

# Plain Township Fire Department Standards of Cover and Strategic Plan Summary 2023-25



## Introduction

With input received from the community, the Plain Township Fire Department (PTFD) conducted Standards of Cover and strategic planning processes in 2022 and 2023.

The Standards of Cover (SOC) is defined by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) as the “adopted written policies and procedures that determine the distribution, concentration, and reliability of fixed and mobile response forces for fire, emergency medical services (EMS), hazardous materials, and other technical types of responses.”

A comprehensive assessment of risks and demand was completed so that Plain Township and PTFD leadership can adopt policies with the utmost confidence to meet expectations and a high degree of transparency with the public.

The data analysis in the SOC illustrates that Plain Township should consider acquiring property for a strategically placed second fire station while developing an equipment and staffing model to continue serving Plain Township and anticipated growth within its territory. The Township will continue its history of fiscal responsibility and partnerships to further develop plans for needed growth.

The strategic plan process included data analysis, community input, and an internal review of mission, vision, values, priorities, goals, outcomes, objectives, and a SWOT analysis. More than 150 community members participated in the survey or by attending an in-person session.

Of the survey participants, 82% live or work in New Albany in Franklin County and 17% live or work in unincorporated Plain Township, and 86% relied on PTFD because they were a resident. Approximately 10% had used PTFD for an emergency in the last year.

The new mission, vision, and values statements are the foundation of the strategic plan and will be the drivers of the work.

*“The ultimate measure is lives saved, first, and property saved second.”*

- Priority 1: Save Lives
- Priority 2: Protect Property
- Priority 3: Prepare for Growth
- Priority 4: Work Effectively
- Priority 5: Engage Community

The SOC and strategic plan will provide the residents of Plain Township improved emergency response and performance times to save lives, protect property, and prepare for growth. The leadership of Plain Township and PTFD promise to work effectively and engage the community as these plans are implemented as we are stewards of the public’s support.

## **Mission, Vision, and Values**

These statements were informed by engagement with all Plain Township employees including a specific survey to our firefighters to understand what motivates their service, as well as the feedback and input received from the community. The Board of Trustees formally adopted these PTFD statements on September 6, 2023.

### **New Mission Statement**

Together, we save lives through education, engagement, and emergency services.

### **New Vision Statement**

A community that is informed, connected, and safe.

### **New Values Statements**

#### **Courage**

We do not hesitate in our response, and we fulfill our oath with passion and pride.

#### **Integrity**

We operate with honesty and transparency.

#### **Compassion**

We care for those in distress as we respond to their emergency needs.

#### **Equity**

We ensure every employee has access to learning and development, and that everyone receives the same level of service.

