



Wadsworth Fire & EMS

2017-2021 Strategic Plan

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Fire Chief's Message

Change. Change is a bad word to some, especially to personnel in the fire/EMS service. The old mantra “200 years of tradition unimpeded by progress” is near and dear to many. Is change necessary? YES! Change is inevitable! Today's society dictates that change is needed almost on a yearly basis.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) makes changes to their standards all the time. Look at the changes made recently to how fire apparatus are laid out and what safety features they must include. Turnout gear, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and even the way departments train has changed over the recent years. Even changes in sprinkler and fire alarms systems and changes to fire codes – which make occupancies safer – occur on a regular basis.

Technology has changed everyone's world the past decade. The ways to communicate, to provide instant information and access to unlimited discovery are at everyone's fingertips. This technology has changed society. The need to be instantly gratified with the ease of today's computers, phones and iPad/tablets is a fundamental desire.

This Strategic Plan will be the roadmap to help make changes for the betterment of our department to enhance our service to the community and the people who live, work and visit our area. This Strategic Plan is a “living document” or a document that will be continually edited and updated. Trying to predict the future is difficult at best. The challenge belongs with the department to modify its direction to better fit the needs of today's ever changing world. This will be a constant work in progress.

Our intent is to continue providing the highest quality emergency services to the community but also adapt and change with the world to improve and maintain this service the public has come to expect. It is also the intent to continually assess community needs, operate as efficiently and effectively as possible, proactively respond to increased demands and changes and solve problems with viable solutions.

Change... A bad word for some, a tremendous endeavor for us! We must have the courage to accept change and develop a positive attitude towards change. The mantra mentioned above should no longer be said with a snicker but be recognized as obsolete along with leather water buckets, insurance fire marks and old Fire Chief's bugles. Change... Isn't it awesome!?!

Respectfully Submitted

Carl Rommel
Fire Chief
Wadsworth Fire & EMS Department

Wadsworth Fire Department

A Brief History...

The City of Wadsworth was founded in 1814. A Revolutionary War hero named Elijah Wadsworth owned much of the land that would become Medina County in the early 1800's. Even though Captain Wadsworth never lived in the immediate area, the City was named in his honor. 1876 saw the area become a village, and then incorporated to a city in 1930.

A fire company was formed in 1896, which was reorganized in 1900 and became known as the Wadsworth Fire Department. At this time, there were two companies, one boasting a hook and ladder and the other a chemical engine. There was also a hose wagon which carried 1200-feet of hose. It wasn't until 1925 that the first "real" fire truck was purchased. Harrison G. Sears was the first Fire Chief and served 35-years in that position. January 1st, 1968, Carol Everhard was appointed as the first full-time Fire Chief of Wadsworth.

In 1982, the department integrated EMS as a component of the services provided to the citizens. Twenty-seven members joined the department to help in providing this service. These members were assigned to shifts and responded to the station when the EMS calls were received. 1998 saw the hiring of six full-time personnel who would run emergency calls while being at the station. These members only answered EMS calls until 2003. Station 2 came into operation this same year and permitted the full-time members to respond to fire calls as well.

Today, the department consists of one full-time Fire Chief, one full-time Assistant Fire Chief/Training Officer, one full-time maintenance person, one full-time office assistant, ten full-time firefighter/paramedics, one part-time maintenance person, and approximately fifty paid-on-call personnel who are trained as firefighters, EMTs or both. Currently, there is one Captain and five Lieutenants to help instruct, lead and mentor other department members.

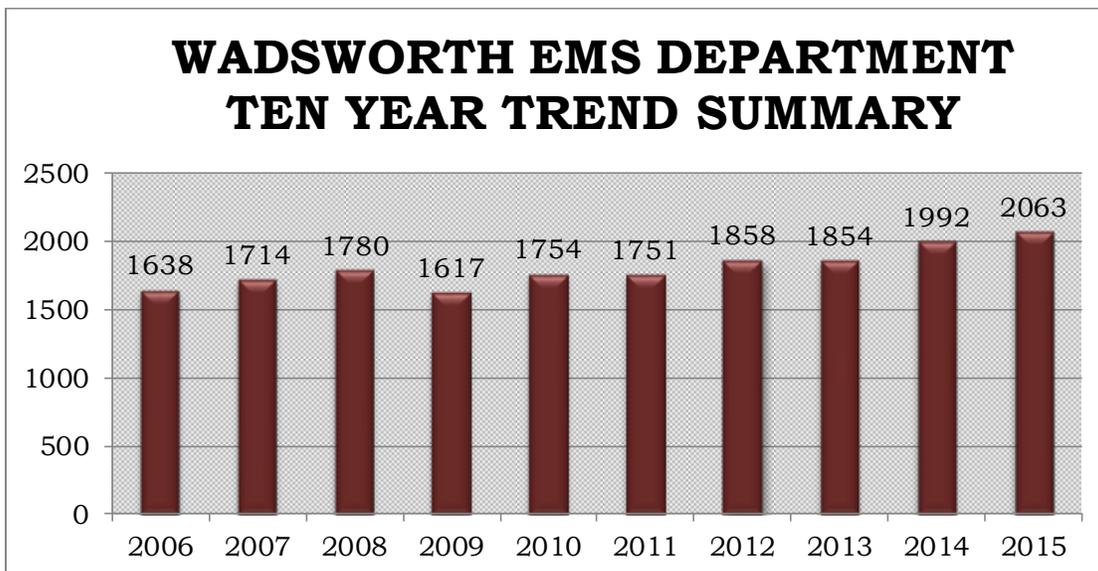
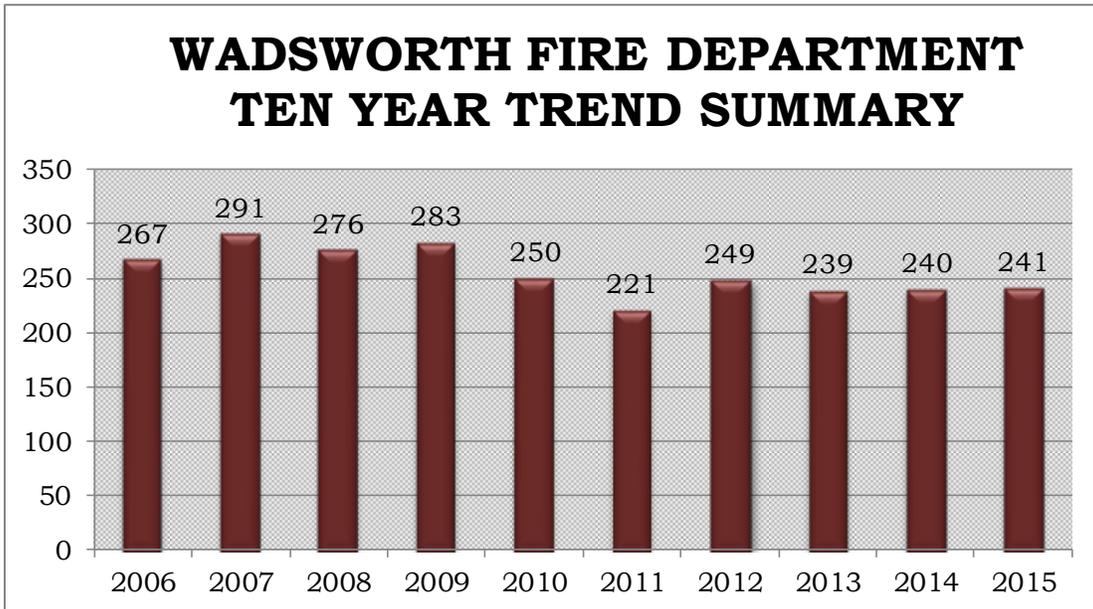
Statistics...

The department answers emergency calls in the City of Wadsworth and Wadsworth Township. This primary response district covers 25-square miles and borders Sharon Township to the North, Summit County to the East, Wayne County to the South, and Guilford Township to the West. As of July 1st, 2015, the estimated population of the City of Wadsworth is 21,860 while the 2010 census shows Wadsworth Township has a population of 4,191.

