



VISION PLAN 2025-2030

“Excellence in Service”

WILLIAMSON COUNTY ESD #5

JARRELL, TX

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Message From:

Fire Chief Ron Stewart

May 1, 2024

In 2022, I was entrusted by the Williamson Co. ESD #5 (WCESD5) Board of Directors to serve as their next Fire Chief. In a collaborative fashion, I have served alongside the men and women of this fire service organization through a period of rapid growth already in the first couple of years with much more anticipated.

As a result of the projected growth, a committee of WCESD5 employees was formed in early 2024 to plan a visionary path from fiscal year 2024/2025 through fiscal year 2029/2030. The goal is ultimately to meet the needs of our community using this vision plan as a road map towards that.

It is my distinct privilege to serve with this committee to move WCESD5 into the future and make an already outstanding fire service organization even better.

The members of the vision planning committee would like to thank the members of our Board of Commissioners, our beloved community, and the heart of our organization, our fire fighters, administrative and command staff. We stand committed to accepting the challenge of cultivating these strategic goals into reality, enhancing the services we offer our district, and meeting our future vision.

I invite our community to view our web page at <https://www.wilcoesd5.org/> and our Facebook page under Williamson County ESD 5/ Jarrell Fire Department.



Ron Stewart

Fire Chief, Williamson Co. ESD No.5 (Jarrell Fire Rescue)



Process

A vision plan was developed by the Fire Chief and a collaborative committee from Williamson County Emergency Services District #5, WCESD5 (AKA: Jarrell Fire & Rescue) formed from multiple ranks, shifts and positions within the organization and was comprised of:

Administrative Staff

- Fire Chief Ron Stewart
- Assistant Fire Chief John “JJ” Jernigan
- Operations Captain Matt Whisenant
- Fire Marshal Bobby Belcher
- Administrative / Finance Manager Morgan Coop
- Human Resources Manager Vanessa Tucker

Operations Staff

- Lieutenant Trenton Hernandez (A-Shift)
- Lieutenant Jonathan Nielsen (B-Shift)
- Lieutenant Matthew Truitt (B-Shift)
- Driver Andrew Allison (B-Shift)
- Driver Tyler Lawhorn (C-Shift)

This team met on multiple occasions over several weeks to identify current procedural processes, organizational overview, and consideration of the needs of the organization over a five-year period spanning fiscal year 2024/2025 to fiscal year 2029/2030.

Their findings and assessments are gathered in this document as an ongoing effort to ensure that WCESD5 is fully prepared to serve our community and maintain the highest level of transparency and fiscal responsibility to our citizens.



Williamson County ESD #5 Board of Commissioners

The Board of Commissioners is appointed by the Williamson County Commissioners Court and serves as the policymaking, fiscal oversight, and policy direction body for WCESD #5 that maximizes citizen value of WCESD5 services.

WCESD #5 commissioner meetings are open to the public and held at Fire Station #2 (155 CR 313) every month on the third Monday at 5pm.

The board members are a dedicated and visionary team that includes the following members as of 2024:

President – Barry Cryer

Vice-President – Tommy Sladeczek

Secretary – Bill Lawson

Treasurer – Mike Adams

Asst. Treasurer – Gary Kovar



Mission, Vision, Motto, and Core Values

Mission Statement

“With pride and dedication, we will commit to providing the highest level of service.”

Vision Statement

“In every Action selflessly service our community.”

Motto

“Excellence in Service”

Core Values

D – Dedication

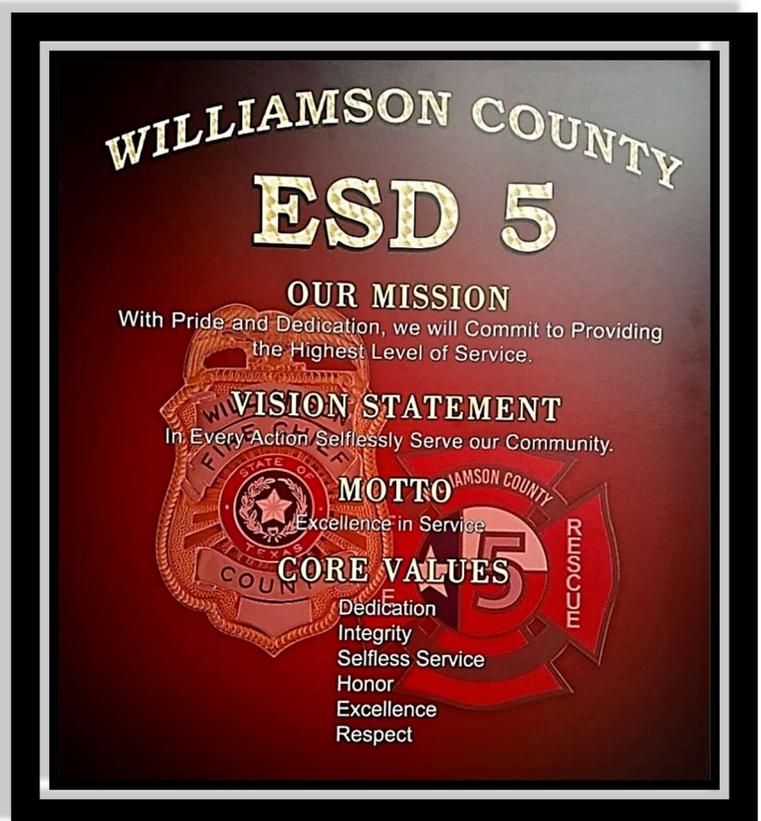
I – Integrity

S – Selfless Service

H – Honor

E – Excellence

R – Respect



What is an Emergency Service District (ESD)

In 2001 the Williamson County Emergency Services District #5 (WCESD5) was approved by area voters to provide the City of Jarrell and surrounding communities a constant revenue stream through taxes for fire personnel, equipment, property, and apparatus. All properties and equipment are owned by the district and staff are employed by WCESD5.

As a governmental entity, the primary source of funds for an ESD is tax revenue. An ESD has two primary methods of securing this revenue, Ad Valorem Taxes (Property) and Sales Tax.

Ad Valorem (Property) Tax – An ESD may impose an ad valorem tax on all real and personal property within the district that is subject to taxation. The current maximum allowable rate of taxation for ESDs across the state is \$0.10/\$100 of valuation according to Chapter 775 of the Texas Health and Safety Code. This is calculated annually by the Williamson County Tax Office. An example of this would that be a property valued at \$100,000 pays \$100 a year to the ESD.

Sales and Use Tax - ESDs are also one of a select group of local political subdivisions that are eligible to levy a local sales and use tax, subject to voter approval. Of that number, 6.25% is reserved and collected by the State of Texas. The remaining 2% sales tax rate is available for ESDs to collect if available.

In 2016 voters within the district approved a 2% sales tax rate for WCESD 5 in areas inside the district but outside the city limits of Jarrell, Texas. As the city of Jarrell annexes into new areas the district and city have entered into a sharing agreement for the allocation that 2% sales tax at a rate equally shared at 1% each.

Consequently, all expenses collectively, (capital, operational, and personnel), must fall at or under these tax caps. The budget only increases when an increase in the property valuation and/or increase in local sales collection occurs. Were property valuation and sales tax to decrease, the budget likewise would also decrease.



WCESD5 continues to explore all options to increase staffing and available equipment to serve our rapidly growing community. Currently WCESD5 has an interlocal agreement with Williamson County EMS in which the county funds a small stipend for ambulance service into county areas. This stipend in the past has been in the amount of approximately \$20,000 per year. A Williamson Co. EMS ambulance is assigned to WCESD5 district and responds out of WCESD5 fire station #2 twenty four hours a day.

WCESD5 consistently pursues grant opportunities to increase services to our district. WCESD5 also collects additional revenue through our plans review and some of the fire code inspections services.

WCESD5 is responsible for all Maintenance & Operations, Interest & Sinking expenses, and the management of all revenues. This includes attending the county Appraisal District meetings, filling out all of the *Truth-N-Taxation* forms, establishing the tax rate calendar, proposing the tax rate, conducting tax rate hearings, setting the tax rate, and voting on the tax rate. Once the revenues are determined, expenditures are established.



Organizational Background

WCESD #5 is a fully paid emergency service district that provides fire, EMS, rescue, fire prevention, code enforcement and education services to our 75 square mile district located in northern Williamson County. WCESD5 currently employs a total of 31 full-time career personnel with an additional five retained as part-time firefighters to ensure proper staffing.

OPERATIONS STAFFING 2023/2024

WCESD #5 currently has 25 fire fighters assigned to fire operations. They staff the two fire stations with eight personnel (2023/2024) with one shift having an over hire and so staffed with nine personnel. The upcoming 2024/2025 budget projects taking all three shifts to a staffing of nine, each on a 48/96 hour rotating schedule.

A Shift	B Shift	C Shift
(2) Lieutenants	(2) Lieutenants	(2) Lieutenants
(2) Engineers	(2) Engineers	(2) Engineers
(4) Firefighters	(5) Firefighters	(4) Firefighters
Minimum Staffing: 7 Per Shift (1 Scheduled & 1 Unscheduled Off)		

ADMINISTRATION STAFFING 2023/2024

Fire administration employees work a traditional 8-hour day and include:

Command Staff	Support Staff
(1) Fire Chief	(1) Administrative / Finance Manager
(1) Assistant Fire Chief	(1) Human Resources Manager
(1) Operations Captain	(1) Fire Marshal



PROJECTED OPERATIONS STAFFING 2024/2025

The upcoming FY2024/2025 budget projects hiring two more firefighters taking all three shifts to a staffing of nine, each on a 48/96 hour rotating schedule. Also projected in FY2024/2025 budget is to turn one Lieutenant position into a Captain position on each shift and turn three firefighter positions into driver positions.

A Shift	B Shift	C Shift
(1) Captain	(1) Captain	(1) Captain
(1) Lieutenant	(1) Lieutenant	(1) Lieutenant
(3) Engineers	(3) Engineers	(3) Engineers
(4) Firefighters	(5) Firefighters	(4) Firefighters
Minimum Staffing: 7 Per Shift (1 Scheduled & 1 Unscheduled Off)		

PROJECTED ADMINISTRATION STAFFING 2024/2025

Fire administration employees work a traditional 8-hour day on a 9-day pay period with every other Friday off.