#### **Professionalism**

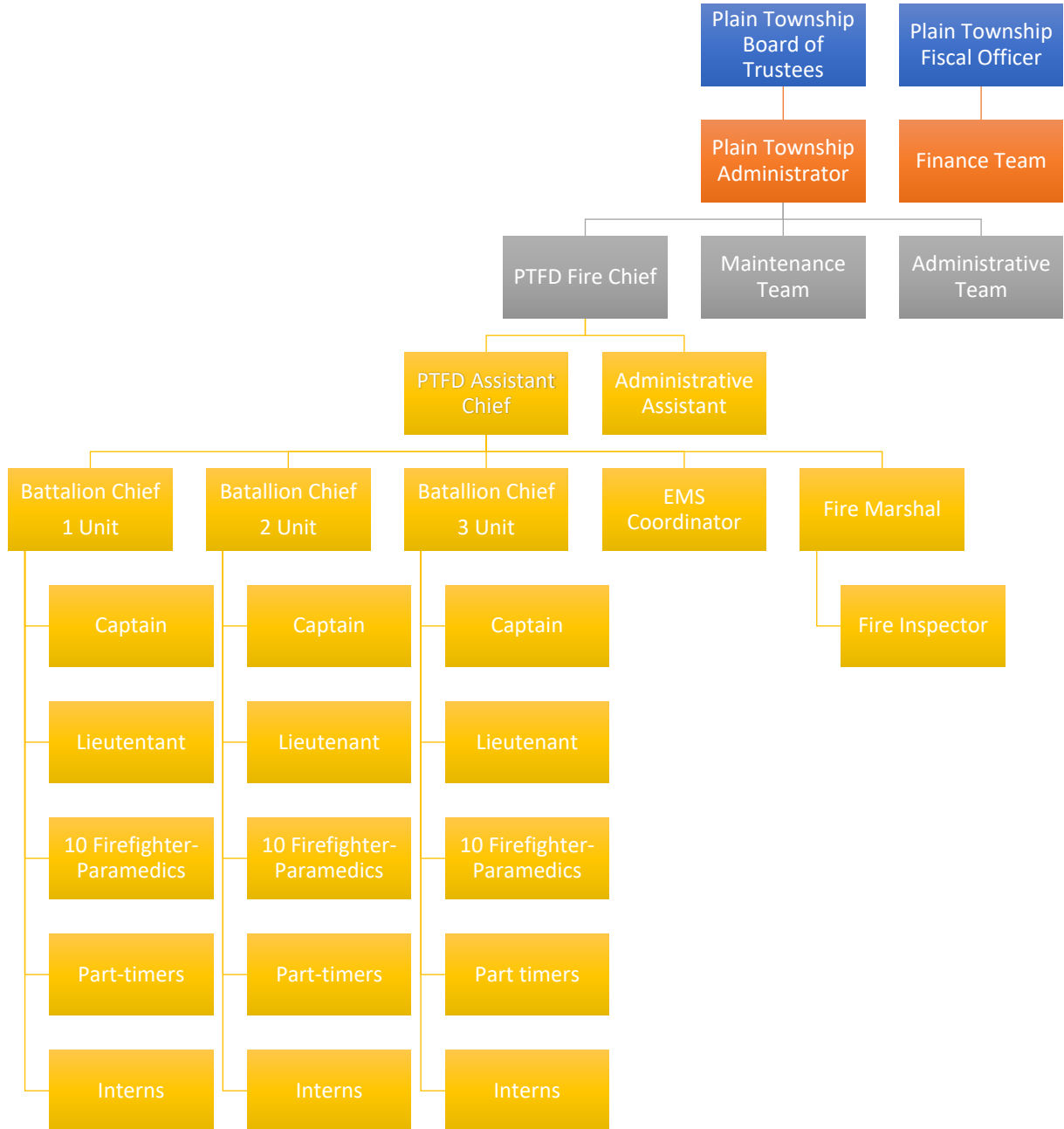
We adhere to the highest standards in the industry, train diligently, and work effectively to achieve the best outcomes.

#### **Connectedness**

We celebrate and engage our community at events, in the schools, and throughout neighborhoods.

## Staffing Structure

PTFD operates with a 24 hours on/48 hours off staffing model for all operational firefighters. The fire chiefs, EMS coordinator, fire marshal, fire inspector, and administrative assistant work 40-hour work weeks. Currently, 45 are employed full-time, 15 are employed part-time, and there are six interns. The fire chiefs report to the Township Administrator and work closely with the Board of Trustees to meet the needs of the community.



## Historical Overview

PTFD was an all-volunteer force until 1991. The original fire station was built in 1943 next to the butcher shop that is now Eagles Pizza. A second fire station was built in 1945 on Second Street with additions made in 1964 and 1979. The Plain Township offices operate out of that building today. The current fire station was built in 1997. Fire Chief Patrick Connor became chief in 2023 and is the sixth fire chief. Greg Ecleberry was named Assistant Fire Chief in March 2023. With the population growth of Plain Township and New Albany, PTFD will continue to evolve to meet the changing and dynamic needs of our community.

