

Fire Protection in the Town of Chili

An Analysis of the Chili Fire Department and the Clifton Fire Department

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Prepared for
The Town of Chili

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Executive Summary

CGR was engaged by the Town of Chili (hereafter “the Town”) to study the current status and future prospects of the two volunteer departments within the Town – the Chili Fire Department (hereafter “Chili”) and the Clifton Fire Department (hereafter “Clifton”).¹ The Town Board oversees the Chili Fire Protection District, which contracts with the Chili Fire Department for fire protection and the Clifton Fire Protection District, which contracts with the Clifton Fire Department.

The goal of this report is to answer several key questions regarding the current operations of the two departments and to help the Town identify the best way to sustain operations into the future.

The full town’s population is about 29,000. Chili FD covers the largest portion of the town, approximately 21 square-miles. Clifton FD covers a 12 square-mile area of the southwest/southcentral part of the town and six square miles of the Town of Riga. Most of the Town of Chili’s population and planned growth are located within Chili FD’s coverage area, while the Clifton FD area is largely rural, including several working farms and a county park.

Key Findings

Department Profiles

- **Chili has about 108 members, with 60% qualified as interior firefighters and a third as EMTs.** The department operates out of four stations spread across the district. They have four engines, two aerials (quints), two rescue trucks and a variety of support vehicles.
- Chili responds to just over 1,000 calls per year on average, or about 2.7 calls per day. 28% are EMS in nature, 22% false alarms and 20% good intent calls.
- In 2025, **the overall operating budget for Chili is about \$3.7 million, with 65% coming from the Town** and a large one time grant bringing in another 18%.
- **Clifton has about 32 members, with 30% qualified as interior firefighters and 20% certified as EMTs.** The department operates from a single station. They have two engines, a rescue truck and several support vehicles.
- Clifton responds to about 125 calls per year, or about 0.3 calls per day. 57% are EMS in nature, 16% are hazardous conditions and 10% are false alarms. In 2024, 35% of their calls were in Riga.
- The overall **operating budget for Clifton was about \$282,000 in 2025. They are funded primarily by the Town of Chili (72%)** but also receive 18% of their budget from the Town of Riga.
- **The ISO PPC rating for Chili is a Class 3 and for Clifton it is a Class 5.** These scores correlate fire department capability to insurance coverage and a lower score is better.

¹ Parts of Chili are also served by the Gates Fire District, but this area was not a subject of this study.

- The existing funding mechanism by the Town supports the current operations of the two departments, but future growth and growing costs will require additional investment, particularly for the Chili Fire Department.
- The cost of fire protection and fire tax rates in the area of study are among the lowest in first ring suburbs of Rochester. They are substantially lower than the neighboring Gates Fire District and Henrietta Fire District. The tax rates are similar to more rural areas such as Riga, Ogden-Parma, and Scottsville Wheatland.

Fire Service Context

- Volunteer departments everywhere are facing a slow but steady decline due to social, financial and cultural changes, including new governmental requirements and regulations.
 - Both Chili and Clifton are facing this common dilemma of volunteer fire departments, with an overall shrinking and aging roster of volunteer members.
 - This problem is affecting Clifton more seriously, given its smaller membership numbers and more limited potential recruitment area.
 - Volunteers are always a more cost-effective option than paid staff, and all measures should be used to maintain a volunteer base up to the point where they are no longer maintaining an adequate response.

Department Observations

- Departmental attitudes diverge on some key issues:
 - Clifton FD's membership derives a lot of value in providing an EMS response into Riga, while Chili FD's leadership expressed reservations about responding to what they consider to be low-acuity EMS calls, concerned that these unnecessarily burn out their membership.
 - Chili FD is open to the idea of a merger, but largely envisions it as Chili managing and directing Clifton's operations according to Chili's standards and practices.
 - Clifton FD is largely opposed to the idea of a merger, and most of the membership and leadership suggested they might resign en masse if Clifton FD were made to merge with Chili FD.
- Clifton FD is stretched thin and in coming years will have increasing problems maintaining an adequate response.
 - This is already a challenge, and no obvious solutions to reverse this trend are emerging.
- Clifton's call volume could be reduced by dropping coverage of some EMS calls, which is the largest category of calls that Clifton responds to.
 - However, many Clifton members derive satisfaction from providing this EMS response and would be less motivated to continue if this were removed.
- If Chili were to merge with Clifton, the following effects are likely:

- A large number of Clifton’s current membership may depart, rather than integrate into a new culture and command structure.
- Chili’s area of responsibility would be increased without adding more personnel, creating a greater response challenge, and likely more strain on its current volunteers.
- Cost-savings would likely be minimal:
 - Clifton is currently a lean operation.
 - The Clifton fire station would likely need to be maintained as a staging area for apparatus and to prevent a downgrading to the insurance coverage rating in the area.
 - Clifton could lose Town of Riga funding of about \$50,000 per year if coverage of Riga was terminated by the new combined department.
 - Chili FD would expect the Town of Chili’s current contribution to Clifton to be redirected back to the expanded Chili FD, rather than fully withdrawn.
- Overall, the **addition of some paid firefighters may be needed within the next five years** to supplement existing volunteers in the Town, but **this need is not yet immediate**.
 - Chili FD leadership believes that while additional paid staff may be appropriate for handling administrative or maintenance work that volunteers do not want to do, if paid staff were added to help respond to calls, such as under a “laborer” model used in other volunteer departments in the region, the department would instantly start losing volunteers, especially any volunteers who work career in other departments.

Recommendations

The goal of both fire departments is to ensure public safety and a proper emergency response to those they cover. Personal pride, history and tradition must take a back seat to this goal.

This requires each department to keep a tight overview on the adequacy of responses and be honest and forthcoming to the Town when they are no longer able to provide an adequate response. In the same vein, the goal of the Town should be to support both Chili FD and Clifton FD with whatever resources they can for as long as the departments are able to maintain an adequate response.

Response Adequacy

Defining an adequate response is important for ensuring that the departments are maintaining a standard of performance that will protect their communities.

When volunteer departments are no longer able to consistently meet the standard of an adequate response, it will be necessary to shift to a hybrid or fully paid model to ensure continued public safety.

Fire Response

According to NFPA Standard 1720, with the Town of Chili classified as Suburban Area due to its population density:

- For a **fire incident**, departments should be meeting the goal of having **10 staff on scene in 10 minutes or less in at least 80%** of their responses.

In terms of **apparatus**:

- The standard response for a **first-alarm structure fire** should be **two Engine Companies and one ladder or rescue company**. Each apparatus should be **staffed with a minimum of 4 firefighters** at all times.

Based on response data from the first seven months of 2025, Chili meets the standard between 4:00 pm and midnight, but not at other times of the day. Looking at the full year of 2025 for Clifton, they meet this standard for all time periods except midnight to 8:00 am.

EMS Response

The Monroe/Livingston Regional EMS standard for First Responder (BLS) calls is: **for Priority 1 (Emergent) calls**, EMS should be on-scene in **5 minutes or less for 90%** of all calls; **for Priority 2 (Emergent) calls**, EMS should be on-scene in **8 minutes or less for 90%** of all calls.

EMS calls were not analyzed separately for this study, but looking at overall call time responses, it is unlikely that they meet this standard.

Apparatus & Stations

Based on CGR's analysis of current apparatus and station placement, drawing on the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA's) 8-minutes-on-scene response standard, CGR foresees the following needs to assure complete coverage of the Town of Chili:

- Chili's current **aerial/ladder trucks (the quints) and rescue trucks could be reduced from two of each to one of each**. Chili is moving this way with a rescue pumper but believes that its operational model substantially benefits from a second quint, as discussed in more detail below. The **number of engine companies covering Chili could be increased by one, along with a new station to house it**. This is based on a gap in a coverage area.

Engine Needs

- If the departments were to merge, the **combined department would ideally have six (6) engine companies**, plus a reserve engine that could be housed anywhere and used to fill in at any station where an engine is out of service.
 - Given Chili's four engine companies and Clifton's two engine companies, **the Town currently is covered by six engine companies**.
- **A sixth fire station should be considered to assure full coverage for future incidents**. The location of Chili Ave. and Union St. in West Chili may assist in reducing response times to areas that are currently seeing construction and expansion of residential neighborhoods.

- *It is important to note that the above apparatus and station recommendations are based on ideal coverage considerations, and may differ from what is currently realistic, given volunteer limitations.*

Aerial/Rescue Needs

- Currently, Chili has two aerial/ladder trucks (both quints) and two rescue vehicles.
 - Based on our analysis of response times per NFPA standards, this could be **reduced to one quint and one heavy rescue adequately covering the Town**. Chili is moving this direction with a combined rescue pumper but believes that a second quint is needed for its operational model.
 - However, ISO PPC scoring would gain a point by maintaining two ladder trucks/quints. The Departments will have to determine **whether it is cost-effective** to maintain an additional ladder truck in order to gain this small improvement in the ISO PPC scoring.

Merger Possibilities

- Maintain the status quo of separate Chili and Clifton departments up to the point where it is recognized that either department is unable to mount an adequate response to fire or EMS incidents.

Currently, the Town and both departments have more to lose than gain through a merger.

- If Clifton becomes unable to provide an adequate response, according to the standards laid out above, **the Town will need to decide if Chili will need to assume responsibility through a default merger**, absorbing what remains of Clifton under its operational umbrella and tasking available members to respond to the Clifton area.
 - It is not clear how efficient Chili's response would be to Clifton's area, and whether Chili FD would be open to continuing coverage into the Town of Riga.

Resources/Paid staff

- **Clifton does not feel it needs any additional funding, resources, or administrative staff at present**, given sufficient volunteer support for business operations at current, and adequate fund balances. **It may need additional funds to meet apparatus costs in the future**, and may require administrative help if the volunteer support for maintenance and the business side of the department diminishes.
- **Chili's current staff should be supplemented with additional paid support/administrative staff** to help ease the burden of routine tasks that would otherwise fall on volunteers. This would required additional funding from the Town.
 - This can reduce burnout and add to volunteer sustainability, particularly among chief officers and other department leaders.

Future Planning

- **The Town's long-range planning should anticipate that both Chili and Clifton's existing volunteer coverage will, within the next 5 to 10 years, evolve into a combination department, utilizing a limited number of paid/career firefighters, as volunteer numbers continue to diminish.**
 - Some members warned that a combination department might hasten volunteer departures, but there also have been local combination departments that have been able to maintain a healthy culture that supports both career and volunteer firefighters.
 - The costs for laborers that respond to calls and/or career firefighters range dramatically depending on the number of staff hired. For example, each full-time firefighter would have costs of about \$100,000 with salary and benefits. Each desired full-time position would require 4 firefighters to staff it. A minimum paid staffing model would result in \$1.6 million in annual staffing expense to have 2 firefighters at 2 of the stations 24 hours a day.
- **The Town should begin long-range fiscal planning for the increased costs of adding paid firefighters.**
 - Some possible funding scenarios discussed by volunteers during this project included the possibility of a county-based fire department, or several smaller departments joining together to create a fire district. Clifton feels it is too small to create its own fire district.
 - The Town should consider an independent fire district for the area currently covered by Chili and Clifton potentially including the area in Riga.
 - Alternatively, working with neighboring fire districts to provide the service may be a more cost-effective solution.
- **A fifth fire station in Chili should be considered for the area of Union Street and Chili Avenue,** due to the forecasted growth in the area and existing call volume.
- **Any upcoming station refurbishments or replacements,** which have potential lifespans in the decades, **must be planned with sufficient sleeping quarters** to accommodate overnight volunteer or full-time career staff, as that will likely be a sizeable component of the firefighter force before these buildings are replaced. The availability of female locker rooms or gender-neutral bathrooms should also be considered.
- The Town of Chili should meet with the Town of Riga to understand its contingency plans in the eventuality that Clifton or a merged Chili/Clifton department is no longer providing fire and EMS coverage into Riga. In 2025, Clifton answered 47 calls into the Town of Riga.
 - Riga may opt to contract with another fire department, such as the Churchville Fire Department, to provide coverage.

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Introduction

CGR was engaged by the Town of Chili (hereafter “the Town”) to study the current status and future prospects of the two fully volunteer departments within the Town – the Chili Fire Department (hereafter “Chili”) and the Clifton Fire Department (hereafter “Clifton”).² The Town Board oversees the Chili Fire Protection District, which contracts with the Chili Fire Department for fire protection and the Clifton Fire Protection District, which contracts with the Clifton Fire Department.

The Town wishes to learn more about how both departments are responding to common challenges facing volunteer departments across the state and nation, such as declining volunteerism, increasing costs, new training requirements, and growing administrative burdens. Key questions of interest to the Town include:

- Are the two departments both providing appropriate responses to the emergencies in their areas? Is there a more effective way to operate the fire response? How can the Town best support the activities of the fire departments?
- Do the two companies have the appropriate equipment to serve the community? What are the anticipated capital costs? How should the Town address the upcoming capital expenditure needs?
- How is the population and development in the Town likely to change in the next decade and how will that impact demand for service?
- How can the Town best position itself to ensure high-quality fire service and to control costs over the next decade?

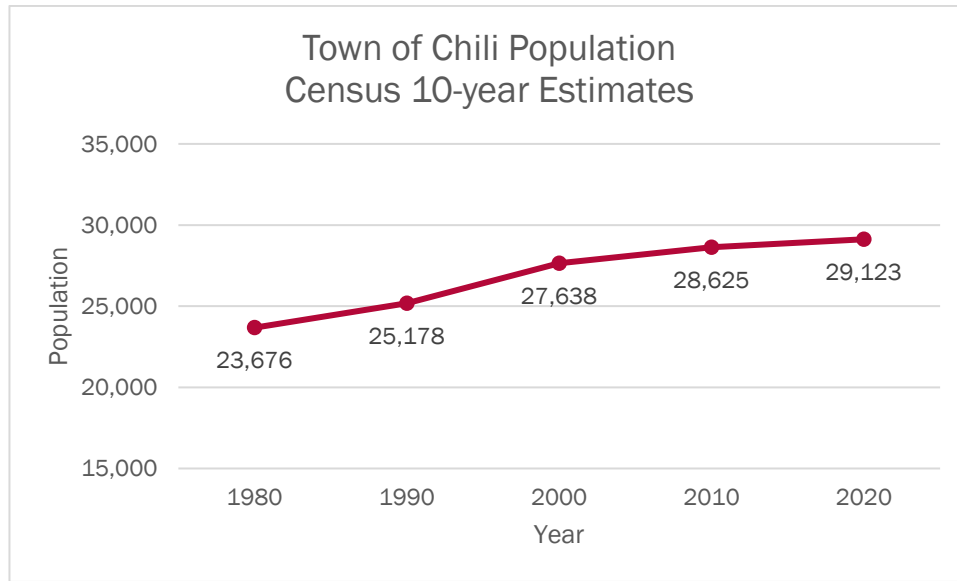
In line with the questions concerning future positioning of services and the most efficient way to operate, CGR also examined pluses and minuses of a potential merger between Chili FD and Clifton FD.

In addition to the two Chili and Clifton Fire Protection Districts, the Gates Fire District, which is governed by a Board of Fire Commissioners covers a small geography in the northeast portion of the Town. The areas in the Town of Chili served by the Gates Fire District were not an object of this study.

Town Context

The Town of Chili’s population has been growing each decade since 1980. In 2020, the population was 29,123 residents, a 2% increase from 2010. More recent Census American Community Survey (ACS) estimates (2020–2024), which are updated every year to show a 5-year rolling average, show the population holding relatively stable, at approximately 28,982 residents

² Parts of Chili are also served by the Gates Fire District this area was not a subject of this study.



Town Development Patterns

Chili FD covers the largest portion of the town, approximately 21 square miles. Clifton FD covers a 12 square mile area of the southwest/southcentral part of the town. Most of the Town's population and planned growth are located within Chili FD's coverage area while the Clifton FD area is largely rural including several working farms and a county park.

Chili continues to grow, with both new residential and commercial development in the planning stages and some expansions of existing industrial facilities foreseen in the near future.

However, taken all together, these planned developments do not appear to be of the size and magnitude where they would pose a challenge to the fire departments' current resources or capacity, especially if new apartment buildings that come online incorporate automatic sprinkler systems and other modern building standards.

Additional details on the Town's demographics and development patterns appear in Appendix 1.

National and Regional Fire Context

- The cost of operating any fire department has grown at rate that is at least 3 to 4 times the rate of inflation, driven by new standards for key material (turnout gear, nozzles, SCBAs- Self Contained Breathing Apparatus), higher insurance premiums, and higher utility costs. Additionally, new fire apparatus costs have grown so much that they are subject of congressional and media inquiries. An apparatus ordered today will take 2 to 4 years for delivery.

- The number of people volunteering to serve their community in all organizations has been in decline for the last two decades and has begun to cross a critical threshold for EMS and fire agencies.
- Volunteering in the fire service has taken on the feel of a second career with high training standards, growing demand for service, increased regulations and heightened community expectations for response.
- Across New York State and the Northeast, there has been increasing attention to the need for recruiting new firefighters and retaining the current ones. New programs like property tax exemptions, income tax rebates, and training stipends have all been introduced.
- Fire departments in nearby communities have added paid staff to assist the operations as volunteers have dwindled. Gates, Ridge Road, North Greece, Barnard, and Henrietta all have primarily paid personnel in their fire department.

Fire Service Overview

A brief overview of the two departments is presented here and more detailed profiles appear later in the report.

Personnel

Chili has 108 members, including 61 interior-qualified firefighters. Chili reports good interest from potential volunteers, with 2-3 people per month making inquiries, but faces a bottleneck with limited seats available in Monroe County's fire academy. Currently, more people are aging out of the system and retiring than there are seats available for new firefighters to replace them. Chili has 36 certified EMS providers, almost all are emergency medical technicians (EMTs).

Clifton has 32 members with 24 active personnel, including 9 interior-qualified firefighters. They share that their membership is stretched thin and finding new volunteers is an increasing challenge. This is largely affected by the lower population concentration in Clifton's coverage area, which restricts the pool of viable volunteers. Clifton has 6 certified EMS providers

Communications

The primary Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) is the Monroe County 911 center. It receives all calls and dispatches all alarms for both departments. Chili previously had their own dispatchers located at Station #1 on Chili Ave. Chili eliminated their dispatcher center several years ago, believing there was redundancy in services between their dispatchers and the Monroe County 911 Center dispatchers. The salaries from the dispatchers' positions were used to create the full-time administrators' position and the part-time maintenance position.

Both departments now utilize the Monroe County dispatchers to complete their alarm processing. The telecommunication positions process the request for services and then add the information into the computer aided dispatch (CAD) systems software. Information is then electronically forwarded to the fire dispatchers' position, and then the respective department

is notified of the incident. The tone activation to the departments signals the pagers and stations sirens, and the location of the incident is then announced. This is the primary circuit that meets the requirements of NFPA Standard 1221 for fire service communications. In addition, a third-party vendor interfaces the 911 centers information into a cellular phone service database which activates cell phones carried by the members.

During the last ISO Public Protection Classification evaluation (discussed in more detail later), both departments received the same score under the communications section of the fire grading schedule. At that time, the departments were dispatched by the Chili on-duty dispatcher. Both departments could increase their point values in the ISO grading now that they are under the jurisdiction and protocols of the Monroe County 911 center. These additional points can help to maintain or even improve the ISO classifications for the departments.

Apparatus

In the Town, there are five engines, two aerials (quints), and three dedicated rescue trucks of various capabilities. There are also several squads, chiefs vehicles, UTVs and a grass truck detailed in the body of the report. The oldest front-line engine is from 2007, and the oldest quint is from 2009. Both are slated to be replaced in the next few years.

Station	ID	Type	Year
Chili 1	4312	Engine	2015
Chili 1	4310	Quint	2009
Chili 2	4322	Engine	2015
Chili 2	4320	Quint	2021
Chili 3	4332	Engine	2015
Chili 3	4338	Rescue	2005
Chili 4	4342	Engine	2007
Chili 4	4348	Medium Rescue	1998
Clifton	4414	Rescue/ Engine	2019
Clifton	4413	Engine	2010
Clifton	4418	Light Rescue	2009

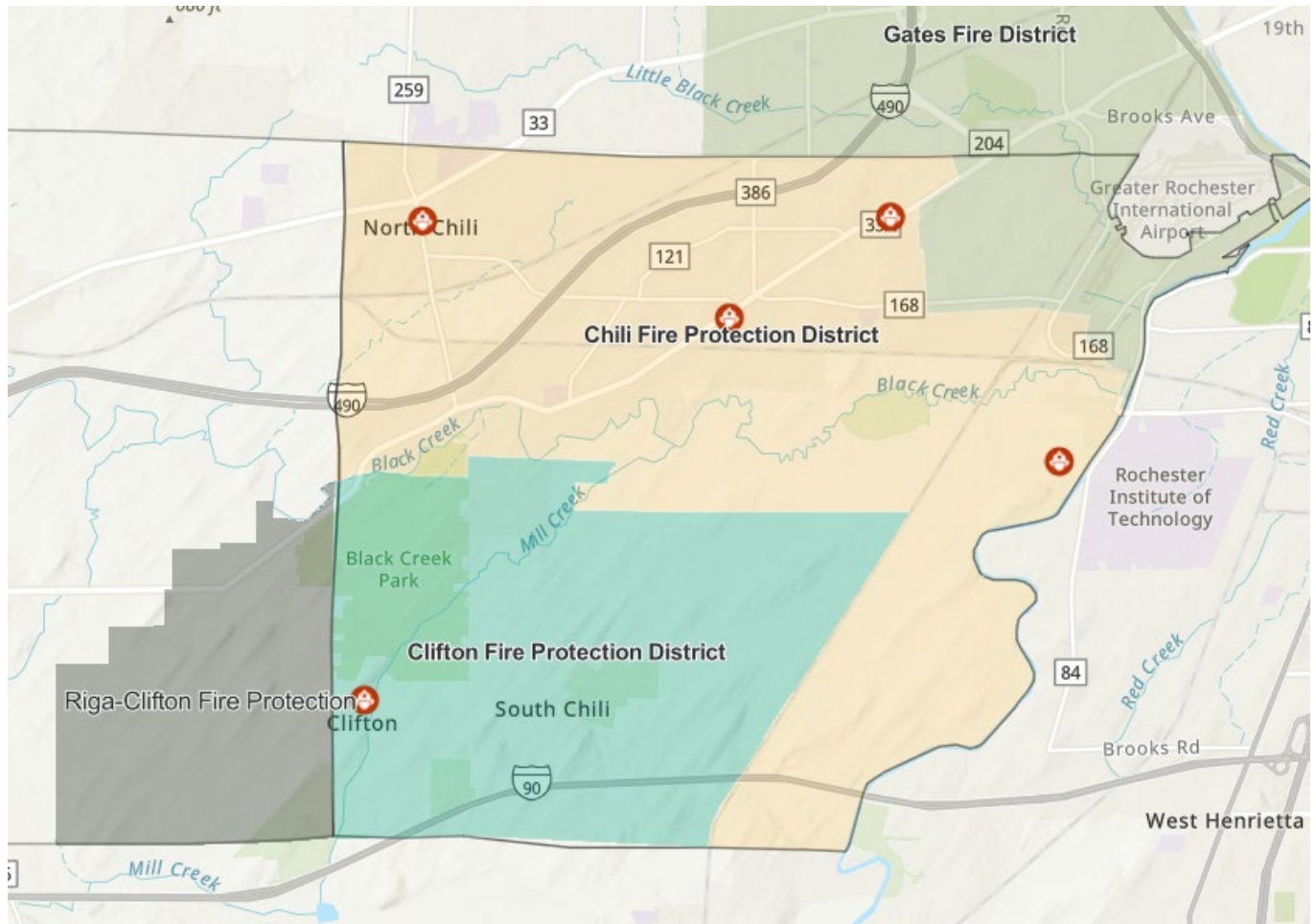
Stations

Chili operates out of four fire stations and Clifton has a single station. The stations range from four years old to fifty years old. Several of the older stations have had significant remodels, but there are also maintenance needs that have been deferred.

Station	Address	Year Built	Apparatus
Chili Company #1	3225 Chili Ave	2022	5

Chili Company #2	3310 Union Street	1976	3
Chili Company #3	2856 Chili Ave	1976	3
Chili Company #4	15 Circle Drive	1989	2
Clifton	53 Wheatland Center Rd	1991	6

The map below shows the location of five fire stations in Chili, as well as the district borders and the portion of Riga covered by Clifton.



