

**Fire Consolidation Feasibility Study**  
**TOWN OF LINCOLN, RHODE ISLAND**

**FINAL REPORT**



December 2015

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## **1. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Matrix Consulting Group was retained by the Town of Lincoln to conduct an assessment of the current Fire Service delivery system, which consists of the six (6) independent Fire Districts operating from seven (7) stations. The purpose of the study was to examine the current structure, service delivery and funding of the current Districts and whether it is feasible to re-organize the delivery of fire services to have a single Fire District serve the Town.

Specifically the scope of work for the project included:

- Understanding the services, service levels and service capabilities of the six (6) independent fire districts serving Lincoln.
- Understanding the funding of the fire services in the six (6) independent fire districts serving Lincoln.
- Evaluating how the fire districts currently work together for response and for other purposes.
- Developing an initial feasibility of alternative service delivery systems up to and including organizational consolidation.
- Developing an initial implementation plan which addresses transition, governance and costs.

In this study, the project team utilized a wide variety of data collection and analytical techniques. The project team conducted the following data collection and analytical activities:

- The project team began an intensive process of conducting interviews with Town management, all the Fire Districts, elected officials as well as collecting a wide variety of data designed to document the organization of each Fire District, workloads and service levels.
- The project team collected detailed workload statistics for the primary functional areas, including calls for service from the computer aided dispatch / records

management system, budget documents and other statistical reports from each of the Fire Districts for analysis in this project.

- Each service area was toured to view the fire and non-fire risks present in the various response areas served by the Fire Districts.

In this report recommendations are made for areas the project team has identified as areas where a change should be made to improve function, practice or efficiency (either cost efficiency or process efficiency). There are also a number of findings related to the current service delivery that could improve upon the performance of the Fire Districts if formal performance measures were adopted and reported.

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Fire Districts were instrumental during the process for conducting this study. From making themselves available for interviews to responding to requests for data and reviewing interim deliverables during the process, it was clear the Fire Districts have a great deal of pride in their individual organizations and a desire to provide high level fire and rescue services to the residents of their service area and the Town of Lincoln as a whole.

### **(1) Project Findings and Recommendations**

As information was gathered and the data analyzed a few key findings resulted that lead to recommendations for the agencies:

**Finding:** There currently exist no formal performance standards for call processing, turnout or travel times that are tracked and publicly reported. Implementing these would allow dispatch and fire service manager to find improvement opportunities if industry standards are not met by personnel or to ensure a level of consistency in service.

**Finding:** There is a difference in pay scales between the three agencies. This makes the best approach to pay in a consolidated agency at the higher end of the current pay scales to ensure employees are treated fairly in a consolidated approach to providing fire services.

- Finding:** The Fire Districts all operate from the same Fire Codes so integrating a Town wide fire prevention program will be practical in a consolidated agency.
- Finding:** There are mutual aid agreements in place in the area and a strong level of cooperation and assistance between the Fire Districts. The formation of single Fire District would require a new mutual or automatic aid agreement between the District and surrounding communities.
- Finding:** There are opportunities to reduce the number of stations from seven (7) to four (4) and still provide travel times within expected industry standards for a suburban community. Staffing should be 13 personnel per shift to ensure an effective response force can be deployed to the risks present in Lincoln.
- Finding:** There are different methods for staffing and deploying personnel in the Fire Districts, but the current use of part-time and paid call personnel should continue in a consolidated Fire District.
- Finding:** There would savings in the total annual operating costs in a consolidated Fire District of about 3% annually compared to the costs of operating independently.
- Finding** While there would be little cost savings from consolidation, the staffing plan allows for improved operational response to emergencies as there would be 13 personnel on duty 24 hours per day at each of the four (4) stations with a dedicated command level officer also on duty.
- Finding** There will be long term capital cost reductions due to a reduction in vehicles and apparatus by 11 units in a consolidated agency and reduced station upkeep and upgrade costs due to the elimination of three (3) fire stations.

The following recommendations were developed during the course of this study:

***Recommendation: Consider Fully Consolidating the Fire Districts into a single fire service agency for the Town of Lincoln.***

***Recommendation: If consolidation to a single Fire District occurs utilize a four (4)-station response network for delivery of fire and rescue services.***

**Recommendation: Staff the consolidated Fire District with 13 personnel operating from 4 stations 24/7/365. Staff administration with a Chief, Deputy Chief, Fire Marshal, Fire Inspector and 2 clerical positions.**

**Recommendation: The single Fire District should have the following fleet and apparatus - 4 front-line, 2 reserve engines, 2 ladders, 1 brush unit, 1 heavy rescue, 1 boat, 1 ATV rescue and 4 administrative vehicles.**

**Recommendation: The Fire Chiefs should work together to develop a system-wide fire prevention plan that addresses the use of standardized policies focused on development, plan review, inspections and enforcement.**

**Recommendation: Consider Fully Consolidating the Fire Agencies through an IGA or the Creation of a single fire authority.**

**Recommendation: Sell surplus capital items and use the proceeds to pay off outstanding debt and develop a reserve fund.**

Each of the above findings and recommendations have greater detail provided within the body of the report.

## **(2) Consolidation Implementation Plan**

The following table provides an implementation plan for steps needed to move toward consolidation of the current use of six (6) Fire Districts into a single Fire District serving the Town of Lincoln.

<b>Step</b>	<b>Critical Tasks</b>
<b>Gain Fire District support for consolidation of Fire Services in Lincoln.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Town manager and elected officials should meet with Fire District Leadership and elected officials to discuss the viability of consolidation and get support.</li><li>• The Town and Fire District leadership should meet with Fire District staff (career, part-time and volunteers) to discuss the options and get staff support for consolidation.</li></ul>
<b>Gain public support for the consolidation of Fire Services in Lincoln.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hold Town Hall meetings with Citizens and conduct a public campaign outlining the benefits of operating as a single Fire District compared to operating as six (6) independent Districts.</li></ul>

Step	Critical Tasks
<p><b>Get approval from the State of Rhode Island to hold a local referendum election to allow voters to vote on the consolidation of Fire Services in Lincoln.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with State officials to get approval to put a local referendum on an upcoming ballot.</li> <li>• Place referendum on ballot and allow citizens to vote on consolidation of Fire Services.</li> <li>• If referendum passes adopt a local resolution for the consolidation of Fire Services with an effective date.</li> <li>• Seek State approval for the final consolidation and passage of an ACT allowing the consolidation to occur.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Begin Consolidation Implementation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select the Chief and command staff for the newly consolidated District.</li> <li>• Schedule the election of a Board to govern the newly created Fire District.</li> <li>• Establish tax rates for the Consolidated District.</li> <li>• Begin process of negotiating labor contracts with employees of the Consolidated District, understanding that existing labor agreements will remain in place until they expire or a new agreement is in place.</li> <li>• Hold public hearings and post public notices related to establishing the new tax rates for the Consolidated District.</li> <li>• Hold public hearings and post public notices regarding the adoption of the annual budget for the Consolidated District.</li> <li>• Dissolve the current Fire District Boards upon the election of the new Fire District Board.</li> <li>• The new Board should execute new mutual and automatic aid agreements with surrounding communities.</li> </ul>

## 2. CURRENT FIRE DELIVERY SYSTEM

This chapter includes an overview of the current fire delivery system in the Town of Lincoln, Rhode Island. Data contained within this chapter was obtained through interviews with the elected and appointed officials of the Town as well as personnel and leadership in the six (6) Fire Districts currently providing fire services in the Town, group meetings and examination of fire district records including budgetary and fire incident data. The descriptive profile of the current services was developed and circulated to the Fire Chiefs and the Town to ensure it was a factual representation of the current services.

### 1. DEMOGRAPHICS

The table below illustrates the demographics of the six Fire Districts participating in the study.

**Fire Departments / Fire District Demographics**

Fire District	Population	Sq. Mi	Density/ Square Mile	ISO Rating	Stations
Albion	3,200	3.6	889	3/3x	1
Lime Rock	5,600	9.2	609	5	2
Lonsdale	4,205	2.1	2,002	Unknown	1
Manville	3,300	1	3,300	4	1
Salyesville	3,800	2	1,900	4	1
Quinnville	1,000	1	1,000	5	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,105</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>1,117</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7</b>

As shown above, Lime Rock has the largest population and covers the most land area in Lincoln. The average population per square mile for Lincoln is 1,117, which would make the Town suburban for fire service planning purposes.

## 2. DISTRICT BUDGETS

The following table illustrates the funding for the Fire Districts over the past three (3) years:

**Fire Departments / Fire District Budget**

Fire District	FY 2012/13 Budget	FY 2013/14 Budget	FY 2014/15 Budget
Albion	\$1,013,498	\$1,043,447	\$1,060,074
Lime Rock	\$2,295,130	\$2,354,493	\$2,332,147
Lonsdale	\$581,906	\$580,372	\$608,615
Manville	\$354,788	\$356,786	\$330,078
Salyesville	\$686,967	\$699,483	\$708,033
Quinnville	\$84,100	\$84,100	\$87,365
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,012,389</b>	<b>\$5,114,681</b>	<b>\$5,122,312</b>

As shown above, the total funding allocated for providing fire services in the Town of Lincoln is approximately \$5.1 million annually. The largest budget is Lime Rock, with a budget of approximately \$2.3 million. Quinnville has the smallest budget for providing fire services at approximately \$90,000 annually.

The next table illustrates the current evaluation and taxing for each of the Districts for 2014:

**Fire District Evaluation and Tax Rates**

Fire District	Evaluation	Real Estate Tax	Business Tax	Tangible Tax	Auto Tax
Albion	\$605,441,304	\$1.50	\$1.75	\$3.00	\$1.10
Lime Rock	\$1,163,084,285	\$1.50	\$2.30	\$2.30	\$1.60
Lonsdale	\$281,718,506	\$1.90	\$1.90	\$6.82	\$3.00
Manville	\$170,243,000	\$1.67	\$1.67	\$1.67	\$1.70
Salyesville	\$390,428,189	\$1.69	\$2.20	\$3.15	\$2.50
Quinnville	\$51,617,348	\$1.54	\$1.54	\$1.54	\$1.40
<b>Average</b>		<b>\$1.63</b>	<b>\$1.89</b>	<b>\$3.08</b>	<b>\$1.88</b>

As shown above, there is a wide range of tax rates and valuations in the Fire Districts. Real Estate tax rates range from \$1.50 to \$1.90 and business tax rates range

from \$1.54 to \$2.30. While Lime Rock has one of the lowest real estate tax rates, it has the highest business tax rate.