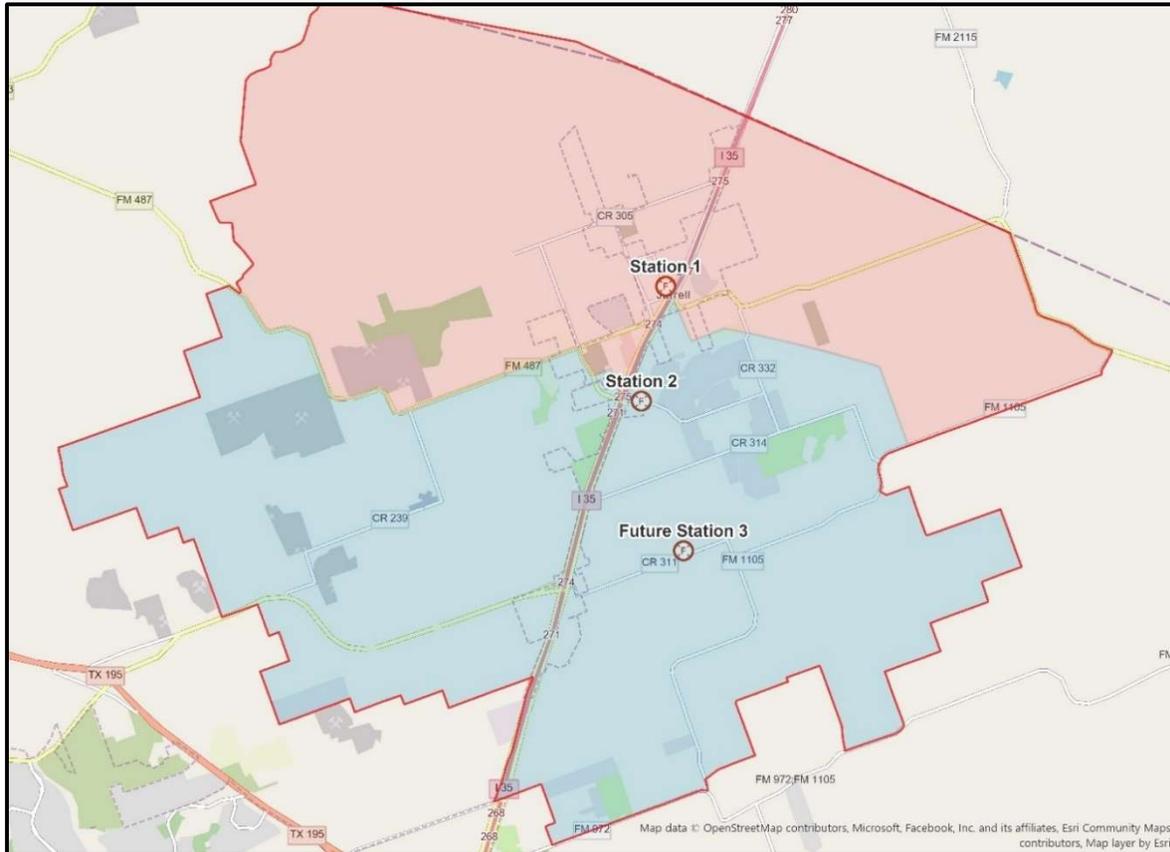
Command Staff	Support Staff
(1) Fire Chief	(1) Training Captain
(1) Assistant Fire Chief	(1) Administrative / Finance Manager
(1) Division Chief	(1) Human Resources Manager
	(1) Fire Marshal

*** NOTE: Williamson County ESD #5 has applied for SAFER grant funds to add nine additional firefighters to operations. If awarded, this would add three firefighters to each shift and cover the expense of their salaries and benefits for a period of three years. This grant cannot be counted on until the results are announced, and that is expected to occur by September 2024. If awarded, these nine firefighters would be hired in the 2024/25 budget year. ***



Service Area (“District”)

Fire departments are assigned geographic areas where they are the primary emergency provider which are called a “district.” The primary service area for Williamson County ESD #5 covers 75 square miles and is depicted in the district map below with the red indicating firehouse #1 coverage area and blue representing firehouse #2 coverage area.



District Demographics

Population

WCESD5' s district has undergone a transformation over the past decade from a rural area, with approximately 6000 total residents, to one of Texas' fastest growing areas. WCESD5 protects a growing population of approximately 26,000+ residents currently with growth projected into six figures in the next 5-10 years.

Structures

Some of the district is in the wildland-urban interface (WUI) which places challenges of wildland fires butting against developed areas and threatening improved properties and assets such as homes and/or businesses. These structures can range from 1-and 2-family single story dwellings, to 1-and 2-family or multiple-family dwellings and/or commercial business that are 2 or more stories in height.

Residential Growth

There is expectation for a rapid growth of commercial, multi-family permanent and transient units planned such as anchor stores, apartments, and hotels. There are projections of up to 30,000 newly added living unit equivalents (LUEs) planned in the next 5-10 years within our 75 square mile district that could result in a population growth of as much as 50,000-100,000 new residents in addition to the 26,000 currently residing in the district.

Commercial Growth

With this growth has come an increase in the residential, commercial, and industrial construction, both in the city and the county areas. The district has already witnessed several new retail stores and businesses arrive within the last few years including restaurants, a car wash, grocery, auto supply, service, medical and dental practices, and fitness facilities with potential for much more coming soon.

Critical Infrastructures

WCESD5 protects critical infrastructures consisting of highways, electrical power transmission lines, and public buildings. Our 13-mile stretch of IH- 35, a major route for commerce including hazardous materials shipments, sees an estimated 85,000 vehicles daily and historically represents up to 24% of our total call volume. A major crude oil pipeline bisects the district, and we are additionally a location for telecommunication sites, six public schools, pump houses, water sources and local government facilities.



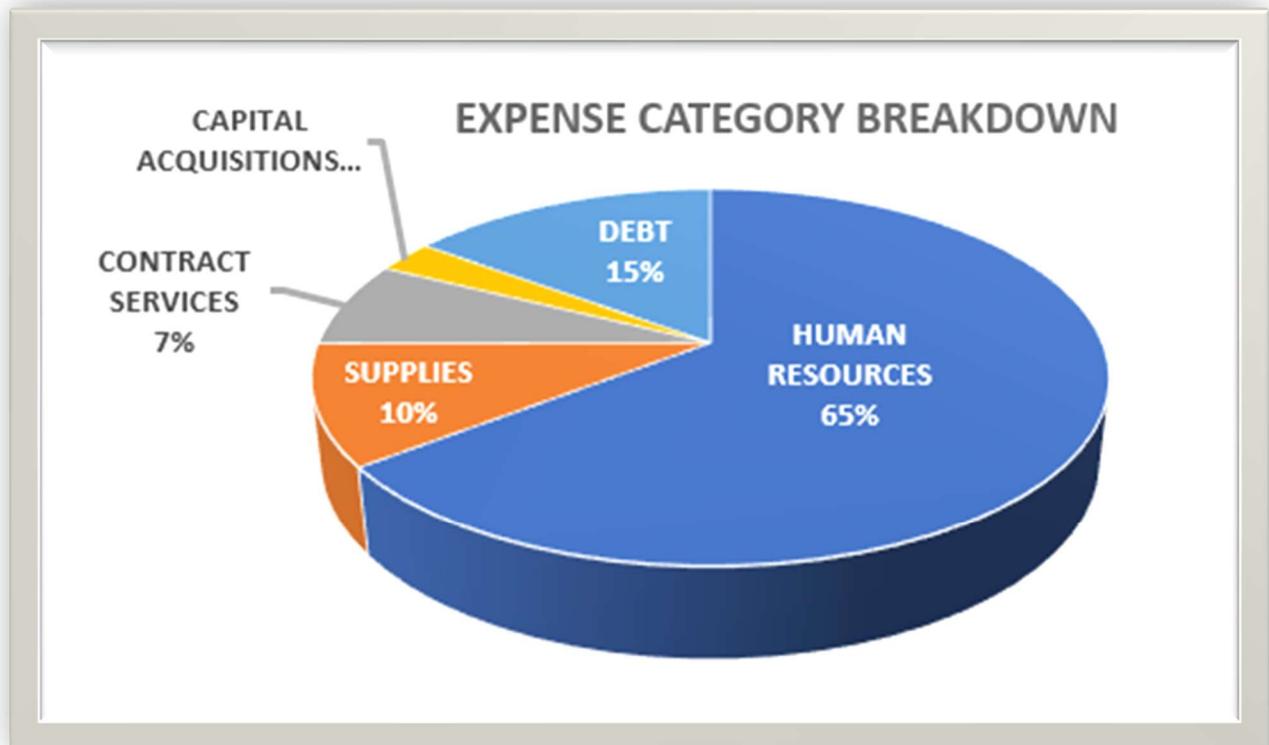
Budget

One of the primary tasks of the administrative team at Williamson County ESD #5 is to develop and maintain a working budget from revenues generated for operation. This revenue comes in the form of local sales tax of which, 2 cents per dollar goes to WCESD5 and property tax of which, no more than .10 cents per \$100 valuation (as determined by the Williamson County Tax Appraisal District).

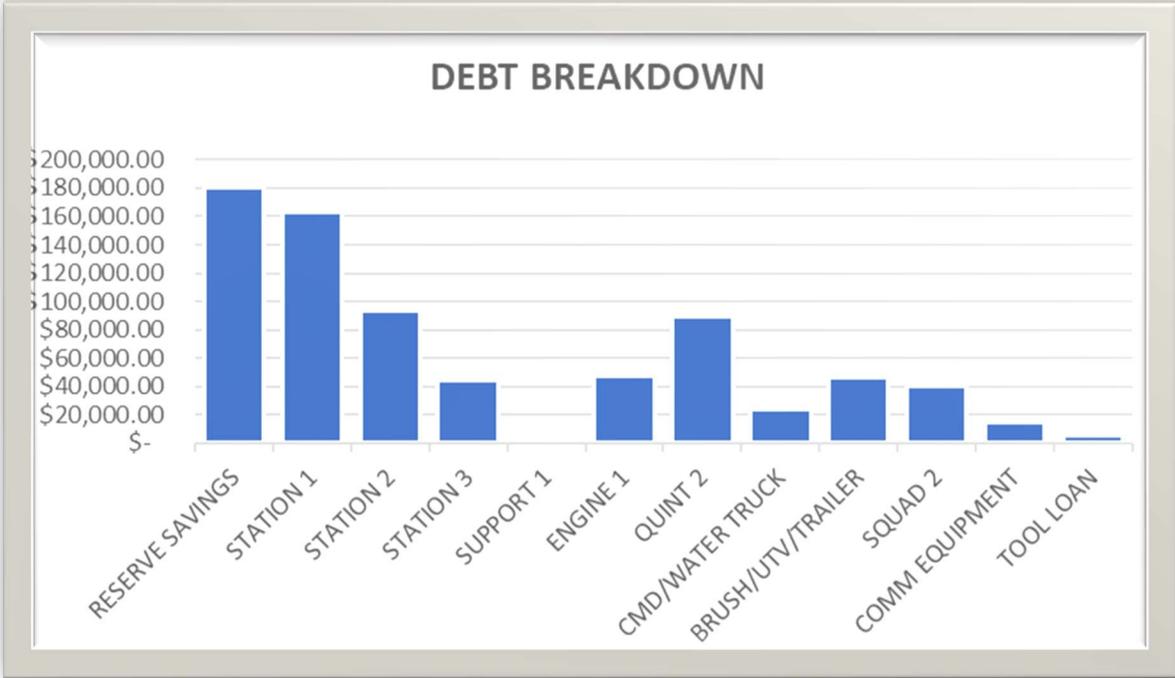
The budget is not unlike any home budget accounting for things such as mortgage payment of home and vehicles (known as interest and sinking funds, I&S) and things such as vehicle and building maintenance, insurance, contracted work, investing, utilities, salaries, benefits and outfitting of our personnel. These funds are known as maintenance and operations or M&O.

Unique to our budget versus your own home budget is the salaries and benefits portion which accounts for 65% of our total budget. The remaining 35% is directed to debt, capital acquisitions, contract services and supplies.