Calls for Service

The table below shows a summary of the calls for service for the two departments. An important note is the table is based on two different time periods. Chili averages 1,015 calls per year over a five-year period from 1/1/2020 to 12/31/2024. Clifton averages 125 calls per year over a three-year period from 1/1/2022 to 12/31/2024.

There is a significant variation in the call types responded to by the departments. Clifton chooses to respond to nearly all EMS requests for service in its area, while Chili chooses to respond only to the more serious medical conditions or when the ambulance responding has

a long estimated time of arrival. Because of these variations in policy, 57% of Clifton's calls are for EMS, compared with 28% of Chili's calls.

Call Type	Chili Fire			Clifton Fire		
	Time Period 1/20 to 12/24	Annual Average	Percent	Time Period 1/22 to 12/24	Annual Average	Percent
Cat. 1: Fire Incidents	303	60.6	6%	16	5.3	4%
Cat. 2: Overpressure/Rupture	29	5.8	1%	0	0.0	0%
Cat. 3: Rescue & EMS	1,419	283.8	28%	213	71.0	57%
Cat. 4: Haz Condition /No fire	645	129.0	13%	58	19.3	16%
Cat. 5: Service Call	497	99.4	10%	32	10.7	9%
Cat. 6: Good Intent Call	997	199.4	20%	11	3.7	3%
Cat. 7: False Alarm & False Call	1,099	219.8	22%	38	12.7	10%
Cat. 8: Sev. Weather/Nat. Disaster	16	3.2	0.30%	0	0.0	0%
Cat. 9: Special Incident Type	69	13.8	1%	6	2.0	2%
Total	5,074	1014.8		374	124.7	

Response Times

Response-time data from both Chili and Clifton represent the time interval from when the incident is created at the 911 Center to the time the first unit arrives on-scene, which is not necessarily the first apparatus to arrive. Specific apparatus arrival times are not part of the available data, but each department should review their operations to ensure that their apparatus are arriving in a timely manner. High-impact events such as structure fires should have a specific review to ensure that adequate apparatus and trained personnel arrive on scene within 10 minutes, 80 percent of the time.

The following table is taken from reports submitted in 2025 to the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). Chili switched to the new National Emergency Response Information System on July 1, 2025, so their data is only for the first six months. Chili's response times are slightly longer than Clifton's at all periods of the day. There are several likely factors. First, Chili does not respond to routine alarms with lights and sirens, instead going with the flow of traffic. These alarms account for more than a third of all calls and a non-lights and sirens response can be several minutes longer at all times of the day. Second, the Chili service area is larger and the first apparatus responding is not always the closest apparatus. Chili was aware of the slower response times overnight and has been actively promoting a bunk in program to have a crew available in the station which they report has reduced the response times during the overnight time frame.

Chili Fire Department Response Times Jan 1 to June 30 2025

Calls by Hour	Calls	50th Percentile	80th Percentile	Avg Response Time
Overnight 00:00-03:59	37	10.1 mins	12.7 mins	9.8 mins
Early Morning 04:00-07:59	39	11.7 mins	14.2 mins	10.8 mins
Morning 08:00-11:59	99	8 mins	12.4 mins	8.5 mins
Afternoon 12:00-15:59	124	8.4 mins	11.4 mins	9.5 mins
Evening 16:00-19:59	137	7.4 mins	9.9 mins	8.5 mins
Night 20:00-23:59	81	7.8 mins	9.7 mins	8.3 mins
<i>Total</i>	517			
Clifton Fire Department Response Times 2025				
Calls by Hour	2025	50th Percentile	80th Percentile	Avg Response Time
Overnight 00:00-03:59	9	9.5 mins	13.6 mins	10.1 mins
Early Morning 04:00-07:59	9	9 mins	10.8 mins	9.4 mins
Morning 08:00-11:59	26	5.5 mins	8 mins	6.6 mins
Afternoon 12:00-15:59	37	6 mins	9 mins	6.2 mins
Evening 16:00-19:59	38	6 mins	9 mins	6.7 mins
Night 20:00-23:59	23	7 mins	9 mins	7.1 mins
Total	142			

ISO Ratings

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) provides communities with Public Protection Classification (PPC) reports which rate local fire departments on their capabilities. These ratings form the basis of fire insurance rates in the community: when a department is highly rated, insurance premiums can be lower, and conversely can be higher when a department has low ratings.

A comparison of the most recent Insurance Services Offices (ISO) reports for found several points of interest.

- The communication section of the ISO report was identical when reviewed. Chili no longer has their own on-duty dispatchers so it would be worthwhile to have a new report conducted to determine if additional points may be gained by having the Monroe County Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) answering and dispatching alarms for them.
- Deployment Analysis shows a vast difference in points for the departments. Chili obtained 7.07 points out of 10, compared to Clifton obtaining 2.48 points out of 10 points. This section of the ISO report evaluated the fire station locations and the on-scene response times from the various locations of incidents in the community. A better point classification would be possible if the departments were combined into one operational unit.

- Company personnel points were almost identical when the reports were reviewed. There would not be many additional points obtained by joining the two departments into one operation.
- Chili obtained 54% of possible points - for training while Clifton only receives 10% of the possible points in this category. By joining training programs Clifton would receive an increase in this category.
- Chili has been rated Class 03/3X³. In New York, a Class 3 department falls in the top quarter of all state fire departments. Clifton has been rated Class 05/5X⁴. In New York, a Class 5 department falls in the top two-thirds of all state fire departments.

Mutual Aid/Automatic Aid

A distinction must be made between “automatic aid” and “mutual aid”. In the specific case of the departments, predetermined locations in the areas of the town should receive either an engine company, ladder company, or rescue company automatically from surrounding fire departments on the initial dispatch. This is referred to “automatic aid” agreements. The “mutual aid” is the request for additional resources when an incident goes beyond the capabilities and resources of the initial dispatch of fire apparatus.

Both departments utilize the resources of neighboring departments on a regular basis while they also provide mutual aid as part of several reciprocal agreements. One of the drawbacks to the mutual service agreements is that some communities immediately surrounding the Town of Chili have had a hard time with volunteer firefighters responding to mutual aid requests, let alone their own incidents.

A very important assumption underlying the current size of the department is that both departments are designed to handle the current day-to-day incidents and be able to respond to various types of incidents over the course of the year. When multiple incidents are received, the department’s mutual service agreements would be automatically implemented requesting aid from fire departments surrounding the fringe areas of the town of Chili.

Training

Fire training programs are the backbone for effective fireground operations and administration in the fire departments. Over the last 20 years, the types of calls the fire service is responding to have evolved into specific types of events the fire department needs to be trained for. The types of incidents required today consist of Hazardous Materials, Technical Rescues and Special Operations, just to name a few.

Both departments have very diverse training programs suited to meet the demands of today’s call volumes. Even though these types of training meet the needs of the community, the

³ The second part of the score, “3X”, reflects the increased risk level for properties more than 1,000 feet from an FSRs creditable water supply (i.e., a hydrant, suction point, or dry hydrant).

⁴ The second part of the score, “5X”, reflects the increased risk level for properties more than 1,000 feet from an FSRs creditable water supply (i.e., a hydrant, suction point, or dry hydrant).

attendance and duration of the programs could be strengthened. Attendance at Clifton should be reevaluated to try have more members attend required training programs. Per the ISO PPC study, Chili received a substantial number of points for their programs.

Finances

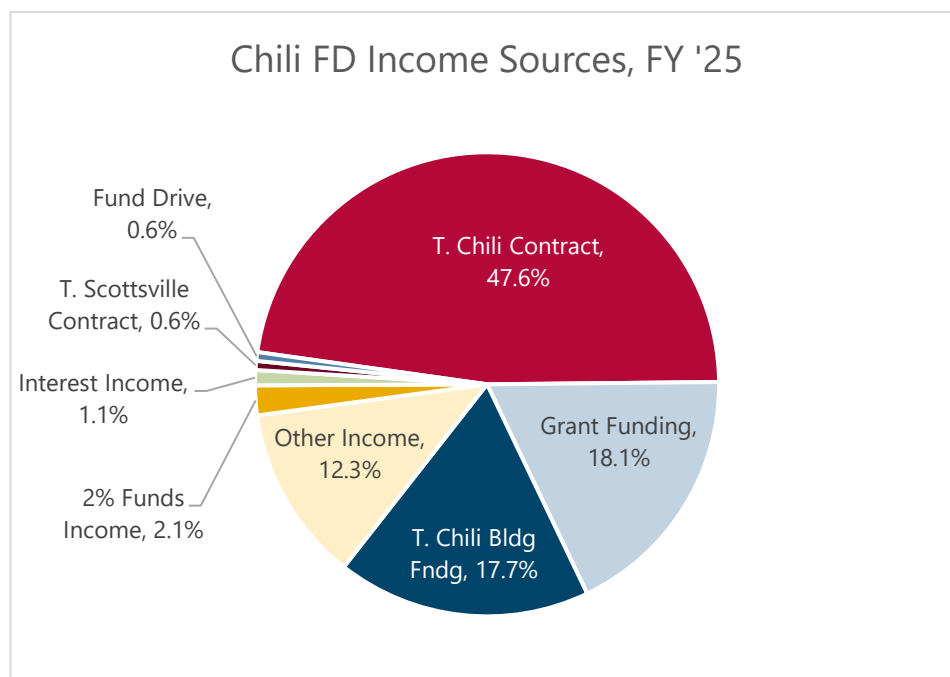
Both Chili and Clifton have maintained positive budgets balances in recent years. Chili has reserve funds totaling approximately \$5 million at the end of 2025, while Clifton's reserve funds total approximately \$1.3 million.

Chili Finances

Income

Chili's leadership notes that in the past two years, its finances have improved due to garnering substantial grants, including amounts totaling \$120,000 in 2024 and \$658,000 in 2025.

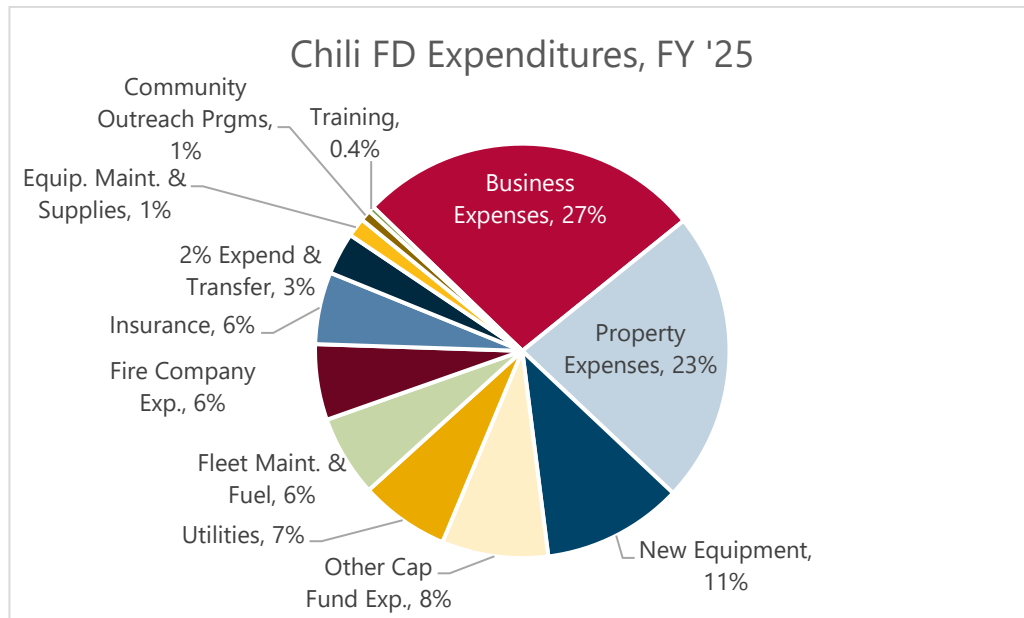
Chili's top four budgetary sources, accounting for 96% of its total income in its FY '25, are: the Town of Chili Fire Contract (\$1,750,000), Grant Funding (\$664,000), Town of Chili Building Funding (\$650,000), and Other Income including Realized and Unrealized Gains (\$451,000). 2% Funds Income⁵ (\$76,000) makes a small portion of the budget.



⁵ "2% Funds" are monies derived from a state tax on out-of-state insurers' fire insurance premiums that are distributed to NYS fire departments.

Expenditures

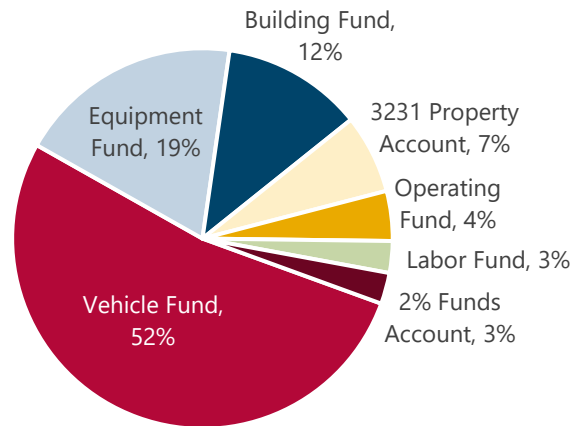
Chili's top five FY 2025 expense categories, accounting for approximately three-quarters of its budget, are Business and Administrative Expenses (\$388,000), which includes wages, salaries and benefits for paid personnel, data services, office costs and professional services; Property Expenses (\$328,000), which includes mortgage, property tax, and building maintenance costs; New Equipment (\$158,000), which includes turnout gear; Other Capital Fund Expenses, (\$119,000), which includes money for PFAS expenses; and Utilities (\$100,000).



Reserve Funds

At the end of 2025, Chili's reserve funds had approximately \$5 million divided between seven funds, with the largest amount (\$2.6 million) reserved for vehicle/apparatus costs, and about \$1 million reserved for equipment.

Chili FD Reserve Funds, Dec. 2025

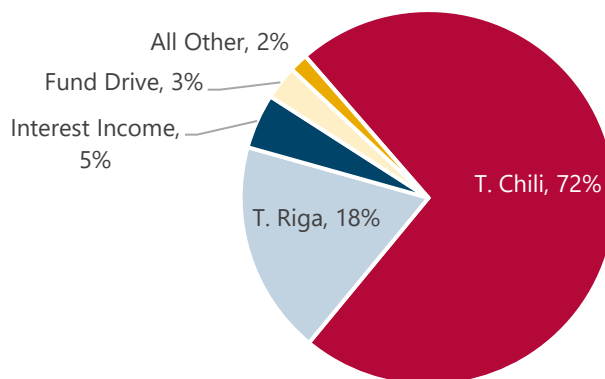


Clifton Finances

Income

Clifton's top four income sources, accounting for 98% of its total income in its FY24-25 are: Town of Chili, (\$204,000), Town of Riga, (\$52,000), interest income (\$13,000), and its Fund Drive (\$15,000).

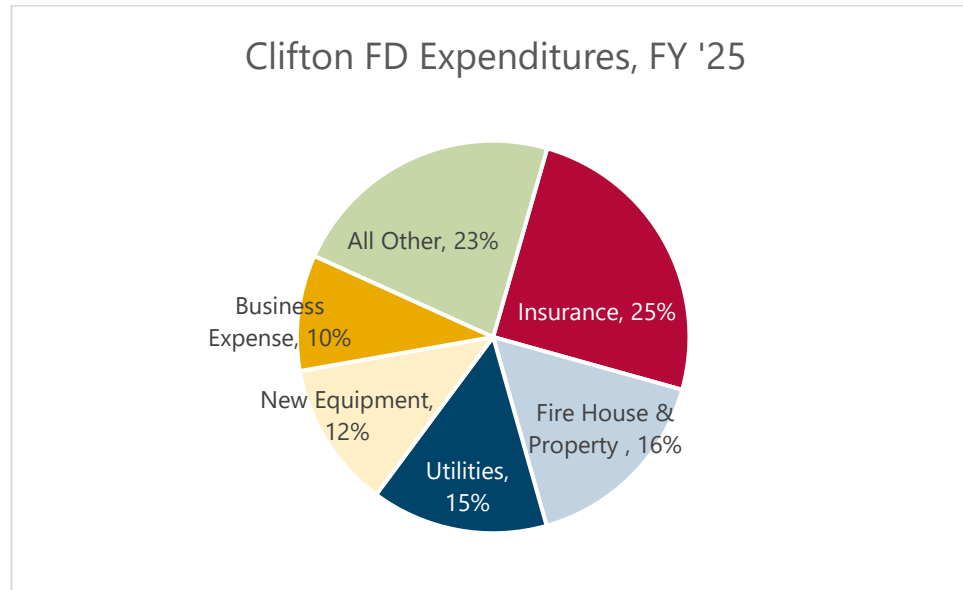
Clifton FD Income Sources, FY '25



Expenditures

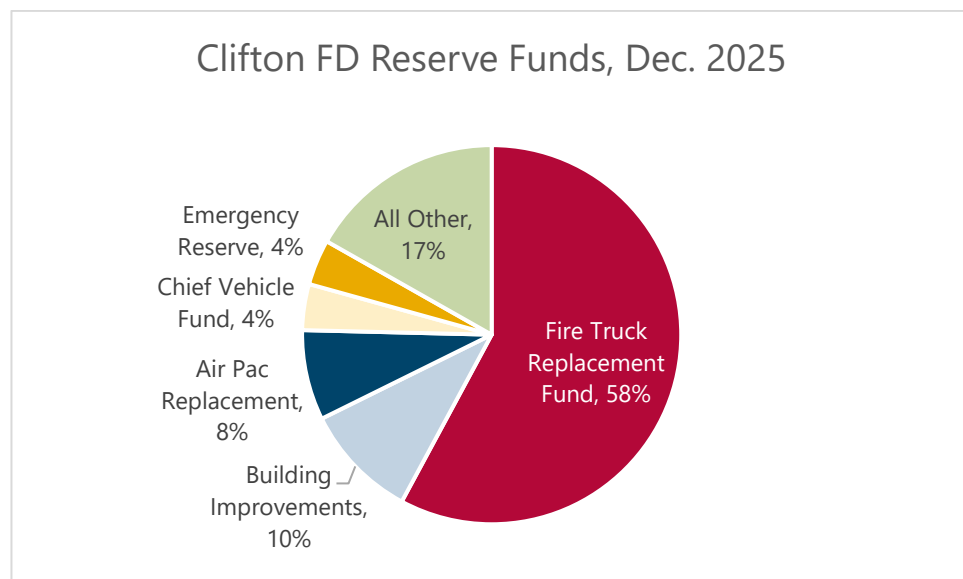
Clifton's five largest expense categories in its FY24-25, accounting for 77% of total expenditures, involve insurance (\$27,000), firehouse and property expenses (\$18,000, which includes building and property improvements and contracts for lawn care and snow removal), utilities (\$16,000), new equipment, (\$13,000) and business expenses (\$10,000). Clifton has not had major apparatus expenses in the last four fiscal years, but continues to move net

revenue into a reserve fund to pay for anticipated future capital (apparatus/building/equipment) expenses.



Reserve Funds

The difference between Clifton's income and expenses is deposited into the reserve fund, which contains approximately \$1.3 million as of the end of 2025. The reserve funds are divided into a number of different categories, with the largest amounts for fire truck replacement (\$743,000), building improvements (\$126,000), air pack replacement (\$99,000), Chief's vehicle replacement (\$50,000), and an emergency reserve (\$50,000).



Property Tax Rates

The tax rates for fire protection vary widely in Monroe County and even in the three different districts in Chili. The Clifton Fire Protection district has among the lowest tax rates in the County at \$0.65 per thousand or \$195.00 annually for a home of \$300,000 in value. The tax rate in Chili Fire Protection district at \$1.04 per thousand or \$312 annually for a home of \$300,000 in value falls in the lower third of tax rates. In the area served by the Gates Fire District, the tax rate is \$4.58 per thousand or \$1,398 annually for a home of \$300,000 in value falls in the top 10% of tax rates.

Fire District/Fire Protection District	2026 Total Tax	Rate per Thousand	Equalized Tax Rate per Thousand	Cost for a \$300,000 home	Rank in County out of 45
Chili	\$2,789,360.00	\$1.04	\$1.04	\$312.00	26
Clifton - Chili	\$214,991.00	\$0.65	\$0.65	\$195.00	34
Clifton - Riga	\$83,506.00	\$1.04	\$1.04	\$312.00	24
Gates FD	\$14,814,463.00	\$4.58	\$4.58	\$1,374.00	4
Gates FD - Chili	\$2,773,497.00	\$4.66	\$4.66	\$1,398.00	5
Henrietta FD	\$19,447,309.00	\$2.70	\$2.70	\$810.00	10
Henrietta -FD West Brighton	\$2,133,092.00	\$4.57	\$2.70	\$808.89	11
Riga	\$349,345.00	\$1.04	\$1.04	\$312.00	24
Spencerport FD (Ogden)	\$2,526,703.00	\$1.11	\$1.11	\$333.00	23
Wheatland Scottsville Joint FD	\$575,000.00	\$2.18	\$1.48	\$444.72	17
Source: Monroe County					

Departmental Interviews

CGR met extensively with leadership and members of both Chili FD and Clifton FD. Separate findings for each department are presented in the “Firefighter Perspectives” sections at the end of each department profile. There were also a number of common themes shared across both departments.

Increasing challenges to volunteering

Volunteers identified a number of changes occurring over the past decades that are making volunteer firefighting feel less rewarding and more burdensome.

American culture as a whole is switching towards an emphasis on home life, family time and private entertaining, and away from the group social events and collective activities that characterized previous generations and helped drive large-group volunteerism. Simultaneously, there has been a decline in shift work and in employers who will release their members to respond to calls, making it increasingly difficult to fill some time blocks.

At the same time, more is being asked of volunteers: in the name of safety, basic training and certification classes have increased in scope to require more and more of a volunteer's time. It is expected that new standards from OSHA will come with even more requirements.

As well, volunteer companies also rely on members to step into leadership positions on the business side, managing finances and handling required paperwork like records and reporting, training, etc. One Chili company estimated that this can require an extra 20 hours per week from those in leadership positions.

One common complaint across volunteer departments is the perception that calls are increasingly shifting away from 'true emergencies' to more trivial quality-of-life calls. Volunteers are often highly motivated to go on serious calls, like structure fires and motor vehicle accidents. However, repeated false alarms, malfunctioning smoke alarms, and calls for minor medical issues, such as panic attacks or gastrointestinal distress, sap volunteers' energy and enthusiasm.

These increasing demands are not the fun and rewarding side of volunteer firefighting: people join to serve their communities by fighting fires and providing medical aid, not to spend time on paperwork, cleaning, false alarms, or seemingly endless training requirements. It is tough to balance increasing demands with personal and family life, and even harder to personally justify when service does not provide the same level of excitement and satisfaction that previous generations gained from it.

The importance of firehouse/fire company identity

Each different fire company and firehouse has a distinct atmosphere and personality to it. Every fire company was the same in emphasizing their cohesion and group identity, often stating that the fire company felt like a family or a community, and that members of that company were supportive of each other, with the older members mentoring the newer and less-experienced members.

While this sentiment is very common in fire companies, it points to the important truth that members bond and feel identity with the people they are regularly around and work with. The personal sense of connection is formed at the company/firehouse level, rather than the higher and more abstract departmental level. Therefore, anything that disrupts company connections also has the potential to disrupt a person's connection to the department as a whole. This is important to bear in mind in any discussion about the pluses and minuses of a potential merger. While Clifton's membership are generally opposed to a potential merger (discussed more below), there are also some Chili members who primarily identify with their companies over the whole department, who would likely quit if they were asked to move to another company or their company was merged with a different company.

Incentives

In discussions, many members argued that younger generations are less committed to volunteering for free and want some kind of compensation for their time and labor. In the most obvious case, this leads some to use volunteer service as a steppingstone into a paid fire career. While this pathway is good for bolstering regional fire service, overall, it is not ideal for volunteer departments, as they lose the time and resources they have invested in training that member, unless the member continues volunteering in addition to their career work, as some do.

In interviews and meetings, members discussed a variety of possible incentives to boost volunteering. This includes LOSAP, the Length Of Service Award Program, which provides a modest pension-like stipend to volunteers at retirement age based on service credits they accrue in previous years. Other possibilities include property tax credits/abatements and some kinds of compensation for participating in calls.