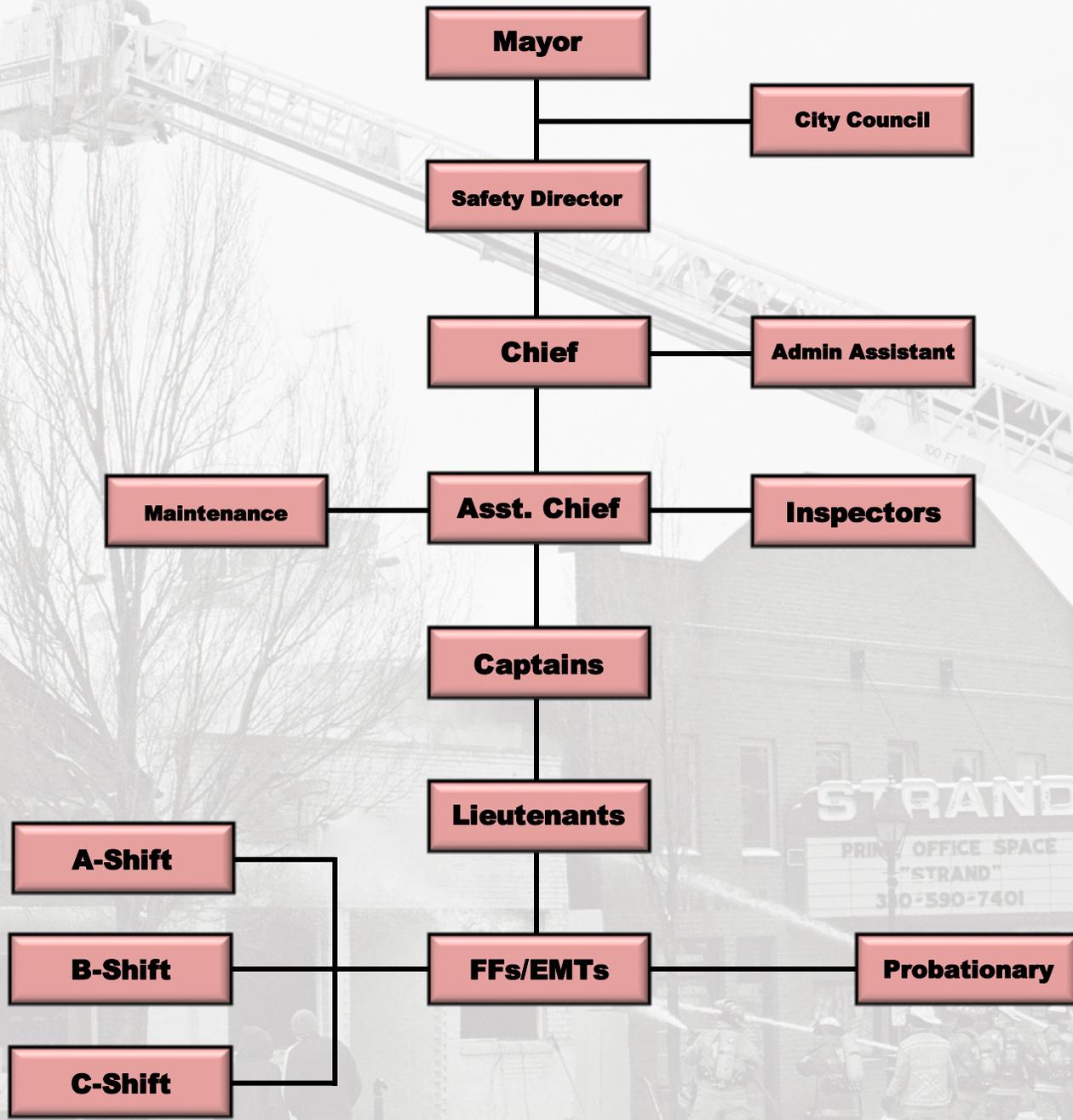
The Wadsworth Fire & EMS Department (WFD) runs out of two stations. Station 1 is located close to the center of the city at 153 North Lyman Street while Station 2 is located north of Interstate 76 at 338 Weatherstone Drive.

Station 1 houses one primary response engine with one back-up engine. Also housed here is a 100-foot aerial ladder apparatus, a heavy rescue truck, a 3,000-gallon tanker/tender and two ambulances. Housed at Station 2 are one response engine, a grass fire unit and two ambulances. WFD also has six pool/fleet SUV type vehicles which are used by officers, fire safety inspectors and maintenance personnel.

In 2015, WFD answered 241 fire calls, 2063 EMS calls, and 155 calls for other service and conducted 481 fire safety inspections. Fire trainings were held twice a month and were attended on average 70% of the time. EMS trainings were also held twice a month and were attended on average 65% of the time.



Organizational Chart...



Budget Summary – Fire General Fund

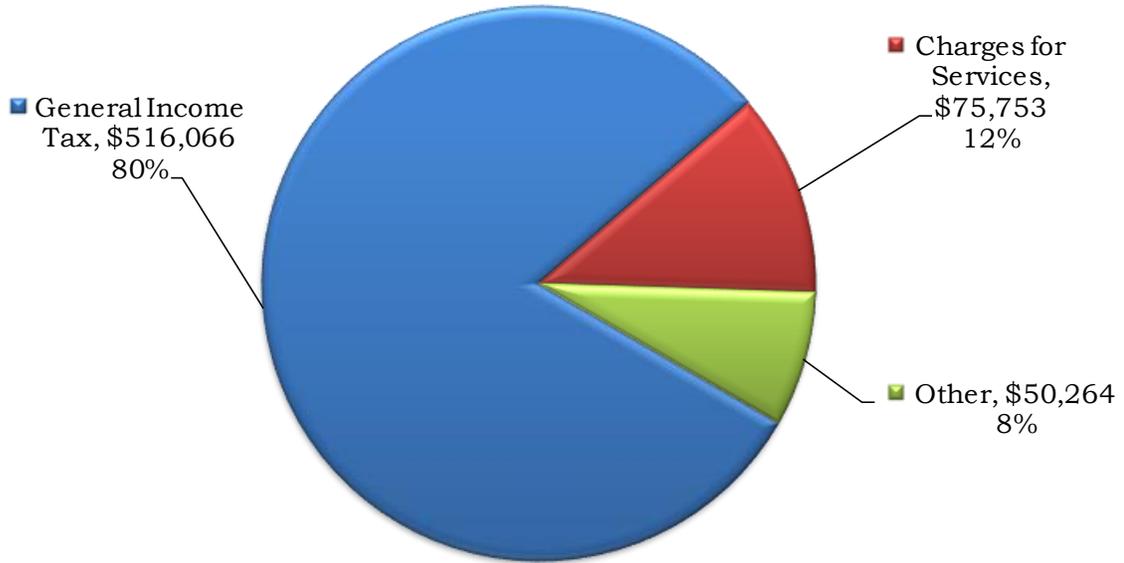
2015 Fire Revenues by Source

Fund: 110 General Fund - Fire	
Revenue	
Income Tax	\$516,066
Charges for Services	\$75,753
Other	\$50,264
Contributions and Donations	\$200
Refunds and Reimbursements	\$63
Other Non-Operating Revenues	\$50,001
Revenue Totals	\$692,347

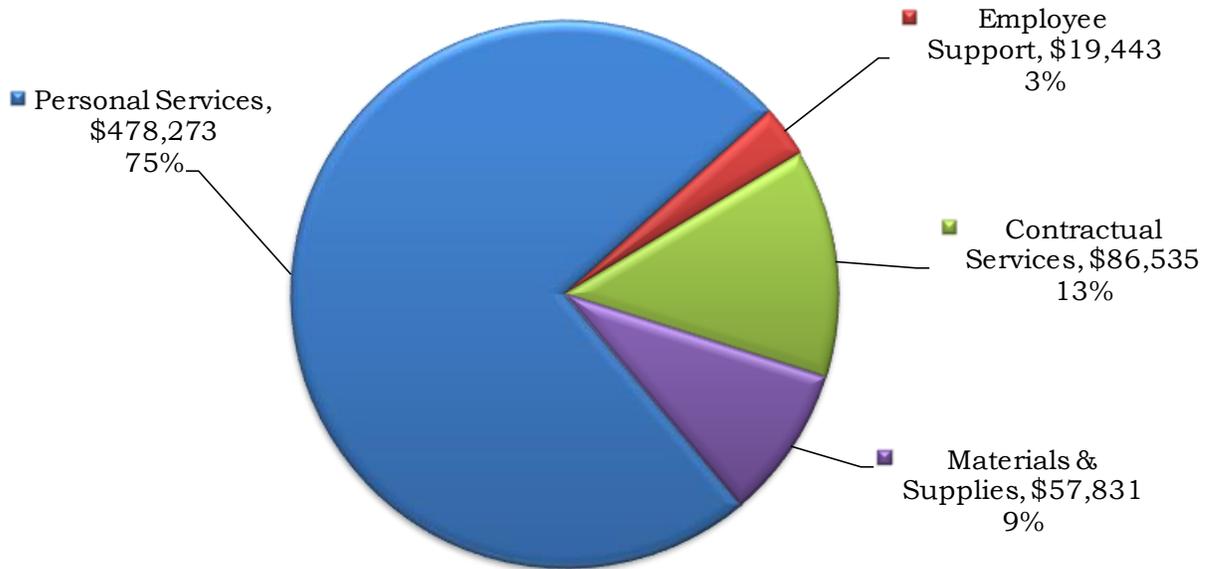
2015 Fire Expenses by Classification

Personal Services	\$478,273
Employee Support	\$19,443
Contractual Services	\$86,535
Materials and Supplies	\$57,831
Expenditure Totals	\$642,083
Revenue Grand Totals:	\$692,347
Expenditure Grand Totals:	\$642,083
Net Grand Totals:	\$50,264

