

Wake County Fire Tax District

Recommended Budget FY 2027

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Fire Services & Emergency
Management



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#TeamWake

Fire Departments

- 20 unique agencies protecting Wake County

Wake County

- Board of Commissioners
- County Manager's Office
- Budget & Management
- Communications
- FD&C
- GSA
- Human Resources
- Information Technology

FSEM Team

- Bud Davenport
- Chris Hoffman
- Kevin Weitzel
- Brad Pace
- Diana McBride
- Braxton Tanner
- Josh Creighton

Presentation Topics

- Welcome
- Year In Review
- Directors Message and Decision Drivers
- Operating
- Capital
- Staff Recommendation

Wake County's Growth

Over 1.2M Residents

- Growing at 66 people per day
- Third fastest growing metro area in the nation for people over 65 years of age
- Aging population increases the need for emergency services
- Increasing community events



Increasing Call Volumes

- 55,934 emergency responses in Calendar Year 2025
- 3,406 additional calls above Calendar Year 2024 or a 6.48% increase
- Concurrent calls by departments stayed constant
- Over 34% of the time, departments have concurrent calls



Year in Review – FY26

- Snow and Ice Events
- Zebulon Fire Station 1 Groundbreaking
- Sandy Plains Public Safety Station Groundbreaking
- Swift Creek and Fairview Fire Merger Discussions
- Wendell North Public Safety Station - Land and Design
- Town of Wendell and Fire Department Merger Discussions

Winter Weather 2026



Groundbreaking – Zebulon Fire



Groundbreaking – Sandy Plains





Swift Creek and Fairview Fire Merger Discussions



- Swift Creek and Fairview Fire met with Wake County staff to explore the possibility of a merger
- NC Fire Chief Consulting was hired by both Fairview and Swift Creek fire departments to assist with the merger discussions
- Fairview Fire Department Board voted and approved merger process
- Swift Creek held a public meeting to explain the proposal and hear directly from the community. After hearing the information and having a chance to weigh in, Swift Creek residents voted not to move forward at this time

Station Design – Wendell North Public Safety



Town of Wendell and Wendell Fire Merger Considerations

- Fire Services and Budget staff recommended ✓
- Brief County Manager's Office to seek support ✓
- Meet with Town of Wendell Manager ✓
- Brief Board of Commissioners, members of the Town Council and Fire Department Board ✓
- Fire Commission briefing ✓
- Consulting (NC Fire Chiefs Consulting) will be utilized to assist with this process
- Proposed date of Merger: July 1, 2027

Supply Chain and Inflation

- Rising costs related to insuring employees, apparatus and buildings
- Fire engine cost escalating at 6% per year:
 - Tankers: 12-18-month delivery
 - Engines: 24+ month delivery
 - Ladders/Rescues: 30+ month delivery
- Utility costs rising



American Rescue Plan Act = \$17.3M

- Four years of Fire Academies (Dec. 2026) = \$13.4M
- Mobile Data Terminals and cradle points = \$1.1M
- 800MHZ system software upgrade = \$1.2M
- Retention incentives in 2022 = \$75k
- New fire record management system = \$200k
- New air-paks and new air filling trailer = \$1.3M

Total investment through December 2026 = \$17.3M

Wake County Fire Academy 16 Graduates



Wake County Fire Academy 17



FY26 Adopted Budget

FY2026 Model	FY26	FY27	FY28*	FY29	FY30*	FY31	FY32*
Total Fire Tax Rate (Cents)	12.25	12.25	13.25	13.25	13.50	13.50	13.75
Tax Increase	1.50	-	1.00	-	0.25	-	0.25

- Assessed rate of 12.25 cents
- FY26 Revenue Budget (Fire Tax and Vehicle Tax only): \$63,478,297
- FY26 Anticipated Collection: \$63,974,137



Fire Tax District FY27

FY27 – Decision Drivers

- ARPA funding expiring Dec/2026
- Planning for new stations
- Inflation
- Continue to follow the data
- Employee compensation
- Less revenue growth than years past



Cost Share

Fire Department	FY25	FY26	FY27	Change from FY26	3-year Change
Apex Fire Department	14.36%	13.66%	13.17%	-0.49%	-1.19%
Fuquay-Varina Fire Department	38.86%	38.05%	37.47%	-0.58%	-1.39%
Garner Fire Department	41.52%	40.08%	39.01%	-1.07%	-2.51%
Holly Springs Fire Department	19.52%	17.98%	15.85%	-2.13%	-3.67%
Knightdale Fire Department	49.26%	49.19%	47.88%	-1.31%	-1.38%
Morrisville Fire Department	14.81%	14.19%	13.50%	-0.69%	-1.31%
Rolesville Fire Department	43.48%	42.38%	40.89%	-1.49%	-2.59%
Wake Forest Fire Department	21.86%	21.54%	21.38%	-0.16%	-0.48%
Zebulon Fire Department	35.76%	34.48%	32.78%	-1.70%	-2.98%