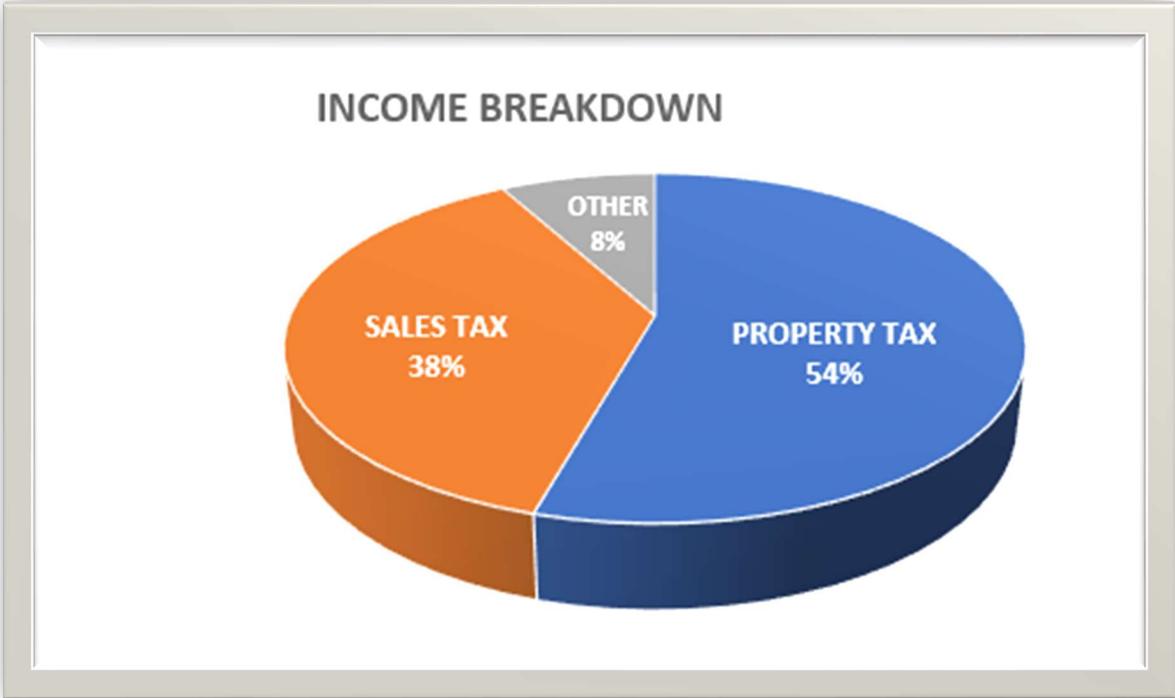
Breakdown Of Expense by Category FY 23/24