## Service and Budget Overview

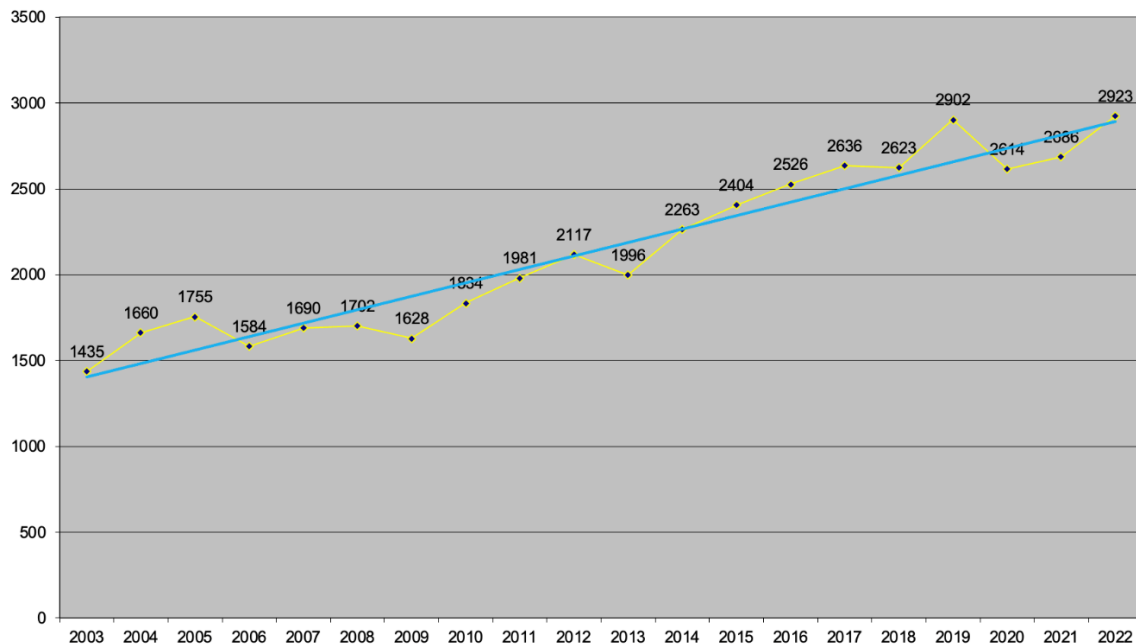
PTFD public services include:

- Fire – fire alarm response, fire suppression, fire rescue, fire investigation
- Rescue – motor vehicle extrication, confined space rescue, building collapse
- EMS – advanced life support, pediatric life support, basic life support
- Prevention – plan review, commercial inspections, education, community outreach

The PTFD FY22 operating expenditures were \$7,823,394 and capital expenditures were \$117,564. The primary funding sources include property taxes (94%) and insurance billing for EMS transports (4.5%).

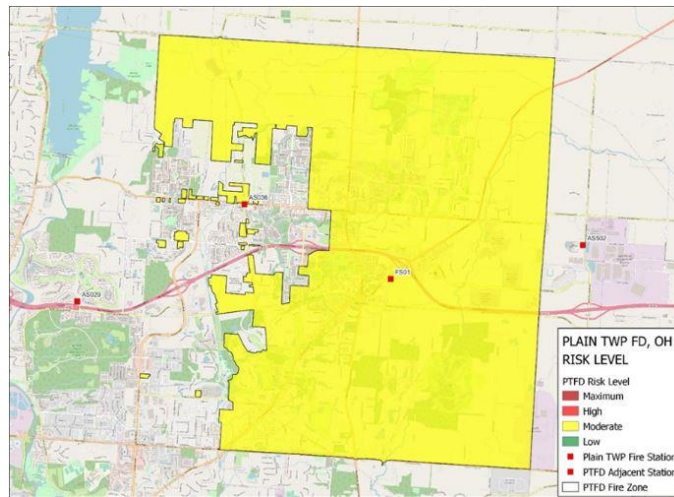
Total runs (combined fire/rescue and EMS) in 2022 were 2,923, which averaged 8 per day.

- Highest volume day in 2022 was 22 runs in a 24-hour shift.
- 110 days in 2022 (30.2%) had 10 or more runs in a 24-hour shift.



## Coverage Area

The yellow area is the primary jurisdiction for PTFD as it conforms with the boundaries of the township. The red dots indicate where our station, and adjacent stations, are located. It's important to note that the geographic growth of New Albany means that PTFD no longer has primary responsibility for fire protection and EMS services in all of New Albany, which is now also served by West Licking Joint Fire District and Monroe Township Fire Department.



PTFD works with all fire departments in central Ohio as mutual aid partners, which means calls and runs for PTFD are not limited to its jurisdiction.

