

Wake County Fire Tax District

Recommended Budget FY 2025

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Presentation Topics (People First)

- **Welcome & Accolades**
- **Current Picture**
- **Revaluation for the Fire Tax District**
- **Decision Drivers**
- **ARPA**
- **Operating**
- **Capital**
- **Staff Recommendation**

#TeamWake

Fire Departments

- 17 unique agencies with one common goal

Wake County

- Budget Management
- Human Resources
- Communications
- Information Services
- County Manager's Office
- Board of Commissioners

FSEM Team

- Joe Vindigni
- Bud Davenport
- Chris Hoffman
- Kevin Weitzel
- Brad Pace
- Diana McBride
- Autumn Goheen

Wake County's Population Growth

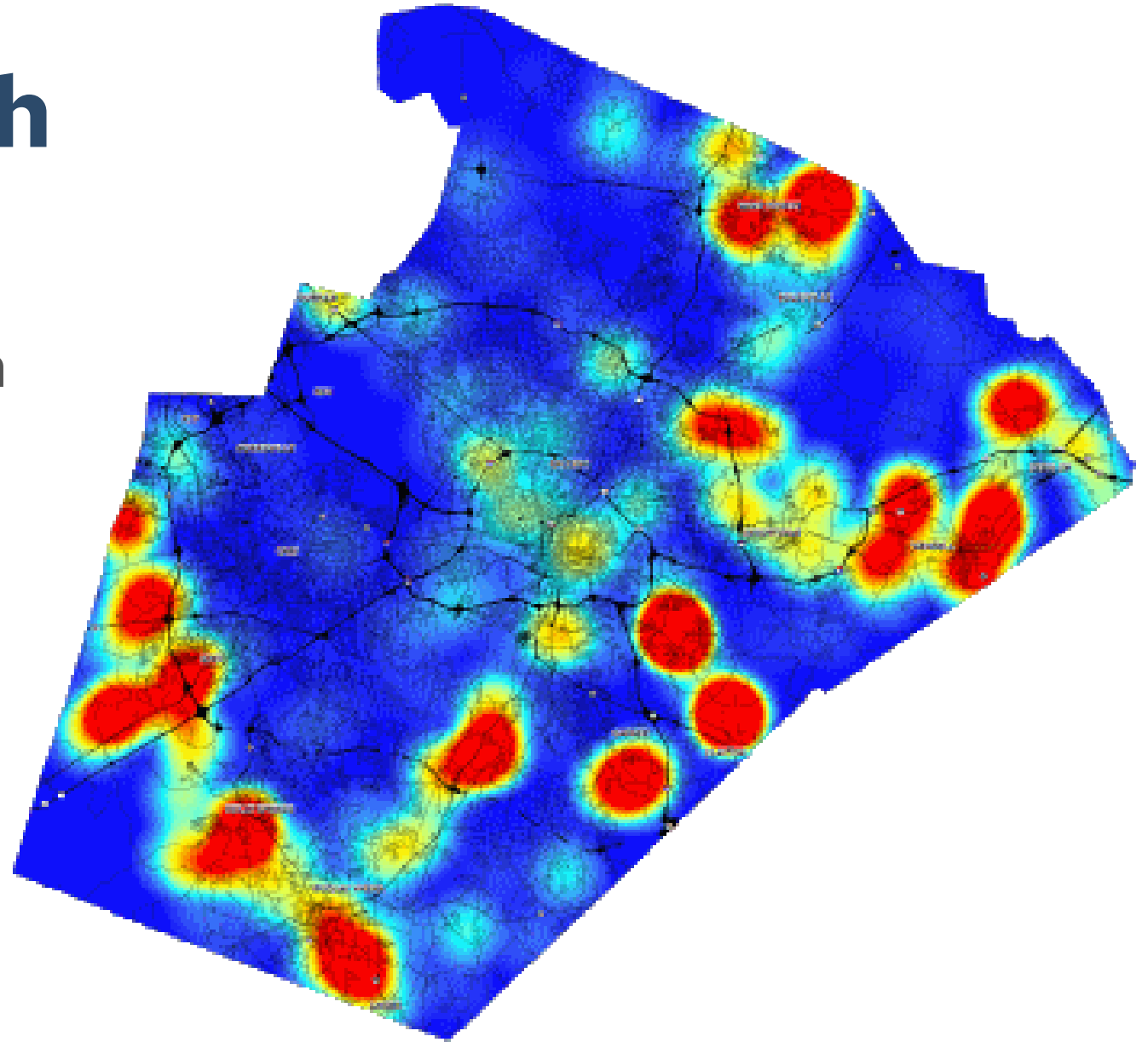
Nearing 1.2M Residents

- 48% of new residents are 55+
- More community events
- Additional vehicle traffic



Population Growth

- Data indicates county growth is shifting.
- There will be future needs to address underdeveloped public safety infrastructure.



