

Staff Report

Presented By: Ed Melanson, Fire Chief
Meeting Date: August 11, 2025
Subject: New Fire Station Location
Attachment(s): Response Time Analytics
Preliminary Site Plan Drawing
Preliminary Site Plan with Satellite Overlay

Recommendation

That Council approve the location for a new Port Elgin Fire Station at 640 Mill Creek Road.

Report Summary

The location criteria of the new Port Elgin Fire Station are based on firefighter response times, municipal property ownership, minimal environmental impact, and appropriate property size. The location of 640 Mill Creek Road, Port Elgin, is presented for Council's consideration as the preferred location in advance of design and engineering scheduled for 2026.

Background/Analysis

The 2023 Fire Master Plan and 2023 Saugeen Shores Business Plan identified that a new fire station is required due to health and safety legislation and community growth demands. As a Future Year Highlight in the 2025 Business Plan, Council considered and approved design and engineering in 2026 followed by the build in 2027 / 2028 and has included this in the special capital tax levy.

A data-driven approach was utilized and focused on firefighter response times ensuring robust service coverage for all residents. Two locations were ultimately evaluated and chosen for detailed consideration: 640 Mill Creek Road and 1240 Mackenzie Road.

The following criteria was considered to determine a recommended site:

- Firefighter's Residential location.
- 10-minute response zone: The travel time from each firefighter's pager activation to fire station to arrival at incident scene.
- Property owned by Municipality to maintain budgetary adherence.
- Environmental impact.

- Property size allowing for firefighter parking, Ministry of Labour Cancer Prevention checklist requirements, pull through truck bays, and administration offices.

Further, an amalgamated station was also considered but poor response times and impacts caused by winter weather road closures precluded a single fire station model recommendation. A GIS analysis (attached) is included for Council's reference which analyzed all Saugeen Shores Fire Fighters residence locations and 10-minute response time in a single fire station model.

Based on a detailed analysis, it is recommended that the site of the Port Elgin Station be located at 640 Mill Creek (Cameron Park) to best mirror the present response times of the current Station. For Council's information, a preliminary site plan is attached along with current response modelling and land situated on Mackenzie Drive for consideration. Within the preliminary site plan there is an overlay of present residential and institutional buildings for reference.

Linkages

- Strategic Plan Alignment: Pillar 1: Meeting the Needs of a Growing Community
- Business Plan Alignment: Fire Services Major Initiative

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding

No costs or revenue is associated with this report.

Prepared By: Ed Melanson, Fire Chief

Reviewed By: Kristen Shrider, Director Community Services

Approved By: Kara Van Myall, Chief Administrative Officer