Jurisdiction	Reporting Period <sup>1</sup>	Number of Calls <sup>2</sup>	Number of Responses <sup>3</sup>	Average Responses per Call	Total Busy Hours	Responses with Time Data <sup>4</sup>	Average Busy Minutes per Response	Average Calls per Day <sup>5</sup>	Average Responses per Day <sup>5</sup>
All	2017	2,629	4,641	1.8	1,959.0	4,640	25.3	7.2	12.7
	2018	2,614	4,542	1.7	1,835.2	4,540	24.3	7.2	12.4
	2019	2,897	4,933	1.7	2,047.4	4,931	24.9	7.9	13.5
	2020	2,611	4,387	1.7	1,786.8	4,386	24.4	7.1	12.0
	2021	2,659	4,402	1.7	1,713.7	4,400	23.4	7.3	12.1
Within PTFD	2017	1,389	2,712	2.0	1,238.9	2,711	27.4	3.8	7.4
	2018	1,361	2,574	1.9	1,162.4	2,572	27.1	3.7	7.1
	2019	1,569	2,902	1.8	1,272.8	2,902	26.3	4.3	8.0
	2020	1,316	2,427	1.8	1,024.2	2,427	25.3	3.6	6.6
	2021	1,378	2,481	1.8	1,032.8	2,479	25.0	3.8	6.8

Jurisdiction	Reporting Period <sup>1</sup>	Number of Calls <sup>2</sup>	Number of Responses <sup>3</sup>	Average Responses per Call	Total Busy Hours	Responses with Time Data <sup>4</sup>	Average Busy Minutes per Response	Average Calls per Day <sup>5</sup>	Average Responses per Day <sup>5</sup>
Outside of PTFD	2017	1,240	1,929	1.6	720.1	1,929	22.4	3.4	5.3
	2018	1,253	1,968	1.6	672.8	1,968	20.5	3.4	5.4
	2019	1,328	2,031	1.5	774.6	2,029	22.9	3.6	5.6
	2020	1,295	1,960	1.5	762.6	1,959	23.4	3.5	5.4
	2021	1,281	1,921	1.5	680.9	1,921	21.3	3.5	5.3

We asked in the survey how important it was to “support the fire, safety, and EMS needs of the area through mutual and/or automatic aid?” The overwhelming response was supportive – 72% strongly agreed and 24% agreed.

- *“The zip code shouldn’t determine the level and quality of response.”*

We also asked in the survey if New Albany’s growth into Licking County should be a factor in PTFD planning. Most of the responses want coordination, cooperation, and improved planning among all the providers, and to be good stewards of tax dollars. Opinions varied on how best to serve this area.

- *“No. A department responsible for that area should be planning for that development, not PTFD. It is outside of the scope of the tax dollars that are provided to PTFD and an irresponsible use of those tax dollars, to plan for that area outside of the jurisdiction.”*
- *“Yes. Ideally, one fire department would protect all of New Albany.”*

We asked in the survey if different services are needed by employees, residents, or students, given that the population of New Albany doubles in size during the workweek. The theme of the responses demonstrates the need for consistent levels of service for employers and residents 24 hours a day. There is a clear understanding that residential response versus a commercial response requires different resources.

- *“Public services need to be consistent to serve the needs of all persons residing or working within the service area. Community engagement and responsiveness should not be different.”*
- *“Given the influx of workers, there is probably an escalation of traffic accidents and worksite injuries. Both could put more pressure on EMS runs.”*

We also asked in the survey if new services or changes to services should be provided. The responses focused on public education and prevention and expressed interest in additional training and information.

- *“Letting the community know what all services are available through PTFD. I wasn't aware of some of the things on the survey.”*
- *“Education and Preparedness - I'm a huge fan of safety town and hope there would be similar programs for both older children and adults.”*

While we did not ask a specific question in the survey about additional fire stations, some comments referenced one. Response time data and anticipated population growth and development indicate a need, however, further analysis is necessary.

## Defining and Measuring Success

The following strategic priority and goal statements have associated outcomes for PTFD to benchmark and measure against, which were informed by best practices in the fire service and from community input.

