



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

PROPOSAL

FOR EXPANSION OF SCIO TOWNSHIP EMERGENCY SERVICES AND RESOURCES

JULY 2024



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

Table of Contents

- Introduction..... 3
- Fire Protection on the November Ballot3
- History 5
 - Growing Demand 5
 - Current Department Staffing & Station 6
 - What We’re Lacking 6
- Fire and EMS Services 7
 - Career Firefighters 7
 - Medical Emergencies 7
 - Changing Regulations 7
 - Training 8
 - ISO Rating 8
 - Medical Transport 8
- Previous Reports/Plans/Assessments 9
 - 2015 Ferch/Carlyle Wartman Strategic Plan 9
 - 2018 Emergency Services Consulting International Assessment 9
 - 2022 Fire Service Guidance Committee Recommendations 9
- The Identified Issues 9
 - Ability to Meet OSHA/MIOSHA Respiratory Protection Standards (2-in/2-out) 10
 - Meeting Response Time Goals 10
 - Map: Response Time by Section.....11
 - Adequate Response Staffing 12
 - How Many Firefighters Does It Take? 12
 - Improvement of Training with Addition of a Training Officer 14
 - Improvement of the Department’s ISO Rating 14
 - Ability to Achieve Basic Life Support (BLS) Transport Capabilities 15
 - Ability to Achieve Advanced Life Support (ALS) Transport Capabilities 15
- Scio Resident Risk Summary Scorecard 16
- How Best to Protect Scio Resident Life and Property 17
 - Service Area Map 18
- Cost and Scope 19
- Implementation 20
- Ballot Proposal.....20



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

Introduction

Since the establishment of the Scio Township Fire Department in 1988, the Township's unprecedented population growth has driven the need to expand our existing Fire Safety and Rescue services. The current infrastructure (*a single Fire Station on Zeeb Road*), aging vehicles and equipment, and modest staff size, are not adequate to manage the safety of Scio's people and businesses. Since 2015 there have been 3 formal studies – all of which indicated the need for more staff, additional equipment, and a second fire station. During that time, very little action has been taken to address the needs while the Township has continued to grow. As a result...

We are currently under-responding to about 30% of our total calls

Under-responding shows up in two key ways:

1. The Fire Department is often the first to arrive at the scene of a 911 call, and provides basic medical care on site. However, we must wait upon the arrival of a non-contracted commercial operator (Huron Valley Ambulance, HVA) to transport victims to the hospital as Scio does not have its own ambulance service.
2. Often, we are able to send only 2 or 3 firefighters to a fire when, depending upon the situation, standard protocol demands 2-4 times that level of response. This is due to lack of key fire equipment and, most importantly, the necessary personnel. (*See How Many Firefighters Does It Take, p. 12, for more detail*).

The resulting delays in service, either in waiting for an ambulance to arrive, or in waiting for Paid-On-Call staff or mutual aid from a nearby town to complete the necessary response team, pose a constant threat to resident life and property. **The need for increased funding for fire protection is clear: to improve the Fire Department's ability to timely protect life and property, to improve the safety of our committed firefighters, and to reduce our reliance on HVA and mutual aid from nearby fire departments.**

Fire Protection on the November Ballot

To mitigate these existing and unnecessary safety threats, we are asking Scio residents to make a long-term investment in safety and consider a proposal to increase the current 1.35 mills assessment for fire protection to 2.7 mills. **This proposal will appear on the ballot for the November 5 General Election for voter approval.**

An assessment increase from 1.35 to 2.7 mills will improve the Fire Department's ability to provide service to the community by funding:

- 12 new personnel to support industry firefighting standards
- Construction of a second fire station in a high-need area
- Ability to respond to more than 95% of our calls with adequate numbers of staff and appropriate equipment
- Greatly improve response times to areas far from the Zeeb Road station
- Upgrade and modernize vehicles, including a ladder truck and a new water tanker

While this proposal is not adequate to fund a new medical transport service, or fully staff two fire



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

stations, it would provide immediate as well as long-term benefits to the community.

Improved Level of Care

Resident Benefits

Increased funding to 2.7 mills makes possible:

- Achieve our goal of a 6-minute response time from dispatch to incident scene
- Ability to meet the OSHA Standard 2-in/2-out firefighter protocol
- Sufficient personnel to respond to incidents other than routine medical calls
- Meet state-mandated training requirements
- Improve the Department's Insurance Services Office (ISO) score
- Reduce our "inadequate" response rate to around 3% of calls

 **Reduced Risk**



The proposed funding level of 2.7 mills enables the Department to achieve our response-time goal of 6 minutes on the southeast and east sides of the Township, 90% of the time



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

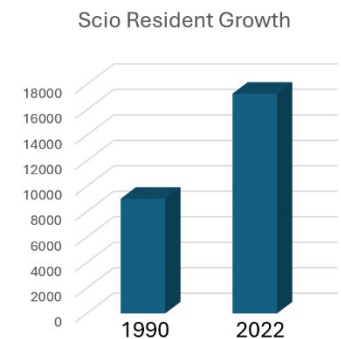
History

Prior to 1988, fire protection in Scio Township was provided by the Dexter Area Fire Department. In 1988, the Zeeb Road station was built as a substation for the Dexter Area Fire Department (DAFD). The Township Board then decided to discontinue service with DAFD and authorized the creation of the Scio Township Fire Department (STFD). At its inception, the department had 2 full-time (40 hours/week) staff (Chief and Assistant Chief), and 18 Paid-on-Call (POC) staff, for a total of 20 members.