Members were mixed on LOSAP – Chili has a program (discussed more below), while Clifton never started a program, due to expense. In any case, many members state that LOSAP is not an effective recruiting incentive for young members, as retirement seems distant, and the amounts seem low. However, it may be helping as a retention incentive for some older Chili members.

Likewise, property tax abatements are not a meaningful incentive for young members who do not own property, such as students and apartment-dwellers.

Various direct monetary incentives, such as pay-per-call incentives, may not currently be legally compatible with volunteer status. However, legislation is being advanced at the state level which could change this by allowing pay-per-call and pay on call stipends for volunteers, along with travel expense reimbursements.⁶ The bill is just in its initial committee stage, and in the current version, pay would be capped at \$50 per call, or \$5,000 per year.⁷

Whether or not this is ultimately approved, volunteer organizations are already allowed to compensate their members for regular expenses. For example, Chili's bunk-in program provides money for participants to buy meals, either at restaurants or to cook themselves at the stationhouse. This is reportedly attractive to volunteers not only for the free meals, but also because eating and cooking together helps build camaraderie.

Opinions About a Potential Merger

Chili leadership and members were broadly open to the idea of a potential merger between Chili and Clifton, with a few key reservations. Clifton leadership and members are broadly opposed to the possibility of a merger.

⁶ Assembly Bill A10630: <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2025/A10630>.

⁷ <https://www.wxxinews.org/new-york-public-news-network/2026-04-08/lawmakers-look-at-pay-for-volunteer-firefighters-to-address-shortage>.

Added Responsibilities

Some Chili members expressed concern that taking on Clifton's area would add more responsibilities, size and burdens to a department that already has some challenges operating and managing everything that it is currently responsible for.

Chili is also generally more selective about EMS calls – for instance, Chili may not pick up lift assist calls if an EMT member is not available to go – and notes that members express frustration with the paperwork required after calls they deem less serious. By contrast, Clifton's membership derives a lot of value from providing EMS response into the Town of Riga, including to the trailer park, which is a major source of calls. Chili leadership expressed ambivalence about maintaining a response into Riga after a potential Chili-Clifton merger, concerned it might strain their membership further.

Potential Loss of Membership

Both Chili and Clifton members indicated that they believed a large number of Clifton volunteers may quit in the event of a merger. For Chili, some members were concerned that a combined department would still be responsible for Clifton's area, but without a sufficient number of volunteers. For Clifton, members from Riga joined to serve their community and were concerned that a combined Chili department would drop coverage of Riga, which would eliminate their motivation for continuing.

Reducing Operational Differences

There are current differences between Chili and Clifton gear (such as airpacks) and organization of equipment (for example, Chili crosslays the hose on its trucks while Clifton uses reels), that might reduce interoperability. A combined department would eventually move to a common standard for organization. Chili members were positive on this possibility, stating that moving to a common training standard and common practices would improve how the departments work together. Clifton members were negative, stating that if they had to relearn how to do things Chili's way, this would alienate those members used to doing things Clifton's way.

Chili and Clifton already have good working cooperation, with the departments training together a few times per year and offering mutual/automatic aid on serious calls such as Structure Fire class A and Motor Vehicle Accident - Patient Trapped calls.

Apparatus Needs

In the event of a merger, Clifton foresees that perhaps one of their engines might be eliminated. Clifton Leadership notes that while the grass truck does not see much use because of its specialized nature, its maintenance and operation costs are very low.

Key Findings

- The volunteer fire service in Chili is well organized and full of dedicated volunteers who give thousands of hours each year to protect their community.

- By all measurers, the Chili Fire Department is larger than the Clifton Fire Department.
- The number of effective volunteers has declined slightly in recent years.
- The overall number of apparatus is appropriate for the needs of the community, but there could be a shift in the type of apparatus used.
- The existing stations provide good coverage to most of the Town, but there is a gap in an area that is seeing growth with more planned.
- The stations are well maintained, but there is need for significant renovation at several of the Chili stations.
- The predominant type of response is for emergency medical services calls, followed by false alarm calls. Clifton has a larger share of EMS calls in its total call volume because they respond to all EMS calls, while Chili chooses to respond only to the most serious calls. Chili responds to about 1,015 calls per year on average, while Clifton responds to about 125 calls per year.
- The demand for service drops substantially late in the evening and on overnights. The peak of demand is at a time when many volunteers are at work.
- The two departments work together frequently on calls for service, with Chili responding to all major events in Clifton and Clifton responding to most major events in the areas that border their district.
- Both departments have response time intervals that meet the target of having a unit on scene of an alarm within 10 minutes of the call being answered on 8 out of 10 calls. Because of different tracking methods, it is not possible to directly compare the departments.
- The ISO PPC rating for Chili is a 3 and for Clifton it is a 5. If both departments merge into one operational unit, it would be feasible that the insurance rating in the areas of Clifton would be improved from a Protection Class 5 to a Protection Class 3. In addition, it could also be possible that both departments would receive a Protection Class 4, thus reducing the fire insurance rates in Clifton and possibly increasing the fire insurance rates for the properties in the current Chili fire protection area. A detailed study needs to be conducted to see if this merger would be beneficial for both agencies.
- The existing funding mechanism by the Town supports the current operations of the two departments, but future growth and growing costs will require additional investment, particularly for the Chili Fire Department.
- The cost of fire protection and fire tax rates in the area of study are among the lowest in first ring suburbs of Rochester. They are substantially lower than the neighboring Gates Fire District and Henrietta Fire District. The tax rates are similar to more rural areas such as Riga, Ogden-Parma, and Scottsville Wheatland.

Recommendations

The recommendations that follow fall into categories separated below. The Town plays an important role in funding the departments, but does not have a role in the day to day operations unless it places requirements in its contracts to the departments. Open

communication about the funding needs for the fire service is essential to ensure adequate fire protection going forward. Similarly, the Town should establish its expectations for service from the Departments and require that they report on their ability to meet the expectations.

Apparatus & Stations

The Town of Chili needs the right mix of stations and apparatus to provide complete coverage, while avoiding an excess of either. Based on CGR's analysis of current apparatus and station placement, drawing on the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA's) 8-minutes-on-scene response standard, CGR foresees that Chili's current aerial/ladder trucks (the quints) and rescue trucks could be reduced from two to one⁸. At the same time, the number of engines covering Chili should be increased by one, along with a new station to house it, particularly if there is continued growth in the area of Union Street and Chili Avenue that borders the two districts.

Chili currently has two engines, a rescue and a quint on order to replace the older vehicles in their fleet. The time from order to delivery can be as long as three years depending on the specifications.

Engine Needs

Based on our analysis, if the departments were to merge, the combined department would ideally have six (6) engine companies, plus a reserve engine that could be housed anywhere and used to fill in at any station where an engine is out of service.

Given Chili's four engine companies and Clifton's two engine companies, the Town currently is covered by six engine companies. Two operate from Clifton. A fifth fire station for Chili should be considered to assure full coverage for future incidents.

The location of Chili Ave. and Union St. in West Chili may assist in reducing response times to areas that are currently seeing construction and expansion of residential neighborhoods. It should be noted that two major fires have occurred in this area in the past several years. The station location could jointly house an engine company from both fire departments and decrease response times in this area if a volume of members lives within close proximity of this new location.

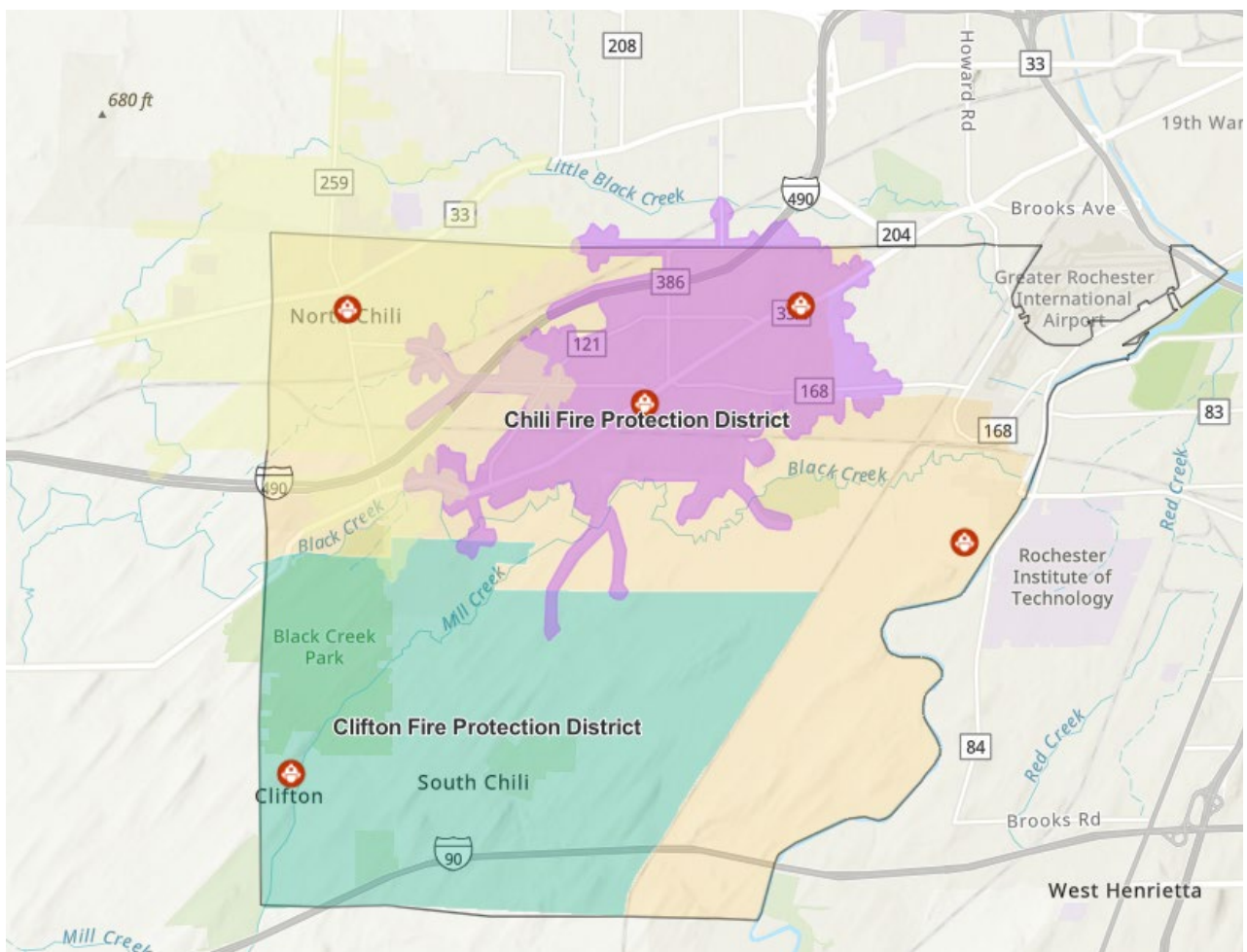
Aerial Ladder & Rescue Companies

Aerial ladder companies and rescue companies need to be evaluated to assist in response times and proper locations to determine the sufficient number of apparatus. There are two criteria utilized to determine the effective number of aerial apparatus that should be in

⁸ Chili is already addressing the number of rescue trucks by purchasing a rescue pumper to combine the features of an engine and rescue truck. Also, having two quints leads to an operational efficiency under the current crew mustering process. When both a quint and engine are needed for an alarm, which ever station is able to staff an engine first goes enroute and then the quint from the other station will respond. Additionally, having two quints available provides redundancy to ensure that one is in service.

service. One methodology uses the ISO grading schedule, and the second utilizes National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1720 response times, based on travel distance from current fire station locations.

In the Insurance Service Office (ISO) grading schedule, individual ladder and service response areas with at least five buildings of three stories (32 feet in height), or with at least five buildings that have fire flow requirements more than 3,500 gallons per minute, or with at least 5 buildings meeting any combination of that criteria, should have an in-service ladder company. Even when no individual response area needs a ladder company under these criteria, the fire protection area needs at least one ladder company if buildings in the Fire Protection area meet these criteria. Service response areas (2.5 road miles) not needing an actual ladder company must have a rescue or service company available. The following map shows the 2.5 mile drive distance for the existing ladders in Chili. There is considerable overlap between the quint's stationed at Companies 1 and 2. The quint at Company 1 provides sufficient coverage for the district.



Currently, Chili has two aerial/ladder trucks (both quint's) and two rescue vehicles. Based on our analysis of response times per NFPA standards, this could be reduced to one quint and one heavy rescue adequately covering the Town.

However, ISO ratings would gain a point by maintaining two ladder trucks/quints and the operational model of Chili benefits from having a quint available at two different stations to help ensure at least one is available. The Town and Chili will have to determine whether it is cost-effective to maintain both ladder trucks in service in order to gain this improvement in ISO rating and the aforementioned operational flexibility. Chili is moving away from a second heavy rescue by switching to a rescue pumper.

Seeing the community has two in-service ladder companies, one could be credited as a reserve ladder and be utilized on a regular basis as the reserve ladder.

The community should refer to the GIS study to determine the effectiveness of the current Ladder and Rescue companies' locations. Both departments should review this standard and try to obtain the necessary staffing and on-scene times, when possible.

Staffing & Response Times

Both departments should consider establishing an in-station staffing program. Volunteer firefighters would be in the stations and on-duty to respond immediately to any areas in the Town of Chili serviced by the Chili or Clifton fire departments. The fire chiefs should establish a specific turnout response time for the personnel that are in the fire stations. This time helps to decrease the overall response and on scene times. Chili does encourage this on evenings and overnights which has been shown to be successful in having a consistent presence in the station. However, the bulk of the responses for Chili occur during the normal business day when traffic is also more difficult to navigate. Addressing daytime response staffing should be a high priority for the Chili Fire Department given their heavy call volume.

Sharing Services & Resources

Administrative Sharing

Chili and Clifton should consider where they can share administrative resources to the benefit of both departments.

Records management

The two departments could establish a joint record management system (RMS) for both departments to utilize. Some of the information in the new RMS could be:

- Personnel records and maintenance
- Personnel information
- Inventories
- Health and Safety records
- Medical records

Joint purchasing

The departments could leverage joint purchasing to achieve more favorable rates and help standardize equipment. This could include:

- Station supplies and consumables
- Firematic equipment
- SCBAs and related gear –There would be potential cost-savings and increased operational efficiency if Clifton standardizes to the same SCBA platform that Chili is using when making new airpack purchases.
- Insurance policies
- Medical services: physicals and pulmonary function testing by medical professionals

Training resources

There are a number of areas where the two departments could further coordinate training. This includes exploring where they could both coordinate on:

- Training facilities and programs
- Training together to increase efficiency
- Live fire training
- Recruit training
- In-service training
- OSHA training standards
- Apparatus operator training
- Office development and leadership programs
- Develop a training program for both departments that brings best practices to the fire ground.

Response Adequacy

The goal of both fire departments is to ensure public safety and a proper emergency response to those they cover. Egos, history and tradition must take a back seat to this goal. This requires each department to keep a tight overview on the adequacy of responses and be honest and forthcoming to the Town when they are no longer able to provide an adequate response. In the same vein, the goal of the Town should be to support both Chili FD and Clifton FD with whatever resources they can for as long as the departments are able to maintain an adequate response.

Defining an adequate response is important for ensuring that the departments are maintaining a standard of performance that will protect their communities. When volunteer departments are no longer able to consistently meet the standard of an adequate response, it will be necessary to shift to a hybrid or fully paid model to ensure continued public safety.

Both departments should review their current mutual aid/automatic aid agreements and response areas and update the apparatus type that response to specific areas of the districts.

All the information should be placed in the CAD system at the Emergency Communications Department (ECD).

Fire Response

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) defines national standards for fire response. According to NFPA Standard 1720, with the Town of Chili classified as Suburban Area due to its population density, for a fire incident, departments should be meeting the goal of having 10 staff on scene in 10 minutes or less in at least 80% of their responses.

In terms of apparatus, the standard response for a first-alarm structure fire should be two Engine Companies and one ladder or rescue company. Each apparatus should be staffed with a minimum of 4 firefighters at all times.

Based on response data from the first seven months of 2025, Chili meets the standard for responding to all events between 4:00 pm and midnight, but not at other times of the day. Looking at the full year of 2025 for Clifton, they meet this standard for all time periods except midnight to 8:00 am. Both departments should evaluate their responses on high impact events such as reports of a fire and serious motor vehicle accidents going forward. If there is a trend that they are not meeting these guidelines on a consistent basis, they should consider adding response staff for those periods of the day.

EMS Response

The Monroe/Livingston Regional EMS standard for First Responder (BLS) calls is: for Priority 1 (Emergent) calls, EMS should be on-scene in 5 minutes or less for 90% of all calls; for Priority 2 (Emergent) calls, EMS should be on-scene in 8 minutes or less for 90% of all calls.

EMS calls were not analyzed separately for this study, but looking at overall call time responses, it is unlikely that they meet this standard.

Merger Possibilities

Although a merger could improve some operational and equipment efficiencies, it is unlikely to improve the biggest issue, which is manpower/volunteer numbers and availability.

Currently, the Town and both departments have more to lose than gain through a merger.

Given this reality, CGR recommends maintaining the status quo of separate Chili and Clifton departments up to the point where it is recognized that either department is unable to mount an adequate response to fire or EMS incidents.

If Clifton is no longer providing an adequate response, Chili will need to assume responsibility through a default merger, absorbing what remains of Clifton under its operational umbrella and tasking available members to respond to the Clifton area. It is not clear how efficient Chili's response would be to Clifton's area, and whether Chili FD would be open to continuing coverage into the Town of Riga.

Resources/Paid staff

Based on our interviews, Clifton does not need any additional funding, resources, or administrative staff at present, given sufficient volunteer support for business operations at current, and adequate fund balances. It may need additional funds to meet apparatus costs in the future, and may require administrative help if the volunteer support for maintenance and the business side of the department diminishes.

Chili's current staff should be supplemented with additional paid support/administrative staff to help ease the burden of routine tasks that would otherwise fall on volunteers. This can reduce burnout and add to volunteer sustainability.

Future Planning

Staffing

As noted above, the trendlines for volunteer fire service across the state and nation are discouraging – this is not a situation unique to the Chili area. Some initiatives at the state level, such as increased reimbursement of training/class fees, and possibly pay-per-call incentives – may help moderate this decline, but we do not anticipate a substantial reversal of this overall trend.

Facing this reality, the Town's long-range planning should anticipate that both Chili and Clifton's existing volunteer coverage will, within the next five to ten years, evolve into a combination department, utilizing a limited number of paid/career firefighters, as volunteer numbers continue to diminish. Some members warned that a combination department might hasten volunteer departures, but there also have been local combination departments that have been able to maintain a healthy balance of career and volunteer firefighters. The key to a healthy relationship between volunteers and career staff seems to lie with strong leadership inside the department that sets clear expectations for roles and responsibilities.

The costs for laborers that respond to calls and/or career firefighters range dramatically depending on the number of staff hired. For example, each full-time firefighter would have costs of about \$100,000 with salary and benefits. Each desired full-time position would require 4 firefighters to staff it. A minimum staffing model to start would result in \$1.6 million in annual expense for 2 firefighters at 2 of the stations 24 hours a day.

Capital Needs

The Chili Fire Department has a well-developed capital plan for its apparatus needs but does not have a firm plan for renovations nor the possibility of adding a fifth fire station. Any upcoming station refurbishments or replacements, which have potential lifespans in the decades, must be planned with sufficient sleeping quarters to accommodate overnight volunteer or full-time career staff, as that will likely be a sizeable component of the firefighter force before these buildings are replaced.

A fifth fire station for Chili should be considered for the 10-year horizon to fill a response gap in the area of Union Street and Chili Avenue. The station should be designed for an engine and facilities to house volunteers and/or career staff.

Financial Resources

To prepare for this eventuality, the Town should begin long-range fiscal planning for the increase costs of adding paid firefighters. Some possible funding scenarios discussed by volunteers during this project included the possibility of a county-based fire department, or several smaller departments joining together to create a fire district that crosses municipal boundaries. The Town has made an inflation-adjusted increase of 25% in funding for the two fire departments since 2015. Adjusted for inflation, Chili's funding has grown 29% while Clifton's has actually declined by 11% over that period. While the Town has managed to stay under the tax cap despite the growth in the tax levy for fire protection, the continued upward pressure may challenge that ability.

The Town should weigh the pros and cons of an independent fire district for the area served by the Chili and Clifton fire companies. A clear positive is that creating a district would remove the fire tax levies out from the tax cap. However, creating the fire district would require developing a plan, public hearings and a potential referendum. The end result would be the Town would no longer get to set the funding for the departments. As noted above, it would be reasonable for Chili to discuss the creation of a fire district with one or more neighboring towns to help spread the cost of fire protection across a broader area. This would become particularly relevant if career staff were added to the department(s).

An alternative to consider would be for the Town to become involved in the purchase of apparatus for the fire departments. Town Law does allow for the purchase of apparatus for the fire departments. The Town would retain title but the departments would operate them.

Additionally, the Town of Chili should meet with the Town of Riga to understand its contingency plans in the eventuality that Clifton or a merged Chili/Clifton department is no longer providing fire and EMS coverage into Riga. The Town of Riga may opt to expand the Churchville Fire Department to provide coverage to that area.

Prioritization of Recommendations

The Chili Fire Department and Clifton Fire Department are each meeting the fire protection needs of the community. However, both have opportunities for operational improvement and both would benefit from a more robust response at certain times of the day – particularly overnights and during normal business hours.

The fire department leaders must honestly and continuously evaluate if their responses meet the appropriate targets for timeliness (10 minutes or less 80% of the time for non-EMS calls and faster for EMS calls) and number of personnel (10 or more qualified staff for reports of a fire). If they are not meeting these targets for all times of day, they should consider increasing volunteer incentives for the challenging times of day or adding paid responders.

The capital expenses of the departments need to continue to be planned for and should include the potential of significant facility renovation and new station for the area of Union Street and Chili Avenue.

The Town should continue to provide the needed financial support for the fire departments as part of a cohesive effort to sustain volunteerism. This should include clear plans for capital needs and regular reporting on the adequacy of response from the departments. The Town may need to increase the funding by up to 10% annually for several years to ensure the stations, apparatus and volunteer incentives can sustain a healthy volunteer response. While this growth might seem excessive, it equals the cost of about two full-time firefighters. If either company had to add career staff, it is likely that a minimum of 16 would need to be hired.

Chili Fire Department Profile

For each department, CGR conducted a number of different interviews with leadership, operational staff and members to develop a comprehensive view of concerns and opinions.

For Chili FD, CGR met with department leadership in fall and summer 2025, including President Gerad Levey, Treasurer Pat Quinn, Administrator Bill Anderson, Chief Andrew Wilkinson, and Deputy Chiefs Mike Lopez and Dylan Niewiemski. CGR also met separately again with Bill Anderson to further understand his role and responsibilities as Department Administrator. CGR conducted a follow-up meeting focused on operational aspects of fire response with just Chili's Chief and Deputy Chiefs.

Overview from Leadership

Interviews with Chili FD's business-side and operational leadership addressed a number of key issues for the department.

Volunteer Numbers and Commitment

Chili has been able to maintain its volunteer ranks at about 100 in recent years, but this includes turnover, with some joining as others leave. A limiting factor has been a shortage of available seats in training programs run by the Monroe County Fire Bureau. Chili leadership believes this is a systemic imbalance that needs to be addressed, with more firefighters aging out of the system annually than seats are available to train replacements. Because of this, Chili has been trying to get creative on where to send people for training, including sending some to Livingston County or to other programs in counties west of Rochester.

Leadership observed that newer generations of volunteers may struggle with the level of commitment required. It is increasingly difficult to find volunteers who will put more than 10-12 hours per week into volunteer duties, which leaves them less time to accomplish the routine maintenance and preparation tasks needed to support call response. Leadership has been addressing this by hiring paid personnel to assist with time-consuming daily support activities, leaving volunteers with more time for training and call response. Use of paid personnel is described in more detail later in this report

EMS Calls

Chili leadership notes that EMS calls had recently been a struggle to staff, as many calls may seem less serious and calls require paperwork to be completed afterwards. Since meeting with CGR, Chili introduced a CME (Continuing Medical Education) program to support and improve EMT's overall EMS training. Post-implementation, Chili reports having hit 100% of its target on EMS response.