The SOC includes fire service data and following here are comments from stakeholders, which informed the priorities and goals. In particular, comments during the in-person sessions about the health and welfare of the firefighters, in addition to the community, stood out and are reflected here. Many of the survey responses noted the need to establish standards and service levels based on measurable criteria, and that the criteria should be available to the community.

Of those who responded, 93% agree or strongly agree that PTFD actively engages the community, 91% agree or strongly agree that PTFD is responsive to the needs of the community, and 98% agree or strongly agree about their satisfaction with overall services.

- *“Success should be defined as high levels of service that meets the unique needs of our community. We expect excellence in our schools and in city planning, we should expect excellence in fire service, too.”*
- *“I believe that continual training and commitment towards development of the essential skills, plus speed, efficiency, consistency, urgency and utilizing the most modern technologies are all essential, as well as the most effective communication equipment both internally and externally.”*
- *“By demonstrating community involvement and understand of the needs of the community. Having access to the most up to date technology and equipment for responding to emergency calls. Quick response time to emergency situations.”*

## Priorities, Goals, Outcomes, Objectives, and Measures

# Priority One: Save Lives

Goal: To respond quickly with highly trained professionals and state of the art equipment.

Dispatch, turnout, and response time optimized

Civilian and firefighter safety and survivability improved

Health and wellness of PTFD employees ensured

Emergency equipment purchased and maintained

*“The Plain Township Fire Department has excellent firefighters that provide a great service to the community.”*

*“I feel safe knowing we have a great team keeping us safe. Thank you for all you do.”*

- **Priority 1: Save Lives**

Goal: To respond quickly with highly trained professionals and state of the art equipment.

- Dispatch, turnout, and response times optimized
  - Determine and analyze new response metrics
    - Current PTFD call processing and turnout times improved by 10%
    - NFPA goal for 90<sup>th</sup> percentile response time is
      - 911 call processing time = 75 seconds
      - EMS turnout time = 60 seconds
      - Fire turnout time = 80 seconds
  - Upgrade dispatch technology
    - Tyler Technology CAD system operational by Q2 2024
    - Emergency 911 calls processed within 2 min and 8 sec 90% of incidents
    - Turnout time for fire rescue calls within 1 min 51 sec 90% of incidents
  - Identify travel time benchmarks
    - Urban benchmark = 4 min 39 seconds
    - Rural benchmark = 7 min 04 seconds
  - Identify response time benchmarks
    - Urban Benchmark = 5 min 58 seconds
    - Rural benchmark = 8 min 20 seconds
  - Maintain or improve current ISO protection rating of 2
    - Identify cost-efficient measures to improve rating
  - Review dispatch operations and agreement
  - Conduct regular firefighter/paramedics training
    - All firefighters meet certification requirements annually



- Civilian and firefighter safety and survivability improved
  - Ensure lives are saved
    - Zero civilian deaths due to fire
    - Golden Hour from time of injury to trauma center arrival maintained
    - Cardiac survival rates meet or exceed the national average
    - Zero line-of-duty firefighter deaths
    - Improve Pre-Plan documentation
  - Make professional development goals and investments annually
  - Offer community education programs
    - Hands-only CPR and first aid training taught regularly
    - NAPD collaboration for medication disposal twice per year
    - Fire extinguisher training provided to the community regularly
  - Determine timing for 2<sup>nd</sup> dedicated medical unit
    - Unit Hour Utilization assessed for a 2<sup>nd</sup> fully staffed medic unit
  - Assess need for a 2<sup>nd</sup> fire station and determine possible locations
    - Response time assessment metrics
  - Provide active shooter and/or mass casualty event training
    - NAPLS and NAPD collaboration twice per year
  
- Health and wellness of PTFD employees ensured
  - Offer wellness programs, screenings, and incentives
    - Identify partnerships for addiction services
    - Continue partnership with Heit/OSU Fitness Center for employer sponsored wellness access
  - Strive for no workplace injuries
    - Worker's compensation costs maintained below 2% of annual budget
  - Maintain positive workplace culture
    - Continue to be an employer of choice
  - Expand community partnerships for health and wellness
  - Recognize achievements and promotions
    - Feasibility of hosting an annual awards banquet assessed by Q4 2024
    - Promotional ceremonies hosted when appropriate
    - New firefighters sworn in within 60 days of hire
  
- Emergency equipment purchased and maintained
  - NFPA standards used for planning equipment needs
    - Maintain Unit Hour Utilization below 30% for all units.
    - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needs assessed annually
  - Monitor Stryker 360 contract
    - 100% of equipment is in use
    - Training on new equipment completed
  - Maintain capital equipment replacement schedule
    - Functionality of multi-jurisdictional communication systems assessed annually and as needed
    - Adopt maintenance agreement with City of NA by Q3 2024

# Priority Two: Protect Property

Goal: To prevent loss and to minimize disruptions to property owners.