New ~~Station~~ Fire House Openings

Morrisville Fire House 3



Knightdale Fire House 4



Apex Fire House 6



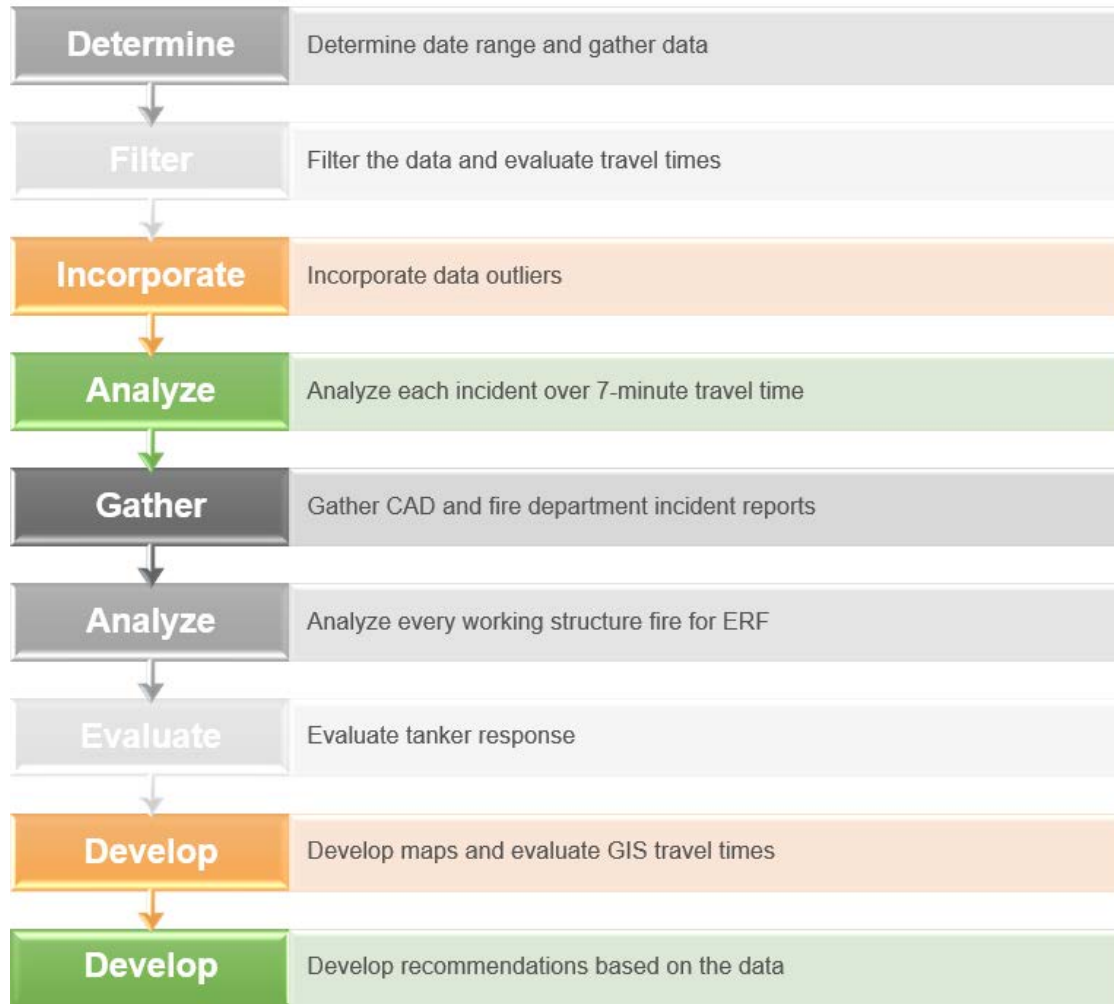
Fuquay-Varina Fire House 4



Call Volumes Have Stabilized

- **49,738 emergency responses in Calendar Year 2023.**
- **700 additional calls above Calendar Year 2022 or a 1.4% increase.**
- **Concurrent calls have decreased and are below numbers from Calendar Year 2022.**