In 1988, Jackson Road was an undivided two-lane road and, according to 1990 Census data, Scio Township’s population was approximately 9,000 (excluding Dexter Village).

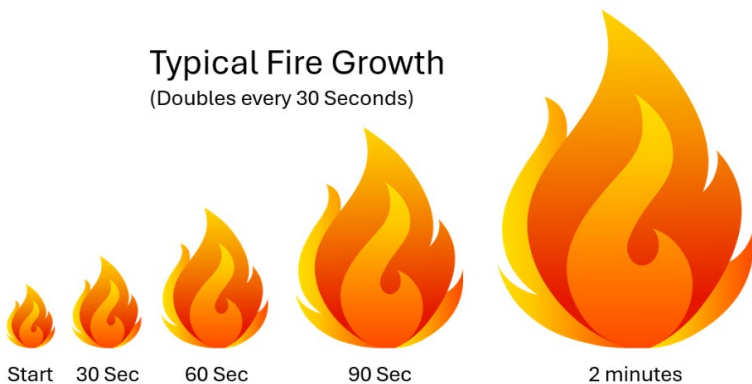
Growing Demand

Over the ensuing 36 years, there has been substantial growth in the number of residential developments (*Scio Farms, Walnut Ridge, Country French Estates, Arbor Point, Polo Fields, Scio Ridge, the Uplands, Trailwoods, Scio View, and others*), and the Township has experienced a commensurate growth in population. From 9,000 in 1990, the 2022 Census population estimate is 17,526. With more than 1,200 housing units currently in, or approved for, development, Scio will soon have more than doubled its population since the Fire Department was created in 1988.



Responding to almost 1,600 calls, 2023 was our busiest year on record...

With the establishment of the Downtown Development Authority, Jackson Road has been expanded to a virtual four-lane divided highway. As a result, commercial and residential development along the Jackson Road corridor has thrived. Changes in zoning are allowing for higher density developments and a greater number of stories on new buildings. New homes and apartments are being built, several commercial buildings are planned and under construction, and an approved senior living facility is about to break ground. Naturally, this growth places new and greater demands on the Fire Department. Due to the presence of several “big box” stores and multi-level apartment and condominium complexes, **the need for a ladder truck has become critical**. Often, the only effective means to control a fire is to douse it from the top down.



Fire doubles in size every 30 seconds. A quick response time with adequate resources is the difference between being inconvenienced for 9-12 months while a fire-damaged house is repaired and experiencing a total loss of home and its possessions.



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

Current Fire Department Staffing & Station

Today, the Scio Township Fire Department consists of 15 staff:

- 1 Fire Chief
- 1 Assistant Chief/Fire Marshal
- 9 career firefighters
- 1 administrative assistant
- 3 paid-on-call firefighters
- 1 part-time Fire Investigator

By the fall of 2024, we will staff 4 career firefighters per 24-hour shift in the renovated original fire station. The Zeeb Road station is comprised of a reception area, one administrative office (the Chief's office), 4 dorm rooms (one of which doubles as the Captain's office), a dayroom/kitchen area (also serving as the Assistant Chief's "office") with two computers, a locker room, a laundry room, 5 bathrooms, 4 showers, a decontamination room, and an apparatus bay. The fitness room, an important feature for every fire department, is relegated to an outbuilding that also serves as vehicle storage and has no bathroom facilities or air-conditioning.

From this description, it is clear that the existing Zeeb Road Station has exceeded its capacity and is no longer adequate to meet Department needs. There is little room on site to expand outward, and when factoring in population growth outside the Jackson Road-Zeeb Road corridor, it makes little sense to expand at this location.

The Zeeb Road Fire Station contains the Township's Sheriff substation. When Scio built this station in 1988, it met the needs of the time, but there was no consideration of



what the Township needs would be 30 years on. In 2020, we invested \$3.5 million to renovate the building, which addressed many structural issues, but did not provide adequate space for the needs of a career department or for the increased demands of a much-larger population. The result: We had already outgrown the renovated building the day we moved back in.



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

Fire and EMS Services

Career Firefighters

The structure of the Fire Department has changed since its inception in 1988. Initially we relied entirely on non-career (Paid-on-Call) firefighters. However, the nature of the community along with a nationwide decline in availability of POC firefighters has made it necessary to shift to a career firefighter department. We now rely on a paid career staff of 9 firefighters (3 per 24-hour shift). The Township Board of Trustees recently approved the hiring of an additional 3 full-time firefighters, 1 per shift. Firefighter shifts are 24 hours, which is why all fire stations contain dorms. The addition of 3 firefighters this fall will bring the Zeeb Road station to its maximum capacity of 4 per shift, because there are only 4 dorms. This marks the first improvement in staffing for this department since January 2019.

Medical Emergencies

In addition to traditional firefighting duties, firefighters provide Basic Life Support (BLS), non-transporting level care. (This designation indicates that the STFD is not licensed to transport patients to the hospital.) Firefighters are often the first to arrive on the scene of a medical call and can, among other services, administer certain medications, defibrillate cardiac arrest patients, perform CPR, and insert an advanced airway. Studies have shown that there's a much greater chance of surviving a cardiac arrest if 8-10 rescuers arrive in the first 10 minutes. With the increased funding requested in the Fire Expansion proposal, STFD will be able to put 7 responders on incident scenes quickly for the best possible outcomes, with remaining personnel provided by our Advanced Life Support provider, Huron Valley Ambulance. Oftentimes HVA is delayed or not immediately available, so critical interventions, such as defibrillation, are performed by fire staff until the remainder of resources arrive to assist.