Deployment & Dispatching

The departmental leadership is also reviewing the dispatching and deployment model. One of Chili's challenges is the railroad tracks dividing the town, with limited roads across and trains

sometimes blocking the crossings. Traditionally, to maintain equal coverage, dispatches have been to individual companies, based on call type and location, which determines which apparatus should be dispatched. The company being dispatched had ‘ownership’ of the call, deciding how the response should be handled. Chili is now trying to shift to a more department-wide approach, where everyone collaborates on the response.

Personnel

Chili FD Volunteers	
Total number	108
Interior Qualified Firefighters	61
Certified First Responders	0
Certified EMTs (or higher)	36
Apparatus Drivers (Engine and/or Ladder/Quint)	41
Lieutenants	8
Captains	4
Safety Officer	1
Battalion/Deputy/Assistant Chiefs	6
Chief	1

Chili has just over 100 personnel. A bit over half (56%) are interior-qualified and a third are certified as EMTs. Chili has 19 line officers below the Chief, including two deputy chiefs and four battalion chiefs – one leading each of the companies.

Paid Personnel

Chili has a paid administrator, Bill Anderson, who has a background in emergency dispatch and as a general laborer for Chili. His general duties include managing fleet and equipment availability and maintenance, handling vendors and contracting, insurance and bills, records management, including mandated state and federal fire reporting and training records, and answering all incoming phone calls, which are a mixture of business calls and community inquiries about matters like smoke alarm and fire extinguisher maintenance. Equipment specifics include responsibility for IT, inventory management, department laundry, medical supplies, training consumables, etc. Small equipment repairs are carried out in-house, when possible.

He handles Chili’s fire prevention program, which involves classes and appearances at places like local schools and churches to teach fire safety.

Mr. Anderson also oversees a crew of five laborers and one cleaner who help with these tasks: he is allowed to use laborers for 36 hours per week and a cleaner for 20 hours per week, but he believes he needs more to handle everything. Snow plowing was just added to the responsibilities that laborers cover. Laborers do not respond to any fire calls or get on trucks.

Likewise, he believes the administrative task load is substantial enough that another full-time person should be hired to help with it.

In separate meetings, other Chili leadership expressed the opinion that while additional paid staff may be appropriate for handling administrative or maintenance work that volunteers do not want to do, if paid staff, such as laborers, were added to help respond to calls, the department would quickly start losing volunteers, especially any volunteers who work as career staff in other departments, due to the language in collective bargaining agreements at their career departments.

Stations

Chili features both modern and dated stationhouses. Company #1's station is a thoroughly modern firehouse, with a full set of amenities meant to make it a desirable space for volunteers to spend time. This includes kitchen space and individual rooms for the bunk-in program, plus attractions such as an outdoor firepit. The other three stations have had renovations and upgrades since they have been built, but are still lacking some modern amenities, such as decontamination showers that are directly adjacent to the apparatus bays.

Chili would like to renovate the other three fire stations and bring them up to the standards of station #1 if they are able to.

Company #1	3225 Chili Ave Rochester, NY 14624	# of Bays	6
Typical Apparatus (Radio IDs)	4312,4310,4317,4306,4316	Year Built	2022
Offices (#)	9	Apx. Sq. ft.	21,000
Sleeping Spaces (#) (typical)	8	Gear Wash	Yes
Breathing Air Cascade System	Yes	Exhaust Capture	Yes
Generator	Natural Gas Auto Tested weekly	Security System	Yes
Fire Detection Alarm	Central Station	Sprinkler System	Yes Last Test Date: 05/25

Company #2	3310 Union Street North Chili, NY 14514	# of Bays	6
Typical Apparatus (Radio IDs)	4322,4320,4327	Year Built	1976

Offices (#)	1	Apx. Sq. ft.	6,678
Sleeping Spaces (#) (typical)	0	Gear Wash	Yes
Breathing Air Cascade System	No	Exhaust Capture	Yes
Generator	Natural Gas Auto Tested weekly	Security System	Yes
Fire Detection Alarm	Central Station	Sprinkler System	No

Company #3	2856 Chili Ave Rochester, NY 14624	# of Bays	4
Typical Apparatus (Radio IDs)	4332,4338,4337	Year Built	1976
Offices (#)	2	Apx. Sq. ft.	6,595
Sleeping Spaces (#) (typical)	4 pull-down Murphy Beds installed as of October	Gear Wash	Yes
Breathing Air Cascade System	No	Exhaust Capture	Yes
Generator	Natural Gas Auto Tested weekly	Security System	Yes
Fire Detection Alarm	Central Station	Sprinkler System	No

Company #4	15 Circle Drive	# of Bays	3
Typical Apparatus (Radio IDs)	4342,4348	Year Built	1989
Offices (#)	1	Apx. Sq. ft.	4,000
Sleeping Spaces (#) (typical)	0	Gear Wash	Yes

Breathing Air Cascade System	No	Exhaust Capture	Yes
Generator	Natural Gas Auto Tested weekly	Security System	Yes
Fire Detection Alarm	Central Station	Sprinkler System	No

Apparatus

Chili has been making a concerted effort to upgrade its apparatus through a strategy of bulk buys of base-model standardized/non-customized trucks. While it was the previous practice of Chili and most other departments to customize apparatus to their own unique, traditional specifications, the strategy of purchasing standardized, non-customized base models instead has two major benefits: it significantly decreases cost and lead time from manufacturers, and means that all new apparatus will be configured identically across Chili's companies/stations, which means that all volunteers can respond to any station, even if it is not their home station, and know exactly where everything is on the apparatus.

Currently, Chili has four trucks on order: two engines, a rescue, and a ladder truck. Chili believes that while buying multiple trucks at the same time presents a big short-term cost bump, it will generate savings on long-term costs as apparatus prices will only continue to inflate going forward, lead times will increase, and apparatus will continue to be scarce.

Apparatus # 1						
Radio ID	Type (Engine, Ladder/Quint, Rescue, Other)	Year	Manufacturer	Pump Capacity (GPM)	Tank Size	Aerial Length (Bucket?)
4312	Engine	2015	Pierce	1250	1000	
Supply Hose Diameter	Supply Hose Length Carried	Suppression Hose Diameter	Suppression Hose Length Carried	Foam Capacity	Hydraulic /E-draulic Extrication Tools	Thermal Imaging Cameras
4in	1200ft	1 ¾ 2.5	700 500	30gal	Yes	Yes
Gas Meter	Ground Ladders and Lengths	AED	SCBAs (#)	Seats	Spare Air Tanks	
Yes	24ft, 16ft, Attic Ladder	Yes	8	8	8	
Apparatus # 2						
Radio ID	Type (Engine, Ladder/Quint, Rescue, Other)	Year	Manufacturer	Pump Capacity (GPM)	Tank Size	Aerial Length (Bucket?)

4310	Quint	2009	Pierce	1500	300	100 w Bucket
Supply Hose Diameter	Supply Hose Length Carried	Suppression Hose Diameter	Suppression Hose Length Carried	Foam Capacity	Hydraulic /E-draulic Extrication Tools	Thermal Imaging Cameras
4in	800ft	1 ¾ 2.5	500 200	no	No	Yes
Gas Meter	Ground Ladders and Lengths	AED	SCBAs (#)	Seats	Spare Air Tanks	
Yes	24ft, 35ft, 10ft, 16ft	Yes	6	6	6	
Apparatus # 3						
Radio ID	Type (Engine, Ladder/Quint, Rescue, Other)	Year	Manufacturer	Pump Capacity (GPM)	Tank Size	Aerial Length (Bucket?)
4322	Engine	2015	Pierce	1250	1000	
Supply Hose Diameter	Supply Hose Length Carried	Suppression Hose Diameter	Suppression Hose Length Carried	Foam Capacity	Hydraulic /E-draulic Extrication Tools	Thermal Imaging Cameras
4 in	1200ft	1¾ 2.5	700 500	30 gal	No	Yes
Gas Meter	Ground Ladders and Lengths	AED	SCBAs (#)	Seats	Spare Air Tanks	
Yes	24ft, 16ft, 10ft	Yes	8	8	8	
Apparatus # 4						
Radio ID	Type (Engine, Ladder/Quint, Rescue, Other)	Year	Manufacturer	Pump Capacity (GPM)	Tank Size	Aerial Length (Bucket?)
4320	Quint	2021	Pierce	1500	500	107 No bucket
Supply Hose Diameter	Supply Hose Length Carried	Suppression Hose Diameter	Suppression Hose Length Carried	Foam Capacity	Hydraulic /E-draulic Extrication Tools	Thermal Imaging Cameras
4in	500ft	1 ¾ 2.5	500 500	no	Yes	Yes
Gas Meter	Ground Ladders and Lengths	AED	SCBAs (#)	Seats	Spare Air Tanks	
Yes	24ft, 35ft, 20ft, 16ft	Yes	6	6	6	
Apparatus #5						
Radio ID	Type (Engine, Ladder/Quint, Rescue, Other)	Year	Manufacturer	Pump Capacity (GPM)	Tank Size	Aerial Length (Bucket?)

4332	Engine	2015	Pierce	1500	1000	
Supply Hose Diameter	Supply Hose Length Carried	Suppression Hose Diameter	Suppression Hose Length Carried	Foam Capacity	Hydraulic /E-draulic Extrication Tools	Thermal Imaging Cameras
4in	1200ft	1 ¾ 2.5	700 300	30 gal	No	Yes
Gas Meter	Ground Ladders and Lengths	AED	SCBAs (#)	Seats	Spare Air Tanks	
Yes	24ft, 16ft	Yes	8	8	8	
Apparatus #6						
Radio ID	Type (Engine, Ladder/Quint, Rescue, Other)	Year	Manufacturer	Pump Capacity (GPM)	Tank Size	Aerial Length (Bucket?)
4338	Rescue	2005	RD Murry	0	0	
Supply Hose Diameter	Supply Hose Length Carried	Suppression Hose Diameter	Suppression Hose Length Carried	Foam Capacity	Hydraulic /E-draulic Extrication Tools	Thermal Imaging Cameras
					Yes	Yes
Gas Meter	Ground Ladders and Lengths	AED	SCBAs (#)	Seats	Spare Air Tanks	
Yes	10ft	Yes	9	10	16	
Other Apparatus Features	Water rescue equipment including a boat, Air bags, generator and light tower					
Apparatus #7						
Radio ID	Type (Engine, Ladder/Quint, Rescue, Other)	Year	Manufacturer	Pump Capacity (GPM)	Tank Size	Aerial Length (Bucket?)
4342	Engine	2007	KME	1500	1250	
Supply Hose Diameter	Supply Hose Length Carried	Suppression Hose Diameter	Suppression Hose Length Carried	Foam Capacity	Hydraulic /E-draulic Extrication Tools	Thermal Imaging Cameras
4in	1000 ft	1 ¾ 2.5	1200ft	30 gal	Yes	Yes
Gas Meter	Ground Ladders and Lengths	AED	SCBAs (#)	Seats	Spare Air Tanks	
Yes	35ft, 28ft, 24ft, 20ft, 16ft, 10 ft, 8 ft.	Yes	6	6	6	

Other Apparatus Features						
Apparatus #8						
Radio ID	Type (Engine, Ladder/Quint, Rescue, Other)	Year	Manufacturer	Pump Capacity (GPM)	Tank Size	Aerial Length (Bucket?)
4348	Medium Rescue	1998	Spartan			
Supply Hose Diameter	Supply Hose Length Carried,	Suppression Hose Diameter	Suppression Hose Length Carried	Foam Capacity	Hydraulic /E-draulic Extrication Tools	Thermal Imaging Cameras
					No	Yes
Gas Meter	Ground Ladders and Lengths	AED	SCBAs (#)	Seats	Spare Air Tanks	
Yes	8ft	Yes	5	8	16	
Other Apparatus Features	Water rescue equipment, including an RDC, cascade system, generators and pumps.					

Chili has two rescues; however, only one (4338) is a heavy rescue and has extrication equipment on it. It is currently being replaced with a rescue pumper, which is cheaper than replacing it with a heavy rescue and provides additional capabilities based on current needs. The other rescue is a cascade and salvage truck, which is used to fill air bottles. This is an older truck that is currently not scheduled to be replaced due to the value of the truck, and which has a minimal cost to operate yearly. When this truck reaches the end of its serviceable life, it would be replaced with a squad type vehicle (pickup truck).

Chili keeps two ladder trucks for redundancy within the district. There are multiple large commercial buildings, strip plazas, multi-story apartments, multi-story assisted/senior living centers, and a college with multiple multi-story buildings. Should any major event happen, additional ladders are on automatic mutual-aid assignment, but getting trucks close to the building early to assist with evacuations is a priority. The town is continuing to expand with more large commercial facilities and denser residential apartments, increasing the demand for this capability. The two ladder trucks are also set up with different capabilities: 4320 is prioritized for responding to events at residential dwellings and carries a full complement of extrication equipment to supplement the rescue and assist with response on I-490; 4310 is prioritized for responding to events at commercial and multi-story facilities.

Equipment Testing

Chili maintains a consistent testing and maintenance schedule to ensure all apparatus and safety equipment operate at peak performance. Pump and hose testing are conducted annually by a third-party vendor. Both aerial and ground ladders undergo annual testing, with aerial ladders additionally subject to destructive testing every five years to verify structural

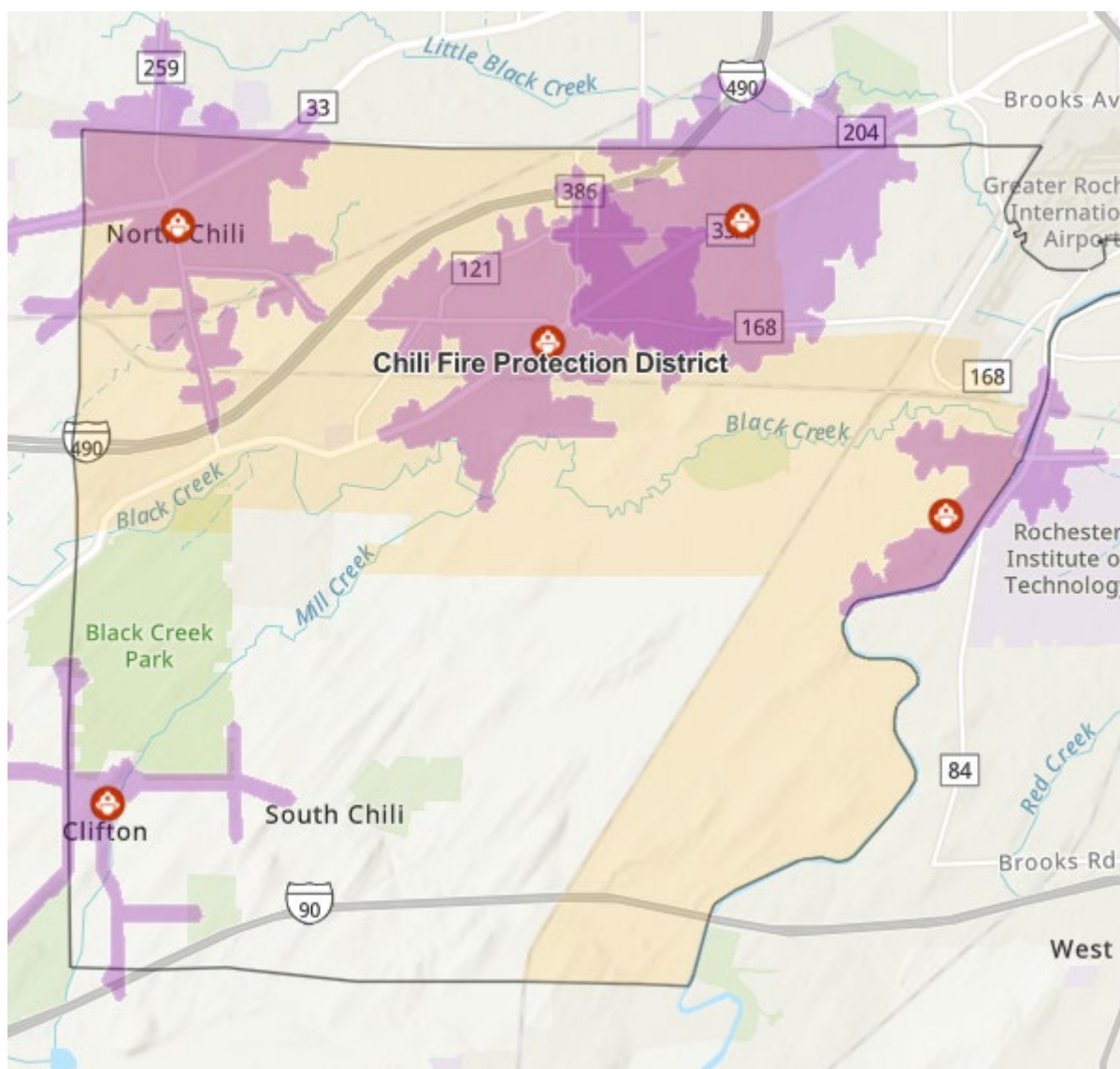
integrity. Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) units are maintained by an external vendor, inspected weekly by department personnel, and tested annually to ensure reliability during operations.

Coverage of District

The following map shows the locations of the stations for the Chili Fire Department and also indicates the area that is within a 1.5-mile drive-distance from the station. A 1.5-mile drive distance is approximately a 5-minute response time from the station if personnel are at the station at the time of the call. An interactive map with multiple layers is available at:

<https://bit.ly/ChiliFireStudy>

1.5 Mile Drive Distance from Stations



Training

Chili maintains a comprehensive training program that is structured to ensure operational readiness, safety, and compliance with state and national guidelines. All members are required to complete 12 annual training, supplemented by company drills to reinforce required skills. Drivers complete both annual training on vehicle operations and biannual pump training.

Firefighters have the opportunity to participate in live fire training exercises at least twice per year. Physical examinations for all firefighters are provided twice yearly at the firehouse, in accordance with NFPA guidelines. Training requirements for volunteer interior firefighters,

officers, and apparatus operators are defined in departmental standards and supporting documentation.

Gear

Currently, approximately 50% of in-service turnout gear is over ten years old (the recommended point for replacement). The department utilizes a combination of turnout gear and helmets from reputable brands including Lion, Morning Pride, Fire Dex, and Inno Tex. Approximately 20% of Chili's firefighters are issued two sets of turnout gear – one kept in their home station and one kept in their vehicle – so that they can respond from multiple stations or directly to the scene. While this entails an extra cost, it allows greater flexibility, increasing prompt response time, and availability.

ISO Report

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) performed a Public Protection Classification (PPC) assessment of Chili FD in 2019. A PPC reviews fire capabilities and produces a set of scores and an overall score that is used by many insurance companies to assess the adequacy of local fire protection, which in turn affects insurance rates. The overall score is from 1-10, with 1 being the highest score.

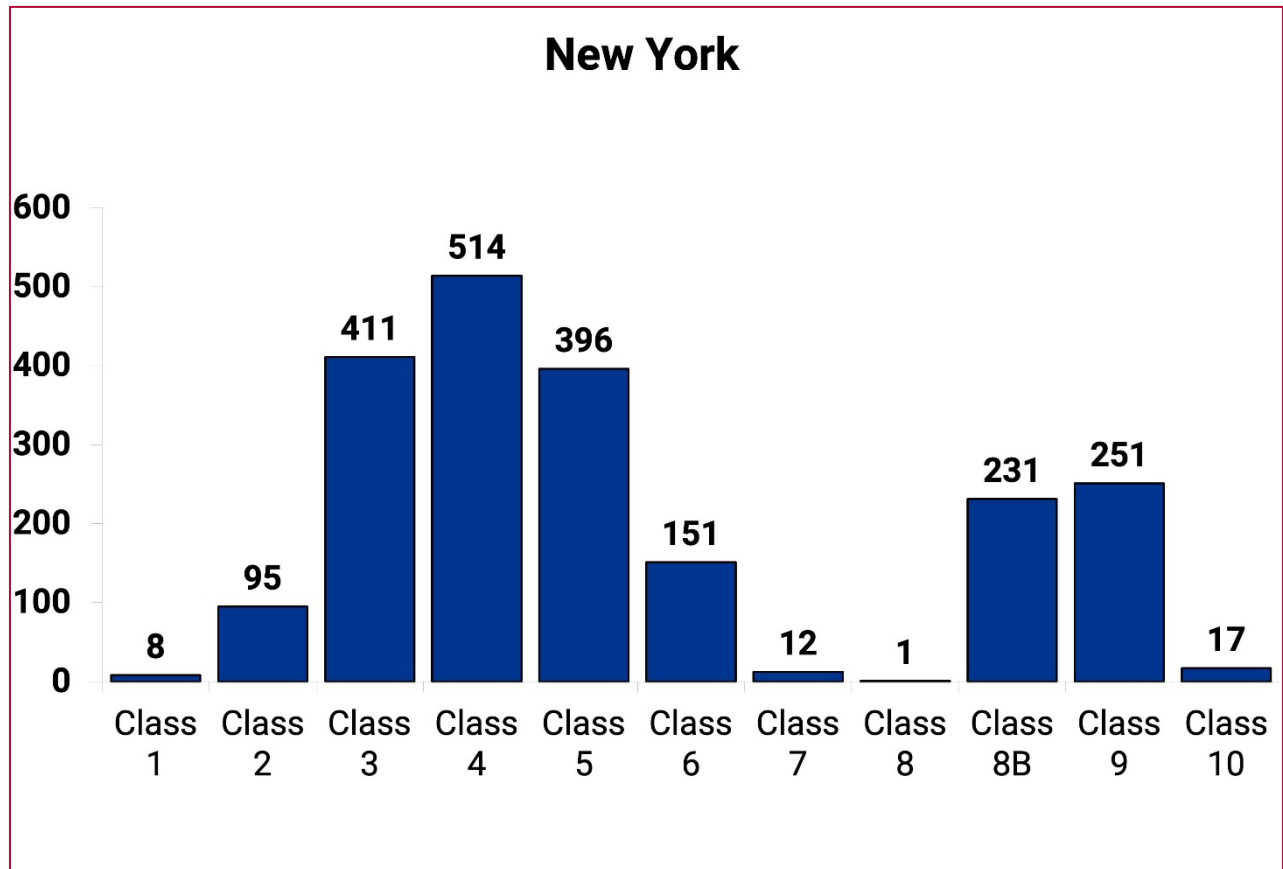
Chili has been rated Class 03/3X⁹. In New York, a Class 3 department falls in the top quarter of all state fire departments.¹⁰

⁹ The second part of the score, "3X", reflects the increased risk level for properties more than 1,000 feet from an FSRs creditable water supply (i.e., a hydrant, suction point, or dry hydrant).

¹⁰ For more information on the rating system, go to the following link:

<https://www.verisk.com/resources/faqs/public-protection-classification-ppc-program/>

Distribution of ISO PPC Scores in New York State¹¹



As displayed in the table below, Chili scored well in most areas under its control, except in relation to company personnel and, to a lesser extent, training. This reflects the volunteer nature of the department: only fully career departments are likely to receive high scores from the ISO in these areas.

FSRS Feature	Earned Credit	Credit Available
Emergency Communications		
414. Credit for Emergency Reporting	2.55	3
422. Credit for Telecommunicators	2.54	4
432. Credit for Dispatch Circuits	1.95	3

¹¹ Source: <https://www.isomitigation.com/ppc/program-works/facts-and-figures-about-ppc-codes-around-the-country/>

440. Credit for Emergency Communications	7.04	10
Fire Department		
513. Credit for Engine Companies	6.00	6
523. Credit for Reserve Pumpers	0.50	0.50
532. Credit for Pump Capacity	3.00	3
549. Credit for Ladder Service	2.99	4
553. Credit for Reserve Ladder and Service Trucks	0.00	0.50
561. Credit for Deployment Analysis	7.07	10
571. Credit for Company Personnel	3.99	15
581. Credit for Training	5.42	9
730. Credit for Operational Considerations	2.00	2
590. Credit for Fire Department	30.97	50
Water Supply		
616. Credit for Supply system	24.77	30
621. Credit for Hydrants	3.00	3
631. Credit for Inspection and Flow Testing	4.00	7
640. Credit for Water Supply	31.77	40
Divergence¹²	-3.50	-
1050. Community Risk Reduction	4.75	5.50
Total Credit	71.03	105.50

Calls for Service Summary

Over the last few years, Chili has been averaging about 1,000 annual calls.

Calls by Time Period

Calls by month

There are no clear patterns of variation in Chili's calls by month, as shown in the table below.

¹² The Divergence factor mathematically reduces the total score based upon the relative difference between the fire department and water supply scores. The factor is introduced in the final equation.