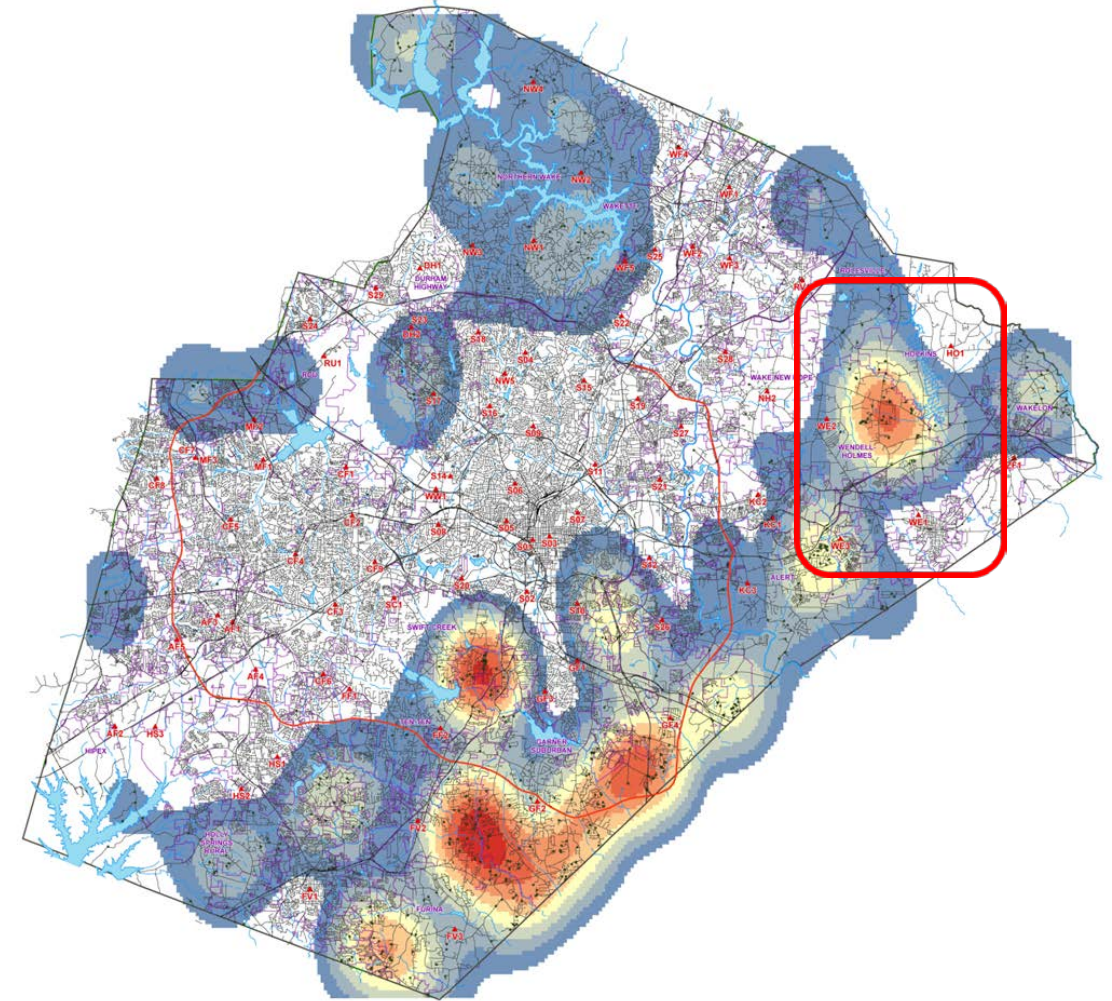
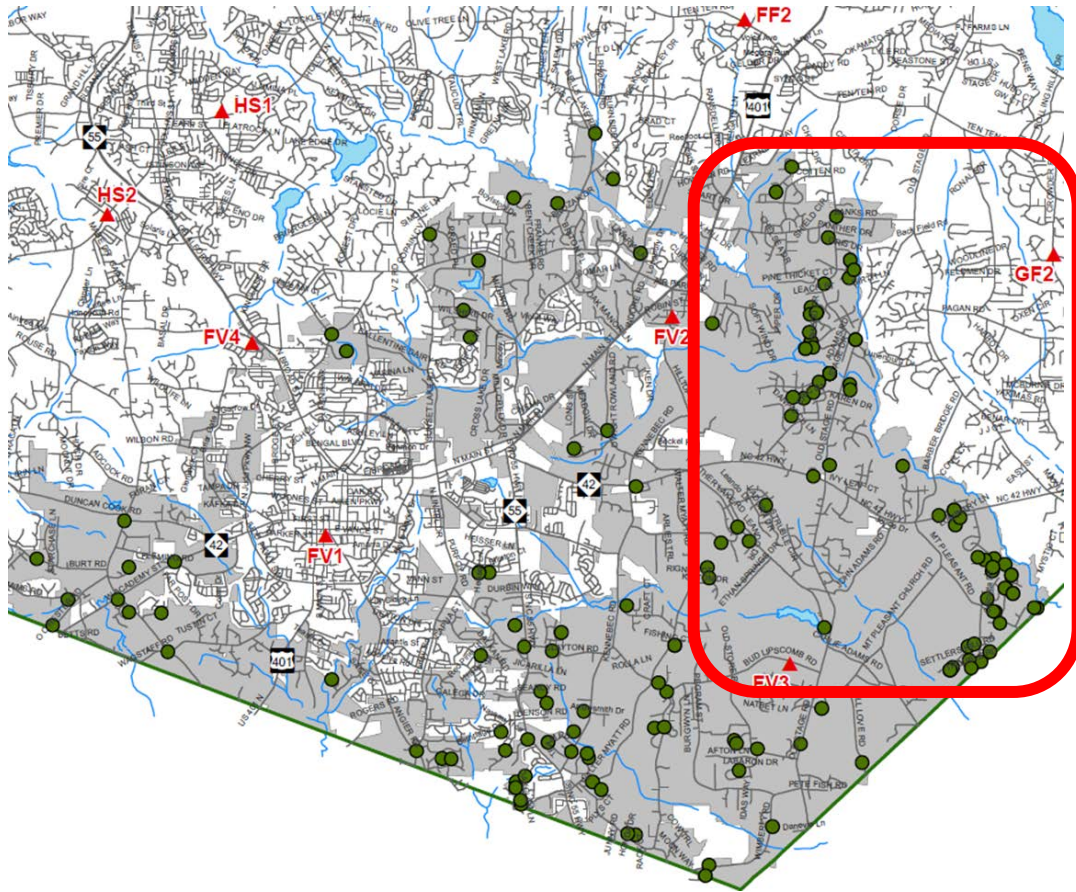
Long Range Plan for Data-Driven Decisions