Fire prevention services increased

Fire damage mitigated

Environmental damage minimized

Training and professional development ensured

*"I believe the Plain Township offers exceptional service. Professionalism and response times are the best that I have seen in any community."*

- **Priority 2: Protect Property**

Goal: To prevent loss and to minimize disruptions to property owners.

- Fire prevention services expanded
  - Inspect 100% of commercial occupancies annually
  - Inspect 100% of state-mandated occupancies annually
  - Monitor commercial property growth regularly
  - Add fire inspection and building plan review capacity based on demand
  - Accept digital plan submission in alignment with New Albany
- Fire damage mitigated
  - Contain structure fires to the room of origin at least 80% of the time
  - Maintain latest technology to determine and suppress fire source
  - Deepen partnerships to provide information and support the needs of fire victims Q4 2023
  - Develop an "after the fire" brochure for fire victims with the Red Cross
- Environmental damage minimized
  - Assess risks for chemical spills and other hazardous events annually
- Training and professional development maintained
  - Add specialty trainings and certifications as needed and determined by community need

# Priority Three: Prepare for Growth

Goal: To meet the fire and EMS needs of a larger population within Plain Township and contracted service areas.

Geographic growth areas analyzed.

Future station location(s) and future fire levy needs assessed

Current station functionality assessed and improved

Partnerships with adjacent fire departments expanded

Contracts for shared services and mutual aid analyzed

*“My main desire is that they are able to grow and structure the department in a way that seamlessly serves the growth without underserving the current community.”*

- **Priority 3: Prepare for Growth**

Goal: To meet the fire and EMS needs of a larger population within Plain Township and contracted service areas.

- Geographic growth areas analyzed
  - Assess demand and call volume along 161 corridor continuously
  - Determine if/when first suppression unit arrival at structural fires and other crisis incidents requiring use of PPE within 5 min 58 sec (urban) and 8 min 20 sec (rural) for 90% of incidents
  - Engage constituents to best understand needs for future growth and coverage
- Future station location(s) analyzed and future fire levy needs assessed
  - Assess viability and cost of future locations by Q2 2024
  - Secure option or agreement for land in potential location(s) in 2024
  - Determine size and scope of a future levy
- Current station maintenance needs assessed
  - Repair and maintenance list created by Q1 2024
  - Develop a comprehensive facility maintenance plan by Q1 2025
- Partnerships with adjacent fire districts and municipalities explored
  - Participate in regional chief’s meetings monthly
  - Serve on RCCOG and MECC board monthly
  - Determine feasibility of new agreements
  - Collaborate with City of New Albany and other community stakeholders for future EMS and fire coverage needs and agreements
- Agreements for shared services and mutual/automatic aid reviewed
  - Assess cost/benefit of current agreements annually

# Priority Four: Work Effectively

Goal: To manage tax dollars efficiently and operate with transparency.

Systems, policies, and procedures assessed and improved

Staffing structure optimized

Other revenue sources increased

Philanthropy program created and grant funding secured

Organizational culture strengthened

*"It's been 8 years since the last fire levy. If the fire department needs additional funding, I hope that the community will support it."*

- **Priority 4: Work Effectively**

Goal: To manage tax dollars efficiently and operate with transparency.

