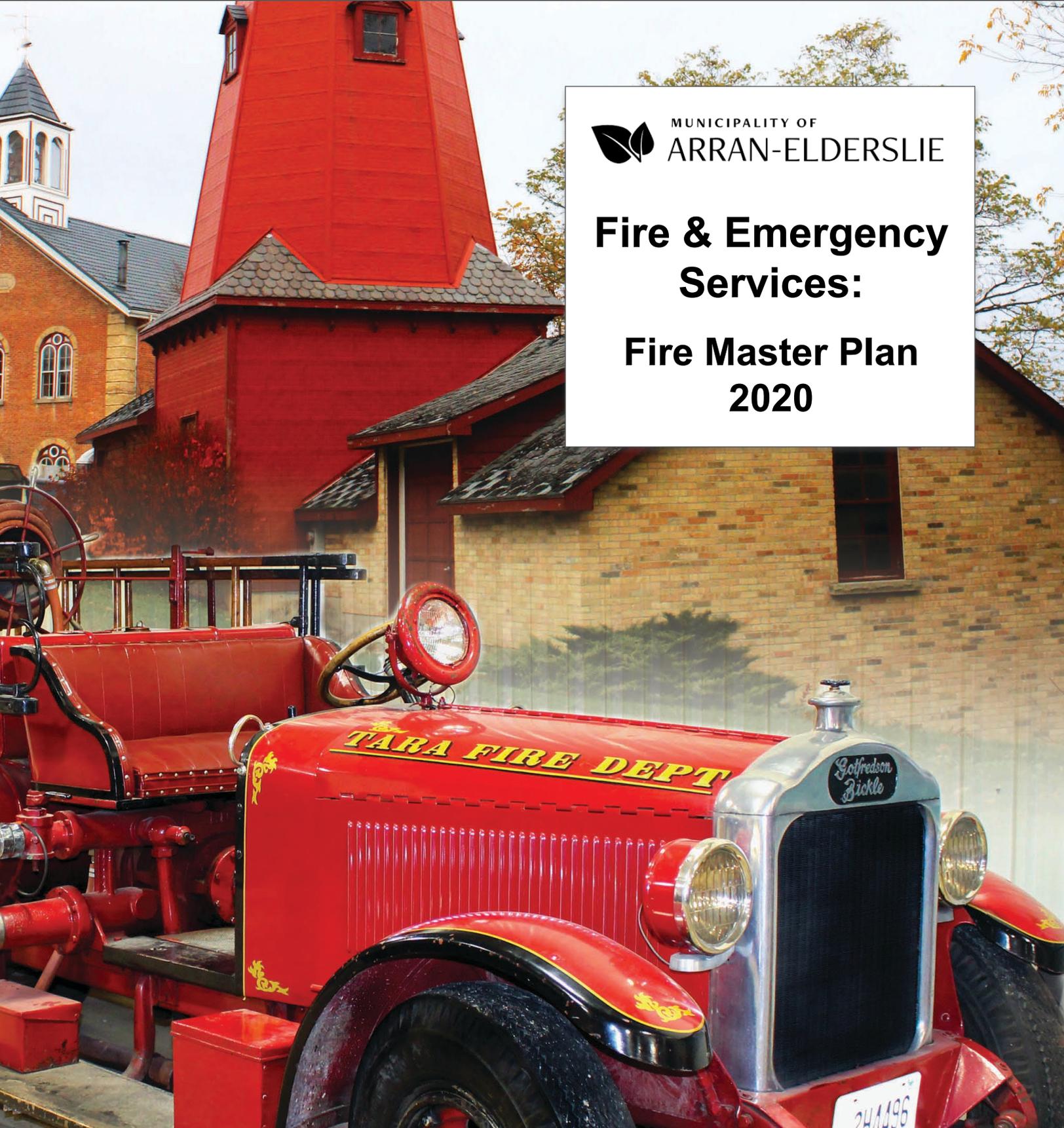




MUNICIPALITY OF  
ARRAN-ELDERSLIE

## **Fire & Emergency Services:**

### **Fire Master Plan 2020**



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## Executive Summary

The Fire Master Plan intends to provide current information from which Council and the Fire Department management team can make better-informed decisions regarding life safety services, now and for the future. The Arran-Elderslie Fire Departments (Departments) provides high-quality services to residents and businesses. The Departments' goals should be to build upon existing strengths, improve efficiencies, and be proactive in responding to the Municipality's anticipated needs to serve the community effectively.

There are many factors to consider when developing a Fire Master Plan. Each municipality and fire department are unique; differences can vary considerably in community makeup, economic conditions, population, demographics, building stock, fire service delivery and capabilities.

Emergency services are considered an essential service for the Municipality. Due to the nature of the work, workers' safety and lives are at higher risk for impact than many other service-type occupations. Therefore, it is vital to protect the volunteer firefighters in smaller communities by ensuring that appropriate and safe equipment is available for service when needed for the municipal residents, businesses, and visitors, on a 365/24/7 basis. It is also essential to ensure that the volunteer firefighters are respected, reasonably compensated, and provided with appropriate benefits for their service. The Municipality of Arran-Elderslie (Municipality) Council should continue to look at the volunteer firefighters as an investment in the future and the services they provide as cost-effective and cost avoidance.

The Fire Master Plan development process reviews all aspects of the Departments. It considers how the services and resources available will align with the service demands and risks present in the Municipality. Unfortunately, there is no easy solution to reduce costs meaningfully while maintaining sufficient protection from fires and other emergencies for the residents and businesses. There are, however, opportunities to adjust and revise components of the Departments to improve effectiveness and implement cost efficiencies. The Fire Master Plan provides recommendations to Council to consider policies, procedures, administrative support, and infrastructure changes to prepare the Departments for associated hazards expected for the Municipality. It also provides opportunities to reduce operating and capital expenses with new ways of conducting business.

## Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Fire Master Plan

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The Municipality commissioned The Loomex Group to examine the Departments and provide Council with recommendations to help manage the community growth and asset management over the next five years. The Loomex Group's methodology and approach included:

- A review of the Departments management,
- An analysis of the community's current needs, and,
- An assessment to determine if the Departments can continue to provide an appropriate level of service.

The Fire Master Plan has a total of twenty recommendations that resulted from the comprehensive review. These recommendations are based on an analysis of several factors, including current legislation, suggestions for updates to by-laws, agreements, and proactive changes to organizational structure, Fire Prevention and Training programs.

The review includes a section on how the Departments are operating today and recommendations on how they should operate in the future. Included is a recommendation to move the three Departments into one municipal Department and have a full-time Fire Chief manage the new Department. The advantages of this approach are discussed, but one of the driving factors for change is the lack of available time from the current three Fire Chiefs to manage the requirements for running the Departments.

Council, the CAO, Fire Chiefs, officers, and firefighters can all be proud of the service they provide to the community. In the next number of years, with some investment and with a few necessary changes, they will continue the strong tradition and will be better able to manage the growing demands for the fire service in the Municipality.

The Fire Master Plan was successful due to the support of several key individuals:

- Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Bill Jones
- Fire Chief Paul Best
- Fire Chief Rob Bonderud
- Fire Chief Robert Bell

The Plan is a dynamic document that must be reviewed and adjusted annually as the Municipality's needs and circumstances change. Information provided in the Fire Master Plan may also change over the next several years, but every effort was made to ensure its accuracy and comprehensiveness. The Plan should be updated after the legislative requirement in 2024 to complete a municipal Community Risk Assessment.

**Summary of Recommendations**

<b>Legislation and By-laws Recommendations Section 5.4, Page 12</b>	<b>Council Approval</b>	<b>Budget Implication</b>
1. A single new Establishing and Regulating By-law is developed that sets the level of services as approved by Council and outlines the Departments' core services and operations.	Yes	No
2. A review of the Joint Fire Protection Agreement between the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie and the Township of Chatsworth is required to determine its relevance compared to services provided on a contract basis.	Yes	Yes
3. All fire service-related by-laws and agreements are reviewed and updated to reflect the current service level and legislation.	Yes	Yes
4. A schedule is developed and followed to ensure all fire service by-laws and agreements are reviewed regularly and updated as required.	No	No
<b>Strengths, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threats (SWOT) Recommendation Section 6.1 – Page 13</b>	<b>Council Approval</b>	<b>Budget Implication</b>
1. The Fire Chiefs and officers review the SWOT Analysis results and determine if and how to incorporate comments and suggestions into future Departments strategic planning.	No	No
<b>Occupational Health &amp; Safety Recommendation Section 7.3 – Page 15</b>	<b>Council Approval</b>	<b>Budget Implication</b>
1. In conjunction with the Joint Health and Safety Committee, the Departments enhance their Firefighter Wellness Program, including, but not limited to, continuing to support the CIS and PTSD Programs.	No	Yes

## Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Fire Master Plan

Future Departments Operations Recommendations Section 9.3 – Page 23	Council Approval	Budget Implication
1. Council supports the recommended organizational chart that creates one new position, reclassifies the current Fire Chiefs positions, removes three Deputy Chief positions, and streamlines the three Fire Departments into one new Department.	Yes	Yes
2. Council support creating a new full-time Fire Chief position, responsible for administration, operations, training, fire prevention, fire service agreements and by-laws and emergency management for the Municipality.	Yes	Yes
Fire Prevention & Public Education Recommendations Section 10.8– Page 31	Council Approval	Budget Implication
1. A standardized Public Education Program is developed and implemented across the Municipality for a consistent delivery approach.	No	No
2. By-law 22-08, Smoke Alarm and Home Escape Planning Program is updated and includes wording to meet the Carbon Monoxide Alarm Legislation.	Yes	No
3. A Fire Prevention By-law be developed for Council to consider that sets regular inspections based on occupancy type and best practices.	Yes	Yes
4. The 2008 Simplified Risk Assessment be updated in 2021 to ensure the Municipality is compliant with the Fire Protection and Prevention Act's mandatory requirements.	No	No
5. The Municipality completes a Community Risk Assessment by 2024 to ensure compliance with the new Community Risk Assessment Legislation.	No	Yes
Training Recommendation Section 11.4 Page 33	Council Approval	Budget Implication
1. The current three Training Committees consolidate into one committee with representatives from each station to create a standardized Training Program for the Departments that includes regular and recruit training.	No	No

## Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Fire Master Plan

<b>Emergency Response Standards Recommendation Section 12.4 Page 36</b>	<b>Council Approval</b>	<b>Budget Implication</b>
1. The average number of firefighters responding to current Departments zones be reviewed and changes made accordingly to resource deployment and Departments response borders. The review would include stations outside the Municipality that could provide a quicker response to areas within the Municipality.	No	No
<b>Fire Apparatus &amp; Equipment Recommendation Section 14.2 – Page 40</b>	<b>Council Approval</b>	<b>Budget Implication</b>
1. The Departments develop standards for the type of apparatus and equipment used and collectively purchase equipment through a standard procurement process.	No	Yes
<b>Fire Stations Recommendations Section 15.4 – Page 45</b>	<b>Council Approval</b>	<b>Budget Implication</b>
1. Separate bunker gear space with ventilation is developed for each station.	No	Yes
2. Council considers replacing the Paisley and District station with a new facility to meet current and future municipal and legislative requirements.	Yes	Yes
<b>Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) Recommendation Section 16.1 – Page 46</b>	<b>Council Approval</b>	<b>Budget Implication</b>
1. The Departments re-establish the SOG Committee to continue the development of standard SOGs.	No	No
<b>Emergency Management Recommendation Section 17.1 – Page 47</b>	<b>Council Approval</b>	<b>Budget Implication</b>
1. The Municipality explores the feasibility of managing their Emergency Management Program instead of contracting the County of Bruce to ensure that both the program and a municipal emergency is controlled at a Municipal level.	Yes	Yes

## Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Fire Master Plan

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Statistics and Records Management Recommendations Section 18.1 – Page 48	Council Approval	Budget Implication
1. A standard process is developed for Departments to collect the necessary records and provide required statistics consistently, and support is provided to the Fire Chiefs to update the records management system.	No	No

## 1.0 Introduction

The Fire Master Plan provides a framework for Council and the Departments administration to make policy, organizational, capital, and operational decisions affecting the Departments for the short term.