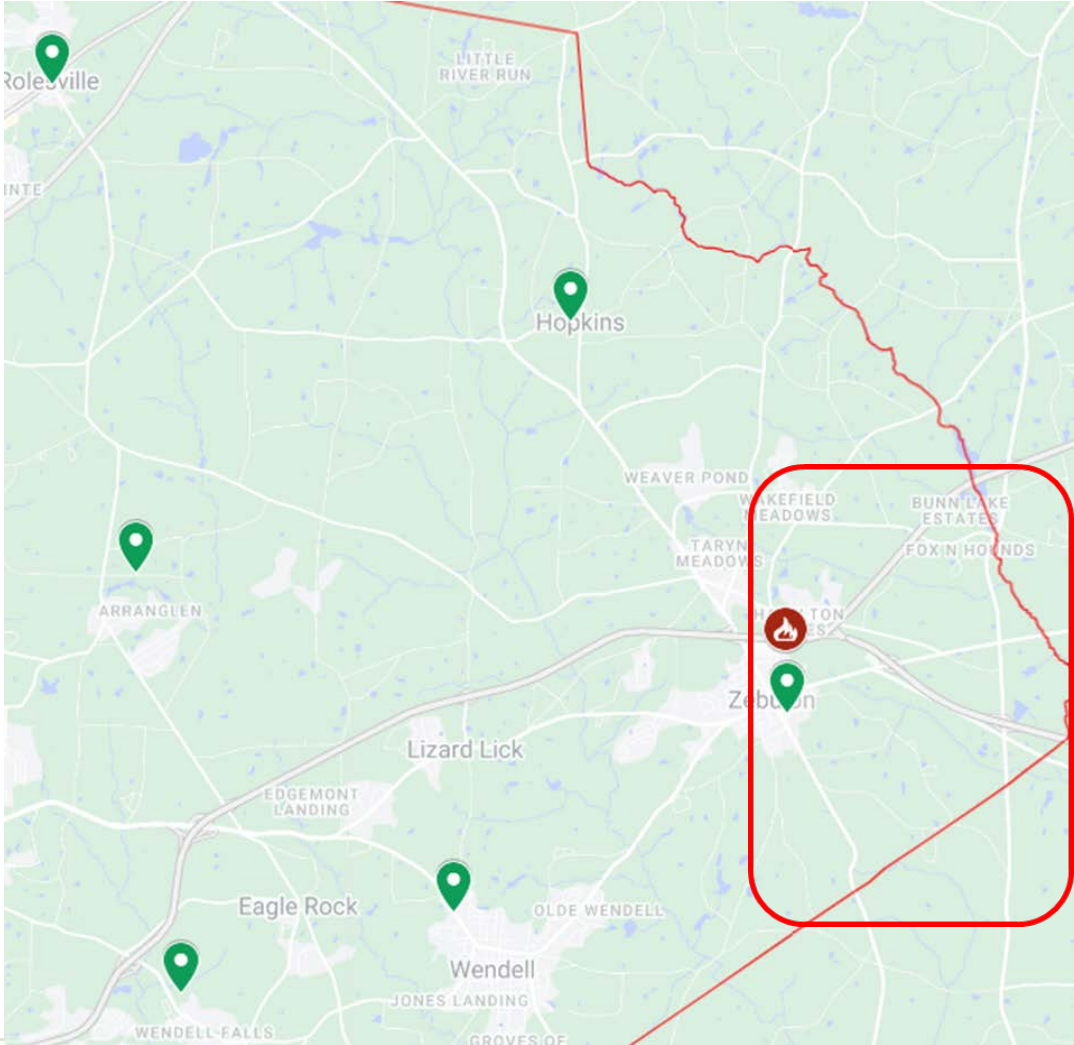
Guidelines and Principles

- 7-minute travel time
- Effective Response Force (ERF) = Assemble 16 firefighters within 12 minutes of the first arriving unit

Areas of Concern – Travel Time



Area of Concern – ERF Arrival



Supply chain has not fully recovered

30+ months delivery



12+ months delivery



4+ months delivery



Although going down, inflation is still real

- **Fire engine cost escalating at 6% per year.**
- **Associated cost for insuring employees, apparatus and buildings rising annually.**
- **Utility costs rising.**
- **Prices for employees on the home front increasing.**

We are the best neighbors

Response to Western NC

Crews from Wake Forest, Morrisville and Wake County Fire and Emergency Management responded to assist departments around Hendersonville with a mountain wildfire.