### **3. CALLS FOR SERVICE**

The following table illustrates the number of calls for service by Fire District in 2012:

**Total Call for Service**

<b>Fire District</b>	<b>2012 Total Calls</b>	<b>2014 Total Calls</b>
Albion	986	1,103
Lime Rock	1,140	1,299
Lonsdale	831	820
Manville	618	634
Salyesville	764	747
Quinnville	234	169
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,573</b>	<b>4,772</b>

As shown above, the Fire Districts responded to a total of 4,573 calls for service in 2012 and 4,772 in 2014. This is an increase of 4.4% over the two-year period. Lime Rock had the most responses in 2014 at 1,299, with Quinnville responding to the least calls at 169. Overall the Districts average approximately 13.1 responses per day.

### **4. STAFFING**

The Fire Districts are staffed with paid personnel and volunteers. The following table illustrates the staffing of the Fire Districts:

**Fire Department / Fire District Staffing**

<b>Fire District</b>	<b>Full Time</b>	<b>Part Time</b>	<b>Call Man</b>	<b>Total</b>
Albion	5	14	6	<b>25</b>
Lime Rock	22	9	0	<b>31</b>
Lonsdale	5	6	5	<b>16</b>
Manville	0	12	10	<b>22</b>
Salyesville	3	12	12	<b>27</b>
Quinnville	0	1	11	<b>12</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>150</b>

As illustrated above, there are a total of 162 personnel available for emergency response in the Fire Districts. Of these 35 are full-time personnel, 73 are part-time and an additional 44 are paid-call.

**5. CURRENT SALARIES**

The following tables illustrates the salaries of full time employees by each allocated position with the Fire Districts of Albion, Lime Rock and Salyesville:

**ALBION FULL TIME SALARY – FY 2014/15**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Base Salary</b>	<b>Actual Salary</b>
Chief	\$70,135	\$72,590
Deputy Chief	\$55,041	\$64,133
Captain	\$50,568	\$59,196
Lieutenant (1)	\$48,160	\$54,236
Lieutenant (2)	\$48,160	\$53,755

**LIME ROCK FULL TIME SALARY–  
FY 2014/15**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Base Salary</b>
Chief	
Deputy Chief	
Captain	\$56,718
Lieutenant	\$52,001
Firefighter (A)	\$47,284
Firefighter (B)	\$37,805
Firefighter (C)	\$31,340

**SALYESVILLE FULL TIME**  
**SALARY – FY 2014/2015**

Position	Base Salary
Chief	N/A
Deputy Chief	\$59,383
Captain	\$53,985
Lieutenant	\$51,414
Firefighter	\$46,740
Probationary FF	\$42,491

**6. APPARATUS**

The following tables illustrates the apparatus by type for each agency sorted by station location:

**ALBION APPARATUS**

Year	Make	Model	Type	Status	Staffing
<b>Address: 38 School Street, Albion, RI 02802</b>					
1992	Spartan	3D	Engine	Frontline	
2015	E-One	HM100 Quint	Ladder	Frontline	
2005	Pierce		Heavy Rescue	Frontline	
N/A	N/A	N/A	Utility Truck	N/A	
2013	Ford	Expedition	Command Unit	Frontline	
2005	Mercury		Boat/25hp	Frontline	

**LIME ROCK APPARATUS**

Year	Make	Model	Type	Status	Staffing
<b>Address: 1085 Great Road, Lincoln, RI 02865 – Station 1</b>					
2000	American LaFrance		Engine	Front Line	
			Utility Truck		
			Command Unit		
			Boat		
<b>Address: - Station 2</b>					
2008	Pierce	MFG	Engine	Front Line	
1975	Mack		Engine	Reserve	

**LONSDALE APPARATUS**

Year	Make	Model	Type	Status	Staffing
<b>Address: 224 Front Street, Lincoln, RI 02865</b>					
2005	American LaFrance		Pumper	Front Line	
1990	KME		Pumper	Reserve	
1995	Ford	F-250	Brush Unit	Front Line	
2009	Ford	Expedition XLT	Command Unit	Front Line	
2009	Ranger	6 Wheel Drive	Off Road EMS Unit on a Utility Trailer	Front Line	

**MANVILLE APPARATUS**

Year	Make	Model	Type	Status	Staffing
<b>Address: 112 Old Main Street, Manville, RI 02838</b>					
2006	Crimson	Spartan Chassis	Engine	Front line	
1996	Leverne	Spartan Chassis	Engine	Front line	

**SALYESVILLE APPARATUS**

Year	Make	Model	Type	Status	Staffing
<b>Address: 1 Chapel Street, Lincoln, RI 02865</b>					
1995	E-One	Protector	Engine	Front Line	
2005	Pierce	Dash Quint	Ladder	Front Line	
2005	GMC	2500HD Reading	Utility Truck	Front Line	
2008	GMC	Envoy	Command Unit	Front Line	
2001	10'10" RIB		Boat	Front Line	
2005	6 X12 Horton		Trailer	N/A	

**QUINNVILLE APPARATUS**

Year	Make	Model	Type	Status	Staffing
<b>Address: 861 Lower River Road, Lincoln, RI 02865</b>					
1993			Pumper	Front line	

**7. TRAINING**

Each of the agencies provided training records to indicate the amount of annual training attended by personnel of the Department/District. The following tables illustrate the annual training hours for each agency in 2014:

**ALBION TRAINING HOURS - FY 2014**

Type	Hours	Avg. Hours
Apparatus Check Procedures	42.0	1.2
CPR Recertification	72.0	2.1
Electrical Safety	21.0	0.6
Emergency Medical Services	196.0	5.8
Fire Control	30.0	0.9
Fire Department Organization	46.0	1.4
Fundamentals of Fire Suppression	344.5	10.1
Monthly Drill	40.0	1.2
SCBA Donning Methods	38.0	1.1
Strategic & Tactical Operations	400.0	11.8
Traffic Laws	60.0	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>1289.5</b>	
<b>Avg./Personnel (34)</b>		<b>37.9</b>

**LIME ROCK TRAINING HOURS - FY 2014**

Type	Hours	Avg. Hours
No Training Data		
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.0</b>	
<b>Avg./Personnel</b>		

**LONSDALE TRAINING HOURS - FY**

Type	Month	Avg. Hours
PPE	January	
SCBA	February	
Forcible Entry	March	
Hose Lines	April	
Driver Training	May	
Driver Training	June	
Ladders	June	
Drafting	July	
Driver Training	August	
Pumping Operations	August	
Pumping Operations	September	
Live Burn	September	
Driving and Pumping	October	
Pumping and Hand Lines	November	
Ladders	December	
<b>Total</b>		
<b>Avg./Personnel</b>		

**MANVILLE TRAINING HOURS - FY 2014**

Type	Hours	Avg. Hours
CPR	54.0	1.8
EMS	682.0	22.7
ICS	331.0	11.0
Jaws	12.0	0.4
Ladder	240.0	8.0
SCBA	546.5	18.2
Sen training	0.0	0.0
Tactics	1149.5	38.3
Water	330.0	11.0
Other	580.0	19.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>3925.0</b>	
<b>Avg./Personnel (30)</b>		<b>130.8</b>

**SALYESVILLE TRAINING HOURS - FY 2014**

Type	Hours	Avg. Hours
Administrative Procedures	37.5	1.4
General Driving Training	43.8	1.6
Emergency Medical Services	111.0	4.1
Fire Control	678.0	25.1
Ice/Water Rescue Operations	65.3	2.4
Extrication Operations	32.8	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>968</b>	
<b>Avg./Personnel (27)</b>		<b>35.9</b>

**QUINNVILLE TRAINING HOURS**

Type	Hours
Pumping	13
Maintenance	2
Communications	1
Ladders	2
Search and Rescue	3
SCBA	3
Hydrants	6
Hose	1
Knots and Ropes	1
Carbon Monoxide Meter	1
Emergency Medical / CPR	6
Chimney Fires	1
Storm Preparation	1
Forestry	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Avg./Personnel (6)</b>	

## **8. FIRE PREVENTITON**

The following table illustrates the number of prevention activities conducted in 2014 as provided by each fire district:

**Fire Prevention Activities – FY 2014**

<b>Fire District</b>	<b>Final Inspection</b>	<b>Liquor License</b>	<b>Plan Review</b>	<b>Re-inspection</b>	<b>Resale inspection</b>	<b>Rough Inspection</b>
Albion	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lime Rock	35	-	60	-	66	-
Lonsdale	-	-	-	-	-	-
Manville	16	5	6	3	22	6
Salyesville	6	5	10	5	39	27
Quinnville	2	1	2	-	5	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>35</b>

As shown in the table above, only the Districts of Lime Rock, Manville, Salyesville and Quinnville current report fire prevention activities being conducted by personnel in the Fire District.

### 3. SERVICE DELIVERY ASSESSMENT

In order to provide the analytical framework necessary to evaluate alternatives to current service, this chapter addresses the following:

- Manpower distribution in terms of total personnel and on-duty per station. Career firefighter availability, part-time firefighters, as well as the use of volunteers (paid call) by the various districts providing fire service in the town.
- Comparative fire service costs and resources at present levels and over the past three-years.
- Fire service demand levels as determined through analysis of the computer aided dispatch (CAD) system and records management system in use at the agencies.
- Comparative service levels in terms of the following: response policies, , training programs, fire prevention activities and automatic/mutual aid agreements.

The service overview begins in the next section.

#### 1. THE CURRENT FIRE SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM IN THE LINCOLN CONSISTS OF SIX (6) FIRE DISTRICTS OPERATING FROM A NETWORK OF SEVEN (7) FIRE STATIONS.

Currently, fire services in Lincoln is provided by six (6) independent Fire Districts.

Each of the Districts has their own taxing authority for the area of the Town they service.

