

June 2024

Consolidation Feasibility Study



City of Livingston and Park County Rural Fire District #1

Livingston, MT

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CONSULTANT REPORT

***Livingston and Park County, MT
Consolidation Feasibility Study***

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Livingston, in cooperation with the Park County Rural Fire District #1, contracted with Fitch and Associates to evaluate the feasibility of the two agencies consolidating fire and EMS service delivery under a single agency. The project is largely motivated by Montana's state statute, which prohibits the city from annexing into the fire district once its population exceeds 10,000. According to the US Census Bureau, Livingston's estimated population was 8,790 in 2022.

Livingston Fire Rescue is an all-career department that provides fire protection to the City of Livingston and automatic aid to the areas of Park County within 5 miles of the city. They are also the sole provider of EMS transport to the City of Livingston and Park County. Park County Rural Fire District #1 provides fire protection within its defined boundaries and automatic aid to the City of Livingston utilizing a predominantly volunteer workforce. Its primary station is located within the City of Livingston.

Comprehensive data-based quantitative and geospatial analyses were utilized to objectively evaluate the historical service demand by type and severity. Additionally, a review of facilities, fleet, staffing, and budget was completed for each agency to identify possible areas of efficiency.

In 2022, the two agencies' combined call demand was 2,569 including 398 interfacility transfers. The historical response time performance in Livingston is 8.3 minutes, 90% of the time, while the response time performance in Park County Rural Fire District #1 is 31.5 minutes, 90% of the time. Since neither agency has an adopted performance standard, the analysis and options presented in this report assume maintaining the current performance experienced by the community.

Several consolidation options are presented for consideration. Additionally, several staffing and deployment alternatives were provided for consideration regardless of whether consolidation is pursued.

Priority recommendations are provided below for convenience. A full list of recommendations is provided at the end of the report.

1. The City of Livingston should evaluate and determine if the consolidation of fire/EMS services is in its best long-term interests based on operational, fiscal, and political considerations before it reaches Class 1 status.
2. If consolidation is attempted, sufficient time and effort should be made to ensure a workplace culture that values the career staff, the volunteers, and the college students, presuming all are part of the combined approach.
3. A reinvestment plan for liberated general fund dollars or a tax roll-back strategy should be developed with community input as part of any consolidation planning.

4. The City should consider the value of savings and daily staffing concentrations associated with a 3-platoon shift schedule to improve overall staffing strength; understanding that any change would require impact bargaining with the labor unit.
5. Based on the disparate population densities and historical demand in Livingston and Park County, it is recommended that the City or consolidated Agency consider adopting a differentiated service model. This approach utilizes an urban performance standard in high-demand urban areas and a rural performance standard in low-demand rural areas.
6. The City should work to ensure their EMS billing vendor services are able to provide best practice performance along with data retention, validation, and reporting capabilities for all elements of EMS transport revenue management.

DESCRIPTION OF THE COMMUNITY SERVED

History of Agency

Originally called Clark's City, Livingston was founded in 1882 as a division headquarters of the Northern Pacific Railway and was renamed for Crawford Livingston, a railroad executive. Large locomotive repair shops were built as the locomotives often required maintenance before crossing the Bozeman Pass which is the line's highest point. Livingston was also the Northern Pacific Railway northern gateway to Yellowstone National Park. Once the line was abandoned, Livingston was still the northern gateway to the park, with motorized vehicles replacing passenger trains. Over the years, Livingston became a tourist destination and arts hub for people travelling from around the world to see Yellowstone.¹

The territorial legislature created Park County with Livingston as the county seat in 1887. By the mid-1890s city officials needed office space and a firehouse was even more critical. Fiery disasters had long plagued the community, and the destruction of the opera house in January of 1896 underscored this need. A \$10,000 bond issue provided funds to build adjoining facilities on this site. City officials moved in before the end of 1896, and a volunteer fire company formed in early 1897. By 1900, the company boasted twenty-eight volunteers, two hose carts, a hose and ladder wagon, and 2,200 feet of cotton hose. Fire driver M. J. McGinnis, hired in 1894, was Livingston's only paid fireman until 1906. The city purchased its first motorized fire truck in 1915 and it remained in use until the late 1950s.²

What is now known as Livingston Fire Rescue was founded in 1883 as the Livingston Hook and Ladder Company. In 1897, Livingston chartered its first organized volunteer fire department as the Livingston Volunteer Fire Department. Sam M. Leroy was named chief of a 21-member volunteer department. In 1992 the City of Livingston approved the implementation of ambulance services at the paramedic level.

Legal Basis

Livingston Fire Rescue

The legal basis for municipal fire departments within the Montana State Code resides in Title, 7, Chapter 33, Part 41.

Montana Code Annotated 2023
TITLE 7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CHAPTER 33. FIRE PROTECTION
Part 41. Municipal Fire Departments

¹ Livingston Fire Chief Position Announcement 2022

² Historic Montana – The Montana National Register Sign Program

Fire Protection Services

7-33-4101. Fire protection services. (1) Every city and town shall provide for fire protection in a manner that is organized, managed, and controlled as provided in this chapter.

(2) (a) Except as provided in 7-33-4115(6), a first-class city or town shall provide fire protection services as provided in this part.

(b) A second-class city or town may provide fire protection services as provided in this part:

(i) through an interlocal agreement with another governmental fire protection provider under the provisions of Title 7, chapter 11, part 1;

(ii) through a contract with another fire protection provider; or

(iii) subject to 7-33-4115, annexing to a rural fire district established under Title 7, chapter 33, part 21.

(c) A third-class city or town may provide fire protection through a contract for fire protection services, consolidation of its fire department with another fire protection provider, or inclusion in a rural fire district as provided in Title 7, chapter 33, part 21.

The legal basis for municipal fire protection resides within the City of Livingston Code of Ordinances, Chapter 11 – Fire Protection and Prevention, particularly Section 11-20 – Establishment of a fire department:

Organized civilian fire protection began in 1883 with the formation of the Livingston Hook and Ladder Company after a fire destroyed the first wood frame building in Livingston, then called Clark City. In 1885-86, multiple conflagrations destroyed several blocks of the town, prompting much of the brick and stone construction seen today. In 1892 the city hired its first paid firefighter and acquired horse-drawn hose and ladder wagons. Another large fire in 1897 prompted the formal creation of the Livingston Volunteer Fire Company on October 13, 1897. Livingston has a significant fire history. Conflagrations, mostly wind driven, occurred in the 1800's, 1904, 1931, 1969, and 1975. Since then, several large fires have destroyed important infrastructure, but the fires have been contained to the building of origin. In 1992, Livingston Fire Department expanded its mission to include emergency medical services and ambulance transport.

(Ord. No. 3038 , 9/6/22)

Observation:

Once the City of Livingston achieves a population of 10,000 and becomes a Class 1 city, it must maintain its own municipal fire department.

Recommendation:

The City of Livingston should evaluate and determine if the consolidation of fire/EMS services is in its best long-term interests based on operational, fiscal, and political considerations before it reaches Class 1 status.

Park County Rural Fire District #1

The legal basis for rural fire district within the Montana State Code resides in Title, 7, Chapter 33, Part 21.

TITLE 7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CHAPTER 33. FIRE PROTECTION
Part 21. Rural Fire Districts

Rural Fire Districts Authorized – Petition

7-33-2101. Rural fire districts authorized -- petition. (1) The board of county commissioners is authorized to establish fire districts in any unincorporated territory or, subject to 7-33-4115 and subsection (2) of this section, incorporated second-class or third-class city or town upon presentation of a petition in writing signed by the owners of 40% or more of the real property in the proposed district and owners of property representing 40% or more of the taxable value of property in the proposed district.

(2) (a) Subject to 7-33-4115, second-class or third-class cities and towns may be included in the district upon approval by the city or town governing body.

(b) Subject to 7-33-4115, a second-class or third-class city or town may withdraw from a district 2 years after providing to the board of county commissioners notice of intent to withdraw.

Operation of Fire Districts

7-33-2104. Operation of fire districts. When a board of county commissioners establishes a fire district in any unincorporated territory or incorporated second-class or third-class city or town, the commissioners:

(1) may contract with a city, town, private fire company, or other public entity to furnish all fire protection services for property within the district; or

(2) shall appoint five qualified trustees to govern and manage the fire district.

Observation:

Park County could contract with Livingston to provide fire protection for the Park County Rural Fire District #1.

Legal Basis Municipal Fire Protection Through Rural Fire District – Election – Transition – Governance

The legal basis for municipal fire protection through a rural fire district resides within:

Montana Code Annotated 2023
TITLE 7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CHAPTER 33. FIRE PROTECTION
Part 41. Municipal Fire Departments

7-33-4115. Municipal fire protection through rural fire district -- election -- transition -- governance. (1) Upon an affirmative vote of the governing body of a city of the second class and the

governing body of a rural fire district, the municipal governing body may, after providing public notice and holding a public hearing, submit to the electors of the municipality the question of annexing to the rural fire district for the provision of fire protection services and dissolving the municipal fire department if one exists. Subject to the provisions of this section, a municipality may annex to a rural fire district for the provision of fire protection services upon an affirmative vote of a simple majority of those voting on the question in the municipality.

(2) Within 14 days after the date on which the governing bodies vote to propose the annexation, notice of the proposal must be published as provided in 7-1-4127. A public hearing must be held before the municipal governing body.

(3) At the time the governing bodies vote to propose the annexation, the governing bodies shall also adopt a plan for dissolution of the municipal fire department if one exists and assumption of fire protection services by the rural fire district. The plan must include:

- (a) a timetable for annexation;
- (b) a map of the boundaries of the rural fire district after annexation occurs;
- (c) the estimated financial impact of the annexation on the average taxpayer in the proposed district; and
- (d) the process for disposition of paid municipal fire department staff and the transfer to the rural fire district of municipal fire department equipment, facilities, finances, and any warrant or bonded indebtedness.

(4) The rural fire district must be governed under the provisions of Title 7, chapter 33, part 21. Residents of the municipality are eligible to serve on the rural fire district's board of trustees.

(5) If there is not an affirmative vote of a simple majority of those voting on annexation to the rural fire district and dissolution of an existing municipal fire department, the existing municipal fire department, subject to 7-33-4101, remains intact and is subject to the provisions of this part.

(6) If the population of a second-class city classified under the provisions of 7-1-4111 or 7-1-4112 increases to the level that would require the city to be classified as a first-class city and the city has been annexed to a rural fire district under the provisions of this section, the city may remain part of the rural fire district upon adoption of a resolution by the city governing body.

As the City of Livingston is currently a Class 2 city, and is anticipated to be such for several years, the City retains the prerogative to transition fire protection the Park County Fire District #1, pending compliance with statutory requirements including a vote of the electors. If this transition took place while still a Class 2 city, the arrangement would remain intact even if Livingston became a Class 1 city, upon adoption of a resolution by the city governing body.

Community Characteristics

Geography and Population

Livingston

The population in April 2010 was 7,044 and grew to 8,430 in April 2020, a 14.1% increase.³ The estimated population increase from April 2020 through July 1, 2022, was 4.3% with a population estimate of 8,790⁴. Livingston is predominantly owner occupied at 64.3% and a total of 3,945 households (2018-2022).

The density within Livingston has changed since 2010 as well as some increases in the land mass. The land mass change from 2010 to 2020 saw an increase of 6.7% (5.64 square miles to 6.02 square miles). The population per square mile changed by 21.79% during this same time period from 1,170 to 1,425 per square mile.

The population growth rate in Livingston is a consideration as the city will become a Class One city in a few years based upon current and projected increases. Once this occurs, the opportunity to be annexed into a fire district no longer exists.

Park County

Park County is located in the south-central part of the state. It is surrounded by four mountain ranges: the Absarokas, Bridger, Gallatin, and the Crazy Mountains. The highest natural point in Montana, Granite Peak at 12,807 feet (3,904 meters), is in Park County. The county has an area of 2,813 square miles (7,290 km²), of which 2,803 square miles (7,260 km²) is land and 10.4 square miles (27 km²) (0.4%) is water. The county seat is Livingston.

Park County is surrounded by six counties: Gallatin (west), Meagher (north), Sweet Grass (east), Stillwater (southeast), Carbon (southeast), and Park (south).

The population in April 2010 was 15,636 and grew to 17,191 in April 2020, a 9.9% increase.⁵ The estimated population increase from April 2020 through July 1, 2022 was 3.5% with a population estimate of 17,790⁶. The population per square mile saw increases from 2010 to 2020 with an increase from 5.6 to 6.1, or 8.9%.

Park County, and particularly the Fire District, is mostly rolling hills with rangeland, cropland, and some juniper/pine/fir forested land. In contrast, the adjoining national forest next to the Fire District is steep terrain with coniferous forest and has experienced numerous and significant large fires over the past three decades. The east and west borders of the District are either the Park County line or the Custer Gallatin National Forest border. Interstate 90 and a primary route of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe

³ US Census 2020 Quick Facts

⁴ US Census 2020 Quick Facts

⁵ US Census 2020 Quick Facts

⁶ US Census 2020 Quick Facts

(BNSF) railroad latitudinally bisect the District at Livingston. Highway 89 South, a major route to Yellowstone National Park, and the Yellowstone River, divides the District into east and west quadrants south of Livingston.

The Fire District is bisected by Highway 89, the Yellowstone River, Interstate 90, and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad.

Demographic Comparisons of Park County and Livingston

While considerable similarities exist between Park County and Livingston, there are some differences between them per the United States Census 2018-2022 data. It is fair to note that the Park County data also includes Livingston.

Table 1: Livingston and Park County Demographics

Element	Livingston	Park County
Percent of persons 65 years and over	20.1%	24.5%
Percent of White alone	93.9% ⁷	95.5% ⁸
Percent of owner-occupied housing unit rate	64.3%	70.2%
Persons in household	2.11	2.11
Percent of Language other than English spoken at home	4.6%	3.4%
Median income (in 2002 dollars)	\$62,893	\$67,602
Per capita income past 12 months (in 2002 dollars)	\$37,180	44,273
Percent of persons in poverty	14.0%	10.3%

Observation:

There are not significant differences between the population demographics of the City of Livingston versus Park County.

Recommendation:

The agency/s should base operational decisions on geographical and workload demands without regard to demographic distinctions.

Climate

The climate history shows a long pattern of reasonably warm summer periods and rather extreme winter weather with the mean daily temperature being below 20 degrees in December, January, and February with an average annual snowfall of 56 inches. Livingston has some of the warmest winters in the state, but the temperature can feel cold because Livingston is also one of the windiest places in the United States, having the 2nd highest average wind speed among airport/AMOS stations from 2000 to 2010 per the Western Regional Climate Center.

⁷ Livingston - Second most common is American Indian and Alaskan native at 2.5% and Hispanic or Latino at 2.5%

⁸ Park County - Second most common is Hispanic or Latino at 3.6%

City of Livingston, MT

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Figure 1: Livingston Historical Climate Data⁹

Climate data for Livingston, Montana (Livingston Airport), 1991–2020 normals, extremes 1948–present													[hide]
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Record high °F (°C)	67 (19)	70 (21)	75 (24)	86 (30)	93 (34)	99 (37)	104 (40)	105 (41)	102 (39)	91 (33)	77 (25)	64 (18)	105 (41)
Mean maximum °F (°C)	55.7 (13.2)	57.3 (14.1)	67.6 (19.8)	76.2 (24.6)	82.5 (28.1)	91.0 (32.8)	97.8 (36.6)	97.0 (36.1)	92.3 (33.5)	80.8 (27.1)	65.3 (18.5)	55.5 (13.1)	99.1 (37.3)
Mean daily maximum °F (°C)	37.4 (3.0)	38.9 (3.8)	47.8 (8.8)	54.4 (12.4)	64.4 (18.0)	73.8 (23.2)	85.7 (29.8)	84.8 (29.3)	73.5 (23.1)	58.2 (14.6)	44.9 (7.2)	36.4 (2.4)	58.4 (14.6)
Daily mean °F (°C)	28.1 (−2.2)	28.9 (−1.7)	36.1 (2.3)	42.2 (5.7)	51.0 (10.6)	59.3 (15.2)	67.9 (19.9)	66.5 (19.2)	57.3 (14.1)	45.5 (7.5)	35.1 (1.7)	27.6 (−2.4)	45.5 (7.5)
Mean daily minimum °F (°C)	18.8 (−7.3)	18.9 (−7.3)	24.3 (−4.3)	30.0 (−1.1)	37.6 (3.1)	44.8 (7.1)	50.2 (10.1)	48.1 (8.9)	41.2 (5.1)	32.7 (0.4)	25.3 (−3.7)	18.8 (−7.3)	32.6 (0.3)
Mean minimum °F (°C)	−9.4 (−23.0)	−6.9 (−21.6)	1.2 (−17.1)	14.8 (−9.6)	23.2 (−4.9)	33.6 (0.9)	40.0 (4.4)	36.9 (2.7)	27.1 (−2.7)	11.6 (−11.3)	−1.7 (−18.7)	−8.7 (−22.6)	−20.5 (−29.2)
Record low °F (°C)	−32 (−36)	−33 (−36)	−32 (−36)	−2 (−19)	11 (−12)	27 (−3)	33 (1)	28 (−2)	10 (−12)	−12 (−24)	−31 (−35)	−41 (−41)	−41 (−41)
Average precipitation inches (mm)	0.44 (11)	0.47 (12)	0.79 (20)	1.71 (43)	2.66 (68)	2.42 (61)	1.31 (33)	1.07 (27)	1.20 (30)	1.36 (35)	0.62 (16)	0.50 (13)	14.55 (369)
Average snowfall inches (cm)	10.4 (26)	6.2 (16)	7.3 (19)	7.6 (19)	2.5 (6.4)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.0 (0.0)	0.9 (2.3)	5.1 (13)	7.5 (19)	8.5 (22)	56.0 (142)
Average precipitation days (≥ 0.01 in)	5.5	6.5	8.4	11.8	13.6	12.9	9.2	7.8	7.5	9.5	7.1	6.3	106.1
Average snowy days (≥ 0.1 in)	5.4	4.8	6.6	6.9	1.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.9	3.4	5.2	5.4	39.9

Disaster Management and Readiness

Both the City of Livingston and the Park County Fire District’s emergency management responsibilities are coordinated through the Park County Division of Emergency Management. Per the Concept of Operations Unit within Park County’s Emergency Operations Plan, an assessment of risks and hazards are compiled, including but not limited to the probability, magnitude, duration, and priority. Those events with either a high probability or high priority include drought, earthquake, flooding, hazardous materials release, and wildfire.

Table 2: Park County Disaster Risk Assessment

Disaster Risk	Probability	Magnitude	Duration	Priority
Avalanche and Landslide	Moderate	Mass Casualties	Seconds	Low
Aviation Accident	Moderate	Mass Casualties	Seconds	Low
Communicable Disease and Bioterrorism	Moderate	Up to a Pandemic	Weeks to Months	Moderate
Dam Failure	Low	High Loss of Life and Property	Hours to Days	Low
Drought	High	Up to D4 Drought	Months to Years	Moderate
Earthquake	Moderate	Major Damage	Seconds to Minutes	High
Flooding	High	100+ Year and Flash	Hours to Days	High

⁹ Source: US Climate Normals Quick Access National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Retrieved August 5, 2022.

Ground Transportation Accident	Moderate	Mass Casualties	Seconds to Hours	Moderate
Hazardous Material Release	High	Mass Casualties	Hours to Months	High
Urban Fire	Moderate	Up to Several City Blocks	Hours to Days	Moderate
Utility Outage	Low	Loss for days to weeks	Hours to Weeks	Moderate
Volcano	Low	Up to Inches of ash	Hours to Weeks	Low
Wildfire	High	Up to 1,000's acres	Hours to Weeks	High
Wind	Moderate	Wind to 100 MPH	Minutes to Hours	Moderate
Winter Storms and Extended Cold	Moderate	Up to Blizzard and -51 degrees F	Hours to Days	Moderate

Disaster and Emergency Declarations: Depending on the nature and extent of the incident, a local disaster declaration or emergency proclamation may be issued. These declarations can only be issued by the Principal Executive Officer by order or resolution. (MCA 10-3-402, 403) State disaster and emergency declarations may similarly be issued by the Governor and federal major disaster and emergency declarations are made by the President.

Local Emergency Proclamation: An emergency proclamation may be issued by order or resolution whenever the principal executive officer determines there is an emergency. An emergency proclamation may terminate with a disaster declaration or when the principal executive officer determines that the emergency no longer exists. (MCA 10-3-402 (1)(2)) An emergency is the imminent threat of a disaster causing immediate peril to life or property that timely action can avert or minimize. (MCA 10-3-103 (7))

Local Disaster Declaration: A disaster declaration may be issued by order or resolution whenever the principal executive officer determines a disaster is occurring or has occurred. A disaster declaration may be terminated when the principal executive officer determines that the disaster conditions no longer exist. (MCA 10-3-403 (1)(2))

Per the Park County Emergency Operations Plan the greatest response limitations are:

- Volunteers – many response agencies are composed primarily of a limited number of volunteers; retention of Emergency Medical Technicians in outlying areas is difficult
- Rural Areas – the response times can be long due to distance and volunteer base
- Communications – changing technology, transitioning to narrowband, and coverage problems all make keeping communications equipment and training up-to-date difficult

SERVICES PROVIDED

The City of Livingston Fire Rescue (LFR) and Park County Rural Fire District #1 (District) work cooperatively to provide services to their communities. While each agency has primary responsibility for its jurisdiction, their success relies heavily on each other to provide supplemental equipment and personnel. The one exception is emergency medical services, where the City of Livingston is the primary provider to the city and county.

Fire

LFR provides primary fire protection to the City of Livingston. Station 1 houses a fire engine, ladder truck, and water tender. Typical staffing consists of a battalion chief on some of the shifts, and one captain, engineer, and firefighter on all of the shifts. Beyond the initial response, LFR relies on the callback of off-duty personnel and volunteers from the district to make up their effective response force. The District provides primary fire protection to their designated portion of Park County. They operate three stations that house multiple fire engines and water tenders and rely on a paid chief and deputy chief along with volunteers for staffing. LFR responds to fires within 5 miles of the city limits. Beyond 5 miles the district relies on mutual aid response from neighboring fire districts.

EMS

LFR is the primary EMS agency for the city and Park County. They provide 911-based ALS transport service along with BLS and ALS interfacility transport between Livingston, Bozeman, and Billings hospitals. Interfacility transport relies on the availability of part-time or reserve personnel. The District has some EMS-trained personnel and will occasionally respond to provide BLS care until LFR arrives.

Rescue

LFR and the District are capable of providing basic vehicle extrication to their communities. LFR carries extrication equipment on their ambulances, while the district has a light-duty rescue truck. LFR along with Park County Search and Rescue have limited backcountry and water rescue capabilities.

HazMat

Both agencies provide hazardous materials response at the operations level and have access to a state hazmat trailer. While LFR has some technician-certified personnel, they rely on the Bozeman Regional HAZMAT team or private agencies for technician-level response.

Wildland

LFR provides basic wildland urban interface response in the city. The District has numerous wildland apparatus and deploys its assets and personnel throughout the region and state.

CURRENT AGENCY ORGANIZATION

Organizational Structure

Livingston Fire Rescue

LFR operates from a single fire station that also serves as its administrative office.

LFR's organizational structure reflects a fairly typical, paramilitary organization. The Fire Chief is the only executive-level position with no deputy or assistant chiefs. In addition to a Community Paramedic, two operational Battalion Chiefs report to the Fire Chief.

The two Battalion Chiefs work a 3-platoon schedule (48/96) while the personnel they manage work a 4-platoon schedule (24/72) meaning each Battalion Chief oversees two shifts of personnel. It should also be noted that since there are only two Battalion Chiefs assigned to the 3-platoon schedule, no Battalion Chief is on duty two to three days per week. LFR reported that when the Battalion Chief was off their responsibilities would be distributed to the on-duty Captain and Fire Chief.

Observation:

The deployment of battalion chief positions that are inconsistent with the balance of the remaining operational workforce leads to gaps in battalion chief coverages for emergent situations and has the potential for leadership/management gaps and inconsistencies.

Recommendation:

If the Agency chooses to provide a Battalion Chief position, it should be consistently aligned with each shift for round-the-clock coverage as well as consistent supervision and administration.

Each of the 4-platoon shifts is staffed with a captain, engineer, firefighter/EMT and up to two part-time reserve firefighters. However, the consistency of the part-time staffing is difficult to determine with the available data. Additionally, LFR uses frequent callbacks to meet periods of peak demand and interfacility transfers. LFR has no identified support or administrative personnel. LFR did not provide information on who manages functions including training, logistics, and records management.

Observation:

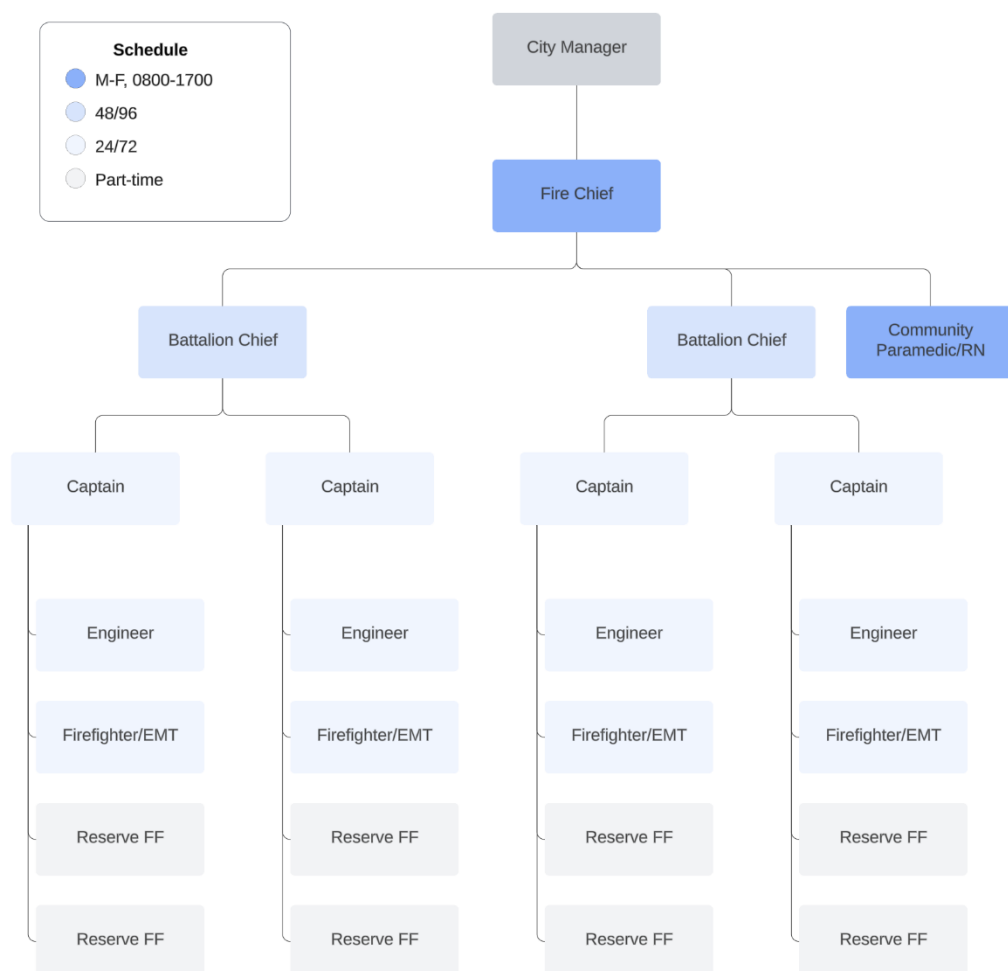
In the absence of identified support and/or administrative staff, the division of labor and task responsibility practices are challenged.