Wake County Recruit Class 15

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

- **2023 and 2024 Fire Academies (Dec. 2026) = \$6,450,000**
- **Mobile Data Terminals and cradle points = \$1,100,000**
- **800MHZ system software upgrade = \$1,226,000**
- **Retention incentives in 2022 = \$75,000**
- **New fire record management system = \$200,000**

During and prior to FY24 an investment totaling = \$9.05M

FY24 Adopted Budget

- An adopted Fire Tax Budget of \$42M
- Assessed rate of 12.27 cents
- Projected taxing outlook last year at this time

FY 2024 Model	2023 Adopted	2024	2025*	2026	2027	2028	2029*	2030
Total Fire Tax Rate (Cents)	10.27	12.27	12.27	13.72	13.72	14.90	14.90	14.90
Tax Increase		2.00		1.45		1.18		

Effects of Revaluation on the Fire Tax District

Fiscal Year	Tax Rate	Estimated Levy
FY 2024	Adopted Rate: 12.27 Cents	\$42,775,000
FY 2025 Projected	Revenue Neutral Rate: 8.70 Cents	\$44,100,000
Total Change from FY 2024 Adopted		\$1,325,000



Fire Tax District FY25

Cost Share – 3 year rolling average

Department	FY23	FY24	FY25	Change from FY24	3 Year Change
Apex	15.11%	14.89%	14.36%	-.53%	-.75%
Fuquay-Varina	41.45%	39.93%	38.86%	-1.07%	-2.59%
Garner	43.50%	42.65%	41.52%	-1.13%	-1.98%
Holly Springs	19.27%	20.48%	19.52%	-.96%	.25%
Knightdale	50.66%	50.11%	49.26%	-.85%	-1.40%
Morrisville	15.18%	15.10%	14.81%	-0.29%	-.37%
Rolesville	45.66%	44.86%	43.48%	-1.38%	-2.18%
Wake Forest	23.02%	22.62%	21.86%	-.76%	-1.16%
Zebulon	37.80%	36.95%	35.76%	-1.19%	-2.04%

Had the cost share remained the same = additional \$500K cost to County

Decision Drivers (People First)

- Uncontrollable cost increases
- Cancer prevention
- Long range plan/Follow the data
- Phased move to 100% cost share participation with our municipal partners
- Increase staffing levels for not-for-profits to 4 per staffed unit with minimum staffing level at 3
- Pay off county apparatus debt 2016-2020
- Increase and maintain funds for new fire ~~stations~~ houses
- Model Fire Academy funding in FY27



Operating (People First)

- **Fire Department base budget requests were \$1M below target base and \$700K above last year's adopted budgets = \$36.1M**
- **Recommending the following staffing expansions = \$786,774**
 - Staffing expansions for 12 new requested positions (Fairview, Fuquay-Varina, Garner, Hopkins, Rolesville, Wake New Hope and Zebulon)
 - Enhancements in volunteer stipends and promotions for five departments (Northern Wake, Swift Creek, Wendell, Western Wake and Zebulon)



Two-Year Phase to 100% Cost Share on All Municipal Firefighting Staff

- Adherence to Fire Protection Agreement
- 140 firefighting positions that were not County-funded

Department	FY25 Cost Share	Year 1		
		# of Positions	Cost before C/S	Cost after C/S
Apex	14.36%	14	\$1,563,917.04	\$224,578.49
Fuquay-Varina	38.86%	8	\$819,796.90	\$318,573.08
Garner	41.52%	7	\$635,153.28	\$263,715.64
Holly Springs	19.52%	13	\$1,014,370.93	\$198,005.20
Knightdale	49.26%	6	\$557,359.83	\$274,555.45
Morrisville	14.81%	7	\$827,761.37	\$122,591.46
Wake Forest	21.86%	15	\$1,492,967.45	\$326,362.68
		70	\$6,911,326.79	\$1,728,382.00

Not-for-Profit Departments Staffing to 4

Total Positions Needed			
Department	# of Positions Needed	Total Cost	Total Cost with Changes
Durham Highway	3	\$195,246.00	\$140,514.00
Fairview	6	\$431,622.00	\$407,047.00
Northern Wake	9	\$605,349.00	\$573,162.00
Wake New Hope	6	\$447,126.00	\$390,625.00
Wendell	9	\$627,084.00	\$593,476.00
	33	\$2,306,427.00	\$2,104,824.00

Only **11** new FTEs needed due to the last two years of academy over hires.

\$202K in reductions to budgets from overtime, duty crews and part-time.

Fire Academy 16

Fire Academy 16 Numbers		
Durham Highway	2	1 will be an over hire
Fairview	2	2 will be over hires
Hopkins	1	1 will be an over hire
Northern Wake	8	5 will be over hires
Wake New Hope	5	1 will be an over hire
Wendell	4	1 will be an over hire
Zebulon	3	Town Requested Recruitment Effort
TOTAL	25	11 over hires total

All positions from previous slide and this slide will be ARPA-funded through CY 2026. Wake County approved an additional \$2.75M in ARPA funding for the FTEs.

Systemwide Operating Expenses

\$2.7M for FY25 - \$407K 

- RWECC dispatch fees (-\$190K)
- Record management system: \$250K
- Annual medical exams: \$65K
- New overtime/part-time pool: \$100K
- Volunteer duty crew pool: \$81K
- Dual sim card connectivity: \$128K



FY25 Recommended = \$42.39M (People First)

Category	FY25 Recommended
Department Appropriations	\$39.66M
Systemwide Expense	\$2.73M
Total	\$42.39M

Increase of \$4.2M over FY24 (\$3M in staffing dollars)

ARPA funding not counted in these totals = \$2.1M



Capital

Apparatus, Equipment, Technology and Facilities

Everything ties back to providing for people first

Capital Model

- Fire Service Logistics Team has contacted vendors and updated the model based on 2024 actual quotes.