2015 Fire Revenues by Source



2015 Fire Expenses by Classification

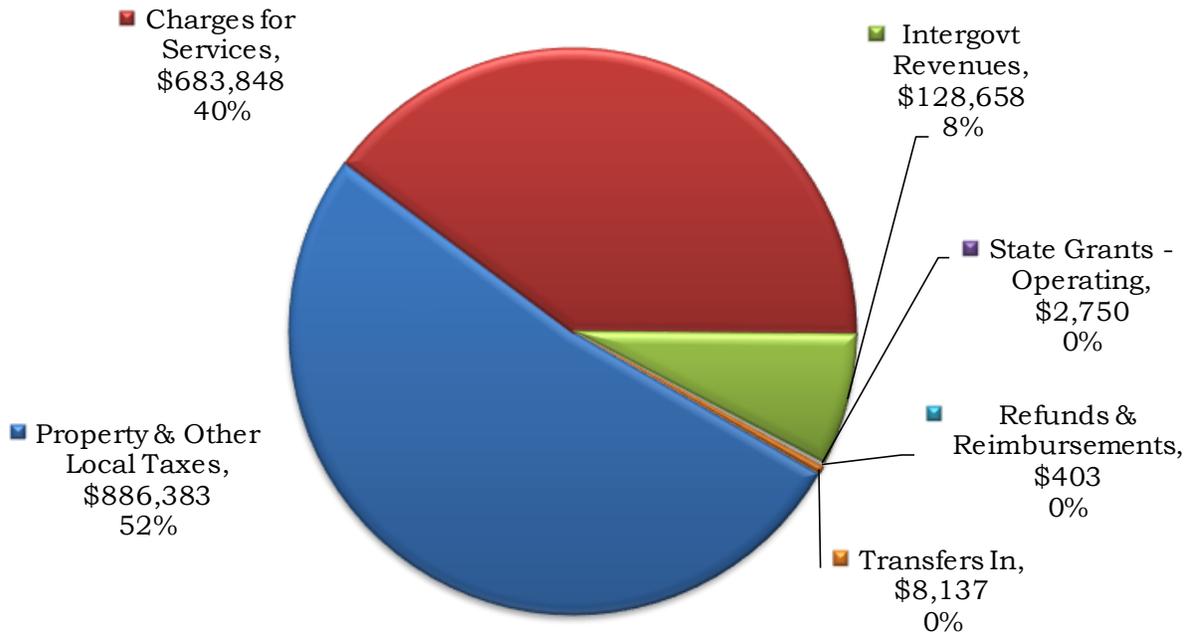


Budget Summary – EMS

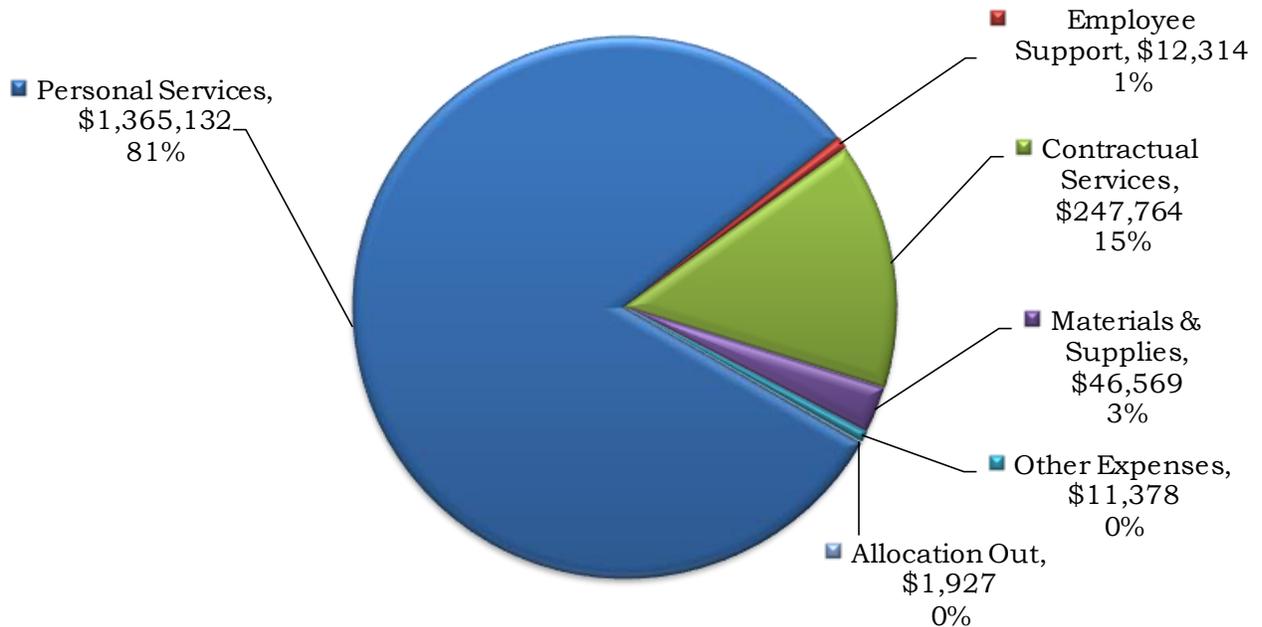
2015 EMS Revenue by Source

Fund: 212 Emergency Medical Services	
Revenue	
Property and Other Local Taxes	\$886,383
Charges for Services	\$683,848
Intergovernmental Revenues	\$128,658
State Grants - Operating	\$2,750
Refunds and Reimbursements	\$403
Transfers In	\$8,137
Revenue Totals	\$1,710,179
2015 EMS Expense by Classification	
Personal Services	\$1,365,132
Employee Support	\$12,314
Contractual Services	\$247,764
Materials and Supplies	\$46,569
Other Expenses	\$11,378
Capital Outlay	\$0
Allocation Out	\$1,927
Expenditure Totals	\$1,685,083
Revenue Grand Totals:	\$1,710,179
Expenditure Grand Totals:	\$1,685,083
Net Grand Totals:	\$25,096