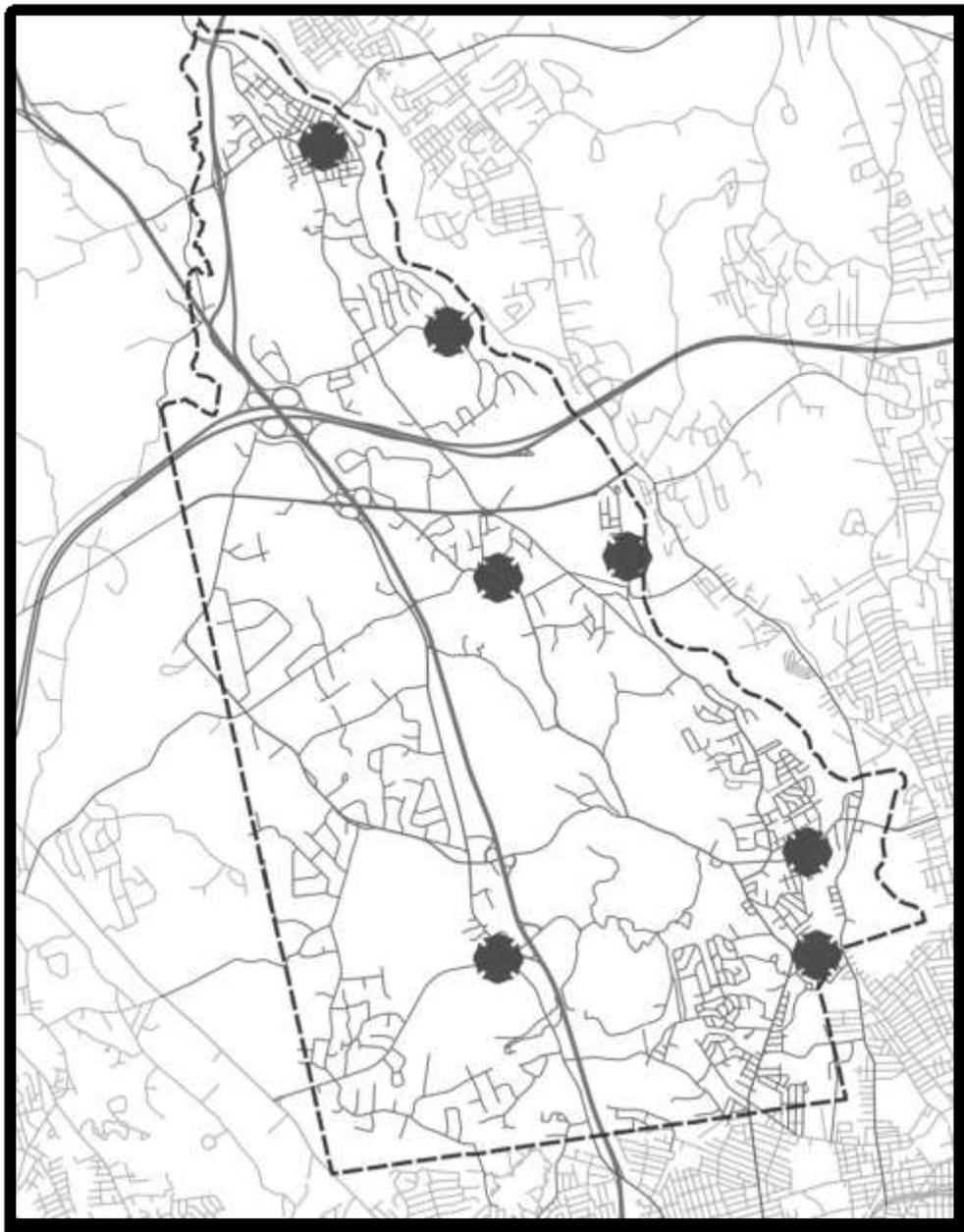
The following provides a summary of the service providers in Lincoln:

- **Albion Fire District (AFD):** covers approximately 3.6 square miles and provides services to approximately 3,200 residents from a single fire station.
- **Lime Rock Fire District (LRFD):** covers approximately 9.2 square miles and provides services to approximately 5,600 residents from 2 fire stations.
- **Lonsdale Fire District (LFD):** covers approximately 2.1 square miles and provides services to approximately 4,205 residents from a single fire station.
- **Manville Fire District (MFD):** covers approximately 1 square mile and provides services to approximately 3,300 residents from a single fire station.

- **Salyesville Fire District (SFD):** covers approximately 2 square miles and provides services to approximately 3,800 residents from a single fire station.
- **Quinnville Fire District (QFD):** covers approximately 1 square mile and provides services to approximately 1,000 residents from a single fire station.

The following illustrates the location of the seven (7) fire stations serving the Town of Lincoln:

**CURRENT FIRE STATION NETWORK**



As shown in the map on the previous page, the current station network Has the majority of fire stations located in the eastern portions of the city with one station located west of the Eddie Dowling Highway (146). These station locations will be further examined in a later section to show the proximity of stations to calls for service and expected travel times to calls for service from the stations.

**2. THE RESOURCES OF THE FIRE AGENCIES INCLUDE 36 FULL TIME CAREER PERSONNEL, 128 PART TIME PERSONNEL, 15 VOLUNTEER PERSONNEL AND 23 INTERNS.**

The method of staffing the three fire agencies varies from using a combination of paid full time personnel, supplemented with part time personnel to using a combination of paid, part time and volunteer personnel to using a combination of using paid full time, part time and interns.

The following table illustrates the staffing of each of the fire agencies:

**ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN / STAFFING**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Albion</b>	<b>Lime Rock</b>	<b>Lonsdale</b>	<b>Manville</b>	<b>Salyesville</b>	<b>Quinnville</b>
<b>Full Time Positions</b>						
Chief	1	1	0	0	1	0
Assistant Chief	0	1	0	0	0	0
Deputy Chief	1	1	1	0	0	0
Admin/Clerical	0	2	0	0	0	0
Fire Marshal	0	1	0	0	0	0
Captain	1	2	1	0	1	0
Lieutenant	2	5	1	0	1	0
Firefighters	0	9	2	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Part-Time Positions</b>						
Fire Chief	0	0	0	1	0	1
Deputy Chief	0	0	0	1	0	0
Lieutenant	0	0	0	4	0	0
Firefighter	18	10	0	6	17	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Volunteer/Paid Call Positions</b>						
Firefighter	7	0	7	11	8	11
<b>TOTAL STAFF</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>12</b>

As shown the total full time staff employed by the six fire districts is 35 personnel, part time personnel equal 58 and volunteer/paid call positions account for 56 personnel. The total staffing of the three fire agencies is 137.

**3. IN THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR, APPROXIMATELY \$5.12 MILLION IS SPENT ON FIRE PROTECTION IN THE TOWN.**

This section outlines the current costs of providing fire protection for each of the fire districts. The table, which follows, illustrates the budgets for each of the fire districts for fiscal years 2013 - 2015. Each of the budgets has been consolidated into broad areas for comparison purposes.

**Fire District Budgets**

<b>Fire District</b>	<b>FY 2012/13 Budget</b>	<b>FY 2013/14 Budget</b>	<b>FY 2014/15 Budget</b>	<b>Change</b>
Albion	\$1,013,498	\$1,043,447	\$1,060,074	4.59%
Lime Rock	\$2,295,130	\$2,354,493	\$2,332,147	1.61%
Lonsdale	\$581,906	\$580,372	\$608,615	4.58%
Manville	\$354,788	\$356,786	\$330,078	-6.07%
Salyesville	\$686,967	\$699,483	\$708,033	3.06%
Quinnville	\$84,100	\$84,100	\$87,365	3.88%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,012,389</b>	<b>\$5,114,681</b>	<b>\$5,122,312</b>	<b>2.19%</b>

As shown there is a wide variance in the budgets of the six fire agencies. Overall growth of the budget over the three-year period was minimal with the total budgets growing by approximately 2.2% from FY 2013 to FY 2015. Percentage wise, Albion had the highest budge growth at approximately 4.6% over the three-year period, while Manville had an overall decrease of 6.07% in their operating budget over the period.

**4. ANALYSIS OF FIRE CALL DATA INDICATES THAT THERE ARE VARIATIONS IN SERVICE DEMANDS AND WORKLOADS AMONG THE FIRE AGENCIES.**

Demands for service in terms of call frequency and type as well as workload in terms of response capability and practice, differ between the three fire agencies. The

following paragraphs show the results of analysis of emergency and public service responses of each fire agency.

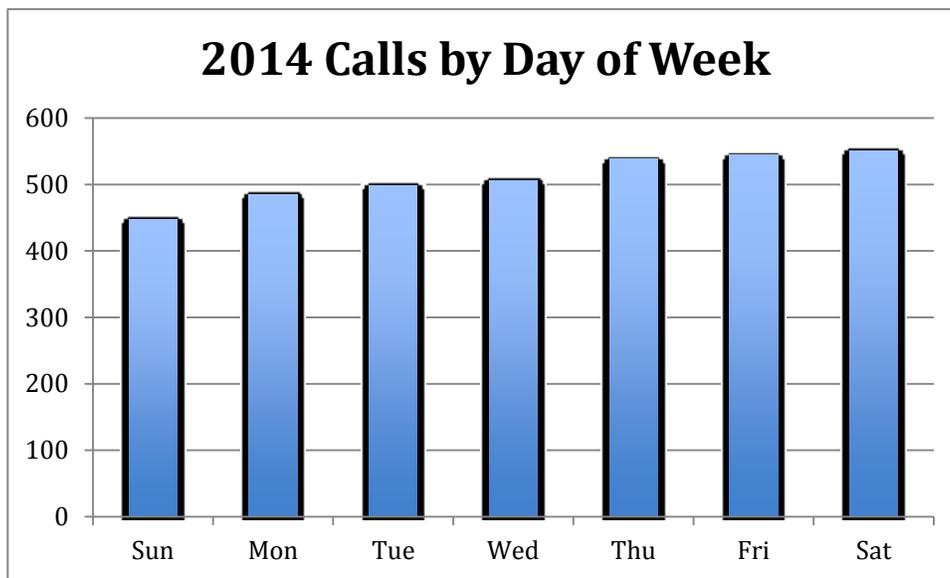
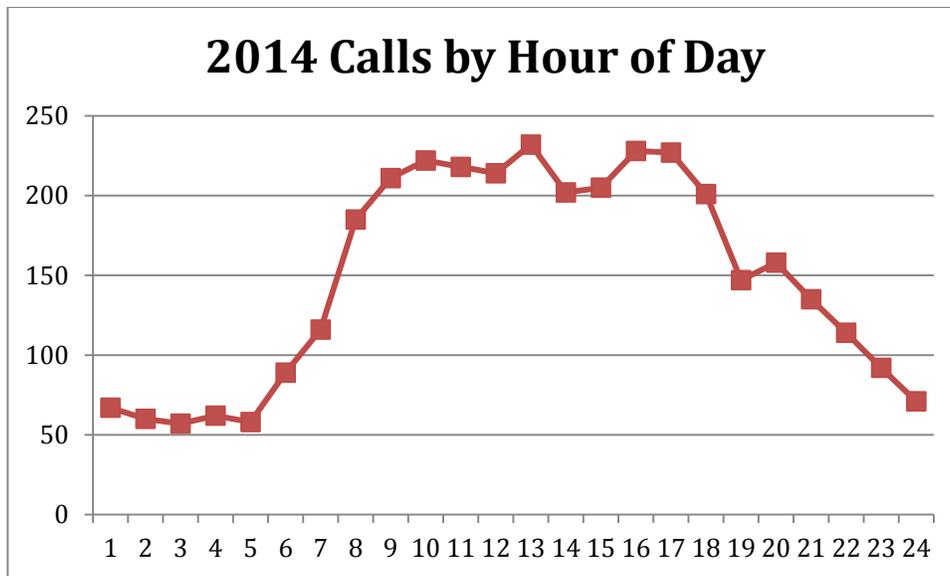
The table, which follows, illustrates the call demand experienced by each agency during the 2014 calendar year.