Recommendation:

The battalion chief positions should each have clearly defined administrative and support responsibilities assigned to them to account for all required elements of the organization's management and administration.

The following organizational chart illustrates the general organizational structure for LFR.

Figure 2: Current LFR Organizational Chart



Park County Rural Fire District #1

The District operates from three facilities. Its headquarters station, located in the City of Livingston, serves as its administrative office. The District’s organizational structure reflects a fairly typical, paramilitary organization. The Fire Chief serves as the executive officer and is supported by a Deputy Chief. The two executive positions are the only full-time personnel employed by the District. Services are largely provided through a volunteer pay-per-call system.

The District did not provide a roster of current volunteers or an organizational chart, but according to the department’s website, the roster includes 16 volunteers including two Captains and three Lieutenants¹⁰. For illustrative purposes, the firefighters are assigned to each Captain and Lieutenant in

¹⁰ <https://www.parkcounty.org/Government-Departments/Rural-Fire-Department/Volunteers/>

the following organizational chart. The District partners with Helena College as part of its Fire and Emergency Services residency program¹¹. Volunteers in this program are provided room, board, and scholarships and in return provide staffing.

Observation:

The merging of career fire/EMS professionals into an environment that has depended heavily on volunteer fire fighters and residency college students can bring about a number of workplace culture challenges.

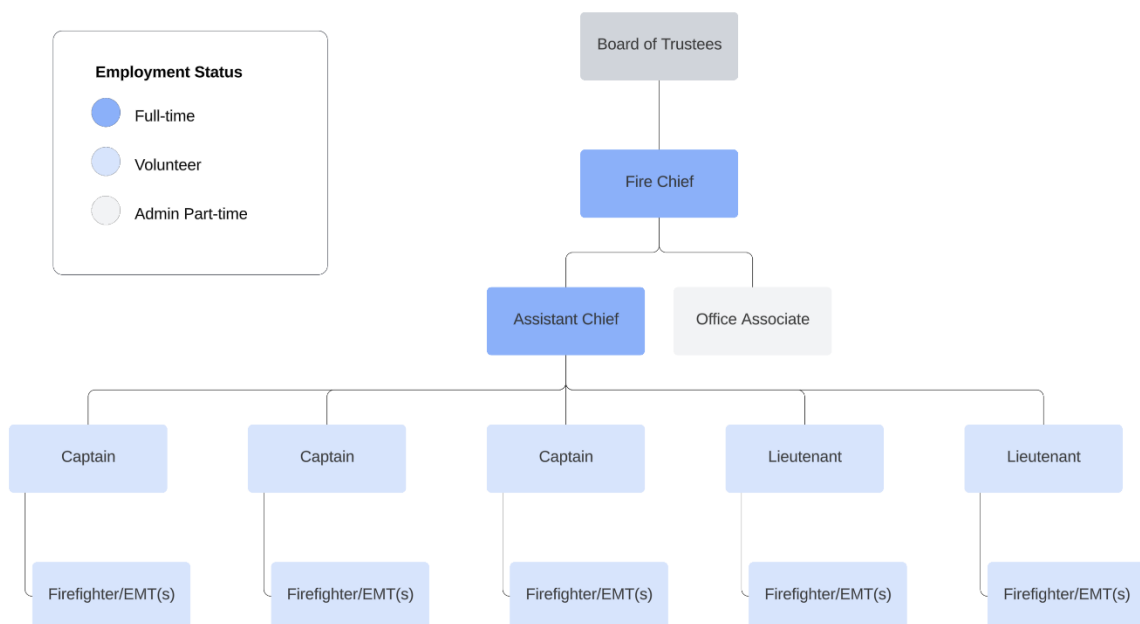
Recommendation:

If consolidation is attempted, sufficient time and effort should be made to ensure a workplace culture that values the career staff, the volunteers, and the college students, presuming all are part of the combined approach.

The District has no identified support positions and administrative functions are provided through a combination of a part-time office assistant and contractual services.

The following organizational chart illustrates the general organizational structure for the District.

Figure 3: Current PCRFD #1 Organizational Chart



¹¹ <https://helenacollege.edu/academics/programs/fire/default.aspx>

Fixed Facilities and Demand Zones

City of Livingston

The City of Livingston operates one fire station located at 414 E. Callender St. This station is a five-bay station with very limited capacity to increase operational staffing, administration staffing, or apparatus. The facility is part of a larger campus of other governmental services.

Since LFR deploys from a single location, the Agency operates a singular demand zone for Fire and EMS responses. The Fire response demand zone is defined by the City limits + 5-miles into PCRFD1's area. In 2022, the Fire demand zone produced 192 Fire Incidents. The EMS response demand zone is defined by the Park County geographical boarder. In 2022, the EMS demand zone produced 2,334 EMS incidents including 606 interfacility transports.

Park County Rural Fire District #1

Park Rural Fire District operates mainly from a single station, referred to as Station #1, located at 304 – E. Park Street. In order to resolve an apparatus storage concern, the District uses an adjacent building for storage. This station serves as the administrative offices as well as the main operational arm of the District.

The District owns two unstaffed stations. Station #2 is located at 3 - Pine Creek Road and Station #3 is located at 15 - Chicory Road. Both stations are three-bay buildings with limited depth and no facilities for full-time occupation. Station #1 and #2 are separated by 11 road miles. Station #1 and #3 are separated by 19 road miles. These stations have infrequent responses and are used primarily as additional storage for fleet assets and additional equipment. Per the Fire Chief these stations were added based on efforts to improve their ISO standing.¹²

Since PCRFD1 deploys a single staffed location, the Agency operates a singular demand zone for all responses. The PCRFD1 demand zone is defined by the District's geographical border, exclusive of the Livingston City boundary. In 2022, the demand zone produced 208 Fire Incidents and 609 EMS incidents.

Considerations of Consolidation

When considering the option of a consolidation between the two entities, there are certain facts that can't be overlooked. The current locations of the departments' primary stations are approximately 1,000 feet apart. There would be no operational necessity to keep both station locations in a consolidated environment. However, the need to maintain both stations may exist simply to house reserve and wildland apparatus and equipment.

¹² Personal communications during initial site visit

In considering a consolidation, careful thought should be given to space considerations for administrative staff, operational forces, apparatus needs, training, and overnight housing needs that are consistent with whatever the revised organizational structure may be.

Observation:

Observation: There is not an operational need to operate both the LFR station #1 and the Park Rural station #1 in a consolidated environment, however unless the fleet size is reduced, apparatus storage becomes a challenge.

Recommendation:

Careful thought should be given to space considerations for administrative staff, operational forces, apparatus needs, training, and overnight housing needs that are consistent with whatever the revised organizational structure may be.

The GIS Report provided as a supplement to this document demonstrates the opportunities for maximizing performance within current facility arrangements and prospective optimized arrangements if changes in demand or desired performance warrants the establishment of new locations.

Apparatus and Equipment

While the long-term apparatus replacement plans were not provided for review, it appears as if both entities have unmet apparatus replacement needs. The exception to this appears to be the EMS fleet for Livingston. Currently, some apparatus manufacturers are seeing time frames to build apparatus exceeding 36-months. Both entities have apparatus that appear to be past, or fast approaching, the recommended retirement dates per the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) *1900 – Standard for Aircraft and Firefighting Automotive Apparatus, Wildland Fire Apparatus, and Automotive Ambulance Standards*. An excerpt from that standard address's retirement approaches:

F.1 General.

To maximize firefighter capabilities and minimize risk of injuries, it is important that fire apparatus be equipped with the latest safety features and operating capabilities. In the last 10 to 15 years, much progress has been made in upgrading functional capabilities and improving the safety features of fire apparatus. Apparatus more than 15 years old might include only a few of the safety upgrades required by the recent editions of the NFPA fire department apparatus standards or the equivalent Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC) standards. Because the changes, upgrades, and fine tuning to NFPA 1901 (now 1900) have been truly significant, especially in the area of safety, fire departments should seriously consider the value (or risk) to firefighters of keeping fire apparatus more than 15 years old in first-line service.

It is recommended that apparatus more than 15 years old that have been properly maintained and that are still in serviceable condition be placed in reserve status; be upgraded in accordance with NFPA 1910; and incorporate as many features as possible of the current fire apparatus standard (see Section F.3). This will ensure that, while the apparatus might not totally comply with the current editions of the automotive fire apparatus standards, many of the improvements and upgrades required by the current editions of the standards are available to the firefighters who use the apparatus.

Apparatus that was not manufactured to the applicable NFPA fire apparatus standards or that are over 25 years old should be retired or replaced.

Table 3: PCFRD #1 Fleet

Unit Designator	Year	Type	Special Note
Command 453	2017	Chevy pickup	Chief's Vehicle
Command 461	2016	Chevy pickup	Slip on pump module
Support 458	2008	Chevy Tahoe	Staff vehicle
Engine 465	2008	Pierce Structure Engine	1,500 GPM/1,000 tank
Engine 450	1999	E-One Structure Engine	1,250 GPM/750 tank
Engine 466	1981	Pierce Structure Engine	1,250 GPM/750 tank
Rescue 452	2016	Ford F-550	Cascade, lights, extrication
Rescue 464	2013	Ford F-550	
Brush 454	2002	Stevenson 6 X6 flatbed	Plow in winter, brush with 150 GPM and 750-gallon tank in summer
Brush 459	2001	GMC 3500	Type 7
Brush 468	2007	Ford F-550	Type 6
Brush 469	2013	Ford F-550	Type 6
Tender 463	1994	Freightliner	1,000 GPM/4,000 tank
Tender 462	1984	International	750 GPM/3,800 tank
Tender 451	(Unk.)	Military 6 X 6	250 GPM/1,600 tank
Tender 457	(Unk.)	Military 6 X 6	900 GPM/3,000 tank
Tender 467	(Unk.)	Military 6 X 6	1,000 GPM/ 2,600 tank

Table 4: LFR Fleet

Unit Designator	Year	Type	Special Note
Engine #1	2017	Pierce Enforcer	1,500 Type 1
Truck #1	2000	E-One 75-foot aerial	Quint capable
Medic #1	2019	Ford F-450 AEV	4 X 4 Critical care ambulance
Medic #2	2020	Ford T-350 Transit van	All wheel drive critical care
Medic #3	2022	Dodge Ram 4500 AEV	4 X 4 Critical care ambulance
Medic #4	2023	Ford T-350 Transit van	All wheel drive critical care ambulance
Rescue #1	2011	Chevy ½ Ton 4 X4 pickup	
Brush #1	2011	Ford F-550	Type 6 DNCR brush
Community Paramedicine #1 and #3	2017	2017 Explorer	
Command #2	2016	Ford F-150 pickup	Command Officer

Command #1	2023	Ford F-150 pickup	Command Officer

Observation:

While the long-term apparatus replacement plans were not provided for review, it appears as if both entities have unmet apparatus replacement needs, with the exception of the EMS fleet for Livingston.

Recommendation:

The agencies should establish and fund a long-term apparatus replacement plan that is consistent with national standards.

Guiding Documents

Labor Agreements

A review of the existing Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City of Livingston and the IAFF Local 630 reveals several potential pinch points in efforts to make changes in staffing, operational approaches, or organizational structures without a solid working relationship between the parties to effect change.

The below article defines the recognition of members of Local 630, as well as those excluded.

ARTICLE 1 – RECOGNITION

Section 1.1- Recognition -The Employer recognizes the Union as the exclusive agent for employees of the Livingston Fire & Rescue Department, excluding the following classifications:

*Fire Chief

*All Reserve members

Section 1.2 – Shift Qualified Reserve – A Shift qualified reserve shall be defined as a member of the reserves who has achieved the certification of Firefighter I & EMT.

Section 1.3 – Ambulance Qualified Reserve – An ambulance qualified reserve shall be defined as an individual with an EMT certification.

The Management Rights Article does give certain broad management rights that could be seen as an opportunity to bring about changes. In essence, unless restricted by another provision of the CBA, the rights include the right to maintain the efficiency of operations, the personnel, methods, means, structure, and job classifications, as well the number and location, and operations. However, these rights are offset to an unknown degree by Article 20.2 regarding existing conditions (discussed later).

ARTICLE 4 – MANAGEMENT RIGHTS

Section 4.1 – Management Rights – Except as expressly modified or restricted by a specific provision;

- E. To maintain the efficiency of operations;*
- F. To determine the personnel, methods, means, organizational structure, job classifications, and facilities by which operations are conducted;*
- H. To determine the number, location and operation of departments, divisions, and all other units of the Employer;*

ARTICLE 6 – WAGES, HOURS, HOLIDAYS

It is unclear as to the fiscal impact of including the health insurance premium contributions into the employee's gross pay for the purposes of computing retirement compensation. While the inclusion itself may not affect the fiscal impact when limited to health care costs, it has the potential to drive up the City's share of the pension costs.

The parties have agreed to overtime compensability at 121 hours in a defined 16-day work cycle. Consideration should be given to the fiscal impacts of this arrangement as the FLSA allows up to 212 hours in a 28-day period for firefighters. A fiscal evaluation should also be conducted to evaluate the impacts of including sick leave and vacation leave on the compensable hours as that is not a requirement. A change in overtime compensability would likely come with considerable resistance from Local 630. Theoretically, a member could be off on either sick leave or vacation for the entire 16-day period yet be eligible for overtime time if working a shift coverage or special event.

While the amount of compensation for call backs is rather minimal with a one hour minimum at 1.5 time, the number of call backs, if not well approached, could yield an unfavorable fiscal impact.

The transfer pay for all BLS, ALS, and flight teamwork appears to be a necessity to generate sufficient interest in the workload and the department's ability to best manage the unpredictable workflow. When a request for off-duty staffing to fill an IFT request fails to produce the required staffing level, the use of on-duty staffing has service impacts on both fire and EMS coverage during that time frame.

The prohibition of using a person who is not working due to a shift exchange could suppress off-duty response for transfers. While it is understood that the person off on exchange is still considered to be in a paid on-duty status, they are still eligible to respond to an "all-call" page. This would indicate that there is a system in place to correct the payroll implications of a member off on exchange who responds in to work for assignment. The net impact is one employee begins accruing overtime compensation, which is likely to occur anyway with requests for off-duty personnel to respond for assignment. Thus, the agency might reconsider the prohibition of exchange-off employees answering transfer service requests.

Section 6.1.1 – Health insurance premium contribution, as related to retirement calculation – *The City's contribution toward employee health insurance will be added to the employee's gross pay for purposes*

of computing retirement compensation. As part of this collective bargaining agreement, employees are required to authorize a payroll deduction from the employee's gross pay equal to the City's contribution toward employee's health insurance. This deduction from the employee's gross pay will be paid to provide health insurance benefits for employees. The purpose of including the City's contribution toward employee's health insurance in the employee's gross pay is solely for the purpose of augmenting the employee's eventual retirement benefit.

Section 6.2 – Overtime Pay – *Overtime is defined as hours worked in excess of 121 hours in the defined 16-day work period. Sick leave, scheduled vacation, and bereavement leave shall accrue towards the 121 hours.*

Non-Emergency call backs below and above 121 hours in a 16-day period are compensated at a premium rate with the exception of call backs on a holiday which is compensated at the rate of double time. Compensation for emergency call backs is calculated as set forth in Section 6.3.1, with the exception for a call back on a holiday which is compensated at a rate of double time.

Section 6.3 – Call Back – *All employees covered by the terms of this Agreement who are called back to work while off-duty for an emergency situation will receive a minimum of one (1.0) hour call back pay and shall be compensated at a rate of 1 ½ times the regular hourly rate for up to the first one hour of call back status. Call back on holidays will pay two times the regular hour rate for up to the first hour and will then be compensated at 1.5 times the regular rate.*

Section 6.4 – Shift Coverage – *An employee filling in for another's leave shall be on a rank for rank basis and compensated at a rate of 1 ½ times the regular hourly rate of pay for two hours. Additional time spent on shift will be compensated at the appropriate regular hourly rate, overtime rate, or holiday rate.*

Section 6.5 – Special Events – *Employee's providing coverage for special events will be compensated at a rate of 1 ½ times the regular hourly rate of pay for two hours. Additional time spent covering special events will be compensated at the appropriate regular hourly rate, overtime rate, or holiday rate.*

Section 6.6 – Transfer Pay -

- *All transfers for BLS, ALS, and Flight Team level of care qualify for \$100 transfer incentive for off-duty personnel.*
- *All transfers for Critical Care Critical Care level of care qualify for \$150 for off-duty and on-duty Critical Care endorsed paramedics.*

Transfers must meet qualifications for Critical Care level of reimbursement.

- *On duty-personnel shall make a minimum of two attempts to page in off-duty personnel for non-emergent patient transfers. If no off-duty personnel are available, on-duty personnel may be sent at the discretion of the Captain/Watch Commander, and/or the Fire Chief, dependent on availability.*
- *In-town transfers shall not qualify for incentive pay.*

Critical Care transfers shall be defined as any transfer which is billed at a Critical Care Rate.

Section 6.10 – Shift Exchanges – *An employee who has exchanged shifts cannot respond for Call Back or Transfers since they are viewed as already working that shift. Such an employee may respond to an All Page.*

Section 6.15 – Command Staff Coverage - *The Union agrees that while member(s) have responsibility for providing command, members shall avoid participating in inter facility transfers. Union members eligible shall be rank of Captain or above.*

The support for members attending training is commendable. While covering the vacant slot with staff from the office would only have an efficiency deficit, the use of overtime to cover the slot no doubt has fiscal impacts. An analysis of the impact from a purely fiscal lens demonstrates an average annual cost of \$7,556. If the Agency maintains a good level of engagement with OT opportunities, this is a sound strategy to continue at the Agency's current size.

ARTICLE 15 - TRAINING

Other Courses Not in a Formal Degree Program:

Shifts for the employee attending training will be covered by staff from the office or overtime list, non-shift workers, shift workers and / or reservists.

Section 15.3 – Instructor Pay – *Employees assigned to teach classes approved by the Fire Chief for the Fire Department shall be compensated at straight time.*

Observation:

The current practice of using overtime to cover for personnel training is prudent and sustainable at the Agency's current size and scale.

The hours of work are established as a 24/72 schedule. Any effort to modify the schedule will require impact bargaining with the labor unit.

ARTICLE 16 – HOURS OF WORK

Section 16.1 – Hours of Work Shift workers– *The on-duty shift members, excluding non-shift workers, shall work 24 hours on duty, 72 hours off duty.*

ARTICLE 17 - SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT

Section 17.1 – Supplemental Agreements – *This Agreement may be amended, provided both parties concur. Supplemental agreements may be completed through negotiations at any time during the life of the Agreement. Either party may notify the other party in writing of its desire to negotiate. A Supplemental Agreement will be signed by the responsible Union and City officials. Supplemental agreements thus completed shall become a part of the larger agreement and subject to all of its provisions.*

Article 20, Section 20.2 regarding existing conditions could make changes dependent upon the willingness of both parties to see needed changes and effectively impact bargain over these topics.

ARTICLE 20 - TERM OF AGREEMENT

Section 20.1 – Term of Agreement – *This Agreement shall be in Full Force and effect from the first day of July 2020 to June 30, 2025.*

Section 20.2 – Existing Conditions – *Existing wages, hours, and other conditions of employment rising out of this Agreement shall not be changed by the action of either party without the consent of the other during the negotiation, mediation, fact finding or arbitration of the next contract, and any additional cost of maintaining the items listed in this paragraph, after the expiration of this Agreement, shall be figured in the financial settlement of the next Agreement.*

The Memorandum of Understanding between the parties concerning the Creation, Staffing, Schedules, and Operations of the Battalion Chief Positions was reviewed. Although the MOU addressed a trial period ending September 30, 2023, in the absence of any conflicting information it is presumed these conditions continued to the current day.

Observation:

The Collective Bargaining Agreement between the IAFF and the City of Livingston contains a number of articles that would make any consolidation and changes in working conditions substantially more challenging.

Recommendation:

If the City elects to pursue consolidation with the District, it should engage the local IAFF labor unit at the outset to establish commonality in purpose for the reconfiguration of the CBA as required.

Policies and Procedures

Fitch was not provided any Policies or Procedures from the Agency to review.

Financial Basis

City of Livingston

Budget Overview

For accounting purposes, the City of Livingston divides revenues and expenditures into two budget areas: fire and ambulance services. Salary and benefits are allocated 50/50 for full-time employees while the reserve or part-time employees are allocated 65% to ambulance services and 35% to fire services. All operating costs are allocated to their respective program area.

Observation:

The 50/50 cost split strategy between fire and EMS does not provide sufficient detail for accurate cost allocation and is inconsistent with the costs of providing these services

Recommendation:

The City of Livingston should evaluate their cost allocation practice to provide greater detail and tracking for expenditures related to the Fire and EMS programs.

Fire services are funded through general fund revenue and have no dedicated revenue while ambulance services are supported primarily through ambulance fees and contributions from Park County. Both programs benefit from a capital replacement program.

Combined expenditures for the two programs equaled \$3,320,083 in FY23 with salary and benefits accounting for 70% of all expenditures. Livingston Fire Department's expenditures appear consistent with their programs and services. However, it should be noted that they are supported by other City of Livingston departments such as human resources, finance, and legal. Without these departments providing support, the fire department would be required to hire additional employees or contract for those services and expenditures would increase accordingly.

Table 5: City of Livingston- Revenue and Expenditures for All Fire and EMS Services

	FY21 (Actual)	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)	FY24 (Budgeted)
General Fund Allocation	\$1,336,667	\$1,245,693	\$1,299,315	\$1,360,380
EMS Revenue	\$2,269,057	\$2,433,951	\$2,427,960	\$2,609,703
Total Funding	\$3,605,724	\$3,679,644	\$3,727,275	\$3,970,083
Fire Expenditures	\$1,336,667	\$1,245,693	\$1,299,315	\$1,360,380
EMS Expenditures	\$1,752,800	\$1,737,242	\$1,860,055	\$2,180,343
Total Expenditures	\$3,089,467	\$2,982,935	\$3,159,370	\$3,540,723
Net Funding	\$516,257	\$696,708	\$567,905	\$429,360

Fire Services Budget

Based on LFR's current cost allocation, salary and benefits account for 81% of FY23 fire service expenditures. Operating costs have increased consistent with service demands and annual inflation¹³. FY21 experienced an abnormally high annual increase primarily related to one-time expenses of \$147,373 for tools and equipment.

Table 6: City of Livingston Fire Service Expenditures

Category	FY21 (Actual)	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)	FY24 (Budgeted)
Salary and Benefits	\$1,028,795	\$1,060,831	\$1,048,340	\$1,112,026
Operating	\$307,872	\$184,862	\$250,976	\$248,354
Total Expenditures	\$1,336,667	\$1,245,693	\$1,299,315	\$1,360,380
Percent Change	N/A	-7%	4%	5%

Fire services are funded utilizing revenue from the City's general fund equal to expenditures. There are no dedicated revenues to support the City's fire services.

EMS Services Budget

Based on LFR's current cost allocation, salary and benefits accounts for 77% of all FY23 EMS service expenditures inclusive of 911 and IFT work. Operating costs have increased consistent with service demands and annual inflation¹. FY24 experienced an abnormally high annual increase primarily related to one-time expenses of \$245,000 to replace an ambulance and command vehicle.

Table 7: City of Livingston's Ambulance Expenditures Based on Current Personnel Cost Allocation

	FY21 (Actual)	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)	FY24 (Budgeted)
Salary and Benefits	\$1,347,876	\$1,386,848	\$1,487,074	\$1,689,177
Operating	\$404,924	\$350,395	\$372,981	\$491,166
Total Expenditures	\$1,752,800	\$1,737,242	\$1,860,055	\$2,180,343
Percent Change	N/A	-0.9%	7.1%	17.2%

The current EMS personnel cost allocation used by LFR doesn't align with their EMS call demand. Historically, EMS accounts for approximately 80% of LFR's total call demand. In order to provide a more

¹³ https://www.bls.gov/regions/southwest/data/consumerpriceindexcyhistorical_southwest_table.htm

accurate EMS program cost, a financial assessment that allocated personnel costs based on the percentage of EMS calls the department responds to was also completed (80% allocated to EMS and 20% to Fire). Using this cost allocation salary and benefits accounts for 83% of FY23 all EMS service expenditures.

Table 8 - City of Livingston's Ambulance Expenditures Based on Percentage of EMS Calls

	FY21 (Actual)	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)	FY24 (Budgeted)
Salary and Benefits	\$1,901,337	\$1,958,143	\$2,028,331	\$2,240,962
Operating	\$404,924	\$350,395	\$372,981	\$491,166
Total Expenditures	\$2,306,261	\$2,308,537	\$2,401,312	\$2,732,128
Percent Change	N/A	0.1%	4.0%	13.8%

EMS services are funded utilizing several revenue sources including County tax contributions, fees for service, and other local and state revenues. Ambulance revenues are overall stable with an appropriate rate of growth, but ambulance fees in FY23 experienced an uncharacteristic reduction of over \$130,000. This reduction in ambulance revenue corresponds to a reduction in total EMS calls in FY23.