2015 EMS Revenue by Source



2015 EMS Expense by Classification

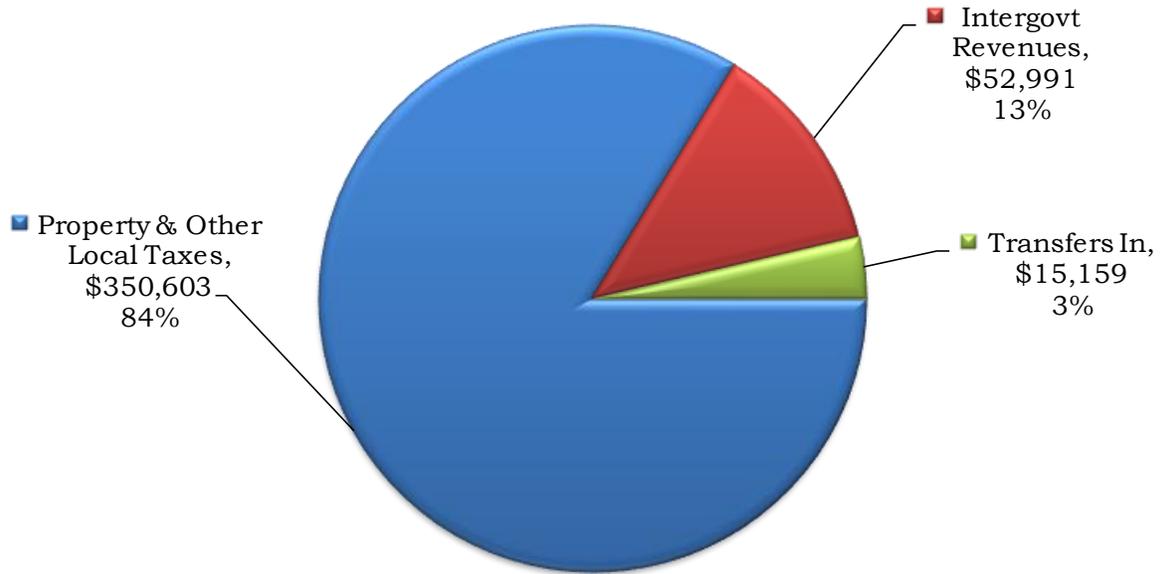


Budget Summary – Fire Capital Levy

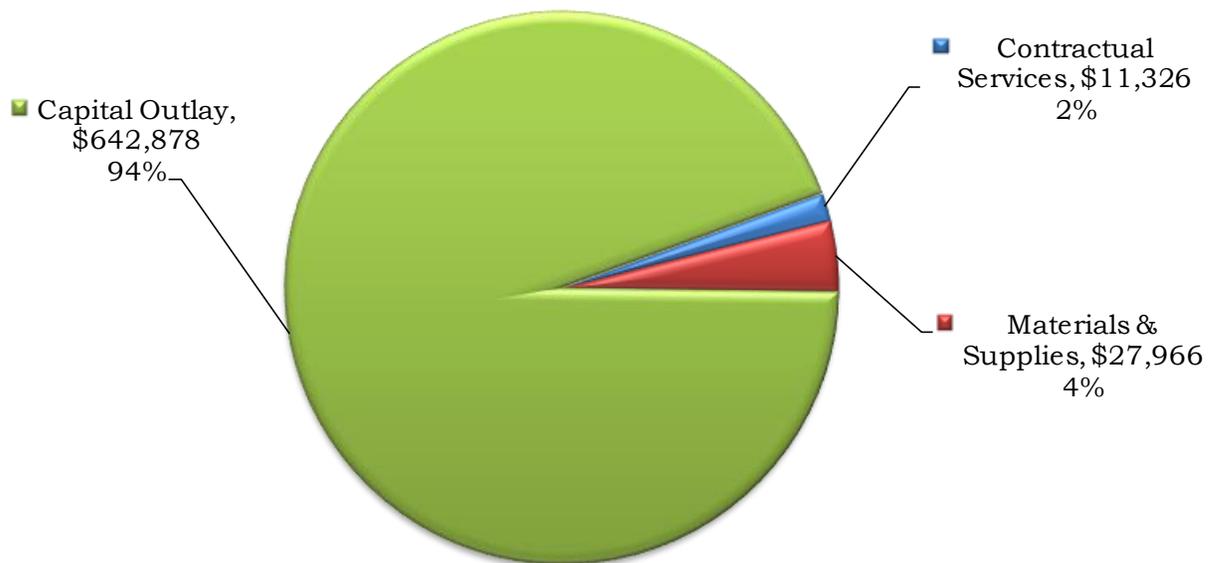
2015 Fire Levy Revenue by Source

Fund: 437 Fire Equipment Reserve	
Revenue	
Property and Other Local Taxes	\$350,603
Intergovernmental Revenues	\$52,991
Transfers In	\$15,159
Revenue Totals	\$418,753
2015 Fire Levy Expenses by Classification	
Expenditures	
Contractual Services	\$11,326
Materials and Supplies	\$27,966
Capital Outlay	\$642,878
Allocation Out	\$0
Expenditure Totals	\$682,171
Revenue Grand Totals:	\$418,753
Expenditure Grand Totals:	\$682,171
Net Grand Totals:	(\$263,418)

2015 Fire Levy Revenue by Source



2015 Fire Levy Expenses by Classification



Mission, Vision and Values

Our Mission Statement...

Intended to be clear, simple and easy to remember, yet accurately describe our purpose:

"The Wadsworth Fire & EMS Department is an organization of dedicated professionals who are committed to serving the community by protecting life, property and the environment through prevention, education, training and high-quality emergency response."

Core Values and Vision Statements...

The vision of the Wadsworth Fire Department is to get really good at doing our job. We will train to a high level of proficiency at the basic and advanced skills of our job, standardize our operations, and deliver a service to the public in such a manner as to endear us to them.

In addition to the City of Wadsworth's values statement, the Wadsworth Fire & EMS Department values aims to hold high these core values. The acronym "RESCUE" is used to identify our core values. These then intertwine into our vision statements, directing us into the future.

- **R**esourceful
- **E**fficient
- **S**elfless
- **C**onfidence
- **U**nity
- **E**xcellence



- ✓ We will gain further knowledge with education and training, helping to be **resourceful** when encountering different situations during emergency responses.
- ✓ We will use our gained knowledge, to be **efficient** in our actions during emergencies, trainings and down time, on a daily basis.
- ✓ We will show **selfless** devotion to duty and caring for other people's needs during times of emergencies, public education and prevention and when educating fellow department members.
- ✓ We will have **confidence** in one's self, other department members and the department as a whole that tasks will be done correctly, effectively and timely.
- ✓ We will have a sense of **unity** by working as a team and experiencing camaraderie while answering emergency calls, and participating in trainings.
- ✓ We will strive for **excellence** by maintaining integrity, professionalism and ethical standards when interacting with the public, ourselves and our colleagues.



Our Core Functions

As a department that responds to both fire and EMS calls for service, there are certain expectations from the public. Unbeknownst are the facts that there are several other functions, which our department maintains, that the public doesn't see on a daily basis or is unaware of these activities and our total array of operations.

Administration...

The Administration develops the annual operating budget and performs strategic planning for public fire protection and EMS services. Additionally, the administration team manages the department's operating and capital improvement budgets, develops and maintains the department's strategic planning activities and documents; supervises compliance with all regulatory and certification requirements including OSFM and NFPA and supervises all department efforts.

The Administration also manages the training programs for the operations group, including state-mandated training in firefighting, heavy rescue, hazardous materials, incident command and emergency medical services. The Administration manages all health and safety issues, Insurance Services Office Grading Schedule; coordinates departmental support for financial management and planning functions; serves as the department's liaison to emergency management; manages department compliance with all department service contracts; and manages any grant projects. This also includes drafting or updating departmental standard operating guidelines.

Administration is also responsible for the procurement and maintenance of all the department's capital assets to include Fire Department facilities, firefighting apparatus and equipment, department vehicles, and technology assets. Additionally, the office is responsible for the day to day procurement and maintenance of non-capital equipment and supplies. The Chief and Assistant Chief also serve as the liaison between the department, and the Information Technology Department and the emergency communications dispatch group within the Police Department, and the HR department and assists in the recruitment and selection of new employees.

Emergency Medical Services...

The scheduling of two stations with personnel to provide Advanced Life Support (ALS) services, twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, is accomplished 100% of the time. Crews determine the severity of EMS calls upon scene arrival and administer appropriate care and transportation. EMS personnel follow the latest updated medical protocols established by our medical control to achieve the best outcome for our residents and others who visit and work in the community when their time of need is of the utmost importance.

Fire Suppression...

In the unfortunate event of a fire, a quick and efficient response is made by our department. Uncontrolled fires tend to double in size with each passing minute. Using up-to-date equipment and proven suppression strategies, controlling these fires is the major goal. By controlling fires, preventing their spread, final extinguishment and checking for extension of fire, we mitigate the overall damage to lives, property and the environment.

Rescue Operations...

Our personnel are trained with extrication equipment, stabilization equipment and basic rope techniques. When vehicle accidents occur and citizens are trapped, the “Jaws-of-Life” can disentangle the patient, freeing them for EMS treatment. Stabilization is used to prevent an object from moving or collapsing further allowing for patient rescue. Ropes can be used to help lift or lower patients from difficult areas. With the help of the Medina County All-Hazards Team, this mutual aid resource can assist us with rescues involving structural collapse, trench rescues, high or low angle rescues where ropes and special rigging are required and swift water rescues which occur during flash flood events.

Also, department personnel train regularly on search and rescue techniques. While working in a hostile environment such as a structure fire, the heat, smoke and darkness make moving around difficult, especially if looking for a missing person. Different search patterns and the use of tools and ropes aiding in the search operation are practiced. Another search and rescue procedure practiced is “Rapid Intervention Team” or RIT. This is a specific training requiring different tools and techniques used primarily when a firefighter is reported down, missing or is calling a “mayday.”

Hazardous Materials...