- Systems, policies, and procedures assessed and improved
  - Consolidate and train on new RMS systems by Q1 2024
  - Implement new time sheet process by Q2 2024
  - Review and update all policies and procedures every two years
- Staffing structure optimized
  - Maintain 13 minimum assigned per shift with 9 minimum daily staffing
  - Maintain overtime costs below 3% total salaries per year
  - Recruit and hire diverse employees
- Other revenue sources increased
  - Evaluate EMS billing rates by Q2 2024
  - Assess feasibility of additional TIF revenue by Q1 2024
- Philanthropy program created and grant funding secured
  - Explore public-private partnerships
  - Research grant eligibility and submit applications based on deadlines
- Organizational culture strengthened
  - Provide training and development for all personnel regularly
  - Use mission, vision, and values in personnel training
  - Survey all staff annually to measure culture and morale by Q2 2024
  - Conduct annual performance reviews for all employees by Q4 2024

# Priority Five: Engage Community

Goal: To provide community service and to celebrate community traditions and achievements.

Effective communication tools implemented

Special duty and community requests fulfilled

Community access ensured

Fire service profession and PTFD careers promoted

*“Plain Township Fire Department has gone above and beyond to engage the community and serve as role models for others.”*

- **Priority 5: Engage Community**

Goal: To provide community service and to celebrate community traditions and achievements.

- Effective communication tools implemented
  - Assess current communications duties, roles, and processes by Q1 2024
  - Develop communication and social media strategy
  - Presentations provided to community groups regularly
  - Impact report submitted to the community annually
  - Develop customer satisfaction/user experience survey
- Special duty and community requests fulfilled
  - Offer on-line process for resident requests as needed/ongoing
- Community access maintained
  - Participate in touch-a-truck annually
  - Host Open House annually during Fire Prevention Week
  - Lead early learning safety programs annually
  - Determine new event or program to broaden access by Q4 2024
- Fire service profession and PTFD careers promoted
  - Partner with local technical schools
  - Provide support to local high school programs
  - Continue developing intern program
  - Participate in local career fairs

# Standards of Cover

## Risk Assessment Process

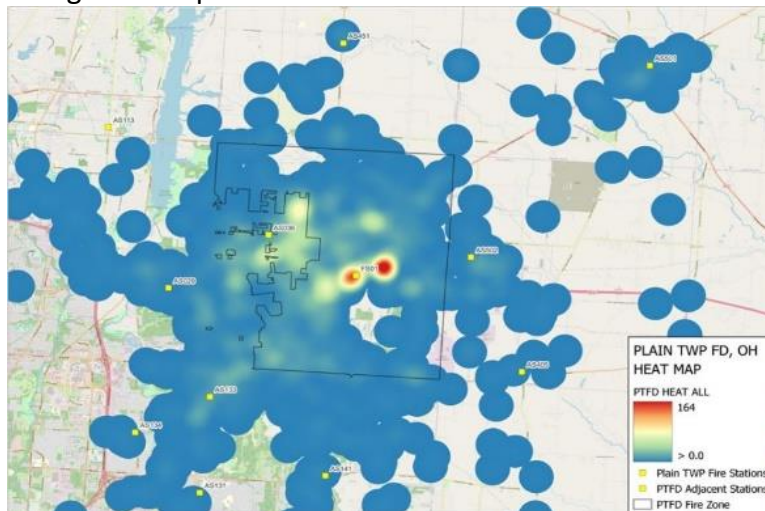
Plain Township is classified as a moderate risk area.

## Commensurate Risk

Analysis of the Station 121 area revealed that the jurisdiction has a mix of both urban and rural call densities. Its placement is well-aligned with where calls are concentrated.

- Continuing to staff and deploy at least four units from Station 121 would address the commensurate risk model across all areas of the jurisdiction while maintaining current response time performance.
- Based on the hybrid modeling at 6.0 minutes, the jurisdiction will need an additional Medic unit and add a second, and perhaps a third station, due to anticipated increases in population and community demand.
- Additional resources should be added when demand exceeds 0.30 Unit Hour Utilization for the Medic 121, or community demand increases with a commensurate decline in a 6-minutes travel time at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile.

The following heat map demonstrates call concentration areas.



## Dispatch and Turnout Times

- Dispatch time is defined as the time from when the 911 center receives a request for service until the fire department is notified to respond.
  - o The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA 1225) recommends a combined answering and processing of the call within 75 seconds at the 90th percentile.