Changing Regulations

In 1988, when the Department was formed, there was no hint of the OSHA/MIOSHA 2-in/2-out regulation. 2-in/2-out means: 2 Firefighters enter the building and 2 remain outside in case the 2 in the building become incapacitated or are needed to address any other emergency that requires life-saving assistance. It is easy to understand why this regulation exists: to reduce risk of firefighter injury and death. Not only is 2-in/2-out the industry standard, it is also the law. **The Scio Township Fire Department is not able to enter a dangerous fire environment until we assemble a minimum of 4 firefighters on scene.** Current funding levels have kept staffing to 3 personnel per shift since 2019. This has meant that arriving at the scene of a fire has not always resulted in the start of firefighting, but instead the nail-biting wait for Paid-on-Call or off-duty personnel or mutual-aid partners. In the fall of 2024, the Department expects to welcome a fourth firefighter to each shift, thanks to increases in assessed property values in the last two years, action taken by the Board of Trustees, and diligent management of Department funds by Chief Houde. While most fire incidents require more than 4 firefighters on scene, for the first time in 5 years, STFD will be able to at least start the work of putting out a fire immediately upon arrival instead of waiting for sufficient numbers of personnel to arrive.



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

Training

Along with the increased demands placed on the Department by a growing population, training requirements have increased – and become more complex. State regulations now set standards for fire service instructors, and the STFD can no longer rely on our existing staff to develop and deliver training. Until additional funding is provided by approval of the Fire Expansion proposal on the ballot on November 5, the Department is making do with what training can be put together, but not all relevant standards are being met. A dedicated training officer is necessary to train all personnel the same way, network with other departments, attend outside training, offer new techniques, and maintain accurate records. ***To meet state standards for proper instruction, the training officer position must be a dedicated full-time position.***

ISO Rating

The Insurance Services Office score (***1-10, with 1 being the best***) is a measure of the ability of a fire department to respond to emergencies in a timely and appropriate manner. Among other things, it takes into consideration factors such as station location, number of scheduled on-duty staff, presence of hydrants throughout the Township, quality of training, and condition and age of equipment. ***Some insurance companies use the ISO score when determining the cost of homeowner insurance, so improvements in any of these areas, funded by the Fire Expansion proposal, may reduce the cost of some homeowners' property insurance.*** Other insurance companies simply use the metric of road miles to the nearest fire station, with better scores earned by dwellings within 5 road miles of the fire station. Again, funds provided by the increased assessment requested in the Fire Expansion proposal that are used to build a second station hold the possibility of reducing property insurance for those residents within 5 road miles of the new station.

Our current ISO rating is 5 in the areas of the Township within 5 road miles of the station, and 10 for the remainder of the Township. Our goal is to bring our ISO rating down to 3 within the next 1-2 evaluations. This goal is entirely achievable under the plan funded by the increased assessment requested in the Fire Expansion proposal on the November 5 ballot.

Medical Transport

Throughout all of Washtenaw County, medical transport service is provided by Huron Valley Ambulance (HVA). ***HVA is a privately owned company with no contract for service and no requirement to respond to emergencies.*** While the delivery of transporting Emergency Medical Services in Washtenaw County is increasingly transitioning to a model where some transport is delivered by fire departments (which is largely the norm elsewhere), STFD currently lacks the capacity to develop service along these lines. Transport capability has been identified as important area for growth, but STFD is not attempting to address this need through the Fire Expansion proposal on the November 5 ballot.





SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

Previous Reports/Plans/Assessments

Since 2015 there have been 3 formal studies of fire services in Scio Township – all of which indicated the need for more staff, additional equipment, and a second fire station. Until 2023, when the Township Board attempted to act on recommendations of the Fire Services Guidance Committee, no action had been taken to address the needs for more staff, updated and additional equipment, and a second fire station.

2015: Ferch/Carlyle-Wortman Strategic Plan

In 2015, Fire Chief Ferch and Carlisle Wortman & Associates developed a strategic plan. The plan identified increased population growth and demand for services and **recommended a second fire station be built** on Township-owned property on Wagner Road near Liberty Road by 2020. That property has since been deemed too small to support the infrastructure needed and is no longer in Township possession. Overall, the plan was largely ignored.

2018: Emergency Services Consulting International Assessment

In 2018, Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI), performed a staffing needs and deployment assessment. Several recommendations were made, and some action was taken. The assessment indicated that a paid-on-call model was no longer viable or best practice; identified the need for 4 personnel to be on duty at the Zeeb Road station 24/7; and indicated that 3 fire stations were required for optimal protection of life and property. This study also identified that the ideal location of a second station would be Wagner Road north of Liberty Road, which is close to where the Township has since purchased property for this purpose.

2022: Fire Services Guidance Committee Recommendations

In 2022 the Township Board authorized the Fire Services Guidance Committee (FSGC). The FSGC evaluated previous studies along with current data and concluded that a second fire station was needed on Wagner Road near Liberty Road. It also identified the staffing level required to appropriately meet the needs of our growing community. It recommended that both a fire vehicle and a transporting EMS vehicle be staffed at the second station, and that a Basic Life Support transporting service be implemented. This plan had an approximate 8-year implementation timeline. At that time, the Township authorized a preliminary schematic design for building a second fire station and asked voters to approve two questions to fund its construction and operation. However, both questions failed in a special election held in the Fall of 2023.