**Calls for Service CY 2014**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>In District</b>	<b>Out of Town</b>	<b>Automatic Aid in Town</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Albion</b>	892	70	141	<b>1,130</b>
<b>Lime Rock</b>	<b>1,075</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>1,299</b>
<b>Lonsdale</b>	520	100	200	<b>820</b>
<b>Manville</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>634</b>
<b>Saylesville</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>747</b>
<b>Quinnville</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>169</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,553</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>932</b>	<b>4,772</b>

As show above, the agencies responded to a total of 4,772 incidents in 2014. Of these 3,553 were within their own district, 287 were outside the Town and 932 were automatic aid to another district in the Town. Lime Rock and Albion are the busiest districts, responding to 2,429 calls in approximately 51% of the calls for service in 2014. This call volume results in an average of approximately 13 calls for service per day in the Town.

The following charts show the average calls per hour and per day for the fire districts in Lincoln as a single agency.



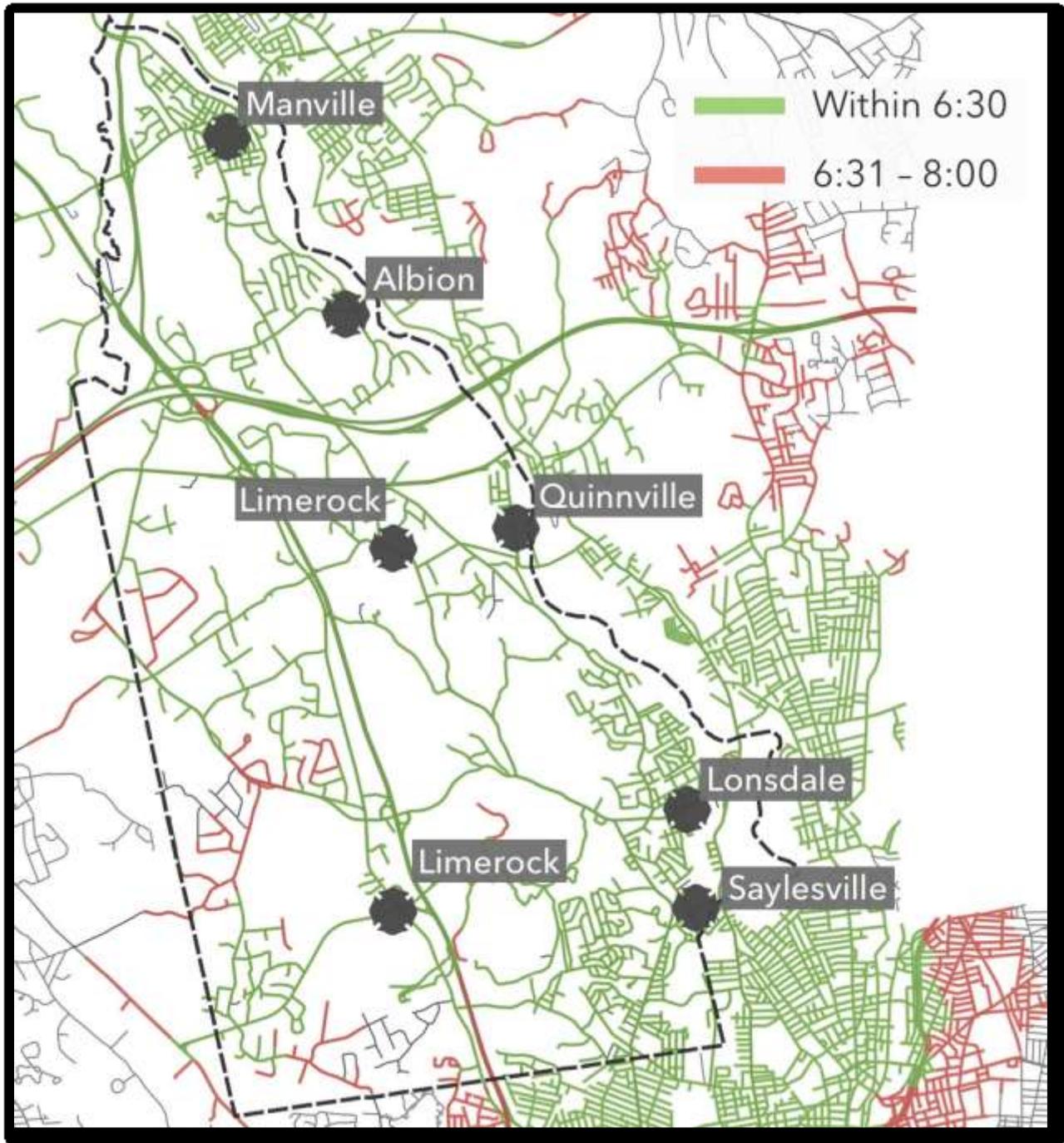
As shown above, call volume peaks between the hours of 9:00 am – 6:00 pm, with Friday and Saturday being the busiest days of the week and Sunday the slowest in terms of call volume.

According to the Commission on Fire Accreditation International 3,500 calls per year for a single apparatus is the target threshold to begin planning for additional resources, at 3,850 calls annually additional resources are needed or action needs to

be taken to alleviate demand from the unit, such as adding a unit or reconfiguring response districts. Currently there are no individual units in the agencies approaching that level of call demand, which indicates the current apparatus are not fully utilized from a demand perspective and there are opportunities to reduce the number of apparatus in a consolidated Fire District. All units for the agencies are well below threshold values and show to have good availability rates to respond to emergency calls. For planning purposes the driving factor will be meeting response time objectives as compared to unit capacity.

The computer aided dispatch data did not allow for the examination of response times for the agencies. Current best practices for dispatching emergency fire and EMS calls is to dispatch 90% of calls within 60 seconds of the call being received by the dispatch center. Turnout best practices are currently 60 seconds 90% of the time for EMS calls and 80 seconds 90% of the time for fire calls. Best practices for travel time vary by the type of area being protected (metropolitan, urban, suburban or rural). For the purposes of this study the Town is considered suburban. Due to the lack of CAD data to illustrate current performance by District, the project team develop a map showing projected travel times from each of the current fire stations utilized today in Lincoln. The map is shown on the following page:

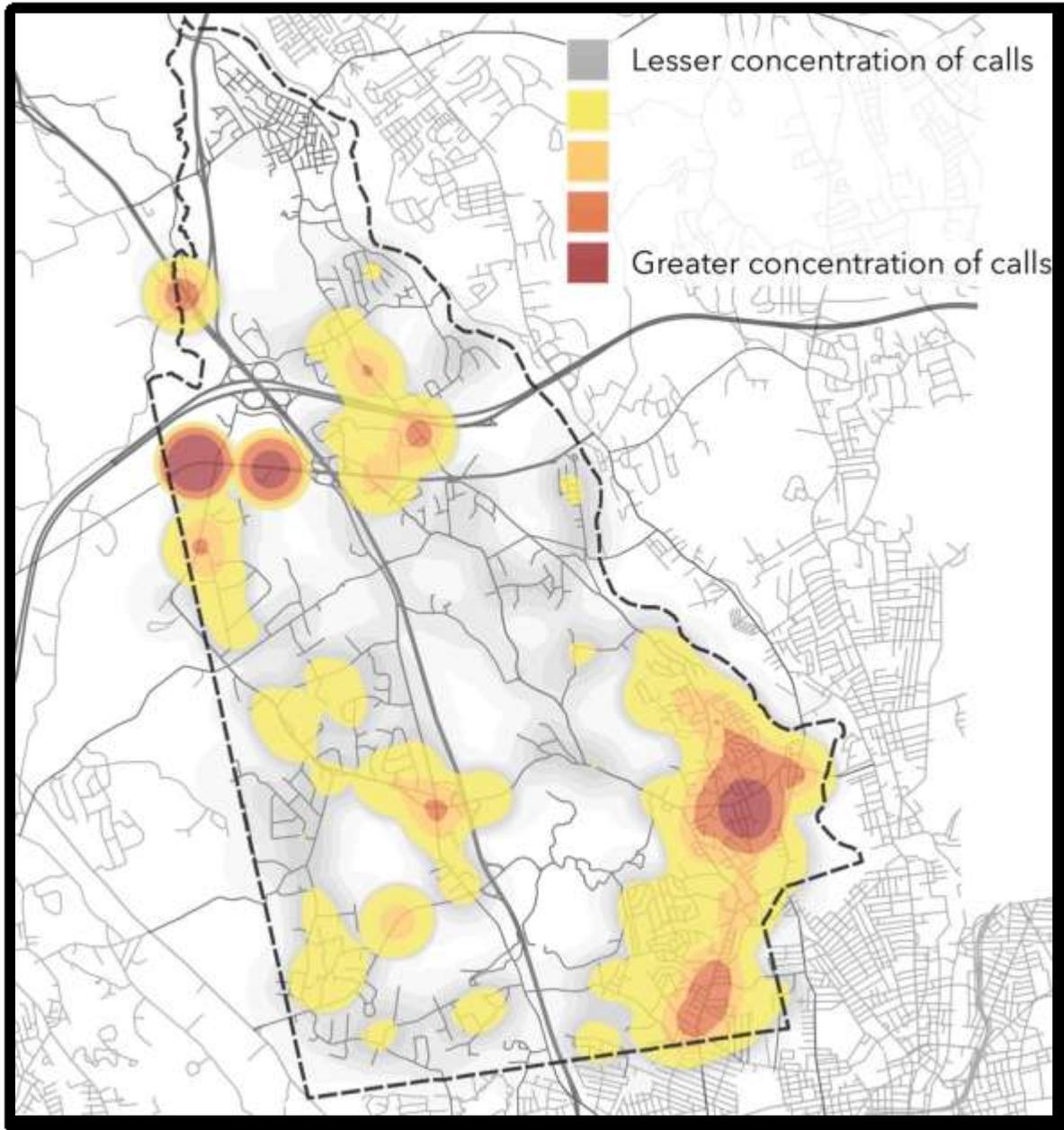
### Current Response Travel Times



As shown in the map above, the current agencies have predicted travel times of under 6 minutes 30 seconds, baseline performance expectation for a suburban agency.

to the majority of the Town from the current station network. There are a few areas west and south where response travel times can be as long as 8 minutes.