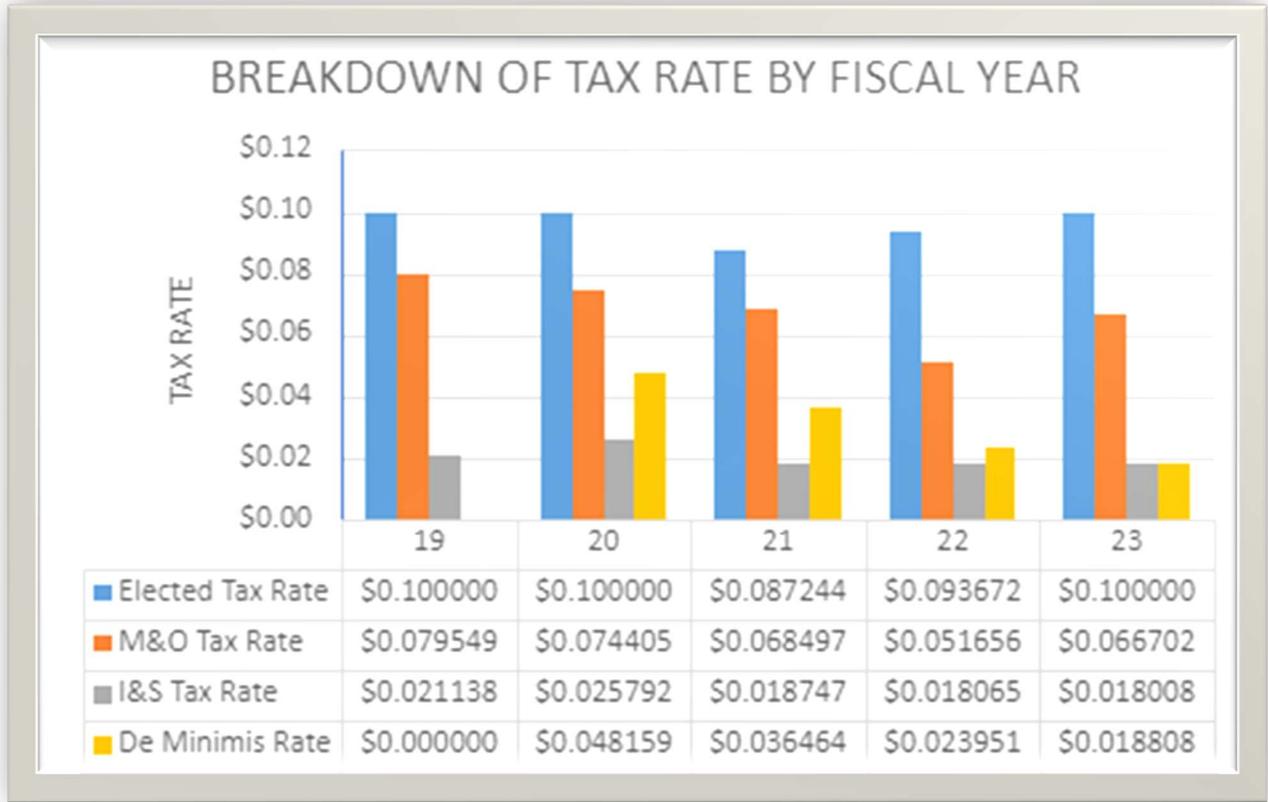
Breakdown Of Debt by Account FY 23/24



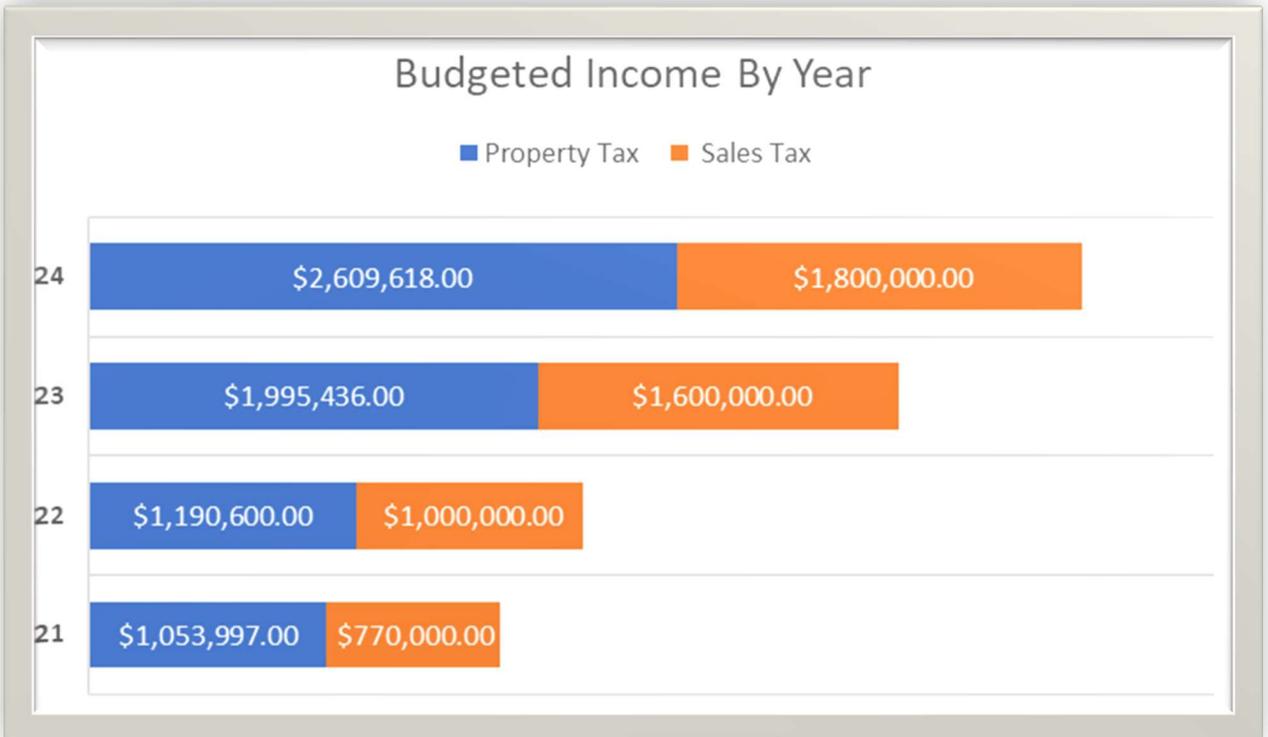
Breakdown Of Income by Source FY 23/24



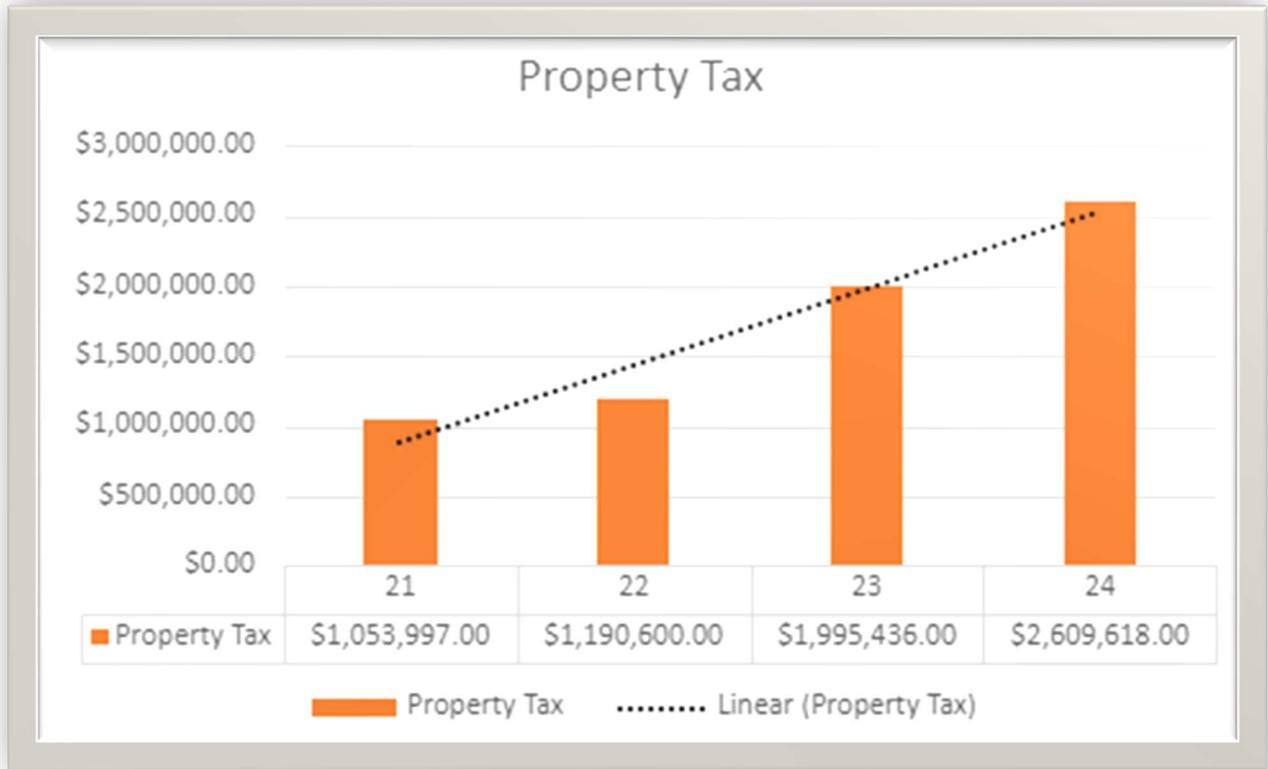
Breakdown Of Tax Rate by Type FY 23/24



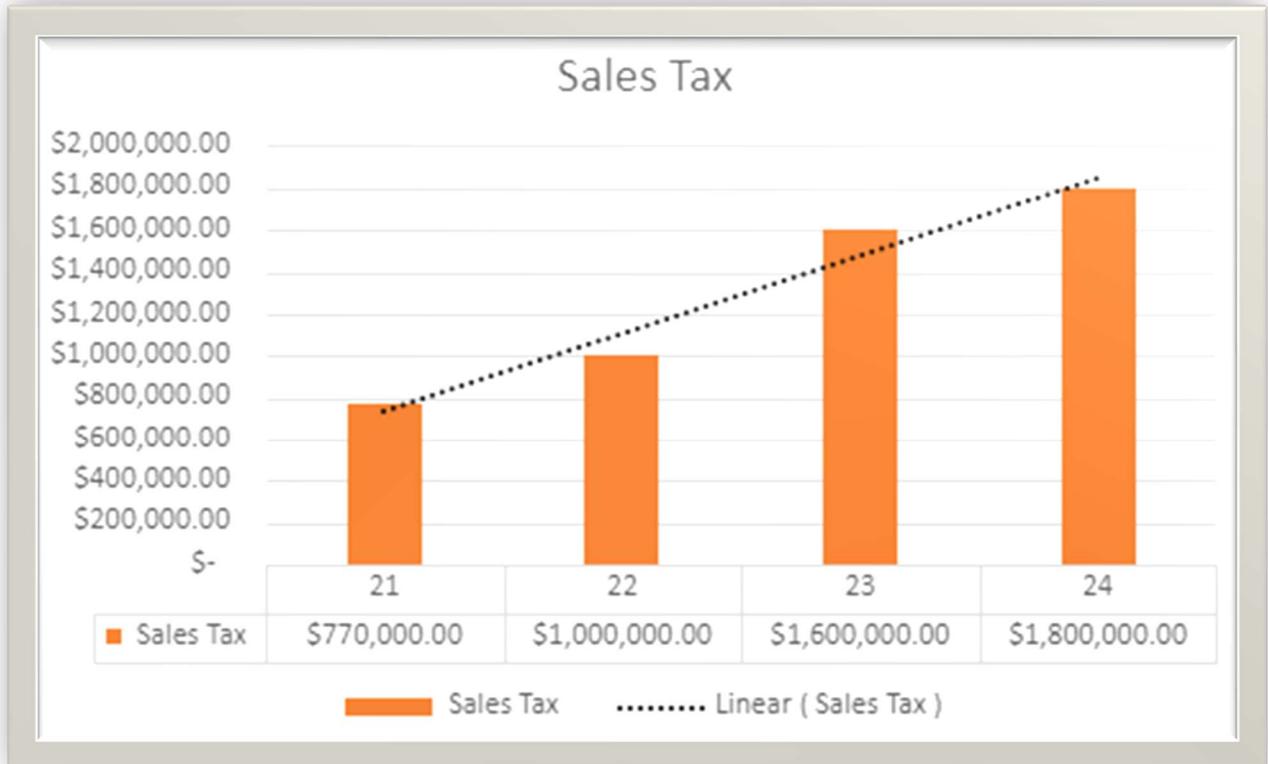
Breakdown Of Income by Fiscal Year



Breakdown Of Property Tax Levy by Fiscal Year



Breakdown Of Sales Tax Income by Fiscal Year



Forecasting Revenues

While WCESD5 has seen substantial growth in revenues over the past five years, it has not met the growing needs (because of call volume increase both realized and projected) required to maintain response expectations to hire personnel, purchase needed equipment, and build stations to plan for the continued projections of rapid growth. For this reason, we are pursuing multiple grants to help supplement revenue including both AFG and SAFER.

One of the difficulties in planning, predicting, and proposing a future budget for any ESD is the lag between the arrival of business growth and the monies available to purchase needed equipment and supplies which are collected from our modest property tax revenue.

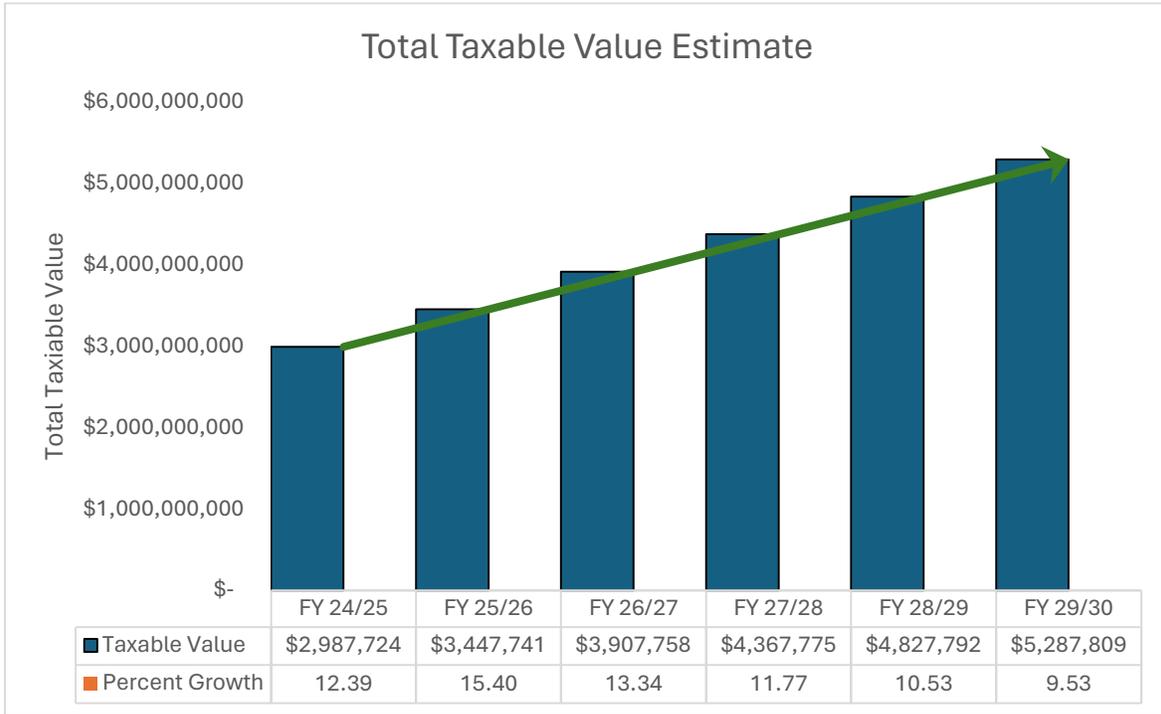
WCESD5 protects any properties from the day that construction begins with the same number of personnel and equipment. These new expenses must be absorbed into the current year's budget. It takes Williamson County Tax Office up to 24 months from a building's completion to appraise, collect, and distribute tax dollars. During this time, WCESD5 is not able to receive the added tax revenue, yet still responds to the newly expanded areas which places budgetary constraints until the tax revenue disbursement begins.

This is an element of the fiduciary and moral responsibility that we are happy to take on in service to our community, and that we accept wholeheartedly. It can, however, make prediction of future revenues versus additional properties a challenge as we grow and so we include this element of budgeting for full disclosure.

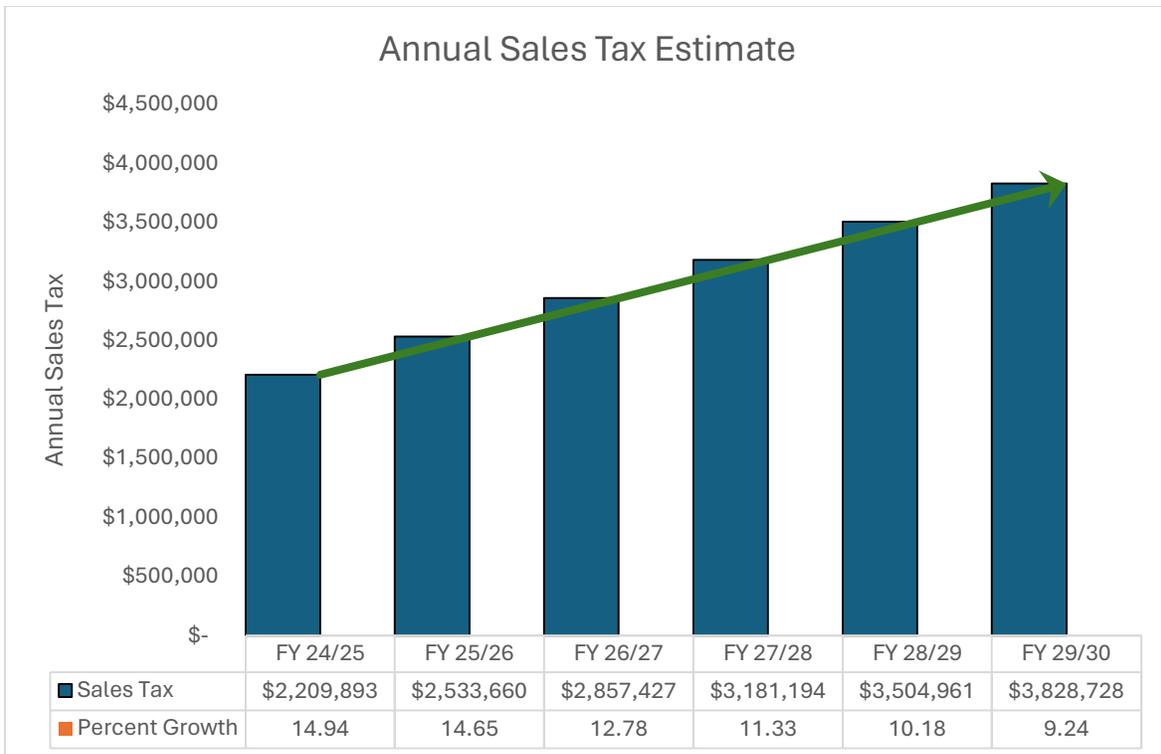
The following charts are examples of our forecasting of total taxable value and sales tax. Each forecast is derived from WCESD5 historical totals which produce a potential linear growth model. WCESD5 utilizes a linear approach as opposed to an exponential model to remain conservative as part of our ongoing fiduciary responsibility focus for the revenue trusted to us by our citizens. Linear growth models provide a clear and transparent basis for budgeting decisions and financial planning in taxing jurisdictions. By using a linear growth approach, policymakers can more easily explain the rationale behind their projections and justify budget allocations to stakeholders and the public.