The Identified Issues

Several issues were identified by these 3 studies including:

1. Ability to meet OSHA/MIOSHA 2-in/2-out standard
2. Meeting the response-time goal of under 6 minutes 90% of the time
3. Adequate number of personnel and appropriate equipment to respond to incidents other than medical calls
4. Improvement of training to meet state regulations
5. Improvement of the Department's Insurance Services Office score
6. Ability to achieve Basic Life Support Transport capability



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

7. Ability to achieve Advanced Life Support transport capability

1. Ability to Meet OSHA/MIOSHA Respiratory Protection Standard (2-in/2-out)

The OSHA/MIOSHA Respiratory Protection Standard is an industry standard related to when employees who use a respirator can enter an atmosphere Immediately Dangerous to Life and Health (IDLH). While this generally relates to structural firefighting activities, many other hazardous conditions also apply, such as gas leaks in a building or a carbon monoxide incident. For firefighters to enter these situations, they must wear a breathing air tank and mask, and they must work in a team of not less than 2.

At the same time, there must be no fewer than 2 firefighters outside the IDLH atmosphere ready to rescue the entering team if they become unable to exit under their own power. This is commonly referred to as the 2-in/2-out rule. Meeting 2-in/2-out requires a minimum of 4 personnel to be assembled before entering the area. While these types of calls are less frequent, they are often the most severe calls we respond to and normally require immediate action to mitigate. **On fire scenes, we are currently forced to attempt to extinguish an internal fire from outside a burning home until our mutual aid resources arrive.** Only then can we enter and extinguish a fire. This is clearly not a best practice and greatly lowers the expected outcome for the property owner.

2. Meeting the Response-Time Goal of Under 6 Minutes 90% of the Time

As of December 31, 2023, the Department's average response time was 8 minutes 19 seconds (from when the call was received to when personnel arrived on scene). The Department's goal is to respond to calls in under 6 minutes 90% of the time, a national consensus standard from the National Fire Protection Association. Year-to-date, the Department meets this goal less than 40% of the time.

Data shows that the area with the highest number of 911 calls is the southeastern section of the Township. The map Response Time by Section (p 11) demonstrates that this section is one where the Department is not meeting its 6-minute response time goal. While the Department does not meet this goal in the northeast or southwest sections either, the population density of the southeast section is much higher. The combination of population density, 911 call frequency, and our current response times make the location of the proposed second fire station at Wagner and Liberty Roads ideal for redressing current limitations of the Department.

Fire doubles in size every 30 seconds. A quick response time with adequate resources is the difference between a homeowner being inconvenienced for 9-12 months while they repair their fire-damaged house, and the homeowner experiencing a total loss of a home and its possessions.

Additionally, the chance of survival when someone is in cardiac arrest decreases 15-20% every minute without CPR and defibrillation. If you are 3-4 minutes from a fire station, your statistical outcome is much better than if you are 10-12 minutes from a fire station.

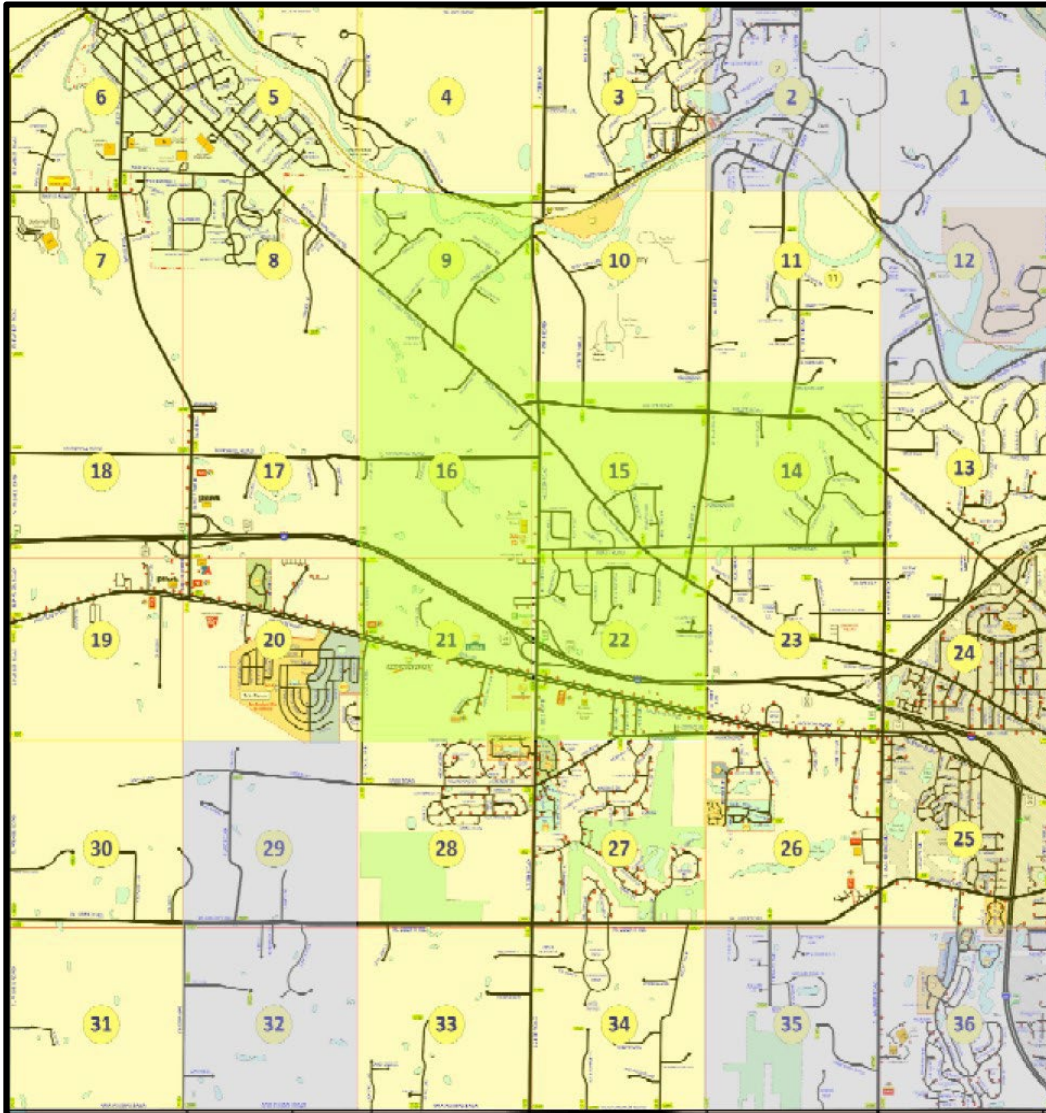
A Pertinent Example: The Uplands subdivision, one of the densest sections of the Township, requires 10-15 minutes for the first arriving engine to get there. Recently, a resident cyclist was struck by a truck and lay in a ditch for almost 15 minutes before we arrived to provide medical care. Even then, we beat the ambulance by almost 5 minutes. This is not acceptable.