It is also important to understand where the calls are occurring so call location frequency can be compared to travel times to ensure high call areas have the lower travel times. The following map illustrates call density for the Fire Districts:



As illustrated in the map on the previous page, the majority of calls are occurring in areas with predicted travel times of 6:30 or less, the baseline performance expectation for a suburban fire protection area.

The next table illustrates the total system call volume from July 31, 2014 – June 30, 2015.

<b>Call Type</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Emergency Medical</b>	2,348	69.3%
<b>Motor Vehicle Accident</b>	321	9.5%
<b>Fire</b>	50	1.5%
<b>Box Alarm</b>	265	7.8%
<b>Twin River Medical</b>	214	6.3%
<b>Other</b>	188	5.6%
<b>Total in District Calls</b>	<b>3,386</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Mutual Aid Given</b>	239	
<b>Mutual Aid Received</b>	668	

As shown above, medical emergencies and motor vehicle accidents are by far the most common call types the agencies responded to in 2014, accounting for approximately 79% of all calls for service.

**5. OTHER INDICATORS OF FIRE SERVICE LEVELS SHOW SIMILARITIES AND VARIATIONS WHEN COMPARING THE DISTRICTS.**

In addition to comparative indicators of the fire services related to staffing, costs and workload, there are variations in other facets of the fire service delivery system.

**(1) The Districts Are Utilizing the Same Fire Code.**

As shown in the previous chapter of the report only Lime Rock, Manville, Saylesville and Quinnville are reporting fire prevention activity conducted by the district. Each of the Fire Districts utilize the same Fire Codes to conduct inspections and ensure compliance with applicable Codes in the Town. Currently these are the Rhode Island Uniform Fire Code (NFPA 1, 2012 edition as amended) and the Rhode Island Life Safety Code (NFPA 101, 2012 edition as amended).

As part of the fire prevention efforts all schools are inspected annually prior to the start of the school year, bars, restaurants and liquor stores are inspected annually prior to the renewal of their Town license, auto body shops are inspected every 3 years, private homes are inspected for smoke and carbon monoxide detectors prior to property transfers and private businesses are inspected when a complaint is filed or during fire alarm and sprinkler inspections.

**(2) The Scope of Fire Service Training Programs Is Similar, But Has Variations.**

The training hours for each fire district are shown in Chapter 2 of the report. Each of the fire districts focuses on conducting some form of training on a weekly basis. The majority of the training is focused on fire and EMS related topics and ensuring perishable skills are maintained. The training is typically scheduled in the evenings to best fit the volunteer and part-time personnel schedules. Each of the fire districts conduct drills which have a mandatory attendance requirement. Each of the agencies is also using NFPA standards (1001 and 1002) for conducting training.

**(3) The Districts Are Currently Part of an Automatic Aid Agreement.**

The agencies have a well-established automatic aid program in place with automatic aid stacking developed for the CAD system utilized by the Town dispatch center. By establishing the types of calls where assistance is required to develop an effective response force, aid from neighboring districts is automatically dispatched to ensure a timely arrival of an effective response force to mitigate the emergency. The timely dispatch of units ensures there is no delay in developing an effective response force to structural fires and other critical incidents where the resource needs exceed the capacity of the primary responding agency.

**(4) Fire Investigation Programs Are Similar Among the Fire Service Districts.**

All the districts are involved in the fire cause determination, arson investigation and prosecution in their respective fire districts. For larger more complicated fires, the State Fire Marshal will assist in the investigation.

**(5) There Currently Exist No Established Performance Measures for Dispatching or Travel Times to High Priority Calls for Service.**

As stated earlier in the report, the fire districts all utilize the Town of Lincoln Police Department for dispatching emergency calls for service. The dispatch center was unable to provide data to analyze the call process, turnout or travel times of the fire districts to emergency calls for service. The current best practices for the dispatching of high priority calls is for a call to be dispatched in 60 seconds 90% of the time, with expected baseline performance at 1 minute 30 seconds 90% of the time. Turnout times have a benchmark performance standard of 80 seconds with baseline performance of 90 seconds 90% of the time. Travel time best practices are dictated by the density of the population being served. The current best practices for travel time, according to the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) are shown in the following table.

**CFAI Best Practices**

	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Unit</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Unit</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Alarm Assignment</b>	<b>Performance</b>
Urban Benchmark	4 minutes	8 minutes	8 minutes	90%
Urban Baseline	5 minutes / 12 seconds	10 minutes / 24 seconds	10 minutes / 24 seconds	90%
Suburban Benchmark	5 minutes	8 minutes	10 minutes	90%
Suburban Baseline	6 minutes / 30 seconds	10 minutes / 24 seconds	13 minutes	90%
Rural Benchmark	10 minutes	14 minutes	14 minutes	90%
Rural Baseline	13 minutes	18 minutes / 12 seconds	18 minutes / 12 seconds	70%

Benchmark standards are optimal performance levels, while baseline is acceptable performance. Urban areas are considered areas with a population of over 30,000 people and/or a population density of over 2,000 people per square mile. Suburban areas are those areas with a population of 10,000 – 29,000 and/or a population density of 1,000 to 1,999 people per square mile and rural area are those areas with a population of less than 10,000 and/or a density of less than 1,000 people per square mile. Areas defined as wilderness or remote have no established best practices for response times; these are largely unpopulated areas. Based on these criteria, the districts included in the study would have the following classifications.

- Albion (Rural)
- Lime Rock (Rural)
- Lonsdale (Urban)
- Manville (Urban)
- Salyesville (Suburban)
- Quinville (Suburban)

Overall the Town of Lincoln would be classified as suburban, but could choose to implement varied travel time standards based on specific population densities in station response areas.

**(6) The Agencies Have a Large Number of Vehicles/Apparatus in Their Fleets.**

The breakdown of emergency apparatus and vehicles was previously shown in Chapter 2 of this report. Each district currently maintains a number of vehicles and apparatus to respond to emergency calls for service within their jurisdiction. The decisions related to purchasing and maintaining these capital expenditures has been

made individually and not when viewing the Town as a single fire response area. This leads to each fire district having apparatus that is appropriate for meeting the needs of their taxpayers, but ultimately more apparatus than would be needed if a single fire district were serving the Town. While important to ensure the ability to respond when functioning as a single entity there are opportunities to reduce the size of the fleet in a consolidated agency as will be discussed in Chapter 4 of this report.

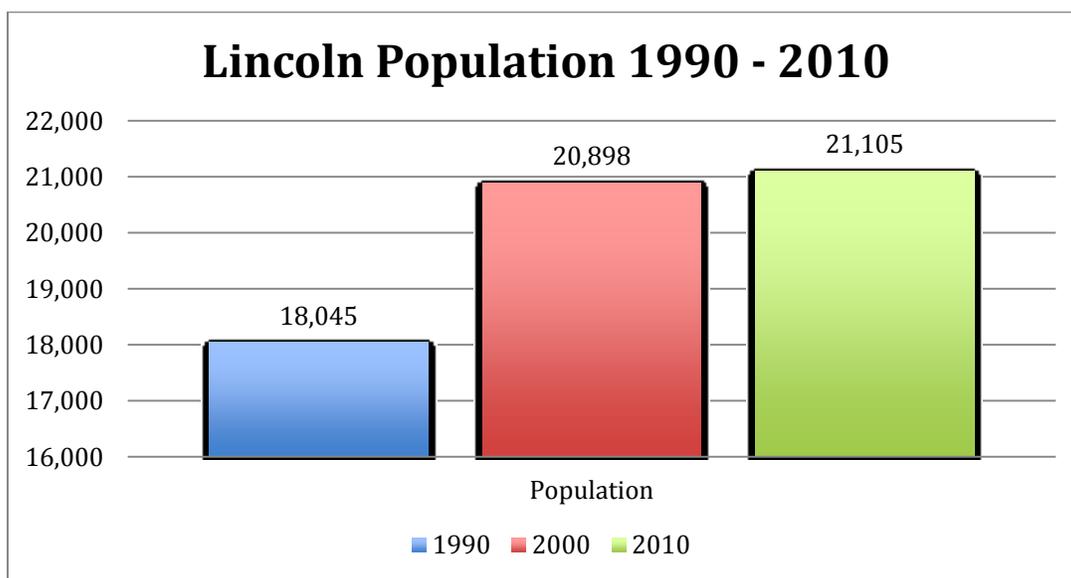
## 4. KEY ISSUES AND ASSUMPTIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to identify and analyze service and cost effectiveness issues, which have arisen as a result of the analysis of the existing fire services system in place. Issues and assumptions presented in this chapter will provide the basis for the analysis of alternatives presented in Chapter 4 of the report.

### 1. GROWTH HAS SLOWED IN LINCOLN, MAKING THE EXAMINATION OF THE BASIC NETWORK OF CURRENTLY OPERATED STATIONS APPROPRIATE FOR A CONSOLIDATED FIRE DISTRICT.

During interviews with various key individuals on the expected growth in the various service areas there is a belief that the steady growth experienced in Lincoln in the past has slowed and will continue to be slow in the near future. There are currently no major residential or commercial developments planned in the Town and overall growth from 2000 to 2010 was 1.0%, while from 1990 to 2000 the change in population was 16.6%,

The following chart illustrates the growth trend in the Town since 1990.