Total Taxable Value Estimates by Fiscal Year



Annual Sales Tax Estimates by Fiscal Year



Department Achievements 2021 – 2024

Equipment, Stations, and Apparatus

- Purchased new technical rescue equipment to assist with technical rescues.
- Retrofitted an existing brush truck with a new tank, pump, CAFs system and storage. (2021)
- Purchased the organization’s first aerial ladder, a 2014 Pierce Quint from Jollyville FD, (2022)
- Constructed and occupied a second fire station located at 212 N. 5th to complement the existing station located at 155 CR 313. (2022)
- Purchased a used construction water truck to aid firefighters in wildland response. (2023)
- Relegated Support 2 vehicle to reserve and replaced with a 2023 command vehicle for Captain 2. (2023)
- Purchased a type 6 brush truck. (2024)
- Purchased a Wildland UTV and trailer to transport that can serve as a command post and/or rehab. (2024)
- Purchased a state-of-the-art drone and implemented a drone program to aid in the tactical decision-making of large events such as wildland fires, structure fires and/or technical rescue emergencies. This has already been proven to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and reduce scene times.
- Purchased land with existing structures that will require renovation for the purpose of serving as fire station #3 (2024)

Personnel, Benefits and Salary

- Added a second Administrative Captain position. (2022)
- Added a Human Resource Manager (2022)
- Hired nine additional operations personnel. (2022-2025)
- Increase salaries by an average of 5% per year via COLAs to maintain competitive with surrounding departments. (2022-2024)
- Increased salaries an average of 4% per year in the form of scheduled step raises to maintain competitive with surrounding departments (2021-2024)



- Increased benefits including addition of a Health Savings Account (HSA) to maintain competitive with surrounding departments (\$1677 per year)
- Implemented an employee certification incentive program of up to \$250 per month to maintain competitive with surrounding departments (2023)
- Added a \$4 per month per year longevity incentive in an effort to retain firefighters. (2022)
- Placed administrative assistant positions (HR Manager and Office Manager) on the same pay scale as firefighters and included them in incentive pay program.

Vision Plan – Yearly, monitor during the budget process the salaries and benefits of surrounding fire service organizations to ensure WCESD5 remains competitive to reward our employees and encourage them to remain with us their entire career.

Training – In Service

- Appointed Training Captain to the job duty of the Administrative Captain who develops the training calendar and oversees the scheduled and company level training of firefighters. (2022)
- Expanded outside training to various locations including more conferences, seminars, outside training classes, TEEK and opportunities that present themselves through the year as education and networking opportunities.
- Yearly scheduled live fire training conducted at Georgetown FD training facility at 3500 DB Wood at Georgetown FD Station #5.
- NWCG task books for wildland fire fighting are in place.
 - *The goal is to have all members obtain the national certified wildland fire fighter level of FF1/ICT5.*
- WCESD5 firefighters are proactive in their training and education. Crews are expected to advance and enhance their knowledge through ongoing continuing education and ongoing daily training both formal and informal.
- WCESD5 crews take advantage of county level training with monthly technical rescue team (TRT) training hosted on a rotational basis by a fire department in Williamson County.



- EMS training continues to be a hybrid of hands on and online by Career Cert overseen by the Training Captain and conducted by one of our staffed driver /paramedics. This will give the necessary training on duty for members to maintain their EMT certification.

Vision Plan - Evaluate the ability in FY 24/25 budget to add a part time training officer tasked with the sole responsibility of training and maintaining training records to free the administrative Captain to focus on other areas of operations. The goal is that this position would become a full-time position once the budget allows.

Public and Community Relations

Nothing is more focal to WCESD5 than the community that we serve and the citizens within it. In the past two years several community events have been added to the cadre of activities already undertaken by WCESD5. These functions include:

- “Safe Place” at both WCESD5 Firehouses
- Firehouse Tours on Request
- School Education Visits
- Back to School Welcome and School Zone Early Warning Presence (2022)
- Annual Fire Safety Day and Open House in October (2022)
- Junior Fire Cadet Summer Camp in June (2023)
- Active Facebook Page for Safety Updates and General Information
- Addition of Community Connect, a community-wide feature of our reporting software that allows citizens to enter critical information prior to an emergency that relays their information to our crews responding to their home.

Vision Plan - Expand our community presence to include programs such as CPR, stop the bleed, library reading programs and possibly even establish a local chapter of Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)



Policies and Procedures/Rules and Regulations/Guidelines

SOGs were thoroughly and comprehensively evaluated in 2022-2023 over the course of one full year using a committee of staff to achieve.

SOGs were then re-reviewed for accuracy and compliance by all six of the lieutenants in 2024. Their recommendations for improvement were submitted to command staff for review and the SOG's were again updated based on their input. This project ensured that all SOG's are current and relevant to industry standards.

Vision Plan - The review process will recur annually to ensure all policies and procedures remain current, relevant, and enforced to ensure maximum standardization and safety for all WCESD5 employees.

Insurances Service Office (ISO)

A review of a district or municipal water, dispatch and fire service capabilities are conducted every five years by the ISO to determine the combined capabilities of these services. A grade is given on a scale between 1 (best) to 10 (worst) These grades impact the insurance costs that a homeowner pays.

During the last ISO evaluation of the district in 2019 WCESD5 was awarded a Class 3. This grade shows an improvement trend from the previous grade of 4.

Typically, ISO provides a split classification where those areas within 5 miles of a fire station and within 1000 feet of a reliable and credible water source scored a 3. The rural areas outside of the parameters scored a 10. The grade of 10 is expected to improve with improving water sources and fire service protection in the next evaluation. WCESD5 was able to prove an alternate water source granting a single Class 3 rating across the district. (See ISO Document on the following page)





TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

State Fire Marshal's Office (112-FM)

333 Guadalupe Street, Austin, Texas 78701 ★ PO Box 149221, Austin, Texas 78714
(512) 676-6800 | F: (512) 490-1054 | TDI.texas.gov/fire | @TXSFMO

3/11/2020

Mr. Mark McAdams
Fire Chief of Jarrell
155 County Road 313
Jarrell, Texas 76537

Place Code: Williamson: 49140

Dear Mr. McAdams:

Insurance Services Office (ISO) has submitted a recommendation concerning your community's Public Protection Classification (PPC). Currently, the Community's Public Protection Classification is a Class **4**.

Insurance Services Office is recommending the classification be changed to a single Class 3, with an effective date of 8/1/2020. The recommendation is based on a review of your community performed on 11/1/2019 and does include application of the Texas Addendum to the Fire Suppression Rating Schedule.

With a single **Class 3** rating, all class-rated properties will use **Class 3**. Hydrant distance requirement does not apply due to an alternate creditable water supply.

Public Protection Classifications range from 1 (best) to 10 (worst).

We have reviewed the information provided and believe it is enough to grant approval. Enclosed is a PPC Submittal sheet indicating the point totals for the major areas associated with the review. The Insurance Services Office will be notified of our approval of their recommendation and the 8/1/2020 effective date.

If you have any questions regarding this change, you may be reached at the address indicated above or by email to PPCOversight@tdi.texas.gov.

Please make sure all community officials and residents within your district are notified of the new Public Protection Classification rating for your community, and the effective date.

We'd really like to find out how you feel about the Public Protection Classification (PPC) process and the Insurance Services Office (ISO) inspection services, by your participation in a brief customer satisfaction survey.



Communications

- Command staff meets weekly on Mondays and staff meetings are held immediately after.
- Company Officers convene with command staff monthly for a meeting. Officers are encouraged to seek and bring back information to their members from these meetings and carry back discussions to their respective shift.
- The entire department comes together once a year to discuss the state of the organization and conduct Q&A in person.
- ESD commissioner meetings are held monthly on the third Monday of every month as required by Texas Code Chapter 775.
- Ongoing department-wide communication is conducted via e-mail and each WCSED5 employee has their own assigned business e-mail address.
- The Fire Chief maintains an open-door policy if the traditional chain of command process is unsuccessful.



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen

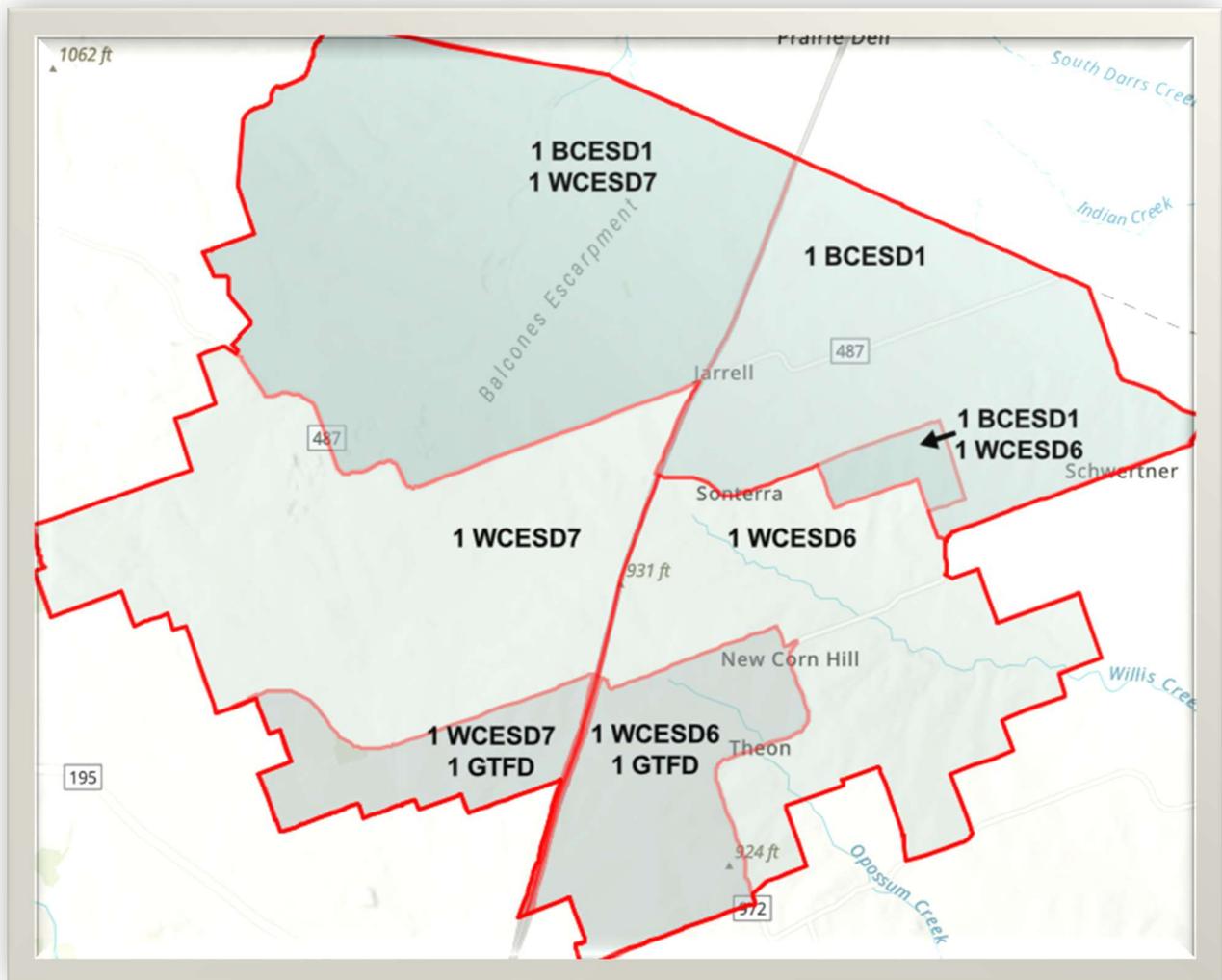


Automatic Aid Agreements

Staffing shortages are supplemented using automatic or mutual aid agreements with our neighboring fire departments. These agreements outline a specific area and call type that will generate supportive assistance in the form of more fire apparatus and personnel.