The Fire Master Plan is based on the requirements of the [Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 \(FPPA\)](#) and other regulations and standards, including the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Ministry of Labour Fire Service Section 21 Guidance Notes, National Fire Protection Standards and the Fire Underwriters Survey and Ontario Fire Marshal's Public Fire Safety Guidelines.

Section 2 of the FPPA identifies the responsibility for fire protection services as follows:

"Every municipality shall, (a) establish a program in the municipality which must include public education with respect to fire safety and certain components of fire prevention; and (b) provide such other fire protection services as it determines may be necessary in accordance with its needs and circumstances."

Further, in Section 2.6.3, the FPPA defines the Fire Chief's responsibility to Council as follows: "A fire chief is a person who is ultimately responsible to the council of a municipality that appointed him or her for the delivery of fire protection services."

Municipal Council is the body that determines the type and level of fire protection services. The Fire Chief's responsibility is to ensure the delivery of the services and provide recommendations to Council for services required to comply with regulations and standards and meet the community's needs.

As a third-party consultant, The Loomex Group has made recommendations in the Fire Master Plan based on consultations with the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), the Departments' administration, officers and firefighters, and a review of applicable legislation, standards, and best practices. The consultant's role is to provide comments and suggestions on issues that may or may not be supported by the Departments' administration, some of which may require additional study and consideration.

Council and community residents expect fire service to run effectively and efficiently and need to know the fire service's capabilities and limitations given the resources provided. This Plan considers the current and future resources needed to provide the services authorized and identify benchmarks to measure service efficiencies.

This review also examines the primary functions of the fire service and specific fire department operations, changes that have taken place, and provides recommendations for changes or improvements, if applicable. An accumulative summary of recommendations is located after the Executive Summary in the Plan.

## 2.0 Approach and Methodology

The Loomex Group brought together a Project Team expressly suited to complete the Municipality's Fire Master Plan. The team included experts with direct experience in managing emergency and fire services departments, conducting organizational reviews, and developing strategic plans. Their expertise, knowledge, dedication, and commitment to community life safety is apparent throughout this document.

The Project Teams approach and methodology to the scope of work included a background review of documents and maps, direct observation of the environment, and Departments and municipal staff engagement. While this approach is essential, stakeholder engagement is an instrumental component of the Fire Master Plan process. The following list outlines the steps that led to the development of the final Plan.

1. Establish Terms of Reference
2. Stakeholder Engagement
3. Firefighter Engagement Sessions
4. Data Collection, Review and Analysis
5. Draft Fire Master Plan Review
6. Fire Master Plan

### Establish Terms of Reference

The Loomex Group met with the Municipal CAO Bill Jones and Fire Chiefs Paul Best, Robert Bell and Rob Bonderud to review the scope of work and establish the terms of reference for the project. It is critical to ensure that everyone understands the scope of work, timelines, and deliverables at the project start. The Project Team developed a framework to meet the requirements of a Fire Master Plan, which was reviewed and approved by the CAO.

### Stakeholder Engagement Sessions

The Project Team engagement sessions included meetings with Council, the Chair of Protective Services, the CAO, the three Fire Chiefs and the officers and firefighters. The goal of the meetings was to:

1. Introduce the Project Team.
2. Present the framework for the project.
3. Outline the roles of each project team member and their contributions to the Plan.
4. Solicit feedback on the operations of the three Departments.

### **Firefighter Engagement Sessions**

The engagement sessions with the Departments' officers and firefighters were an essential part of the work scope and analysis. The Project Lead conducted a series of sessions with each station and asked questions relating to the Departments' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Officers and firefighters unable to attend a session could also provide input and feedback through either an online survey or a face-to-face meeting.

### **Data Collection, Review and Analysis**

The Loomex Group worked with the CAO, the Fire Chiefs, and municipal staff to review and analyze numerous documents that provided relevant and historical information. It is essential to understand the framework and development of current operations to provide recommendations for the Plan. Documents reviewed included:

- Applicable By-laws
- Response Protocols
- Operating and Capital Budgets
- Firefighter Compensation
- Applicable Agreements
- Organizational Structure
- Municipal boundaries, station locations and response data
- Population Data
- Simplified Risk Assessments

The Project Team maintained an open-mind approach while assessing data to review how the Departments conducts business to identify synergies and opportunities for shared services, cost-savings, or avoidance recommendations. The areas analyzed included:

- Governance
- Human resources
- Service delivery
- Fire prevention
- Public safety and education
- Facilities
- Fleet and equipment
- Agreements and Fire Service Boards
- Training
- Compliance with applicable legislation

In addition to data collection and stakeholder engagement, the Project Team spent time in the community, observing and reviewing, first-hand, all areas and aspects of the Municipality.

## 3.0 Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Overview

The Municipality of Arran-Elderslie is one of eight municipalities in Bruce County, located in Western Ontario. It was formed on January 1, 1999, through the amalgamation of former Townships Arran and Elderslie and included Paisley and Tara Villages and the Town of Chelsey. The Municipality is within a half-hour drive of Owen Sound, the largest centre in Grey-Bruce Region, 130 km from Barrie, and 205 km from Toronto. Its location is close to one and a half hours to access Provincial Highways 400 and 401. The headwaters of the Saugeen and Sauble rivers form the Northwestern boundary.

Statistics Canada 2016 Census notes the Municipality has a population of 6,803 and is approximately 460.07 square kilometres and a population density of 14.8 per square kilometre.

The community offers the warmth of a small-town community with historic buildings and the laidback lifestyle of rural living with proximity to regional tourist destinations and work employment. It has substantial agricultural and construction industries and a scenic natural landscape that attracts visitors for recreation activities like camping, fishing, hiking, skiing, snowmobiling, and home-based and local small businesses' retail offerings.

### 3.1 Growth and Development

As noted on the [County of Bruce Economic Development Townfolio](#), the Municipality has grown .23% from 2011 to 2016, based on the 2016 Census. Following this trend, its projected population will be 6,910 by 2021.

A Community Development Coordinator was hired in 2019 and marked the Municipality's first investment in economic development. An Economic Development Strategic Plan has also been undertaken by the Municipality with professional consultants' assistance and will be complete in 2021.

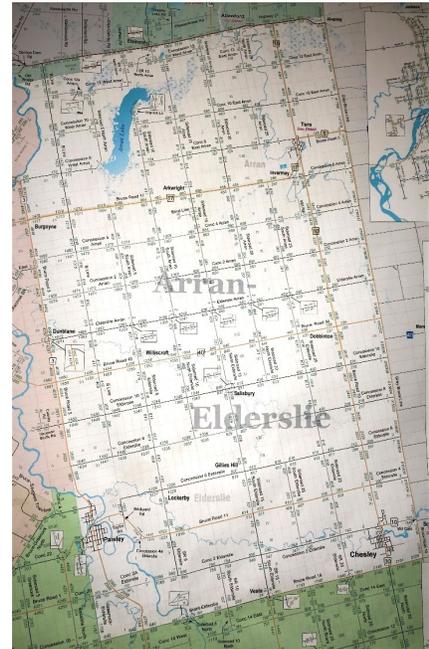


Figure 1: Map of Municipality created by County of Bruce.

## 4.0 Fire Departments History

The Departments' history provides vital information from which to develop a roadmap for the future. It is essential to have a solid understanding of how the Departments has arrived where they are today and to set plans for where they should go in the future.

The Project Lead reviewed the history with Fire Chiefs Paul Best and Rob Bonderud, and Fire Prevention Officer Scott Thomson. From the discussion, it was evident the pride they have in the history of the Departments. All too often, the hard work of previous Councils, community leaders and firefighters go unnoticed, but without them, the Departments would not be what they are today.

The forming of all three Departments dates to the late 1800s and, as in many cases, was established because of the potential risk or result of a devastating fire, like Chelsey's case. In 1888 a fire wiped out the entire business section of Main Street within two hours. As a result, The Town of Chesley established the first Fire Brigade and named T.R. Reed as Fire Chief. A steam-powered fire engine was purchased for the Brigade for \$4,500.

Around the same time in 1887, the Town of Paisley Council passed By-law No. 162 authorizing to raise \$5,500 by way of loan to construct a waterworks system for the extinguishment of fires, and any other purpose(s) thought advisable by the Council. This action taken by the Paisley Council demonstrates its proactive approach to protecting the Town, which remains to this day.

In 1888, Albatross Hose Company, Paisley's first fire company, formed with C. Briggs appointed by Council as the Fire Chief. Two (2) hand-drawn hose reels were purchased to fight fires and remained in use until 1946, when a pumper truck was purchased.

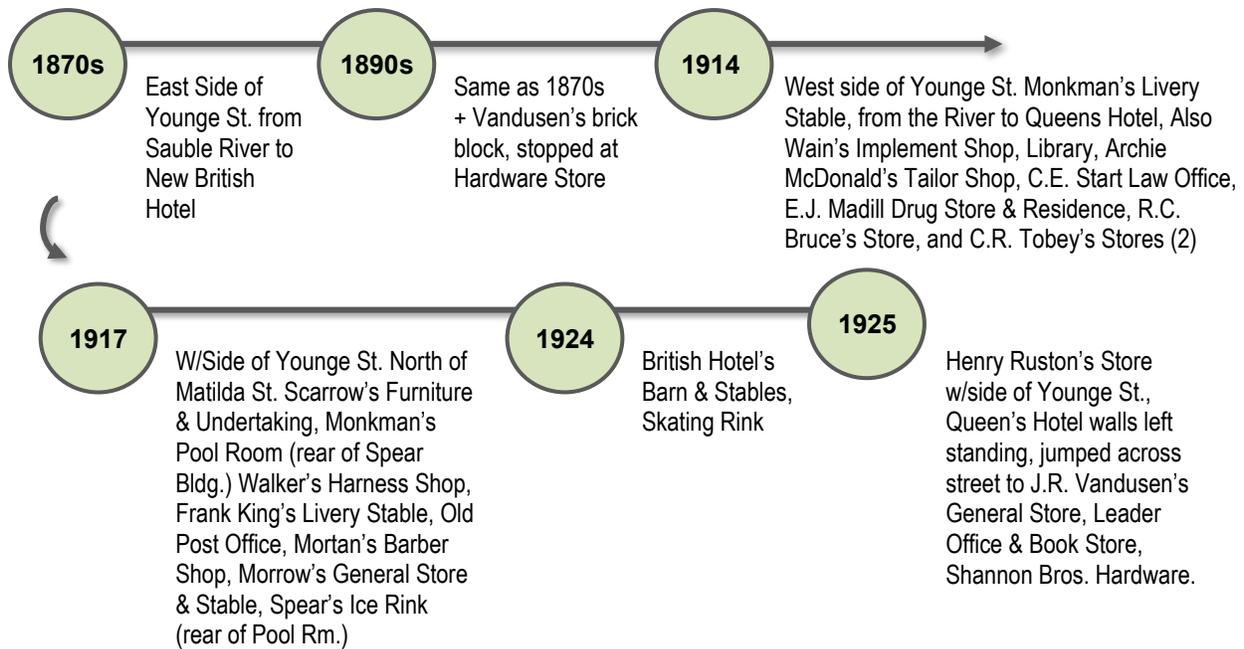


Figure 2: Paisley's hand-drawn hose reels and their first pumper truck.

## Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Fire Master Plan

The Village of Tara's history showed a devastating fire in the 1870s and a second "Great Fire" in the 1890s. It wasn't until 1916 that a Fire Brigade was formed under the direction of Fire Chief Frank Walker, and they purchased their first chemical engine from R.S. Bickle Co. of Woodstock for \$600.00. In 1917, a complete Fire Brigade formed with nine members.

Figure 3: History of Major Fires in Tara



Because of pride and commitment to retaining their history for future firefighters, community leaders and residents, each Department proudly displays historical artifacts in the stations, from original fire gear to equipment and original working fire trucks.



Figure 5: Golfredson Bickel Pumper Truck



Figure 4: Original Firefighter Jacket

## Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Fire Master Plan

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The hose tower in Paisley is one of the most unique pieces of history in the Municipality. At a build cost of \$295, the tower allowed firefighters to hang and dry hoses and was attached to the quarters of the Hook and Ladder Company. It was entirely restored by a dedicated group of firefighters and community members. The hose tower is a designated heritage building under the Ontario Heritage Act in November of 1976 because it is “an example of a free-standing frame hose drying tower of the late nineteenth century.” Every Saturday morning, when the building is open, visitors and residents can tour inside this remarkable structure and see the hose reels and the original 1946 Paisley fire truck.