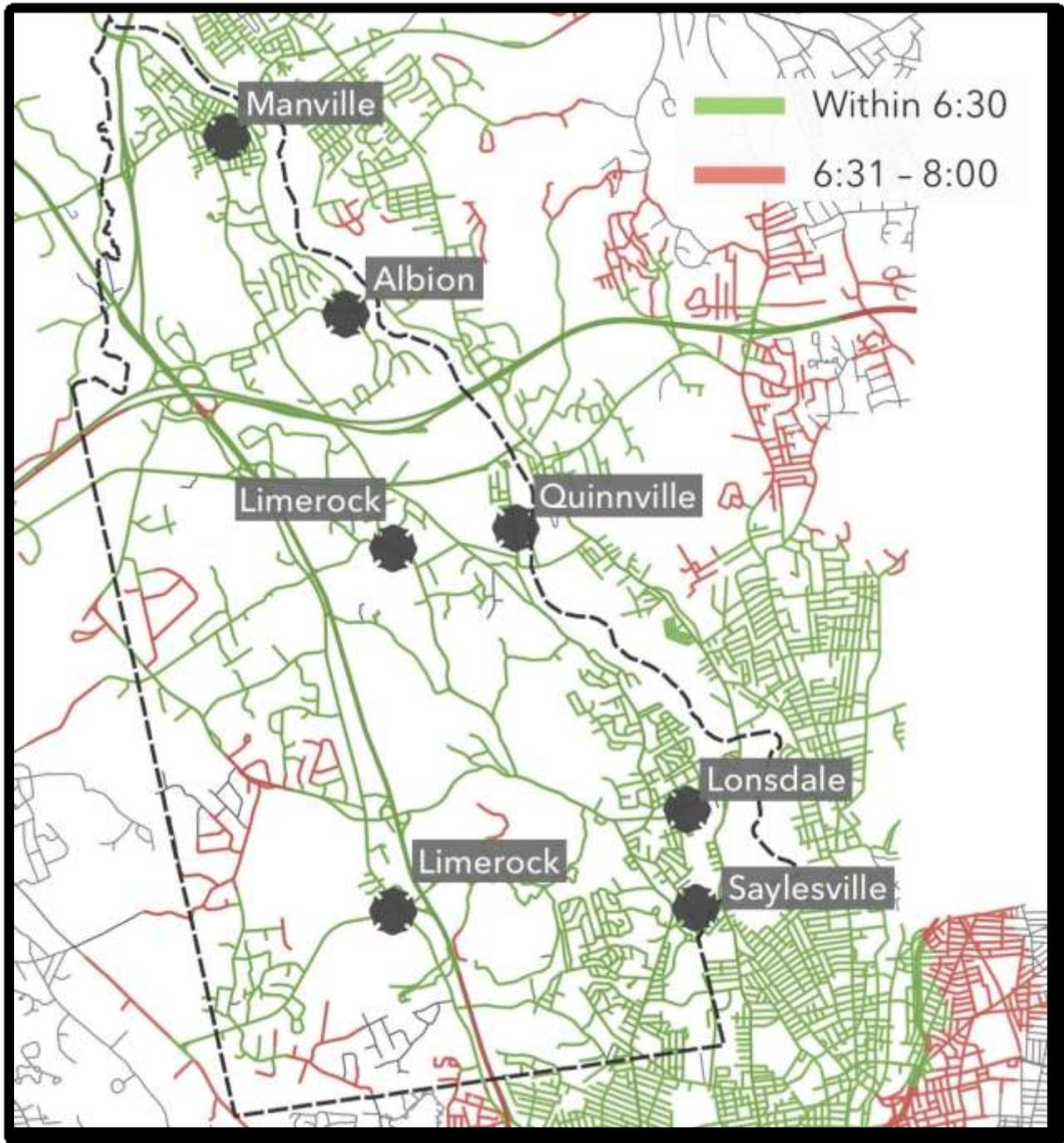
As shown there has been considerable growth in the area over the past 20 years in in Lincoln, but that growth slowed in the past 10 years. According to the State of Rhode Island population projections, Lincoln is predicted to have a population of 21,857 by 2020 and 23,038 by 2030. This would equate to an increase of 9% over the 20-year period from 2010 to 2030.

**2. TRAVEL TIME STANDARDS CAN BE MET IN THE SERVICE AREA WITH FEWER STATIONS.**

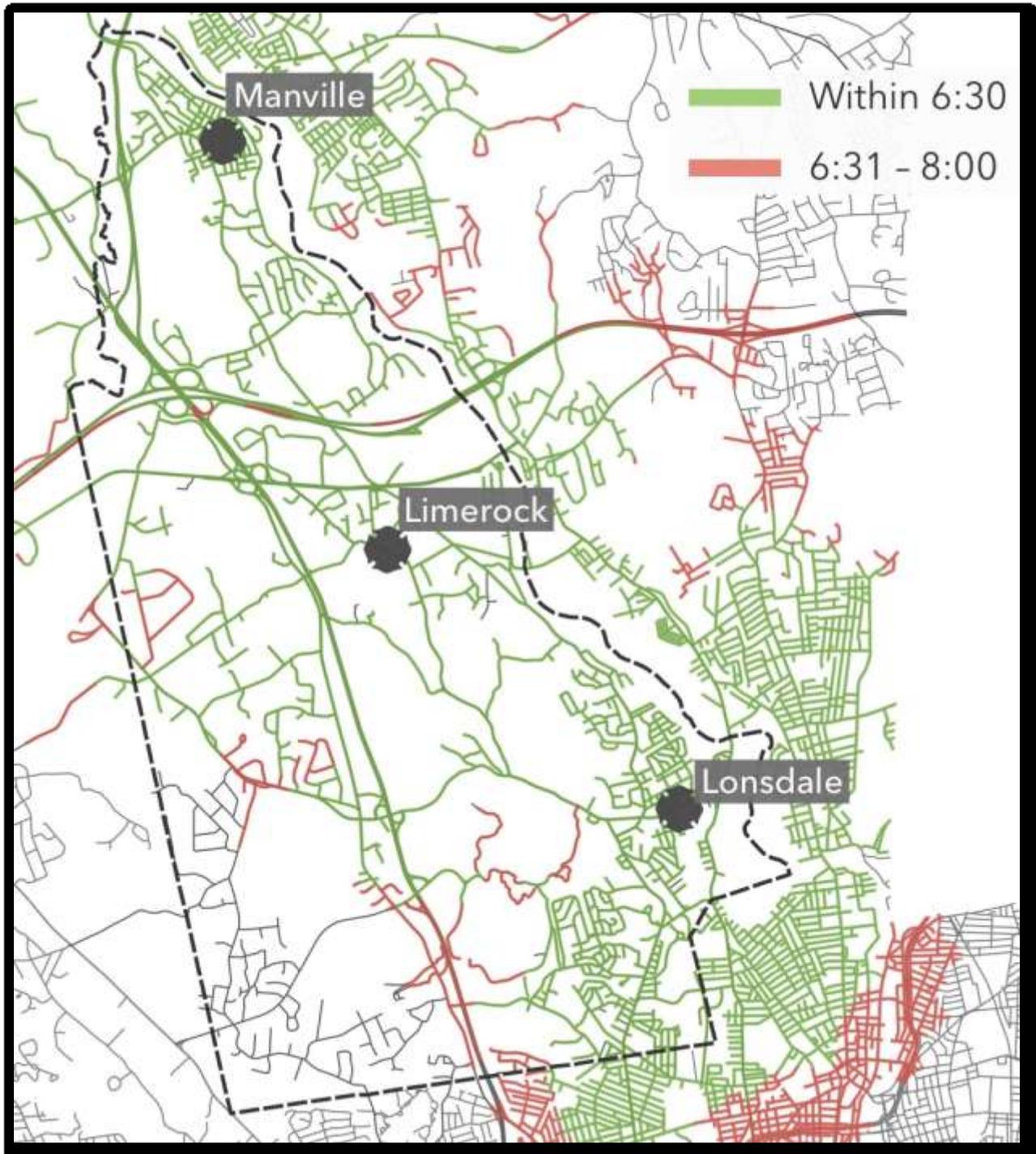
When the six Fire Districts are viewed as single fire response district there are apparent opportunities to reduce the number of stations if a travel time goal of 6 minutes 30 seconds 90% of the time is established, but there would be areas, as is the case today that could be reached in 8 minutes 90% of the time.

The maps on the following pages illustrate the projected travel times from the existing stations at 6:30 and 8:00 from the current station network and the best scenarios using a 3-station or 4-station network for response to emergency calls for service.

Current 7 Station Travel Times



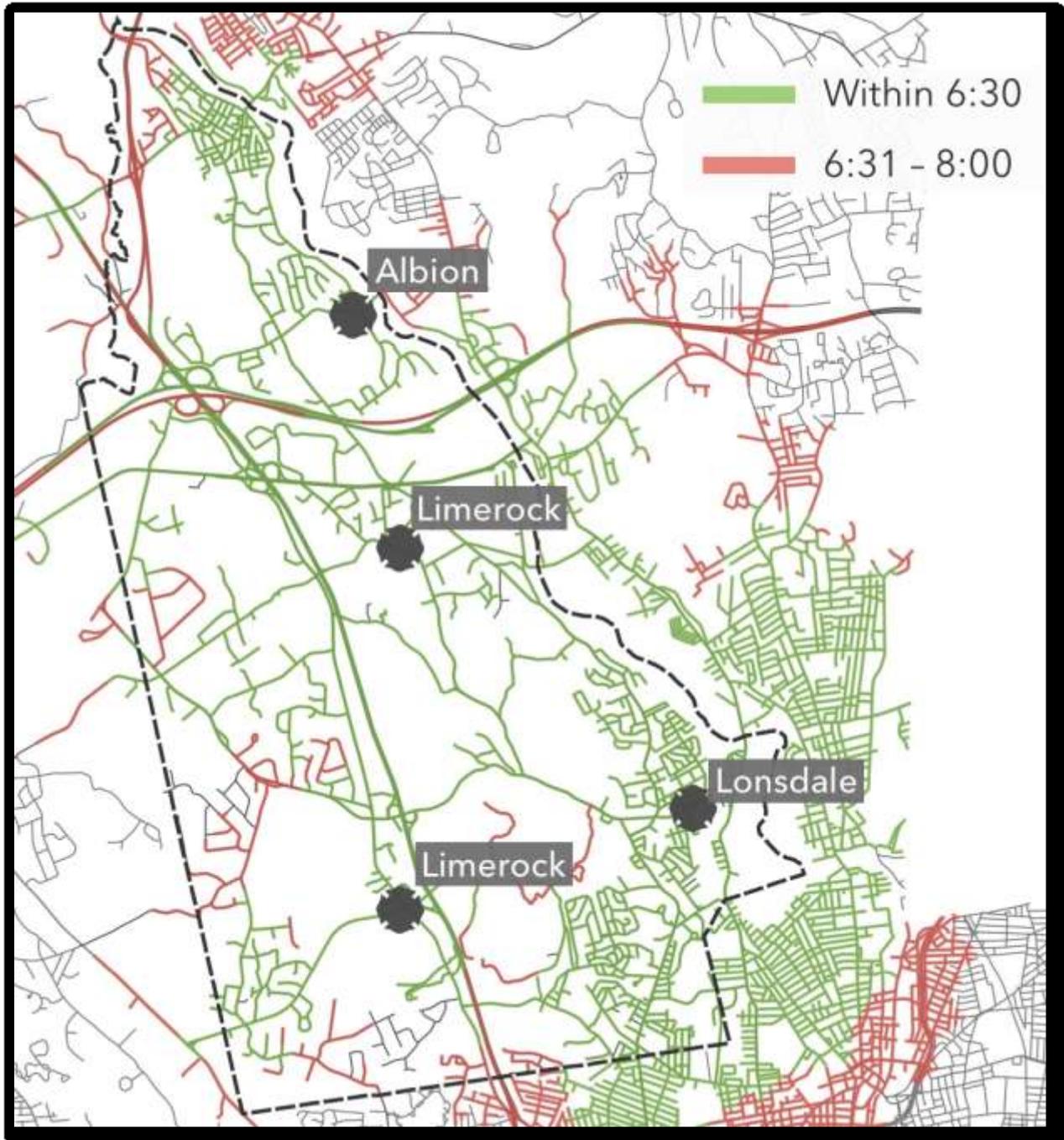
Travel Times Using 3 Stations



As shown above, using the best 3 station option provides good coverage in the northern and eastern portions of the Town, but is unable to provide adequate travel