Currently, Williamson County ESD #5 has automatic aid agreements in place with the following organizations:

- Georgetown Fire Department (“GTFD”) – South
- Williamson County ESD #7 (“WCESD7”) – West
- Williamson County ESD #6 (“WCESD6”) – East
- Bell County ESD #1 (“BCESD1”) – North



C-SWOT Analysis Summary

Discussion and data collection for this vision plan started by conducting a survey of our committee to examine our critical needs strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats (C-SWOT). This information would provide a perspective from the internal stake holders point of view on the ESD's C-SWOT.

COMMITTEE IDENTIFIED CRITICAL NEEDS

- Add Operations Personnel
- Add an additional Engine.
- Add a Fire Inspector
- Purchase fire hose.
- Add a dedicated Training Officer
- Order apparatus now for 2027/28 budget.
- Begin Station 3 project process to open in 36 months.
- Add the position of Captain on shift in preparation for adding Battalion Chiefs in 2027/28-2028/29 budget.
- Maintain and build positive work life balance

COMMITTEE IDENTIFIED STRENGTHS

- Experienced Officers
- NFPA compliant turnout gear with two sets each
- New members with new ideas and backgrounds.
- Growing competencies
- Growing willingness to learn, train & develop.
- Effectively expanding outside networking
- Ownership and teamwork
- Information technology proficiency
- Addition of personnel, apparatus & equipment
- Potential for growth and associated career ladder
- Growing ability to be competitive with salaries and benefits
- Improvements in recruitment and retention
- Collaborative Culture
- 48/96 Schedule



COMMITTEE IDENTIFIED WEAKNESS

- Aging apparatus which will possibly require addressing inside of this vision plan.
- Rapidly growing need for additional personnel in both operations and administration.
- A growing population of new firefighters, drivers, and officers.
- Need for improved communication between admin and officers.
- Need to update aging equipment including standardizing the E-Draulic tools & stocking fire hose.
- Need to standardize SCBA fittings.

COMMITTEE IDENTIFIED OPPORTUNITY

- Building stations
- Purchasing updated apparatus
- Hiring more staff
- Expanding needs results in more opportunity for promotions
- Training focus and support (internal & external training)
- Educate and serve the public in more ways.
- Fire prevention and fire life safety activities.
- Stable culture with focus on maintenance and expansion
- Training to include more TIFMAS and all-Hazards opportunities.

COMMITTEE IDENTIFIED THREATS

- Low experience levels as we grow.
- Budgetary constraints and unknown revenue growth
- Changes in technology
- Size of the department versus growing requests for service
- Rapid growth
- Aging vehicle fleet
- Increased call volume
- IH 35 bisecting the district.
- Need to expand the cache of rescue equipment including dedicated and staffed rescue vehicle with specialty trained staff.
- On going need to recruit quality staff
- Communication as growth occurs.
- 24-month delay in property tax



SWOT Critical Needs

The SWOT analysis was expanded recently to include the element of assessing “critical needs” and so the letter C was added, and some becomes C-SWOT. The list of critical needs above represents primary critical threats in the near-term future (FY 24/25). The committee identified the projected upcoming critical needs from FY 25/26 – 29/30. Those include:

Recruitment of experienced firefighters

Adding 5 staff in 25/26 | Adding 5 staff in 26/27 | Adding 7 staff in 27/28 |
Adding 7 staff in 28/29

Hiring Full-Time Fire Inspector(s)	Adding a second squad or rescue
Hiring a dedicated prevention assistant	Hiring a logistics employee
Consider feasibility of hiring mechanic	Hiring a dedicated IT employee
Hire a safety, PIO, Pub-Ed employee	Opening of Fire Station #3
Adding Battalion Chiefs	Update & standardize SCBA's
Standardize hydraulic (e-Draulic) tools	Plan Fire Station #4

Strategic Planning Topic #1 – Facilities

The Anatomy of a Firehouse

A fire station is quite literally a firefighter’s home for the duration of the 48 consecutive hours they are on duty and in this respect, not unlike any citizen’s own residence. The “firehouse” as it is often called must provide our crews with a very similar quality of life. It must support the needs of the personnel, the fire department, and the community in which it is located. A firehouse must also accommodate extremely diverse functions including not only housing operations but also administration, training, community education, equipment and vehicle storage, minor maintenance, storage of all gear and equipment and even recreation activities such as working out.

While normally only occupied by fire personnel, our stations may also host the public for community education or outreach programs.

The location placement of the fire stations is largely driven by the need to minimize response time and determined by demographic and geographic studies, growth projections and heat maps of current and projected call volume. This is accomplished using computer-generated heat maps that show historical call volume clusters and project future call volume generated with the assistance of known growth.



Apparatus Bay Support and Vehicle Maintenance

Apparatus bay support functions include cleaning and maintenance areas for the firefighter's self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), protective clothing, fire hose, and equipment. It also includes storage areas for firefighting gear and equipment and secure storage for medical supplies. Some of these areas are specialized spaces for disinfecting protective equipment and for maintaining and recharging the SCBA in a clean environment.

Administrative, Training, Residential and Specialized Areas

Administrative areas include standard offices and conference and training rooms. The area will also include specialized spaces such as an officer dorm with sleeping and shower facilities and computer training/testing facilities for firefighter continuing education.

The day room accommodates kitchen, dining, and living/recreation functions. It is often separated into subspaces for those three functions, but an open design may also be effective to encourage interaction between the spaces. The dining space may also double as training or meeting space and might include provisions for audiovisual equipment.

Dorm room design can vary widely from station to station and department to department. Each firefighter is provided with a place to sleep, work, and store personal items. Careful consideration should be given to the location and design of the area to ensure a rapid response. Other residential areas include a laundry room, a physical fitness room, bathrooms, and showers, etc.

Maintain a Safe and Healthy Firehouse Environment

Due to the continuous occupation of the facility by firefighters and the presence of hazardous materials, special attention must be given to designing the facility to accommodate equipment and operational strategies to both protect the occupants and maintain a healthy environment including:

- Provide a secure facility for both personnel and materials such as controlled medical supplies and hazardous fire suppression agents.
- Ensure good indoor air quality and abundant natural light in the residential and administrative areas.
- Ensure good ventilation of industrial areas such as the apparatus bay and prevent contamination of clean spaces such as the SCBA maintenance area



Firehouse #1 – 212 N. 5th St, Jarrell, TX 76537



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen

Firehouse #1 is located at 212 N. 5th St. in Downtown Jarrell, Texas and was opened on September 11th, 2022, and dedicated at a public open house on October 29, 2022.

Construction started on this project in April of 2021 after a heat map survey of growth and call volume identified the ideal location to build.

Firehouse #1 houses a front-line engine (Engine 1) staffed 365 days a year for 24 hours per day by three scheduled personnel. One of the Jarrell Fire & Rescue's two brush trucks and our 1500-gallon water tender are also housed at station #1.

This is also the location of WCESD5 administrative offices including the Fire Marshal's office and the Fire Chief.

The **vision plan** for this firehouse includes replacing an aging engine 1 with a used but newer engine from Jollyville FD and adding a fourth person on Engine 1.



Firehouse #2 – 155 CR 313, Jarrell, TX 76537



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen

Opened in 2010, Firehouse #2 houses a frontline aerial ladder (Quint 2) staffed by three personnel and frontline squad staffed by two personnel. Station 2 is staffed 365 days per year for 24 hours per day. The second of Jarrell Fire & Rescue's brush trucks and a 3000-gallon water truck are both housed at station #2.

The **vision plan** for this firehouse includes the addition of a brush truck, adding a fourth firefighter to Quint 2 and evolving one of the firefighter positions on Squad 2 into a driver position. There are four administrative offices and a conference room in firehouse 2. The monthly commissioner board meetings are held in the conference room and the offices will serve for the future growth and expansion of our administrative staff.



Firehouse #3 – 1135 CR 311, Jarrell, TX 76537



To meet the needs of our rapidly growing community, Jarrell Fire & Rescue purchased property located at 1135 FM 311 on the south and east side of our district in an area targeted for potentially high growth of residential and commercial business.