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

Scio Township Fire Department: Response Times by Section



Green = 6 minutes or less response time

Yellow = 6-10 minutes response time

Gray = 10 minutes or longer response time



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

3. Adequate Response Staffing

We are currently under-responding to approximately 30% of our total calls. For most routine medical calls, we are able to respond with only 2 or 3 personnel who provide basic medical care until the arrival of Huron Valley Ambulance (HVA). Our care level is provided at the Basic Life Support level (BLS) by firefighters who are also state-licensed Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). HVA provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) or paramedic level care and transport. For many 911 calls BLS is adequate. However, for higher acuity medical calls, ALS is often required and unless and until the Department is able to fund a transport-level licensure, the Township must continue to rely on Huron Valley Ambulance for these needs.

Overall, the Department lacks the ability to send numbers of firefighters that are considered sufficient in response to fire (4%), car accidents and other rescue calls (7.5%), alarms (7.5%), and hazardous conditions (10%). This amounts to 30% of total calls to the STFD. A staff of 4 firefighters on shift is woefully inadequate for any incident (*see How Many Firefighters Does It Take? below*). In instances of significant building fires, rescues, or other incidents, we call on neighboring departments through a mutual aid agreement. Two of the tenets of the agreement are that the aid be reciprocal, and that we expend our resources before calling for help. The mutual aid system is designed to aid in extreme circumstances – **not supplement our lack of adequate staff and apparatus**. Currently, we are a debtor in the mutual aid equation.

The Department also cannot handle more than 1 incident at a time. In cases of back-to-back calls, we are currently forced to prioritize which call to respond to. With only 1 response vehicle staffed, the first emergency call in Scio will get immediate response, but a second concurrent call will most likely get a delayed response from a mutual-aid partner. Or there may be no fire department response at all, if our mutual aid partners are already out on calls.

In years past, full-time staffing was supplemented by a paid-on-call contingent. However, we can no longer attract or retain paid-on-call firefighters. The number of personnel on an emergency scene directly affects how long it takes us to resolve an incident. With proper staffing, scenes are cleared more quickly: fires are extinguished, people are removed from their vehicles, rescues are made. The reality is, we are usually under-staffed for most of our calls, which is unsafe for both residents and firefighters.

How many firefighters does it take?

A typical motor vehicle accident requires a minimum of 6-8 firefighters, plus transporting ambulance staff



Required Firefighters

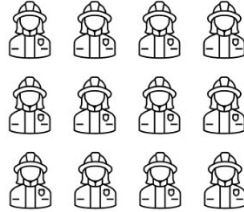




SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

Required Firefighters



A vehicle extrication call requires
9-11 firefighters,
plus transporting ambulance staff

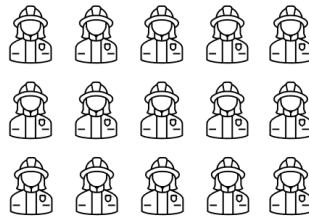
A vehicle fire requires
6-8 firefighters



Required Firefighters



Required Firefighters

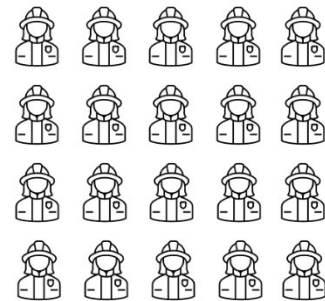


A commercial vehicle fire requires
12-16 firefighters

A typical house-fire requires
15-20 firefighters



Required Firefighters





SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

4. Improvement of Training with the Addition of a Training Officer



The training of personnel has greatly improved over the last several years both in consistency and frequency. However, the Department is still lacking quality and continuity with training.