- Turnout time is defined as the time between the fire department being notified of a call (dispatched) and when they are actually driving to the incident.
  - o NFPA 1710 recommends turnout time of 60 sec. for EMS and 80 sec. for fire.
- Currently, PTFD does not meet recommended targets. Efforts should be made with the 911 providers to find improvements and with PTFD staff to enhance performance. 10% improvement benchmark text box

Within PTFD: 1 <sup>st</sup> Arriving Baseline Performance		2017- 2021	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	10% improvement benchmark
<b>Alarm Handling</b>		2:22	2:00	2:28	2:22	2:11	3:12	2:08
<b>Turnout Time</b>		2:03	1:55	1:53	2:00	2:07	2:15	1:51
<b>Travel Time</b>	Urban	5:10	5:15	5:21	5:20	4:59	5:03	4:39
	Rural	7:51	8:10	8:10	8:44	7:14	7:27	7:04
<b>Total Response Time</b>	Urban	6:38	6:33	6:32	6:50	6:32	6:40	5:58
		<i>n</i> = 5,132	<i>n</i> = 1,028	<i>n</i> = 1,023	<i>n</i> = 1,154	<i>n</i> = 932	<i>n</i> = 995	
	Rural	9:16	9:28	9:43	10:09	8:51	9:15	8:20
		<i>n</i> = 604	<i>n</i> = 143	<i>n</i> = 100	<i>n</i> = 112	<i>n</i> = 122	<i>n</i> = 127	

### Optimized Relief Staffing Multiplier

The current staffing model is acceptable for one fire station. However, the recommendation for an additional fire station will require an eventual increase in daily minimum staffing.

Optimal staffing is defined as sufficient staffing to cover all scheduled work hours, shift schedules, and the average employee leave experience. Increasing the minimum daily staffing to 11 would require a staffing multiplier of 4.36 to optimally staff the department – it would take 48 full-time employees (FTEs) for a total of 16 personnel assigned to each shift. The current allocation is 39 personnel.

### System Resiliency and Deployment

Station 121’s average duration of calls lasted 52.3 minutes for EMS transport and 17.6 minutes for EMS non-transport calls. There was an average of 16.2% in overlapping calls. This means that during the period of an active Station 121 call, there is a 16.2% chance that another EMS incident in the jurisdiction will simultaneously occur.

Jurisdiction <sup>1</sup>	Overlapped Calls	Total Calls	Percentage of Overlapped Calls
All	436	2,686	16.2
Within PTFD	171	1,405	12.2
Outside of PTFD	83	1,281	6.5

A 16.2% rate for overlapping calls means the system is not highly constrained; however, with the proposed influx of industry and population, PTFD may soon find itself in a position where stations, equipment, and employees will need to be planned, purchased, and trained. Station planning and construction is timely and normally requires several years to complete.

### Summary of Measures

The summary of measures provided below include all aspects of time, apparatus staffing by type, relative risk ratings, and system resiliency measures such as reliability, call concurrency, workload, and unit hour utilization. The system of measures provided are not intended to be overly prescriptive. PTFD should adopt the system performance objectives internally and update as needed.

Type of Measure	Performance Metric	Recommended Performance Urban	Priority	Review Period	
Station/Unit Performance	Turnout Time - EMS	≤1.0 MIN at 90%	Emergent	Quarterly	
	Turnout Time - All Other	≤1.5 MIN at 90%	Emergent	Quarterly	
	Travel Time	≤6 MIN at 90%	Emergent	Quarterly	
	Minimum Engine Staffing	≥3 Firefighters	All Responses	Daily	
	Minimum Medic Unit Staffing	1 FF/PM 1 FF/EMT	All Responses	Daily	
	Minimum Ladder Staffing	≥3 Firefighters	All Responses	Daily	
System Design and Performance	Dispatch	≤2 MIN at 90%	Emergent	Monthly	
	Station Risk Rating	Increase in Risk		Annually	
	Reliability	≥70%		Quarterly	
	Call Concurrency	≤30% Per Unit		Quarterly	
	Call Volume	3,000 - Initial			Annually
		1,000 - Ongoing			
	Unit Hour Utilization	≤0.25 on 24-hour units			Quarterly
		≤0.50 on 24-hour units			
Cross-Staffing at Unit Level	<1,500 annual calls and <15% Call Concurrency			Annually	