Table 9: City of Livingston Ambulance Service Revenues – Per City Budget Data

	FY21 (Actual)	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)	FY24 (Budgeted)
County Contribution	\$715,372	\$823,405	\$842,341	\$800,000
Ambulance Fees	\$1,241,729	\$1,419,372	\$1,285,147	\$1,428,447
Other Revenue	\$311,956	\$191,174	\$300,472	\$381,256
Total Revenue	\$2,269,057	\$2,433,951	\$2,427,960	\$2,609,703
Percent Change	N/A	6.8%	-0.2%	7.0%

The net operating expense for EMS services, inclusive of 911 and IFT, utilizing LFR's current salary and benefits allocation is outlined below. Using this cost allocation, the EMS system's revenues are outpacing expenditures by an average of approximately \$500,000, a year.

Table 10: City of Livingston Ambulance Net Operating Costs Based on Current Personnel Cost Allocation

	FY21 (Actual)	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)	FY24 (Budgeted)
Revenue	\$2,269,057	\$2,433,951	\$2,427,960	\$2,609,703
Expenditure	\$1,752,800	\$1,737,242	\$1,860,055	\$2,180,343
Net Cost	\$516,257	\$696,708	\$567,905	\$429,360

EMS net operating expenses, inclusive of 911 and IFT, were also calculated using the previously referenced call demand cost allocation (80% to EMS and 20% to fire). When viewed from this lens EMS revenues continue to outpace expenditures in all years except FY21, but by a more modest amount. This shouldn't be interpreted as the EMS program performing poorly, but it does reflect a more accurate cost of providing EMS services. In FY21 a portion of the general fund revenue allocated for fire service actually supplemented EMS service.

Table 11 - City of Livingston Total EMS Net Operating Costs Based on Percentage of EMS Calls

	FY21 (Actual)	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)	FY24 (Budgeted)
Revenue	\$2,269,057	\$2,433,951	\$2,427,960	\$2,609,703
Expenditure	\$2,306,261	\$2,308,537	\$2,401,312	\$2,732,128
Net Cost	(\$37,203)	\$125,413	\$26,648	(\$122,425)

The net cost experience for 911 EMS work was also evaluated to provide its contextual value to the overall cost assessment provided above. In the same fashion, net operating expenses were calculated using the previously referenced call demand cost allocation (80% to EMS and 20% to fire). Revenues are inclusive of all revenue except payment from IFT work. Overall, the cost of providing 911 EMS services outpace the revenues associated with the program. Thus, there is an annual supplement for EMS from the Livingston general fund.

Observation:

Overall, the cost of providing 911 EMS services outpace the funding and revenue associated with the program when appropriated by the distribution of workload.

Table 12: City of Livingston 911 EMS - Revenue vs Expenditures

Interfacility Transfers	FY21 (Actual)	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)
Revenue	\$1,683,692	\$1,838,909	\$2,020,751
Expenditures	\$1,840,898	\$1,908,826	\$2,085,988
Net Cost	(\$157,206)	(\$69,917)	(\$65,237)

The net cost experience for IFT EMS work was also evaluated to provide its contextual value to the overall cost assessment provided above. In the same fashion, net operating expenses were calculated using the previously referenced call demand cost allocation (80% to EMS and 20% to fire). Revenues are only those received from IFT work. While the IFT program appears to provide a positive cost position, caution is warranted with this conclusion due to the lack of specificity in cost reporting. Thus, the IFT program cost displayed may not be fully representative of the cost of providing these transfers.

Table 13: City of Livingston Interfacility EMS - Revenue vs Expenditures

Interfacility Transfers	FY21 (Actual)	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)
Revenue	\$585,365	\$595,042	\$407,209
Expenditures	\$465,363	\$399,711	\$315,324
Net Cost	\$120,002	\$195,331	\$91,885

Interfacility Services Budget

Fitch was unable to fully assess the revenue performance and potential for LFR due to the limited information provided and some discrepancies in the data. For instance, the CAD data indicated 668 IFT transfers for FY22 while the billing company data only showed 389 IFTs for the same period. Thus, the

cash value per transport assumption utilized for modeling should be confirmed by the City's internal finance department and the third-party EMS billing vendor.

Observation:

Fitch was unable to fully assess the revenue performance and potential on IFT's for LFR due to the limited information provided and some discrepancies in the data.

Recommendation:

The cash value per transport assumption utilized for modeling should be confirmed by the City's internal finance department and the third-party EMS billing vendor.

Additionally, the revenue data provided by LFR's EMS billing company also utilized a different method than Livingston Finance utilizes for accounting. Therefore, the analysis of EMS revenue by transport type, 911 and interfacility, will result in total revenue values that differ from the revenue data provided by Livingston and presented as part of the EMS services budget above.

Ambulance fees represent more than 50% of the city's ambulance revenue and can be categorized into two major areas: 911 transports and interfacility transfers (IFT). While revenue from 911 transports has increased annually in each of the last three fiscal years, revenue from IFTs declined by \$178,156 over the same period. In FY21 IFTs accounted for 50% of revenue but by FY23 accounted for only 32% of revenue.

Table 14: City of Livingston EMS Revenue by Type of Transport – Per Billing Company Data

	FY21 (Actual)		FY22 (Actual)		FY23 (Actual)	
911 Transports	\$589,456	50%	\$796,721	57%	\$853,439	68%
Interfacility Transfers	\$585,365	50%	\$595,042	43%	\$407,209	32%
Total Revenue	\$ 1,174,821		\$ 1,391,763		\$ 1,260,648	

The decrease in interfacility revenue is consistent with a decrease in total IFT patients according to the EMS billing company. IFT patients decreased during the last two years by 1% and 18% respectively.

LFR does not track the total number of IFTs requested and their disposition (accepted or denied), so Fitch was unable to determine if the decline in transports was a result of a decrease in demand or a decrease in available staffing.

Observation:

LFR does not track the total number of IFTs requested and their disposition (accepted or denied), so Fitch was unable to determine if the decline in transfers was a result of a decrease in demand or a decrease in available staffing.

Recommendation:

To better assess the fiscal viability of IFT's, all IFT requests should be tracked, whether fulfilled or declined, with data regarding the basis for the action.

Table 15: City of Livingston EMS Patients by Transport Type

	FY21 (Actual)		FY22 (Actual)		FY23 (Actual)	
911 Service	803	67%	907	70%	942	75%
Interfacility Transfers	393	33%	389	30%	319	25%
Total Revenue	1196		1296		1261	

Additionally, IFTs saw an even larger decrease in procedures billed. IFT procedures billed decreased during the last two years by 19% and 35% respectively. A breakdown of the procedures billed was not provided so no analysis of the decrease could be completed.

Table 16: City of Livingston EMS Procedures by Transport Type

	FY21 (Actual)		FY22 (Actual)		FY23 (Actual)	
911 Service	2969	63%	3505	72%	3675	80%
Interfacility Transfers	1714	37%	1388	28%	906	20%
Total Procedures	4683		4893		4581	

In order to determine the net operating cost of LFR's interfacility transport service, the expenditures attributed to IFTs were subtracted from the revenue they generated as reported by the EMS billing company. Personnel expenditures attributed to IFTs included designated salary items in Livingston's budget report including "Transfer Time", "Transfer Incentive", and "Non-Emergency Call-Back" for full-time and part-time employees. Any additional salary and benefit costs such as overtime, FICA, and retirement costs that may have been incurred as a result of IFTs could not be determined.

Non-personnel expenditures related to IFTs were calculated by multiplying the total EMS operating expenditures such as fuel and equipment by the proportional share of IFT work.

Table 17: City of Livingston Interfacility Transfers- Revenue vs Expenditures

Interfacility Transfers	FY21 (Actual)	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)
Revenue	\$585,365	\$595,042	\$407,209
Expenditures	\$465,363	\$399,711	\$315,324
Net Cost/Profit	\$120,002	\$195,331	\$91,885

Finally, the average net revenue per IFT patient was calculated by dividing the annual net operating cost by the number of annual IFT trips per the billing company's data. Due to the limited information the EMS billing company was able to provide, City Finance should verify the revenue per transport analysis with their billing vendor.

Observation:

The limited EMS revenue and billing information provided by the billing company presents challenges for the agency in the assessment and tracking of the fiscal performance of their EMS services.

Recommendation:

The City Finance Department, working with LFR, should establish more robust performance and reporting expectations for their billing vendor in accordance with best practice EMS revenue cycle management.

Table 18: City of Livingston Revenue per Interfacility Transport

	FY21 (Actual)	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)
Interfacility Transfers	393	389	319
Annual Net Operating Cost	\$120,002	\$195,331	\$91,885
Revenue per Patient	\$305	\$502	\$288

While the IFT program appears to provide a positive cost position, caution is warranted with this conclusion due to the lack of specificity in cost reporting. Thus, the IFT program cost displayed may not be fully representative of the cost of providing these transfers. Additionally, due to the decrease in patients and procedures over the last two years LFR should exercise caution. LFR maintains no active service contracts with area hospitals, which could allow a third-party service provider to compete for the same transports. Additionally, during interviews, LFR indicated they rely heavily on call backs for IFT. If personnel have less availability in the future, then LFR would be incapable of meeting demand and force hospitals to seek third-party providers. Any loss of revenue from IFT may have to be offset by general fund revenue.

Observation:

LFR maintains no active service contracts with area hospitals. Additionally, LFR indicated they rely heavily on call backs for IFT. If personnel have less availability in the future, then LFR would be incapable of meeting demand and force hospitals to seek third-party providers. Any loss of revenue from IFT may have to be offset by general fund revenue.

Recommendation:

LFR should evaluate the viability of a service provider agreement with the hospital/s with defined scope of service and hours of service. LFR should periodically evaluate their ability to meet the IFT demand with current staffing and proposed staffing strategies.

Rural Park District #1

Park County Rural Fire District #1 is a legally established fire district under Montana law and has taxing authority within its district. According to the Montana Department of Revenue, the Fire District included \$29,442,305 of taxable value in 2023¹⁴. While this represents a \$7,753,082 increase from 2022, under Montana law the maximum number of mills collected is limited to that required to generate the amount of property tax actually assessed in the prior year based on the current year taxable value, less the current year's newly taxable value, plus one-half of the average rate of inflation for the prior 3 years¹⁵.

¹⁴ <https://svc.mt.gov/dor/property/cov#/249>

¹⁵ https://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/title_0150/chapter_0100/part_0040/section_0200/0150-0100-0040-0200.html

Table 19: PCRFD #1 Mill Rate and Taxable Value

	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Mill Rate	33.84	30.51	30.72	23.24
Taxable Value	\$18,750,225	\$21,129,630	\$21,689,223	\$29,442,305
Tax Revenue	-	\$651,390	\$660,141	\$684,170

In addition to property tax revenues, the District received revenue from several other sources, including grants, donations, and contract services. Overall, revenues have decreased minimally over the last three years. The biggest contributor to this decrease is the reduction in contract services. The District provides contract services for wildland firefighting, but it's unclear if the volatility is related to service demands, staffing availability, or delays in receiving payment for services.

Table 20: PCRFD #1 Revenues

	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)	FY24 (Budgeted)
Tax Revenue	\$651,390	\$660,141	\$684,170
Intergovernmental	\$40,148	\$43,606	\$41,000
Grants	\$5,000	\$77,000	\$10,000
Contract Services	\$303,110	\$165,854	\$150,000
Rental Income	\$14,550	\$24,800	\$23,000
Donations	\$13,175	\$7,225	\$5,000
Other	\$1,909	\$28,918	\$15,000
Total Revenue	\$1,029,281	\$1,007,543	\$928,170
Percent Change	N/A	-0.02%	-0.08%

The District's expenditures are consistent with their revenues. FY23 saw a decrease in salary and benefits related to a decrease in contract services and an increase in operating expenses due to an increase in capital expenditure.

Table 21: PCRFD #1 Expenditures

	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)	FY24 (Budgeted)
Salary and Benefits	\$412,589	\$356,336	\$438,300
Operating	\$578,865	\$625,593	\$489,870
Total Expenditures	\$991,454	\$981,929	\$928,170
Percent Change	N/A	-1.0%	-5.5%

Overall, the District's revenues and expenditures appear consistent with their programs and services. However, it should be noted that expenditures related to station and vehicle maintenance appeared high based on the frequency of response. Additional data and research would be required to determine if some of those expenses are large one-time expenses or ongoing and escalating maintenance costs.

ESTABLISHING BASELINE PERFORMANCE

Community Demand

During the 2022 reporting period (i.e., January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022; hereinafter referred to as (2022), community demand from LFR jurisdiction for services included calls related to the EMS ($n = 1,422$; 83.1%), fire ($n = 192$; 11.2%), hazmat ($n = 48$; 2.8%), rescue ($n = 7$; 0.4%), and unknown ($n = 42$; 2.5%; Table 15). Community demand from LFR and PCRFD1 jurisdictions for services included calls related to the EMS ($n = 2,031$; 79.1%), fire ($n = 400$; 15.5%), hazmat ($n = 52$; 2.0%), rescue ($n = 12$; 0.5%), and unknown ($n = 74$; 2.9%; Table 16). Note, Tables 15 and 16 include all Interfacility Transfer (IFT) work.

Table 22: Number of Calls, Number of Responses, and Total Busy Time by Program – LFR Jurisdiction All Call Types¹⁶

Program	Number of Calls ¹	Number of Responses ²	Average Responses per Call	Total Busy Hours	Responses with Time Data ³	Average Busy Minutes per Response	Average Calls per Day	Average Responses per Day
EMS	1,422	1,452	1.0	1,124.9	1,305	51.7	3.9	4.0
Fire	192	267	1.4	32.9	82	24.1	0.5	0.7
Hazmat	48	67	1.4	10.6	18	35.2	0.1	0.2
Rescue	7	10	1.4	14.6	6	146.0	-	-
Unknown	42	56	1.3	1.1	14	4.6	0.1	0.2
Total	1,711	1,852	1.1	1,184.0	1,425	49.8	4.7	5.1

Table 23: Number of Calls, Number of Responses, and Total Busy Time by Program – LFR and PCRFD1 Jurisdictions All Call Types

Program	Number of Calls ¹	Number of Responses ²	Average Responses per Call	Total Busy Hours	Responses with Time Data ³	Average Busy Minutes per Response	Average Calls per Day	Average Responses per Day
EMS	2,031	1,950	1.0	1,629.8	1,770	55.2	5.6	5.3
Fire	400	338	0.8	62.3	102	36.3	1.1	0.9
Hazmat	52	68	1.3	10.6	18	35.2	0.1	0.2
Rescue	12	13	1.1	14.6	6	146.0	-	-
Unknown	74	89	1.2	2.6	21	7.5	0.2	0.2
Total	2,569	2,458	1.0	1,719.9	1,917	53.7	7.0	6.7

The following tables 17 and 18 reflect the distribution of work within the community, exclusive of IFTs. Even so, EMS still represents the highest area of demand within the community.

¹⁶ “Number of Calls” reflects an adjusted number of calls to align with responses made by front line units assigned to LFR.

² “Number of Responses” reflects the total number of records in the data file associated with responses made by front line units assigned to LFR, regardless of calculated busy time.

³ “Responses with Time Data” reflects the number of records in the data file associated with responses made by front line units assigned to LFR with calculated busy time not otherwise excluded.

Table 24: Number of Calls, Number of Responses, and Total Busy Time by Program – LFR Jurisdiction Excluding IFTs

Program	Number of Calls ¹	Number of Responses ²	Average Responses per Call	Total Busy Hours	Responses with Time Data ³	Average Busy Minutes per Response	Average Calls per Day	Average Responses per Day
EMS	1,095	1,157	1.1	719	1,007	42.8	3.0	1.1
Fire	192	341	1.8	67	114	34.7	0.5	0.3
Hazmat	48	88	1.8	14	23	35.3	0.1	0.1
Rescue	7	10	1.4	15	6	146.0	-	-
Unknown	42	61	1.5	1	15	4.5	0.1	0.1
Total	1,384	1,657	1.2	815	1,165	41.9	3.8	1.5

Table 25: Number of Calls, Number of Responses, and Total Busy Time by Program – LFR and PCRFD1 Jurisdictions Excluding IFT

Program	Number of Calls ¹	Number of Responses ²	Average Responses per Call	Total Busy Hours	Responses with Time Data ³	Average Busy Minutes per Response	Average Calls per Day	Average Responses per Day
EMS	1,633	1,723	1.1	1,329	1,538	51.8	4.5	1.6
Fire	400	568	1.4	235	264	52.5	1.1	0.5
Hazmat	52	93	1.8	16	26	37.9	0.1	0.1
Rescue	12	15	1.3	24	6	201.4	-	-
Unknown	74	94	1.3	3	22	7.3	0.2	0.1
Total	2,171	2,493	1.1	1,607	1,856	51.8	5.9	2.3

Response Time Performance

A GIS planning analysis was completed to evaluate potential performance parameters. Measures of total response time can be significantly influenced by both internal and external influences. For example, the dispatch time, defined as the time from call creation at the 911-center to the dispatching of units, contributes to the customer's overall response time experience. Another element in the total response time continuum is the turnout time, defined as the time from when the units are notified of the incident until they are responding. Turnout time can have a significant impact on the overall response time for the customer and is generally considered under management's control. However, the travel time, defined as the period from when the units are responding until arrival at the incident is a factor of the number of EMS stations, the ability to travel unimpeded on the road network, the existing road network's ability to navigate the community, and the availability of the units. Largely, travel time is the most stable variable to utilize in system design regarding response time performance.

Therefore, the GIS planning analyses focused on travel time capability as the unit of measure. Performance for travel time of first arriving Livingston Fire and Rescue (LFR) and Park County Rural Fire District 1 (PCRFD1) units to emergency calls by program during the CY22 (January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022) reporting period is provided below. Overall, travel time was 7.4-minutes or less for 90% of the

emergency incidents occurring within LFR's jurisdiction. For the combined jurisdictions of LFR and PCRFD1 the overall travel time was 15.1-minutes or less for 90% of the emergency incidents.

Table 26: 90th Percentile Performance Times by Program– First Arriving Units in LFR's Jurisdiction

Program	Dispatch Time (Minutes)	Turnout Time (Minutes)	Travel Time (Minutes)	Response Time (Minutes)	Sample Size ¹
EMS	3.2	2.3	7.4	8.5	954
Fire	2.0	1.4	8.0	8.0	73
Hazmat	-	-	6.7	6.7	16
Rescue	-	-	11.0	11.0	6
Unknown	-	-	6.0	6.0	-
Total	3.2	2.3	7.4	8.3	1,049

¹Sample sizes reflect the number of responses to emergency calls made by first arriving primary front-line units assigned to LFR; due to missing or excluded time data, sample sizes corresponding to individual table metrics may be smaller.

Table 27: 90th Percentile Performance Times by Program– First Arriving Units PCRFD1 Jurisdiction

Program	Dispatch Time (Minutes)	Turnout Time (Minutes)	Travel Time (Minutes)	Response Time (Minutes)	Sample Size ¹
EMS	3.5	2.2	30.3	32.0	379
Fire	3.8	5.5	17.3	20.8	16
Hazmat	0.0	0.0	8.0	8.0	-
Rescue	0.0	0.0	10.2	10.2	-
Unknown	0.0	0.0	24.2	24.2	-
Total	3.6	2.3	30.2	31.5	395

¹Sample sizes reflect the number of responses to emergency calls made by first arriving front-line units assigned to LFR and PCRFD1; due to missing or excluded time data, sample sizes corresponding to individual table metrics may be smaller.

Table 28: 90th Percentile Performance Times by Program– First Arriving Units in LFR and PCRFD1 Jurisdictions

Program	Dispatch Time (Minutes)	Turnout Time (Minutes)	Travel Time (Minutes)	Response Time (Minutes)	Sample Size ¹
EMS	3.4	2.2	17.3	20.3	1,266
Fire	3.7	5.4	9.0	10.2	81
Hazmat	1.2	4.4	7.0	7.4	17
Rescue	-	-	11.0	11.0	6
Unknown	-	-	15.6	15.6	-
Total	3.5	2.3	15.1	17.1	1,370

¹Sample sizes reflect the number of responses to emergency calls made by first arriving primary front-line units assigned to LFR or PCRFD1; due to missing or excluded time data, sample sizes corresponding to individual table metrics may be.

Historical performance was utilized to validate the GIS model. The CY22 historical performance demonstrated a 7.4-minute overall LFR department travel time performance at the 90th percentile. The planning assessments estimated 95.21% fire risk coverage in Livingston by 1 station within 8-minutes travel time. The CY22 historical performance showed a 17.3-minute overall travel time performance at

the 90th percentile to EMS calls within the combined areas of LFR and PCRFD1. The planning assessments estimated 84.02% EMS risk coverage in the combined area by 1 station within 15-minutes travel time. Therefore, there is a high degree of agreement between the planning tools and actual historical performance.

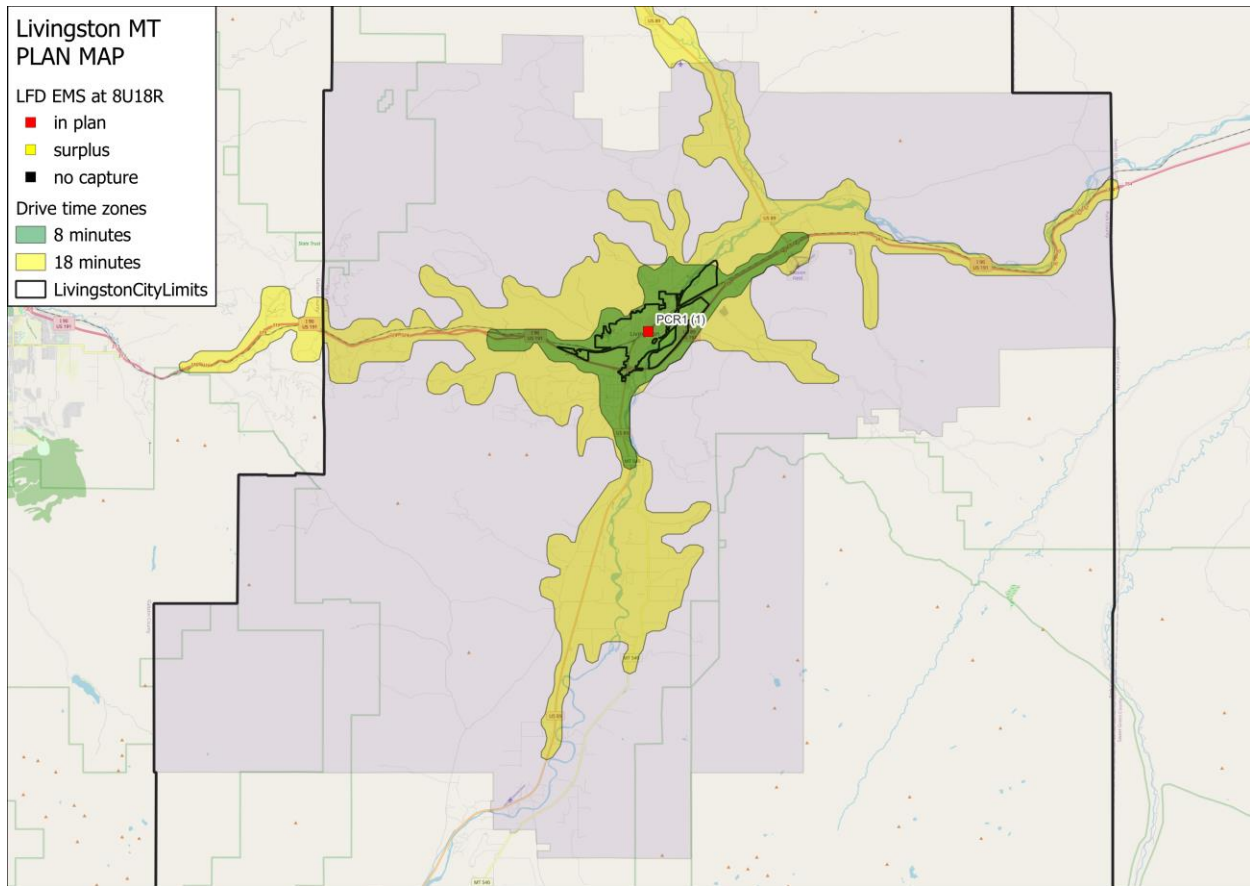
When referring to the marginal utility analyses provided in the tables on the following pages, ascending rank order is the station's capability to cover risk (incidents) for all calls in relation to the total historical call volume of the sample period CY22. Station is the identifier for the current LFR or PCRFD1 station; Station Capture is the number of calls the station would capture within the specified travel time parameter; Total Capture is the cumulative number of calls captured with the addition of each station; and Percent Capture is the cumulative percentage of risk covered with the addition of each station.

The goal would be to achieve at least 90% capture. The figures illustrate the drive time capabilities. Three baselines are provided for comparative context. First, since LFR is the EMS provider for all of Park County, a county wide analysis of EMS performance is provided at 8-minutes of travel time in the urban areas and 18-minutes of travel time in the rural areas, in line with historical performance. The GIS analyses use average road speeds; therefore, a few percentage points drift from historical to modeled performance are reasonable understanding that it is typical that the system units can travel faster than the average road speed, especially in rural areas.