STFD currently lacks personnel qualified to develop and provide fire or EMS training for staff, both of which are required by State regulations. Training efforts are guided by several factors including ISO, MIOSHA, NFPA, and an evolving scientific knowledge

of fire suppression tactics and strategies. Training can be greatly improved by having one person dedicated to this objective. Additionally, this person would be responsible for quality assurance of reports (both fire and EMS), as well as filling a staff position on emergency scenes.

5. Improvement of the Department's Insurance Services Office (ISO) Score

Insurance Services Office (ISO) score (*now Versk Analytics*) is a measure of risk determined by evaluating all aspects of the fire department, including its 911 system, the fire department (engines, ladders trucks, reserve apparatus, deployment analysis, personnel/staffing, training, operational considerations, and community risk reduction/inspections), and its water supply, both in areas with municipal water and areas without.

Some insurers use this score when underwriting a homeowner's policy, which may impact policy cost. Others use the number of road miles to the nearest fire station.

Most of Scio Township has a 5 rating, with 1 being the best rating and 10 being the worst. Improvements in the factors listed above will improve our score and reduce both community and staff risk.

Additionally, there are three corners of the township that are more than 5 road miles from the Zeeb Road station, resulting in those homes having an ISO rating of 10. In the southeast there are approximately 400 homes in this classification, in the northeast approximately 90, and in the southwest approximately 15. **The proposed 2.7 mills assessment requested in the Fire Expansion proposal on the November 5 ballot would fund the construction and staffing of a second fire station centered in the southeast—the area in the community with the greatest population density and a current average response time of greater than 10 minutes.**





SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

6. Ability to Achieve Basic Life Support Transport Capability



Achieving Basic Life Support (BLS) transport has become more important since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Throughout the nation people are leaving the EMS field, resulting in ambulances being short-staffed. This both increases response times and decreases the ability to transport patients to hospitals.

Locally, EMS service in Washtenaw County is provided by Huron Valley Ambulance (HVA). Like the rest of the nation, HVA is experiencing staffing shortages resulting in increased response times. On occasion, HVA even lacks transporting ambulances. Fire departments in the county have begun addressing this through various methods. Ann Arbor City and Chelsea Fire Authority have purchased and licensed an ambulance to transport, while Scio Township has purchased an ambulance to be used as a non-transporting rescue. While the Department currently lacks licensed personnel to staff the ambulance 24/7, as required, the ambulance has proven useful in carrying equipment to incidents, and has been called into use transporting injured people occasionally, when HVA was unable to provide an ambulance.

It is important to note that HVA is a privately-owned company and does not have a contract to provide service with Washtenaw County, or with any local unit of government. Relying on an arrangement such as this offers no long-term guarantees of service to the community.

If licensed to transport, the Department would operate alongside HVA, giving us the capability to transport less serious patients, freeing up HVA units for more serious calls. State regulations require a licensed transport vehicle be staffed 100% of the time in operation, requiring staffing exclusive of the personnel necessary for staffing a fire engine.

The idea of a small EMS-type station has been looked at in depth and found not to be viable in Scio Township at this time. Our staffed fire engines can do everything that a BLS ambulance can do EXCEPT transport while also handling fire and rescue emergencies. Therefore, the funding proposal on the November 5 ballot does not include pursuit of BLS transport capability and represents the best and most efficient use of tax dollars.

7. Ability to Achieve Advanced Life Support Transport Capability

Achieving Advanced Life Support (ALS) would be possible if the department were to hire 9 paramedic firefighters and license its ambulance for ALS transport. The plan for increased funding requested on the November 5 Fire

Transporting EMS services are meant to complement fire/EMS services... not replace them



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

Expansion ballot question does not include pursuit of ALS transport capability.

Scio Resident Risk Summary Scorecard

1. *Ability to Meet OSHA/MIOSHA Respiratory Protection Standard (2-in/2-out)*

Yes--With the improvements authorized by the Township board in the FYE 25 budget, Scio will for the first time in its history, consistently meet the MIOSHA 2-in/2-out requirement daily with on-duty staff. This is a significant accomplishment. However, this standard is a minimum performance standard and does not meet all the objectives at a fire incident.

2. *Meeting the Department's Response-Time Goal of Under 6 Minutes 90% of the Time*

No – because our one fire station is in the center of the Township, distant from one of the most densely populated areas, the southeast of Scio that borders Ann Arbor. Most areas that are more than a couple miles from the Zeeb Road station will not meet response-time objectives.

This goal could be achieved with the addition of a second station on Wagner Road near Liberty Road with funding from the Fire Expansion proposal on the November 5 ballot.

3. *Adequate Response to Incidents Other Than Medical Calls*

No – because we lack staffing to adequately respond to 30% of our calls. We can usually handle one minor medical call. We under-respond to car crashes, fires, and other high-acuity calls.

The addition of a second station at Wagner Rd near Liberty Road, with its attendant staffing, will allow us to properly respond to more than 95% of our incidents. We will still require mutual aid for around 5% of our calls.

4. *Improvement of Training with the Addition of a Training Officer*

No--Without a training officer we are unable to consistently and regularly train all staff. We lack the ability to bring industry best practices into Scio.

The November 5 Fire Expansion proposal would fund the addition of a training officer, resulting in consistent training among all three shifts, measured improvement in both the quantity and quality of training, and the development of a quality improvement program for all reporting.

5. *Improvement of the Department's Insurance Services Office Score*

No – our current ISO rating reflects the capabilities of the Fire Department at current funding levels. Our ISO rating identified significant gaps in staffing (53% of available points), training (26% of available points), and deployment (14% of available points). Overall, Scio received 54% of available points in the most recent rating.