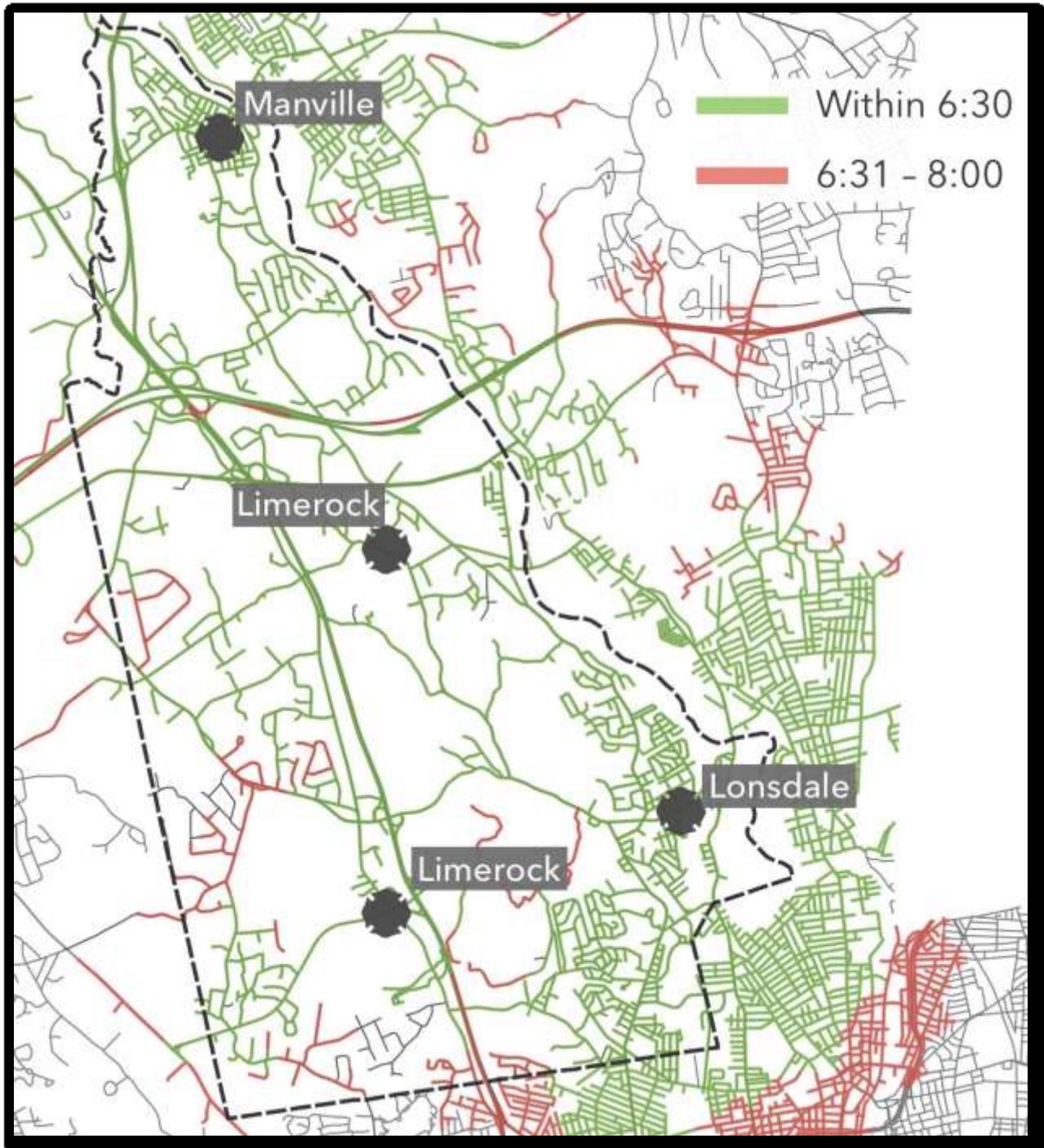
times to the southwestern areas of the town. The next map illustrates using a fourth station.

**Travel Times Using 4 Stations (Option 1)**



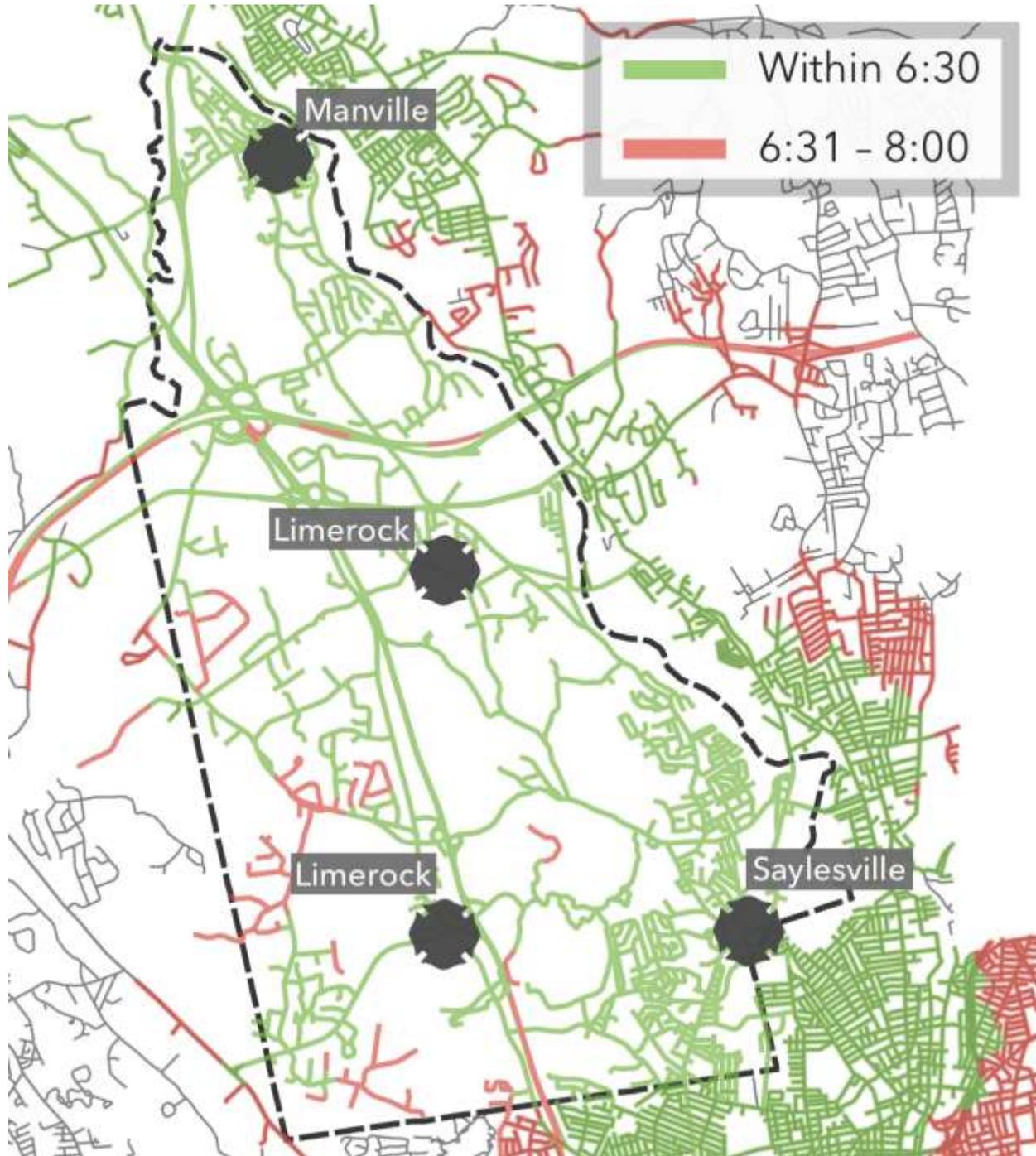
As shown above, this option provides travel times of less than 8 minutes for the majority of the Town.