Had the cost share remained the same, operating budget alone would be an additional \$705K

Director's Pre-Budget Submittal Message

"Minimal Expansion Requests – Maintain Status Quo"

- **FY26 Expansion Requests = \$1.56M**
 - Recommended funding \$651k
- **FY27 Expansion Requests = \$2.94M**
 - Recommended funding \$1.2M



Operating Budget

FY27 Fire Tax District

ARPA Pickup – FY27 and Onward

Type	FY27	FY28	FY29
Department Staffing	\$2,527,500	\$2,606,000	Included in Department Appropriations
Fire Academy	\$265,000	\$515,450	\$515,914
Total	\$2,792,500	\$3,121,450	\$515,914

- **Salary and Benefits for ARPA Positions past Dec. 31, 2026**
 - 63 total ARPA positions between eight departments
- **Contingency for Future Fire Recruit Academies**
 - Bridge ARPA gap if needed in FY27

Staffing Expansions Recommended = \$673K

- 44 additional positions requested from 10 departments and additional funds for part-time, overtime, and holiday pay
- Recommendation to fund six new positions, part-time, and holiday pay expansions



Additional Operational Recommendations = \$149K

- Miscellaneous items requested by four departments = \$171K
- Recommended to fund all miscellaneous items = \$149K
 - Vision coverage for two departments
 - 3/4 year of operating expenses related to the new Sandy Plains Public Safety Station
 - Computer upgrades
 - HR and Payroll Services



Systemwide Operating Expenses

\$2.77M for FY27

- RWECC dispatch fees: (-\$38K)
- Forestry contract: (-\$27K)
- CAD fire costs: (-\$3K)
- Record management system: \$12K
- 800 MHZ radio system cost: \$10K
- Annual medical exams: \$10K
- HazMat program: \$12K
- Wendell town merger consultant: \$50K



FY27 Operating – Additional Items

- **3% for Merit - \$943,000**
 - Included in the department appropriations
- **Standardized Duty Crew Stipends Countywide - \$225,000**
 - Included in the department appropriations

Operating Summary

- **Department Appropriations = \$46,530,500**
 - Staffing Expansions = \$673,000
 - Misc. Expansions = \$148,800
 - Merit = \$943,000
- **ARPA Pickup = \$2,527,500**
- **Systemwide Expense = \$2,777,000**
- **Fire Academy Costs = \$265,000**
- **Total FY27 Operating Expenses = \$52,100,000**



Capital Budget

Apparatus, Equipment, Technology and Facilities

Capital Budget FY27

Capital Model

- Fire Services Logistics Team has contacted vendors and updated the model based on 2026 actual quotes



Systemwide Enhancements

- Recommending the creation of a \$100k emergency facility fund, similar to the emergency apparatus fund
- Updated costs associated with capital items in the model
- Worked with FD&C and EMS on the new Fire/EMS station model
- Recommending \$75k for Fire Training Center Facility Assessment

FY27 Capital Replacement Schedule

- Sets of PPE including second sets: 357
- Thermal imaging cameras: 11
- Defibrillators: 48
- SCBA: 0
- \$149k in One Time Equipment Expansions
 - \$102k of these requests were related to the Sandy Plains Public Safety Station opening



FY27 Capital Replacement Schedule

Description	FY26	FY27
Full Set Personal Protective Equipment (and 2nd sets)	\$1,033,000	\$1,046,000
Thermal Imaging Cameras	\$10,000	\$29,000
Defibrillators	\$84,000	\$74,000
Small Capital (Annual Allocation)	\$255,000	\$255,000
Small Capital Recommendations	\$199,400	\$149,000
SCBA	-	-
Total	\$1,582,000	\$1,553,000



FY27 Apparatus Replacement Schedule

- Purchased two years of large apparatus in FY26:
 - Three engines
 - Five tankers
 - One ladder
 - Two rescue refurb



Apparatus Funding for FY27

- \$2.3M – County Apparatus debt payments FY27
- \$411K – One-time payment to the Town of Garner
- \$994K – Annual municipal apparatus contribution
- \$413K – FY27 two small vehicles and two brush trucks