The Departments’ commitment and dedication over the decades is remarkable and does not go unnoticed with preserving the Municipality’s deep and rich history. The Fire Master Plan is a crucial touch-off point for developing a roadmap going forward that is expressly suited for the Departments and honours their hard work and commitment to the service.



Figure 6: Historic Hose Tower in Paisley

## 5.0 Legislation, By-laws, and Agreements

### 5.1 Legislation

#### Municipal Liability Policy vs. Operational Decisions for Fire Protection

In the 1989 case of *Laurentide Motel vs. Beauport (City)* <sup>1</sup>, the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) found that the Town of Beauport, Quebec, was liable for a significant portion of the fire loss at the Laurentide Motel which occurred in 1972. This case was precedent-setting in that until this time, municipalities and fire departments were largely considered free from civil liability for firefighting efforts. An important aspect was the issue of "Policy Decisions vs. Operational Decisions" in determining liability. The Supreme Court of Canada's decision announcement in 1989 cost the City of Beauport over five hundred thousand plus interest.

*"A client's negligence led to a fire that damaged appellants' hotel complex in the City of Beauport. As soon as they arrived, the firefighters sprayed water from the fire truck onto the fire, but the water soon ran out owing to the impossibility of connecting with the hydrants. The latter, which were difficult to reach and covered with snow, were unusable because they were frozen or broken. It was not until some forty minutes later that water was finally obtained from the hydrants. The appellants brought an action for damages against the person who had set the fire and the respondent, alleging fault by the latter in fighting the fire, namely that its equipment had not been maintained and did not function properly, as well as fault by its employees in the performance of their duties."*

A summary of this case is included as necessary for the Council to consider when making fire protection services decisions. Both water supply and negligence in firefighting operations were issues. There is no question that a client in the motel was responsible for causing the fire. However, the failure of the City to maintain and operate effective fire protection services (water supply and firefighting) resulted in them being partly responsible and were allocated most of the costs.

In the ruling, the court determined that a "policy decision" made by Council would be mostly free from liability, as it was made by an elected body in a manner that the citizens would be aware of (by-laws, council minutes, news reports, etc.). If the citizens were unhappy with the decisions of the Council, they had the opportunity to elect different councillors at the next election.

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<sup>1</sup> Judgements of the Supreme Court of Canada - Laurentide Motel vs. Beauport (City) <http://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/436/index.do>

## Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Fire Master Plan

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With operational decisions made by departments/employees, the public may not know those decisions and may have limited or no opportunity to question or change the decisions that could adversely affect them.

As a result of this Supreme Court decision, many municipalities have revised and updated by-laws relating to fire protection to ensure services and policies are included as a Council's decision rather than the fire department's operational decisions. These by-laws include the "Establishing and Regulating" By-law, specifying services provided, service level, fire prevention by-laws, including open burning, false alarm, fireworks, fire routes, and service agreements Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid.

The Departments' operations are guided by national and provincial legislation, industry standards (best practices), municipal by-laws, and policies. The following is a list of the primary legislation and standards:

- Fire Prevention and Protection Act, 1997 (FPPA)
- Ontario Fire Marshal's Directives and Guidelines
- Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (R.S.O. 1990)
- Ontario Building and Fire Codes
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards
- Occupational Health and Safety Act (OH&S) and Section 21 Committee Guidelines
- Municipal By-laws
- Corporate Policies and Guidelines
- Policies and Standard Operating Guidelines
- Highway Traffic Act

One of the primary legislations the Municipality must meet is the [Province of Ontario's Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 \(FPPA\)](#). This Act outlines and mandates minimum standards that must be adhered to for providing life safety systems to a municipality. The following are the minimum standards:

- A simplified risk assessment.
- A smoke alarm program.
- Distribution of fire safety education materials.
- Participation in inspections upon complaint or when requested to assist with fire code compliance.
- Vulnerable Occupancy Program meets Provincial regulations.

### 5.2 By-laws

To meet the FPPA regulations and other legislation, Council approves through a by-law, based on the recommendations of the Chief Fire Officials. The services provided to the residents, businesses, and visitors in the Municipality are under the authority of an Establishing and Regulating By-law. This by-law forms the foundation and structure by establishing how a department will operate and what services they will deliver based on Council's approval. The Departments' are governed by three by-laws, which are:

- By-Law No. 12-2013 – To enter into a Joint Fire Protection Agreement, To Establish and Regulate a Fire Department and to Provide for Mutual Aid
- By-Law No. 41-10 – Protection to Persons and Property – Fire: Establish Paisley and District Fire Department
- By-Law No. 929-88 Being a By-Law to Establish a Fire Department

The by-laws reviewed determined that all three of them are unique and different and, for the most part, need to be updated to reflect current legislation or the services of the Departments supply. Council must approve any type of service provided. Missing from two of the by-laws is the list of core services the Departments can provide as approved by Council. The core services approved by Council guides the Departments on everything from training programs to required equipment. Additionally, it protects the Municipality and the members of the Departments by setting expectations of the service levels to be provided.

Currently, the Departments provide a variety of services that includes:

- Public Education and Code Enforcement
- Structural Firefighting including Rescue and Interior Fire Attack
- Water Rescue (Shore Based)
- Vehicle Firefighting
- Grass and Wildland Firefighting
- Advanced Medical Assist with Defibrillation
- Vehicle Accidents
- Vehicle Extrication
- Transportation Accidents
- Industrial or Agricultural accidents
- Public Assist Calls
- Mutual Aid and Automatic Aid Agreements
- Support for the Emergency Response Plan
- Community Activities

## **Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Fire Master Plan**

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The Departments also provide other limited services at an awareness level, and only little active intervention is possible at this level. It requires assistance from other fire services trained and/or equipped to deliver an advanced level of these special services. Services at an awareness level or similarly limited in scope are:

- Hazardous Materials Response
- Confined Space Rescue
- Trench Rescue
- High Angle

The current Establishing and Regulating By-laws require updating and consolidating into one by-law reflecting current legislation, liability, and Council's approved service level for the Municipality. Doing so ensures every resident and business, regardless of location in the Municipality, receives the same service level.

Other by-laws that affect the Departments include:

- By-law No. 43-10 – Authorizes the execution of an agreement with the Town of Saugeen Shores
- By-law No. 54-2017 - Authorizes the execution of a Fire Protection Agreement with the Municipality of Kincardine
- By-law No. 58-2016 - Authorizes the execution of a Fire Protection Agreement with the Municipality of Brockton
- By-law No. 938-89 – Authorizes entering an agreement with the Township of Amabel
- By-law No. 16-2014 - Open Fire Regulations

A review of the by-laws identified that updates are required to reflect that the agreements are with the Municipality rather than individual Departments. It is also essential to review and update the by-laws to ensure they are current and applicable.

A review of all existing by-laws relating to the Departments will help ensure that they are current and applicable. A scheduled review and update of each by-law will ensure they remain current.

### **5.3 Agreements**

The Departments operate with several agreements in place that includes:

- Dispatch Services
- Fire Protection
- Mutual Aid
- Automatic Aid
- Tiered Response
- Specialized Rescue
- Aerial Ladder and High Angle
- Arran-Elderslie and Chatsworth Joint Fire Agreement

## Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Fire Master Plan

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As with the by-laws, fire service agreements require review to ensure they remain current and applicable and a schedule set to ensure reviews happen regularly. A comprehensive review of the relevance of the Arran-Elderslie and Chatsworth Joint Fire Agreement is required, and the option should be explored to provide service to the Township of Chatsworth on a contract basis.

When the review is complete, agreements should be developed for any identified service(s) the Departments currently provides or receives to other municipalities that are not in any agreements.

### 5.4 Recommendations

From the review and assessment of legislation and by-laws, it is recommended that:

1. A single new Establishing and Regulating By-law is developed that sets the level of services as approved by Council and outlines the Departments' core services and operations.
2. A review of the Joint Fire Protection Agreement between the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie and the Township of Chatsworth is required to determine its relevance compared to services provided on a contract basis.
3. All fire service-related by-laws and agreements are reviewed and updated to reflect the current service level and legislation.
4. A schedule is developed and followed to ensure all fire service by-laws and agreements are reviewed regularly and updated as required.

### 6.0 Strengths, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threats (SWOT)

As part of the Fire Master Plan process, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis was completed. A SWOT Analysis is a structured planning method that evaluates an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

The analysis was done by conducting sessions with the officers and firefighters. The sessions for officers and firefighters took place with all the Departments. Members who were unable to attend a session were provided with the opportunity to complete an individual survey. Overall, the response was good for all sessions.

Nine questions were asked of each group to stimulate a discussion on past, present, and future of the Departments. The results demonstrated that the firefighters are very dedicated and care about serving their community. Areas of improvement identified from the sessions include standardizing the three Departments and working more with each other. The following list highlights themes that were evident from the SWOT Analysis.

- The officers and firefighters are very dedicated to providing professional services for residents in need and participating in most community events within their areas.
- There is a general feeling that the three Departments should work more closely together for emergency response and training.
- There is an inconsistent approach overall to many services among the three Departments.
- Generally, the officers and firefighters feel the Municipality fairly compensates them.
- Overall, the officers and firefighters believe there is a need for a better and more consistent public education approach and code enforcement.
- The officers and firefighters believe there is a better and more consistent approach to training.

#### 6.1 Recommendation

From the review and assessment of the SWOT Analysis, it is recommended that:

1. The Fire Chiefs and officers review the SWOT Analysis results and determine if and how to incorporate comments and suggestions into future Departments strategic planning.

### 7.0 Occupational Health & Safety

The Departments are governed under the [Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act \(OHSA\)](#) (Ministry of Labour, 2020), known as the Green Book and the Ministry of Labour (MOL) [Ontario Fire Service Health and Safety Advisory Committee](#), formed under Section 21 of the OHSA.

The Departments participate in Joint Health and Safety with both management and worker representatives. The individual Departments representative is responsible for attending Joint Health and Safety meetings, conducting monthly inspections on the fire stations, and represents either the employer or employee for health and safety issues that arise in the workplace.

In addition to meeting the applicable OHSA requirements, the Departments' operations must align with the Section 21 Guidance Notes. Recognizing that the nature of firefighting work can put a worker at risk of injury, illness, or death, the MOL established an Ontario Fire Service Health and Safety Advisory Committee in 1989 to handle health and safety issues specific to the fire service. The objective of the committee is to make safety recommendations for firefighters across Ontario. To date, the committee has made over seventy (70) best practice recommendations to reduce the risk to firefighters. The intent is to integrate these recommendations into training programs and procedures for fire scenes or stations and include recommended equipment.

It was discovered by reviewing the health and safety procedures, the monthly inspections, and the integration of the Section 21 Guidance Notes, that the culture regarding health and safety is taken seriously. For the most part, concerning health and safety, members feel they are being looked after by management, including their need for personal protective equipment (PPE).

Other programs recognized over the last several years in the fire service are the firefighters' health and safety and firefighter wellness. Many departments have initiated a Firefighter Wellness Program that promotes fitness, nutrition, and health awareness. The program should also include cancer awareness and prevention due to the high risk of cancers with firefighters, managing critical incident stress, and post-traumatic stress syndrome.

#### 7.1 Firefighter Wellness

Over the last decade, firefighter wellness there has been a greater emphasis for members of fire departments. Before then, wellness programs were not discussed, accepted, or adequately funded, especially in volunteer fire departments. There is a liability to the Municipality when a firefighter is injured or dies in the line of duty, but an even larger obligation and benefit to look after its employees. Promoting wellness and good health among staff is also a new concept used for firefighter recruitment and retention.

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A beneficial wellness program would include:

- Medicals for firefighters
- Access to fitness facilities (internal or public)
- Education and awareness on healthy behaviours, and injury prevention and rehabilitation
- Collecting data

The Municipality and Departments have made great strides in firefighter wellness with access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), a Critical Incident Stress (CIS) policy and participation in the Bruce County CIS program.

### 7.2 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Firefighters deal with the same life issues as all other Municipal employees; however, they are also exposed to events that involve trauma, death, and loss regularly throughout their careers. Occupational stress experienced by firefighters can lead to PTSD. It is a mental health issue that some firefighters develop after experiencing or witnessing a life-threatening event, natural disaster, or traumatic events like car accidents or fire. PTSD can also increase firefighters' risk of developing additional mental health conditions like depression, substance abuse, or eating disorders. Most fire departments have had one or more of its members affected by PTSD and sometimes with devastating results.