All of our firefighters are trained in hazardous materials incidents, or haz-mat, at both the awareness and operations levels. Whether it is a large tanker truck on the highway or a small acid or fertilizer spill at a local store, our members can recognize the event, start initial containment and initiate evacuation procedures, if necessary. Again, the Medina County All-Hazards Team is a great mutual aid resource that can assist in larger or unusual situations involving hazardous materials.

Public Assistance...

Sometimes citizens have questions or concerns that don't require a full fire department response with fire engines and/or ambulances. In these instances a fire department representative will respond and determine the course of action needed. Situations such as a smoke detector beeping, a CO monitor sounding or a strange developing odor causes a citizen concern. Our investigation and mitigation of these situations will help ease the citizens' apprehension.

Fire Prevention...

The number one way to control fires is to prevent them from occurring in the first place. Each school, church, store, business office, industrial and manufacturing complex and any place the public has access to or assembles has a fire safety inspection completed annually by our fire safety inspectors. There are currently nine inspectors, including the Chief and Assistant Chief, with a tenth attending a fire safety inspector's class. The inspectors conduct a complete walkthrough of all occupancies while looking for fire code violations. If left disregarded, these violations have the potential of starting a fire or causing personal injury. Follow-up inspections are conducted to insure all violations are corrected. Fire alarm, sprinkler and other fire suppression systems are tested and inspected annually with third party vendors to insure their proper operations.

Fire safety inspectors also conduct residential home inspections for foster care, adoption and respite care. These are state required inspections and are done when requested from the



resident. Child day care establishments also require a state fire safety inspection and are done annually.

The State Fire Marshal conducts inspections of hotels, motels and nursing facilities. The Medina County Building Department inspects all new building construction and renovated building projects. We work closely with both agencies to insure proper code enforcement.

Building plan reviews are done when new building construction, renovation building construction and new allotments or streets are proposed. These plan reviews are necessary to identify possible problems or issues in regards to fire and public safety. These matters can then be addressed prior to the actual construction or development.

Public Education...

Educating the public on fire safety, smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors, fire extinguishers and general house safety is an ongoing endeavor. To help with this activity, a fire safety and public education trailer is used at several public events throughout the year. The trailer uses a photoelectric fire extinguisher to simulate its use with a kitchen fire. There are also smoke detectors, a heated door and a smoke generator to help simulate a fire outside a bedroom. This is a big hit with the kids!

Fire station tours are conducted on a requested basis and usually involve groups such as elementary school classes, boy and girl scouts and other children groups. Fire safety education events also occur at the schools, in classrooms, when requested. Material regarding fire and home safety education is distributed annually to all elementary grades. During the summer months, we participate with the schools and the Wadsworth Police Department in conducting a *Safety Forces Camp*. This week long summer camp for kids encompasses different aspects of child safety and activities. Another summer camp conducted in conjunction with the schools and police department is *Safety Town*; directed towards children entering kindergarten. Again, all aspects of safety are presented in fun, educational ways.

Public education presentations are also conducted for the elderly. Persons over the age of 62 account for almost 20% of the population in Wadsworth. Programs include circumstances like trip hazard mitigation, fire safety, smoke and CO detectors, fire alarms and fire extinguishers. Several senior citizens establishments and assisted living establishments have had these programs conducted at their facilities.

Fire Investigations...

When a fire occurs, there is always an origin, or where it started, and a cause, or how it started. It is the responsibility of the fire department to establish these two items. With a thorough and systematic investigation, the origin and cause can be detected. Several department members have received training in relation to this type of investigation. All fires, big or small, are investigated to determine the origin and cause. These investigations are included as part of the incident report and are filed with our department. All fire incidents are reported to the state as part of the National Fire Incident Reporting System or NIFRS. In certain instances, the State Fire Marshal is contacted and asked to help or conduct the fire investigation.

Public Events...

Our department participates in several public events throughout the year. Events like *The Key to My Father's House Touch-a-Truck*, *Target's National Night Out* and *Home Depot's Safety Days* are some that we regularly take part in. Apparatus, tools and equipment are on display where citizens can see these items up close. EMS attends other events like the Blue Tip Carnival and the airport's Props and Pistons Show to help in case of accidents. EMS can also perform blood pressure checks, blood sugar checks, evaluate cuts and scrapes and treat minor injuries.

The Wadsworth Fire & EMS Association holds a pancake breakfast every Memorial Day at Fire Station 1. Members start early in the morning cooking sausage and flipping pancakes for the public. Equipment and apparatus is on display for the public to view.

Station Duties...

While there seems to be enough items listed above to stay busy each and every day, there is still “down time” during shifts while staffing the stations. During these times members do station duties which include, cleaning the station bathrooms, kitchens, bunkrooms and living areas, as well as, office space and apparatus areas. Apparatus and ambulance checks are done daily to ensure equipment is in working order. Outside grounds are maintained with grass cutting, weed control and snow removal. During this time, members review new medical protocols and policies and procedures. Training review and equipment review is also a common task during these times.

While members are on shift, staffing the stations, the general public is welcome to stop by to have their blood pressure checked, take a tour or have a ring cut off.



The SWOT Analysis

SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. A SWOT analysis is a tool that allows managers to gain insight of an organization and its environment from collecting and evaluating internal and external factors which have, or may have, an impact on the organization. It is designed to be simple, practical and clear to understand. The main purpose should aim to turn the weaknesses into strengths and threats into opportunities so as to add value and improvement to the services that are provided to the public.

The Officers of WFD were asked to perform a SWOT analysis. They were asked to be honest in their analysis and record all thoughts, both good and bad. These officers are; Assistant Chief Robert Lindner, Captain David Cleckner, Lieutenant Timothy Flath, Lieutenant Robert Heller, Lieutenant Jason Lorton and Lieutenant Timothy McCurry. A summary of the analyses is as follows:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Apparatus/Equipment Well Maintained ➤ Well Trained Members ➤ Good Teamwork at Emergency Incidents ➤ Good Budget for Outside Training ➤ Good Budget for Modern Equipment ➤ Good Water Supply-ISO rating ➤ Moderate Community Risks ➤ P&P's Compliance ➤ Sound Community Risk Reduction Methodology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Policies & Procedures are outdated and are inconsistent ➤ Personnel not being used to their fullest potential ➤ Inconsistency in Chain-of-Command ➤ Inconsistency of staff response to calls ➤ Lack of cohesion between shifts, stations, full-time & on-call staff ➤ No staff development plan for probationary, junior & officer staff ➤ Staffing & scheduling is inconsistent; seniority not considered ➤ Communication & vision of the department is lacking ➤ Resource Distribution for Newly Developing Areas ➤ Training Resources and Facilities ➤ Inter-safety force responses not highly coordinated ➤ Lack of representation on County Teams
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Department's Use of Social Media ➤ Increased Engagement with Community ➤ Utilize External Trainers & New Trainings ➤ Increased Minimum Station Staffing ➤ Chief Officer Development with Business/Management Classes ➤ Explore more grant opportunities ➤ Investigate potential of shared staffing and/or response with neighboring departments ➤ Shared Training Resources ➤ Collaboration of Mutual Aid Partners to meet response goals ➤ Ability to maintain prompt response and protect lives by making routes of travel safe through expansion of traffic signal preemption program ➤ Use Citizen Satisfaction Survey Results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Failure of levies which reduces funding for capital expenses & operations ➤ Non-support of Department needs from City Council, Safety Committee & City Administration ➤ Retirements & staff reductions ➤ Fire/EMS apparatus getting more wear/tear with increased call volumes & mileage ➤ Aging station infrastructure ➤ Radio/communication obstacles with mutual aid departments on different frequencies ➤ Further relationship division among stations and full-time and on-call staff ➤ Impact of future growth/expanding development reaching service borders and redevelopment in existing areas ➤ Age of housing stock ➤ Misalignment/confusion with Council direction ➤ Changing Community Demographic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Age & Ethnicity ➤ Regulatory Environments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ISO/FSRS-Changes impact on ratings ○ Fire & Building Codes ○ NFPA changes

Strengths...

Being able to recognize strengths is very important to an organization as it identifies the capability of providing services to the public. Also, our strengths can be considered when facing weakness or threat issues.

Some specific excerpts from the officer's analysis include:

- "Most of our equipment is state-of-the-art";
- "Solid financial base for training and equipment; outside training is generally easy to attain";
- "The experience of the veteran firefighters," and
- "The trainings that are provided in-house are good overall."

Weaknesses...

For us to begin to move progressively forward depends greatly on our ability to identify what we don't do well or don't do at all. To determine and deal with these weaknesses can be challenging and difficult to accomplish effectively. Determining weakness requires a hard, sincere and straightforward look at the department while being honest with the analysis.