Table 29: Marginal Station Contribution for 8-minute Urban and 18-minute Rural Travel Time – EMS calls Countywide

Rank	Station	Area Class	Station Capture	Total Capture	Percent Capture
1	PCR1	U	1225	1225	71.43%
2	LIV	U	0	1225	71.43%
3	PCR1	R	264	1489	86.82%
4	LIV	R	0	1489	86.82%

Figure 4: Current Station Bleed Map for 8-minute Urban and 18-minute Rural Travel Time – EMS calls Countywide



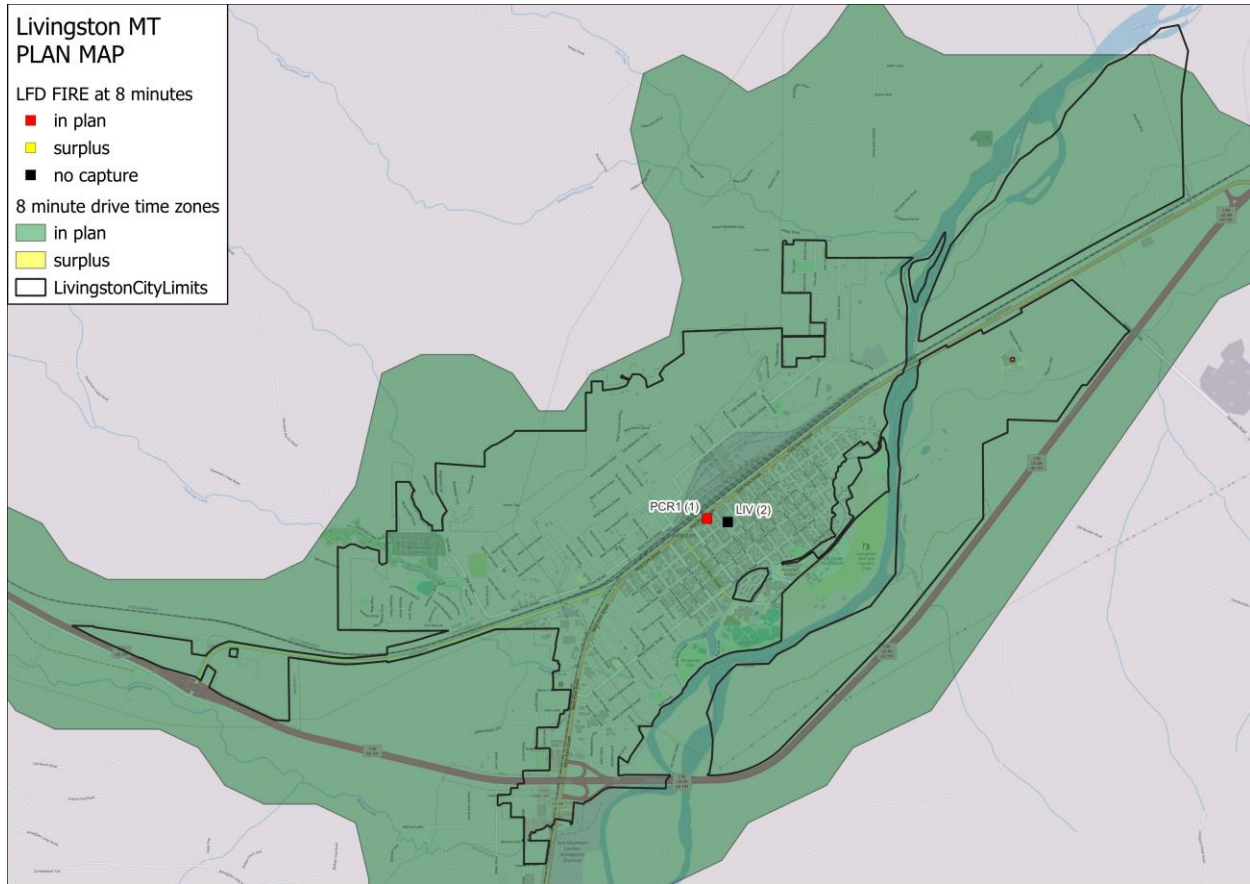
Additional analyses are provided for fire risk within each individual jurisdiction of LFR and PCRFD1.

Analyses suggest that with the single LFR station, 100% of Fire program calls within the City of Livingston could be responded to within 8-minutes or less travel time.

Table 30: Marginal Station Contribution for 8-minute Travel Time – Fire calls in LFR's Jurisdiction

Rank	Station	Area Class	Station Capture	Total Capture	Percent Capture
1	LIV	U	283	283	100.00%
2	PCR1	U	0	283	100.00%

Figure 5: Current Station Bleed Map for 8-Minute Travel Time – Fire calls in LFR’s Jurisdiction

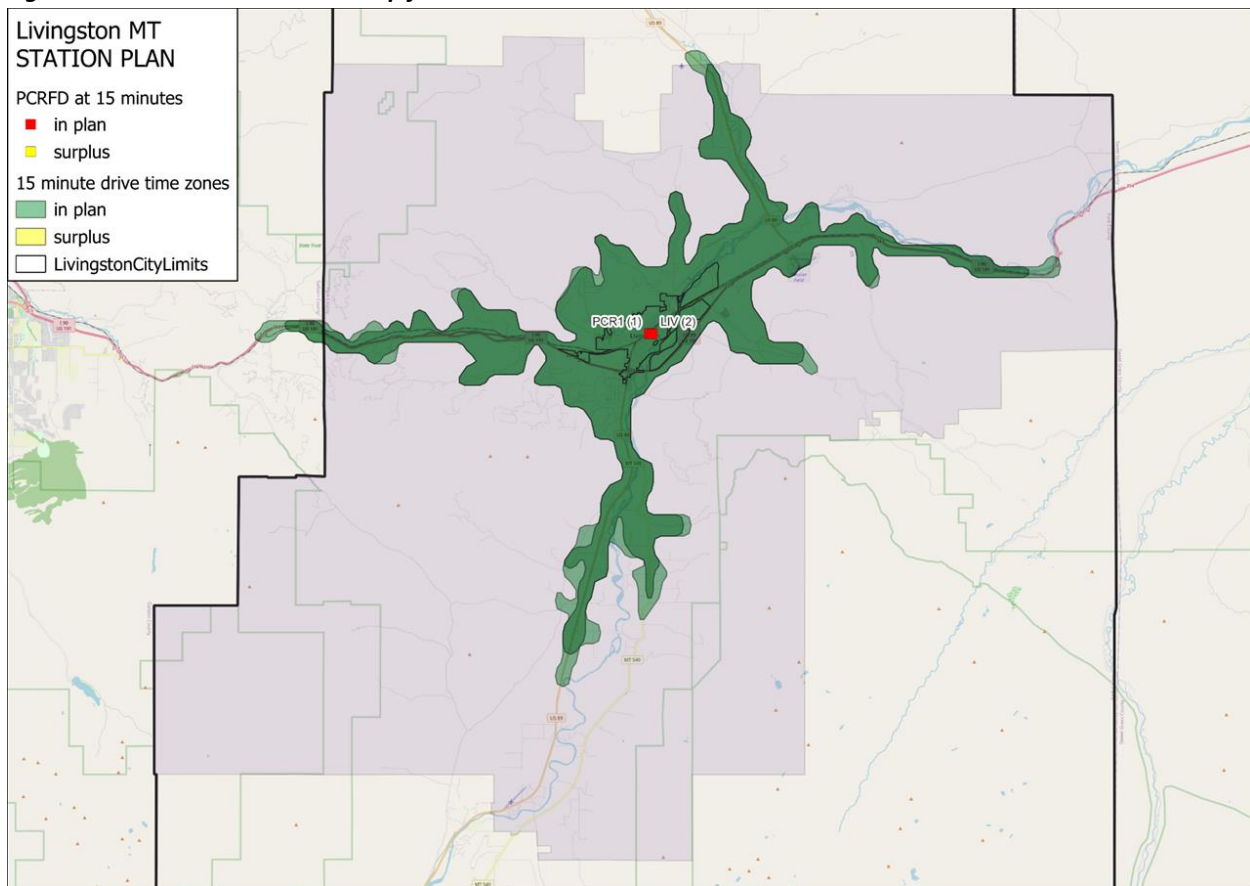


Analyses suggest that with the primary PCRFD1 station, only 62.65% of Fire program calls within the PCRFD1 jurisdiction could be responded to within 15-minutes or less travel time.

Table 31: Marginal Station Contribution for 15-minute Travel Time – Fire calls in PCRFD1’s Jurisdiction

Rank	Station	Area Class	Station Capture	Total Capture	Percent Capture
1	PCR1	U	156	156	62.65%
2	LIV	U	0	156	62.65%

Figure 6: Current Station Bleed Map for 15-Minute Travel Time – Fire calls in PCRFD1’s Jurisdiction



Workload

Another measure, time on task, is necessary to evaluate best practices in efficient system delivery and consider the impact workload has on personnel. Unit Hour Utilization (UHU) values represent the proportion of the work period (e.g., 24 hours) that is utilized responding to requests for service.

Historically, the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) has recommended that 24-hour units utilize 0.30, or 30% workload as an upper threshold.¹⁷ In other words, this recommendation would have personnel spend no more than 7.2 hours per day on emergency incidents. These thresholds take into consideration the necessity to accomplish non-emergency activities such as training, health and wellness, public education, and fire inspections. The 4th edition of the IAFF EMS Guidebook no longer specifically identifies an upper threshold. However, *FITCH* recommends that an upper unit utilization threshold of approximately 0.30, or 30%, would be considered best practice. In other words, units and personnel should not exceed 30%, or 7.2 hours, of their workday responding to calls. These recommendations are also validated in the literature. For example, in their review of the City of Rolling Meadows, the Illinois

¹⁷ International Association of Firefighters. (1995). *Emergency Medical Services: A Guidebook for Fire-Based Systems*. Washington, DC: Author. (p. 11)

Fire Chiefs Association utilized a UHU threshold of 0.30 as an indication to add additional resources.¹⁸ Similarly, in a standards of cover study facilitated by the Center for Public Safety Excellence, the Castle Rock Fire and Rescue Department utilizes a UHU of 0.30 as the upper limit in their standards of cover due to the necessity to accomplish other non-emergency activities.¹⁹

Recommendation:

FITCH recommends that the Agency adopt an upper UHU threshold for 24-hour units at 0.30 and 8 to 12hr units at .45 with a .05 trigger to begin planning for additional resources.

Unit response volume and busy time analyses included LFR and PCRFD1 units in the table below. The data includes all 911 and IFT work. A total of 541 incidents lacked sufficient time data to determine their total busy time and are thus excluded from this calculation. However, the resulting workload values demonstrate substantial workload capacity within LFRs current unit staffing. Assuming all of the 541 excluded incidents were 1-hour in duration and run by Medic 1, Medic 1's workload would still be well below the threshold at .17 UHU. Values shown as 0.00 have registered workloads of less than 1% of their deployed time.

Table 32: LFR and PCRFD1 Unit Hour Utilization (UHU) Workload

Agency	Unit ID	Unit Type	Number of Responses ¹	Responses with Time Data ²	Total Busy Hours	UHU assuming 24hr deployment	UHU assuming 12hr deployment
LFR and PCRFD1	Brush1	Brush truck	14	2	5.6	0.00	0.00
	Engine1	Engine	162	37	23.2	0.00	0.01
	Medic1	Ambulance/ALS Unit	1546	1307	962.8	0.11	0.22
	Medic2	Ambulance/ALS Unit	333	317	471.3	0.05	0.11
	Medic3	Ambulance/ALS Unit	111	98	89.5	0.01	0.02
	Medic4	Ambulance/ALS Unit	70	63	93.9	0.01	0.02
	Medic5	Ambulance/ALS Unit	9	8	23.2	0.00	0.01
	Rescue1	Rescue unit	194	73	27.3	0.00	0.01
	Truck1	Truck or aerial	6	1	0.3	0.00	0.00
	Brush 468	Brush truck	1	1	1.9	0.00	0.00
	Brush 469	Brush truck	1	0		0.00	0.00
	Engine 450	Engine	1	1	0.7	0.00	0.00
	Engine 465	Engine	1	1	0.7	0.00	0.00
	Rescue 464	Rescue unit	2	2	1.2	0.00	0.00
	Squad 452	Squad unit	6	6	8.1	0.00	0.00
	Tender 457	Tender	1	0	10.3	0.00	0.00
Totals			2,458	1,917	1720		

¹⁸ Illinois Fire Chiefs Association. (2012). *An Assessment of Deployment and Station Location: Rolling Meadows Fire Department*. Rolling Meadows, Illinois: Author. (pp. 54-55)

¹⁹ Castle Rock Fire and Rescue Department. (2011). *Community Risk Analysis and Standards of Cover*. Castle Rock, Colorado: Author. (p. 58)

Observation:

Workload analyses indicate substantial workload capacity within LFR's current unit staffing, including demand for all 911 and IFT work.

Observation:

The Agency struggled to produce the necessary data to provide a comprehensive analysis of the system suggesting the need for more robust internal data extraction and reporting tools in addition to the potential for updates to the CAD data systems.

Recommendation:

The City should update its data capture, export, and reporting capabilities to align with best practices for current and future system performance monitoring and planning.

CONSOLIDATION CONSIDERATIONS

Any efforts to reorganize or consolidate fire service agencies come with many obstacles to be managed. These obstacles can range from legislative challenges to workplace culture elements that make difficult changes even more difficult. For any of the opportunities to have any chance for successful execution, the stakeholders must buy in to the process. Clearly the City of Livingston and its elected leaders, the Park Rural District #1 and its elected leaders, and the IAFF Local 630 are very direct stakeholders. In any effort to evaluate options, other stakeholders such as the city residents, the Park County residents, regional partners, and the hospital system must be considered. The following sections provide a review of factors requiring consideration for consolidation.

Regulatory Factors

At present, there does not appear to be statutory prohibitions in place that would preclude a rural fire district consolidating with a municipal fire department, nor would the option for a municipal fire department consolidating with a fire district be prohibited. In either case, certain statutory requirements discussed in the Legal Basis section would need to be met. The legal basis for both a municipal fire department and a rural fire district are also included in the Legal Basis section of this report.

Thus, the option of a municipal fire department and a rural fire department merging into a newly created fire district is possible, but the implementation process and timelines suggest this option is not a viable option. Currently, statutes do not provide for the establishment of a fire territory.

Observation:

The option of a municipal fire department and a rural fire department merging into a newly created fire district is possible, but the implementation process and timelines suggest this option is not a viable option. Currently, statutes do not provide for the establishment of a fire territory.

Financial Factors

The merger of LFR into the PCRFD1 would likely include redefinition of the District's boundaries to include the City of Livingston. Thus, properties within the City would then be subject to the District's taxing authority, subsequently increasing revenue for the District. Assuming a 95% collection rate, the amount of additional revenue available based on the City's taxable value and the District's mill rate is summarized below²⁰.

²⁰ <https://svc.mt.gov/dor/property/cov#/249>

Table 33: Estimated PCRFD1 Tax Revenue Generation within City of Livingston

	FY22	FY23	FY24
Mill Rate	30.51	30.72	23.24
City of Livingston Taxable Value	\$18,892,788	\$19,928,254	\$28,047,015
95% of District's Livingston Tax Revenue	\$547,598	\$581,586	\$619,222

To recognize potential efficiencies and savings from consolidation, the District would also need to assume responsibility for EMS services along with the associated revenues and expenditures. The chart below represents the total revenue that would be available to the District following consolidation. To ensure the consolidated system is sustainable only revenues that are stable were considered. Revenues that were excluded included grants and donations.

Table 34: Total Revenue of Consolidated District

Revenue Source	FY22	FY23	FY24
District Revenue	\$1,009,198	\$894,401	\$898,170
City of Livingston Tax Revenue	\$547,598	\$581,586	\$619,222
EMS Revenue	\$2,433,950	\$2,427,960	\$2,609,703
Total Revenue	\$3,990,747	\$3,903,947	\$4,127,095

It's difficult to predict the exact expenditures following the consolidation of two agencies. This analysis assumes that the same level of response time performance is provided and that the additional expenses incurred by the District will be consistent with the City's historical fire and EMS service costs minus any predicted savings directly related to the consolidation of personnel and assets.

The first opportunity for operational efficiencies lies within personnel costs. The city employs 16 full-time personnel, inclusive of a fire chief, and a cadre of part-time firefighters at a cost of \$2,534,413. The District employs a fire chief and a deputy chief at a cost of around \$176,970. Consolidation of the two organizations will eliminate the need for one of the fire chief positions and result in savings equal to the salary and benefits associated with that position. The salary and benefits associated with LFR's chief was \$144,278 in FY23. The District did not provide employee level salary and benefit costs so a savings of \$101,970 was assumed for the reduction of one fire chief in the consolidation analysis.

LFR does not currently utilize a deputy chief so it's reasonable to consider eliminating that position by delegating those responsibilities to the battalion chiefs. Although the District did not provide employee level salary and benefit costs, an estimated savings of \$75,000 could be realized if the deputy chief position was eliminated. However, LFR receives support services from other city departments such as human resources and finance that the District does not possess. The consolidated system could elect to retain the current deputy chief and ask the City to continue to provide those services at no cost or eliminate the deputy chief positions and utilize those dollars to contract for the additional support services. Regardless, the District will be required to manage the additional responsibilities associated with employing a larger workforce, so no additional savings were included as part of the consolidation.

Observation:

In a consolidated agency operated by the District, it is unknown what level of service Livingston would provide, if any, such as human resources, legal, building maintenance, etc.

Recommendation:

Assuming consolidation into the District, the City should evaluate its willingness and cost to provide the District with essential administrative support services to the extent it currently does for LFR.

Since the District does not employ any firefighters or paramedics there is no overlap in those positions. It's also unlikely that the current volunteers would eliminate the need for any of the existing LFR firefighters so no additional personnel savings are projected.

There is a sizeable fleet between the two agencies. Based on the level of community demand, the fleet could be consolidated and reduced in a consolidated agency. Between the two agencies there are eight vehicles that responded to less than ten calls each in 2022 and seven vehicles that didn't respond to any incidents in 2022. Some of those vehicles may have responded as part of the district's wildland contract service but those responses aren't documented in the CAD incident data. A recommended fleet for the consolidated agency is below. Staff vehicles have been excluded from this analysis.

Table 35: Recommendation for Consolidated Fleet

Use	Owner	Year	Unit ID	Unit Type	Number of Responses	Total Busy Hours
Front Line	PCRFD1	2013	Brush 469	Brush truck	1	
Front Line	LFR	2017	Engine1	Engine	162	23.2
Front Line	LFR	2020	Medic2	Ambulance/ALS Unit	333	471.3
Front Line	LFR	2022	Medic3	Ambulance/ALS Unit	111	89.5
Front Line	PCRFD1	2016	Squad 452	Squad unit	6	8.1
Front Line	PCRFD1	Unk.	Tender 457	Tender	1	10.3
Front Line	LFR	2000	Truck1	Truck or aerial	6	0.3
IFT	LFR	2023	Medic4	Ambulance/ALS Unit	70	93.9
Reserve	LFR	2011	Brush1	Brush truck	14	5.6
Reserve	PCRFD1	2008	Engine 465	Engine	1	0.7
Reserve	LFR	2019	Medic1	Ambulance/ALS Unit	1546	962.8
Reserve/Contract	PCRFD1	Unk.	Tender 451	Tender	-	-
Contract	PCRFD1	2007	Brush 468	Brush truck	1	1.9

The recommended fleet size is based on the services provided, historical performance, and community demand. The units recommended were included based solely on age with no regard to ownership. Department personnel should consider ongoing reliability and specific capabilities of each unit before finalizing the fleet. The fleet can be further reduced if IFTs and wildland contract services are discontinued. Any units above the recommended numbers should be disposed of accordingly.

The smaller fleet will result in savings related to fuel, maintenance, equipment, and insurance expenses. Since the recommended fleet includes approximately 50% of the current fire apparatus, potential annual savings equal to 50% of the combined fuel, maintenance, equipment, and insurance costs for fire apparatus or \$108,134 are included in a consolidation assessment. Before determining the final savings related to fleet consolidation the district would need to negotiate with the city on the potential purchase of their units, which may include debt service.

Observation:

There is a sizeable fleet between the two agencies. Based on the level of community demand, the fleet could be consolidated and reduced in a consolidated agency. The fleet could be reduced further if IFT's and wildland deployments were discontinued.

Recommendation:

In a consolidated environment, the fleet size should be reduced as depicted in Table 35.

Finally, a consolidated system would not require both stations to be located in the City of Livingston. While the District station has a slightly better response performance, the difference is negligible. The consolidated system could select the station that affords the most advantageous position as related to overall square footage, personnel accommodations, and condition. It should be noted, however, that the LFR station is part of a larger city complex and the city may elect to retain that property for other uses. For the purposes of the financial assessment, it is assumed that the District station is utilized and therefore would not assume duplicative overhead costs related to the city station and liability insurance. Those expenses represent potential for an additional \$76,631 savings to the City with a consolidated system.

Observation:

While a combined system may not require the operations of both stations located in the City, it remains unclear if the District facility could provide space for the combined fleet, even if reduced.

Recommendation:

If consolidated, the parties should conduct a facility assessment to determine the most suitable approach for housing the consolidated fleet in support of both normal operations and reserve or standby equipment.

The estimated revenues and associated expenditures following a consolidation are outlined in the table below to provide a high-level snapshot of the potential financial position resulting from a consolidation. Without sufficient insight into the District's budget and cost factors, this snapshot assumes all of their expenditures along with LFR's which maintains the same staffing and service levels as currently provided by LFR and District volunteers, while reducing personnel costs by one chief, some apparatus and equipment costs, and the overhead related to the second station. Undoubtedly, there are duplicative costs in this assessment that would require further detail to flesh out. Thus, in this snapshot, the projected expenditures exceed funding by \$55,063. Meaning without additional expenditure reductions and/or additional revenue or funding allocations, the consolidated system would likely operate at a loss.

The models presented later in this report seek to remove duplicative costs by only carrying over purposeful and identifiable obligations to each model's financial assessment.

Table 36 – High-Level Consolidated Revenue vs Expenditures

	FY24
Consolidated Revenue	\$4,127,095
PCRFD #1 Expenditures	(\$928,170)
LFR Expenditures	(\$3,540,723)
Personnel Savings	\$101,970
Vehicle & Equip. Savings	\$108,134
Other Savings	\$76,631
Net Financial Position	(\$55,063)

Observation:

Assuming the District maintains the same staffing, overhead, and service levels as currently provided by LFR while reducing personnel costs by one chief, some apparatus and equipment costs, and the overhead related to the second Livingston station, the projected expenditures exceed funding by \$55,063 on an annualized basis. Without additional expenditure reductions and/or additional revenue or funding allocations, the consolidated system would be likely to operate at a loss.

Finally, it should be noted that the city's residents will experience a tax increase without an appreciable improvement in fire and EMS service. However, if desired, the consolidation would allow the city to redirect approximately \$1.3 million that is currently allocated from the general fund for fire services toward a different strategic priority. Conversely, a portion of these previously committed general fund dollars could be allocated to providing support service to the consolidated district.

Observation:

Unless the City opts to reduce taxes proportionately, the City's residents will experience a tax increase without an appreciable improvement in the level of fire and EMS services.

Recommendation:

A reinvestment plan for liberated general fund dollars, or a tax roll-back strategy should be developed with community input as part of any consolidation planning.

Personnel Factors

The personnel-related considerations for a consolidation between the two entities are significant. The City of Livingston is a party to the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) that, unless modified by both parties, carries some substantial obligations on the City's part. No employees of the rural district are represented by a bargaining unit.

While limited information was provided by the rural district to verify, it is assumed the pay and benefits between the rural district and the city are inconsistent. In the event the rural district would consolidate with the city, there is not a need for two fire chiefs and two deputy chiefs. In the event the employees

from the city were onboarded into the District, meaningful assignments for them would be important and could fill some unmet administrative needs.

One of the more significant personnel impacts to city staff consolidating into the fire district, especially if the city opted to transition to an “EMS only model” lies with the retirement system. By statute, Livingston firefighters are mandatory participants in the Montana Firefighter Unified Retirement System (FURS). While the Fire District has the option to participate, they have opted not to do so. Should the Livingston employees no longer be responsible for fire protection and no longer career firefighters, it could bring about untoward outcomes related to FURS and other benefits that are set aside by ordinance or statute exclusively for firefighters.

Should the existing Livingston employees be merged into the Fire District, considerable research would need to be done regarding the impacts on the Livingston employees’ benefits, particularly retirement benefits as the benefits packages between the two entities are disparate. Unless the Fire District agrees to accept the transfer of the displaced Livingston staff, the disposition of some or all of the staff is predictably challenging for policy makers. If the Fire District opted to transfer some or all the staff, labor concerns would emerge and the desire to enter into a collective bargaining agreement would be a challenge for their Fire District. Given these factors, modeling assumed the current cost of benefits and conditions of the CBA would be assumed by the consolidated district just as they are today.

Optimized Staffing

A baseline for establishing personnel needs is developed by determining the required number of full-time employees (FTEs) needed to staff all operationally deployed line positions. Staffing needs are determined by mathematical formula based upon the required number of seats, the hours to be covered, and the annualized use of scheduled and unscheduled leave. These factors are used to determine the optimized staffing for all models and variations. The resulting ‘staffing multiplier’ indicates the number of FTE’s required to staff each 24-hour position 24-hours a day for 365 days a year based on the average 56-hour work week. However, the Agency was unable to produce historical leave data, so Fitch utilized a relief factor of 15% based on observed industry experience for similarly deployed agencies and schedules.

Recommendation:

The Agency should develop a system for tracking and reporting on the use of paid leave to provide monitoring for the appropriate use of leave and operational staffing levels.

Schedule and compensation are part of the City’s collective bargaining agreement, and any modifications would need to be negotiated prior to understanding the full financial impact of any proposed changes. The following options and cost analysis are presented to determine financial feasibility and do not represent the only options that may be considered as part of contract negotiations. This analysis is focused on operational staffing and the Fire Chief and Community Paramedic have been removed from consideration. Cost projections were completed using FY24 personnel salary data provided by City Finance and do not include costs related to call-back overtime or

transfer incentives. Any projected increase or decrease in costs is based on LFR's current staffing levels and average personnel costs as outlined below and include the following assumptions.

- The "base pay" includes eligible overtime pay including longevity and certification pay.
- The Operations Chief and EMS Chief salaries were used to obtain the Battalion Chief average salary and benefit costs. Based on the CBA those positions are currently being utilized as Battalion Chiefs.
- Firefighter average salary and benefits include Firefighter I and Firefighter II costs. Although the CBA indicates a desire to only hire paramedics, currently three of the four firefighters are EMTs. Firefighter costs may increase if this ratio changes in the future.

Table 37: LFR Personnel Costs

Position	Avg Base Pay	Avg Other Pay	Avg Total Salary	Avg Benefits	Avg Salary & Benefits	Number of Positions	Total Cost per Rank
Battalion Chief	\$76,409	\$36,373	\$112,782	\$43,055	\$155,836	2	\$311,672
Captain	\$64,815	\$11,295	\$76,109	\$35,731	\$111,841	4	\$447,364
Engineer	\$55,610	\$8,574	\$64,184	\$33,089	\$97,273	4	\$389,092
Firefighter	\$48,629	\$6,919	\$55,547	\$31,176	\$86,723	4	\$346,892
					Total:	14	\$1,495,020

While a 4-platoon schedule reduces the amount of overtime liability and can provide a recruitment advantage over departments utilizing a 3-platoon schedule, it requires 33% more personnel to achieve the same level of staffing. Below is a comparison of the two schedules based on LFR's current daily minimum staffing of four personnel. Although LFR utilizes a combination of full-time and part-time employees to meet their minimum staffing, this example illustrates the number of personnel required daily, regardless of their employment status. A leave usage report was not provided so an industry-aligned 15% relief factor was used to determine the number of personnel required to account for leave usage. An illustrative cost comparison for all full-time employees is provided utilizing the average firefighter salary and benefits applied to all required positions.