Capital Facility Recommendations = \$325k



- Planned repair and facility modifications at six fire stations = \$231K
- Contingency = \$19k
- Fire Training Center Facility Assessment = \$75K

Fire and EMS New Construction Projects

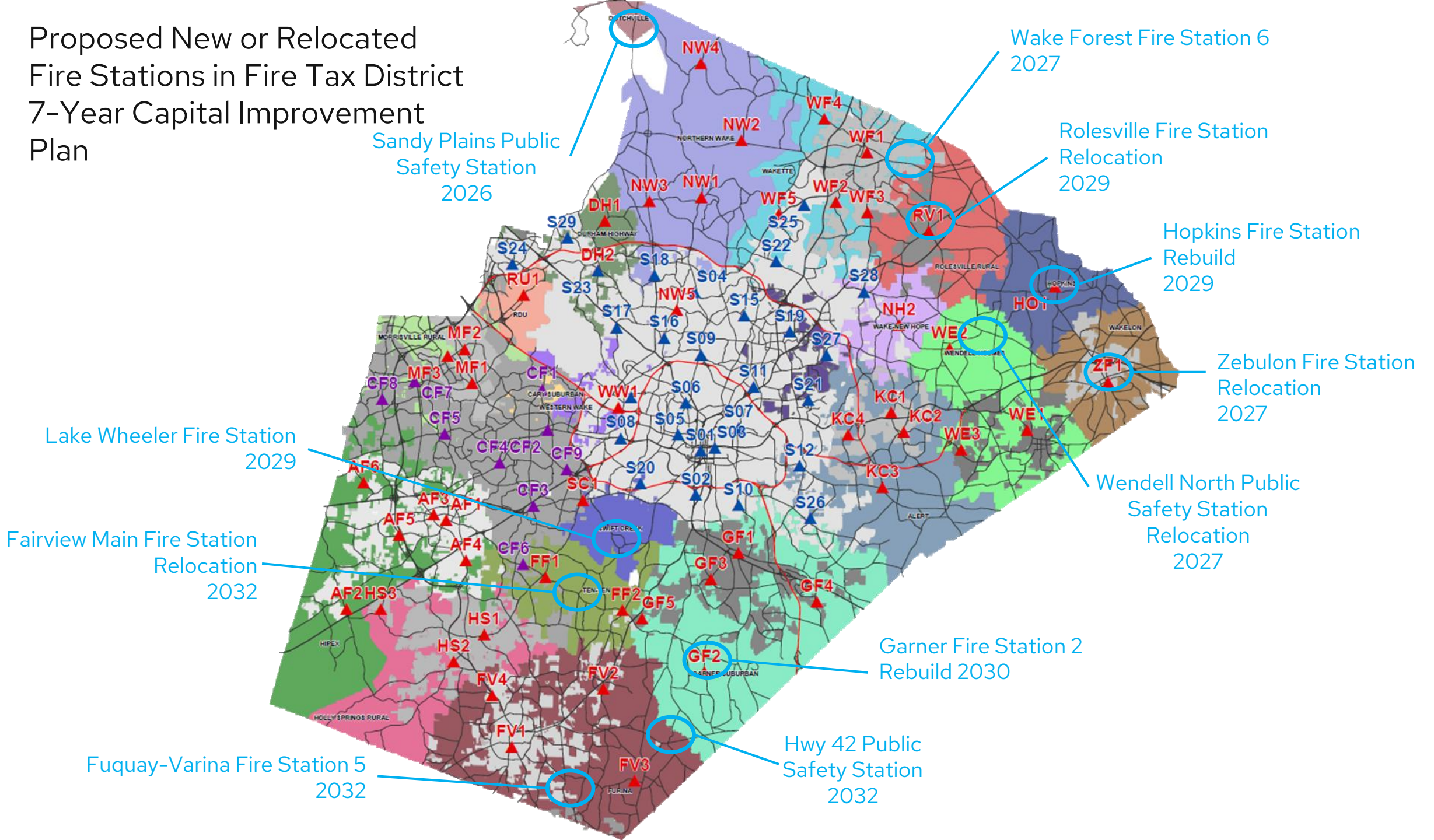
Fire and EMS New Construction Projects

EMS Base Project Name	New Project Name	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32
East Rolesville	Wendell North Public Safety Center - EMS	\$ 8,860,000					
	Wendell North Public Safety Center - Fire	\$ 6,800,000					
Hopkins Fire	Hopkins Fire	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 3,000,000	\$ 10,000,000			
Willow Springs Fire Station	Highway 42 Public Safety Center - EMS			\$ 1,000,000	\$ 2,000,000		
	Highway 42 Public Safety Center - Fire					\$ 9,000,000	
Lake Wheeler Station	Lake Wheeler Station	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 10,000,000			
Garner South	Garner Fire Station 2 - EMS			\$ 700,000	\$ 2,175,000		
	Garner Fire Station 2 - Fire			\$ 1,000,000	\$ 7,625,000		
Fairview Fire Main Station	Fairview Fire Main Station				\$ 1,000,000	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 15,000,000