Some specific excerpts from the officer's analysis include:

- "The upper management and internal management not fighting for the part-time members, both officers and staff";
- "Lack of respect between one another as co-workers";
- "Have some staff who is not dedicated to service or patient care or to the department or city. Only here for the money, then they are gone. No pride in workmanship. They want a part-time job but not the responsibilities of a job," and
- "Division amongst the department (full-time versus part-time) mentality."



Opportunities...

These predominately exist outside of the department but internal opportunities should not be overlooked. The focus of outside opportunities should be on improving, expanding and developing new and old possibilities to better the services we provide.

Some specific excerpts from the officer's analysis include:

- "Getting as much outside training as possible like crash course by Genesis. Also bringing in more speakers to training so we can get different and unique ways of doing things";
- "Need more involvement with the community with programs like CPR, AED and fire prevention";
- "Increase staffing level at both stations";
- "Offer developmental/management training that is not linked to the fire service for chief officers," and
- "Change staffing model to assure more consistent and reliable coverage."

Threats...

Understand that threats are not completely and/or directly controlled by the department. In the same aspect, they should be recognized or at least seen as potential unfavorable issues where proper planning and execution can cause the threat to be less invasive.

Some specific excerpts from the officer's analysis include:

- "Safety Committee creating a poor public perception and may undermine civic confidence";
- "Current Public Safety Committee objective and their attack on our credibility;"
- "Aging of membership";
- "Funding is always a threat between council and levies. We may need to educate both council and the public more," and
- "Lack of trained staff to take over and advance into positions that are currently filled by senior members."

The next phase of the department's SWOT analysis and assessment is a compilation of input from the community members and stakeholders. This effort will help to define concerns and establish community expectations for the services that the fire and EMS departments would need to be prepared to provide for in the future. Key areas of concern or interest can be identified through the use of a community survey and be compiled for review.

Strategic Planning Topics

Strategic Planning Topic #1- Feasibility Studies...

These studies can be done to assess several different aspects of a fire and EMS department. They are defined as an assessment of the practicality of a proposed project. There are many consultant businesses and companies that specialize in these studies. Also groups such as the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association have capabilities to help initiate such studies. Having an unbiased third party conduct assessments and studies such as these will give an "outsiders" look into potential projects, problems and solutions.

Strategic Objective/Action Plan Task	Projected Completion	Responsible Group/Person
<p>Objective 1: Conduct a feasibility study to assess the continued use, future needs and location of Fire Station 1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Station 1 was built in 1963 with several additions through the years. With the addition of providing EMS services in 1982 and full-time staffing in 1998, the facility has simply outgrown its initial purpose as a "volunteer" fire station. Being over 50-years old, constant upkeep and maintenance is overwhelming. Can Station 1 be remodeled or does it need a total rebuild? Will an addition of a second story help with desperately needed square footage? What should the footprint be to best accommodate all the apparatus, office, meeting/training and living spaces? Is Station 1 in the "best" location to provide services? 	2017	Fire/EMS Admin & Consultants
<p>Objective 2: Explore a LGIF grant to conduct a feasibility study to address shared staffing, Fire/EMS capital, equipment and fire company co-location with mutual aid partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wadsworth is not the only department having staffing issues and shortages of personnel responding for calls, with surrounding departments having similar issues. LGIF offers communities financial assistance for planning and implementing projects to create more efficient and effective service delivery models. Shared staffing can be analyzed with neighboring departments. Political boundaries can be overcome to provide faster service. Equipment can be shared, such as turnout gear, helmets, gloves, uniforms, even apparatus and vehicles. 	2018	Fire/EMS Admin & Consultants
<p>Objective 3: Conduct a feasibility study to assess current and future staffing and response Fire/EMS time capabilities and needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently two personnel are manned at each station, 24/7. The department has 10 full-time personnel with approximately 40-50 part-time, paid on-call personnel. Fire calls require a response from part-time personnel from their homes. Also manpower intensive EMS calls include response direct to the scene with part-time, paid on-call personnel. Is this type of staffing adequate for the number of responses for both fire and EMS? Should there be more staffing at each station 24/7? Should there be more full-time personnel? Should there be more or less part-time personnel? Would contractual personnel be a viable option for staffing? Should part-time personnel be on set rotating shifts? 	2020	Fire/EMS Admin & Consultants

Strategic Planning Topic #2 – Fire & EMS Levies...

Levies are basically property taxes that are voted on by citizens in which the department serves. Levies generate funds to help cover costs of the department which can include personnel and operations costs, capital, equipment and supplies. Levies are a great way to supplement and offset the use of the general fund. On the other hand, levies can be precarious. Levies need support and backing to show, or demonstrate, to the public the need for and how it will help the department delivery emergency services. The citizens must vote on and pass the levy so it can generate the monies needed. If the levy does not pass, then the department has to seek monies from other sources or the general fund. Currently there is no fire levy in place as it was allowed to expire at the end of 2015 and was never brought before the citizens for a vote. Also, the current EMS levy is set to expire at the end of 2017.

Strategic Objective/Action Plan Task	Projected Completion	Responsible Group/Person
<p>Objective 1: Assess the current and future operational and capital needs of the EMS levy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current EMS levy is used for operations, personnel costs, capital, equipment and supplies. Identify fiscal amounts needed for the future department and service needs. 	2017	Fire/EMS Admin, City/County Auditors, City Council
<p>Objective 2: Assess the need to reinstate the Fire Capital levy to address future capital need of the fire department.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Past fire levy was used for capital expenses only. Current capital fund reserves will be exhausted over time if no new revenue is established. Future apparatus purchases along with future station upgrades or new stations are in jeopardy of not materializing due to continued falling behind on capital saving plans. 	2017	Fire/EMS Admin, City/County Auditors, City Council
<p>Objective 3: Assess the rationales to combine EMS & Fire levies in order to meet the current and future operational and capital needs of the department.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the fire levy expired and the EMS levy set for renewal, now is the perfect time to explore the combining of two levies into one. This combined levy must be used for capital expenses, personnel and operational costs, as well as, equipment and supplies. Assess combined levy usefulness in hiring future personnel to include part-time, full-time and/or contractual employees. A combined levy will alleviate the need for two separate levy campaigns. This can help with current costs and deficiencies and establish future needs and purchase limitations. 	2017	Fire/EMS Admin, City/County Auditors, City Council

Strategic Planning Topic #3: Facilities, Apparatus and Essential Physical & Technical Resources ...

Physical resources are defined as the fire stations, training facilities, fire apparatus and other capital expenditures that constitute the department's capital assets. Special attention is required to obtain and maintain appropriate quality physical resources.

The very nature of public fire protection and related emergency services in general require considerable capital assets in the form of fire stations, large specialized equipment, and technology assets designed to facilitate fire protection, emergency medical services, rescue services, resource management, emergency communications, hazard analysis, planning for services, and training.

Unfortunately, acquiring and maintaining these assets is expensive and requires significant staff time to manage but is a necessary public safety function.

Given the build-out horizon for the city, the anticipated replacement schedule for current Fire and EMS Department assets, and a growing and evolving demand for services, we believe ensuring capital assets will continue to require significant organizational resources to manage.

Anticipated city build-out and expansion demonstrates the potential need for additional fire stations to serve the City based on current service level objectives. Remodeling and/or rebuilding of Fire Station 1 is



required to relieve crowded work and unsafe living conditions, restore building use needs and address current and future service level deficiencies.

Administration staff is continuously evaluating the cost-benefit relationships relating to the long established apparatus replacement schedule based on experience with critical vehicles, their components, maintenance and reliability, as well as, future service demands and changing hazard risks. In regards to ambulances, the department administration is recommending that our current (12) year front line ambulance replacement schedule be changed to (10) year front line replacements.

New technologies present opportunities for the department to enhance service provision. New generations of thermal imaging cameras, self-contained breathing apparatus, GIS technology, mobile wireless capability, fiber optic cable deployment, digital radio technology, improved EMS & CAD software, foam firefighting capability that reduces water use, and teleconferencing capability to facilitate meetings and trainings are just a few examples of technologies current under review or implementation by the department.