Table 38: Required Staffing 3-Platoon versus 4-Platoon Schedule

	Minimum Seats per Shift	Number of Shifts	Number of Seats Required	Relief Factor (15%)	Number of Personnel Required	Salary & Benefits
4-platoon	4	4	16	2.4	18.4	\$1,595,703
3-platoon	4	3	12	1.8	13.8	\$1,196,777
Projected Savings:						\$398,926

In addition to the total number of personnel required to achieve the desired staffing levels, LFR would also need to consider the overtime impact of any schedule changes. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) 7k exemption allows employers to work firefighters up to 53 hours a week before requiring overtime compensation. While the exact amount of overtime can vary based on the Department's choice of schedule and pay cycles, a typical 4-platoon schedule averages 42 hours per week, well below the allowable threshold. In contrast, a typical 3-platoon schedule works an average of 56 hours per week.

Table 39: Scheduled Hours 3-Platoon versus 4-Platoon Schedule

	Avg Weekly Hours	Avg Annual Hours	Avg Hours Above FLSA Threshold
3-platoon	56	2912	156
4-platoon	42	2184	-572

The FLSA overtime analysis below assumes that an employee's annual base pay remains constant, and their hourly rate is determined by dividing their base pay by 2,756, the maximum allowable hours by FLSA. Then the overtime impact is calculated by multiplying 156, the hours scheduled above 2,756, by 1.5 times the employee's hourly rate. Any additional benefit costs that may be related to overtime such as FICA and retirement costs are not included as part of the analysis. The reserve firefighters and the two Battalion Chiefs have been removed from the OT implementation cost analysis. The Battalion Chiefs are already on a 3-platoon schedule and the reserve firefighters are not OT eligible.

Table 40: FLSA Overtime Impact of 3-Platoon Schedule

Position	Avg Base Pay	Avg Hourly Rate	Avg OT Rate	Avg FLSA OT	Number of Positions	Total FLSA OT Impact
Captain	\$64,815	\$23.52	\$35.28	\$5,503.16	4	\$22,012.64
Engineer	\$55,610	\$20.18	\$30.27	\$4,721.60	4	\$18,886.42
Firefighter	\$48,629	\$17.64	\$26.47	\$4,128.88	4	\$16,515.51
Total Implementation Cost:					12	\$57,414.57

LFR could also consider implementing a Kelly Day to offset the FLSA impact. A Kelly Day provides one additional day off per pay cycle to lower the number of scheduled hours and could be implemented by using the existing reserve firefighters. If an adequate cadre of reserve firefighters and trained personnel to ride up exist, LFR should consider providing a relief day every 14th shift to reduce the workweek to 52 hours, below the FLSA threshold for overtime. The vacancies created by personnel on Kelly Day could be staffed with reserve firefighters. Utilizing the max hourly rate of \$21/hour for reserve firefighters implementing a Kelly day would result in a savings of \$6,884 from the \$57,414 FLSA burden of the 56hr work week. This conservatively represents the minimum savings possible. The average reserve firefighter hourly rate is \$16.40/hour, thus additional savings would be recognized.

Table 41: Three Platoon Average Work Week Options with Kelly/Relief

Shifts	Work Week	R-Day Frequency	Total Annual Kelly-Days	Annual Relief Hours
3	56	No R-Day	0	0.00
3	54	R-Day every 28th Shift	4.35	104.29
3	52	R-Day every 14th shift	8.69	208.57
3	50	R-Day every 10th shift	13.00	312.00
3	48	R-Day every 7th Shift	17.38	417.14

The city could reinvest the personnel assigned to the fourth shift to increase operational capacity, improve service delivery, and reduce reliance on call-backs or they could utilize the schedule change to create operational savings as outlined below.

If the same daily staffing levels are maintained the schedule change could reduce the number of full-time employees by 2, to a total of 12. The cost projection below provides a total of four personnel assigned to each shift, inclusive of a battalion chief. No relief staffing is provided in this approach as the current staffing practice does not provide relief, but instead utilizes reserve firefighters and overtime. An approximate \$77,471 in operational savings from current staffing costs would be realized after the promotion of a battalion chief and the increase in FLSA overtime.

Table 42: Personnel Costs for 3-Platoon Schedule- 12 Full Time Employees

Position	Avg Base Pay	Avg Other Pay	Avg FLSA OT	Avg Total Salary	Avg Benefits	Avg Salary & Benefits	Number of Positions	Total Cost per Rank
Battalion Chief	\$76,409	\$36,373	\$6,487	\$119,270	\$43,055	\$162,325	3	\$486,974
Captain	\$64,815	\$11,295	\$5,503	\$81,613	\$35,731	\$117,344	3	\$352,032
Engineer	\$55,610	\$8,574	\$4,721	\$68,906	\$33,089	\$101,995	3	\$305,984
Firefighter	\$48,629	\$6,919	\$4,128	\$59,677	\$31,176	\$90,853	3	\$272,559
						Total:	12	\$1,417,549

If the city chooses to retain all existing employees and reinvest the additional personnel to improve service delivery the two additional firefighters could be assigned to a daylight Monday – Friday schedule to provide a peak activity unit. The peak activity unit would provide a higher level of redundancy during peak demand periods and a reliable model for providing interfacility transfers. This option is built on the existing number of personnel and reduces the potential overtime liability since not all personnel will be on 24-hour shifts.

It provides a third battalion chief and a total of 6 operational personnel Monday – Friday, 0800-1700, and 4 at all other times. Retaining all existing full-time employees would cost an estimated \$95,977 over the current staffing costs if deployed as a 56hr work week, but the peak activity unit has the potential to increase IFT revenue and/or reduce emergency callback costs.

Observation:

If a Battalion Chief position is deployed, it should be deployed across all shifts for operational consistency and administrative support. The 3-platoon schedule provides the most efficient way to accomplish this.

Table 43: Personnel Costs for 3-Platoon Schedule- 14 Full Time Employees

Position	Avg Base Pay	Avg Other Pay	Avg FLSA OT	Avg Total Salary	Avg Benefits	Avg Salary & Benefits	Number of Positions	Total Cost per Rank
Battalion Chief	\$76,409	\$36,373	\$6,488	\$119,270	\$43,055	\$162,325	3	\$486,974
Captain	\$64,815	\$11,295	\$5,503	\$81,613	\$35,731	\$117,344	3	\$352,032
Engineer	\$55,610	\$8,574	\$4,722	\$68,906	\$33,089	\$101,995	3	\$305,984
Firefighter (56 hr)	\$48,629	\$6,919	\$4,129	\$59,677	\$31,176	\$90,853	3	\$272,559
Firefighter (40 hr)	\$48,629	\$6,919	\$0	\$55,548	\$31,176	\$86,724	2	\$173,448
						Total:	14	\$1,590,997

The costs associated with the current 4-platoon schedule along with the two 3-platoon schedules discussed are outlined below for comparison. During the last three fiscal years, total revenue (general fund plus EMS revenues) has outpaced expenditures with FY23 revenues exceeding expenditures by nearly \$433,000 despite interfacility calls decreasing. The additional revenue may serve as a funding source to implement the desired option without increasing levies. Additionally, the option that includes a peak activity unit could increase EMS revenue by providing more consistent unit availability for interfacility transfers.

The following table provides a summary of the potential opportunities related to a schedule change. The table includes the impacts of FLSA but does not include relief staffing since the current practice does not provide for relief. In other words, the comparison is provided to align with current practice of utilizing reserve firefighters and overtime to cover relief.

Table 44: Comparison of Personnel Costs Related to Schedule Change

	Current Model -4-platoon schedule with 14 FTEs	3-platoon 56hr wk schedule with 12 FTEs	3-platoon 56hr wk schedule with 14 FTEs
FTEs	14	12	14
Cost	\$1,495,020	\$1,417,549	\$1,590,997
Difference from current cost	N/A	(\$77,471)	\$95,977

Recommendation:

The City should consider the value of savings and daily staffing concentrations associated with a 3-platoon shift schedule to improve overall staffing strength; understanding that any change would require impact bargaining with the labor unit.

Recommendation:

If the City pursues a 3-platoon schedule for LFR, they should also consider implementing a Kelly Day to offset the FLSA impacts, maintain a competitive incentive, and soften the transition from the 4-platoon system

Recommendation:

If the City pursues a 3-platoon schedule for LFR and maintains the Battalion Chief position, they should consider utilizing the associated savings to place a Battalion Chief on each shift and distribute essential administration functions among them.

Operational Factors

Establishing Benchmark Performance Standards

A GIS planning analysis was completed to evaluate potential performance parameters. Measures of total response time can be significantly influenced by both internal and external influences. For example, the dispatch time, defined as the time from call creation at the 911-center to the dispatching of units, contributes to the customer's overall response time experience. Another element in the total response time continuum is the turnout time, defined as the time from when the units are notified of the incident until they are responding. Turnout time can have a significant impact on the overall response time for the customer and is generally considered under management's control. However, the travel time, defined as the period from when the units are responding until arrival at the incident is a factor of the number of EMS stations, the ability to travel unimpeded on the road network, the existing road network's ability to navigate the community, and the availability of the units. Largely, travel time is the most stable variable to utilize in system design regarding response time performance.

Therefore, the GIS planning analyses focused on travel time capability as the unit of measure. Performance for travel time of first arriving Livingston Fire and Rescue (LFR) and Park County Rural Fire District 1 (PCRFD1) units to emergency calls by program during the CY22 (January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022) reporting period is provided below. Overall, travel time was 7.4-minutes or less for 90% of the emergency incidents occurring within LFR's jurisdiction. For the combined jurisdictions of LFR and PCRFD1 the overall travel time was 15.1-minutes or less for 90% of the emergency incidents.

Table 45: 90th Percentile Performance Times by Program– First Arriving Units in LFR's Jurisdiction

Program	Dispatch Time (Minutes)	Turnout Time (Minutes)	Travel Time (Minutes)	Response Time (Minutes)	Sample Size ¹
EMS	3.2	2.3	7.4	8.5	954
Fire	2.0	1.4	8.0	8.0	73
Hazmat	-	-	6.7	6.7	16
Rescue	-	-	11.0	11.0	6
Unknown	-	-	6.0	6.0	-
Total	3.2	2.3	7.4	8.3	1,049

¹Sample sizes reflect the number of responses to emergency calls made by first arriving primary front-line units assigned to LFR; due to missing or excluded time data, sample sizes corresponding to individual table metrics may be smaller.

Table 46: 90th Percentile Performance Times by Program– First Arriving Units PCRFD1 Jurisdiction

Program	Dispatch Time (Minutes)	Turnout Time (Minutes)	Travel Time (Minutes)	Response Time (Minutes)	Sample Size ¹
EMS	3.5	2.2	30.3	32.0	379
Fire	3.8	5.5	17.3	20.8	16
Hazmat	0.0	0.0	8.0	8.0	-
Rescue	0.0	0.0	10.2	10.2	-
Unknown	0.0	0.0	24.2	24.2	-
Total	3.6	2.3	30.2	31.5	395

¹Sample sizes reflect the number of responses to emergency calls made by first arriving front-line units assigned to LFR and PCRFD1; due to missing or excluded time data, sample sizes corresponding to individual table metrics may be smaller.

Table 47: 90th Percentile Performance Times by Program– First Arriving Units in LFR and PCRFD1 Jurisdictions

Program	Dispatch Time (Minutes)	Turnout Time (Minutes)	Travel Time (Minutes)	Response Time (Minutes)	Sample Size ¹
EMS	3.4	2.2	17.3	20.3	1,266
Fire	3.7	5.4	9.0	10.2	81
Hazmat	1.2	4.4	7.0	7.4	17
Rescue	-	-	11.0	11.0	6
Unknown	-	-	15.6	15.6	-
Total	3.5	2.3	15.1	17.1	1,370

¹Sample sizes reflect the number of responses to emergency calls made by first arriving primary front-line units assigned to LFR or PCRFD1; due to missing or excluded time data, sample sizes corresponding to individual table metrics may be smaller.

Observation:

The dispatch times and turnout times exceed best practice in either a single agency environment or a consolidated environment. Overall response times can be reduced by the reduction of both dispatch time and turnout time, without encouraging responders to make up time during the travel time window.

Observation:

The communications center does not utilize a Priority Dispatch system and therefore does not possess the ability to prioritize the limited resources of the Fire Department when responding to requests for service.

Recommendation:

Both agencies should work diligently to reduce both their dispatch times and turnout times and evaluate the implementation of a Priority Dispatch system.

LFR and PCRFD1 currently operate as two independent entities that each deploy from a single fixed facility location. PCRFD1 does have two additional facilities where apparatus is stored, but these are not considered for routine response. Additionally, the primary LFR and PCRFD1 stations are nearly adjacent to each other. Thus, the distribution models considered did not consider the impact of multiple station locations but rather the ability of each single location to cover the historical demand within a prescribed travel time performance.

To consider performance for a consolidated department, models analyzed all calls occurring within a combined jurisdiction of LFR and PCRFD1. All program types are considered together under the assumption that in this consolidated system, one Agency would provide all services and EMS and Fire resources would deploy from shared locations. Thus, the following plan considers this consolidated jurisdiction's ability to respond to all call types.

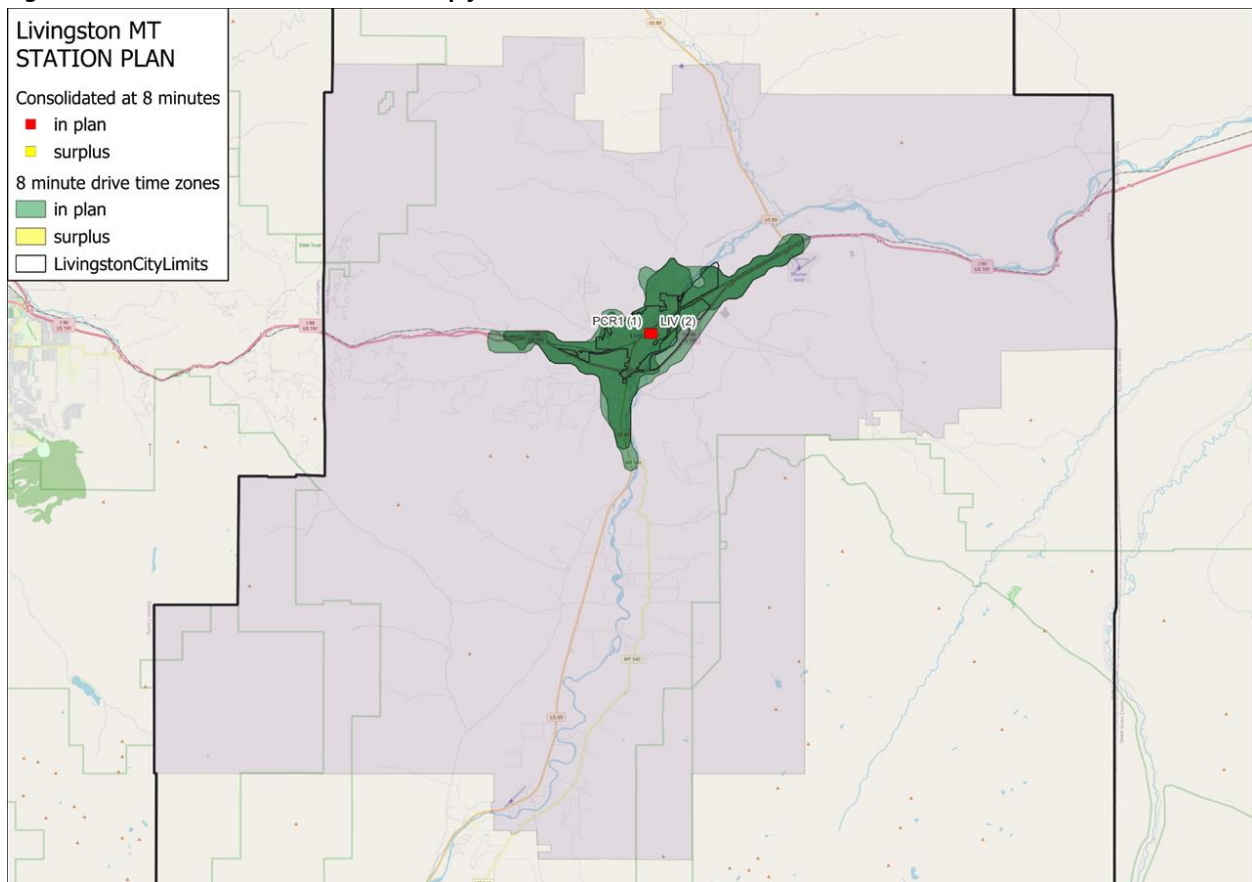
8-minute Travel Time – All Calls

Analyses suggest that with the consolidated station, 72.87% of ALL calls could be responded to within 8-minutes or less travel time.

Table 48: Marginal Consolidation Station Contribution for 8-Minute Travel Time – All Calls

Rank	Station	Area Class	Station Capture	Total Capture	Percent Capture
1	PCR1	U	1582	1582	72.87%
2	LIV	U	0	1582	72.87%

Figure 7: Consolidated Station Bleed Map for 8-Minute Travel Time – All Calls



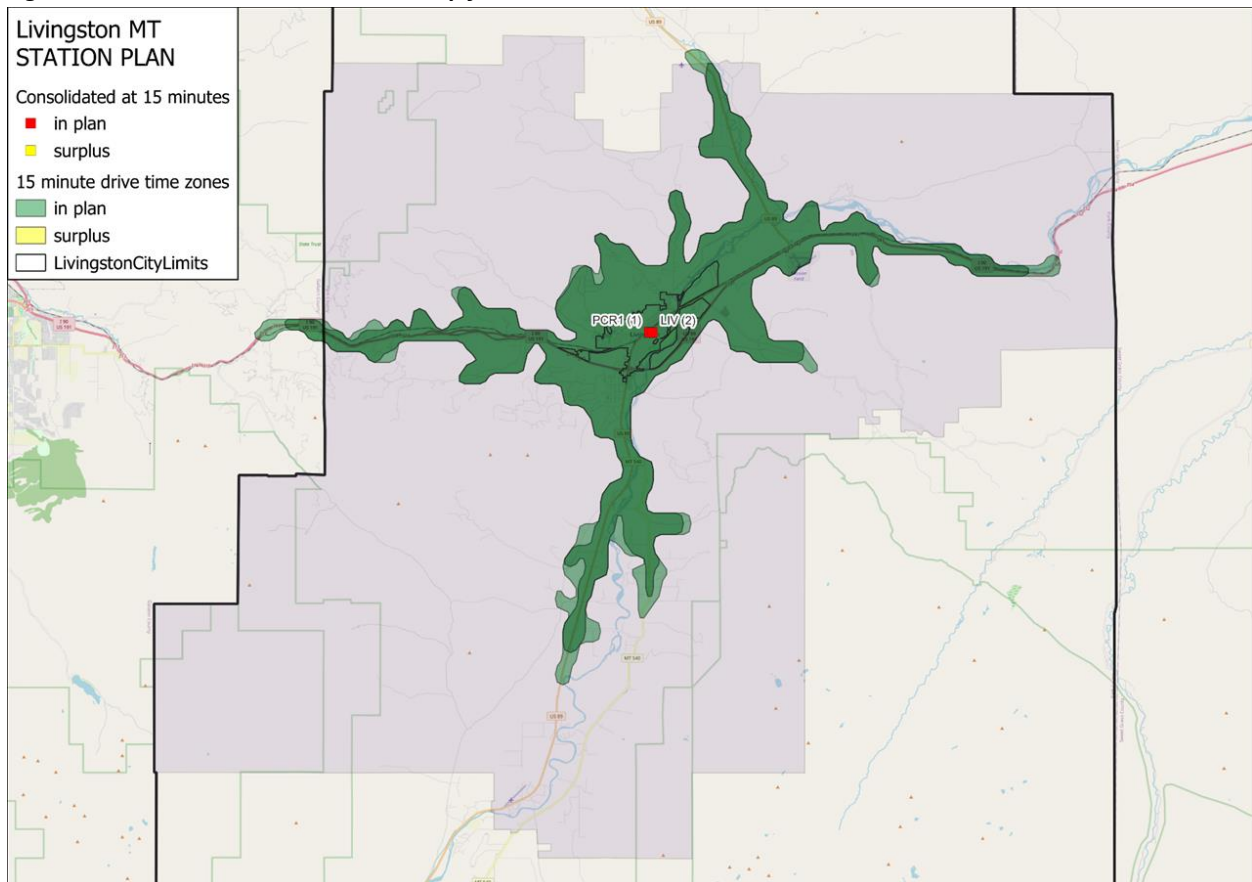
15-minute Travel Time – All Calls

Analyses suggest that with the consolidated station, 86.60% of ALL calls could be responded to within 15-minutes or less travel time.

Table 49: Marginal Consolidated Station Contribution for 15-Minute Travel Time – All Calls

Rank	Station	Area Class	Station Capture	Total Capture	Percent Capture
1	PCR1	U	1880	1880	86.60%
2	LIV	U	0	1880	86.60%

Figure 8: Consolidated Station Bleed Map for 15-Minute Travel Time – All Calls



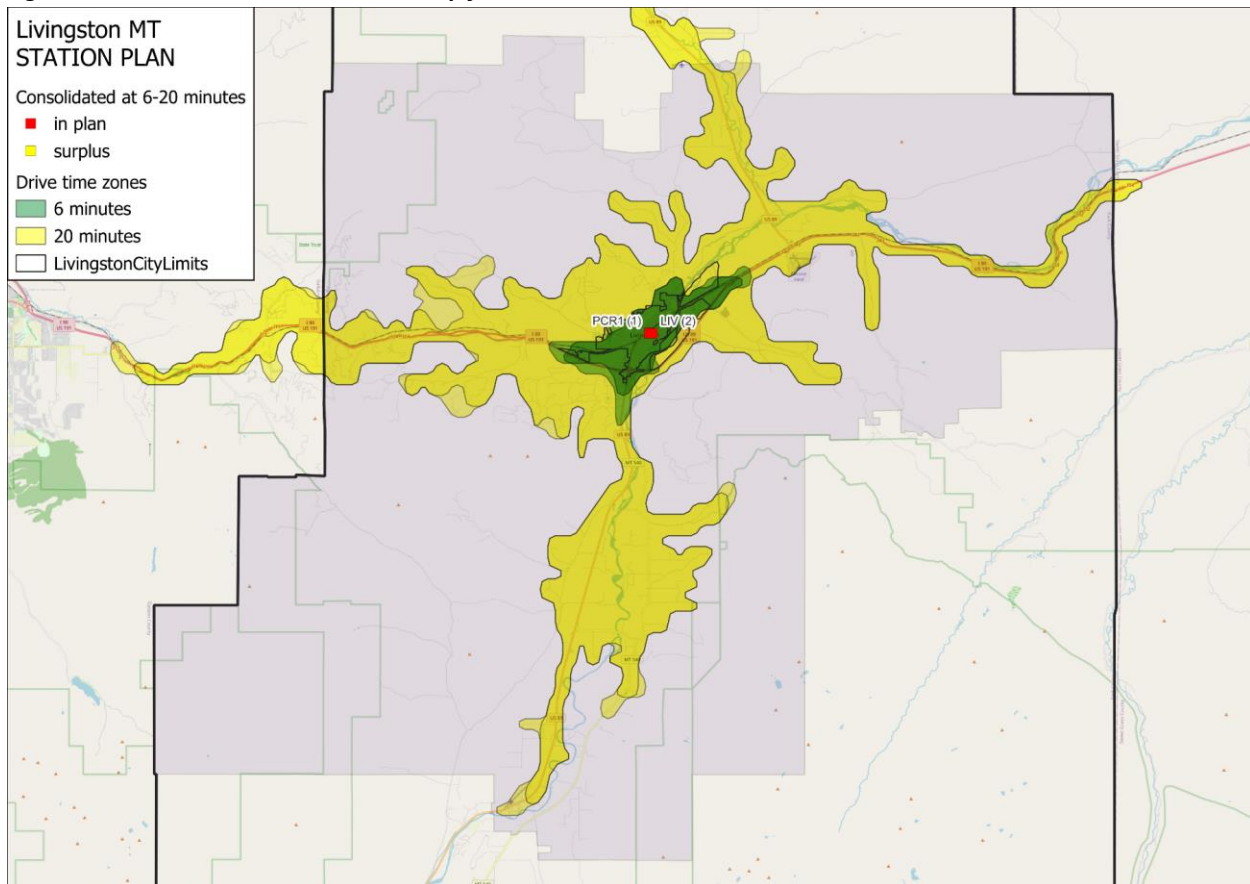
6-minute Urban, 20-minute Rural Travel Time – All Calls

Analyses suggest that with the consolidated station, 70.11% of ALL calls could be responded to within 6-minutes or less travel time. Utilizing the station again for a 20-minute travel time will provide coverage for 90.23% of ALL incidents within a 20-minute travel time.