PTSD is prevalent among firefighters and the fire service since the start of fire departments; however, only recently has the service implemented programs to educate and support its members. Furthermore, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) now recognizes PTSD as a workplace injury.

In 2017, Council passed a resolution supporting a PTSD Plan for the Departments, which included a PTSD prevention plan, CIS policy, Organizational Anti-Stigma Policy and PTSD assessment tool.

It is imperative Council, and the Fire Chiefs continue to support these programs to help firefighters manage mental health issues. The program will also assist with the recruitment and retention of firefighters for the Departments.

### 7.3 Recommendation

From the review and assessment of Occupational Health and Safety, it is recommended that:

1. In conjunction with the Joint Health and Safety Committee, the Departments enhance their Firefighter Wellness Program, including, but not limited to, continuing to support the CIS and PTSD Programs.

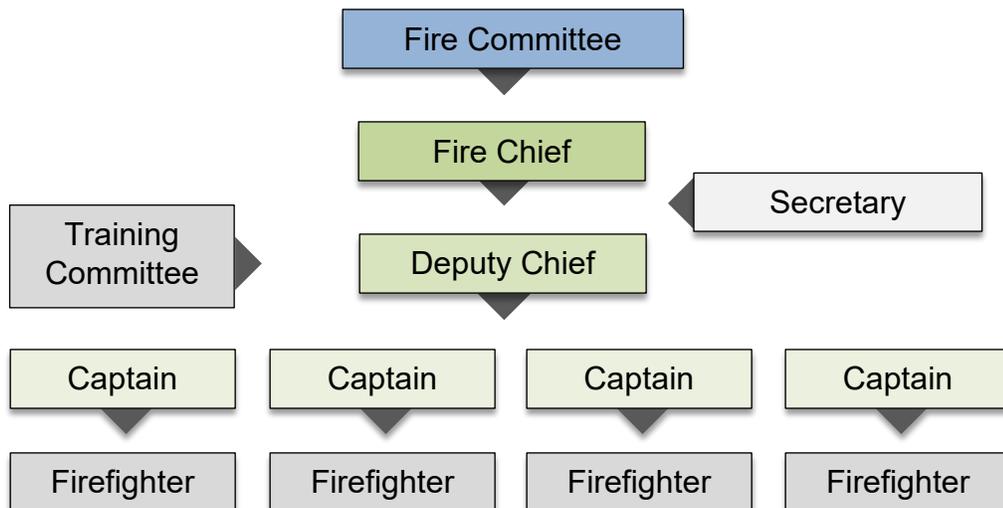
## 8.0 Departments Current Structure

The Municipality of Arran-Elderslie, like many others in the Province, amalgamated in 1999. The decision made at this time was to retain three separate fire departments to service the Municipality. It was not the norm for many newly amalgamated municipalities, but a conscious decision made by Councils and the Departments with the best intentions for many reasons, including the complexity of the jointly owned fire departments.

### 8.1 Tara-Arran Fire Department

The Tara-Arran Fire Department operates from a station located in the Village of Tara. It is managed by the Fire Chief and Deputy Chief, who report to the Tara Fire Committee, comprised of the Mayor and a Councillor from Tara and Arran, alongside the CAO and municipal staff for administrative support. The station staffing includes approximately twenty-five officers and firefighters and a secretary position. The figure below illustrates the Tara-Arran Fire Department organizational structure.

Figure 7: Current Tara-Arran Organizational Chart

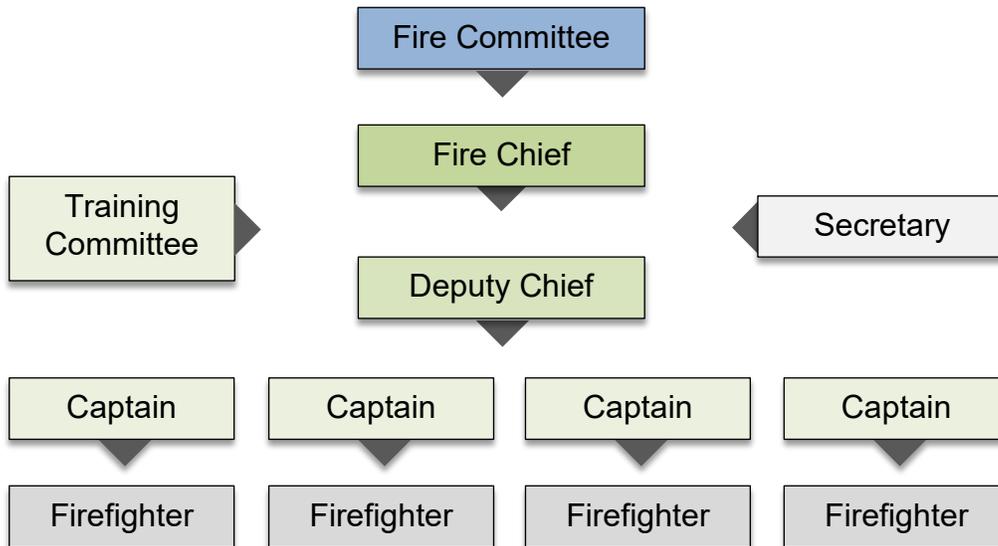


### 8.2 Paisley and District Fire Department

The Paisley and District Fire Department operates from one station located in the Town of Paisley. The Fire Chief and a Deputy Chief manage the station and report to the Fire Committee through the CAO. The station staffing is made up of approximately twenty-five officers and firefighters and Secretary Admin/Payroll position. The current organizational structure is outlined in Figure 8.

# Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Fire Master Plan

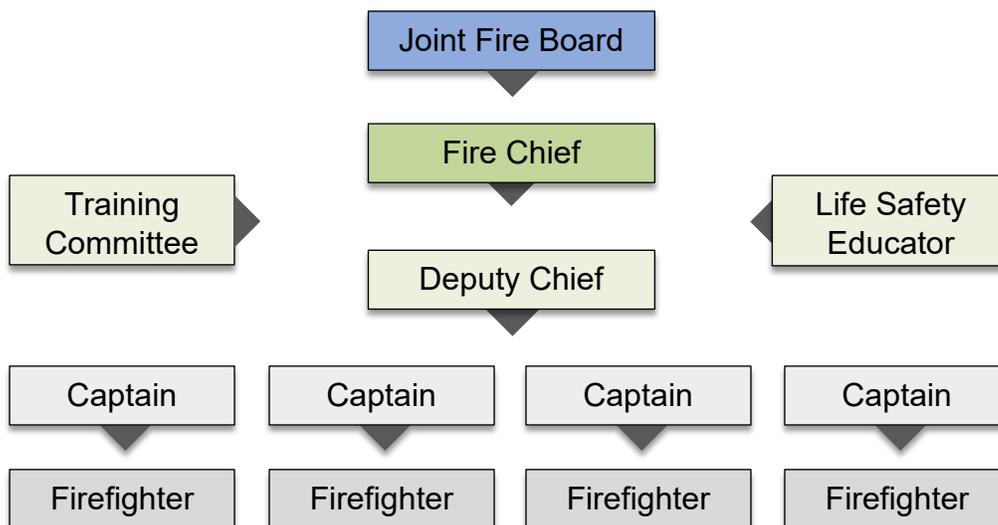
Figure 8: Current Paisley and District Organizational Chart



### 8.3 Chesley and Area Fire Department

The Chesley and Area Fire Department is owned jointly by the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie and the Township of Chatsworth. It operates out of one station located in the Town of Chesley and is managed by a Fire Chief and a Deputy Chief who report to a Joint Fire Board, made up of three Councillors from Arran-Elderslie and two from the Township of Chatsworth. The station staffing is comprised of approximately twenty-five officers and firefighters, and a fire prevention officer. Figure 9 outlines the current organizational structure.

Figure 9: Current Chesley and Area Organizational Chart



### 8.4 Challenges

As previously stated, the organizational structure of each Department has been in place with little change since amalgamation. If the status quo of operating three Departments in one Municipality remains, issues can arise when legislation, liability and resident expectations dramatically change. There is also the issue of financial pressures for the Municipality to provide fire services and the time constraints of three (3) part-time Chiefs who do not have enough time to manage the Departments and maintain a work-life balance. This issue alone exposes the Chiefs and the Municipality to liability risk.

Another challenge with the current structure is the level of service supplied to Municipality residents. While not intentional, different service levels are provided depending on the residents' location and the Department responding to that area. Furthermore, during interviews with the Fire Chiefs, it was quite evident they are overtaxed, and all are asking for a change in the current operations structure.

Many of the improvements identified in this review reflect standardizing operations, including budget allocations and reporting structures. The three Departments are fighting for the same municipal taxpayer dollar. Also, Council and municipal staff attend three meetings to discuss budgets and provide administration support to three Departments, which triples the workload for all those involved.

### 9.0 Future Departments Operations

The Fire Master Plan review considered the community's current needs and circumstances, applicable legislation, organizational structures, and how each Department operates. The Fire Chiefs, officers, and firefighters recognize that to maintain an appropriate level of service for the Municipality, the three Departments must come together under one Fire Chief's direction.

There is a definite advantage to restructuring the Departments now, rather than at the amalgamation in 1999. From the firefighters to the Chiefs, most of the Departments recognize that this is the right thing to do from a fire service perspective. The timing is ideal for bringing the Departments together from three into one as the initiative is coming from the bottom up versus being legislated from the top down in 1999. This acceptance makes for a smoother transition to one Department than it would have been twenty-two years ago.

One Department provides a standardized approach to operations and procedures, equipment purchases, public education, and code enforcement, ensuring that the service level is the same for all residents. It also presents cost savings and cost avoidance for the Municipality in the future. This recommendation is not a new concept for the Municipality, as Hodgson and Associates made the same recommendation in a 2006 report.

Figure 10 outlines recommended restructures to streamline the Departments together as one. A single Fire Chief assumes the administration responsibilities, including operations, fire prevention and training. Current Fire Chiefs' positions will reclassify as Station Chiefs responsible for managing the stations from an operational perspective. Deputy Chief positions will also reclassify to Captain and vacant positions at the time of restructuring removed from the organizational structure.

The Deputy Chief restructuring likely only affects the Tara-Arran Fire Department, and which would result in five Captains on their roster until the current Captains position becomes vacant. At which time, they would fall in line with the recommended organization structure.