The Department Administration monitors the replacement schedules to ensure appropriate assets contribute to the City's ISO public protection rating and remains an important consideration for budgetary recommendations. The City's current Public Protection Classification (PPC) is based on an ISO survey conducted in July 2014. The relative credit for the City's water system improved from the previous survey and received a 32.17 out of 40 rating. The relative credit for our ability to receive and dispatch alarms (9-1-1 communications) also improved from the previous survey and received a 7.75 out of 10 rating. The relative credit for the fire department received a 29.41 out of 50 rating. When all three systems, or ratings, along with the "divergence factor" are combined, the City's classification translates to a Class 4. Wadsworth is only 0.09 away from a Class 3 rating. To show perspective, out of 49,010 departments rated countrywide, there are only 3,220 departments rated higher than Wadsworth.

Strategic Objective/Action Plan Task	Projected Completion	Responsible Group/Person
Objective 1: Recommend the remodeling, rebuilding, adding, or relocating of fire facilities as needed for the effective delivery of emergency services and to provide a safer environment for staff.	2017/2021	Fire/EMS Admin, Consultants, City Council and Levy Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renovate, rebuild and/or relocate Fire Station 1. • Evaluate the need to build a Fire Station 3 in the southwest area of jurisdiction. • Continue to assess opportunities to procure land to build a Fire Station 3 in the southwest area of jurisdiction. • When appropriate the Admin staff will recommend utilizing unused fund capacity from Fire & EMS levies, together with other governmental financing mechanisms for the design and construction of fire stations which may include joint Fire/EMS/Police training building and community safety town facilities. 		
Objective 2: Identify location(s) for stations to address anticipated community risks, response times, and service delivery needed to maintain and improve the City's current PPC.	2017/2021	Fire/EMS Admin, Consultants and City Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project when and where a fire station will be needed in southwest jurisdictional area. • Explore all possible locational opportunities to provide fire/EMS services in Southwest jurisdictional area. • Project capital and operational costs associated with a fire station in southwest jurisdictional area. 		
Objective 3: Evaluate the current apparatus acquisition plan to ensure it meets the emergency response needs of the community.	Continuous	Fire/EMS Admin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Execute the apparatus replacement schedule plan with proper funding, budgeting and procurement strategies (See, Department Apparatus Replacement Schedules). • Revise front line EMS ambulance replacement schedule from every (12) years to every (10) years. 		
Objective 4: Identify immediate and long term needs for a Joint Fire/EMS/Police Department Training Facility.	Continuous	Fire/EMS Admin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore efforts to construct a joint fire/police training facility. 		
Objective 5: Maintain and improve upon the City's current PPC and compliance with the most current edition of the FSRs.	Continuous	Fire/EMS Admin

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with FD managers so that equipment testing aligns with the FSRS. • Coordinate with FD training chief to ensure training program objectives align with the FSRS. • Review and consult with Emergency Dispatch Department to ensure appropriate call processing times and that all Fire/EMS procedures are followed. • Formally request an ISO field representative conduct a class for the new FSRS. • Consult with Water & Water Distribution Departments on maintaining of hydrant testing maintenance schedule and new hydrant planning and distribution. • Conduct planning meeting with PD and public works about the new FSRS, if necessary. • Bi-Annually crosscheck the ISO Grading Schedule with Department Strategic Plan Initiatives. 		
Objective 6: Coordinate with Substation Signals Department to continue the installation of intersection pre-emption project.	2017-2021	Fire/EMS Admin and Signals Substation & Engineering
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a list of intersections that need pre-emption and prioritize the list. • In collaboration with Signals Substation & Engineering Department staff, develop criterion on which intersection shall be evaluated for the need of traffic signal pre-emption. 		
Objective 7: Incorporate iPads/Tablet Use for MDT, Inspections & Officers.	2018-2019	Fire/EMS Admin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will replace paper reports for fire safety inspections. • All records stored in a cloud based system. • Easier access and retrievable records for all occupancies. • Can include fire reporting, or mandatory state/ NIFRS reporting. • Can incorporate fire hydrant locations. • Preplans and layouts of buildings can be accessed and updated. • Locations of pertinent information like gas and electric shutoffs can be accessed. • Personnel accountability on fire scenes or large areas scenes can be utilized. • Incident command structure, tasks and forms can be accessed along with NIMS forms and information. • Hazardous Material operations and information can be accessed. • Enable access to map layers, ERG, MABAS, and many other resources are available and accessible. • Coordinate technology programming with equipment enhancements. • Train staff on effective use. 		
Objective 8: Investigate and Keep Abreast with Evolving Fire/EMS Technologies	Continuous	Fire/EMS Admin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to investigate new programs, new ideas and new hardware and decide if it will benefit the department. 		
Objective 9: Provide a workplace free from all controllable environmental health risks.	Continuous	Fire/EMS Admin and HR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and identify environmental hazards that may exist in fire department facilities that are controllable and that the Fire Department will take an active role in eliminating. • Provide an annual report on the departmental state of safety including number of accidents, lost work days, mitigation activities and hazards identified and eliminated. 		

Strategic Planning Topic #4: Operations, Programs and Services ...

Programs are defined as the operations, services, activities and responses provided by the Fire and EMS departments for the community that are designed, organized, and operated in compliance with the agency's mission, goals and objectives. The key elements used to evaluate these services are: adequacy, effectiveness, methods, and program outcomes.

The Fire and EMS department's mission, goals and objectives will determine the applicability of all the listed programs. The fire department programs are consistent with the criterion in the Fire and Emergency Services Self-Assessment Manual. These programs include Fire Suppression, Fire Prevention/Life Safety Programs, Public Education Programs, Fire Investigation Programs, Technical Rescue, Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT), Emergency Medical Services, Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response, Aviation Rescue and Firefighting Services, Other Programs.

For many years, the fire department has maintained the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) Standard of Response Coverage. NFPA Standards 1710 and 1720 state response times for structure fires should be less than 9-minutes, 90% of the time for city and less than 14-minutes, 80% of the time for township, while EMS response times should be less than 8-minutes, 90% of the time. The average response time in 2015 was 6:26 for fire responses and 4:22 for EMS responses. Factors that could influence our ability to comply with these response time goals include: large response areas served by existing fire stations, more streets and development, additional traffic volumes, continued implementation of traffic signal pre-emption devices and roadway improvement projects.

As we continue our affiliation and participation with the Medina County All-Hazards Team, staff assignments, training and equipment acquisition for technical rescue operations will need to be evaluated in upcoming years. With ongoing development and expansion of the City, the departments anticipated increased future operational needs in these and other areas will require an enhanced level of service by the Fire and EMS Departments.

The department anticipates additional opportunities to partner with other agencies in order to improve a variety of emergency services for residents. We anticipate new internal and external staffing and operations at Wadsworth fire stations in the future. In addition, the department has well developed and functioning external agency agreements but as the city continues to grow and expand we must utilize our auto-aid and mutual-aid partners to aid in meeting our service delivery needs and response time performance goals.

We have also experienced and anticipate a growing future need to explore creative new services brought about by public demand. Examples include: Wadsworth's community emergency response team (CERT), public access defibrillator program, National Fire Prevention Week open house and events and public fire academies and challenges.

Strategic Objective/Action Plan Task	Projected Completion	Responsible Group/Person
Objective 1: Restructure existing emergency response to maximize use of existing & future manpower resources.	Continuous	Fire/EMS Admin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the impacts of allowing Fire & EMS responses from station 1. • Assess the impact of (3) person shifts 24/7. • Assess the impact of assigning part-time, paid on-call staff to rotating shifts or squads. • Evaluate & consider one engine responses. • Consider Removal of “On-call” schedule. 		
Objective 2: The fire department must take advantage of all operational and cost effective benefits that may be derived from external agency agreements.	Continuous	Fire/EMS Admin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue relationship with Township Trustees regarding township Fire & EMS contracted services. • Revise written auto-aid & mutual-aid agreements with surrounding agencies. • Explore shared service opportunities with surrounding agencies. 		
Objective 3: Establish a Social Media Presence	2017	Fire/EMS Admin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Facebook & Twitter page so the community can see us every day. Items such as department and community events, safety tips, images of trainings, emergency information, and such can be posted. • Create a department webpage, linked to the City’s webpage, to help advertise events, post monthly stats, communicate information about personnel, stations, vehicles and department functions to the general public. • Include up-to-date content and links showing other webpages of interest, such as the Wadsworth Police’s Facebook page, City of Wadsworth webpage and the State Fire Marshal’s webpage can be displayed. • Investigate other forms of social media, and consider if use would be beneficial for departmental use. 		
Objective 4: Investigate the Need for Paramedicine	2019	Fire/EMS Admin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a new concept, which is allowed by state law. • Paramedicine could be beneficial and help certain citizens. • This could tax personnel and add costs therefore a system must be established, with the help of city administration, before moving forward. 		
Objective 5: Establish a Public Fire/EMS Academy	2020	Fire/EMS Admin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to have the public go through a modified fire and/or EMS training course. This will include lectures and hands-on practice. • Would give the citizens a feel of what it’s like to be a firefighter or medic. • This realization can help bound citizens to the department and would create support for the department. • A great way to advertise the department and interact with the citizens. 		
Objective 6: Organize Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)	2021	Fire/EMS Admin and MCEMA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Emergency Response Teams or CERT is organized through FEMA and run by local Emergency Management Agencies or local safety service departments. 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, train and inform citizens and create a local CERT. • Allows citizens to join a team and help in large emergency situations or large disasters. • Gives citizens a sense of helping, giving and being involved with the community. • Would make connections with other local CERT teams. • Department personnel interact and work alongside citizens in real emergency situations. 		
<p>Objective 7: Provide comprehensive programs for the distribution of information to the public and seek the solicitation of feedback from the public.</p>	<p>2017</p>	<p>Fire/EMS Admin, IT Department and WCTV</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to utilize the City of Wadsworth’s Government Access Channel to promote public fire education and safety “Hot Tips”. • Improve National Fire Prevention Week activities with a kid’s Safety Festival and a Kid’s Combat Challenge, as well as, additional fire safety programs at local elementary schools during National Fire Prevention Week. • Seek additional opportunities to utilize the Wadsworth Fire Department Fire Safety Education Trailer. 		