Table 50: Marginal Consolidated Station Contribution for 6-Minute Urban and 20-minute Rural Travel Time – ALL Calls

Rank	Station	Area Class	Station Capture	Total Capture	Percent Capture
1	PCR1	U	1522	1522	70.11%
2	LIV	U	0	1522	70.11%
3	PCR1	R	437	1959	90.23%
4	LIV	R	0	1959	90.23%

Figure 9: Consolidated Station Bleed Map for 6-Minute Urban and 20-minute Rural Travel Time – ALL Calls



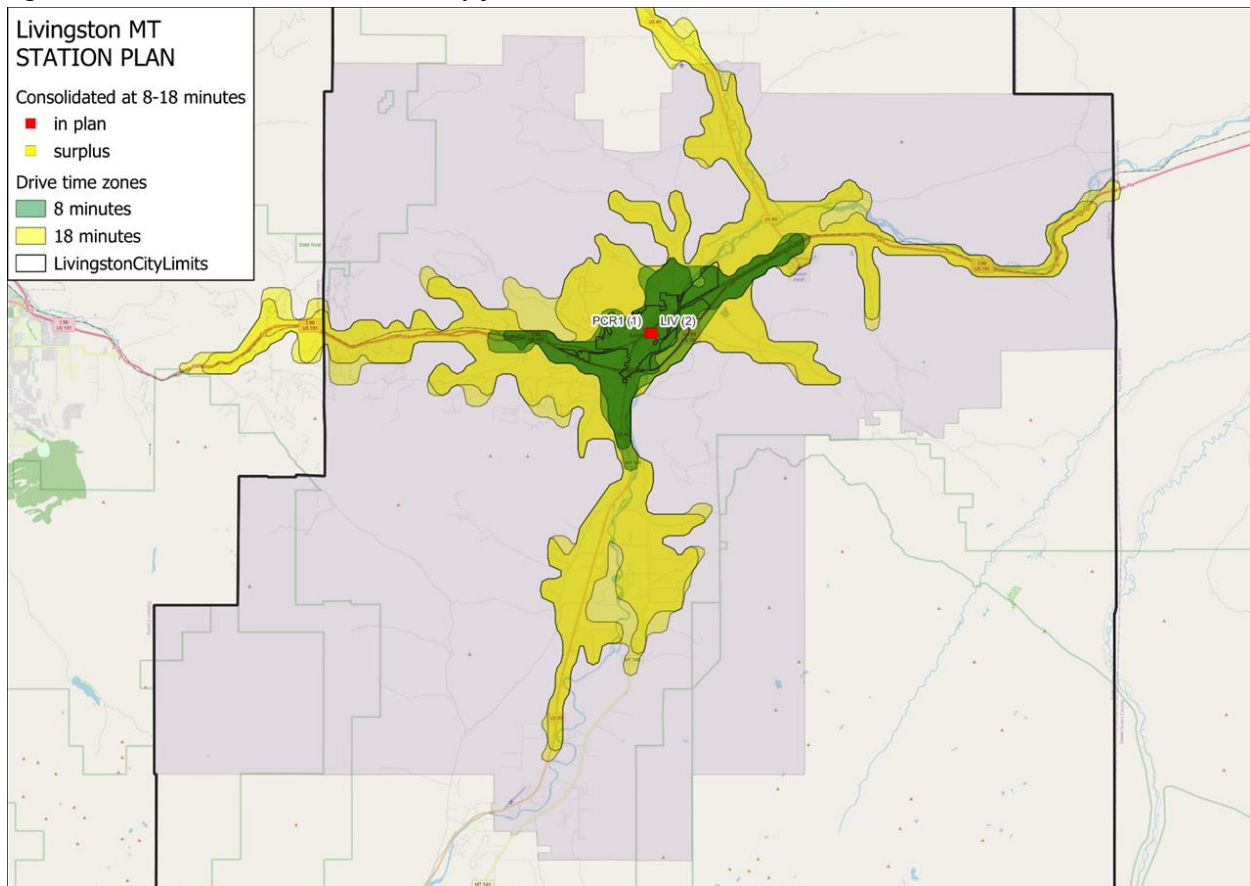
8-minute Urban, 18-minute Rural Travel Time – All Calls

Analyses suggest that with the consolidated station, 72.87% of ALL calls could be responded to within 8-minutes or less travel time. Utilizing the station again for an 18-minute travel time will provide coverage for nearly 90% of ALL incidents within an 18-minute travel time.

Table 51: Marginal Consolidated Station Contribution for 8-Minute Urban and 18-minute Rural Travel Time – ALL Calls

Rank	Station	Area Class	Station Capture	Total Capture	Percent Capture
1	PCR1	U	1582	1582	72.87%
2	LIV	U	0	1582	72.87%
3	PCR1	R	363	1945	89.59%
4	LIV	R	0	1945	89.59%

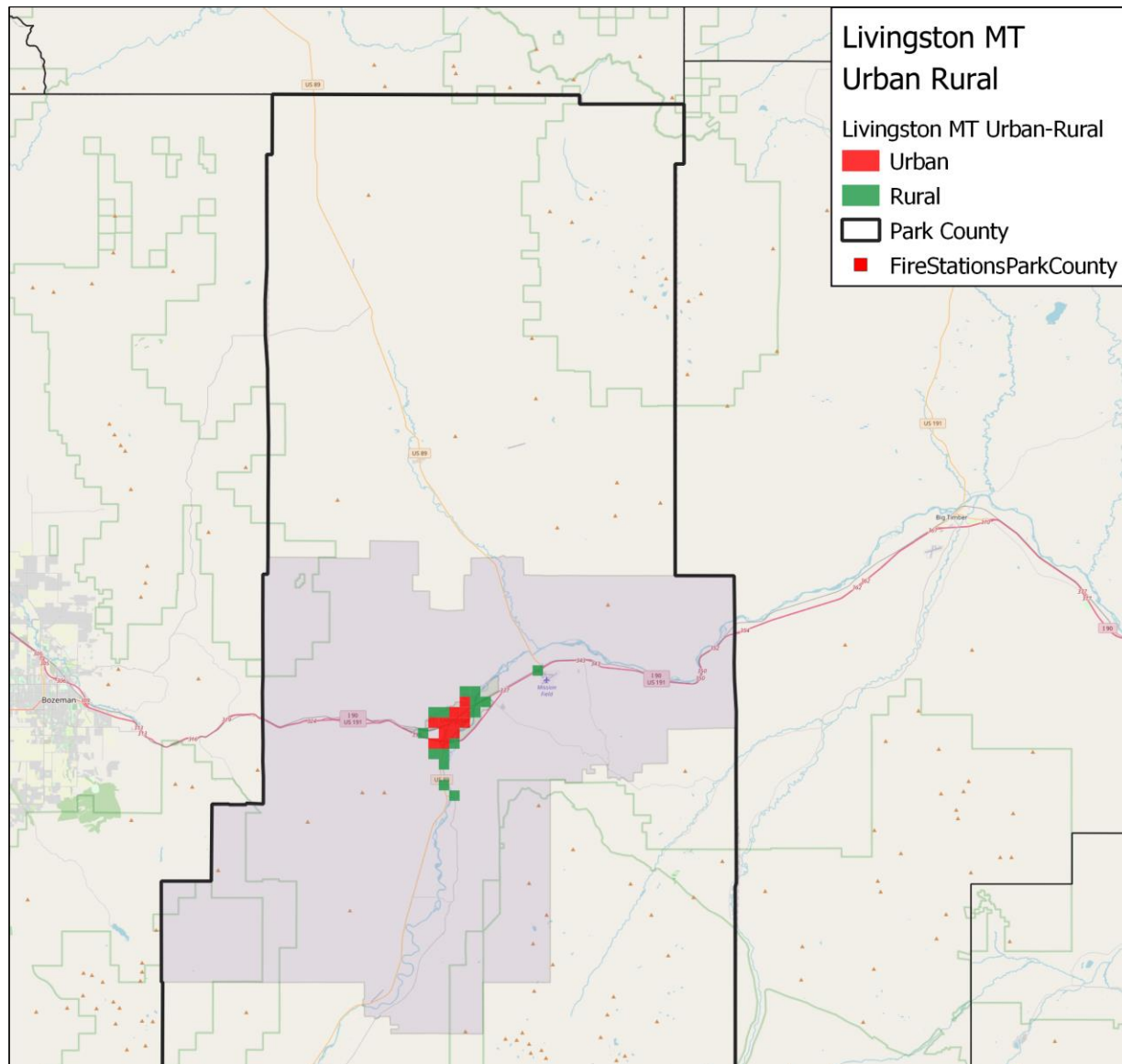
Figure 10: Consolidated Station Bleed Map for 8-Minute Urban and 18-minute Rural Travel Time – ALL Calls



Finally, we calculated call density based on the relative concentration of incidents based on approximately 0.5-mile geographic areas as well as the adjacent 0.5-mile areas. The results demonstrate an urban and rural designation based on call density for services and not based on population. The red areas are designated as urban service areas and the green areas are designated as

rural service areas. Any area that is not colored has less than one call every six months in the 0.5-mile area and the adjacent areas.

Figure 11: Urban and Rural Call Density Map



Based on the disparate population densities and historical demand in Livingston and Park County, it is recommended that the consolidated Agency consider adopting a differentiated service model. This approach utilizes an urban performance standard in high demand areas and a rural performance standard in low demand areas. Attempting to achieve urban level performance across the entire response area would require a considerable number of additional resources and result in diminishing returns.

Recommendation:

Based on the disparate population densities and historical demand in Livingston and Park County, it is recommended that the City or consolidated Agency consider adopting a differentiated service model. This approach utilizes an urban performance standard in high demand urban areas and a rural performance standard in low demand rural areas.

In the absence of any specific community desire to change current practices, the agency should consider adopting a benchmark that is closely aligned with current performance. Thus, a benchmark travel time of 8-minutes in the urban areas and 18-minutes in the rural areas should be considered for formal adoption. Once adopted, this metric becomes a tool by which to evaluate the impacts of growth and future resource needs.

Observation:

Fitch has not observed any community desire to change current practices, and no community expression of dissatisfaction with response times.

Recommendation:

A benchmark travel time of 8-minutes in the urban areas and 18-minutes in the rural areas should be considered for formal adoption. Once adopted, this metric becomes a tool by which to evaluate the impacts of growth and future resource needs.

Opportunities for Consolidation

While consolidation considerations are worthy of study, there are several considerations that must be carefully weighed by policy makers before such pursuit.

It is fair to note that any consolidation approach between the District and the City of Livingston could appear in a number of forms. In no particular order, option #1 is based on the dissolution of the District with the City of Livingston assuming all fire services. Option #2 is based upon the current service delivery model used by LFR (fire and EMS) being annexed into the District. Option #3 is based upon Livingston retaining all EMS services and the District taking over all fire services within their existing boundaries as well as the City of Livingston. The option of Livingston merging with another municipal department is not a viable option as no other municipal fire departments exist within the County.

In the event Livingston were annexed into the Fire District, the District would assume a number of support services that have historically been provided by City of Livingston staff. These services include, but are not limited to human resources, benefits management, risk management, legal services, building maintenance, etc. While some of these support services may fall within the current capabilities and interests of the District, it would be prudent to explore the viability of the City of Livingston continuing to provide such services. This could be arranged via an in-kind agreement or a fee for services approach through an interlocal agreement.

As the makeup of the community members within the District would change considerably with the addition of city residents into the mix, the parties should be prepared for some initiatives to increase the representation of the District Board by city residents or City of Livingston representatives. The number of trustees is set at five persons per statute, with one of the five serving as the presider and one as the

secretary. We recommend that the trustee positions be made up of two people from within the District but not within the City, two people who are electors from within the City, and one member at large from within either the District or City. The City trustees could be placed at the next two expiration of existing three-year terms.

OPTION #1 - Dissolution of the Fire District – Livingston Assuming Services

The dissolution of the Fire District, while permitted and addressed by statute, carries with it a number of challenges. The dissolution could only be considered as a viable option if Park County established either a new service provider such as LFR, or developed a new fire district as Park County retains the prerogative as to how fire protection is provided in areas outside of a municipality. As this change would not be driven by pending changes in population or becoming a Class 1 city, there is no sense of urgency for this option.

The dissolution of any well-established fire district would predictably bring about angst from internal and external stakeholders. Landowners in the district may develop concerns as to how their rates would remain low. As staff within the Fire District face the possibility of being displaced, the public display of concerns should be planned for.

As the new provider of fire protection, Livingston may prefer not to have out of the county deployments for wildland fires as a part of their business plan. If this were to be the case, decisions would need to be made concerning the continuation of such a large fleet of wildland apparatus. A new provider that would absorb the current fleet assets of the Fire District would need to do so with the understanding that the District has an aging fleet. Any assumption of the District's fleet should include an assessment of compliance with the National Fire Protection Association's 1911 and 1901 standards, with a particular emphasis on retirement approaches for apparatus as provided within this report.

As permitted and addressed by Montana Statute 7-33-2128, the Rural Fire District may be dissolved per the following:

7-33-2128. Dissolution of fire district. (1) Subject to subsection (2), a fire district organized under this part may be dissolved by the board of county commissioners upon presentation of a petition for dissolution signed by the owners of 40% or more of the real property in the area and owners of property representing 40% or more of the taxable value of property in the area. The procedure and requirements provided in **7-33-2101** through **7-33-2103** apply to requests for dissolution of fire districts.

(2) A board of county commissioners may not dissolve a fire district that includes territory within the limits of an incorporated second-class or third-class city or town unless the dissolution is approved by the governing body of the city or town.

This option would provide an opportunity for Park County to potentially contract with the City of Livingston. In the event the City of Livingston became the provider for fire protection, there would be very limited new demands placed on Livingston. The additional fire protection demand would be approximately 0.7 calls per day with an individual time on task demand of around 36-minutes each. It is fair to note that with the existing five-mile radius agreement that Livingston is already responding to a subset of these calls, further diminishing the potential impact of new demand.

Based upon the challenges in this model compared against the potential gains, this model is not recommended for further consideration.

Observation:

The dissolution of the Fire District option is fraught with challenges, requires 40% of the landowners to sign a petition, and offers very limited, if any, operational gains.

Recommendation:

The dissolution of the Fire District model is not recommended for further consideration.

OPTION #2 - Livingston Annexing into the Fire District

Currently, Livingston is a Class 2 municipality and certain opportunities exist prior to the pending and presumed population growth that would place Livingston at a Class 1 level. In addition to providing fire protection by means of a municipal department, as a Class 2 municipality, Livingston can provide fire protection by any of the following means:

- (i) through an interlocal agreement with another governmental fire protection provider under the provisions of Title 7, chapter 11, part 1.
- (ii) through a contract with another fire protection provider; or
- (iii) subject to **7-33-4115**, annexing to a rural fire district established under Title 7, chapter 33, part 21.

Montana Code 7-33-4115 addresses the process by which a municipality may provide fire protection through a rural fire district, including the election to do so, transition, and governance. 7-33-4115 (6) clarifies that *“If the population of a second-class city classified under the provisions of 7-1-4111 or 7-1-4112 increases to the level that would require the city to be classified as a first-class city and the city has been annexed to a rural fire district under the provisions of this section, the city may remain part of the rural fire district upon adoption of a resolution by the city governing body.”* This becomes an important timing consideration as the window of opportunity to be annexed into a rural fire district will close once Livingston reaches a Class 1 level. Once a city or town is deemed a Class 1 city it must operate and maintain a municipal fire department unless it was annexed into a Fire District prior to reaching a Class 1 level.

While the City of Livingston could be annexed into the Fire District, it is not without its challenges. It requires a vote of the City’s governing body followed by a municipal election of the electorate, with a simple majority required.

Unless the Fire District agrees to accept the transfer of the displaced Livingston staff, the disposition of some or all the staff is predictably challenging for policy makers. If the Fire District opted to onboard some or all the staff, labor concerns may emerge and the desire to enter into a collective bargaining agreement would be a challenge for their Fire District.

Based on information gathered during the initial site visit, The City of Livingston and the Park Rural Fire District have considerable differences in their response expectations and outcomes for structure fires. These differences would not only present challenges for the workforce, but the city residents may perceive a lower level of service. This could be offset by the establishment of a baseline performance standard for both urban and rural areas as discussed elsewhere in this report.

Should the existing Livingston employees be merged into the Fire District, considerable research would need to be done regarding the impacts on the Livingston employees' benefits, particularly retirement benefits as the benefits packages between the two entities are disparate. Given these factors, modeling assumed the current cost of benefits and conditions of the CBA would be assumed by the consolidated District just as they are today.

Although the most viable option of the three choices presented here, it is challenging to articulate real benefit for the City of Livingston to consolidate into the District. If the City did not already maintain a paid fire department, then the looming Class 1 designation would be more concerning. However, with an already established paid force, the associated fiscal obligations are already customary for the City. Furthermore, the City, and its immediate surrounding areas, are the epicenter of service demands within Park County. This is likely to remain the case for the foreseeable future. Thus, the City might be remiss to cede control of its public safety services to the independent District.

Observation:

The City of Livingston annexing into the District is the most viable option for consideration regarding a consolidation.

Observation:

If the City did not already maintain a paid fire department, then the looming Class 1 designation would be more concerning. However, with an already established paid force, the associated fiscal obligations are already customary for the City. Furthermore, the City, and its immediate surrounding areas, are the epicenter of service demands within Park County. This is likely to remain the case for the foreseeable future. Thus, the City might be remiss to cede control of its public safety services to the independent District.

OPTION #3 - Livingston Retains All EMS Services and Transitions Fire Protection to the Fire District

Currently, Livingston is the EMS provider for all of Park County and it could choose to retain this service and divest its fire protection services to the District. This option is permitted by statute through the means of either an annexation into the District or merely contracted services as addressed in Statute 7-33-4101.

Without the responsibility for round the clock fire protection, this option may provide the opportunity to deploy a staffing model that is more driven by demand, both emergency EMS demands, and the inter-facility transfers. It may also provide additional staffing that could support the community paramedicine efforts.

As with most fire departments, the EMS service's demands outpace the demands for fire protection by a large margin and Livingston is no exception. While the desire to reallocate staffing solely toward EMS demands may increase availability and bring about increased revenues, it would bring about some unnecessary challenges.

Should the existing fire apparatus in Livingston be transitioned to the Fire District, it would provide some additional depth to the fleet for structural engines, as the newest structural engine for the Fire District is 16 years old.

While management rights allow changes in the work to be carried out, the elimination of fire protection as a core service may be viewed quite harshly by the work force. In the event Livingston opted to commit solely to EMS, it would likely necessitate changes to the work schedules and realignment toward a more demand driven staffing model to be more fiscally viable. It is possible that career fire fighters, particularly those who currently work a 24/72-hour schedule, might exhibit considerable resistance to these changes. This resistance could manifest as resignations and migrations to other more traditional fire departments. Without thorough planning for the potential of moderate to large-scale departures, Livingston could find itself with considerable staffing challenges, particularly if the regional employment market doesn't have a sufficient replacement workforce available.

By statute, Livingston firefighters are mandatory participants in the Montana Firefighter Unified Retirement System (FURS). While the Fire District has the option to participate, they have opted not to do so. Should the Livingston employees no longer be responsible for fire protection and no longer career firefighters, it could bring about untoward outcomes related to FURS and other benefits that are set aside by ordinance or statute exclusively for firefighters.

Based upon the challenges in this model compared against the potential gains, this model is not recommended for further consideration.

Observations:

Historical community demand does not provide a fiscally sound basis for independently government provided Fire and EMS services. A cross-staffed Fire Rescue EMS approach is the most efficient and resilient approach for the community from both a service delivery and fiscal perspective.

Recommendation:

No further consideration should be given to an EMS only model under the City of Livingston. In addition to the pension implications, this would essentially cede fire protection to the District while still incurring at least 80% of their former financial obligations to keep running EMS.

Obstacles to Consolidation

Any efforts to reorganize or consolidate fire service agencies come with many obstacles to be managed. These obstacles can range from legislative challenges to workplace culture elements that make difficult changes even more difficult. For any of the opportunities to have any chance for successful execution, the stakeholders must buy into the process. Clearly the City of Livingston and its elected leaders, the Park Rural District #1 and its elected leaders, and the IAFF Local 630 are very direct stakeholders. In any effort to evaluate options, other stakeholders such as the city residents, the Park County residents, regional partners, and the hospital system must be considered.

The two entities involved in this consolidation assessment have significant differences in an array of areas.

The City of Livingston is a full-service fire department where much of the service demand rests in EMS and inter-facility transport. Livingston is a predominantly career department with most of their staff being full-time employees represented by IAFF Local 630. Members are a part of the State's retirement

system. Livingston Fire Rescue, as a component of the City of Livingston, has access to a full array of support services such as legal, finance, human resources, and purchasing. In that the Fire Rescue Department is a component of the City of Livingston; the Department does not have autonomy on many decisions that may need consent of the city management team and/or their elected body.

In contrast, Park Rural Fire District has no service demands in EMS and the vast majority of their demands are in fire protection, with some service demands related to motor vehicle highway crashes. The District retains two full-time employees, with no labor organization. District members do not participate in the State retirement system. The predominantly non-career work force is a mix of volunteers and students. The District is essentially self-contained and retains the responsibility for all support services often provided by municipal organizations. With this responsibility comes the autonomy to operate as the District sees fit, with the concurrence of the District's elected body.

Thus, consolidation options such as these are best served when all the parties discuss and negotiate from an interest based bargaining perspective. Additionally, as discussed in the Labor Agreements Section, the willingness of Local 630 is important. Even with the provisions addressed in the Collective Bargaining Agreement's (CBA) Management Rights Article, the Prevailing Rights Article appears to provide certain protections, at least until the expiration of the CBA in 2025.

General Observations and Implementation

On a more global scale, consolidations and regionalization efforts are sought after by many fire and rescue services throughout the country to gain efficiency, effectiveness, or both. While there have been some efforts by both the Park County Rural Fire District #1 (PCRFD1) and the City of Livingston Fire Rescue Department (LFR), the work ahead for both agencies in consolidating is substantial.

In any consolidation effort, there are any number of obstacles that can create challenges in achieving the end goal. These challenges could include an unwillingness of the Boards to accept change, the unwillingness of the fire chiefs to work collaboratively, a disparity between the departments that depict one as a donor agency and the other as a recipient agency, a clash in organizational cultures, a lack of cooperative agreements and services between the agencies, disputes within the consolidated workforce, disputes between the labor organizations, an unrealistic belief that all employees will embrace the change, and a mission and vision that are in conflict.

The two governing boards, while demonstrating a desire to place the needs of the communities they serve ahead of personal interests, possess real and legitimate differences in perspectives on the provision of emergency services.

In the most successful consolidation efforts, the agencies have already adopted a service delivery model that includes closest unit response plans, consolidated dispatching, and some shared services. All of the agencies would be stable and with no deficits noted that would depict either one as a donor agency. All the agencies would have similar organizational cultures that place service ahead of self. They would share a number of services already such as Fleet Services, Information Technologies, and Fire & Life

Safety. The workforce would have been assured that there would be no reduction in force. All organizations would have a shared vision of the consolidation and a highly valued focus on working through issues that can derail consolidation efforts. Finally, the mission and vision of the two agencies would not be in conflict. However, within the current environment and community, few of these elements have been overtly observed over the course of this assessment.

Observation:

Of the varied elements that make for the most successful consolidation efforts, few of these elements have been overtly observed over the course of this assessment.

There would be much work to be done starting with the onboarding of the dissolved agency employees and members into the new system, presuming all would be onboarded. While this function may seem to be purely an administrative one, there are a number of potential obstacles that must be addressed, including benefits, continuity, retirements, payroll, worker's compensation, records retention, and records consolidation.

Both the PCRFD1 and LFR staff should determine the training areas that must be addressed and set timelines for each of the areas. Some more critical training will need to be addressed very early in the process for those being onboard. Other training can be on a more protracted schedule. It should be anticipated that some training will be required for members of both former agencies. Both agencies have best practices that should be considered in the consolidation of the agencies. Planning should take place regarding the portfolio of services of each agency and how the portfolio will look in the combined setting. This will likely require the phasing in of any new services.

Considerable effort will be required to establish and share organizational structures for the immediate term, the short term, and the longer term. Finding the right organizational structure may be contingent upon the timeline chosen for the complete consolidation and eventual dissolution of the dissolved entity. The Governing Board will need to give consideration to the concerns of the dissolved agency while it may initially have no direct representation until a newly configured representative board can be seated.

A cooperative detailed analysis of existing physical assets and spaces should be conducted in an effort to improve efficiency or effectiveness. It should be understood that some functional areas may be relocated and that some modifications to buildings or office space could be required. A process should be established to share the status of the consolidation and to gather feedback from the municipal and county customers. Deliberate efforts should be made to communicate with the customers regarding the processes to be used, the progress, and the gains in operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Finally, all existing agreements, including automatic aid and mutual aid agreements, should be reviewed and then either maintained, updated, or cancelled.

ASSUMPTIONS USED FOR MODELING

Financial Assumptions

For modeling expenditures, operational line level personnel costs were calculated based on average salaries by position, including assignment pay, and benefits for a total compensation value that includes the FY23 burden rate for each position. Additionally, LFR utilizes part-time or reserve firefighters as part of their minimum staffing strategy. The reserve firefighters are not benefits eligible and are paid a base hourly rate of \$15/hr with increases based on certifications held. To account for the highest potential cost, the max rate of \$21/hour was used to model the personnel costs for reserve firefighters. Each total compensation value was then applied to the required seats per shift as a product of the calculated staffing multiplier.

Table 52: Staffing Costs Used for Modeling

	Salary	Benefits	Total Comp	Burden Rate
Battalion Chief 56/hr wk	\$119,270	\$43,055	\$162,325	27%
Captain 56/hr wk	\$81,613	\$35,731	\$117,344	30%
Engineer 56/hr wk	\$68,906	\$33,089	\$101,995	32%
Firefighter 56/hr wk	\$59,677	\$31,176	\$90,853	34%
Firefighter 40/hr wk	\$55,548	\$31,176	\$86,724	36%
Reserve Firefighter 56/hr wk	\$61,152	N/A	\$61,152	N/A
Reserve Firefighter 40/hr wk	\$43,680	N/A	\$43,680	N/A

Table 53: Cost to Staff a 24-hour Ambulance

24hr Ambulance	Seats	FTEs	FTE Type	Staffing Cost
Firefighter 56/hr wk	2	6.9	Uniformed	\$626,885

Table 54: Cost to Staff an 8-hour Ambulance

8hr Ambulance	Seats	FTEs	FTE Type	Staffing Cost
Firefighter 40/hr wk	2	2.3	Uniformed	\$199,465

Table 55: Cost to Staff a 24-hour Engine

24hr Engine	Seats	FTEs	FTE Type	Staffing Cost
Captain 56/hr wk	1	3.0	Uniformed	\$352,032
Engineer 56/hr wk	1	3.0	Uniformed	\$305,984
Firefighter 56/hr wk	1	3.0	Uniformed	\$272,559
Firefighter 56/hr wk	Relief Factor	1.4	Uniformed	\$122,651
Total				\$1,053,226

Table 56: Cost to Staff a 24-hour Battalion Chief

24hr Battalion Chief	Seats	FTEs	FTE Type	Staffing Cost
Battalion Chief 56/hr wk	1	3.0	Uniformed	\$486,974
Firefighter 56/hr wk	Relief Factor	0.45	Uniformed	\$40,884
Total				\$527,857

The total unit staffing costs are calculated utilizing all full-time employees and will be applied to the proposed deployment models to determine the maximum cost. LFR currently utilizes part-time or reserve firefighters as part of their minimum staffing strategy so it's assumed that a consolidated system will continue this practice. In order to illustrate the potential savings reserve firefighters represent, the following savings will be assumed for each full-time position that is filled with a commensurate amount of hours by part-time personnel. This strategy assumes a sufficient cadre of part-time firefighters exist and full-time employees are qualified to ride-up.