A second station on Wagner Road near Liberty Road will significantly improve Department ratings in the staffing, training, and deployment analysis, resulting in an improvement in our overall score from a 5 to a 4 or a 3. Additionally, a second station at this location will benefit the properties that are more than 5 road miles from the Zeeb Road station, particularly those in the southeast corner of Scio, by putting them within 5 road miles of a fire station.



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

6. Ability to Achieve Basic Life Support Transport Capability

No – the November 2024 ballot question does not provide for adequate personnel to begin BLS transport. It does offer the space to do so, if Scio wanted to provide that service in the future. This proposal only provides for fire protection from 2 stations, 2 staffed fire response vehicles and an officer in charge (7 per day - 24 total firefighting staff). BLS transport would require an additional 9 personnel (9 per day - 33 total), an expense not within the scope of the current ballot proposal.

7. Ability to Achieve Advanced Life Support Transport Capability

No – see above. Additionally, we would need to attract more paramedics. We would need a minimum of 6 paramedics to adequately staff for ALS transport. This is not a capability planned for in the November 5 Fire Expansion ballot proposal.

How to Best Protect Scio Resident Life and Property

In order to best protect Scio resident life and property, the Township should build, equip, and staff a second fire station on Wagner Road near Liberty Road. With funding from raising the tax assessment from 1.35 to 2.7 mills, the following improvements are achievable: Each frontline vehicle would be equipped not only for fire response, but with BLS equipment and EMT personnel, and be licensed to provide BLS non-transport service. 8 response personnel would be scheduled daily with a 7-person minimum, and 4 staff in administration. This would be an increase of 4 response staff (1 lieutenant and 3 firefighters) 24/7 and 1 administrative staff (1 training officer), Monday through Friday.

With the requested funding in hand, the Department would staff the Zeeb Road station with 4 personnel, an officer-in-charge and a 3-person apparatus, while staffing the Wagner Road station with a 3-person apparatus. That would allow the department to meet 2-in/2-out approximately 60% of the time immediately upon arrival at any incident, with additional resources already on the way from within the community.

Resident Benefits

Placement and staffing of the second station would accrue multiple benefits to the community: First, this would address the 6-minute response time goal in the southeast and east sides of the Township, where current response times average between 10 and 15 minutes (see Service Area Map p 17). This improvement represents a large step toward achieving our response-time goal of 6 minutes 90% of the time averaged across the entire community.



Improvement in response-time averages across the community would likely result in ISO improvements (4/5), particularly under the fire department portion of the assessment, as that component is 50% of the review. Lower ISO ratings may be associated with lower home insurance premiums for affected residents.

When dispatched to higher acuity medical calls (about 5% of our calls), all fires (4%), car accidents and other rescue calls (7.5%), alarms (7.5%), and hazardous conditions (10%), our response would include all



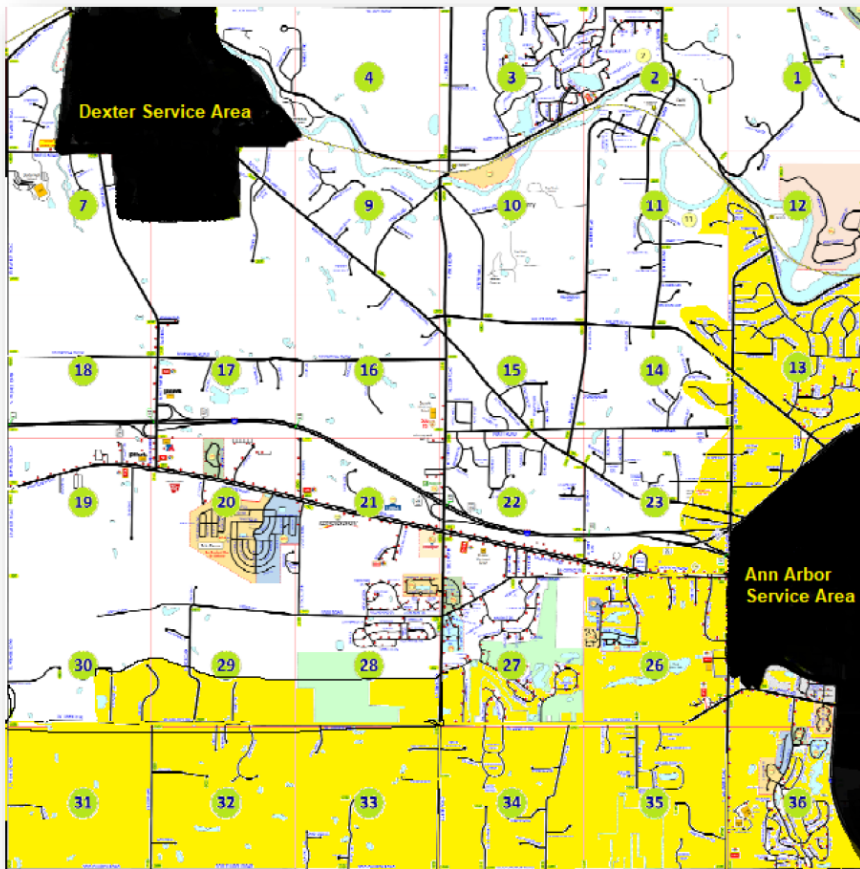
SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

on-duty resources. Most of the time, 7 personnel responding (along with HVA personnel) is adequate to resolve the incident. We would reduce our “inadequate” response level from approximately 30% of calls to around 3% of calls, with that 3% gap being met by mutual aid assistance.