Chili FD Calls by Month	2022	Daily Avg	2023	Daily Avg	2024	Daily Avg	2025	Daily Avg.
January	100	3.2	73	2.4	96	3.1	102	3.3
February	71	2.5	69	2.5	69	2.4	74	2.6
March	86	2.8	89	2.9	79	2.5	85	2.7
April	63	2.1	89	3.0	102	3.4	88	2.9
May	65	2.1	99	3.2	93	3.0	72	2.3
June	81	2.7	81	2.7	88	2.9	96	3.2
July	96	3.1	80	2.6	95	3.1	83	2.7
August	99	3.2	100	3.2	88	2.8	64	2.1
September	84	2.8	95	3.2	79	2.6	82	2.7
October	79	2.5	98	3.2	74	2.4	79	2.5
November	93	3.1	86	2.9	93	3.1	67	2.2
December	97	3.1	89	2.9	87	2.8	102	3.3
Total	1,014	2.8	1,048	2.9	1,043	2.8	994	2.7

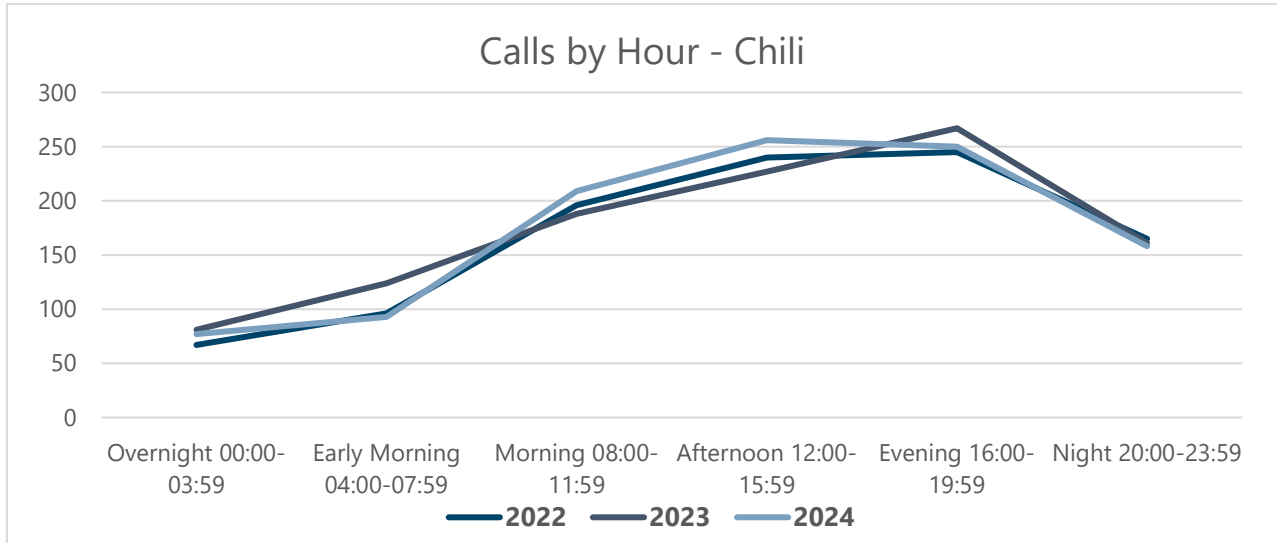
Calls by day of week

Chili's calls have a slight variation where it is busier during weekdays and slower weekends.

Chili Calls by Day of Week	2022	2023	2024	2025	Daily Avg.
Sunday	151	123	129	138	2.6
Monday	159	142	158	174	3.0
Tuesday	135	186	133	135	2.8
Wednesday	123	148	169	127	2.7
Thursday	164	167	172	144	3.1
Friday	152	160	151	149	2.9
Saturday	125	123	131	127	2.4
Totals	1,009	1,049	1,043	994	

Calls by hour

Chili's calls demonstrate a typical pattern of rising during daytime hours, peaking in the afternoon and evening, and then falling to lows overnight. This reflects the common pattern of public daytime and evening activities which lead to service calls. 2025 was excluded from the analysis because the information came from two data sources that could not be easily integrated for this analysis.

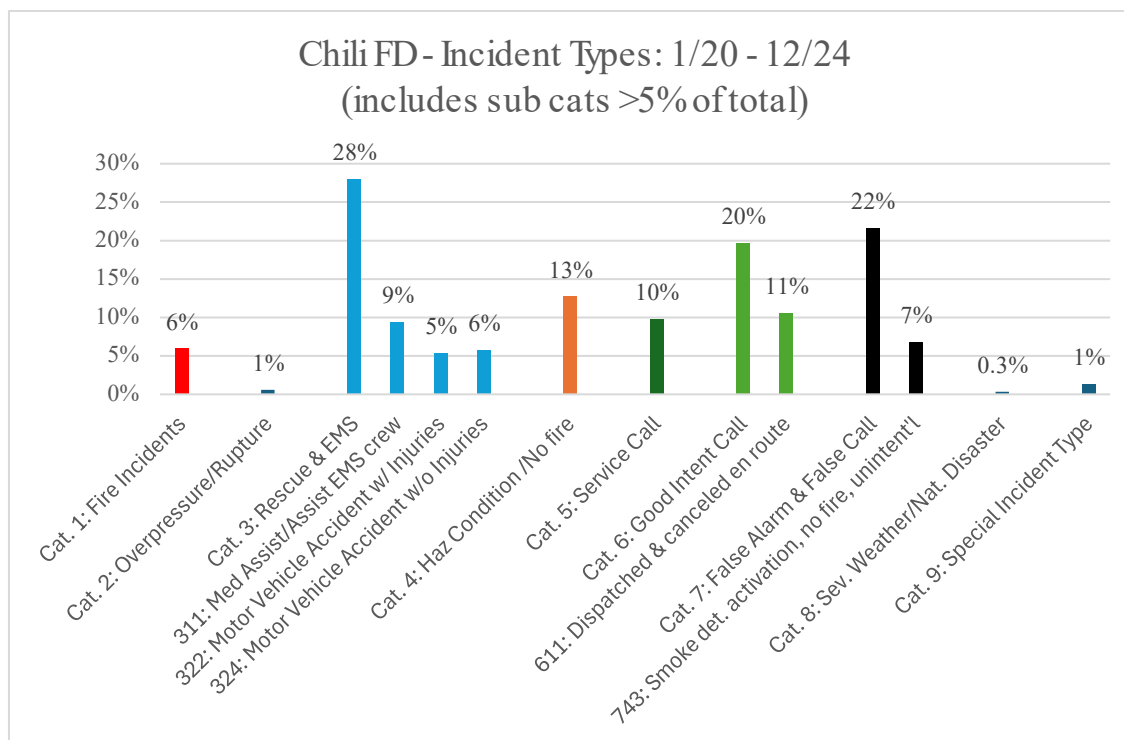


Calls by Type

Chili provided counts of call types covering five years, from 2020-2024. Chili's largest category is EMS calls, accounting for nearly 30% of total call volume. This is followed by false alarms, accounting for just above a fifth of calls, and "good intent" calls – where a reported incident is not an actual emergency (such as smoke from an authorized burn or barbecue) at a fifth of all calls.

Chili FD - Incident Type: 1/20 - 12/24		
Cat. 1: Fire Incidents	303	6%
Cat. 2: Overpressure/Rupture	29	1%
Cat. 3: Rescue & EMS	1,419	28%
Cat. 4: Haz Condition /No fire	645	13%
Cat. 5: Service Call	497	10%
Cat. 6: Good Intent Call	997	20%
Cat. 7: False Alarm & False Call	1,099	22%
Cat. 8: Sev. Weather/Nat. Disaster	16	0.3%
Cat. 9: Special Incident Type	69	1%

For specific sub-types of calls, dispatched and cancelled "good intent" calls were the most common, followed by medical assistance to EMS crews (for example, lift-assists on patients who have fallen), smoke detector false alarms, and motor vehicle accidents, with and without injuries.



Response Time

Response time by hour

The following table shows, by percentage, how quickly Chilis calls are responded to by time of day, for the first six months of 2025. For example, during the Overnight period from 12 am to 4 am, 25% of calls are responded to within 8.9 minutes. This time interval is from when the 911 call center receives the call to when the first unit is reported on scene. This is the caller's response time and includes the call processing time which is out of the control of the fire department. The call processing time varies from 60 seconds to 3 minutes depending on amount of information gathered¹³.

In general, almost all calls are responded to within approximately 14 minutes, regardless of the time of day. In a typical pattern, call responses are slightly faster for some calls during regular awake hours (8 am to midnight), and slowest during overnight and morning hours.

However, these times represent when the first individual arrives on-scene, which is not necessarily the first apparatus to arrive. Specific apparatus arrival times are not part of the available data, but on serious incidents, the departments should review the timeliness of arrival of both personnel and apparatus.

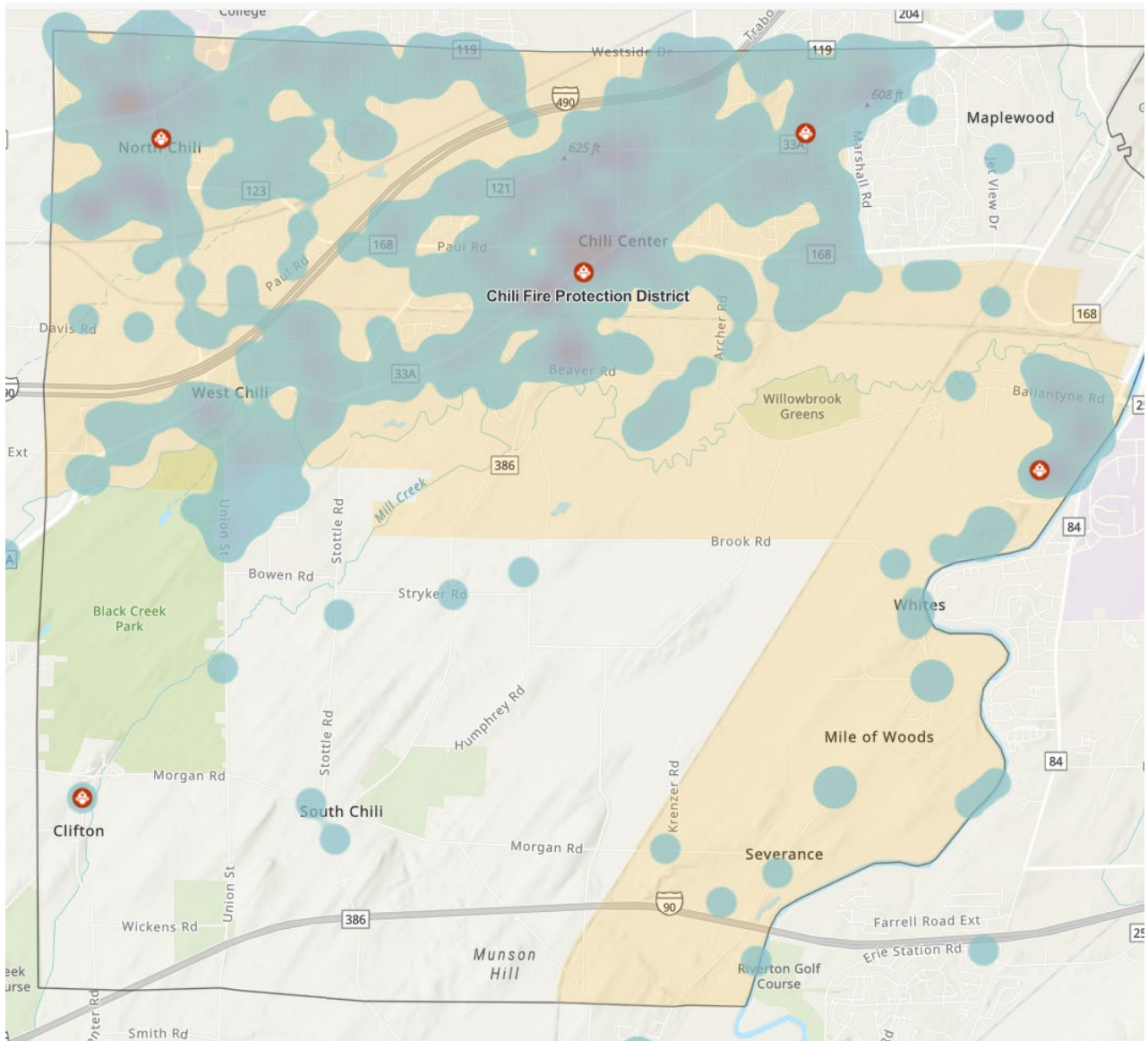
¹³ The data for Clifton shown later in the report does not include this call processing time creating an apples to oranges situation when comparing the two. In general, call processing time can be assumed to be about 2 minutes.

The most commonly used industry guideline for operations of a volunteer fire department is NFPA Standard 1720. This standard suggests that a volunteer department serving a suburban area should have 10 firefighters on scene in 10 minutes or less 80% of the time for the report of a structure fire. Chili does meet the time standard with the first unit on scene during evening hours, but is outside that . We are unable to judge if there are 10 firefighters on scene in that time but they do have that number of firefighters on scene either through their own staff of aid from other departments. The table below shows all responses which includes both mutual aid to other departments and events that may have had a non-emergency response such as a residential water problem.

Chili Response Times (Call Entry To On-scene, January to June, 2025)							
Time Period	#	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	80th Percentile	90th Percentile	Avg Response Time
Overnight 00:00-03:59	37	8.9 mins	10.1 mins	12.4 mins	12.7 mins	14.2 mins	9.8 mins
Early Morning 04:00-07:59	39	7.9 mins	11.7 mins	13.5 mins	14.2 mins	15.9 mins	10.8 mins
Morning 08:00-11:59	99	4.5 mins	8 mins	11.3 mins	12.4 mins	15.8 mins	8.5 mins
Afternoon 12:00-15:59	124	5.7 mins	8.4 mins	10.9 mins	11.4 mins	13.5 mins	9.5 mins
Evening 16:00-19:59	137	4.9 mins	7.4 mins	9.1 mins	9.9 mins	12.9 mins	8.5 mins
Night 20:00-23:59	81	5 mins	7.8 mins	9.4 mins	9.7 mins	11.8 mins	8.3 mins

Call Distribution in Chili

The following map shows the distribution of calls for Chili Fire Department based on their calls in 2024. The darker areas show where there are a number of calls in a single area. Calls on limited access highways do not map well and often show at the interchanges regardless of where they actually occurred. Some of the locations out of district are mutual aid fill ins to those stations. An interactive version of the map is available at: <https://bit.ly/ChiliFireStudy>



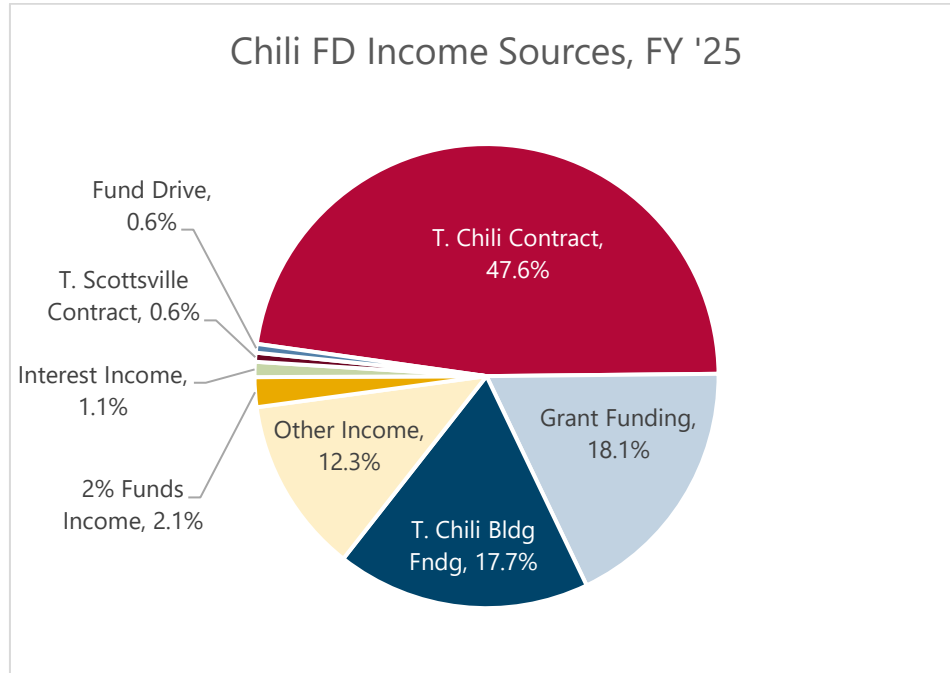
Budget Overview

Income

Chili's leadership notes that in the past two years, its finances have improved due to garnering substantial grants, including amounts totaling \$120,000 in 2024 and \$658,000 in 2025.

Chili's top four budgetary sources, accounting for 96% of its total income in its FY '25, are: the Town of Chili Fire Contract (\$1,750,000), Grant Funding (\$664,000), Town of Chili Building

Funding (\$650,000), and Other Income including Realized and Unrealized Gains (\$451,000). 2% Funds Income¹⁴ (\$76,000) makes a small portion of the budget.



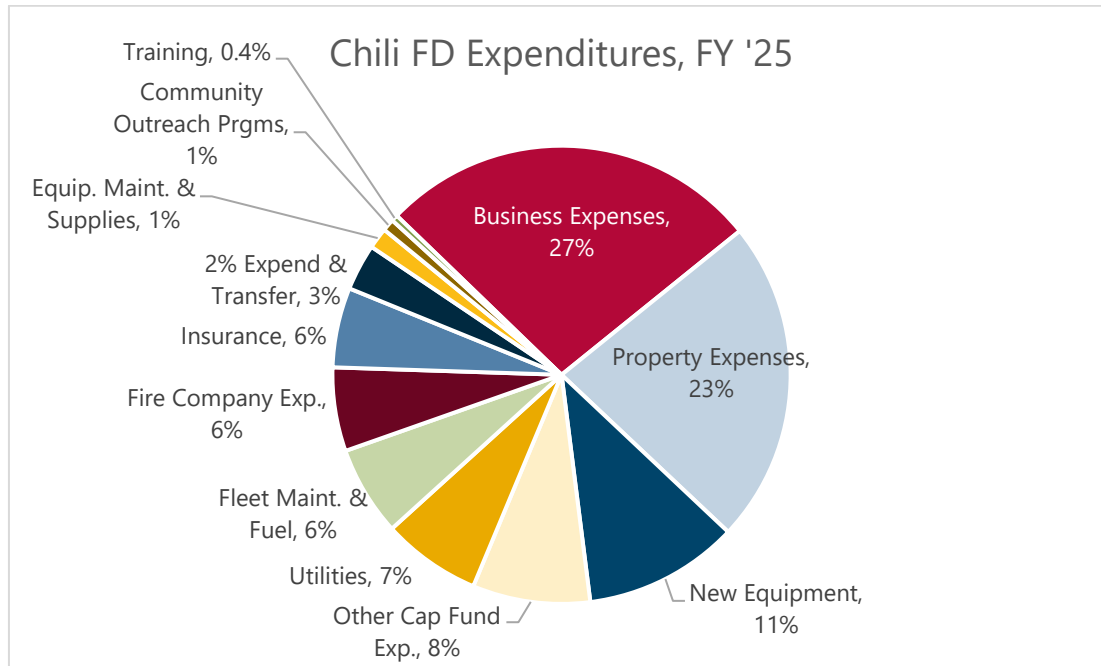
Chili FD Income	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY '25 % of Total
Town of Chili Fire Contract	\$1,498,355	\$1,528,322	\$1,635,305	\$1,749,776	47.6%
Grant Funding	\$0	\$0	\$119,940	\$663,528	18.1%
Town of Chili Bldg Funding	\$650,000	\$650,000	\$650,000	\$650,000	17.7%
2% Funds Income	\$59,294	\$58,341	\$58,691	\$450,859	12.3%
Other Income	-\$61,006	\$76,063	\$163,509	\$76,266	2.1%
Interest Income	\$72,848	\$745	\$227,422	\$38,864	1.1%
Town of Scottsville Fire Contract	\$19,735	\$20,128	\$21,536	\$23,044	0.6%
Fund Drive	\$33,091	\$32,934	\$34,803	\$22,275	0.6%
TOTAL INCOME	\$2,272,317	\$2,366,534	\$2,911,207	\$3,674,611	

Expenditures

Chili's top five FY 2025 expense categories, accounting for approximately three-quarters of its budget, are Business and Administrative Expenses (\$388,000), which includes wages, salaries and benefits for paid personnel, data services, office costs and professional services; Property Expenses (\$328,000), which includes mortgage, property tax, and building

¹⁴ "2% Funds" are monies derived from a state tax on out-of-state insurers' fire insurance premiums that are distributed to NYS fire departments.

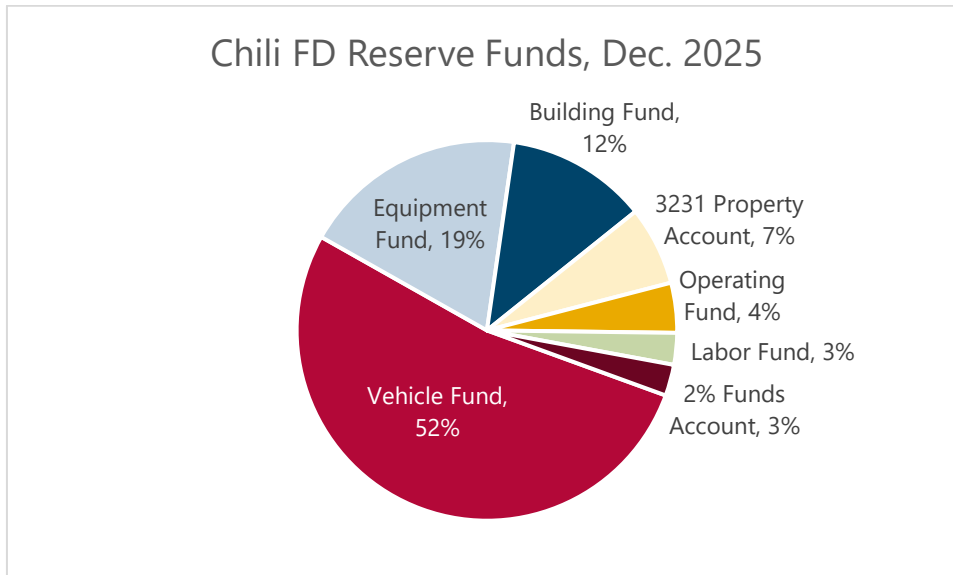
maintenance costs; New Equipment (\$158,000), which includes turnout gear; Other Capital Fund Expenses, (\$119,000), which includes money for PFAS expenses; and Utilities (\$100,000).



Chili FD Expenditures	Jan '22 - Dec '22	Jan '23 - Dec '23	Jan '24 - Dec '24	Jan '25 - Dec '25	2025 % of Total
Business Expenses (Office costs, Wages & Benefits)	\$163,731	\$326,260	\$364,203	\$387,842	27.0%
Fire House Property Expenses (Maintenance, Mortgages, Property taxes, etc.)	\$316,952	\$607,484	\$376,717	\$328,381	22.8%
New Equipment	\$78,462	\$111,121	\$157,337	\$157,598	11.0%
Other Capital Fund Expenses	\$90	\$134,600	\$12,653	\$119,371	8.3%
Utilities	\$79,526	\$91,505	\$95,405	\$100,391	7.0%
Fleet Maintenance & Fuel	\$68,635	\$87,948	\$102,047	\$91,076	6.3%
Fire Company Expenses (Banquets, Bunk Program, etc.)	\$55,244	\$62,610	\$68,043	\$85,019	5.9%
Insurance	\$53,905	\$63,804	\$70,382	\$80,998	5.6%
2% Expenditures & Transfer to 2% acct.	\$60,629	\$60,662	\$41,391	\$47,126	3.3%
Equipment Maintenance & Supplies	\$35,078	\$56,452	\$47,293	\$21,352	1.5%
Community Outreach Programs (Fire safety, Public Relations, etc.)	\$15,409	\$15,558	\$18,556	\$12,327	0.9%
Training	\$13,982	\$9,076	\$17,430	\$6,439	0.4%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$965,738	\$2,140,635	\$1,382,786	\$1,437,922	\$965,738

Reserve Funds

At the end of 2025, Chili's reserve funds had approximately \$5 million divided between seven funds, with the largest amount (\$2.6 million) reserved for vehicle/apparatus costs, and about \$1 million reserved for equipment.



