To Provide Redundancy

Fully staffing two fire stations will give the Fire Department the capacity to respond more appropriately to higher level fire and medical-need calls, as well as to respond to more than one call at a time without relying on aid from neighboring communities, which is currently necessary.



MIOSHA 2-In 2-Out Rule for the prevention of...

- Civilian injury and death
- Firefighter injury and death
- Property loss

To Comply with MIOSHA's Minimum 2-In, 2-Out Rule

When firefighters are called to a fire, there must be at least 2 firefighters on the scene ready to enter the building (the quickest and most effective way to battle a fire in a building), with at least 2 outside ready to rescue them if they become lost, injured, or trapped. This is known as MIOSHA's 2-In, 2-Out Rule. With two fully-staffed fire stations, we will have enough firefighters to meet the 2-In, 2-Out Rule and will be able to start fighting a fire from inside the

building immediately upon arriving on scene, and without having to wait for another station or mutual aid to arrive, improving both the public's safety as well as that of our firefighters.

To Hire a Dedicated Training Officer

To provide consistent, effective, up-to-date, and daily training to all firefighting staff during regular shift time.

To Improve Our ISO Rating

Often insurance companies use a community's "ISO" rating, a numerical score derived from a thorough evaluation by the Insurance Services Office of Verisk Analytics, to determine risk. Generally, a low ISO rating is an indicator of lower risk of loss from fire, whereas a higher rating is an indicator of a higher level of risk, with 1 being the best rating and 10 being the worst. Several factors are evaluated, such as proximity to a fire station, water supplies in

the community, ability to get water to an area with no municipal water, numbers of personnel on duty, and training. Scio Township's current ISO rating is 5 in areas within 5 road miles of the station, and 10 in areas more than 5 road miles from the station. The addition of a second station could significantly lower Scio's ISO rating, bringing approximately 50% of the homes that are more than 5 road miles from a fire station to within that 5-mile limit. This change has the potential to significantly impact property owners' insurance rates.

BACKGROUND RESEARCH & RECOMMENDATIONS

In the fall of 2022, the Township Board authorized the formation of the Fire Services Guidance Committee (FSGC), comprised of citizens, business owners, and Township staff, to evaluate the level of fire protection and make recommendations for service level improvements. The committee convened multiple times and disbanded after presenting its recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

The FSGC considered several criteria in formulating their recommendations, including previous un-acted upon recommendations, optimal community safety, industry standards, demographics, growth, and statistics. Their investigations focused on five main areas:

ability to meet MIOSHA's 2-In 2-Out requirement, improving response times, improving training, improving the Township's ISO score, and improving our ability to serve medical emergencies.

The conclusions of this Committee included the following recommendations: add a second fire station, increase staffing and apparatus to bring Scio into full compliance with the 2-In 2-Out rule at both stations, staff a fire truck and a rescue vehicle at the second station, while staffing a fire truck and a Battalion Chief at the N. Zeeb Road station, add a full-time training officer position, and begin transport of medical patients in cooperation with Huron Valley Ambulance. These recommendations came with estimates of the financial costs of these increased services and staffing. Those estimates formed the basis of the ballot questions before voters this November 7.

All FSGC meeting recordings and documents are available on the Township's website at sciotownship.org/FSGC.

For More Information:

Website: sciotownship.org/fire

Email: fire@sciotownship.org

Call: Fire Chief, Andy Houde
(734) 665-6001

ASSESSMENT TIMELINE

SCIO TWP FIRE DEPT EXPANSION ESTABLISHING A FOUNDATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE





Scio Township Hall
827 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

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PAID
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ANN ARBOR, MI

To Scio Neighbor

HOW MANY FIREFIGHTERS DOES IT TAKE?

BASED ON INDUSTRY STANDARDS

- **Car Accidents or Minor Fires (like a passenger vehicle fire):** Requires a minimum 7-9 firefighters. There should be multiple crews, as well as an officer-in-charge (a.k.a., Battalion Chief) to direct the
- **Tractor Trailer Involved in an Accident or on Fire:** Requires a minimum 13-19 firefighters. May need 3 or 4 more companies to bring water to the scene (in areas without



municipal water) and operate multiple hose lines or tools.

- **Building Fires:** Requires a minimum 18-24 firefighters. Residential and commercial, building fires are the most workforceintensive calls we respond to. Scio Township has extensive mutual aid agreements with our neighbors and can get help in instances of major fires.

IF THE ASSESSMENT DOESN'T PASS

If neither assessment passes, there will be no change to the Fire Department. The Department will continue current operations with the 1.35 levy passed previously by voters. We will generally only staff 3 firefighters at the N. Zeeb Road station and there will be no improvements in apparatus, equipment, level of service, or

response times.

If the Capital assessment passes but the Operating assessment does not, we will not be able to construct and staff a second fire station and there will be no improvement in the level of service.

If the Operating assessment passes but the

Capital assessment does not, we would request a budget that enables us to add a fourth firefighter to the N. Zeeb Road station and make modest improvements in equipment/apparatus. We would not be able to construct a second station, hire additional firefighters, or improve response times and ISO ratings.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Election Day, November 7, 2023

The Fire Services Improvement and Expansion proposals are the only item on the ballot for this special election. Vote in person at your regular or consolidated polling place, vote by absent voter ballot, or vote early, in person at Meeting Hall in the Township Hall, 827 N Zeeb

Road, during the nine-day early voting period, Saturday, October 28 through Sunday, November 5, from 8 am to 4 pm.

Public Hearing, November 14, 2023

Whether the Fire Services Improvement and Expansion proposals pass or fail on November

7, there will be a public hearing on how much the Township will assess you on the upcoming Winter Tax Bill for Fire Department services for the remainder of this fiscal year, December 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024. Property owners will receive a notice of the public hearing date, time, and location in the coming weeks.