\$2.2M in ARPA Funds for Capital

\$1.3M in Technology



\$800K for SCBA



\$100K for Clean Air



\$1.6M for Equipment Replacements & Enhancements



- \$800K in SCBA purchases via **ARPA** funds
- \$150K SCBA air filling trailer via **ARPA**
- This includes nine new thermal imaging cameras
- 273 sets of PPE (includes maintaining second set for cancer prevention)
- 32 automatic defibrillators
- \$226K in one-time equipment expansions

\$5.25M in Apparatus Funding for FY25

- \$2.2M – Payoff county debt 2015 -2020
- \$1.23M – County debt payments FY25
- \$563K – One-time payment to Zebulon and Knightdale
- \$194K – Annual truck payments to Rolesville and Garner
- \$616K – Annual municipal apparatus contribution
- \$451K – FY25 small vehicles and brush trucks



Facility Repairs = \$1.04M at 13 Fire Houses



- Planned repairs and facility modifications = \$300K
- Last year of repairs based on the 2016 Facility Condition Assessment Study = \$343K
- Contingency funds = \$400K

Aging Fire ~~Stations~~ Houses



Buildings designed and constructed in the 1970s and 1980s for volunteer departments

Inadequate Sleeping Quarters

Sleeping in Storage Rooms



Bed Sharing (Hot Bunking)



Recommending a Cash and Debt Plan for the Future

Station	Original Construction	Construction	CIP Plan	EMS	Fund	Estimated Cost
Hopkins Fire	1977	New Main Station	FY28	Yes	Cash	\$10.75M
Swift Creek	1982	New Substation (Merger Opportunity)		Yes		
Wendell 1	1984	Interior Remodel	FY29-31	No	Cash	\$2M
Wendell 2	1988	New Substation (Wendell North PSC)	FY27	Yes	Cash	\$5M
Fairview 2	1990	Possible New Station (Merger)				
Durham Highway	1991	Remodel	FY29-31	Yes	Cash	\$2.5M
Northern Wake 3	1992	Remodel	FY29-31	Yes	Cash	\$2M
Fairview 1	1995	Possible New Station (Merger)				
Northern Wake 4	1996	Interior Remodel	FY29-31	No	Cash	\$2M
Wake New Hope	1988	No Plans Currently				

Set aside \$22M over the next 4 years within the model to cash fund these projects.