Fire and EMS New Renovation Projects

	New Project Name	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32
	Northern Wake Fire Station 3 - REMODEL			\$ 2,000,000			
	Northern Wake Fire Station 4 - REMODEL				\$ 2,000,000		
	Durham Highway Fire Station 1 - REMODEL					\$ 2,000,000	
	Wendell Fire Station 1 - REMODEL						\$ 2,000,000

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



Sandy Plains Public Safety Station 2026

Wake Forest Fire Station 6 2027

Rolesville Fire Station Relocation 2029

Hopkins Fire Station Rebuild 2029

Zebulon Fire Station Relocation 2027

Wendell North Public Safety Station Relocation 2027

Garner Fire Station 2 Rebuild 2030

Hwy 42 Public Safety Station 2032

Fuquay-Varina Fire Station 5 2032

Fairview Main Fire Station Relocation 2032

Lake Wheeler Fire Station 2029

FY27 Capital Summary (1/2)

- **Apparatus = \$2,008,000**
 - Includes brush trucks, small vehicles, municipal annual apparatus payments and emergency apparatus repairs
- **Equipment = \$1,789,000**
 - Includes defibrillators, small capital payments, TICs, MDTs and turnout gear

FY27 Capital Summary (2/2)

- **Facilities = \$8,425,000**
 - Includes planned facility repairs and renovations, emergency facility repairs and payments for fire stations (non-profit and municipal payments)
- **FY27 Station Payments (Cash)**
 - Hopkins Fire = \$1,000,000
 - Lake Wheeler Station = \$1,000,000
 - Wendell North Public Safety Station = \$6,800,000
 - Annual Municipal Station Payments = \$500,000
 - Use of Station Reserves = (\$1,300,000)



FY27 Summary

FY27 Operating and Capital Summary

Category	Amount
Department Appropriations (includes planned merit, staffing and misc. expansions)	\$46,530,500
ARPA Pickup	\$2,527,500
Systemwide	\$2,777,000
Fire Academy	\$265,000
Apparatus	\$2,008,000
Equipment	\$1,753,000
Facilities – Cash Payments	\$8,425,000
Debt Service Payments (stations and apparatus)	\$3,639,000
Total	\$67,925,000



Recommended Tax Rate

Staff recommends no change to the tax rate for FY27

Fiscal Years	FY27	FY28*	FY29	FY30*	FY31	FY32*	FY33
FY2027	12.25	13.25	13.25	13.50	13.50	13.75	13.75
Tax Increases	-	1.00	-	0.25	-	0.25	-
Fund Balance	29%	37%	33%	34%	31%	30%	28%

(in cents; asterisks denote revaluation years)

- 1 cent = \$5.29M
- Model assumes 2% revenue growth in years with revaluation and 1% in non-revaluation years.
- Assumes 3.75% expenditure growth in future years, 3-6% 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 FY33.
- Shifting tax rate allocation to keep Operating balanced.
- Safe from the 15 cents tax cap in the out years.

FY26 to FY27 Tax Rate

Fiscal Years	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32	FY33
FY2026	12.25	12.25	13.25	13.25	13.50	13.50	13.75	-
FY2027	-	12.25	13.25	13.25	13.50	13.50	13.75	13.75
Planned Changes		-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Fiscal Years	FY27	FY28*	FY29	FY30*	FY31	FY32*	FY33
FY2027	12.25	13.25	13.25	13.50	13.50	13.75	13.75
Tax Increases	-	1.00	-	0.25	-	0.25	-
Fund Balance	29%	37%	33%	34%	31%	30%	28%

FY27 Fire Property Tax - Fire Services Staff Recommended Summary

Fiscal Year	Tax Rate	Estimated Levy
FY 2026	Adopted Rate: 12.25 cents	\$63M
FY 2027	Recommended: 12.25 cents	\$64.8M
Total Change from FY 2026 Adopted		\$1.8M

- \$34.8M cash commitment to new fire stations in the 7-year CIP
- Projected collection percentage: 99.35%

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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