Table 57: Part-Time Firefighter Savings - 56 Hour/Week

	Seats	FTEs	FTE Type	Staffing Cost
Firefighter (56 hr)	1	1.0	Uniformed	\$90,853
Reserve Firefighter (56 hr)	1	1.0	Uniformed	\$61,152
Total Savings				\$29,701

Table 58: Part-Time Firefighter Savings - 40 Hour/Week

	Seats	FTEs	FTE Type	Staffing Cost
Firefighter (40 hr)	1	1.0	Uniformed	\$86,724
Reserve Firefighter (40 hr)	1	1.0	Uniformed	\$43,680
Total Savings				\$43,044

Overhead and maintenance cost for modeling are based on a unit hour value derived from the current organizational experience. LFR's FY23 overhead cost totaled \$996,937 to deploy 17,520 unit hours, one Engine and Ambulance continually staffed, culminating in an overhead unit hour value of \$56.90 per hour. The budget did not provide sufficient granularity to differentiate the overhead costs related to 911 transport and IFTs. Therefore, all overhead costs experienced by LFR have been applied to 911 service and additional overhead costs are applied to the IFT model to represent the most conservative cost approach.

Table 59: Overhead Cost for Modeling

FY23 Factor	Value
Overhead and Maintenance	\$996,937
Engine deployed hours	8760
Ambulance deployed hours	8760
Total Deployed Hours	17,520
Overhead Unit Hour Cost	\$56.90

Transport Revenue Assumptions

Fitch was unable to fully assess the revenue performance and potential for LFR due to the limited information provided. Thus, the cash value per transport assumption utilized for modeling should be confirmed by the City's internal finance department and the third-party EMS billing vendor.

Based on information the EMS billing company provided a cash value per trip was developed for 911 and IFT transports.

Table 60: Cash Value per 911 Transport

	FY21 (Actual)	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)
911 Transports	803	907	942
Cash Collected	\$589,456	\$796,721	\$853,439
Cash per Trip	\$734.07	\$878.41	\$905.99

Table 61: Cash Value per Interfacility Transfer

	FY21 (Actual)	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)
Interfacility Transfers	393	389	319
Cash Collected	\$585,365	\$595,042	\$407,209
Cash per Trip	\$1,489.48	\$1,529.67	\$1,276.52

Recommendation:

The City should work to ensure their EMS billing vendor services are able to provide best practice performance along with data retention, validation, and reporting capabilities for all elements of EMS transport revenue management.

Baseline Demand Assumptions

To ensure all proposed models were adequately provisioned, baseline demand attributes were established. In total, the models will provide service for 2,872 total incidents, of which, 1,728 were 911 EMS and 532 resulted in transports. Thus, the community experienced 911 transport rate of 71% is the minimum value accounted for in each proposed model. The IFT demand is based on CAD data to provide a more conservative assessment of workload while providing a prospective consideration for revenue potential. Finally, a baseline EMS Time-on-Task (TOT) ratio of 64.73-minutes was derived by analyzing the proportionate share of on-average time commitment for both transport and non-transport incidents. For Fire calls, the TOT is based on the historical average commitment time for Fire calls of 52.5-minutes among the combined jurisdictions of LFR and PCRFD1.

Table 62: Demand Volumes Used for Modeling

Call Category	Non-Transport	Transport	Total Calls	Transport Rate
All Park County EMS 911	532	1196	1728	71%
All Park County EMS IFT		606	606	
All Park Total EMS			2334	
LFR and PCRFD1 Non-EMS			538	
Total Calls			2872	

Table 63: CY 2022 IFT Demand - All Jurisdictions

Day of Week	2022 IFT Count - ALL	Avg/Day
Sunday	43	0.83
Monday	58	1.12
Tuesday	139	2.67
Wednesday	77	1.48
Thursday	131	2.52
Friday	60	1.15
Saturday	98	1.85
Total	606	1.66

Finally, the relatively low call concurrency rate informed considerations related to the need for a higher or lower concentration of resources.

Table 64: Historical Call Concurrency Rate – Without IFTs

Demand Zone	Overlapped Calls	Total Calls	Percentage of Overlapped Calls
LFR	133	1,045	12.7%
PCRFD1	14	360	3.9%
LFR & PCRFD1	242	1,405	17.2%

MODELS FOR CONSIDERATION

Two models are provided for consideration, consolidated and non-consolidated. Each model includes a review of the organizational structure, deployment strategy, required staffing, financial assessment, and advantages and disadvantages. To provide a direct comparison of consolidated and non-consolidated 911 service delivery models, interfacility transfers have been excluded from the analysis. The revenue and expenditures required to provide IFTs are modeled separately and can be added to either the consolidated or non-consolidated model as a policy decision.

Consolidated Fire and EMS

The consolidated model assumes the District annexes the City of Livingston and provides all fire and EMS services to the region.

Organizational Structure

The new consolidated system would be governed by the current PCRFD1's Board of Trustees, but consideration should be given to restructuring the board. Increased representation from the city and county governments would increase communication and cooperation between the three agencies. Additionally, it creates a shared interest in the consolidated system's success. For example, the board could be comprised of two trustees appointed by the City Manager, two trustees appointed by the County Commissioners, and one at-large trustee. This governance structure may also reduce barriers for other Park County fire districts to annex into the newly formed consolidated system if desired.

Any change to the District's Board would likely require changes to the current bylaws and articles of incorporation and, if desired, implementation could be phased in to align with the terms of the existing trustees.

Operationally, the fire chief would oversee the daily operations of the consolidated system supported by three battalion chiefs, one assigned to each shift. While call demand alone does not require a battalion chief assigned to each shift, they provide the necessary administrative support for the system to be successful. Each battalion chief should be assigned major areas of responsibility for support services including training, EMS QA/QI, logistics/fleet, and community risk reduction. Due to the limited daily staffing, the battalion chief will need to remain operationally flexible and may be required to provide staffing for the engine or ambulance.

The consolidated system may not initially possess the internal expertise or capacity to manage a larger workforce that requires additional administrative support including human resources, finance, and legal considerations. Whether the consolidated system hires staff to complete these functions or contracts with the City of Livingston or another entity, they must have the required support to manage the increase in personnel. The models provided assume contractual agreements are reached and include

either \$75,000 in expenditures to acquire these services or provide recommended staffing and cost to handle within the consolidated agency.

If the City of Livingston does not provide support services to Park Rural upon consolidation, Park Rural would need sufficient staffing to ensure that the required support services do not suffer.

In this event, Park Rural should plan for one FTE to serve as the Finance Director and another FTE to serve as the Administrative Services Coordinator. In addition to these FTEs, it is reasonable to assume that the costs for legal services for Park Rural will increase with the significant increase in staffed positions and the potential for a collective bargaining agreement. Park Rural should also plan for increased costs in certain building maintenance and fleet services that had been provided in-kind by the City of Livingston.

The costs for the Finance Director are estimated to be \$75,000 with a 30% benefits package for a total of \$97,500. The duties for such a position would include payroll, accounts receivable, accounts payable, taxation, millages, capital funds, and budget preparation for the fire chief.

The costs for the Administrative Services Coordinator are estimated to be \$65,000 with a 30% benefits package for a total of \$84,500. The duties for such a position include human resources, benefits, pension, insurance, worker's compensation, and records retention.

The chart below represents the proposed operational line staffing level. It is based on a minimum daily staffing level of five and a staffing multiplier of 15%. Operational staffing utilizes full-time firefighters for the required minimum staffing to illustrate the maximum cost associated with the model.

Table 65: Consolidated Model- Required Staffing for a Minimum Staffing Level of 5

	Minimum Seats per Shift	Number of Shifts	Number of Seats Required	Relief Factor (15%)	Number of Personnel Required
3-platoon	5	3	15	2.25	17.25

Departments with smaller workforces such as the consolidated system may need to consider modifying the typical relief factor to ensure each shift can reliably provide adequate relief. For example, the typical relief factor above provides two of the three shifts with a relief firefighter, but any operational vacancies on the third shift would need to be filled using overtime. The chart below applies the relief factor of 15% to each shift and then rounds up before multiplying the number of personnel by the number of shifts. The models provided utilize the higher staffing factor to illustrate maximum costs.

Table 66: Consolidated Model- Required Staffing for a Minimum Staffing Level of 5 with Modified Staffing Factor

	Minimum Seats per Shift	Relief Factor (15%)	Number of Personnel per Shift (Rounded)	Number of Shifts	Number of Personnel Required
3-platoon	5	0.75	6	3	18

Finally, a proposed organizational chart is provided for the new consolidated system. It includes the additional administrative positions in case they are required and assigns the existing District volunteers to the captains on each shift.

Figure 12: Consolidated System Organizational Chart 5-Person Minimum Staffing



Deployment Strategy and Modeled Performance

This model will deploy to mirror current performance with an 8-minute Urban and 18-minute Rural Travel Time for emergent 911 calls.

The base deployment model includes a 2-person ALS engine, an ALS ambulance, and a Battalion Chief. The engine staffing would be dynamic, cross-staffing additional units including the ladder truck and a second ambulance based on call demand. Both units are programmed to provide service 24 hours a day

by utilizing a 3-platoon or 56-hour work week. The total cost for this deployment model, inclusive of salary, benefits, and operating, are estimated to be \$2,950,459.

Table 67: Deployment Costs- 5-Person Minimum Staffing

Unit Type	Count	FTE Count	Total Personnel Cost	Overhead Costs	Total Costs
2-Person ALS Engine - 24hr	1	6.9	\$739,784	\$496,168	\$1,235,952
ALS Ambulance - 24hr	1	6.9	\$626,885	\$496,168	\$1,123,053
Battalion Chief – 24hr	1	3.5	\$527,857	N/A	\$527,857
Additional Relief	1	0.7	\$63,597	N/A	\$63,597
Totals	2	18	\$1,958,123	\$992,336	\$2,950,459

Alternatively, a deployment model that includes a 3-person engine is provided for comparison. Although the fire demand is relatively low within the community, the ability to deploy a total of six personnel to the scene of a fire increases their efficiency and effectiveness as it relates to fire attack and victim rescue. The additional person also provides greater depth in capacity. In a scenario where two simultaneous EMS calls are received, the department would have the ability to respond with a 2-person ambulance to each incident while retaining two personnel to respond to a potential third call. This should allow the department to be less reliant on callbacks and reduce the costs related to them.

This increase in minimum staffing from five to six would cost an additional \$268,015. Alternatively, the system could rely on callbacks, volunteers, and mutual aid to complete the department’s effective response force for high-risk incidents.

Table 68: Deployment Costs- 6-Person Minimum Staffing

Unit Type	Count	FTE Count	Total Personnel Cost	Overhead Costs	Total Costs
3-Person ALS Engine - 24hr	1	10.4	\$1,053,226	\$496,168	\$1,549,394
ALS Ambulance - 24hr	1	6.9	\$626,885	\$496,168	\$1,123,053
Battalion Chief – 24hr	1	3.5	\$527,857	N/A	\$527,857
Additional Relief	1	0.2	\$18,170	N/A	\$18,170
Totals	2	21	\$2,226,138	\$992,336	\$3,218,474

The models are built utilizing full-time employees to illustrate the maximum potential cost, but LFR currently uses part-time or reserve firefighters as part of its minimum staffing strategy. This is a sound financial strategy assuming a sufficient cadre of qualified part-time personnel exists. Utilizing a part-time firefighter represents a potential savings of \$29,701 per year compared to a full-time firefighter assigned to a 56-hour schedule. The projected savings are based on a max hourly rate of \$21/hour. The current average hourly rate for part-time firefighters is \$16.40, so additional savings are anticipated. The CBA limits the number of part-time firefighters per shift to two, so the total savings of six part-time firefighters are listed below.

Table 69: Personnel Savings from Part-Time Firefighters

Number of Part-Time FF Used	Savings
1	\$29,701
2	\$54,402
3	\$89,103
4	\$118,804
5	\$148,505
6	\$178,206

The table below shows the total cost of both the 5-person and 6-person minimum staffing model along with the potential reduced cost based on how many part-time firefighters are incorporated into the staffing strategy.

Table 70: Impact of Part-Time Firefighters on Personnel Costs

Deployment Model	Base Cost	Cost with 1 PT FF	Cost with 2 PT FF	Cost with 3 PT FF	Cost with 4 PT FF	Cost with 5 PT FF	Cost with 6 PT FF
5-Person Minimum	\$2,950,459	\$2,950,459	\$2,950,459	\$2,950,459	\$2,950,459	\$2,950,459	\$2,950,459
6-Person Minimum	\$3,218,474	\$3,218,474	\$3,218,474	\$3,218,474	\$3,218,474	\$3,218,474	\$3,218,474

A workload analysis for the proposed model was completed based on the historical experience of both agencies including total calls and a time-on-task (TOT) ratio of 64.73 minutes per call. The current workload is within the capabilities of the proposed units so their additional capacity was calculated using a workload cap of .15 UHU for 24-hour Engines, .25 UHU for 24-hour Ambulances, and .45 UHU for 8-12-hour Ambulances. These workload caps ensure that personnel have adequate time for administrative tasks, training, meal breaks, and rest periods. Based on this analysis the engine can absorb an additional 964 calls before reaching capacity and the ambulance can absorb an additional 352 calls before reaching capacity.

Table 71: Projected Unit Capacity

Unit Type	Model Call Count	Projected UHU	Capacity for Growth – Call Count	Capacity for Growth – % Increase
ALS Engine - 24hr	538	5.4%	964	179%
ALS Ambulance - 24hr	1728	20.8%	352	20%
Totals	2266		1316	58%

Financial Implications

The projected cost of the proposed model was calculated using historical revenues and expenditures as reported by the agencies. The following assumptions were utilized to develop the projected revenue and operating costs.

- All non-transport EMS revenue, such as the county contribution, currently collected by the City of Livingston would transfer to the new consolidated system.
- Salary and benefits are consistent with LFR's current CBA.
- Overtime costs are not included. If the department staffs to the recommended staffing levels, overtime related to minimum staffing should be minimal.
- Personnel costs related to IFT are not included in the 911 models.
- Overhead costs remain consistent with LFR's historical experience.
- Administrative costs include salary and benefits for the Chief and \$75,000 to contract for additional administrative support

Table 72: Revenue vs Expenditures for the Consolidated Model with Contract Administrative Services

Type of Revenue/Expenditure	5-Person Minimum Staffing	6-Person Minimum Staffing
District Revenue (All revenue minus grants and donations)	\$894,401	\$894,401
Additional Fire Tax Revenue from the City Residents	\$619,222	\$619,222
City Base EMS Revenue (All EMS revenue minus transport charges)	\$1,142,813	\$1,142,813
911 Transport Revenue (\$905.99 per transport)	\$853,439	\$853,439
Total Revenue	\$3,509,875	\$3,509,875
Administrative Costs (Chief & Contract Services)	\$219,000	\$219,000
Operating Costs (Salary, Benefits, & Overhead)	\$2,950,459	\$3,218,474
Total Expenditures	\$3,169,459	\$3,437,474
Total	\$340,416	\$72,401

In case the consolidated system is unable to contract for the necessary administrative functions, an additional financial model is provided that includes the two previously mentioned administrative positions.

Table 73: Revenue vs Expenditures for the Consolidated Model with Full-Time Administrative Support

Type of Revenue/Expenditure	5-Person Minimum Staffing	6-Person Minimum Staffing
District Revenue (All revenue minus grants and donations)	\$894,401	\$894,401
Additional Fire Tax Revenue from the City Residents	\$619,222	\$619,222
City Base EMS Revenue (All EMS revenue minus transport charges)	\$1,142,813	\$1,142,813
911 Transport Revenue (\$905.99 per transport)	\$853,439	\$853,439
Total Revenue	\$3,509,875	\$3,509,875
Administrative Costs (Chief & 2 FTE Admin Positions)	\$326,000	\$326,000
Operating Costs (Salary, Benefits, & Overhead)	\$2,950,459	\$3,218,474
Total Expenditures	\$3,276,459	\$3,544,474
Total	\$233,416	(\$34,599)

The financial models above illustrate the operating costs required to maintain the same level of service the community experiences today. Since the majority of call demand is centered in and around Livingston with the majority being EMS related, the operating costs closely mimic LFR's current expenditures. However, Fitch recognizes that the District volunteers are an important part of the service delivery model and can serve as a force multiplier on large personnel intensive incidents. The models below include additional costs related to operating the volunteer programs currently in place by the District such as pay-per-call, training, meals, and scholarships.

Table 74: Revenue vs Expenditures for the Consolidated Model with Contract Administrative Services and Volunteer Expenditures

Type of Revenue/Expenditure	5-Person Minimum Staffing	6-Person Minimum Staffing
District Revenue (All revenue minus grants and donations)	\$894,401	\$894,401
Additional Fire Tax Revenue from the City Residents	\$619,222	\$619,222
City Base EMS Revenue (All EMS revenue minus transport charges)	\$1,142,813	\$1,142,813
911 Transport Revenue (\$905.99 per transport)	\$853,439	\$853,439
Total Revenue	\$3,509,875	\$3,509,875
Administrative Costs (Chief & Contract Services)	\$219,000	\$219,000
Operating Costs (Salary, Benefits, & Overhead)	\$2,950,459	\$3,218,474
Volunteer Operating Costs (Pay per call, training, scholarships, equipment, meals, etc.)	\$279,190	\$279,190
Additional District Expenditures (Maintenance, Debt., etc.)	\$169,771	\$169,771
Total Expenditures	\$3,618,420	\$3,886,435
Total	(\$108,545)	(\$376,560)

Table 75: Revenue vs Expenditures for the Consolidated Model with Full-Time Administrative Support and Volunteer Expenditures

Type of Revenue/Expenditure	5-Person Minimum Staffing	6-Person Minimum Staffing
District Revenue (All revenue minus grants and donations)	\$894,401	\$894,401
Additional Fire Tax Revenue from the City Residents	\$619,222	\$619,222
City Base EMS Revenue (All EMS revenue minus transport charges)	\$1,142,813	\$1,142,813
911 Transport Revenue (\$905.99 per transport)	\$853,439	\$853,439
Total Revenue	\$3,509,875	\$3,509,875
Administrative Costs (Chief & 2 FTE Admin Positions)	\$326,000	\$326,000
Operating Costs (Salary, Benefits, & Overhead)	\$2,950,459	\$3,218,474
Volunteer Operating Costs (Pay per call, training, scholarships, equipment, meals, etc.)	\$279,190	\$279,190
Additional District Expenditures (Maintenance, Debt., etc.)	\$169,771	\$169,771
Total Expenditures	\$3,725,420	\$3,993,435
Total	(\$215,545)	(\$483,560)

Advantages and Disadvantages

A consolidated model provides an opportunity to reduce administrative and overhead costs, but the operational savings are limited since neither agency has fully developed career systems. A consolidation represents a significant organizational and cultural change to both organizations and both agencies should consider whether they are committed to its success before proceeding.

Advantages

The consolidated model represents an opportunity to reduce duplicative costs including one of the fire chiefs, facilities, and apparatus. While this may not represent significant annual savings it should provide a more significant decrease in long-term capital costs. Additionally, a consolidation could make approximately \$1.3 million in Livingston general fund revenue available for other priorities.

Based on the current workload, the consolidated system is capable of absorbing any additional workload associated with the continued growth and development of the community. The recommended units should be able to absorb an additional 1316 responses across the two units.

If the consolidated system is successful, it may provide an opportunity for other districts in Park County to consolidate as well. As additional districts consolidate, more savings should be realized.

Finally, a consolidated system would function under the authority of a single fire chief, meaning policies and procedures would apply to all personnel. This operational alignment should increase the department's overall effectiveness.

Disadvantages

The consolidation of two agencies with vastly different organizational structures, cultures, and procedures can be difficult to successfully implement. If all stakeholders including the city, district, and collective bargaining unit aren't fully committed to successfully navigating the various obstacles it represents a real threat to the success of a consolidated system and ultimately service delivery.

The city would effectively outsource core services and have limited control over the level and types of services provided. Additionally, city residents would experience an increase in taxes, without any appreciable improvement in services.

Non-Consolidated Fire and EMS

The non-consolidated model assumes the two agencies remain independent departments. LFR would continue to provide EMS services to the entire county and fire services to the City of Livingston and a 5-mile area outside of the city limits. The District would continue as a largely volunteer agency providing primarily non-EMS service to Park County Rural Fire District #1 and mutual aid to the City of Livingston.

Organizational Structure

The organizational structure for a non-consolidated system would remain consistent with each existing agency's current structure. LFR would continue to report to the city manager and District personnel would continue to be managed by the Board of Trustees.

Both agencies would likely retain their own Fire Chief to manage daily operations. Like the consolidated model, LFR would utilize three battalion chiefs to support the Chief and provide shift oversight. While call demand alone does not require a battalion chief assigned to each shift, they do provide the necessary administrative support for LFR. Each battalion chief should be assigned major areas of responsibility for support services including training, EMS QA/QI, logistics/fleet, and community risk reduction. Due to the limited daily staffing, the battalion chief will need to remain operationally flexible and may be required to provide staffing for the engine or ambulance.

The chart below represents the proposed staffing level and organizational structure for LFR. It is based on a minimum daily staffing level of five and a staffing multiplier of 15%. Operational staffing utilizes full-time firefighters for the required minimum staffing to illustrate the maximum cost associated with the model. Since the majority of the call demand is associated with LFR units, staffing levels and structure for LFR are the same as in the consolidated system.

Table 76: Consolidated Model- Required Staffing for a Minimum Staffing Level of 5

	Minimum Seats per Shift	Number of Shifts	Number of Seats Required	Relief Factor (15%)	Number of Personnel Required
3-platoon	5	3	15	2.25	17.25

Departments with smaller workforces such as the consolidated system may need to consider modifying the typical relief factor to ensure each shift can reliably provide adequate relief. For example, the typical relief factor above provides two of the three shifts with a relief firefighter, but any operational vacancies on the third shift would need to be filled using overtime. The chart below applies the relief factor of 15% to each shift and then rounds up before multiplying the number of personnel by the number of shifts. The models provided utilize the higher staffing factor to illustrate maximum costs.

Table 77: Consolidated Model- Required Staffing for a Minimum Staffing Level of 5 with Modified Staffing Factor

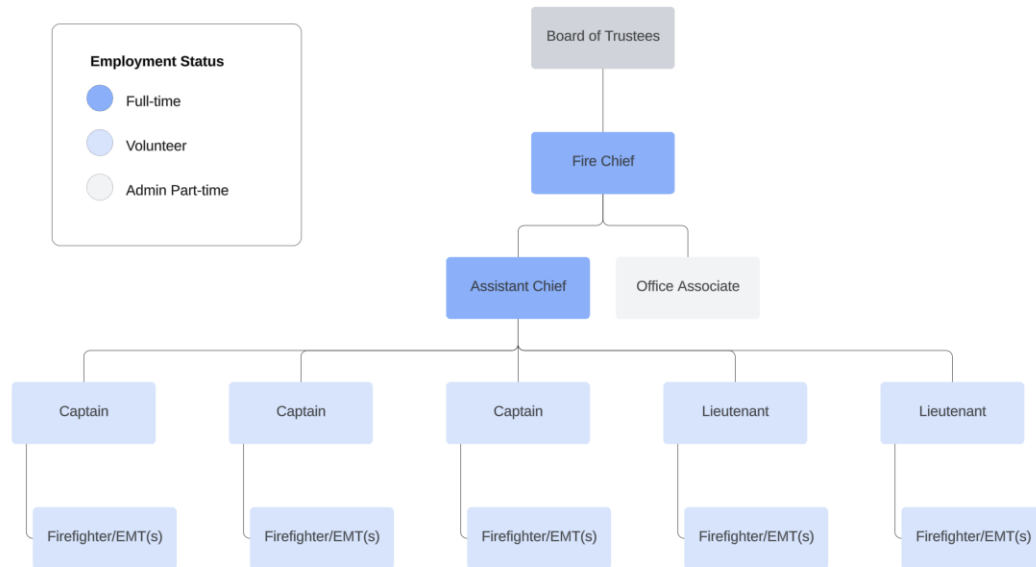
	Minimum Seats per Shift	Relief Factor (15%)	Number of Personnel per Shift (Rounded)	Number of Shifts	Number of Personnel Required
3-platoon	5	0.75	6	3	18

Finally, a proposed organizational chart is provided for LFR and the District separately.

Figure 13: LFR Organizational Chart 5-Person Minimum Staffing



Figure 14: PCRFD1 Organizational Chart



Deployment Strategy and Modeled Performance

This model will deploy to mirror current performance with an 8-minute Urban and 18-minute Rural Travel Time for emergent 911 calls.

The base deployment model includes a 2-person ALS engine, an ALS ambulance, and a Battalion Chief. The engine staffing would be dynamic, cross-staffing additional units including the ladder truck and a second ambulance based on call demand. Both units are programmed to provide service 24 hours a day by utilizing a 3-platoon or 56-hour work week. The total cost for this deployment model, inclusive of salary, benefits, and operating, are estimated to be \$2,950,459.

Table 78: Deployment Costs- 5-Person Minimum Staffing

Unit Type	Count	FTE Count	Total Personnel Cost	Overhead Costs	Total Costs
2-Person ALS Engine - 24hr	1	6.9	\$739,784	\$496,168	\$1,235,952
ALS Ambulance - 24hr	1	6.9	\$626,885	\$496,168	\$1,123,053
Battalion Chief – 24hr	1	3.5	\$527,857	N/A	\$527,857
Additional Relief	1	0.7	\$63,597	N/A	\$63,597
Totals	2	18	\$1,958,123	\$992,336	\$2,950,459

Alternatively, a deployment model that includes a 3-person engine is provided for comparison. Although the fire demand is relatively low within the community, the ability to deploy a total of six personnel to the scene of a fire increases their efficiency and effectiveness as it relates to fire attack and victim

rescue. The additional person also provides greater depth in capacity. In a scenario where two simultaneous EMS calls are received, the department would have the ability to respond with a 2-person ambulance to each incident while retaining two personnel to respond to a potential third call. This should allow the department to be less reliant on callbacks and reduce the costs related to them.