Strategic Planning Topic #5: Human Resources & Personnel...

Human resources are defined as all aspects of employee relations. The heart of any organization is its people. Because fire protection and EMS services are labor intensive, team-based dangerous work, health, safety and fitness needs to be a top priority of the Fire & EMS Departments.

The City, Fire & EMS Departments have long histories of proactive employee safety initiatives that includes annual employee health fairs with screenings and equipping employees with not only required safety equipment but equipment that is high quality and that enhances our ability to do our jobs effectively and safely. As the Department grows, we envision the need to effectively anticipate unsafe acts and environments and the ability to equip, train and operate within those environments.

The Fire & EMS Department is also a relatively young and impressionable collection of employees. Over the last five years, the department has made significant effort to identify and reinforce organizational values that lead to harmonious and productive working relationships among employees and that provides efficient and effective service for the public.

The Fire & EMS Departments are unique from the perspective that its workforce is specifically organized into crews that work and live, for extended periods of time, with each other. This working relationship is often characterized as family-like and produces strong family-like bonds among many employees.



We believe the organization must continuously monitor this unique work environment and anticipate and respond to the role that communications, policies, and procedures play in creating a harmonious and effective work environment.

Currently, both stations are manned with two personnel 24/7. EMS personnel sometimes respond as paid-on-call to emergency scenes helping the arriving station crews. Fire calls are supplemented with manpower from part-time, paid-on-call staff volunteer responses to the stations to help man apparatus. This has worked well, to a point. The average number of personnel responding to emergency calls has fallen off the past several years. Alternatives must be looked at to better utilize personnel and serve the public.

Strategic Objective/Action Plan Task	Projected Completion	Responsible Group/Person
Objective 1: Expand full-time Roster	2021	Fire/EMS Admin and City Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently there are ten-fulltime 24-hour personnel who answer emergency calls. These ten personnel are split between three shifts with two shifts having three personnel and one shift having four personnel. • Hire two more full-time personnel to make all three shifts equal at four personnel each. 		
Objective 2: Full-time Shift Captains	2020	Fire/EMS Admin and City Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently does not exist. Establish one Shift Captain for each shift for a total of three Captains. • Shift Captains would be fulltime personnel working 24-hour shifts and members of the IAFF Union. • Shift Captains would be in charge of overseeing daily operations, trainings, report recording, inspections, special details, schedules, shift coverage, supplies and equipment and maintenance. 		
Objective 3: Establish Six Part-Time Officers	2021	Fire/EMS Admin and City Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently have one Captain and 5 Lieutenants. It is possible that some of the current officers who are fulltime will become Shift Captains. • Future promotional tests will establish a total of six part-time officers to compliment the three fulltime Shift Captains. 		
Objective 4: Evaluate Use of Contractual Employees	2018	Fire/EMS Admin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently all part-time personnel “volunteer” there time for station fills and response to emergency calls. They are not subject to a fixed or rotating schedule. • Contractual personnel would be assigned certain shifts or days or times to cover station shifts. • Contractual personnel would not be required to respond to emergency calls from home. • These personnel could live outside the response district. This opens a larger pool of potential members. • Contractual personnel can be shared with other departments, saving in testing, training and equipment costs. 		

Strategic Planning Topic #6 - Training and Competency ...

Training and educational programs express the philosophy of the organization they serve and are central to its completing its mission in an effective and safe manner. Learning resources should include a library, other materials that support teaching and learning, instructional methodologies and technologies, support services, distribution and maintenance systems for equipment and materials, related computer and software systems, telecommunications, other audio visual media, and the facilities to utilize these resources.

Central to success of the training and educational process is an organizational structure and a technically proficient support staff. The training staff should provide services that encourage and stimulate competency, innovation, and increased effectiveness. The agency or system should provide those learning resources necessary to support quality training.

Strategic Objective/Action Plan Task	Projected Completion	Responsible Group/Person
Objective 1: Support individual professional development opportunities to insure proficiency with departmental policies and plans	Continuous	Fire/EMS Admin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a policy matter, develop and approve a fiscal year performance based training calendar and schedule. • Continue to support company level training to insure proficiency with knowledge, skills and experiences. • Develop and deliver a driver and pump operator training program. 		
Objective 2: Create in-depth mentoring program to prepare staff for the skills and expectations of the Chief positions.	2019	Fire Chief & Asst. Fire Chief
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch Chief & Assistant Chief “fill-in procedure” Task Book and Process. 		



Strategic Planning Topic #7 – Communications...

Communication is defined as “the imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by speech, writing, or signs.” Forms of communication can include talking, hand written memos and letters, hand gestures, radios, telephone, news media. Today’s technology add countless other ways to communicate including e-mail, texts, instant messaging, video chatting, and social media, in general. Fire departments often think of, or refer to, radio communication when this subject is discussed. Also, communicating up and down the chain-of-command is relative to fire departments.

Strategic Objective/Action Plan Task	Projected Completion	Responsible Group/Person
Objective 1: Radio & frequency upgrades	2021	Fire/EMS Admin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All departments around Wadsworth are moving to or have moved to 700 or 800 MHz radio systems. Frequency bands like UHF and VHF are becoming obsolete and equipment upgrades are not as available. The ability to communicate to mutual aid departments is crucial in times of emergency situations. Research and incorporate new radio equipment to move to 700 and/or 800 MHz frequency. This shall include all mobile/vehicle, handheld and Minitor type radio equipment. Infrastructure, repeaters, voters and dispatch consoles shall be upgraded to support 700/800 MHz frequency. 		
Objective 2: Improve Communication for/with Department Members	Continuous	Fire/EMS Admin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate cell phone apps such as “Active 911” or similar to improve on the second means of dispatching calls to members, incorporate location maps and other pertinent information regarding emergency calls. Investigate an e-mail alternative to the current “44281fire-ems.com” to help with accessibility and timeliness with passing along important information to department members. Rollout communication specific policies to set groundwork for procedures, operations and administration. Include social media presence to provide a suitable and beneficial platform to communicate, inform and install a sense of camaraderie amongst members. 		
Objective 3: Coffee with the Chief programs.	2017	Fire Chief
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives opportunity for public to visit, talk and ask questions or voice concerns in an open forum. Allows Chief to address questions directly to concerned citizens. Chief interacts directly with public, building trust and confidence within the community. Other department members can be “special guests.” This will allow the community to personally meet department members when they usually cannot. 		

Plan Evaluation & Review

How will we know if this plan is successful or heading in the proper direction? This document and the topics presented within will be reviewed on an annual basis. All strategic planning topics will be assessed. Topics that have been completed will be examined for its success or shortcomings. Topics in progress will be followed for any potential setbacks. Future topics will be discussed to assess if they still fit into this plan.

When this review process is completed, then this document can be modified. Topics can be added or subtracted to show what has occurred, what is occurring and what is to occur. Updates to schedules and information can be made at this review time. The revised plan can then be reworked, updated and redistributed.

Conclusion

Change. It is inevitable. It should be embraced, not pushed away. It should be welcomed with open arms. This strategic plan will cause change. It will generate change. It will demand change. It will exemplify change. All for the better...



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