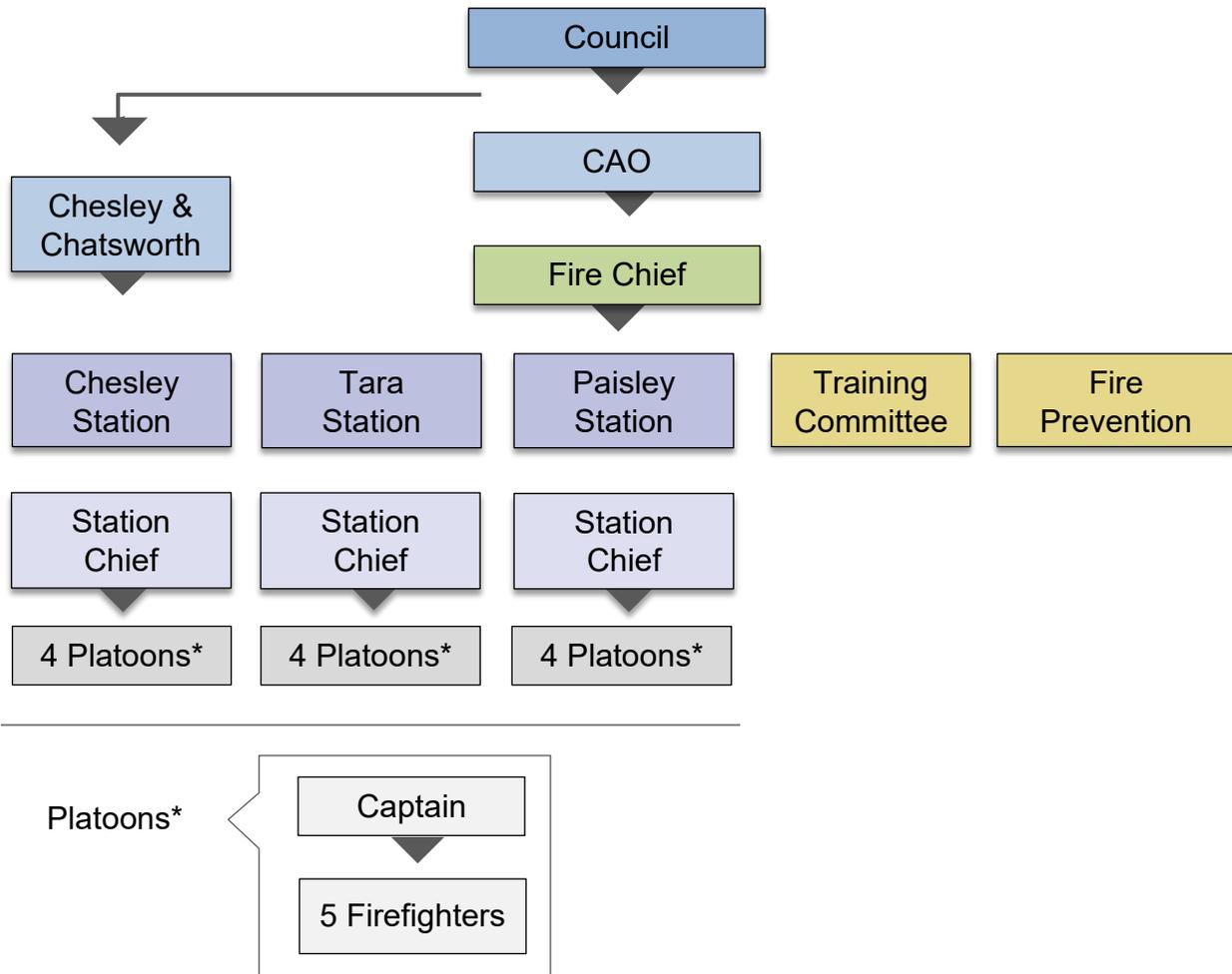
The removal of the current Deputy Chiefs' positions creates immediate cost savings to help cover the recommended new Fire Chief position. For fire prevention and training, the recommendation is to form working committees with representatives from each station to work with the Fire Chief to guide the programs rather than individual committees.

The recommended organizational structure only requires the addition of one new position, the three Fire Chief positions' reclassified, and the Deputy Chief positions' removal. The individual Training and Fire Prevention Committees of Departments would also realign into one committee.

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Moving in this direction means that the Fire Chief would report directly to the CAO or the Chesley and Chatsworth Joint Fire Board, reducing redundancy and realizing an immediate cost savings of staff time.

Figure 10: Future Department Organizational Chart



## 9.1 Part-Time Versus Full-Time Fire Chief

The recommended organization structure benefits the Municipality on many levels; however, the question remains whether the new Fire Chief position should be part-time or full time. The Loomex Group, after careful consideration, research, and review, recommends that the best option for Council is to invest in the hiring of one full-time Fire Chief.

The Fire Chief is positioned at the top of the new organization model and is the foundation. This change allows the Fire Chief to move from a task level to a strategic level, and it is critical for this position to be full-time to support the volunteer fire service and community. The reclassified Station Chiefs would assume the responsibilities at the task level.

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Furthermore, a full-time position in the Department's administration is a proven method to improve a department, protect the Municipality, and retain the volunteers. Council needs to consider this option to reduce the workload of the current Fire Chiefs, the volunteer officers, and firefighters' administrative responsibilities, which allows them time to concentrate on community service, public education, training and response to calls.

Hiring a full-time Chief will have a financial impact on the Municipality's budget; however, Council must consider the return on the investment to see if this is a viable option. In many cases, the measurement is not seen as tangible dollar savings but rather a valuable cost containment or avoidance both now and in the future.

**"While hiring a full-time Fire Chief does not avoid the cost of wages and benefits, it would assist in cost containment and avoidance in many other areas of the budget."**

Dealing with operational, health and safety issues and running a fiscally responsible Department cannot be accomplished on a part-time basis for a Municipality of this size and risk. Some of the immediate returns of a full-time position will be realized when many legislative and potential liability issues are rectified in the short term. This position would also assume the responsibility of developing and managing the training program and the training committee. As is identified in Section 11.0 (Training) and Section 6.0 (SWOT Analysis), standardized training is essential from a health and safety and firefighter retention perspective. In addition to Departmental duties, a full-time Fire Chief can assist with other corporate responsibilities as required.

Should Council decide to proceed with one Department a strong dedication from the top down is needed to move the Department as a cohesive unit forward, which is achieved with a full-time Fire Chief available daily.

## Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Fire Master Plan

The following table is a high-level comparison of the number of staff, stations, and populations of the Municipalities in the County of Bruce and two similar municipalities.

Table 1: Municipal Comparison of Fire Service Staffing

Municipality (# of Stations)	Fire Chief & Additional Duties	Additional Positions	Population
North Bruce Peninsula (2)	FT CEMC	PT Station Chief	3,999
South Bruce Peninsula (2)	FT	PT Deputy Chief PT Assistant Chief of Training	8,416
Saugeen Shores (2)	FT	FT CEMC FT Training Officer FT Fire Prevention Officer FT Administrative Assistant	13,720
South Bruce (2)	FT		5,639
Kincardine (2)	FT	FT CEMC FT FPO FT Administrative Assistant PT Training Officer	6,800
Ripley (2)	FT CEMC	(2) PT District Chiefs	7,069
Brockton (2)	FT Alternate CEMC	FT FPO/Health & Safety Coordinator	9,461
Arran-Elderslie (3)	PT (3)		6,803
Chatsworth	PT		6,630
West Grey (3)	FT CEMC	PT FPO	12,520
Grey Highlands (2)	FT	Fire Prevention Officer/Admin	9,804

### 9.2 Fire Chief Additional Duties

If Council approves a full-time Fire Chief, the individual will spend a substantial amount of time bringing the Departments together as one and standardizing services, including training, procedures, purchasing and budgeting. History has shown this is a multi-year endeavour; however, there are many examples to help move the transition forward.

The new Fire Chief would review and update agreements, by-laws, and complete legislative non-compliant items like the Simplified Risk Assessment. Additional duties can include assuming the management of the Emergency Management Program and the role of Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC), as well as management of the fire prevention programs including code enforcement.

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Assuming the CEMC role ensures the Emergency Management Program is compliant and managed at a local level. Currently, the County of Bruce takes care of the program's administrative portion; however, should a local or widespread emergency occur, the responsibility falls on the Municipality to manage it. Redirecting the funding provided to the County to offset the financial cost for the new Fire Chief position ensures that the Emergency Management Program is both administratively and practically managed by the Municipality.

The review showed that the Municipality is struggling with code enforcement (inspections). The new Fire Chief position can bring the Code Enforcement Program to the level required to protect the community. Code enforcement and public education are the most critical components of the three lines of defence, the least costly for the Municipality and provide the most life safety protection for residents.

### 9.3 Recommendations

From a review and assessment of the Departments structure, it is recommended that:

1. Council supports the recommended organizational chart that creates one new position, reclassifies the current Fire Chiefs positions, removes three Deputy Chief Positions, and streamlines the three Fire Departments into one new Department.
2. Council support creating a new full-time Fire Chief position, responsible for administration, operations, training, fire prevention, fire service agreements and by-laws and emergency management for the Municipality.

### 10.0 Fire Prevention and Public Education

Public Education and Code Enforcement and municipal responsibilities are mandated under the [Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 \(FPPA\)](#). To comply with FPPA, the Municipality must provide specific fire prevention and protection services and additional services, as is determined by Council, to meet the needs and circumstances of the Municipality.

Public Education and Code Enforcement for the community are an essential part of the review and recommendations of the Fire Master Plan. Tradition has shown that the Fire Service treats the three lines of defence in the order of fire suppression, code enforcement, and public education. The Service must reverse these traditional priorities to public education, code enforcement, and then suppression. This revised focus from traditional priorities does not mean that emergency response is not a critical function of the three lines of defence; rather, it emphasizes public education and code enforcement.

Fire prevention is the most effective way to protect lives and property from loss due to fire. While fire trucks and firefighter emergency response attract public and media attention, fire prevention and public education work can significantly impact community fire safety.

Section 2 of the FPPA includes the mandatory requirement for provisions of fire prevention and public education as follows:

"Every municipality shall, (a) establish a program in the municipality which must include public education with respect to fire safety and certain components of fire prevention; and (b) provide such other fire protection services as it determines may be necessary in accordance with its needs and circumstances."<sup>i</sup>

The Office of the Fire Marshal has determined that this requirement also includes the following components:

- A recognized smoke alarm and home evacuation program
- Fire inspections and evacuation for vulnerable occupancies
- Fire inspections on complaint or request
- Public education program
- Completion and maintenance of a Simplified Risk Assessment to determine the risks in the community and the level of fire prevention and emergency response required

In 2013, two (2) new regulations were made under the FPPA that mandate specific fire prevention activities:

- [O.Reg.365/13: Mandatory Assessment of Complaints and Requests for Approval](#)
- [O.Reg.364/13: Mandatory Inspection – Fire Drill in Vulnerable Occupancy](#)

## Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Fire Master Plan

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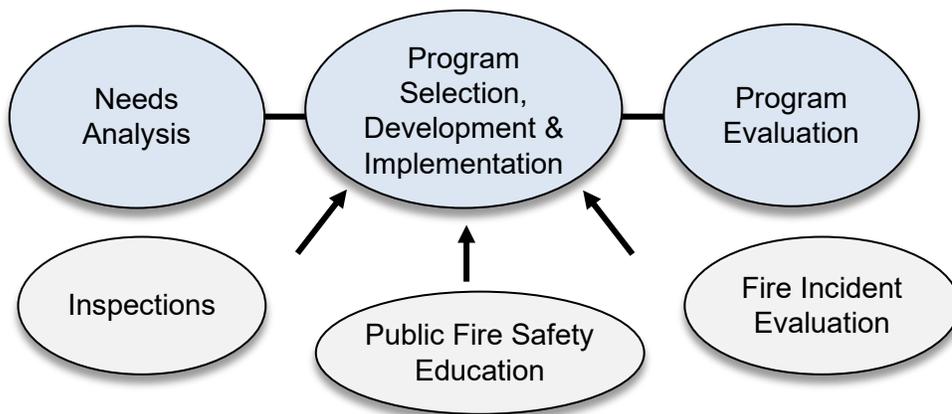
A review of the mandatory FPPA requirements confirmed that the Municipality is not compliant with the Act. The outstanding issue is the outdated Simplified Risk Assessment that must be updated to maintain compliance

Public education and code enforcement for the Departments is the primary role of two of the three Fire Chiefs. The suppression division also provides the fire prevention division at community events, fire prevention week, the annual fall fair, and school drills.

Ontario Fire Marshal Public Fire Service Guideline PFSC 04-09-12, Fire Prevention Effectiveness Model, sets recommended standards for Fire Prevention and Public Fire Safety Guidelines. The guideline states that the Fire Prevention and Effectiveness Model is a:

- Planning aid that focuses on one of the eight components of the Comprehensive Fire Safety Effectiveness Model
- A tool to ensure all issues are identified and addressed when considering any fire prevention programs or activities or when reviewing existing programs

Figure 11: Fire Prevention Effectiveness Model per OFMA Public Service Guideline



The shift of the three lines of defence moved to a more proactive approach to fire and life safety in a community, making it more important to run an aggressive prevention program that meets the Municipality's current and future needs.

In most cases, where the suppression staff are required to attend a structure fire, the components in the three lines of defence have failed. As previously stated, responding fire crews should be the last line of defence. When this occurs, it creates the most risk for the community and the responding firefighters and is the costliest of the three defence lines

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Statistics show that most fires, injuries, and deaths due to fires are preventable. However, in many cases, municipalities do not fund or provide enough resources for a proactive Fire Prevention Effectiveness Model. Often, it is due to the allocation of funds to fight the fire or the suppression division. While the Municipality cannot reduce their suppression division, cost-savings can be found by reducing the number of fires in the community and reducing the risk for residents, businesses, and firefighters.

### **10.1 Public Education Activities**

Public education activities aim to raise community awareness of the importance of fire safety using various platforms, including presentations, participation at events, and public service announcements.