Reserve Funds Balance as of 12/31/25	
Vehicle Fund	\$2,614,647
Equipment Fund	\$949,526
Building Fund	\$595,053
3231 Property Account	\$333,291
Operating Fund	\$210,883
Labor Fund	\$134,131
2% Funds Account	\$131,636
TOTAL	\$4,969,166

Firefighter Perspectives

CGR met with the membership of each Chili company to give them an opportunity to provide their thoughts and feedback. This information was combined with feedback from the previous leadership interviews to develop a comprehensive picture of the department. The key takeaways from all of these meetings are summarized below by topic areas.

Chili Companies

Each of the four Chili companies has a distinct character and atmosphere, and members primarily form bonds and identify with other members of their individual companies.

All companies are proud of the value they are bringing to the Town and other areas they cover as volunteers. They believe they are providing quality fire coverage at a fraction of the price that a career or even hybrid department would require.

Companies each emphasize their family-like atmosphere, including the mix of ages and the depth of experience among members, which allows for the mentoring and development of new volunteers by the older members.

Company-based identity has the virtue of boosting team morale and fostering a sense of family in a smaller group, but can also feed some sense of rivalry: companies tout their own virtues while sometime downplaying the strengths of other companies, and some report that some members are only willing to respond to their home company stations and treat the borders of their areas very strictly. On the plus side, this encourages a sense of ownership and responsibility for each company's coverage areas, but it may also reduce willingness of individuals to keep their own gear with them and respond to other stations, if those are closer during the day.

Chili Key Themes

Challenges with volunteer turnout

Companies acknowledged that getting members to turn out during weekday daytime hours can be challenging, with one stating that in some cases it required the whole department – all four companies – to turn out enough people to respond to a serious call, because no single company could turn out enough members on its own.

Members state that one factor depressing involvement is that the quality of calls has changed: while volume of calls is increasing, the variety is decreasing: more calls feel like 'nuisance' type calls – false alarms or minor medical issues – rather than true emergencies that give members a feeling of satisfaction. As one member put it: new volunteers are more focused on training than on jumping on a truck and responding, which is less fun for them.

Leadership future & line officers

Chili members are generally happy with current leadership but express some wariness about the pipeline for future leadership, with some stating that the next generation of leaders is not yet apparent, and good candidates combining firematic skills with people skills are hard to find. There is concern that those who take the key leadership positions often get overloaded and burned out within two to three years.

Likewise, membership is split on the current number of line officers. Some believe that having 19 line officers is excessive, stating that it is challenging to find qualified people for all of the positions. Others are in favor of it, stating that the number of officers spreads out work and makes the leadership load manageable for the volunteers filling the roles. The span of control is about 6 to 1 for line officers to firefighters, which represents a good level of oversight.

While the operations side of the department has some promising candidates, the bench is thinner on the business side – few people join to be administrators and many may not have aptitude for the complexity and specific skills, such as financial management skills, required. Department leadership suggested that the Treasurer position might be a paid/career position within the next 10 years because of the skills required.

Volunteer recruitment & retention

Chili reports good interest from potential volunteers, with 2-3 people per month making inquiries. A significant bottleneck is upstream: limited spots in required classes. The Fire Bureau's fire academy only has 80 spots for new volunteer firefighters, currently operation with two summer and two fall classes of 20 seats each, which Chili recruits must compete with all other local departments for. Currently, more people are aging out of the system and retiring than there are seats available for new firefighters to replace them.

The 'Missing Middle'

Chili faces a common issue among volunteer departments in having a group of younger members, in their late teens and early 20's, and a larger number of older members, but fewer members from their 30's to 50's. This is attributable to a number of factors: the level of commitment to be a volunteer is high, and as members get busier with family life and careers, they often find it harder to volunteer; likewise, young volunteers who are deeply interested in the fire service may opt to make it a career and move to career departments.

Bunking & duty crews

A new initiative at Company 1 and Company 3 involves members "bunking in" as a duty crew, meaning they stay overnight at the station. The new Company 1 building accommodates individual sleeping rooms and Company 3 has recently installed Murphy Beds that fold down into the main meeting room. Duty crews means that a sufficient crew is available on-site to answer any calls that come in, and both ensures a sufficient response and allows the rest of the memberships a break, knowing that any minor calls during this period will be handled without need to call them in, reducing burnout.

The duty crews are offered a modest allowance for meals during their shift, covered by the department.

Funding levels & sources

Overall funding levels

Chili FD's membership expressed a mixture of opinions about funding levels and financial support. Some Chili members feel that Town has been generous with providing sufficient funding and the relationship continues to be stable and positive. Others feel that Town funding level is below what it could be, given the value that volunteers are providing for the Town. Some expressed frustration with having to budget for a capped percentage increase each year, and, in their opinion, having to "back into" a set budget number, rather than budgeting to what they thought the true needs are and seeing the Town fund whatever level the department determines is appropriate. Some members stated that while demands on volunteers are increasing due to Chili's continuing growth, the department is not clearly gaining benefits proportionate with the level of growth.

Suggestions for additional funding

One member stated that the "bells and whistles," including modern apparatus, good equipment and other items that reflected departmental membership, like branded t-shirts and

furniture, are the things that contribute to a sense of belonging and identity, attracting new young members and motivate them to participate. A few members mentioned Chili's dress uniforms being hand-me-downs and that members had to buy their own dress boots as example of where they felt the Town was limiting expenses in a way that could impact morale.

Desirability of an independent fire district

Members had mixed opinions on whether moving to an independent fire district model would be a plus or a minus. Some felt that the department would gain from entirely controlling its own funding levels and thought residents would be supportive of new fire levies. Others mentioned the example of Fishers Fire District – where some district residents, unhappy with their fire taxes, took over the commissioner seats and voted to dissolve the district – as a cautionary tale of being overly ambitious.

Importance of incentives

Department leadership stressed that small incentives can make a big difference to volunteers: things like free soda and water, hats and t-shirts, or a customized table with the company logo can create an environment that is welcoming and homey that draws volunteer to spend more time at the stations, increasing participation and reducing response times.

Likewise, some members thought monetary incentives like property-tax rebates would have a positive effect on retention and recruitment. Some also objected to the idea that these rebates might be limited by the income level of the recipient.

Mixed feelings on LOSAP

Much participation in training is structured around earning points for the LOSAP program, and this has mixed reviews from department members and leadership. While it does incentivize some members, others find it negative: they consider the amounts LOSAP will pay to be trivial overall in the face of inflation and they think that structuring training to make it easy to get LOSAP points has resulted in unnecessary repetition of basic training courses to fit everyone's schedule and a reduction in more advanced topics. As well, drills are required to be a minimum of 2 hours in length to qualify for LOSAP credits, which affects flexibility and the ability to offer drills and company meetings on the same nights.

Some members are in favor of paying out the LOSAP program and ending it. The Town would have to do this by resolution.

Chili Firefighter Perspectives Summary

- Chili members generally believe things are going well and that they are delivering great value and service to the Town and areas they cover.
- However, they do express concern about future trends, including diminishing volunteers and challenges with daytime turnout.
 - Some of this is being addressed through initiatives like bunk-in programs at Co's 1 & 3.

- Members are mixed on the sufficiency of finances. Some feel satisfied with what the Town is providing, while others feel that additional resources could drive increased morale and retention in a number of ways.
- Members are mixed on the possibility of a merger with Clifton. While they generally feel Clifton would stand to benefit from Chili's greater resources and standardized practices, they also expressed concern that Clifton members would quit, resulting in a larger service area of responsibility for the new merged department being served by fewer active volunteers.

Clifton Fire Department

For Clifton FD, CGR met with department leadership, including President George Emens, 1st Vice President Matt Emens, Chief Brian Koster and Assistant Chief Jeff McNulty. CGR conducted a separate meeting focused on operational aspects of fire response with just Clifton's Chief.

Overview from Leadership

Interviews with Clifton FD's leadership addressed a number of key issues for the department.

Decline in Membership

Clifton acknowledges that it is struggling with membership and turnout. Clifton's leadership states that their membership situation is "beyond stretched". There has been a decline in volunteers locally that has been fed by large trends discussed previously, such as the decline of Kodak and shift work, less interest from younger generations, and a turn towards private family life, etc.

Beyond that, the area around Clifton is not growing in population and does not have a local school, which means there is no focal point for accessing families. For example, there are not enough kids locally to establish a Fire Explorer post. Clifton still tries community recruitment through a variety of means, such as sending postcards to everyone in the district, inviting them to the open house.

Clifton's annual fire carnival, a proud tradition, fell victim to the COVID-19 pandemic, as it became increasingly complex to run, was very taxing on volunteer time and abilities, and typically produced less than \$10,000 in revenue. The annual turkey raffle is the last remaining fundraising event that Clifton is still operating.

Financial Stability and Frugality

Clifton states it is financially stable and is very proud of managing its operations in a cost-effective manner. Clifton membership emphasized their desire to be as self-sufficient as possible and take care of anything they can do themselves internally, without requiring extra outside help or funding. Clifton has an active Ladies' Auxiliary, an independent organization that manages a lot of the social events around the department, such as the Easter Egg Hunt and the Christmas Party.

Clifton has forthcoming plans to renovate or upgrade various parts of the station, including the restrooms and flooring, doing IT upgrades, and heating the back addition to the station to enable storing of smaller trucks back there. All expenses should be fully covered within their planned budgets.

Leadership emphasizes that the department does not have any current debt and they have funded the forthcoming replacement of the next engine. However, they are unsure about the funding of future apparatus beyond that, given rapidly rising costs.

Beyond this, there are no major projects or specialized pieces of equipment that Clifton currently is looking for the Town to fund. A couple of members mentioned an ATV that could be replaced, and that a future addition of a gym in the station might be nice, but no one suggested that these additions would make a meaningful contribution to recruitment or retention.

Rather, Clifton would like the Town to recognize that it has been financially responsible. Clifton's main ask is that the Town helps manage rising costs by being ready to provide some extra funding, if needed, to help with inflation and price hikes on ordinary costs, such as future apparatus replacement, that go beyond what Clifton has already planned for.

Clifton also inquired if the Town or County could help leverage collective bidding power to help negotiate on prices for equipment.

Minimal administrative needs

Clifton does not meet the budgetary threshold to where audits are required by the state, and otherwise believes that it has planned well for the future, so leadership believes its administrative needs are very modest and they do not see gaining additional administrative help from Chili as a benefit.

Importance of station location

Clifton leadership feels that in any scenario, the current station location would have to be kept in order to maintain the local ISO rating.

Personnel

Clifton FD Volunteers	
Total number	32 Total (24 Active; 9 Reserve; 1 Exempt)
Interior Qualified Firefighters	9
Certified First Responders	0
Certified EMTs (or higher)	6
Apparatus Drivers (Engine and/or Ladder/Quint)	8
Lieutenants	1
Captains	1
Safety Officer	1
Battalion/Deputy/Assistant Chiefs	2
Chief	1

Stations

Clifton's station appears to be in good shape for its age. Clifton currently has external contracts for HVAC and grounds maintenance – mowing and plowing, etc. – and otherwise tries to handle maintenance itself where possible. Members are continuing to do small upgrades over time, such as renovating the restrooms and flooring in common spaces and

upgrading technology. Clifton is planning on adding heat to the currently unheated storage addition so that smaller trucks can be stored there, freeing up space in the main bays.

The station does not have a separate decontamination area or gear wash: gear is sent out to be washed.

The station generator is over 20 years old and is due for replacement.

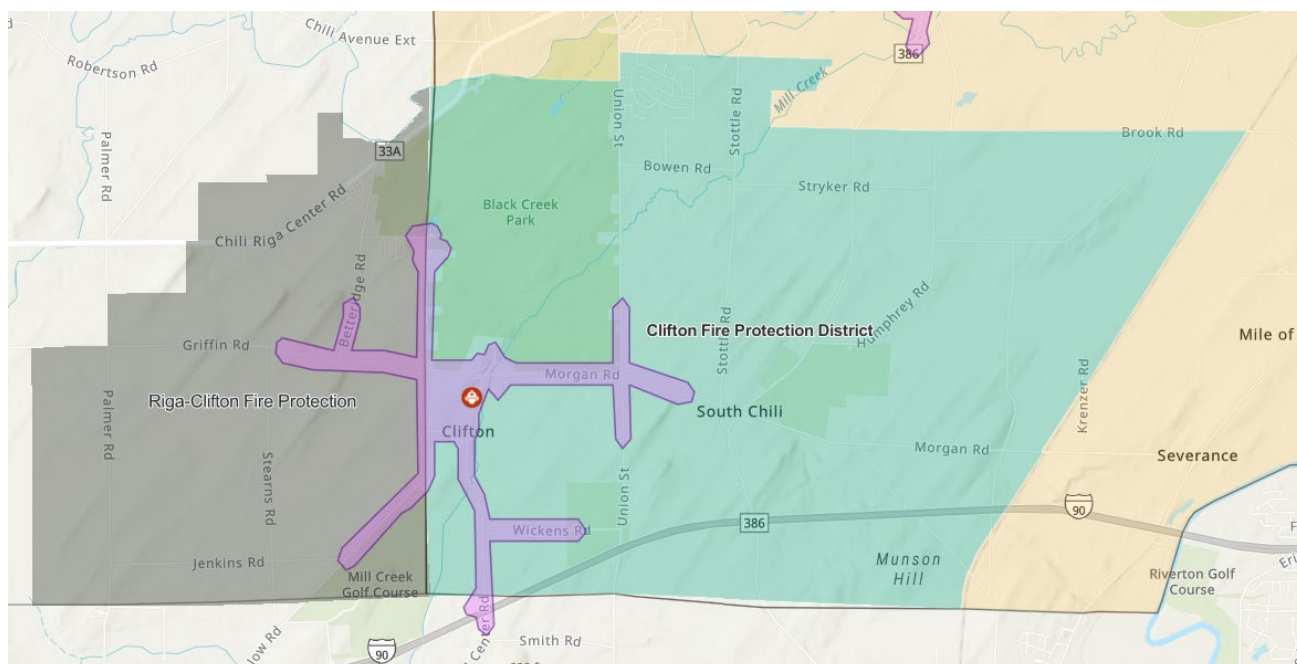
Main Station	53 Wheatland Center Road	# of Bays	6 (5 main building, 1 storage)
Typical Apparatus (Radio IDs)	4414, 4413, 4418, 4416, 4426, 4428	Year Built	1991 Main Bldg 2006 Storage Addition
Offices (#)	Three (3)	Apx. Sq. ft.	12,000 sq ft. 9,800 + 2,200
Sleeping Spaces (#) (typical)	None	Gear Wash	No
Breathing Air Cascade System	No	Exhaust Capture	Yes
Generator	Natural Gas Auto start Tested weekly	Security System	Yes
Fire Detection Alarm	Central Station	Sprinkler System	No

Coverage of District

The following map shows the locations of the stations for the Clifton Fire Department and also indicates the area that is within a 1.5-mile drive distance from the station. A 1.5-mile drive distance is approximately a 5 minute response time from the station if personnel are at the station at the time of the call. An interactive map with multiple layers is available at:

<https://bit.ly/ChiliFireStudy>

1.5 Mile Coverage Area from Station



Apparatus

Clifton customizes their trucks with identical configurations to improve standardization in responses. For the Light Rescue truck, 4418, and possibly the Grass Truck, 4416, Clifton hopes to be able to swap the same configured bodies onto new cabs and chassis when these need to be replaced, saving money.

Previously, Clifton consulted with ISO on the possibility of reducing their number of engines/pumpers from three to two without negatively impacting their PPC rating. ISO approved of the reduction not impacting the rating, as long as pump capacity was increased to 1,750 gallons per minute, which Clifton did.

Apparatus #3, the light rescue truck, is used as the main vehicle for EMS response so that engines do not have to go out on routine calls, reducing wear. Although the light rescue is 16 years old, it only has 12,000 miles on it and does not yet need replacement. Apparatus #6, the squad truck, is the backup for routine EMS calls.

Clifton is preparing to replace its ATUV, which is now 20 years old, but has been a critical piece of apparatus for conducting rescues in Black Creek Park and other less-accessible rural areas. They are hoping a grant will cover the replacement.

The Chief's vehicle is also up for replacement. The vehicle replacement fund covers everything needing replacement currently, except for the Chief's vehicle.

Apparatus # 1						
Radio ID	Type (Engine, Ladder/Quint, Rescue, Other)	Year	Manufacturer	Pump Capacity (GPM)	Tank Size	Aerial Length (Bucket?)
4414	Engine Rescue/ Pumper	2018/2019	Spartan/4 Guys	1750	1225	NA
Supply Hose Diameter	Supply Hose Length Carried,	Suppression Hose Diameter	Suppression Hose Length Carried	Foam Capacity	Hydraulic /E-draulic Extrication Tools	Thermal Imaging Cameras
4"	1500	2 ½" 1 ¾"	500 800	20 Gallon	Yes	Yes
Gas Meter	Ground Ladders and Lengths	AED	SCBAs (#)	Seats	Spare Air Tanks	
Yes	24ft, 20ft, 12ft roof, Attic, a frame folding	Yes	Six (6)	Six (6)	Six (6)	
Other Apparatus Features	9,000 # winch, 14’ little giant ladder, 10,000 watt hydraulic generator, light tower, air bags, rescue jacks, floating strainer, ropes, chains, Stokes basket, EMS Equipment, iPad. 2000 watt generator Telelight, portable scene lights					
Apparatus # 2						
Radio ID	Type (Engine, Ladder/Quint, Rescue, Other)	Year	Manufacturer	Pump Capacity (GPM)	Tank Size	Aerial Length (Bucket?)
4413	Engine Rescue/Pumper	2010	HME/4 Guys	1750	1225	NA
Supply Hose Diameter,	Supply Hose Length Carried,	Suppression Hose Diameter	Suppression Hose Length Carried	Foam Capacity	Hydraulic /E-draulic Extrication Tools	Thermal Imaging Cameras
4"	1500 ft	2 ½" 1 ¾"	500 800	20 gallon	Yes	Yes
Gas Meter	Ground Ladders and Lengths	AED	SCBAs (#)	Seats	Spare Air Tanks	
Yes	24ft, 12ft roof, attic	Yes	Six (6)	Six (6)	Six (6)	

Other Apparatus Features	Light Tower, Deck Gun, 10,000 watt hydraulic generator, high lift air bags, 9,000 # winch, stokes basket, floating strainer, ropes, chains, EMS Equipment, IPad. 2000 watt generator Telelight, portable scene lights					
Apparatus # 3						
Radio ID	Type (Engine, Ladder/Quint, Rescue, Other)	Year	Manufacturer	Pump Capacity (GPM)	Tank Size	Aerial Length (Bucket?)
4418	Other (squad or EMS vehicle nicknamed Rescue) Light Rescue	2009	Ford/4 Guys	N/A	N/A	N/A
Supply Hose Diameter,	Supply Hose Length Carried,	Suppression Hose Diameter	Suppression Hose Length Carried	Foam Capacity	Hydraulic /E-draulic Extrication Tools	Thermal Imaging Cameras
NA	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	Yes
Gas Meter	Ground Ladders and Lengths	AED	SCBAs (#)	Seats	Spare Air Tanks	
Yes	N/A	Yes	Two (2)	Five (5)	Two (2)	
Other Apparatus Features	Stokes basket, PFD's with Helmets, EMS equipment, Pediatric EMS Kit, Suction unit, vacuum/air/wood splints, 1,000 watt generator 2 KW on board mounted inverter, 5,000 watt generator, traffic control devices, ropes, hand tools, 9,000 # winch, IPad. Gas & Elec Dewatering pumps					
Apparatus # 4						
Radio ID	Type (Engine, Ladder/Quint, Rescue, Other)	Year	Manufacturer	Pump Capacity (GPM)	Tank Size	Aerial Length (Bucket?)
4416	Grass truck	2004	Ford	125	200	NA
Supply Hose Diameter,	Supply Hose Length Carried,	Suppression Hose Diameter	Suppression Hose Length Carried	Foam Capacity	Hydraulic /E-draulic Extrication Tools	Thermal Imaging Cameras
NA	NA	1"	200 ft	NA	No	No
Gas Meter	Ground Ladders and Lengths	AED	SCBAs (#)	Seats	Spare Air Tanks	

No	NA	No	NA	Two (2)	NA	
Other Apparatus Features	Wildland Firefighting hand tools, Chainsaw, backpack water tanks, 9,000 # winch 1200-watt mounted inverter, Telelite scene lights					
Apparatus #5						
Radio ID	Type (Engine, Ladder/Quint, Rescue, Other)	Year	Manufacturer	Pump Capacity (GPM)	Tank Size	Aerial Length (Bucket?)
4426	ATUV	2005	Polaris	35	100	NA
Supply Hose Diameter,	Supply Hose Length Carried,	Suppression Hose Diameter	Suppression Hose Length Carried	Foam Capacity	Hydraulic /E-draulic Extrication Tools	Thermal Imaging Cameras
NA	NA	1" 5/8"	50 ft 25 ft	NA	No	No
Gas Meter	Ground Ladders and Lengths	AED	SCBAs (#)	Seats	Spare Air Tanks	
No	NA	No	NA	Two (2)	NA	
Other Apparatus Features	Stokes Basket, EMS Equipment, Search & Rescue Tools, Lights with PA System, tracked vehicle for mobility and stability, iPad. Enclosed Trailer to carry this vehicle and misc equipment; also can act as a command post at an incident. 3200 watt gas powered potable inverter					
Apparatus #6						
Radio ID	Type (Engine, Ladder/Quint, Rescue, Other)	Year	Manufacturer	Pump Capacity (GPM)	Tank Size	Aerial Length (Bucket?)
4428	Squad	2018	Ford	NA	NA	NA
Supply Hose Diameter	Supply Hose Length Carried,	Suppression Hose Diameter	Suppression Hose Length Carried	Foam Capacity	Hydraulic /E-draulic Extrication Tools	Thermal Imaging Cameras
NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	No	No
Gas Meter	Ground Ladders and Lengths	AED	SCBAs (#)	Seats	Spare Air Tanks	
No	NA	No	NA	Five (5)	NA	

Other Apparatus Features	EMS Bag Primary tow vehicle for 4426 trailer.
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The Clifton Fire Department maintains an annual testing schedule to ensure all equipment meets safety standards. Pump and hose testing are performed yearly by a third-party vendor, with recent tests completed in May 2025 and the next pump test set for October 2025. Ladders are tested annually, most recently in March 2025, and SCBAs undergo third-party testing each fall. Interior firefighters are issued two sets of turnout gear, while exterior members receive one. About 40% of gear is over 10 years old, though all interior gear is newer. The department uses Morning Pride turnout gear, Cairns helmets, and MSA SCBAs with 45-minute, 4500 PSI bottles.

Training

The Clifton Fire Department's training program is guided by New York State Best Practices and developed in partnership with a third-party provider, Vigilant Fire Training. Comprehensive training plans and Job Performance Requirements (JPRs) are in place, with detailed activity records available for review at the station. An average of 5.6 out of 32 firefighters attend training on an annual basis. The total average hours of each training/drill are 1.9 hours per session. Members should be encouraged to attend mandatory training programs to be compliant with current Public Employees Safety and Health (PESH) standards.

Officer training is determined by department bylaws, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and Chief Officer recommendations, while apparatus operators complete an internal driver training program. Both physical exams and fit testing are conducted by third-party vendors to ensure compliance with safety and health standards.

ISO Report

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) last performed a Public Protection Classification (PPC) assessment of Clifton FD in 2023. A PPC reviews fire capabilities and produces a set of scores and an overall score that is used by many insurance companies to assess the adequacy of local fire protection, which in turn affects insurance rates. The overall score is from 1-10, with 1 being the highest score.