 **Improved Level of Care**

Service Area Map



Stations 1 & 2 Primary Service Areas

White Area:
Zeeb Rd., Station 1

Yellow Area:
Wagner Rd., Proposed Station 2



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

Cost and Scope

Construction of a fire station is subject to many opinions related to both size and scope. When contemplating how much to build, consideration must be given to future growth as well as current conditions. Scio built its first fire station in 1988 without consideration of future population growth. The 2020 renovation addressed many structural issues but was confined to the space limitations of the original build. As a result, the Zeeb Road station was inadequate for the current needs of the Township from Day One. A fire station is a 50-year building and should be designed to accommodate expected growth. We don't know what the Township will look like in 15 years, but we do know we will continue to grow, and the Fire Department will be called upon more frequently in the future than we are today.

Station Lifespan
50 Years

2nd Station Size
15,000 Square Feet
Local Area Average = 16,172

Construction of a 3-bay station with adequate space will meet the needs of today and the needs of tomorrow. However, building a specialized commercial building such as a fire station is not inexpensive. Around 15,000 square feet is the expected size for the needs of this building. Others in the region are building similar-sized stations: Dexter 18,000 square feet, Green Oak 20,200 square feet, Canton Township 13,400 square feet, and Rochester 13,171 square feet.

The plan proposed for the funding request rejected by Township voters in 2023 estimated the costs for construction of the building at around \$10M, with another \$1.4M for net-zero emissions upgrades, and \$2.8M for apparatus (vehicles and equipment), bringing the total project cost to around \$14.5M. **Based on current conditions we anticipate a scaled-back build could lower the cost to around \$11M-\$12M for construction**, and even further if the Township chose to reduce or eliminate net-zero emissions components. However, the upfront savings of eliminating net-zero components is not advisable given the climate emergency and the fact that the pay-back time for net-zero components is only 9-10 years. That means that the remaining 40 years of the life of this building are expected to be energy self-sufficient, or nearly so.

Some construction costs are driven by meeting the requirements of MIOSHA and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards. Separation of "dirty" areas from "clean" ones, point source exhaust capture, and fire suppression systems are all required in a new fire station. We also need to plan for the vehicles that we will likely be operating in the future, which are expected to run on electric engines.

With all these variables taken into consideration, and upon advice from Township contracted finance staff, the Board of Trustees has chosen to present the following funding proposal to voters on the November 5 ballot: 2.7 mills over 12 years. If voters approve this proposal, it will allow the Township to build a second fire station, and staff it with 3 fire fighters daily, accruing the following benefits:

- Improved response times to 40% of our calls (areas bolded in yellow on page 18)
- Improvement in "adequate response" from 70% to 95%+ of our calls
- Improvement of ISO rating (reduction of risk)



SCIO TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

ANDREW HOUDE, FIRE CHIEF
BRANDON SEARS, ASSISTANT CHIEF / FIRE MARSHAL

- Redundancy of equipment
- Meeting state training standards with the addition of a dedicated training officer
- Ability to fund capital equipment replacement at approximately \$100,000 per year

Implementation

The Department has aggressively sought outside funding for these capital improvements. In the State budget beginning Oct 2024, we have lobbied for and received a direct appropriation of \$750,000 towards a ladder truck. We are working towards another \$500,000 grant for the same purpose. We have sought and been rejected for grants through FEMA for both staffing and a ladder truck. We have previously applied for other federal assistance to help offset the cost of building a station and been rejected. We will continue to pursue federal/state funding, however that should not be the basis of planning for emergency services.

Nothing can be done without taxpayer support. The existing funding stream for the Fire Department is inadequate to fund the needed improvements. We continue to search for additional funding sources, but these potential sources will only fund capital improvements, not ongoing operations.

While the voters who turned out for a special election in an off-year turned down the original 2023 proposal, **the needs of the people of Scio Township for adequate fire and emergency medical assistance have not gone away, or even reduced in the interim.** Without additional funding to staff and equip a second fire station, the people and property owners of Scio Township will continue to be under-served. And their risks will grow as the population grows and the number of multi-story buildings increases. We cannot stretch the resources that were adequate to serve a population of 9,000 to meet the needs of a population approaching 20,000.

Ballot Proposal

Fire Protection Millage Proposal

Shall an increase in tax limitation authorized by the Police and Fire Protection Act, (PA 33 of 1951), imposed on all taxable real and tangible personal property in the Township of Scio, County of Washtenaw, Michigan, be enacted in an amount not to exceed 2.70 mills (\$2.70 on each \$1,000.00 of taxable value), for a period of 12 years, beginning in the year 2025 (December tax bill) and ending in the year 2036, inclusive, as a *replacement* of the current millage (1.35 mills) for the purpose of:

- providing funds for the Township's fire, rescue and first responder emergency medical services (non-transp01iing) for expenses including construction and operation of a second fire station;
- for fire fighters and administrative staff adequate to provide service from 2 fire stations;
- for replacement and additional fire apparatus and equipment acquisition for 2 fire stations;
- for improvements, renovations, repair and maintenance of existing facilities and equipment;
- for related program support for the Township's fire and first responder emergency medical services

It is estimated that 2.70 mills would raise approximately \$4,597,351 when first levied in December 2025.