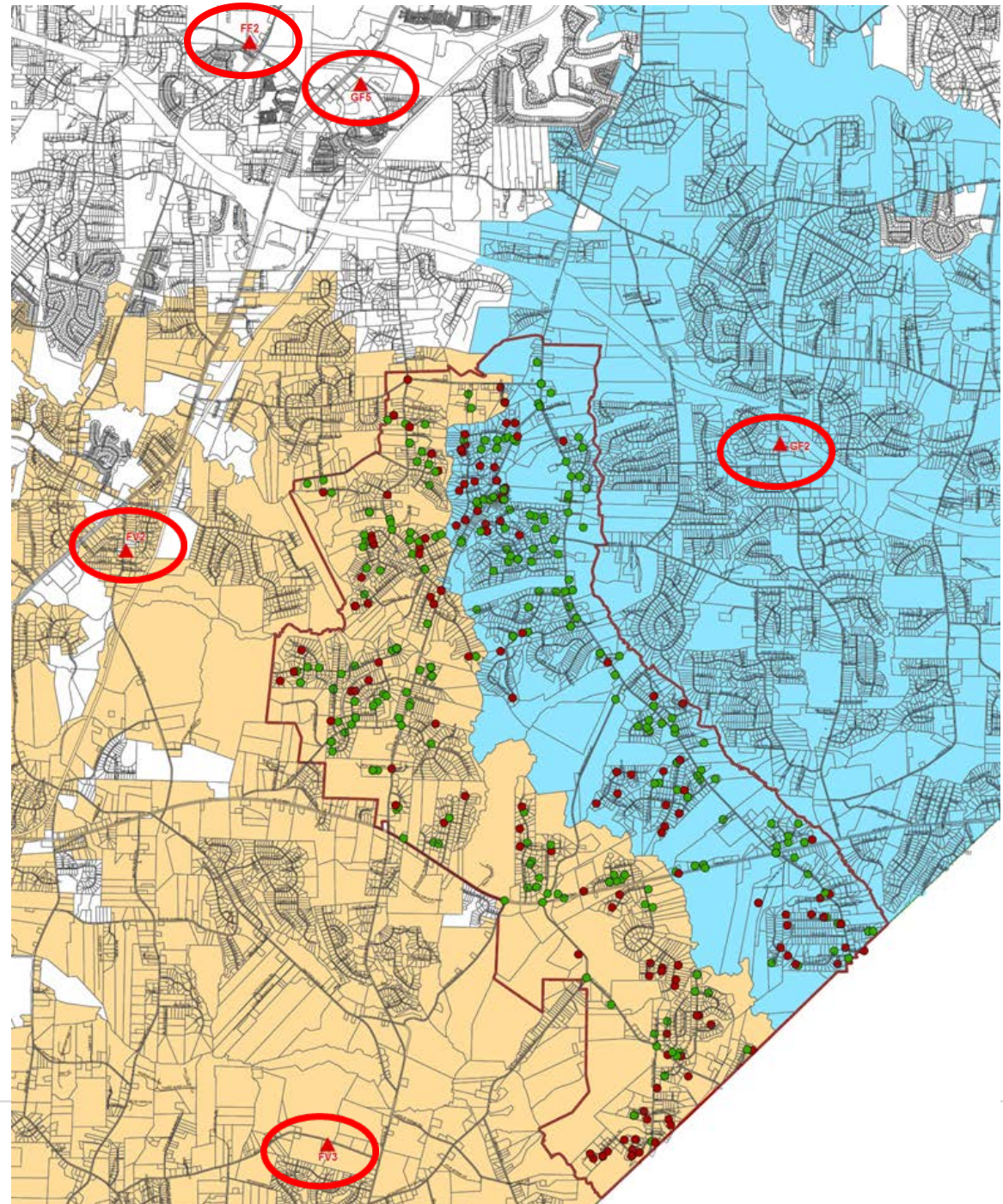
Follow the Data for "New" Fire Houses

- 2023 incident with response time less than 7:00
- 2023 incident with response time greater than 7:00

502 total incidents

197 over the 7:00 target (39.2%)

8:51 90th travel time

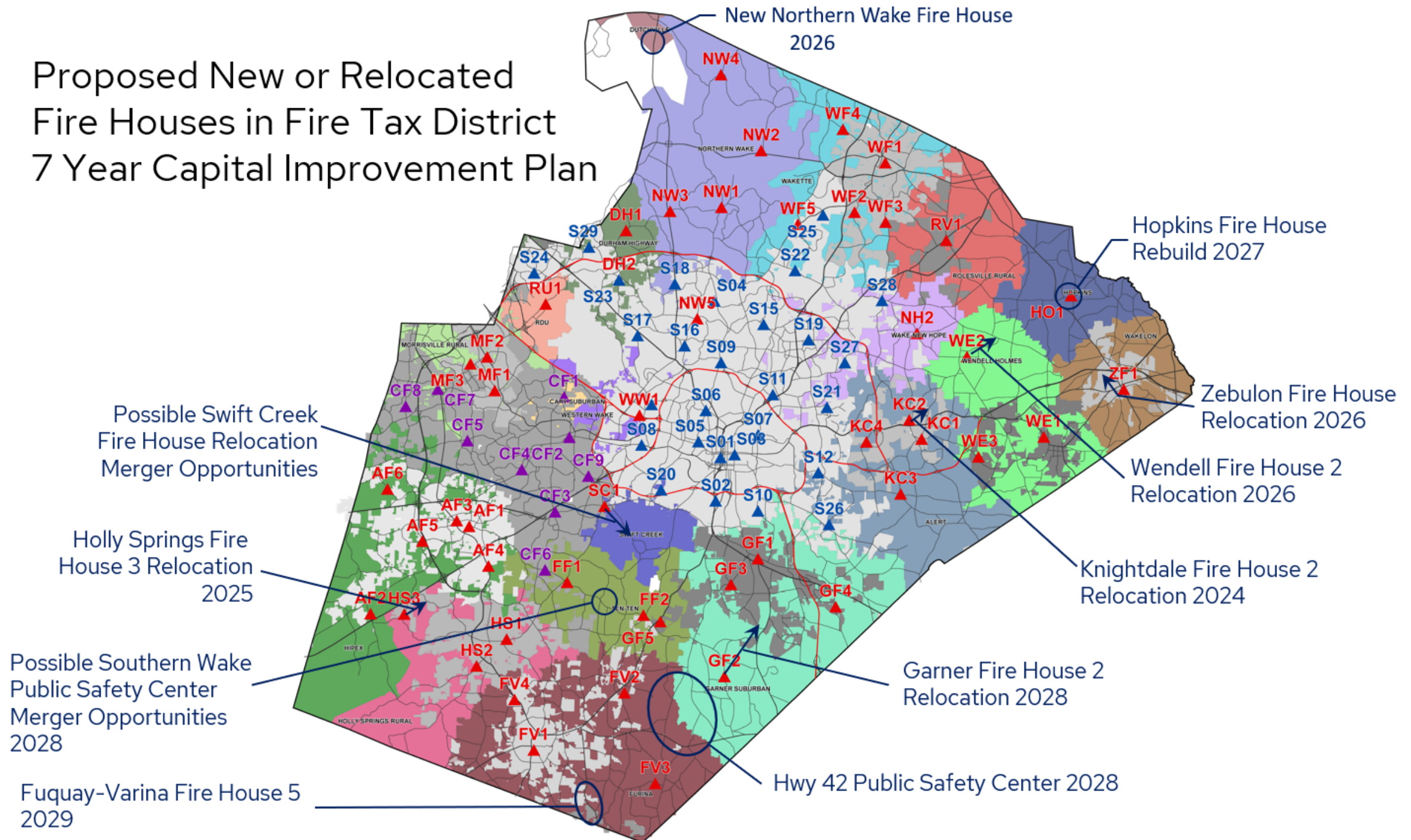


Planning for New Fire Houses

Station	Original Construction	Construction	CIP Plan	EMS	Estimated Cost
Garner Station 2		Possible relocation needed due to 540	FY29-30	Yes	\$9.1M
South Wake Public Safety Center		Merger opportunities	FY28-29	Yes	\$12.75M
Highway 42 Public Safety Center		Long range plan indicated need	FY27-28	Yes	\$8.4M
		Estimated annual debt payment in FY32			\$3.3M