This increase in minimum staffing from five to six would cost an additional \$268,015. Alternatively, the system could rely on callbacks, volunteers, and mutual aid to complete the department's effective response force for high-risk incidents.

Table 79: Deployment Costs- 6-Person Minimum Staffing

Unit Type	Count	FTE Count	Total Personnel Cost	Overhead Costs	Total Costs
3-Person ALS Engine - 24hr	1	10.4	\$1,053,226	\$496,168	\$1,549,394
ALS Ambulance - 24hr	1	6.9	\$626,885	\$496,168	\$1,123,053
Battalion Chief – 24hr	1	3.5	\$527,857	N/A	\$527,857
Additional Relief	1	0.2	\$18,170	N/A	\$18,170
Totals	2	21	\$2,226,138	\$992,336	\$3,218,474

The models are built utilizing full-time employees to illustrate the maximum potential cost, but LFR currently uses part-time or reserve firefighters as part of its minimum staffing strategy. This is a sound financial strategy assuming a sufficient cadre of qualified part-time personnel exists. Utilizing a part-time firefighter represents a potential savings of \$29,701 per year compared to a full-time firefighter assigned to a 56-hour schedule. The projected savings are based on a max hourly rate of \$21/hour. The current average hourly rate for part-time firefighters is \$16.40, so additional savings are anticipated. The CBA limits the number of part-time firefighters per shift to two, so the total savings of six part-time firefighters are listed below.

Table 80: Personnel Savings from Part-Time Firefighters

Number of Part-Time FF Used	Savings
1	\$29,701
2	\$54,402
3	\$89,103
4	\$118,804
5	\$148,505
6	\$178,206

The table below shows the total cost of both the 5-person and 6-person minimum staffing along with the potential reduced cost based on how many part-time firefighters are incorporated into the staffing plan.

Table 81: Impact of Part-Time Firefighters on Personnel Costs

Deployment Model	Base Cost	Cost with 1 PT FF	Cost with 2 PT FF	Cost with 3 PT FF	Cost with 4 PT FF	Cost with 5 PT FF	Cost with 6 PT FF
5-Person Minimum	\$2,950,459	\$2,950,459	\$2,950,459	\$2,950,459	\$2,950,459	\$2,950,459	\$2,950,459
6-Person Minimum	\$3,218,474	\$3,218,474	\$3,218,474	\$3,218,474	\$3,218,474	\$3,218,474	\$3,218,474

A workload analysis for the proposed model was completed based on the historical experience of LFR including total calls and time-on-task (TOT) ratio (64.73 minutes per call). The current workload is within the capabilities of the proposed units so their additional capacity was calculated using a workload cap of .15 UHU for 24-hour Engines, .25 UHU for 24-hour Ambulances, and .45 UHU for 8-12-hour Ambulances. These workload caps ensure that personnel have adequate time for administrative tasks, training, meal breaks, and rest periods. Based on this analysis the engine can absorb an additional 1213 calls before reaching capacity and the ambulance can absorb an additional 352 calls before reaching capacity.

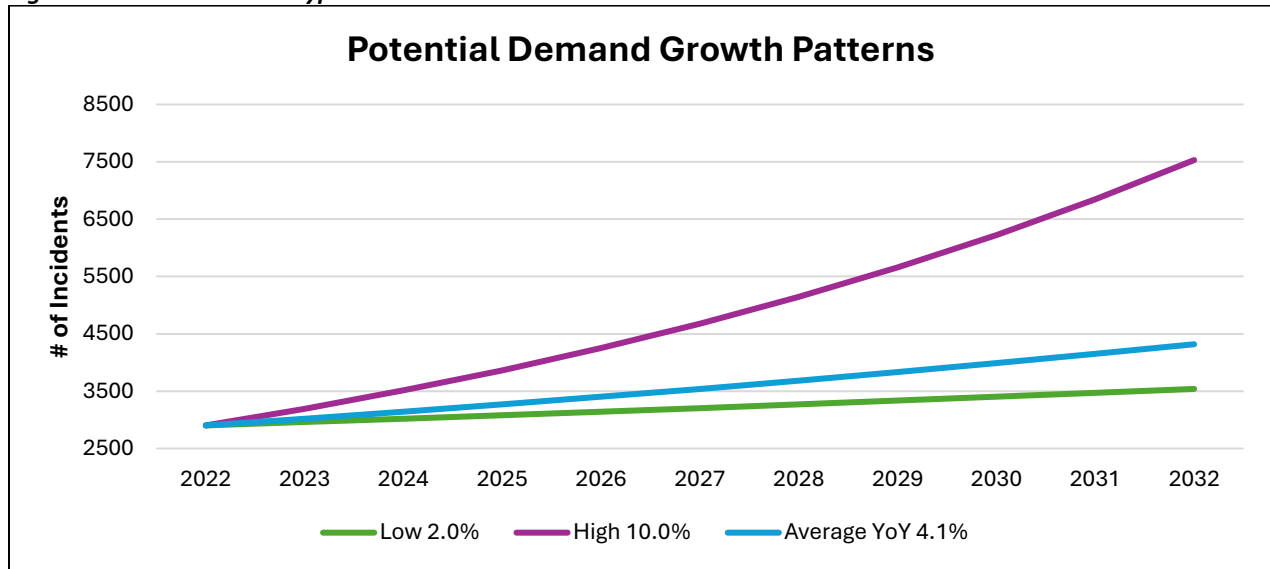
Table 82: Projected Unit Capacity

Unit Type	Model Call Count	Projected UHU	Capacity for Growth – Call Count	Capacity for Growth -Percent Increase
ALS Engine - 24hr	289	2.9%	1213	420%
ALS Ambulance - 24hr	1728	20.8%	352	20%
Totals	2017		1565	78%

The figure below depicts observed call volume during the last three-year reporting periods and various hypothetical growth scenarios for the next 10 years. These projections should be used with caution due to the variability in growth observed across prior calendar years. In all cases, data should be reviewed annually to ensure timely updates to projections and utilization of a five-year rolling average.

Using these growth projections along with the workload analysis above, the agency can predict how long the proposed model will continue to operate effectively. Utilizing the two most likely growth scenarios of average and low, the model should continue to perform reliably for the next 3 – 8 years before needing reinvestment. Due to the variability of growth, the department should evaluate call demand, workload, and performance measures annually to determine if the model needs to be adjusted.

Figure 15: Observed and Hypothetical Growth in Call Volume



Financial Implications

The projected cost of the proposed model was calculated using historical revenues and expenditures as reported by LFR. The following assumptions were utilized to develop the projected revenue and operating costs.

- All non-transport EMS revenue, such as the county contribution remains consistent.
- Salary and benefits remain consistent with the current CBA.
- Overhead costs remain consistent with LFR’s historical experience.
- Administrative costs include salary and benefits for the Chief.
- Overtime costs are not included. If the department staffs to the recommended staffing levels, overtime related to minimum staffing should be minimal.
- Personnel costs related to IFT are not included in the 911 models.

Table 83: Revenue vs Expenditures for the Consolidated Model

Type of Revenue/Expenditure	5-Person Minimum Staffing	6-Person Minimum Staffing
City General Fund Revenue	\$1,299,315	\$1,299,315
City Base EMS Revenue (All EMS revenue minus transport charges)	\$1,142,813	\$1,142,813
911 Transport Revenue (\$905.99 per transport)	\$853,459	\$853,439
Total Revenue	\$3,295,587	\$3,295,567
Administrative Costs (Chief)	\$144,000	\$144,000
Operating Costs (Salary, Benefits, & Overhead)	\$2,950,459	\$3,218,474
Total Expenditures	\$3,094,459	\$3,362,474
Total	\$201,128	(\$66,907)

Advantages and Disadvantages

A non-consolidated option maintains the current operating structures and limits the amount of change the agencies would experience. It provides the same level of service currently provided but limits the ability to reduce duplicative administrative costs such as the salary and benefits for two chiefs.

Advantages

The non-consolidated model maintains the existing agency structures including labor agreements. Although consolidation poses a potential savings, it is not a significant savings and the difficulty navigating a consolidation could result in conflict and poor morale for years to come.

Based on the current workload, the existing system is capable of absorbing any additional workload associated with the continued growth and development of the community. The recommended units should be able to absorb an additional 1316 responses across the two units.

Finally, by maintaining separate departments, the city retains full control of all core public safety services provided to its residents.

Disadvantages -

Maintaining two distinct agencies when the call demand doesn't warrant, results in increased costs related to apparatus, equipment, and administrative overhead. The District doesn't currently have any paid operational line personnel, but if they were to add them in the future, the potential savings of a consolidated system would increase.

Not consolidating surrenders the potential revenue it would create by extending the District's taxing authority to the City of Livingston. Additionally, the city would need to continue to fund fire services through general fund revenue.

Although not immediately, the City will lose the ability to annex into the District if it becomes a Class 1 city. While a Class 1 city doesn't appear to have any additional requirements for fire and EMS services above what LFR is currently providing, they would be obligated to maintain service as call demand and population grows.

Interfacility Transfers

Interfacility transfers (IFT) are not required but provide an opportunity to generate additional revenue for the agency. In addition, IFTs can provide a valuable service to the community if sufficient third-party providers aren't present in the region. The proposed model for IFTs is independent of whether the agencies consolidate or not.

Deployment Strategy and Modeled Performance

The proposed model provides IFT services Monday – Friday from 0800 – 1600 by staffing a dedicated unit. Limiting the availability of IFT services to Monday – Friday captures the majority of the demand while limiting the associated personnel cost. If desired, IFT requests outside of the identified timeframe could be considered utilizing callback personnel or overtime of IFT staff.

It is recommended that the required IFT staffing is achieved by utilizing part-time firefighters. That's not to suggest that the part-time firefighters have to be physically assigned to the IFT unit, but they would provide sufficient staffing during the given time period to place the IFT unit in service. The chart below provides the personnel costs required to staff an ambulance 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. A maximum rate of \$21/hour was used for part-time firefighters to represent the maximum cost potential.

Table 84: Personnel Cost for 8-Hour Ambulance Staffed with Reserve Firefighters

8hr Ambulance	Seats	FTEs	FTE Type	Staffing Cost
Reserve Firefighter 40/hr wk	2	2.0	Uniformed	\$87,360

For comparison, the cost of utilizing full-time personnel is provided as well.

Table 85: Personnel Cost for 8-Hour Ambulance Staffed with Full-time Firefighters

8hr Ambulance	Seats	FTEs	FTE Type	Staffing Cost
Firefighter 40/hr wk	2	2.0	Uniformed	\$173,448

Alternatively, if the Community Paramedic's workload allows, they could be paired with one reserve firefighter or full-time Firefighter to provide community paramedic services and IFTs. This would reduce the associated personnel costs by half but slightly reduce unit availability.

When not committed, a dedicated IFT unit also provides additional capacity for 911 services while reducing the costs associated with callback and transfer incentives. If sufficient part-time staffing isn't available to place the IFT unit in service, then IFTs are denied without impacting 911 service.

A workload analysis for the proposed model was completed based on the historical experience of IFTs including the time-on-task (TOT) for transports (70.4 minutes per call). There was a discrepancy in the number of IFTs included in the CAD data and the number reported by the EMS billing company. To offer the most conservative approach the demand utilizes the 606 IFTs included in the CAD data while the potential revenue generated uses the 319 IFTs reported by the EMS billing company.

Table 86: Projected Unit Growth Capacity

Unit Type	Model Call Count	Projected UHU	Capacity for Growth – Call Count	Capacity for Growth – % of Increase
ALS Ambulance - 8hr	606	34.9%	176	29%

A Monday – Friday ambulance would capture 563 or 93% of the IFT demand assuming all IFT can be achieved between the hours of 0800 – 1600. The unit would also have the capacity to absorb an additional 176 IFTs. To maximize demand, the service along with its operating hours should be communicated to local facilities.

Additionally, all requests for service should be documented inclusive of the day of week, time of day, and disposition (accepted or declined). This will provide the agency with the information required to evaluate the potential for expanding the operating hours in the future.

Table 87: CY 2022 IFT Demand - All Jurisdictions

Day of Week	2022 IFT Count - ALL	Avg/Day
Sunday	43	0.83
Monday	58	1.12
Tuesday	139	2.67
Wednesday	77	1.48
Thursday	131	2.52
Friday	60	1.15
Saturday	98	1.85
Total	606	1.66

Financial Implications

Based on the data reported by the EMS billing provider, LFR billed for 319 IFTs in FY23 and collected a total of \$407,209 for a cash per trip of \$1,276.52.

Table 88: Cash Value per Interfacility Transfer

	FY21 (Actual)	FY22 (Actual)	FY23 (Actual)
Interfacility Transfers	393	389	319
Cash Collected	\$585,365	\$595,042	\$407,209
Cash per Trip	\$1,489.48	\$1,529.67	\$1,276.52

The revenue projections below include options for part-time and full-time staffing and represent the revenue generated by the current demand and the potential revenue if the unit operated at full capacity assuming the CAD data represents unmet demand.

Table 89: IFT Revenue versus Expenditures with Part-Time Personnel

Type of Revenue/Expenditure	319 Transports	606 Transports
IFT Transport Revenue (\$1,276.52 per transport)	\$407,209	\$998,239
Operating Costs (Salary, Benefits, & Overhead)	\$149,661	\$143,411
Total	\$257,548	\$854,828

Table 90: IFT Revenue versus Expenditures with Full-Time Personnel

Type of Revenue/Expenditure	319 Transports	606 Transports
IFT Transport Revenue (\$1,276.52 per transport)	\$407,209	\$998,239
Operating Costs (Salary, Benefits, & Overhead)	\$235,749	\$229,499
Total	\$171,460	\$768,740

According to the providing billing data, IFTs can create a positive cash flow for the agency if it can control the associated personnel costs and maintain demand for the service. Currently, there are no contracts or agreements in place with local facilities so a third-party provider could siphon off demand, effectively reducing the amount of revenue generated by the agency. If the agency is unable to acquire agreements with local facilities, it should use caution in applying IFT revenues to ongoing expenses not related to IFT. Additionally, the agency should continuously monitor demand and revenues and adjust the model accordingly.

Recommendation:

The City should implement a system for tracking IFT requests and services, to include ensuring data agreement between their CAD system and billing company.

Recommendation:

The City should work to secure service contracts for IFT work prior to staffing a unit primarily focused on IFT work.

ALTERNATIVE TO CONSOLIDATION

If it is determined that consolidation is not in the best interests of the City of Livingston, then the agencies may want to consider pursuing the functional consolidation of key areas. LFR and PCRFD1 are dependent on each other to provide adequate service to their communities, particularly for labor-intensive incidents like Structure Fires, yet they lack common procedures and training standards.

LFR is an established organization and is in a unique position to provide cost-effective services to the District. By establishing a service contract, the District can achieve strategic goals that they may not be able to afford otherwise while allowing LFR to create additional support capacity. An illustrative scope for a service contract might include the following items:

- Policy and Procedure Development – LFR, in cooperation with the District, would be responsible for the development of common policies and procedures for emergency operations. Additionally, LFR would provide in-service training to District personnel on new policies and procedures.
- Training – LFR, in cooperation with the District, would be responsible for initial and ongoing training of District personnel. Training programs may include but are not limited to Firefighter 1 & 2, HM Operations, and EVOC.
- Fire Services – LFR would provide fire response to the entire District response area.

The District identified training and common operating guidelines as unmet needs during onsite interviews and since LFR utilizes the District to contribute to their effective response force, both agencies would benefit from a better trained and integrated workforce. Additionally, LFR currently has no training staff and this may present an option to increase their capacity while meeting the District's needs.

LFR currently limits its response to fire calls within 5 miles of the city border. Extending their response to the entire district would ensure a consistent initial response while increasing the District's effective response force to outlying areas. LFR already responds to all EMS calls in the district and the additional call demand associated with non-EMS calls could be accommodated within the proposed optimized staffing models as discussed previously in this report.

If this alternative is selected it is essential for LFR and the District to negotiate the specific requirements of the contract and any performance criteria associated. For example, which and how many training programs are to be delivered annually, what is the required process for policy approval, and what specific incident types would LFR respond to automatically.

Recommendation:

In the absence of consolidation, then the agencies should pursue the functional consolidation of key administrative and operational areas to ensure the most optimized and efficient collective service provision to their communities.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Park County Rural Fire District #1 – Observations from Site Visit

-On February 10, 2023, Fitch staff met with the Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, Association President, Treasurer, Chairperson, and Mr. Ron Lindroth for several hours. While much information was gathered for the discussions, the below represents some significant positions that will impact any efforts to achieve any form of consolidation.

Data – There was considerable discussion that the data that Mr. Lindroth has already collected represented a “detailed analysis” and that he had collected the important data that Fitch would need. The Chair asserted that she wants the best data to be used in an unbiased fashion. The group is not interested in “driving the outcome” but they see Mr. Lindroth’s work as solid with no need to drive deeper into his data.

View of the City of Livingston – Some concerns were raised that the City is focused on environmental issues and land use to the exclusion of all other issues.

Park County – There is no effort within Park County for code enforcement. There is limited new growth with most new homesites being 1-10 acres. There is significant pushback to growth and no apparent appetite for economic development.

Service Delivery – The District’s goal is to provide the best service they can for an affordable price, and that they want to make it better with what they must work with. There is interest in increasing professionalism and training. There is an apparent overall satisfaction with the response times as there has been no outcry from the public. Concerns were shared that a career approach would not have any real impact on fire losses due to the high travel times in the District (presumed same service model).

Fiscal Matters – The District acknowledges they fall short on funding and face staffing struggles. Residents in the rural area would not support rural budget assets going to the City. Cities may impose impact fees, but districts can’t.

Staffing and Personnel – Concerns were shared that within the region, smaller rural departments are “aging out” with no replacement streams. It was asserted that ranchers would oppose any plan that had personnel costs at 70% and that there have been members on the Board to ensure such. The District uses student staffing for nights and weekends.

Wildland and Enterprise Fund – There is considerable year to year variability with wildland deployments. This creates some variability in the overall budget. Deployments are reported to provide an approximately 50% “profit”. While this is referred to as an enterprise fund, there are no restrictions as to how the funds are used. There can be a considerable “tail” on the deployment reimbursements.

Positions – It was asserted that one County agency is likely a better option for now. The two entities could form a new entity, but a Fire Authority is not currently permitted.

Operations – There is a joint training facility with limited capabilities. Concerns were expressed regarding a work/life balance due to the demands of the fire chief and deputy chief positions. The Deputy Chief spoke of scenes where they operated in a “dual command” environment (which is inconsistent with national standards). While the City and the District run calls together in a defined five-mile radius, they do not operate with agreed upon operations plans. The District reports that they have no standardized operating procedures.

Overview

The District asserts that all data that would be needed can be found in Mr. Lindroth's reports and that no further deep dive for data is required.

Due to a variety of concerns, and a significant divide between the City and the District in terms of priorities, the District does not see the City supporting any changes.

The service delivery currently provided appears to satisfy the community, especially considering the available resources.

Concerns exist about any transition to a "union shop" and a place for the District Staff to land.

Concerns were expressed by District staff about their workload and the inability to find time for critical issues. The description of "dual command" and the lack of standard operational plans presents a significant health and safety concern that should be placed upon the District's highest priorities.

City of Livingston – Observations from Site Visit

On February 9, 2023, Fitch staff met with the Livingston City Manager, Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, the Planning Director, and Dispatch Staff. The City Attorney was scheduled but not available. In a separate meeting on that same day, Fitch staff met with IAFF Local 630 officials.

View of the Park County Rural District #1 – The group was clear that a large divide exists on nearly every topic between City and County residents with very strong philosophical differences in taxation. Anecdotally, newer residents relocating to the City, and some to the County, have a higher expectation of services levels than native Montana residents based upon where they came from. Native Montanans are resistant to taxes. The group asserted that the citizens in the rural areas are satisfied, or at least tolerant of the long response times in the District. The Fire Chief sees the Rural District struggling with staffing during the day, but experiences better staffing at nights due to Helena college students.

Service Delivery – The City of Livingston and Rural District have very different operational models.

Volunteer callbacks are done when the first EMS unit is dispatched. The group asserted that the dependance of off-duty staffing is not sustainable and that such callbacks are exacting a toll on off-duty responders. The availability of lucrative off-duty work providing fire protection at the nearby Yellowstone Club has impacted availability for callback coverage.

The crews are left to decide if they respond with 2 or 3 persons on an EMS response based upon "their sense of how serious the calls sounds" with the information they are provide. When three people respond, it may leave just one person on duty in the station for an undetermined period. No Emergency Medical Dispatching Protocols are used.

There are no "backstops" with EMS calls and no routine mutual aid exists for EMS except for mass casualty incidents.

Planning and Development – The Planning Director predicted no new growth until two current development lawsuits are resolved. Two subdivisions were denied that proposed between 100 and 300

homes. The best growth options are on the north side of the tracks. The City is not looking to annex and is more focused on in-fill. She reported no known plans for high service demand facilities such as nursing homes or assisted living facilities. There is an estimated population growth of 2,000 people by 2030.

Overview

Due to a variety of concerns, and a significant divide between the City and the District on priorities, approaches, and funding levels, the City does not anticipate the District supporting any changes.

The service delivery currently provided appears to satisfy the community, especially considering the available resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a listing of recommendations contained within this report, in the order in which they appeared.

Recommendation:

The City of Livingston should evaluate and determine if the consolidation of fire/EMS services is in its best long-term interests based on operational, fiscal, and political considerations before it reaches Class 1 status.

Recommendation:

The agency/s should base operational decisions on geographical and workload demands without regard to demographic distinctions.

Recommendation:

If the Agency chooses to provide a Battalion Chief position, it should be consistently aligned with each shift for round-the-clock coverage as well as consistent supervision and administration.

Recommendation:

The battalion chief positions should each have clearly defined administrative and support responsibilities assigned to them to account for all required elements of the organization's management and administration.

Recommendation:

If consolidation is attempted, sufficient time and effort should be made to ensure a workplace culture that values the career staff, the volunteers, and the college students, presuming all are part of the combined approach.

Recommendation:

Careful thought should be given to space considerations for administrative staff, operational forces, apparatus needs, training, and overnight housing needs that are consistent with whatever the revised organizational structure may be.

Recommendation:

The agencies should establish and fund a long-term apparatus replacement plan that is consistent with national standards.

Recommendation:

If the City elects to pursue consolidation with the District, it should engage the local IAFF labor unit at the outset to establish commonality in purpose for the reconfiguration of the CBA as required.

Recommendation:

The City of Livingston should evaluate their cost allocation practice to provide greater detail and tracking for expenditures related to the Fire and EMS programs.

Recommendation:

The cash value per transport assumption utilized for modeling should be confirmed by the City's internal finance department and the third-party EMS billing vendor.

Recommendation:

To better assess the fiscal viability of IFT's, all IFT requests should be tracked, whether fulfilled or declined, with data regarding the basis for the action.

Recommendation:

The City Finance Department, working with LFR, should establish more robust performance and reporting expectations for their billing vendor in accordance with best practice EMS revenue cycle management.

Recommendation:

LFR should evaluate the viability of a service provider agreement with the hospital/s with defined scope of service and hours of service. LFR should periodically evaluate their ability to meet the IFT demand with current staffing and proposed staffing strategies.

Recommendation:

FITCH recommends that the Agency adopt an upper UHU threshold for 24-hour units at 0.30 and 8 to 12hr units at .45 with a .05 trigger to begin planning for additional resources.

Recommendation:

The City should update its data capture, export, and reporting capabilities to align with best practices for current and future system performance monitoring and planning.

Recommendation:

Assuming consolidation into the District, the City should evaluate its willingness and cost to provide the District with essential administrative support services to the extent it currently does for LFR.

Recommendation:

In a consolidated environment, the fleet size should be reduced as depicted in Table 35.

Recommendation:

If consolidated, the parties should conduct a facility assessment to determine the most suitable approach for housing the consolidated fleet in support of both normal operations and reserve or standby equipment.

Recommendation:

A reinvestment plan for liberated general fund dollars, or a tax roll-back strategy should be developed with community input as part of any consolidation planning.

Recommendation:

The Agency should develop a system for tracking and reporting on the use of paid leave to provide monitoring for the appropriate use of leave and operational staffing levels.

Recommendation:

The City should consider the value of savings and daily staffing concentrations associated with a 3-platoon shift schedule to improve overall staffing strength; understanding that any change would require impact bargaining with the labor unit.

Recommendation:

If the City pursues a 3-platoon schedule for LFR, they should also consider implementing a Kelly Day to offset the FLSA impacts, maintain a competitive incentive, and soften the transition from the 4-platoon system

Recommendation:

If the City pursues a 3-platoon schedule for LFR and maintains the Battalion Chief position, they should consider utilizing the associated savings to place a Battalion Chief on each shift and distribute essential administration functions among them.

Recommendation:

Both agencies should work diligently to reduce both their dispatch times and turnout times and evaluate the implementation of a Priority Dispatch system.

Recommendation:

Based on the disparate population densities and historical demand in Livingston and Park County, it is recommended that the City or consolidated Agency consider adopting a differentiated service model. This approach utilizes an urban performance standard in high demand urban areas and a rural performance standard in low demand rural areas.

Recommendation:

A benchmark travel time of 8-minutes in the urban areas and 18-minutes in the rural areas should be considered for formal adoption. Once adopted, this metric becomes a tool by which to evaluate the impacts of growth and future resource needs.

Recommendation:

The dissolution of the Fire District model is not recommended for further consideration.

Recommendation:

No further consideration should be given to an EMS only model under the City of Livingston. In addition to the pension implications, this would essentially cede fire protection to the District while still incurring at least 80% of their former financial obligations to keep running EMS.

Recommendation:

The City should work to ensure their EMS billing vendor services are able to provide best practice performance along with data retention, validation, and reporting capabilities for all elements of EMS transport revenue management.

Recommendation:

The City should implement a system for tracking IFT requests and services, to include ensuring data agreement between their CAD system and billing company.

Recommendation:

The City should work to secure service contracts for IFT work prior to staffing a unit primarily focused on IFT work.

Recommendation:

In the absence of consolidation, then the agencies should pursue the functional consolidation of key administrative and operational areas to ensure the most optimized and efficient collective service provision to their communities.



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