Participation in community events such as fairs, station tours or fire station open houses provide the opportunity to distribute safety information such as brochures, books, and other fire safety teaching materials. It also provides the opportunity for firefighters to engage first-hand with the public and offers a close-up look at fire apparatus and trucks.

The review has shown that the three Fire Chiefs recognize the importance of having a good public education program; however, the programs depend on the three Fire Chiefs' guidance and knowledge. There is no overall consistency to the Public Education Program, which means the Municipality residents are getting a different level of service depending on where they live. Efforts must be made to ensure a standardized Public Education Program is developed and delivered in the same manner throughout the Municipality.

The Departments are also members of the Grey Bruce Fire Prevention Association, an active fire prevention group made up of members from all departments in Grey Bruce. The group meets regularly and works together to provide common fire prevention messaging to residents across the county through different avenues.

### **10.2 Smoke/ Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarm Program**

In 2008 the Office of the Fire Marshal submitted a Summary Report stating, "A smoke alarm program that includes home-escape planning was not developed, approved or implemented." As a result, the Municipality developed the Smoke Alarm & Home Escape Planning Program adopted by Council in June of 2008.

The program includes a smoke alarm program as well as public fire safety information distribution. The By-law should be reviewed and updated to include a Carbon Monoxide program and the current relevance of the public fire safety information distribution.

The Smoke/CO Alarm programs involve volunteer firefighters interacting with local residential properties to ensure both the smoke/CO detectors in their homes are in working order and to provide fire safety information. If they are not in working order, the Departments will provide batteries or a working smoke/CO detector before leaving to ensure residents are protected.

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The review determined that the Departments meet the minimum requirements of the mandatory FPPA of having a smoke alarm program. However, further consideration for a more proactive door-to-door program is required to ensure that seasonal and transient campers are included. A working smoke/CO alarm in every residence is an essential life safety component for residents and visitors.

### **10.3 Inspections and Compliance**

Inspections for the Municipality fall into three categories: complaint, request, and routine. Complaint inspections are conducted because of a complaint regarding a possible fire code violation and are mandatory under the FPPA. Follow-up on all complaint inspections includes correspondence in the form of a letter or a note to file. Request inspections are usually conducted for new occupancy, licensing, sale of a property, and assistance with fire code compliance. Routine inspections are conducted when concerns are brought to the Departments attention by other means (e.g. home inspection program, retrofit, general inquiry, etc.) or undertaken to inspect specific occupancies or areas of the Municipality.

Inspections are completed by two of three Fire Chiefs. Chesley and Area Fire Chief conducts inspections for the area protected by that Department while the Paisley Fire Chief conducts the Paisley and Tara-Arran areas.

As with other Fire Prevention activities, Departments meet the minimum requirement under that act and complete inspections from complaints and requests. There are attempts to be proactive with inspections by one of the Departments, but as with all three Departments, there is a lack of available time for the part-time Fire Chiefs to do this. Code enforcement is one of the three lines of defence for providing life safety to the residents, and when reviewing the building stock of the Municipality, it is evident that there are significant risks, especially with the downtown core areas.

Future consideration must be given to investing in a more proactive code enforcement program across the Municipality and developing a Fire Prevention By-law that sets regular intervals for inspections based on the type of occupancies and best practices.

### **10.4 Fire Investigations**

Fire investigations are a requirement of the FPPA to identify the cause of any fire. If the reason is accidental, information from the inquiry is used to reinforce fire prevention and public education. The preliminary investigation of the cause, origin, and circumstances of fire is a responsibility of local fire services and is an essential fire protection component. Advance training in arson detection is critical for fire personnel to adequately determine the origin and cause of fires.

If the cause is determined to be suspicious, the Office of the Fire Marshal and the police are notified. Arson is a criminal offence and is sometimes used to cover other illegal activities or defraud insurance companies.

## **Municipality of Arran-Elderslie Fire Master Plan**

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The FPPA states that all assistants to the Fire Marshal shall notify forthwith the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management (OFMEM) of all incidents that meet or that appear to meet the following criteria:

- Fires or explosions resulting in either a fatality or serious injury requiring person(s) to be admitted as in-patient(s) to a hospital (it is the responsibility of the fire department to make every reasonable effort to confirm the status of injured persons transported to hospital prior to the release of the fire scene).
- Explosions (where the explosion is the primary event).
- Fires or explosions suspected of being incendiary (criminal). Discretion may be used when there is no impact on a building(s) or in circumstances where there is no apparent threat to life. These types of fires include dumpster fires, car fires, and wild land fires. All incendiary fires and explosions must also be reported to the Police authority having jurisdiction.
- Fires or explosions where the loss is significant to the community.
- Fires resulting in unusual fire/smoke spread.
- Fires or explosions involving circumstances that may result in widespread public concern (e.g. environmental hazard).
- Fires or explosions in multi-unit residential occupancies where fire spread or explosion impact is beyond unit of origin, or where suspected Fire Code violations have impacted on the circumstances of the event.
- Fire or explosions involving clandestine drug operations or marijuana grow operations.

For the Departments in Arran-Elderslie, the combined years of experience of the three Fire Chiefs allow them to fulfill the requirements under the Act with determining causes of fires and notifying and working with the Ontario Fire Marshals investigators when required.

### **10.5 Vulnerable Occupancies**

There are five (5) vulnerable occupancies in the Municipality, including a hospital, a long-term care facility, private facilities, and a retirement home. These occupancies are in the Chesley and Area Department's response zone.

The review has determined that all of the occupancies are meeting the requirements under both the O.Reg.365/13: Mandatory Assessment of Complaints and Requests for Approval and the O.Reg.364/13: Mandatory Inspection – Fire Drill in Vulnerable Occupancy.

### 10.6 Simplified Risk Assessment

Municipalities have a legislated responsibility under the FPPA to provide public education concerning fire safety and specific fire prevention components. Conducting a Simplified Risk Assessment is the first step towards compliance with these requirements. The intent is to identify the information required by a municipality to make informed decisions about the programs and activities necessary to effectively manage the Community's fire risk based on local needs and circumstances.

This risk assessment aims to identify potential fire risks and enables the Municipality to implement educational programs to address those concerns.

Risk is the measure of the probability and consequence of an adverse effect on health, property, organization, environment, or community because of an event, activity, or operation.

Identifying fire and life safety risks in the community and prioritizing based on the probability of occurrence and the impact if occurred, fire departments can determine which risks to address and how best to manage them. Risk assessments allow fire departments to ensure their service level, including their programs, inspections, safety education, and emergency response, addresses the risks identified. It is also essential that their levels of service prevent and mitigate the identified risks.

The Simplified Risk Assessment includes the following components:

- Demographic profile
- Building stock profile
- Information analysis and evaluation
- Local and provincial fire loss profiles

At the time of the review, it was determined that the latest version of the Simplified Risk Assessment was completed in June of 2008 by Fire Chief Rob Bonderud, Fire Chief Jack Lancaster and Fire Chief Paul Best with the assistance from O.F.M. advisor Jamie Zimmerman. The Simplified Risk Assessment was done in June 2008; however, it does not meet the requirements of the Act, thus the Municipality is not compliant. An updated Simplified Risk Assessment should be completed immediately to ensure the Municipality is compliant under the FPPA.

### 10.7 Community Risk Assessment

Currently, a Simplified Risk Assessment is the only requirement in FPPA to determine and manage potential risk in a community. However, on July 1, 2019, the new Ontario Regulation O. Reg. 378/18: [Community Risk Assessments \(O. Reg. 378/18\)](#) was passed, which requires every fire department to complete a Community Risk Assessment no later than July 1, 2024, under the authority of the FPPA.

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### **Under Section 1-4 of the new regulation, Mandatory Use states:**

Every municipality, and every fire department in a territory without municipal organization, must, (a) complete and review a community risk assessment as provided by this Regulation; and (b) use its community risk assessment to inform decisions about the provision of fire protection services.

### **Defined in the Regulation in Section 2:**

(1) A community risk assessment is a process of identifying, analyzing, evaluating and prioritizing risks to public safety to inform decisions about the provision of fire protection services.

(2) A community risk assessment must include consideration of the mandatory profiles listed in Schedule 1.

(3) A community risk assessment must be in the form if any, that the Fire Marshal provides or approves.

### **Section 3 outlines when the CRA must be complete (at least every 5 years)**

(1) The municipality or fire department must complete a community risk assessment no later than five years after the day its previous community risk assessment was completed.

(2) If a municipality, or a fire department in a territory without municipal organization, comes into existence, the municipality or fire department must complete a community risk assessment no later than two years after the day it comes into existence.

(3) A municipality that exists on July 1, 2019, or a fire department in a territory without municipal organization that exists on July 1, 2019, must complete a community risk assessment no later than July 1, 2024.

(4) Subsection (3) and this subsection are revoked on July 1, 2025.

### **Section 4 outlines when to review (at least every year)**

(1) The municipality or fire department must complete a review of its community risk assessment no later than 12 months after,

- a) the day its community risk assessment was completed; and
- b) the day its previous review was completed.

(2) The municipality or fire department must also review its community risk assessment whenever necessary.

(3) The municipality or fire department must revise its community risk assessment if it is necessary to reflect,

- a) any significant changes in the mandatory profiles;
- b) any other significant matters arising from the review.

(4) The municipality or fire department does not have to review its community risk assessment if it expects to complete a new community risk assessment on or before the day it would complete the review.

Community Risk Assessments provide fire departments with the information needed to make informed decisions regarding the type and levels of protection services required based on identified risks. Completing a comprehensive assessment requires identifying, analyzing, evaluating, and prioritizing risk, based on nine mandatory profiles.

### 10.8 Recommendations

From the review and assessment of the Fire Prevention and Public Education, it is recommended that:

1. A standardized Public Education Program is developed and implemented across the Municipality for a consistent delivery approach.
2. By-law 22-08, Smoke Alarm and Home Escape Planning Program is updated and includes wording to meet the Carbon Monoxide Alarm Legislation.
3. A Fire Prevention By-law be developed for Council to consider that sets regular inspections based on occupancy type and best practices.
4. The 2008 Simplified Risk Assessment be updated in 2021 to ensure the Municipality is compliant with the Fire Protection and Prevention Act's mandatory requirements.
5. The Municipality completes a Community Risk Assessment by 2024 to ensure compliance with the new Community Risk Assessment Legislation.

### 11.0 Training

Training is mandatory for safe and effective fire department operations and is an on-going requirement to maintain skill levels. Under the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#), employers are obligated to provide training to employees.

#### **The Act states the duty of the employer is to ensure that**

- Equipment, materials, and protective devices as prescribed are provided.
- Equipment, materials, and protective devices provided by the employer are maintained in good condition.
- Measures and procedures prescribed are carried out in the workplace.
- Without limiting the strict duty imposed in the above bullets, an employer shall provide information, instruction, and supervision to a worker to protect the worker's health or safety.

#### **11.1 Training Program Overview**

The Fire Chiefs from Chesley and Paisley, and the Deputy Chief of Tara-Arran, who oversee training, were interviewed as part of the training program review. In addition, one of the questions asked during the firefighter engagement sessions pertained to training conducted at each station.

The review concluded that effort is made to provide quality and applicable training to the officers and firefighters by all Departments, and the training programs are based on the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards. Training to the NFPA standards puts a lot of pressure on volunteer departments; however, purchasing an NFPA standards-based program has been advantageous for the departments delivering training.

For determining training subjects, each Department uses different methods to develop a schedule that varies from four, six or twelve months. Training for all Departments is conducted twice a month in the evenings, and some weekends for practical sessions. Each station's training schedules are developed separately by their respective training committee structure chaired by either the Fire Chief or Deputy Chief, depending on the Department. Records are kept individually at each of the Departments. The record-keeping process ranges from electronic management systems to a manual filing system.

The training programs of all three stations require improvements. Each Department recognizes and wants to make changes, but it is challenging to meet the growing training requirements for firefighters given the expectations of the community and legislation, in addition to firefighter availability to attend training. Also, the engagement sessions identified that the firefighters need and want to have more training with each of the other Departments so that when responding to emergencies, they work together under one standard.

Outside training is assessable and encouraged at both the Ontario Fire Marshal's Courses and the Bruce County Training School

### 11.2 Recruit Training

Like the regular training program, each Department has individualized recruit training that teaches standards to recruit firefighters, how long they receive training, and when they can respond to calls. The issue with this training approach is that every new member is trained differently but works for the Municipality.