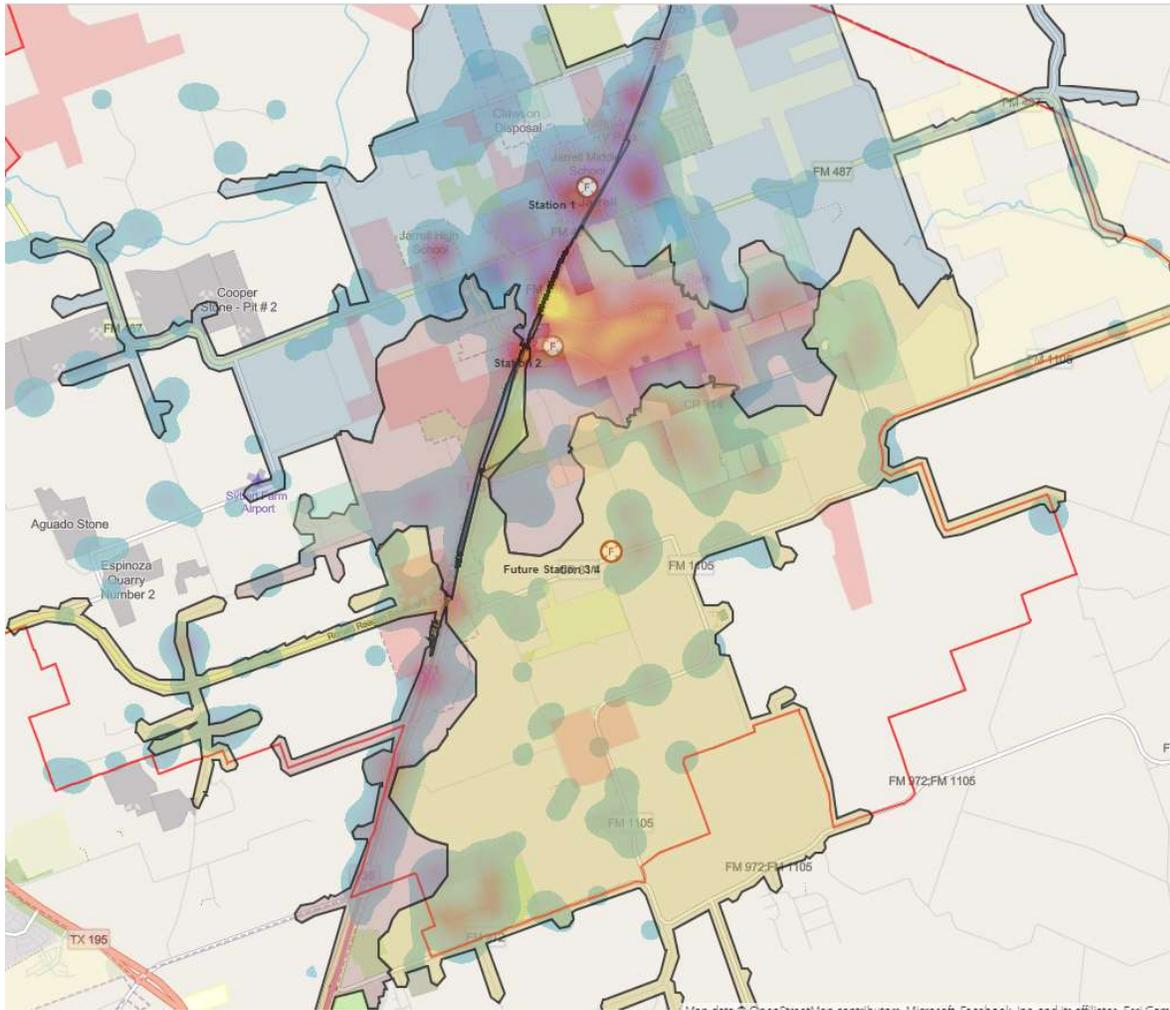
The process has started to contract an architect to renovate the property into a functional fire station and based on their time frame projections, should be occupied in the 26/27 or 27/28 budget once all studies and associated construction has been completed.

Currently it is unoccupied but reserve engine 2 is housed there. Crews address care of this station such as mowing, edging and any identified maintenance no longer than every two weeks and staff visit the property for visual inspections at least weekly.

The 5-year **vision plan** for firehouse #3 is to contract a fire service architect to lead the design of the facilities and staff with a four-person engine in a new apparatus that is to be purchased and place a second two-person squad or rescue vehicle here once it opens. The estimated timeframe to open is 3 years or roughly the 27/28 budget year based on budget estimates of affordability and interviews with architectural firms projecting the timeframe of the project.



Future Firehouse #4 – Location To Be Determined



The projected growth, especially with a project in the northwest corner of our district, requires our administrative and command staff to begin consideration of the location of fire house #4.

Currently there are no identified properties, but the process of searching for firehouse #4 is underway. We anticipate that budgeting for land to be used to build this station will be given strong consideration in the 29/30 budget timeframe.

Future Fire Training Facility – Location to be Determined



Fire service organizations are constantly training and so the need for a location and equipment to conduct quality and realistic fire and rescue training necessitates the need for a modern training facility.

The process of pricing these facilities has passively started and the price information we collected from a leading manufacturer of these types of facilities (WHP) was roughly \$258,000 for the facility itself including labor. The cost of pouring the concrete pad and foundation came in at \$165,000 for a total cost for this project of an estimated \$423,000 and after tools and equipment needed to complete the project, a budget of no less than \$500,000 could reasonably be expected.

The **vision plan** for this facility is to include it in this five-year vision plan with an expectation that it could be mid-range to end of this plan to bring it on board based on budget ability.



Strategic Planning Topic #2 – Equipment and Apparatus



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen

Fire apparatus is the heart of any fire service organization. It is what carries the personnel, equipment, tools, water, and hose to the emergency that our crews are responding to. Without our apparatus, serving is not possible and therefore it is critical that we have a plan to maintain and update our apparatus the best as we can with the budget.

WCESD5 is on a 20-year replacement plan for larger fire apparatus with the intent of reducing that to 15 years as we grow. After 20 years of frontline service, an apparatus should be targeted for replacement (as able with budgetary constraints) with a newer and similar vehicle. The replaced apparatus will then remain in our fleet as a backup/reserve engine.

The smaller vehicles will be placed on a shorter rotation projected to be 15 years for fire vehicles such as brush trucks, squads mini-pumpers or rescues and 10 years for command vehicles for administrative personnel.

NOTE: As you read the names of the various apparatus, one thing to consider is that the number associated is usually related to which firehouse they operate out of. Example, Quint 2 is so named because it operates out of firehouse #2 and not because we have two of them necessarily.

Current Fleet

Engine 1 – An engine is also called a triple because it provides three primary tools: a water tank, a water pump and hose to discharge the water. Our current frontline engine is a 2009 model Pierce purchased in 2018 from Austin Westlake FD and is targeted for replacement no later than 2029.

Williamson Co. ESD #5 plans to purchase a used engine from Jollyville FD in the 2024/2025 budget due to the affordable cost of this purchase representing approximately ½ of the cost of a new engine. This provides a quality apparatus and maintains fiscal responsibility to our citizens.



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen



Quint 2 – A quint is named because of the five things it provides: a water tank, water pump and hose just like the engine and so it can do all that an engine (AKA triple) can do. Additionally, a quint has an aerial ladder and several ground ladders. It is clear to see that it's a good purchase due to its flexibility, but cost and accessibility to narrow areas is a concern as a quint is much larger than an engine at 42' long, weighing over 80,000 pounds and has a 105' aerial ladder for elevated fire attack and/or rescues.

Our quint is a 2014 model Pierce purchased in 2022 from Jollyville FD and is targeted for replacement in 2034.



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen



Squad 2 – A squad has the capability to combat smaller fires and is also equipped with a water tank, pump, and hose but at a smaller capacity. This piece of equipment can get into smaller places, go off-road and is much more fuel efficient. Our squad is a 2019 Ford F-550 and was purchased new in 2019 with a targeted replacement of 2039.



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen

Tender 1 – A tender is a fire apparatus that has a primary role of providing a larger amount of water than an engine, quint, or squad. They are used in areas that are not served by a water source such as hydrants to provide the needed water for firefighting tasks. Our tender has a 1500-gallon water tank to support firefighting in rural areas. It is a 2003-year model purchased in 2003 with a replacement date of 2023. This vehicle is used much less than other apparatus and so extension of the projected replacement date is an option.



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen



Brush 1 - A brush truck is designed specifically for fighting wildland and grass fires. They are maneuverable, capable of off-road with four-wheel drive and have not only the ability of carrying and pumping water through hoses, but also are equipped with discharges all around the vehicle capable of being used inside the cab to aid in effective extinguishment. Our brush truck is a 2008, purchased in 2008, making its replacement date of 2023. The replacement has been purchased and scheduled to arrive in June of 2024. This vehicle will go to reserve at that time and be used as a second out to large wildland fires.



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen

Brush 2 – WCESD5 covers 75 square miles of property that has a lot of wildland/urban interface. Because of this, a second brush truck was purchased in 2024 with a 20 year life cycle and so will serve this community until 2044. This 2024 Ford 550 will become the first option to respond, and the current Brush 1 will complement any response as needed.



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen



Water Truck 2 – In 2022, while battling a grass fire along the I-35 service road, a construction company offered use of their water truck for extinguishment. It worked so well that WCESD5 purchased a used construction water truck to aid in extinguishing open land grass fires quicker. The water tank is 3000 gallons and discharges all around the truck that is operable from inside the cab.



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen

Wildland & Special Events UTV – In 2023, WCESD5 responded to a large wildland fire in Cobb Creek that took over a week to extinguish. Challenges included the thick juniper trees that were in the path of the fire and accessibility to access spot fires for extinguishment. WCESD5 needed a UTV to access, scout and direct available resources and had to borrow that resource from Williamson Co. Office of Emergency Management (OEM). This identified a need and so WCESD5 partnered with Jarrell American Legion Joe Kott Post 317 to purchase a Wildland UTV. Our thanks to them for their support.



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen



UTV/Command Post Trailer – The UTV requires the ability to be transported to scenes across the county and so a trailer was designed and built for this purpose. WCSED5 partnered with Phil’s Trailer Sales to customize a trailer that not only could transport the UTV, but also serve as a mobile command post once on site. This trailer will be transported to the incident location and be an air-conditioned location for crews to rehab and incident command strategies and tactics to be discussed in addition to carrying the UTV.



Command Vehicles – Fire service organizations have command staff that support the efforts of operations firefighters and provide incident command to larger incidents. These apparatus provide the administrative side of the organization and are on call as needed 24 hours a day and seven days a week. They must respond at all hours to a moment’s notice and do so in a company vehicle that carries all the tools they need to serve this purpose. Command Vehicles have a targeted replacement date of 15 years.



Chief 1: 2019 Chevy Tahoe purchased new in 2019.



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen

Fire Marshall 1: 2021 Chevy Z-71 purchased new in 2021



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen



Chief 2: 2023 Chevy Tahoe purchased new in 2023



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen

Captain 1: 2013 Chevy Tahoe purchased used in 2021



Photo Credit: Lisa Nielsen



Support 1: 2012 Chevy 2500 HD purchased as a salvage in 2016



YEAR	VEHICLES TO REPLACE/PURCHASE	
2025	Engine 1	Replace 2009 Pierce
2025	Captain 1	Replace 2013 Tahoe
2026	Traffic Blocking Vehicle	New Purchase
2028	Engine 3	New Purchase for Station 3
2028	Rescue 3	New Purchase for Station 3

Equipment Needs

The fire service is always evolving around the latest standards and innovations that require attention, budgeting, and training. To list every piece of equipment that our vehicles carry would make this document hundreds of pages long, so focus here is given towards the major purchases identified by the vision planning committee in the C-SWOT analysis and project a time frame for implementation.

Standardizing E-Draulic Tools – Hydraulically operated spreaders, cutters and rams are known collectively as the “jaws of life.” These tools are used to open stuck doors, remove obstacles in extrication scenarios, and access patients inside of not only vehicles but any entrapment. The latest version of these tools are no longer bound by hydraulic lines and have become lighter weight, more portable and provide greater PSI cutting, spreading, or “pinching” power than ever before.

Vision Plan - WCESD5 intends to place a set of E-Draulic tools on each piece of large (engine/aerial) frontline apparatus no later than the end of this vision plan with a target goal of phased in implementation in 24/25 budget and upon adding another piece of apparatus for opening of firehouse #3.





Standardizing SCBA - Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) is the breathing air lifeline for firefighters inside of atmospheres that are oxygen deficient and/or contain toxic products. It is imperative that the SCBA are the most technologically efficient and in perfect working condition every time. Our current SCBAs are in top shape but have one issue that requires attention, their connectors are not all the same meaning in an emergency, one person cannot always share their air with another person to escape a hostile environment. These connectors must be standardized so that if needed, any firefighter can share air with another as they conduct their emergency exit from the toxic environment.