These projects would be debt funded through the Wake County General Fund CIP

Proposed New or Relocated Fire Houses in Fire Tax District 7 Year Capital Improvement Plan



New Northern Wake Fire House
2026

Hopkins Fire House
Rebuild 2027

Zebulon Fire House
Relocation 2026

Wendell Fire House 2
Relocation 2026

Knightdale Fire House 2
Relocation 2024

Garner Fire House 2
Relocation 2028

Hwy 42 Public Safety Center 2028

Possible Swift Creek
Fire House Relocation
Merger Opportunities

Holly Springs Fire
House 3 Relocation
2025

Possible Southern Wake
Public Safety Center
Merger Opportunities
2028

Fuquay-Varina Fire House 5
2029

FY25 Recommended Capital = \$12.7M

Category	Funding
Equipment Replacements & Enhancements	\$1.6M
Apparatus Replacements & Annual Payments	\$5.25M
Facility Repairs and Maintenance	\$1.05M
New Stations & Training Center Annual Payments	\$863K
Annual New Stations Contribution	\$4M
Total	\$12.7M

People First







FY25 Summary

FY25 Recommended Budget = \$55.09M

Category	Funding
Department Appropriations	\$39.66M
Systemwide Expense	\$2.73M
Total	\$42.39M

Category	Funding
Equipment Replacements & Enhancements	\$1.62M
Apparatus Replacements & Annual Payments	\$5.25M
Facility Repairs and Maintenance	\$1.05M
New Stations & Training Center Annual Payments	\$863K
Annual New Stations Contribution (set aside)	\$4M
Total	\$12.7M



Recommended Tax Rate

Staff recommends decreasing the tax rate -1.52 cents for FY25 = 10.75 cents

FY 2025 Model	2024	2025*	2026	2027	2028	2029*	2030	2031
Tax Rate (Cents)	12.27	10.75	12.25	12.25	13.25	13.25	13.50	13.50
Tax Increase	2.00	-1.52	1.50		1.00		.25	

(in cents; asterisks denote revaluation years)

- Model assumes 2.5% revenue growth in years with revaluation and 1% in non-revaluation years.
- Assumes 3.75% expenditure growth in future years, 3-5% growth increases for capital and equipment.
- Includes Capital Reserve for station construction and assumed operational costs of new stations.
- Better than a 16% Fund Balance threshold for Fire Tax District maintained through FY31.
- Shifting tax rate allocation to keep Operating balanced.
- Nearing 15-cent district tax cap in out years.

How does this compare to last year's Predictive Model?

FY 2024 Model	2024	2025*	2026	2027	2028	2029*	2030
Total Fire Tax Rate (Cents)	12.27	12.27	13.72	13.72	14.90	14.90	14.90
Tax Increase	2.00		1.45		1.18		

FY 2025 Model	2025*	2026	2027	2028	2029*	2030	2031
Total Fire Tax Rate (Cents)	10.75	12.25	12.25	13.25	13.25	13.50	13.50
Tax Increase	-1.52	1.50		1.00		.25	

Impact to Homeowners at this rate?

FY 2025 Model	2024	2025*	2026	2027	2028	2029*	2030	2031
Total Fire Tax Rate (Cents)	12.27	10.75	12.25	12.25	13.25	13.25	13.50	13.50
Tax Increase	2.00	-1.52	1.50		1.00		.25	

Median Taxable Value for a home in unincorporated Wake County = \$450,000

Revenue Neutral = 8.7 Cents

8.7 = \$392

10.25 = \$462

10.75 = \$484

12.27 = \$553

FY25 Fire Property Tax Fire Services Staff Recommendation

Fiscal Year	Tax Rate	Estimated Levy
FY 2024	Adopted Rate: 12.27 Cents	\$42,775,000
<i>FY 2025 Projected</i>	<i>Revenue Neutral Rate: 8.70 Cents</i>	<i>\$44,100,000</i>
FY 2025 Recommended	Fire Services Proposed: 10.75 Cents	\$55,427,000
Total Change from FY 2024 Adopted		\$12,652,000

- FY 2024 Assessed Valuation: \$35.15 billion.
- FY 2025 Assessed Valuation: \$51.56 billion or a 40% increase.
- FY 2025 at proposed new tax modeled rate above: \$12,652,000 or 29% increase.
- \$22M cash commitment to new fire stations in the 7-year CIP.
- Nearly \$7M in staffing commitments from FY25-FY27.
- Over \$2M in fire station facility repairs and Fire Training Center upgrades.
- Projected collection percentage: 99.25%.

One Team with One Mission: To Serve the Public



Operating as One

- Service delivery across district lines.
- Data-driven decision making.
- Standards for replacement schedules.
- Pipeline of trained recruits.

Questions?



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