### 11.3 Training Moving Forward

A new approach is needed to better manage the Departments' training program to protect residents and individual firefighters while meeting occupational health and safety requirements and reducing the liability risk to the Municipality. The new approach should be to consolidate the three training committees into one training committee for the Departments. This committee would also design and oversee the recruit training program. To move the training program forward, the Departments must collaborate on developing standardized training and scheduling, sharing instructors and cross-training.

Together they can create a new standardized training approach. There are many advantages to this approach that includes:

- The same level of training to all firefighters
- More opportunities for interactions amongst firefighters
- Provision for firefighters to attend other Department training that they have missed
- A standardized schedule
- Utilization of the strengths within each Department

This approach ensures every new member receives the same training level to protect them and that they are ready to respond appropriately and safely when required.

### 11.4 Recommendations

From the review and assessment of the training program, it is recommended that:

1. The current three Training Committees consolidate into one committee with representatives from each station to create a standardized Training Program for the Departments that includes regular and recruit training.

## 12.0 Emergency Response Standards

### 12.1 Departments Statistics

The response numbers of the Departments have been stable over the last several years. The table below demonstrates the total number of emergency responses from 2015-2019. The data is extracted from the Ontario Fire Marshal statistics through a Standard Incident Reporting process based on the Departments' information.

Table 2: Number of Responses by Year

Department	2015	2016	2017	2018
Tara-Arran	42	35	35	36
Paisley & District	36	37	24	50
Chesley & Area	51	51	61	77

Table 3: Number of Loss Fires by Year

Year	Loss Fires Structures	Loss Fires Other	Loss Fires Vehicles	No Loss Fires	No Loss Fire Excluded	Non-Fire Call
2015	12	0	4	1	13	69
2016	1	2	2	0	3	76
2017	7	1	2	0	0	70
2018	14	0	3	0	5	91

### 12.2 Resource Deployment

How to determine the number of firefighters required for response has been a concern for municipalities for years. In recent years, the provincial government has played an important role in the decision-making process for fire department staffing through the OH&S Act and the FPPA.

Under the Fire Ground Effectiveness Model, a recognized staffing chart identifies the functions to complete during a fire. This baseline model is reflective of a fire in a single-family dwelling with a municipal water supply. In rural areas, additional firefighters and tankers are required for water supply. In urban areas, larger buildings, and high-risk occupancies, many more firefighters would be necessary.

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Table 4: Fire Ground Effectiveness Model

Complex Rescue & Subsequent Fire Control	Firefighter Functions	Number of Staff
Establish Water Supply	Water supply hook-up to a hydrant	1
	Pump operator/drive	1
Size Up	Supervisor-Command & Control	1
Rescue	Search & Rescue	2
	Back-Up, 60m of pre-connect 38mm hose	2
Exposures	60m of pre-connect 38mm hose. Water supply person assists when the water supply is secured	1
Ventilation	Raise 7m ladder plus equipment	2
Confinement	Sequential, the rescue back up team begins confinement when the rescue operation is complete	0
Extinguishment/Salvage and Overhaul	Sequential, other staff assigned when earlier duties completed	0

Other recognized standards for resource deployment is the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710 and 1720 and the OFM "10 and 10" model.

OFM "10 in 10" Guidelines and NFPA 1710/1720 Standards are not legislated requirements in the Province of Ontario, and individual Councils can still determine the level of staffing and how to achieve it based on the Fire Chiefs recommendations. However, these standards and guidelines represent "best practices" in deciding what level of staffing should be considered. They would also be referenced in any litigation that may involve the fire department service levels and municipality liability for losses; therefore, it is prudent that Council, based on the recommendation of the Fire Chiefs, develop a standard that applies to the Municipality that is cost-effective and dependable.

Currently, to meet the resource deployment, the Municipality is based on volunteer firefighters. The use of volunteer, part-time, or call back firefighters is a common, effective, and fiscally responsible method of providing fire department service for a municipality. At the time of the review, the Fire Chiefs and firefighters believe they were meeting the needs of the Municipality by providing a proper response. However, this needs to be verified by completing a more in-depth study on the number of responders for different call types by the time of day.

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Many volunteer departments have started changing their resource deployment models by calling more resources (another station) on initial calls instead of waiting for specific times like weekdays.

### 12.3 Response Zones

As part of the Municipality emergency call response, each area was physically looked at in conjunction with the Fire Chiefs. In researching the response zone, (areas where the Departments would respond as the primary station), it showed that they have been in place since before amalgamation and were determined by old municipal borders rather than road networks. In discussion with the Fire Chiefs, it is recognized that some of the existing borders could be adjusted to provide a quicker response to certain areas, in other words having what is known as "best station response."

While there are many agreements in place currently with the surrounding Departments to receive or supply services, there appears to be some areas that could be changed or added.

The process for adjusting borders to ensure that all Municipality residents are getting the quickest and same level of service does not have to be complicated. This can be achieved by mapping all stations in and around the Municipality, reviewing statistics from actual responses to areas and road networks and completing measurements from the stations to different areas.

While this process can cause issues because of the long-standing ownership of the response areas, the reality is that it is ensuring that each resident is getting the appropriate level of service, especially in the same Municipality. Furthermore, the legislation and the legal system does not accept the adage, "but that was always our area."

### 12.4 Recommendations

From the review and assessment of the response times and resource deployment, it is recommended that:

1. The average number of firefighters responding to current Departments zones be reviewed and changes be made accordingly to resource deployment and Departments response borders. The review would include stations outside the Municipality that could provide a quicker response to areas within the Municipality.

## 13.0 Water Supply

Water supply is essential for effective fire suppression, and the Fire Underwriters Survey attributes thirty (30) percent of the insurance grading schedule to that component.

There are two categories for water supply for fire protection:

1. Municipal water supply – hydrant protected
2. Rural water supply - non-hydrant areas

### 13.1 Municipal Water Supply (Hydrant Protected)

The water supply for fire protection is provided by a municipal water supply and distribution system. The Municipality is responsible for supplying potable water with sufficient flow to meet firefighting requirements and the local distribution system, including fire hydrants. Hydrant protected properties usually have lower insurance premium costs than non-hydrant protected properties.



Figure 12: Colour-Coding of Hydrants

When fighting a fire, firefighters must know the flow of hydrants. Ensuring that all hydrants are identified with the proper fire flow rate can be accomplished by either placing fluorescent rings on one of the ports or painting in colour. Painting and colour-coding can be time-consuming and costly; however, many municipalities have utilized programs like hiring summer students to complete the task. Any new fire hydrant installed in the Municipality should be identified to the NFPA classifications and marked for fire flow.

Table 5: Municipal Fire Hydrants Classifications and Markings

Class	Top and Nozzle Colour Code	Barrel Colour	Fire Flow	Pressure
A.A.	Light Blue	Chrome Yellow	1, 500 gpm (5,680 L/min or greater)	20 psi (140 kPa)
A	Green		1,000 – 1, 499 gpm (3,785 – 5,675 L/min)	20 psi (140 kPa)
B	Orange		500 - 999 gpm (1,900 – 3,780 L/min)	20 psi (140 kPa)
C	Red		500 gpm (1,900 L/min or less)	20 psi (140 kPa)

### 13.2 Rural Water Supply (Non-hydrant areas)

Water supply for fire protection in rural areas (non-hydrant protected) presents significant challenges for fire departments. Unlike urban areas where water supply depends on fire hydrants almost exclusively, departments require additional fire apparatus (tankers) and personnel trained on non-hydrant operating procedures. There are two programs developed to address water supply for fire protection in rural areas which are:

1. Superior Tanker Shuttle Accreditation that provides improved capacity to maintain adequate water supply for effective firefighting for distances of up to 8 km from a fire station with a minimum of 900 litres/min (200 gallons) for a two-hour duration. As a result of this program, many rural residents could see significant reductions in fire insurance premiums.
2. Installed dry hydrants in several locations designed to allow fire apparatus to draft water from rivers, lakes, ponds, or storage tanks and are non-pressurized.

At the time of this review, the Municipality does not have its Superior Tanker Shuttle Accreditation from the Fire Underwriters, mainly due to long travel distances. An enhancement to the rural water supply system would be to consider developing a dry hydrant program for the Municipality.

### 13.3 Recommendations

There are no recommendations from the review and assessment of the Water Supply section.

### 14.0 Fire Apparatus and Equipment

Fire departments use fire apparatus (pumpers, tankers, rescues, aerials, etc.), often referred to as fire trucks, to deliver emergency services to Municipality's residents and businesses. When required, the fire service responds with firefighters and properly equipped apparatus to control or mitigate an emergency. The fire apparatus represents a significant investment for a municipality, and continued maintenance and replacement of the apparatus ensures that reliable and modern fleet is available for service. Management and care of the apparatus form an integral component of the overall management and plan for fire service delivery.

Fire service apparatus has evolved over the years, and there are increasing demands for more standards to follow when making purchases. These standards include the Ontario Health and Safety Act, National Fire Protection Association Standard 1901 – Standard for Automotive Fire Apparatus, and/or U.L.C. – S515-04 – Automotive Fire Fighting Apparatus.

Municipalities must also consider the impact of the Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) on the age of apparatus acceptable for insurance grading purposes when determining apparatus replacement. FUS will only recognize the front-line apparatus that is no more than twenty (20) years old. These factors emphasize planning and budgeting when replacing older apparatus to reduce the risk to the Municipality and its firefighters.

The Departments' fire apparatus review has shown that Council has supported updated to the fleet and equipment and Fire Chiefs work together to ensure the replacement of the oldest apparatus. There does not appear to be standardization on the type of fleet purchases or a long-term plan of when to replace apparatus. A Fleet Rationalization Plan must be developed and used for the entire Municipality and used as a tool to determine the benefit of moving apparatus between the stations. It is not always the popular approach taken, but it needs to be explored by Council for the taxpayers to ensure the fleet's effective utilization.

#### 14.1 Fire Equipment

There is a large variety of fire and emergency equipment used by the fire service. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) includes bunker gear (firefighting coats and pants), helmets, flash hoods, gloves, and boots, all of which must meet NFPA standards to comply with Occupational Health and Safety Regulations. Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) is required anytime a toxic atmosphere is present or suspected, such as fires, carbon monoxide calls, hazmat spills, etc. The Departments have programs and budgets to maintain, clean, and replace this PPE to provide firefighters with protection from the hostile work environments they encounter at fires and other emergencies.

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The Departments also have a large inventory of other equipment, including fire hoses, nozzles and fittings, ladders, generators and lighting, ventilation fans, portable pumps, saws, extrication tools (Jaws of Life), gas detectors, thermal imaging cameras, and many types of hand tools. All this equipment must be maintained and replaced as required.

The challenge for Council and the Departments is to properly budget for replacing this equipment in an approved life cycle program. Most fire service equipment is expensive; therefore, the Fire Chiefs must budget and carefully plan to replace equipment in the most cost-effective manner. Standardizing equipment between Departments and collectively purchasing equipment is one way to accomplish this.

Currently, the Departments operate separately to buy equipment and, in many cases, not from the same manufacturer. There are considerable cost-savings for the Departments by standardizing equipment and making purchases through standing offers, Request for Proposals or Tenders. Standardization of equipment also ensures that each resident receives the same service level, regardless of where they live in the Municipality.

### 14.2 Recommendation

From the review and assessment of fire apparatus and equipment, it is recommended that:

1. The Departments develop standards for the type of apparatus and equipment used and collectively purchase equipment through a standard procurement process.

## 15.0 Fire Stations

The three (3) fire Departments that service the Municipality are Station 70 Tara-Arran, Station 80 Paisley and District, and Station 90 Chesley and Area.

### 15.1 Station 70 Tara-Arran

The Tara-Arran Fire Station is located at 72 Younge Street North in Tara and was built in 1989 and houses one (1) pumper, one (1) rescue, and two (2) tankers.

The station has a functional administration section that includes offices and an adequate training room. The station is well maintained, which shows the Department's pride and the leadership of the station. A fire station review should be conducted to ensure the building meets the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

It would also be best to separate the bunker gear from the apparatus floor for health and safety reasons. The potential exists for off-gassing from the bunker gear, and the current location requires firefighters to dress for a call beside an apparatus as it leaves the station.