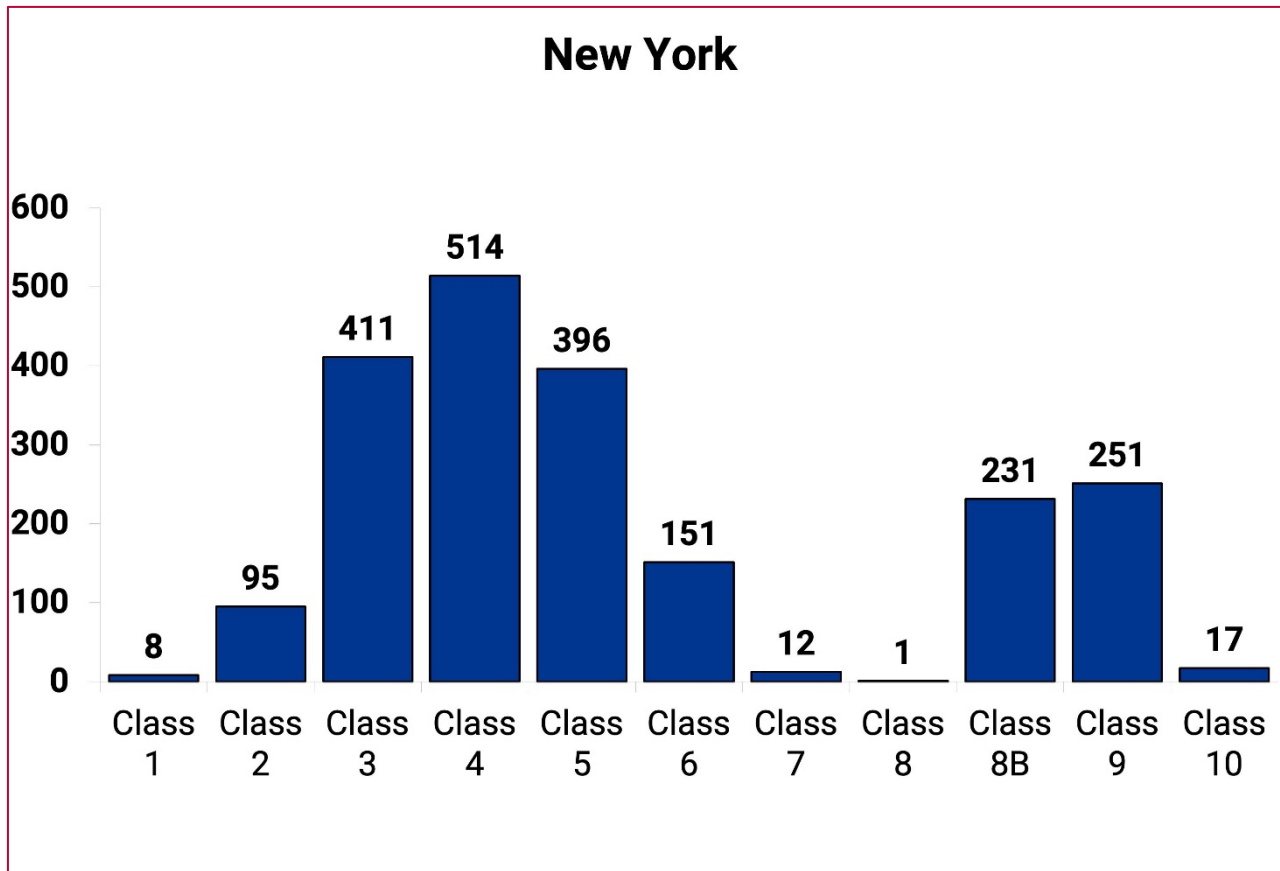
Clifton has been rated Class 05/5X¹⁵. In New York, a Class 5 department falls in the top two-thirds of all state fire departments.¹⁶

¹⁵ The second part of the score, "5X", reflects the increased risk level for properties more than 1,000 feet from an FSRS creditable water supply (i.e., a hydrant, suction point, or dry hydrant).

¹⁶ For more information on the rating system, go to the following link:

<https://www.verisk.com/resources/faqs/public-protection-classification-ppc-program/>

Distribution of ISO PPC Scores in New York State¹⁷



As displayed in the table below, Clifton scored acceptably in most areas, except in relation to reserve apparatus, deployment analysis, company personnel, and training. As was the case with Chili, the areas of company personnel and training are difficult for most volunteer companies to earn high credit in, given ISO's scoring criteria. While Clifton's training score is below Chili's, Clifton asserts that the 2023 ISO assessment did not include a review of the revamp of the training program conducted in 2019 to address previous shortcomings of past training programs.

The deployment analysis score includes factors such as average road miles from stations to structures in the coverage area, which also makes it difficult to improve without adding more stations or changing station locations. It also factors in response times, which are potentially more under a department's control.

¹⁷ Source: <https://www.isomitigation.com/ppc/program-works/facts-and-figures-about-ppc-codes-around-the-country/>

FSRS Feature	Earned Credit	Credit Available
Emergency Communications		
414. Credit for Emergency Reporting	2.55	3
422. Credit for Telecommunicators	2.54	4
432. Credit for Dispatch Circuits	1.95	3
440. Credit for Emergency Communications	7.04	10
Fire Department		
513. Credit for Engine Companies	5.80	6
523. Credit for Reserve Pumpers	0.00	0.50
532. Credit for Pump Capacity	3.00	3
549. Credit for Ladder Service	3.07	4
553. Credit for Reserve Ladder and Service Trucks	0.00	0.50
561. Credit for Deployment Analysis	2.48	10
571. Credit for Company Personnel	3.83	15
581. Credit for Training	0.95	9
730. Credit for Operational Considerations	2.00	2
590. Credit for Fire Department	21.13	50
Water Supply		
616. Credit for Supply system	30	30
621. Credit for Hydrants	3.00	3
631. Credit for Inspection and Flow Testing	6.40	7
640. Credit for Water Supply	39.40	40
Divergence¹⁸	-11.20	-
1050. Community Risk Reduction	3.46	5.50
Total Credit	59.78	105.50

Calls for Service Summary

Over the last few years, Clifton has varied from between 100 to 150 calls per year.

¹⁸ The Divergence factor mathematically reduces the total score based upon the relative difference between the fire department and water supply scores. The factor is introduced in the final equation.

Calls by Time Period

Calls by month

Clifton tends to have a slightly larger volume of calls in the summer months, as shown in the table below.

Clifton FD Calls by Month	2022	Daily Avg	2023	Daily Avg	2024	Daily Avg	2025	Daily Avg
January	18	0.6	8	0.3	9	0.3	11	0.4
February	7	0.2	5	0.2	4	0.1	6	0.2
March	12	0.4	9	0.3	5	0.2	11	0.4
April	6	0.2	10	0.3	14	0.5	11	0.4
May	14	0.5	8	0.3	19	0.6	11	0.4
June	11	0.4	10	0.3	10	0.3	20	0.7
July	20	0.6	11	0.4	15	0.5	12	0.4
August	13	0.4	11	0.4	10	0.3	14	0.5
September	9	0.3	3	0.1	10	0.3	6	0.2
October	13	0.4	9	0.3	7	0.2	10	0.3
November	13	0.4	9	0.3	9	0.3	11	0.4
December	15	0.5	8	0.3	10	0.3	19	0.6
Total	151	0.4	101	0.3	122	0.3	142	0.4

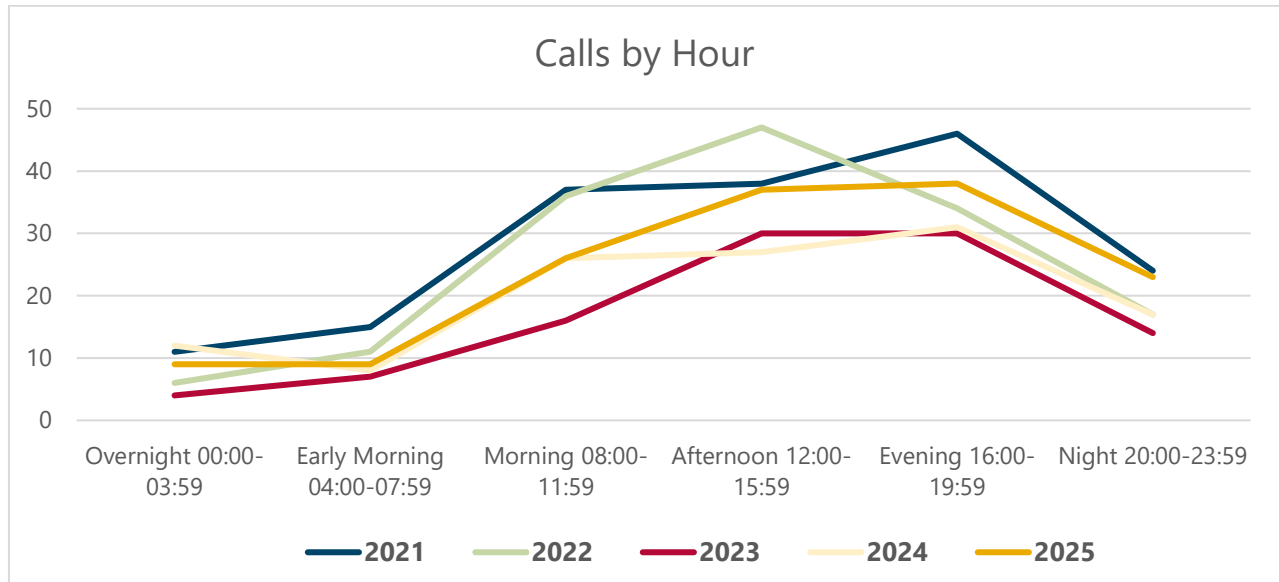
Calls by day of week

Clifton's calls do not demonstrate significant variation by days of week, although Saturdays tend to be a bit higher than average.

Clifton Calls by Day of Week	2022	2023	2024	2025	Per Day Avg.
Sunday	17	8	18	18	0.3
Monday	16	18	22	14	0.4
Tuesday	28	17	11	15	0.3
Wednesday	18	10	16	29	0.3
Thursday	21	15	20	21	0.4
Friday	24	15	17	21	0.4
Saturday	27	18	17	24	0.5
Totals	151	101	121	142	

Calls by hour

Similarly to Chili's calls, Clifton's calls demonstrate a typical pattern of rising during daytime hours, peaking in the afternoon and evening, and then falling to lows overnight. This reflects the common pattern of public daytime and evening activities which lead to service calls.

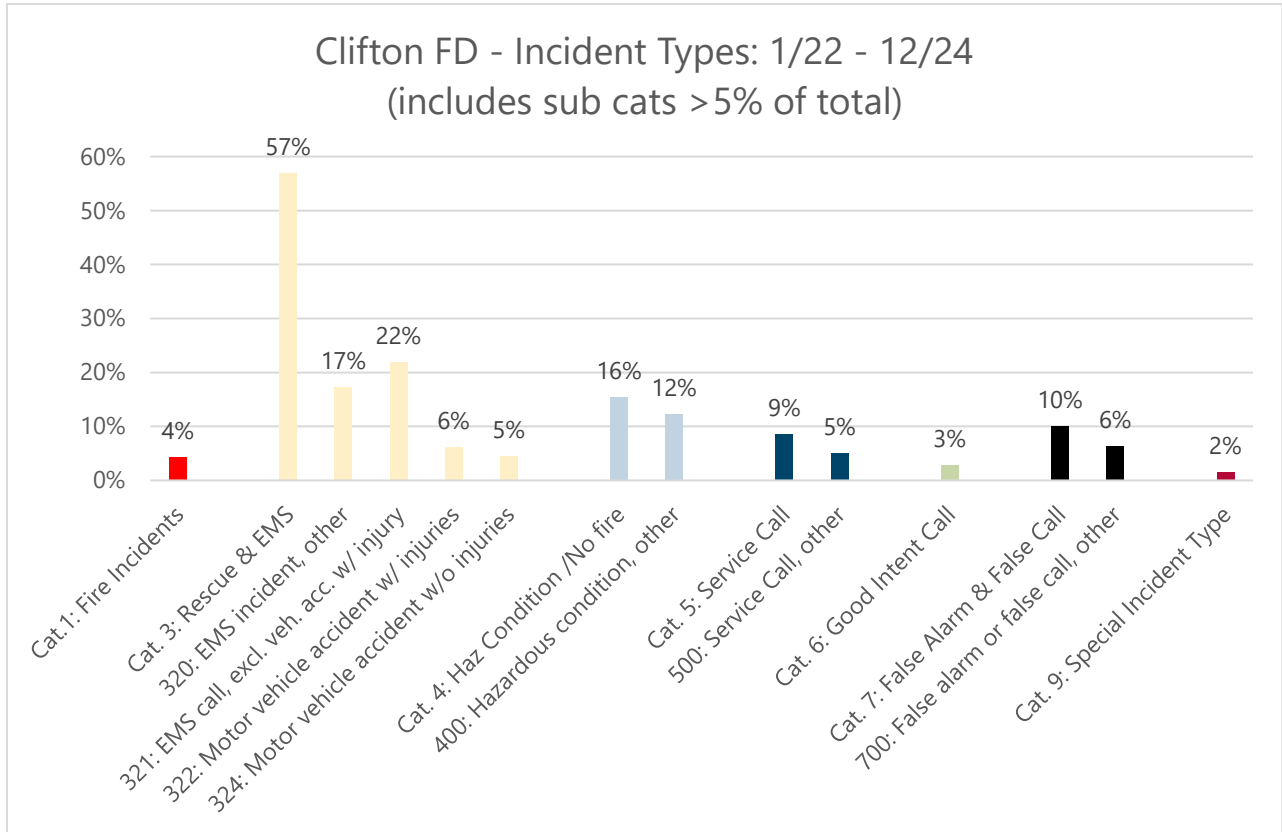


Calls by type

Clifton provided counts of call types covering three years, from 2022-2024. Clifton's largest category is EMS calls, accounting for nearly 60% of total call volume. This is followed by 'hazardous conditions other than fire' calls, and then by false alarms.

Clifton FD - Incident Type: 1/22- 12/24		
Cat. 1: Fire Incidents	16	4%
Cat. 2: Overpressure/Rupture	0	0%
Cat. 3: Rescue & EMS	213	57%
Cat. 4: Haz Condition /No fire	58	16%
Cat. 5: Service Call	32	9%
Cat. 6: Good Intent Call	11	3%
Cat. 7: False Alarm & False Call	38	10%
Cat. 8: Sev. Weather/Nat. Disaster	0	0%
Cat. 9: Special Incident Type	6	2%

For specific sub-types of calls, broad subcategories of EMS injuries excluding vehicle accidents and "Other" EMS calls lead the pack, followed by general "other" hazardous condition calls.



Response Times

Response time by hour

The following table shows, by percentage, how quickly Clifton's calls are responded to (from time of dispatch to arrival on-scene) by time of day, for 2024. For example, during the Overnight period from 12 am to 4 am, 25% of calls are responded within 7.8 minutes. These time intervals track when the 911 call center enters the information for the call until the first unit arrives on scene.

90% of calls are responded to within 16 minutes, regardless of the time of day. In a typical pattern, call responses are slightly faster for some calls during regular awake hours (8 am to midnight), and slowest during night and overnight hours.

Clifton is getting personnel on-scene 80% of the time within 13.6 minutes overnight and within 9 minutes during the day, which is an acceptable level of response for a volunteer department. However, these times represent when the first individual arrives on-scene, which is not necessarily the first apparatus to arrive. Specific apparatus arrival times are not part of the available data, but the department should ensure that their apparatus are arriving in a timely manner, as well.

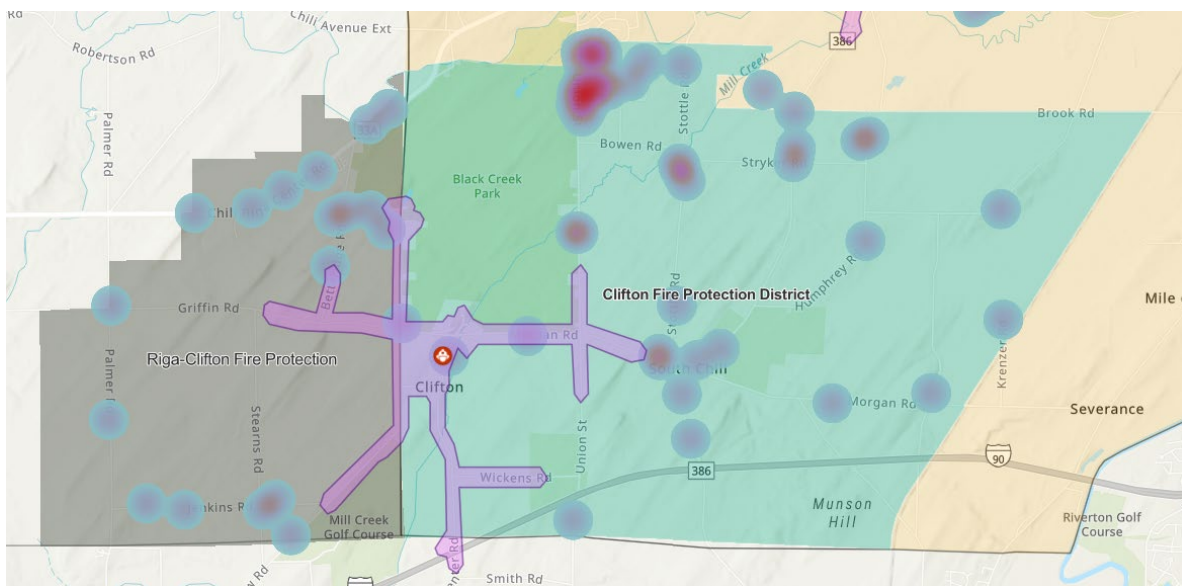
The most commonly used industry guideline for operations of a volunteer fire department is NFPA Standard 1720. This standard suggests that a volunteer department serving a suburban area should have 10 firefighters on scene in 10 minutes or less 80% of the time for the report

of a structure fire. Clifton does meet the time standard with the first unit on scene. We are unable to judge if there are 10 firefighters on scene in that time, but they do have that number of firefighters on scene either through their own staff or aid from other departments. The table below shows all responses which includes both mutual aid to other departments and events that may have had a non-emergency response such as a residential water problem.

Clifton Response Times (Dispatch to on-scene, 2024)					
Time Period	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	75th Percentile	80th Percentile	90th Percentile
Overnight 00:00-03:59	7.8 mins	9.5 mins	11.5 mins	13.6 mins	16 mins
Early Morning 04:00-07:59	8.5 mins	9 mins	10.5 mins	10.8 mins	11 mins
Morning 08:00-11:59	4 mins	5.5 mins	8 mins	8 mins	13.6 mins
Afternoon 12:00-15:59	4 mins	6 mins	9 mins	9 mins	9.8 mins
Evening 16:00-19:59	4.5 mins	6 mins	8 mins	9 mins	10 mins
Night 20:00-23:59	5 mins	7 mins	9 mins	9 mins	11.4 mins

Call Distribution in Clifton

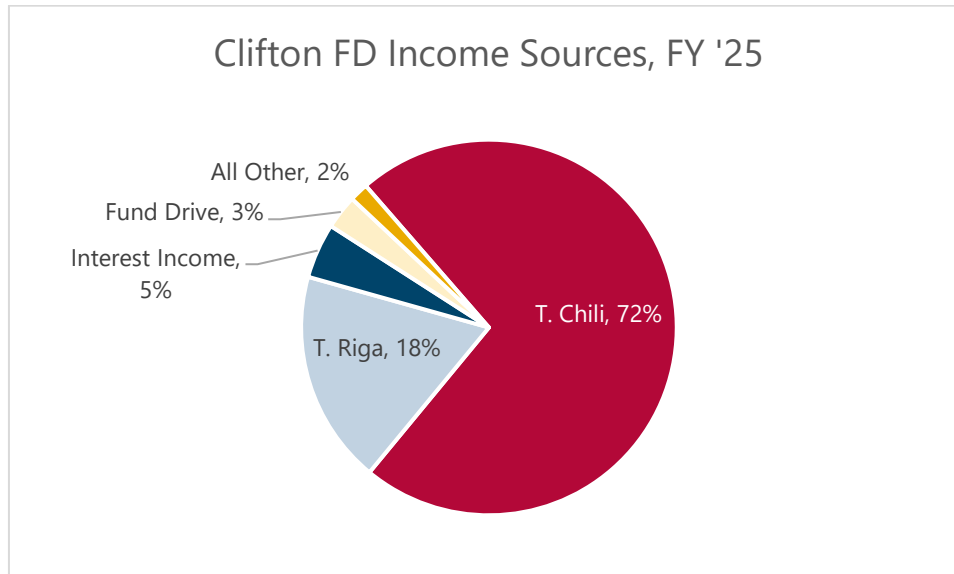
The following map shows the distribution of calls for Clifton Fire Department based on their calls in 2024. The color scale of this map is based solely on the calls for Clifton. The darker areas show where there are a number of calls in a single area. Some of the locations out of district are mutual aid fill ins to those stations. An interactive version of the map is available at: <https://bit.ly/ChiliFireStudy>



Budget Overview

Income

Clifton's top four income sources, accounting for 98% of its total income in its FY24-25 are: Town of Chili, (\$204,000), Town of Riga, (\$52,000), interest income (\$13,000), and its Fund Drive (\$15,000).



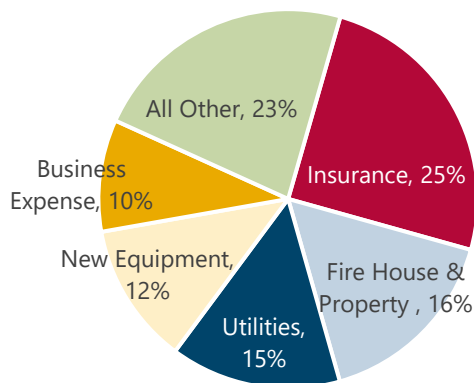
Clifton FD Income	Dec '21 - Nov '22	Dec '22 - Nov '23	Dec '23 - Nov '24	Dec '24 - Nov '25	24 - '25 % of Total
Town of Chili Contract Money	\$181,295	\$184,921	\$197,865	\$203,801	72.4%
Town of Riga Contract Money	\$48,764	\$49,739	\$50,733	\$51,747	18.4%
Interest Income	\$2,547	\$11,462	\$20,469	\$13,335	4.7%
Fund Drive (Net Income)	\$14,310	\$12,945	\$12,885	\$8,230	2.9%
Donations	\$7,991	\$8,102	\$1,283	\$2,711	1.0%
United Way Donations	\$2,873	\$2,840	\$2,709	\$1,705	0.6%
Fire House Rental Fees	\$0	\$120	\$120	\$120	0.04%
Misc. / Other Income	\$80	\$55,287	\$89,882	\$75	0.03%
Membership Dues	\$38	\$35	\$34	\$32	0.01%
Fund Raisers (Profit)	\$3,414	\$3,303	\$1,509	-\$125	-0.04%
TOTAL INCOME	\$261,312	\$328,753	\$377,488	\$281,631	

Clifton had two large miscellaneous income items during these four years: in 2023, it received \$55,000 from the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) for Emergency Responders, and in 2024, it earned \$82,000 from the sale of its Scottsville Chili Road property.

Expenditures

Clifton's five largest expense categories in its FY24-25, accounting for 77% of total expenditures, involve insurance (\$27,000), firehouse and property expenses (\$18,000, which includes building and property improvements and contracts for lawn care and snow removal), utilities (\$16,000), new equipment, (\$13,000) and business expenses (\$10,000). Clifton has not had major apparatus expenses in the last four fiscal years, but continues to move net revenue into a reserve fund to pay for anticipated future capital (apparatus/building/equipment) expenses.