Vision Plan – WCESD5 intends to pursue AFG grant funding in the 2024-25 budget year for standardized SCBAs. If that grant is not awarded, then the best option is to take a loan for these SCBAs in the 2024/25 or 2025/26 budget cycle to be determined once the revenues for those fiscal years are determined.



Fire Hose - Fire hose is another essential tool to a firefighter and our growing organization requires more and more hose to fulfill the emergency response call volume. WCESD5 has written a grant for fire hose in the amount of \$74,000. We are expected to hear the results of that application by September of 2024. This grant is placed to fulfill the supply of current apparatus and maintain a significant stock to use as needed. As WCESD5 expands to more apparatus and stations, the need for hose will only grow as well.

Vision Plan - for hose is to set aside budget money each of the next four years to increase the stock and use to equip apparatus as they come online. This spreads out the cost over several years while still maintaining the amount needed to operate efficiently.



Miscellaneous Equipment - The list of tools and equipment carried by a fire service organization is extensive and requires daily checks for maximum operational efficiency and currency. While all must be observed and updated as needed, the committee identified E-Draulic tools, SCBA standardization and fire hose as the most critical for specific identification and planning in the coming budget cycles. All fire service tools on our apparatus will be constantly monitored for replacement needs.

Vision Plan – In our budgets, there is always a reserve for unexpected or unplanned expense, and this will continue to be a practice to ensure maximum tool effectiveness and operationality.



Strategic Planning Topic #3 – Employee Staffing Structure (2025 – 2030)

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710 outlines the recommended minimum staffing of firefighters on a structure fire for organizations with an aerial apparatus as 17 personnel. This is a national standard that has been studied and accepted as maximizing firefighter safety. With this goal in mind, the WCESD5 vision planning committee laid out the needs of the next five years to meet demand but fall within the confines of the projected budget. Also, to fulfill the NFPA 1710 minimums of 17 per shift. The plan calls for a gradual increase over the five years culminating with the 2029/2030 budget year.

Forecasted Operations Staffing by 2029/2030

The committee identified the need to reach a staffing of 60 operational personnel, 20 per shift. This plan includes the addition of battalion chiefs in approximately 2027/28 budget cycle. The projected 2029/2030 organizational chart should look like this:

Operations Staffing	Per Shift	Total
Battalion Chief	1	3
Officers	3	9
Engineers	7	21
Firefighters	9	27

Breakdown of Staffing by Shift by Unit				
Unit	Battalion Chief	Officer	Engineer	Firefighter
Battalion 1	1			
Engine 1		1	1	2
Brush 1			1	1
Quint 2		1	1	2
Squad 2			1	1
Engine 3		1	1	2
Rescue 3			1	1
Floater				1

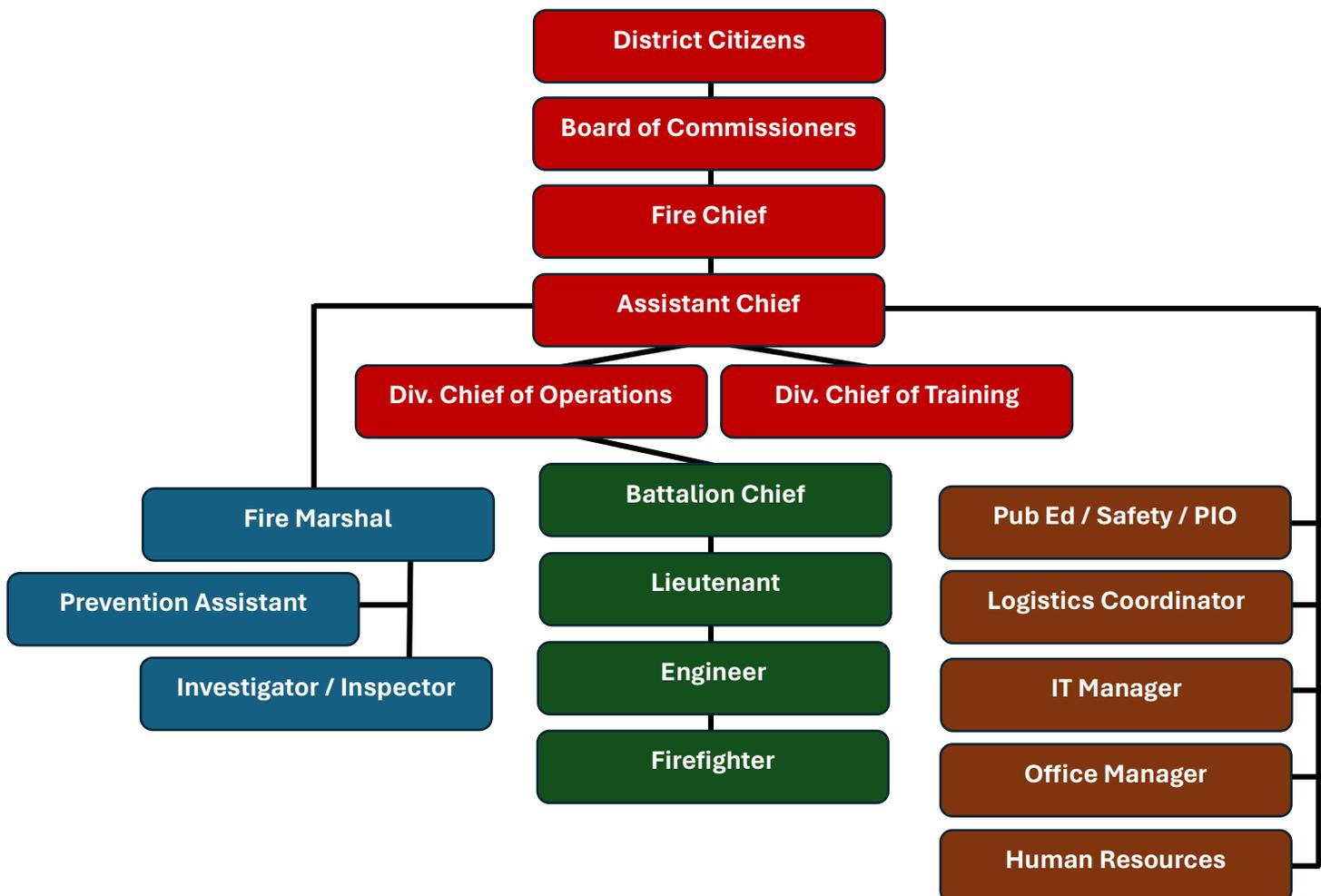
This plan places WCESD5 in a position to not only fulfill NFPA 1710 but do so with an allowance of up to 3 total firefighters off duty on any given shift and still meet the criteria.



Forecasted Administrative Staffing by 2029/2030

To meet the demands of not only the growing population, but also the growing personnel, there was consideration given to the needs of support staff. Like the operations staffing, support staff is a gradual increase to the projected 11 administrative personnel that culminates in the 2029/30 budget and looks like this:

- 1 Fire Chief
- 1 Assistant Fire Chief
- 2 Division Chiefs (Operations and Training)
- 1 Public Education / Safety / Public Information Officer
- 1 Fire Marshall
- 2 Fire Inspectors/Investigators
- 1 Logistics Coordinator (Quartermaster)
- 1 Information Technology (IT) Employee
- 1 Administrative Assistant over Prevention
- 1 Administrative Assistant Officer Manager
- 1 Administrative Assistant Human Resources



Strategic Planning Topic #4 – Training (In Service & Other)

As fire departments take on more responsibilities and duties becoming an all-hazard mitigation department, more training, and expertise is often needed. We can also see a greater increase in the number of medical aid calls that we respond to annually. As medical skills become a more pertinent job function for firefighters, more emphasis should be placed on this kind of training. Training should be conducted daily within the department which will be led by the company officer.

Objectives:

- Maintain a part-time training officer to assist with the training needs of the ESD. This individual can also be used to assist with fire life safety operations.
- Provide the Company Officers with the means to conduct in-service training.
- Continue having the training officer schedule and teach standard training exercises, with all department members, to establish consistency and proficiency in everyday firefighting evolutions and skills.
- Train with neighboring departments
- Have all members certified as wildland fire fighters through the NWCG (National Wildfire Coordinating Group).
- Advance our firefighters' technical skills by sending members to hazardous material, swift water, ropes, and extrication courses.



Strategic Planning Topic #5 – Fire Prevention / Pub. Ed. / Pre-Fire Planning

Fire Life Safety encompasses a variety of code enforcement, fire investigations, fire reporting, plan reviews and inspection duties. The Fire Marshal's office is staffed by one (1) person Monday through Thursday from 7:00 am to 4:00 pm. The Fire Marshal's office is located at 212 N 5th St in Jarrell, Texas. The Fire Marshal is responsible for managing the daily operations of the fire marshal's office in direct partnership with the Chief and command staff Department. Currently, the Fire Marshal is also responsible for other tasks such as department logistics and fleet maintenance. The downside of having one person doing inspections and logistic activities is that when that individual is out of the office, either performing inspections or using personal time, there is a delay in servicing the public.

Objectives

- Provide fire prevention with the hardware (mobile terminals or tablets) to employ the mobility aspect of the new computer software. This would allow the inspections to be recorded in the field and cut down on administrative time needed to spend in the office doing the paperwork after the inspection is done.



- Pre-fire planning – the data needs to be available through hardware to every fire officer and every responding unit. By accessing the information using hardware and software the members have the most accurate information instead of missing the paper that was tucked away in a drawer.
- Hire a part time fire inspector/plans examiner (this can be the same person as the training officer)
- Continue on-shift fire inspection program.
- (All officers must be at least an TCFP inspector)

Vision Plan Timeline

HIRING

- (1) Training Officer
- (2) Firefighters

PROMOTIONS

- (3) Captains from Lieutenants
- (3) Engineers from Firefighters
- (1) Div. Chief of Operations from Captain of Operations

PURCHASE

- (1) Used Engine to replace Engine 1
- (1) New Engine with est. delivery in FY 27/28 for Station 3
- (1) Command Vehicle to replace Captain 1 with est. delivery in FY 25/26
- Fire Hose

PLANNING

- Begin Station 3 remodel process

FY 24/25

HIRING

- (1) Fire Inspector / Investigator
- (5) Firefighters

PURCHASE

- (1) Highway Blocking Vehicle

PLANNING

- Begin Training Facility planning and purchase process

FY 25/26

HIRING

- (1) Fire Prevention Admin Assistant
- (5) Firefighters
- (1) Logistics Coordinator

PURCHASE

- Purchase Rescue 3 with est. delivery in FY 27/28
- Purchase Battalion Chief vehicle with est. delivery in FY 27/28

PLANNING

- Determine feasibility of hiring a full-time mechanic

FY 26/27



HIRING

- Fire Inspector / Investigator
- (7) Firefighters
- IT Manager
- Safety / PIO / Pub. Ed. Employee

FY 27/28

PROMOTIONS

- Div Chief of Training from Training Officer
- (3) Battalion Chiefs from Captains
- (3) Lieutenants from Engineers
- (3) Engineers from Firefighters

PLANNING

- Opening of Station 3

HIRING

- (7) Firefighters

PURCHASE

- E-Draulic extrication tools

PLANNING

- Begin Station 4 planning process

FY 28/29