Figure 13: Tara-Arran Fire Station



Figure 14: Tara Training Room

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### 15.2 Station 80 Paisley and District

The Paisley and District Fire Station is located at 454 Queen Street North in Paisley. It was constructed in 1973 with a training room added later and houses one (1) pumper, one (1) heavy rescue, and one (1) tanker.

The fire station has served the area residents for several years but has outgrown its functionality to meet today's standards and expectations for providing the required and appropriate service level.

The limited footprint of land around the station presents little parking and training space and no ability to expand. Also, the station currently does not have emergency back-up power, except for a small portable generator.



Figure 15: Paisley Fire Station

### Apparatus Floor

In 1973, the station's apparatus floor area appeared to be large and spacious. It allowed firefighters to move safely around the vehicles with enough space to work and clean and offered ample storage. Apparatus size has increased since then, which takes away from the available floor space for firefighters to work safely on the equipment and vehicles.

As illustrated in Figure 16, there is limited space around the fire trucks for firefighters to work, and the lack of space does not allow for growth in vehicle numbers that might be required.

Figure 16: Images of apparatus demonstrates the limited floor space.



### Bunker Gear Storage

Like the other stations, the Paisley and District station's bunker gear is stored on the apparatus floor. There should be a separate bunker gear room with proper ventilation for off-gassing.



Figure 17: Bunker Gear Storage.



Figure 18: Paisley Training Room.

### Training Room

Many fire stations built in the 70s have small training rooms due either to financial limitations, small numbers of firefighters or the type of training style that were taught. With new standards and training requirements, training rooms must have enough space to accommodate the entire station for training. Enthusiasm has changed over the years to ensure that firefighters have theory training and practical. The future of training environments is evolving to accommodate the different types of firefighters who are more versatile with computers and electronics. Training rooms need reliable technology and Wi-Fi access.

Another advantage of a training facility with ample space is that it allows for departments to bring in trainers or facilitators to teach larger numbers of firefighters rather than send firefighters away for training. This is a time and costs savings for the Municipality.

### Washroom and Shower Facilities

The Paisley and District Station currently has only one washroom facility that accommodates both males and female firefighters. The washroom is in the administrative side of the fire station. The station also does not have any shower facilities. With today's inclusiveness to provide facilities for both male and female firefighters and health and safety requirements, there should be washroom facilities both off the apparatus floor and the administrative area to prevent cross-contamination between the "clean and dirty" areas. There is also a need to provide shower facilities to ensure that firefighters can shower after a call if required to prevent the risk of exposure to families and friends.



Figure 19: One Washroom

### AODA Compliance

When the Paisley and District Station was built, facilities did not have to meet AODA requirements for staff and the public. With the introduction of the Act, everyone must have equal access to public facilities. Fire departments have challenged the intention of the Act by stating that a fire station is not a public building; however, fire stations are publicly funded and should be all-inclusive facilities for the Municipality. Fire departments operate in compliance with multiple codes and acts, and while it adds costs to upgrade a facility to AODA standards, it is the right and ethical thing to do.

### Storage Space

Overall, the station lacks storage space and the potential to create more. Fire stations require space or extra rooms to store equipment such as fire hoses, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) tanks, and workbenches for fixing small equipment. Locker space is also required, so firefighters have room to store personal items such as a change of clothes and hygiene items.

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### 15.3 Chesley and Area

The Chesley and Area fire station is located at 211 1<sup>st</sup> Ave North in Chesley. It was built in 1995 and houses two (2) pumpers, one (1) heavy rescue and one (1) Tanker.

The design of the station took into consideration the current and future needs of the community. It has a functional administrative area, including a large training room that can easily accommodate the training station. It has both male and female washroom and shower facilities, and the apparatus floor is large enough to accommodate the current apparatus size with room for future apparatus like an aerial device. It also has emergency back-up power to ensure the station is operational during a power interruption. Additionally, the facility meets the AODA requirements.

Like Tara-Arran and Paisley stations, future consideration should be given to creating a separate bunker gear room separate from the apparatus floor with proper ventilation for off-gassing.



Figure 20: Chelsey and Area Fire Station



Figure 21: Bunker Gear on Apparatus Floor

### 15.4 Recommendations

From the review and assessment of the fire stations, it is recommended that:

1. Separate bunker gear space with ventilation is developed for each station.
2. Council considers replacing the Paisley and District station with a new facility to meet current and future municipal and legislative requirements.

### 16.0 Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG)

The Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) for the Departments provide guidance and direction to members on carrying out their duties following standards and practices that comply with provincial legislation/regulations and municipal and department policies. Operations must be consistent with reasonable work practice compliance, Council direction and must meet the Occupational Health and Safety Act/Regulation requirements. At a minimum, a fire department should have a SOG for each topic identified by the Ministry of Labour Section 21 Guidance Notes, with a few exceptions where services/circumstances do not apply.

All departments are required to develop SOGs that cover various aspects of operations. The maintenance of policies and guidelines is one of the most labour-intensive duties for fire department administration. In small departments, the responsibility of the SOG maintenance usually rests solely with the Fire Chiefs.

The Departments recognize the importance of ensuring the SOGs are maintained and, for the most part, have common SOGs. There is an established SOG Committee, but due to time constraints, the committee is not active. An effort should be made to re-establish the SOG Committee to continue to develop standard SOG's by setting a manageable annual schedule.

#### 16.1 Recommendation

From the review and assessment of the policies and standards operating guideline, it is recommended that:

1. The Departments re-establish the SOG Committee to continue the development of standard SOGs.

### 17.0 Emergency Management

The [Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act R.S.O. 1990 \(The Act\)](#) stipulates several criteria for a municipality to receive their annual compliance, which includes that:

- A municipality has an Emergency Management Program (EMP) and an EMP Committee
- Annual emergency management training is to be provided to all members of the Municipal Control Group
- An annual exercise is conducted utilizing the Plan and all members of the Municipal Control Group
- The municipality designates a Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC) and Alternate CEMC
- Annually the Municipalities Critical Infrastructure (CI) and Hazard Identification Risk Analysis (HIRA) are reviewed and updated as required.

Presently the County of Bruce manages the Municipality's EMP through an agreement authorized through By-law No. 18-2018. A review of the EMP agreement confirms that the administration portion follows the Act; however, it does not fully meet the needs of the Municipality from a practical perspective. When an emergency like the COVID-19 Pandemic occurs, it challenges the Municipality and for the most part, they manage the emergency on their own. This would hold true whenever there is a widespread emergency.

A better approach for the Municipality is to resume management and obligations of the EMP. The Emergency Response plan and any municipal emergency in the future would then be managed locally, whether it is local or widespread.

### 17.1 Recommendations

From the review and assessment of emergency management, it is recommended that:

1. The Municipality explores the feasibility of managing their Emergency Management Program instead of contracting the County of Bruce to ensure that both the program and a municipal emergency is controlled at a Municipal level.

### 18.0 Statistics and Records Management

Good record keeping allows the Municipality and the Departments to meet its legislative requirements, reduces the risk of liability and allows for strategic planning for the future. A review of the Departments' records management system and attempts to obtain statistics demonstrated that this is an area the Departments needs to improve.

Currently, record keeping is done utilizing paper files, electronic programs and in some cases, not at all. The importance of maintaining good records and statistics cannot be understated with the expectations of the Departments and the liability risk for the Municipality, and the members of Departments. Without the aid of accurate statistics, Council and the Fire Chiefs cannot make informed decisions on how best to move the Departments forward in a cost-effective manner.

The absence of records and the Departments' inconsistency is not due to the lack of importance placed on it; instead, it is the lack of time for the three Fire Chiefs to complete this task. Better utilization of the current electronic records management system by all three of the Departments for tracking data on emergency responses, training, public education activities, fire inspections, and equipment is required.

#### 18.1 Recommendations

From the review and assessment of statistics and records management, it is recommended that:

1. A standard process is developed for Departments to collect the necessary records and provide required statistics consistently, and support is provided to the Fire Chiefs to update the records management system.

# Appendix A

## Legislation and Reference Documents

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### Legislation Affecting the Ontario Fire Service

Legislation	Area of Scope/Concern
<a href="#">Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997</a> and <a href="#">Ontario Fire Code</a>	Mandates and authorizes both the O.F.M. and municipalities. Part IX is generally the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, except where terms and conditions in collective agreements may adversely affect the provision of fire protection.
<a href="#">Provincial Offences Act</a>	Assistants to the Fire Marshal are Provincial Offences Officers under the Act for the purpose of smoke alarm related offences.
<a href="#">Municipal Act, 2001</a>	Authorizes the passing of by-laws necessary for the provision of fire protection.
<a href="#">Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations</a>	Human resources occupational health & safety
Ontario Regulation (O.Reg.) <a href="#">211/01</a> and <a href="#">440/08</a> Propane Storage and Handling	Requires propane operators to obtain fire department approval for Risk and Safety Management Plans (RSMPs). The fire department approves fire safety, fire protection, and emergency preparedness elements of the RSMPs.
<a href="#">Environmental Protection Act</a>	Requires fire department personnel to report spills to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MOECC), formerly referred to as the M.O.E.
<a href="#">Dangerous Goods Transportation Act</a>	Governs the transportation of dangerous goods.

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Legislation	Area of Scope/Concern
<a href="#">Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act</a>	Requires municipalities to have an emergency plan and a trained Community Emergency Management Coordinator to conduct exercises.
<a href="#">Building Code Act</a>	Provides authority for municipalities to appoint certain fire personnel as building inspectors.
<a href="#">Highway Traffic Act</a>	Governs operation of fire vehicles during emergency response. Governs the response of firefighters on roads that have been closed by police, the use of flashing green lights on firefighters' personal vehicles and controlling traffic at accident scenes. Contains regulated requirement to log hours of service for operation of commercial motor vehicles.
<a href="#">Forest Fire Prevention Act</a> and <a href="#">O.Reg. 207/96 Outdoor Fires</a>	Applies only to "Fire Regions" as defined in the Act and controls outdoor fires in "Restricted Fire Zones". It requires municipalities to extinguish grass, brush, or forest fires within their limits. Provides authority for the appointment of "Wardens" and "Officer" by the Minister. O.Reg. 207/96 controls outdoor fires outside of restricted fire zones.
<a href="#">Development Charges Act</a>	Provides the authority for portions of development charges to be allocated to fire services.
<a href="#">Coroners Act</a>	Regulates the control of bodies. Authorizes/regulates coroner's inquests and coroner's inquest recommendations.
<a href="#">Day Nurseries Act</a>	Defines the approvals from the fire chief that are required to operate a daycare facility.
<a href="#">Employment Standards Act</a> <a href="#">Labour Relations Act</a>	Human Resources
<a href="#">Human Rights Code</a>	Defines how boards of inquiry, complaints, discrimination, and enforcement are to be handled.

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Legislation	Area of Scope/Concern
<a href="#"><u>Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</u></a>	Provides access to information held by institutions and to protect the privacy of individuals concerning personal information about themselves held by institutions.
<a href="#"><u>Pesticides Act</u></a>	Makes mandatory the reporting of wholesale and retail pesticides to the fire department.
<a href="#"><u>Workplace Safety and Insurance Act</u></a>	The legislated requirement to report accidents and provide and document training Presumptive legislation.

### References

Statistics Canada. 2017. Arran-Elderslie, MU [Census subdivision], Ontario and Ontario Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017. (Accessed November 12, 2020).

Ontario Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, S.O. 1997, c. 4

Fire Prevention and Protection Act, 1997 (FPPA)

Ontario Fire Marshal's Directives and Guidelines

Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (R.S.O. 1990)

Ontario Building & Fire Codes

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standards

Occupational Health & Safety Act (OH&S) and Section 21 Committee Guidelines

Municipal By-laws

County of Bruce Economic and Development Townfolio Website

## **Appendix B**

### **Consultation List**

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The following list of people were resources who provided information and were consulted with throughout the review process.

Municipality of Arran-Elderslie:

- Melissa Kanmacher, Chair of Protective Services Committee
- Bill Jones, Chief Administrative Officer
- Paul Best, Fire Chief, Tara-Arran Fire Department
- Rob Bonderud, Fire Chief, Paisley and District Fire Department
- Robert Bell, Fire Chief, Chesley and Area Fire Department
- Department officers and firefighters

Phil Eagleson, Fire Chief/Director of Protective Services, Mutual Aid Coordinator

David Smith, CEMC, County of Bruce

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