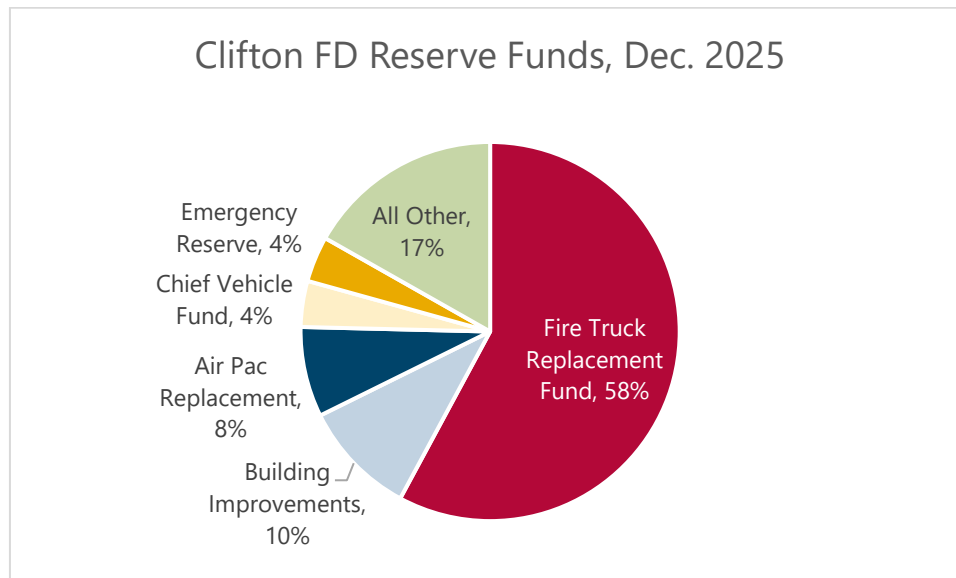
Clifton FD Expenditures, FY '25



Clifton FD Expenditures	Dec '21 - Nov '22	Dec'22 - Nov '23	Dec'23 - Nov '24	Dec '24 - Nov '25	24 - '25 % of Total
Insurance	\$24,952	\$29,297	\$29,491	\$26,965	24.9%
Fire House & Property Expense (Property Improvements, Maintenance Contracts, Etc.)	\$16,405	\$83,529	\$28,829	\$17,630	16.3%
Utilities	\$19,708	\$18,344	\$19,712	\$15,773	14.6%
New Equipment	\$5,732	\$20,708	\$43,219	\$13,069	12.1%
Business Expense	\$10,324	\$11,116	\$14,123	\$10,350	9.6%
Equipment Maintenance & Supply	\$7,503	\$8,908	\$9,929	\$9,442	8.7%
Fire Department Expenses	\$5,299	\$5,980	\$4,198	\$5,216	4.8%
Fire Truck Maintenance	\$16,382	\$12,257	\$13,208	\$5,061	4.7%
Gas & Diesel Cost	\$2,113	\$3,054	\$2,496	\$2,032	1.9%
Radio Repair, Supplies & Fees	\$2,455	\$3,462	\$1,565	\$1,438	1.3%
Food & Refreshments	\$754	\$1,335	\$1,785	\$916	0.8%
Medical Expense	\$8,804	\$1,343	\$5,408	\$371	0.3%
Training	\$351	\$385	\$485	\$84	0.1%
Fire Truck Replacement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%
Chief Vehicle	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$120,782	\$199,717	\$174,448	\$108,347	

Reserve Funds

The difference between Clifton's income and expenses is deposited into the reserve fund, which contains approximately \$1.3 million as of the end of 2025. The reserve funds are divided into a number of different categories, with the largest amounts for fire truck replacement (\$743,000), building improvements (\$126,000), air pack replacement (\$99,000), Chief's vehicle replacement (\$50,000), and an emergency reserve (\$50,000).



Reserve Funds Balance as of 12/1/25	
Fire Truck Replacement Fund	\$742,857
Building Improvements	\$126,161
Air Pac Replacement	\$98,760
Chief Vehicle Fund	\$50,343
Emergency Reserve	\$50,000
All Other	\$215,646
TOTAL	\$1,283,767.00

Firefighter Perspectives

CGR met with the membership of Clifton to give them an opportunity to provide their thoughts and feedback. This information was combined with feedback from the previous leadership interviews to develop a comprehensive picture of the department. The key takeaways from all of these meetings are summarized below by topic areas.

Clifton Key Themes

Incentives to boost volunteerism

Clifton does not operate a LOSAP program because they cannot afford it, but feels that it would not make much difference anyway. Similar to what Chili members pointed out, young volunteers are reportedly not very interested in LOSAP, as the potential payoffs seem distant and the amounts seem small.

Clifton membership does not believe a bunk-in or duty crew system would make much of a difference to volunteer availability for calls, as members expressed they would just rather stay at home and respond to the station as needed.

Service to Riga

Leadership feels that if Clifton or a combined Chili department was no longer serving the Town of Riga, the Riga-based volunteers would withdraw from the department.

Clifton reports that 18% of its budget comes from the Town of Riga and as much as 45% of its membership lives in Riga, while approximately 39% of its total calls are in the Town of Riga. The mobile home park located in Riga is a major source of calls, primarily EMS. With Monroe Ambulance taking up to 25 minutes to respond to calls there, Clifton is a vital provider of first response to the residents.

In the event of a merger, members are concerned that the Town of Riga could end its contracted fire services with the combined department. This would directly and negatively impact the resident taxpayers in this portion of the Town of Riga as the services the Clifton Fire Department currently provides would have to come from another entity with a further geographic distance to respond.

Future of fire service

If and when Clifton and other volunteer agencies get to a point where dwindling membership means they cannot mount an adequate response, Clifton believes that either some kind of joint fire district uniting smaller departments, or a County-level combined or “Metro” career/paid fire department will be the answer.

They believe that local hybrid departments are not a good solution as career members steadily displace volunteers, and volunteers decide to stop coming.

In general, Clifton does not see the need for a separate Clifton fire district at this point. This is something that residents of Riga previously rejected. Clifton feels adequately funded and believes that potential fire district negatives, such as shown in the cautionary example of Fishers Fire District, would outweigh positives.

Downsides to Chili merger

Clifton leadership acknowledged the supportiveness of the Town and that the department serves at the pleasure of the Town Board. However, having conducted their own internal analysis, Clifton leadership believes that a merger with Chili would not address any of its central issues. They believe that in any merger Clifton will not get more membership, will not receive more funding, and will not save more money, overall, since there are few efficiencies-of-scale to be found.

At the same time, Clifton is concerned that it would be a sort of junior partner in a merger and could lose its distinctiveness and identity. If Clifton members feel the merger is unequal or they are being told what to do, leadership believes a mass exodus of members would occur.

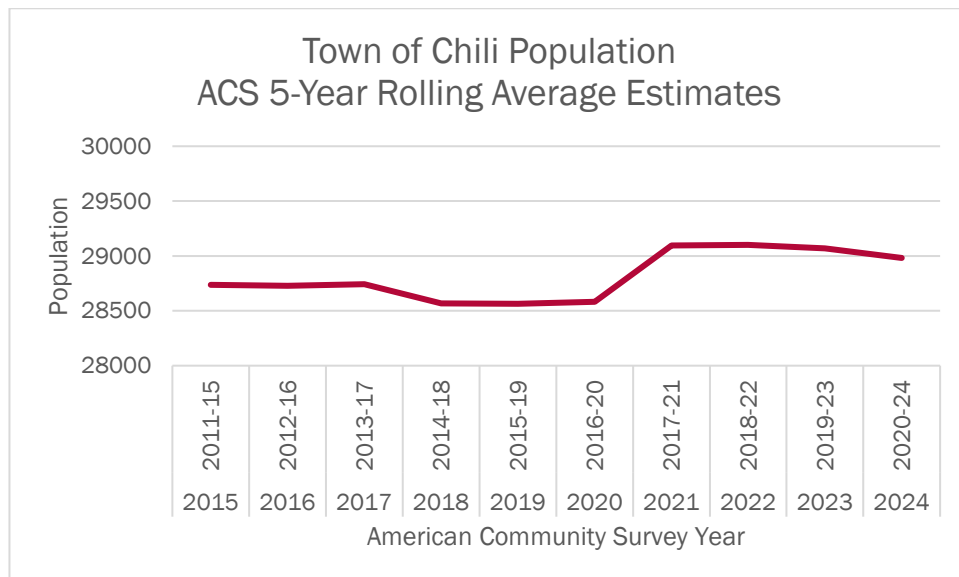
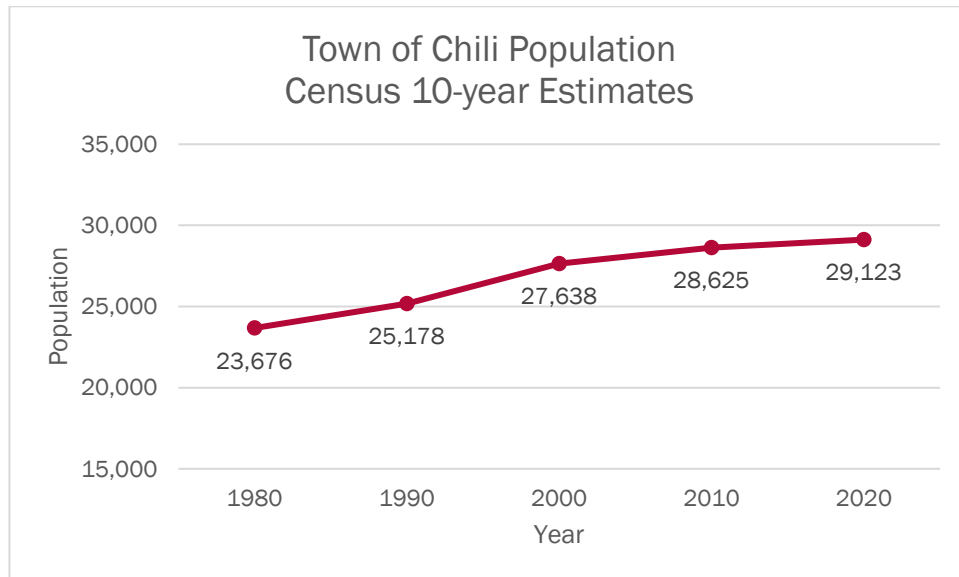
In Clifton's membership meeting, which included nearly 20 members, overwhelming opposition was voiced to the idea of a merger, with several members stating that they would quit in the event of a merger.

Clifton Firefighter Perspectives Summary

- Clifton states it is living within its means and building its budget to fit within the 2% cap. It emphasizes it does not need any special funding from the Town for any wish list items, but just wants the Town to be ready to support Clifton, if needed, in ordinary purchases such as upcoming apparatus replacement, in the event of continuing price hikes and inflation of equipment costs.
- Clifton does not believe a merger with Chili would address any of its most important issues. In its view, a merger would substantially reduce membership without providing substantial additional resources.

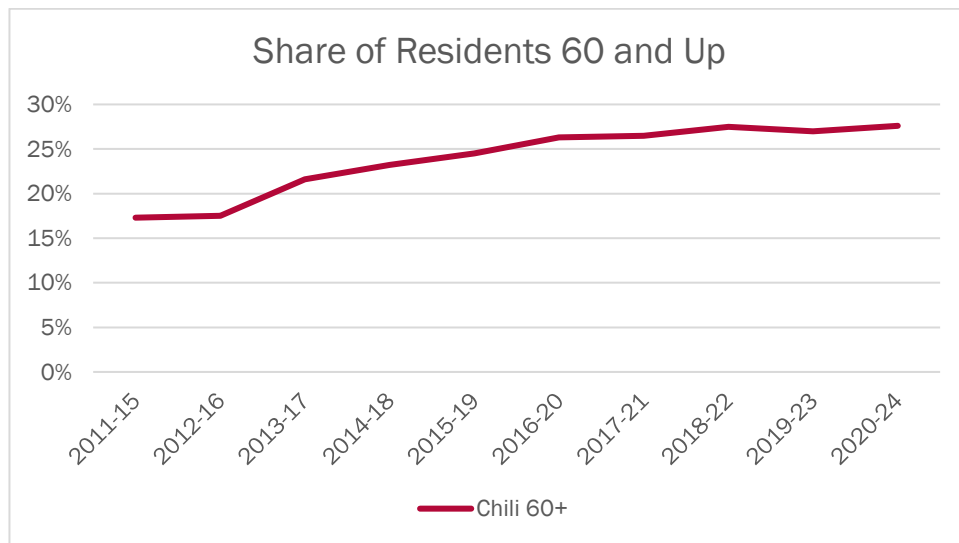
Appendix 1: Demographics and Development Patterns of the Community

The Town of Chili's population has been growing each decade since 1980. In 2020, the population was 29,123 residents, a 2% increase from 2010. More recent ACS estimates (2020–2024), which are updated every year to show a 5-year rolling average, show the population holding relatively stable, at approximately 28,982 residents



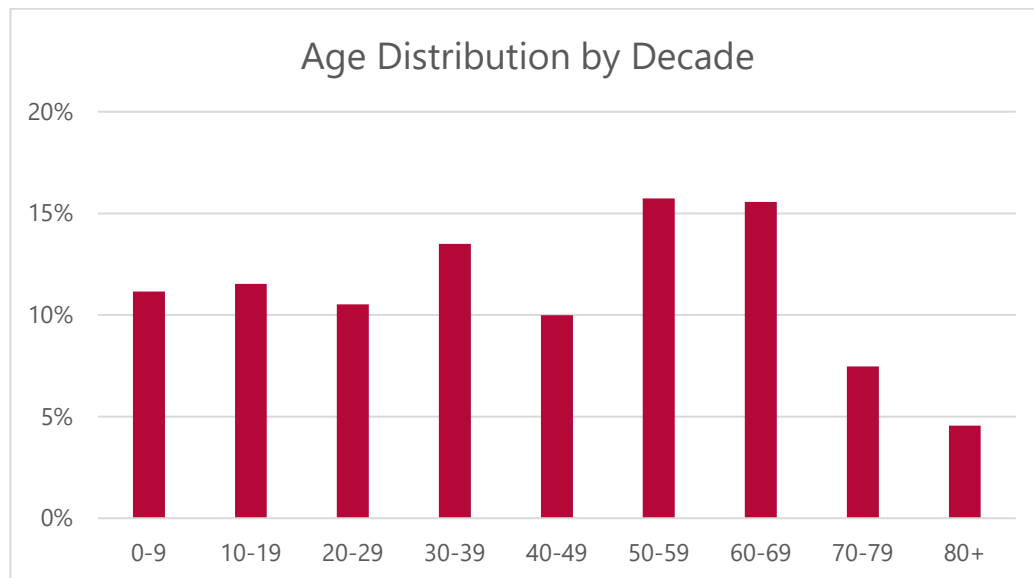
Age Distribution

Chili's age profile reflects a gradually aging population. Between the 2011–2015 and 2020–2024 ACS periods, the share of residents age 60 and older increased from approximately 17% to 27.6% of the population, representing nearly a 11-percentage-point increase.



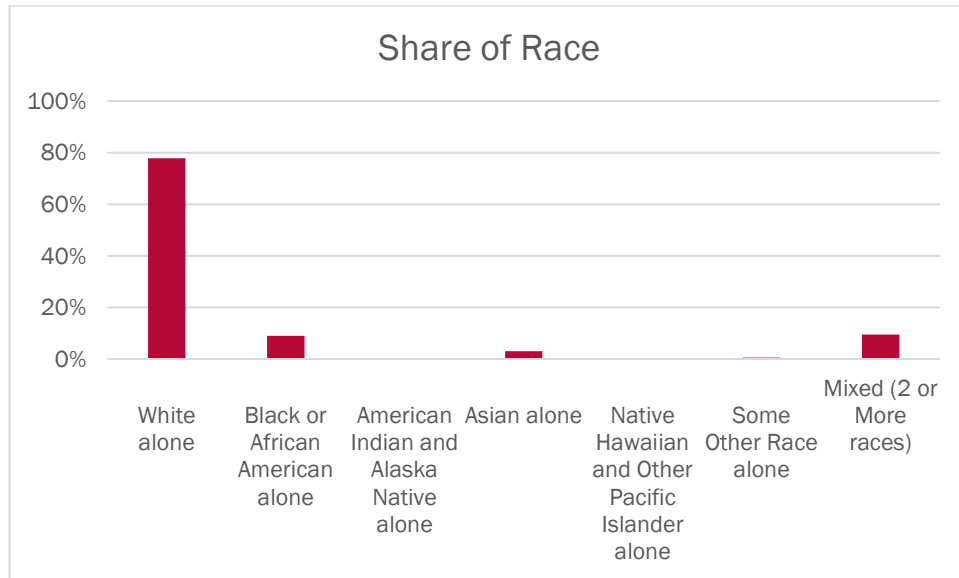
With a growing population of older adults, there is an increased risk for both fire and medical emergencies, posing a greater need for EMS agencies to meet demand. Although more than 60% of residents are between the ages of 18 and 64, the fire departments struggle to find volunteers, which could diminish agency response frequency, increasing the burden on paid staff.

The Town of Chili's population is concentrated in middle-aged and older adult groups, with the largest shares in the 50–59 (15.7%) and 60–69 (15.6%) age ranges.



Race and Ethnicity

The Town of Chili is predominantly White (78% white alone), with a smaller but present representation of Black/African American, Asian, and multiracial residents.

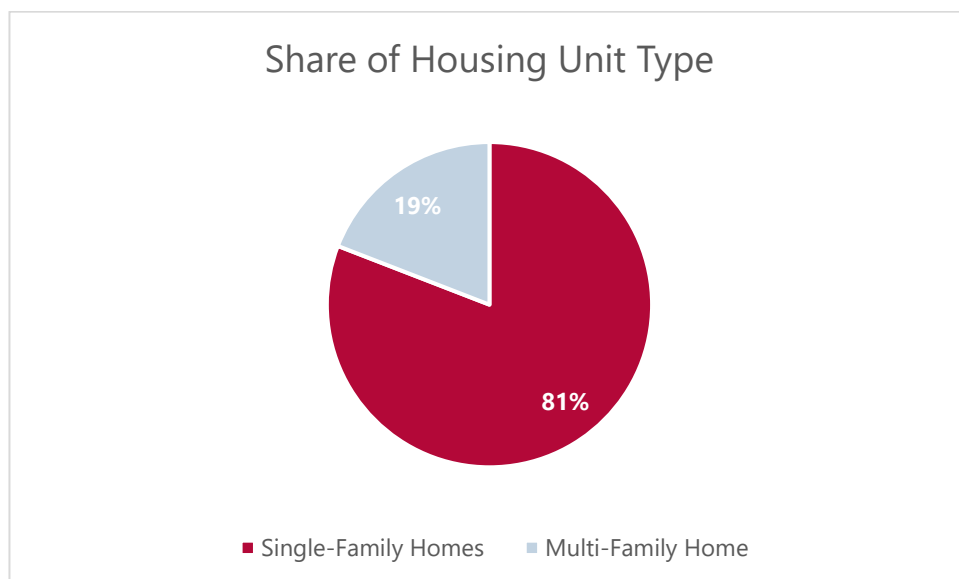


Income and Poverty

The median household income in Chili reflects a stable middle-income suburban community, at \$89,793. The poverty rate remains relatively low (7%). Overall, Chili demonstrates socioeconomic stability with limited concentrated poverty.

Housing Characteristics

Chili contains roughly 12,372 housing units. Its vacancy rate is approximately 3.7%. Of the occupied housing units, 81% are single-family homes and 19% are multi-family homes.



Summary

The Town of Chili is a stable, mature suburban community that has grown steadily since 1980 and now maintains a population of just under 29,000 residents. While the majority of residents are of prime working age (18–64), the most notable demographic shift in the past decade has been the substantial increase in residents aged 60 and older. The town remains predominantly middle-income, and population growth has slowed in recent years.

Town Development Patterns

Chili FD covers the largest portion of the town, approximately 21 square miles. Clifton FD covers a 12 square mile area of the southwest/southcentral part of the town. Most of the Town's population and planned growth are located within Chili FD's coverage area while the Clifton FD area is largely rural including several working farms and a county park.

Chili continues to grow, with both new residential and commercial development in the planning stages and some expansions of existing industrial facilities foreseen in the near future.

However, taken all together, these planned developments do not appear to be of the size and magnitude where they would pose a challenge to the fire departments' current resources or capacity, especially if new apartment buildings that come online incorporate automatic sprinkler systems and other modern building standards.

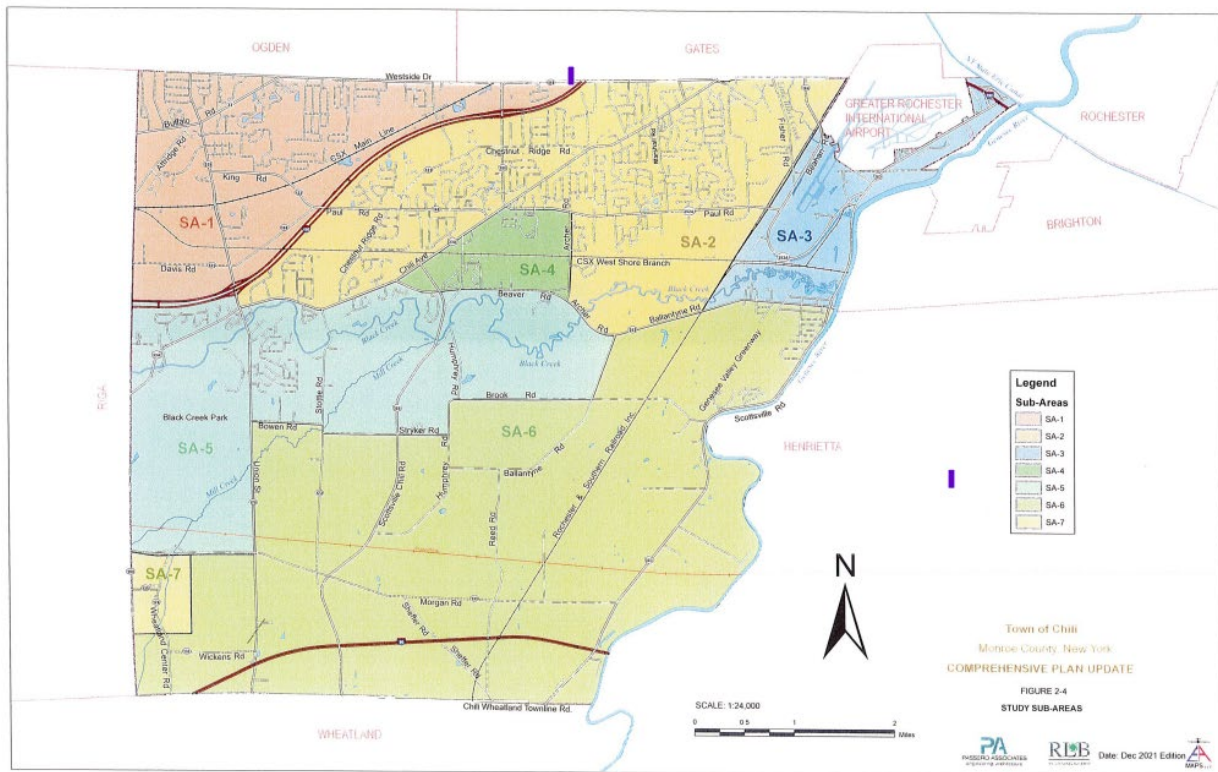
Approved developments since 2011 are largely concentrated on the north side of Chili, except for a couple of commercial and industrial development projects in the middle area. This is due to the higher level of developed infrastructure on the north side and the costs and challenges to develop similar infrastructure on the south side. The south side has more wetlands and flood-prone areas, plus unique soil desirable for farmland.

Per information shared by Supervisor Dunning, in the next several years, the Town is anticipating upgrades to existing facilities and redevelopment on currently vacant commercial properties, along with some potential residential expansion. As one example, a multi-unit redevelopment of the former site of the Chili Fire Company #1 firehouse on Chili Avenue may support up to 100 apartments, if it wins approval. Beyond this, the Town is not anticipating major new development in the near future.

Comprehensive Plan Details

The *2030 Town of Chili Comprehensive Master Plan* was first completed in 2010 and last updated in 2021. A new comprehensive plan will be authored starting in 2028.

The current plan breaks Chili into seven sub-areas, as illustrated in the map below.



The Comprehensive Plan outlines the following development details:

- Sub-Area #1:
 - Small 6-8 town home residential development approved on King Rd. btw CSX Main Line.
 - Town looking for more development proposals to come in that area
 - Anticipating commercial development at Rt. 259 & 490.
 - Approved development at vacant commercial space on Buff Rd. West of 259
- Sub-Area #2:
 - Development opportunities in Limited Industrial & General Industrial categories exist, but there are no new developments, currently.
 - Sydor Optics & XLI Manufacturing on Jet View Dr. are planning expansions.
- Sub-Area #3:
 - No major new development plans, currently.
- Sub-Area #4:

- American Packaging on Beaver Rd. has expressed some interest in expanding on the vacant land to the west of their current facility, but specific plans have not been confirmed.
- The Town is developing a park on Archer Rd.
- Sub Area #5:
 - Single Family homes are currently being developed in the residential zone on the easternmost portion of this sub area.
 - Beyond this, no specific changes anticipated to the current makeup of the sub area.
- Sub Area #6: This area is primarily agricultural and is expected to remain that way.
 - On the northeastern portion of the sub area, Hillside Children's Center and Turner Underground are expanding.
- Sub Area #7: Clifton. There are no expected changes to the current use.