Travel Times Using 4 Stations (Option 2)



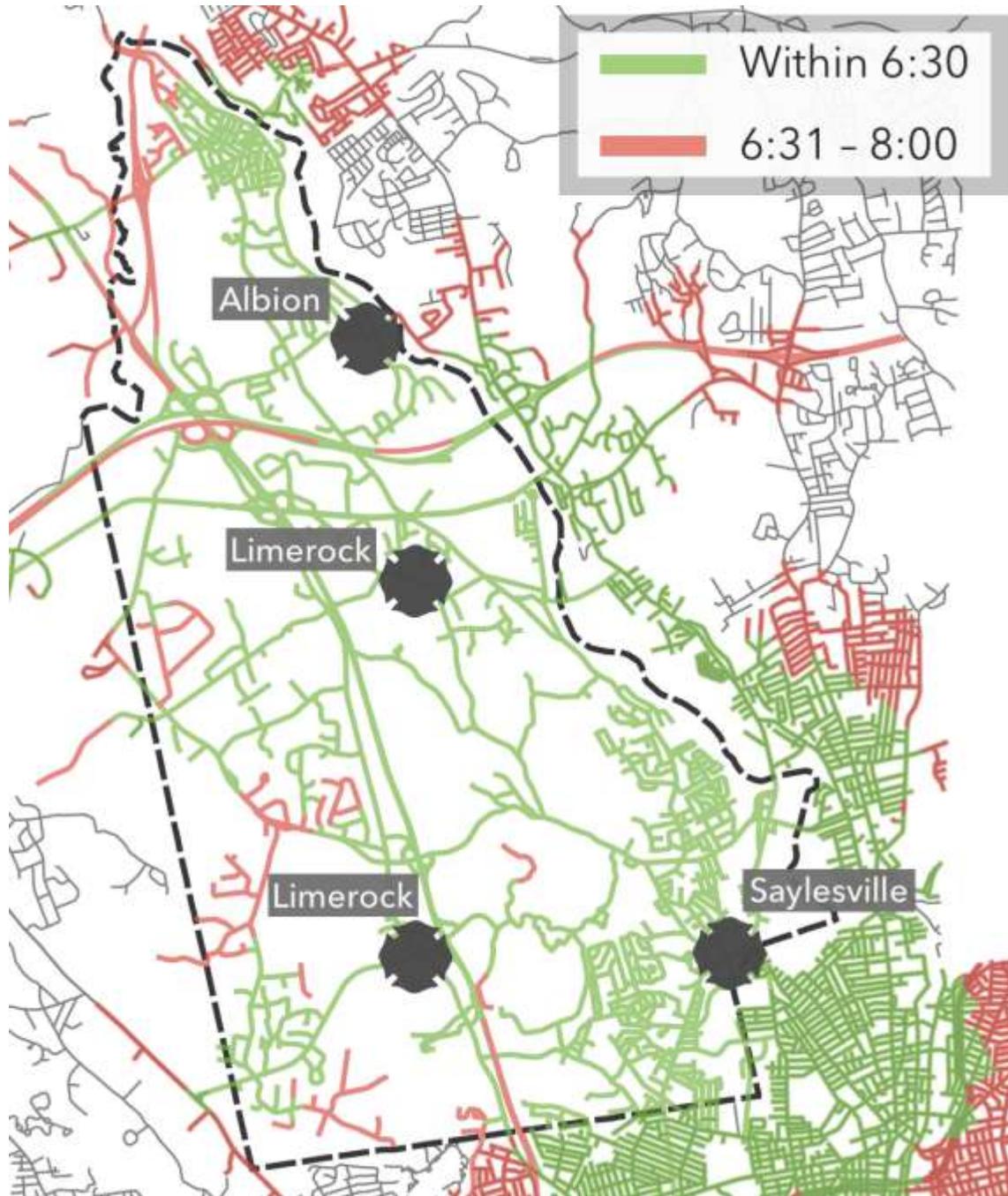
As shown above, using this station configuration the predicted travel times are still within 8 minutes for the majority of the Town, but improved in the far northern sections.

Travel Times Using 4 Stations (Option 3)



As shown above, this station combination results in almost the identical predictive response times as option #2, but with slight improvement in the far southern areas of the Town.

**Travel Times Using 4 Stations (Option 4)**



As shown above, this station configuration also ensures travel times of less than 8 minutes for the majority of the Town, but has slightly longer travel times than option 3 to the most northern sections of the Town.

The predictive travel time maps show that the best response times are achieved from a 4-station network. Option 3, which utilizes the existing Manville, Lime Rock and Saylesville fire stations provides the optimal coverage in terms of predicted response times.. This station network provides almost identical travel times predictions as the current 7 station network and covers higher call volume areas very effectively.

It is important to note that while utilizing the Manville station provides the fastest predicted travel times to the far northern areas of the Town, it is also important to consider station condition and serviceability as these will have long-term capital cost implications for the Town. The Albion station is a modern facility with improved apparatus storage capabilities and modern office and living quarters for response personnel when compared to the Manville station. For this reason the four station concept using the existing Albion, Limerock and Saylesville fire stations should be considered, even though there would be a slight increase in travel time to a portion of the northern areas of the Town, as long-term capital improvement costs associated with the Manville station will be avoided and response times are still in the acceptable range using this station configuration.

***Recommendation: If consolidation to a single Fire District occurs utilize a four (4)-station response network for delivery of fire and rescue services.***

**3. DELIVERY OF COST EFFECTIVE FIRE SERVICES WILL REQUIRE IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE OF SEVERAL KEY PROGRAMS.**

One of the key assumptions made in developing the alternatives presented and analyzed in Chapter 4 was the steps that need to be taken to ensure that a cost-effective fire service system is maintained in the Town. These assumptions include the following:

- The District would continue to utilize a regional approach to dispatching emergency calls for service, with the Town of Lincoln continuing to serve as the dispatch center.
- A consistent volunteer program will be maintained, which is complemented by paid, career firefighters and part time firefighters.
- A comprehensive fire prevention program is developed and implemented on a Town-wide basis.
- A comprehensive and consistent fire training program is developed and maintained for the single Fire District.

These issues set the stage for the assessment of organizational alternatives, which follow this page.

## **5. ANALYSIS OF CONSOLIDATION**

Leading to this chapter of the report we have analyzed the present fire service delivery system in Lincoln for the six (6) Fire Districts currently serving the Town. There are several key findings resulting from this analysis: (1) there are service variations among the Fire Districts in terms of response times, staffing and use of volunteers; (2) the fire prevention and training functions vary among the Districts; (3) there are opportunities to increase volunteer participation beyond emergency response and therefore increase the effectiveness of volunteers; and (4) current growth levels will not seriously impact the service levels or required configuration of stations and personnel in the short to mid-term.

These conclusions suggest that there are opportunities to restructure the fire service system to achieve several results: (1) more effective use of existing manpower; (2) better coordination and oversight of Town fire protection needs; (3) increased cost effectiveness through consolidation; (4) better integration of volunteers into the overall fire protection system.

Broadly, the opportunity for service restructuring and consolidating the Districts into a single Fire Protection District in Lincoln is a very viable option.

The alternatives will be illustrated as both short to mid term and long-term strategies. In developing these strategies, several assumptions were employed relating to pay scales, manning, use of volunteers and apparatus. Briefly these planning assumptions are as follows:

- All pay computed for personnel is at the pay of the District with the highest pay scale of the Fire Districts involved in the study. The mid-point of the pay plan was

used as the salary. Where no salary information existed, position costs are estimated based on current salaries of other positions.

- Benefits are computed at 50% of salaries, based on interviews.
- Operating costs are derived from the current operating budgets of the various Fire Districts.
- Apparatus shown in exhibits is first-line apparatus only and does not include reserve apparatus.
- Capital expenditures have been excluded when comparing costs and cost savings possibilities.

**1. THERE ARE OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE FIRE SERVICE DELIVERY THROUGH CONSOLIDATED OPERATIONS.**

**(1) The Formation of a Single Fire District Would Reduce Costs and Enhance Operations of the Fire Districts.**

A key component to the development of this study was to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages associated with the current Fire Districts joining together to form a single Fire District to serve the Town of Lincoln.

In terms of efficient emergency response, consistent fire department administration and long-range planning, the fire protection system should be designed to ensure consistent service levels are provided to areas with a common economic and population base. As shown earlier, there is an opportunity to view the Town as a whole and adopt suburban performance standards or to view each service area currently served by the individual Fire Districts according to their population density. This would cause the Town to have urban, suburban and rural performance measures based on population density. The benefit of this approach is that travel time standards only reduce when an area of the Town develops to point of having the higher population density, which then requires faster response travel times. The response maps also indicated that

there are overlaps of coverage, which will allow consolidation of resources in terms of closing stations and reducing the stations from seven (7) to four (4) to adequately meet the performance standards for a Town such as Lincoln. There are also opportunities to improve overall management and supervision of both administrative functions and emergency operations through a consolidated effort as there would be a single fire service management team and the Town would be viewed as whole in terms of fire protection needs instead of as several small service areas.

In determining the staffing plan for a consolidated agency, the current approach from each agency was evaluated and a staffing plan developed to ensure appropriate management, supervision and emergency response will occur in the consolidated fire district. The current use of part-time would continue. The use of volunteers (paid-on-call) to supplement the full and part-time personnel should also continue in the combined agency, as these are both very cost effective methods of staffing additional apparatus.

The table on the following page illustrates the organizational design and staffing plan for each of the Fire Districts as they exist today:

**ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN / STAFFING**

Position	Albion	Lime Rock	Lonsdale	Manville	Salyesville	Quinnville
<b>Full Time Positions</b>						
Chief	1	1	0	0	1	0
Assistant Chief	0	1	0	0	0	0
Deputy Chief	1	1	1	0	0	0
Admin/Clerical	0	2	0	0	0	0
Fire Marshal	0	1	0	0	0	0
Captain	1	2	1	0	1	0
Lieutenant	2	5	1	0	1	0
Firefighters	0	9	2	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Part-Time Positions</b>						
Fire Chief	0	0	0	1	0	1
Deputy Chief	0	0	0	1	0	0
Lieutenant	0	0	0	4	0	0
Firefighter	18	10	0	6	17	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Volunteer/Paid Call Positions</b>						
Firefighter	7	0	7	11	8	11
<b>TOTAL STAFF</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>12</b>

In terms of daily operational staffing, the table on the following page illustrates the daily staffing of emergency response personnel for each of the Fire Districts.

**DAILY STAFFING PLAN**

Agency	Staffing	Engine	Ladder/Tower	Heavy Rescue
Albion	1 Officer (24 hours) 3 Part-Time	1 (3 person)	1 Cross staffed	1 Cross Staffed
Lime Rock	4 Full-Time (24 hours) 2 Part-Time (24 hours)	2 (3 person)	0	0
Lonsdale	2 24/7	1 (2 person)	0	0
Manville	3 Part-Time (M-F) 9:00a – 5:00p 2 Part-Time (S-S) 9:00a – 9:00p	1 (3 person) M-F 1 (volunteer staffed) 1 (2 person) Sat/Sun 1 (volunteer staffed)	0	0
Salyesville	3 Full-Time 2 Part-Time 7:30a – 10:00p (M-F) 7:00a – 10:00p (S-S)	1 (3 person) M-F 1 (2 person) Sat/Sun	1 Cross staffed	0
Quinnville	All Volunteer	1 (volunteer staffed)	0	0

As shown above, the daily staffing for the Fire Districts varies from 24 hour staffing to shift staffing to all volunteer staffing. Currently four (4) stations are staffed 24 hours per day.

When developing a consolidated staffing plan it is important that management, supervision and service delivery levels are consistent throughout the service area. This staffing plan utilizes full and part-time personnel with defined daily staffing and minimum staffing levels for each apparatus.

**Combined Staffing Plan**

<b>Position FTE</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Consolidated</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Fire Chief	4	1	-3
Assistant Chief	1	0	-1
Deputy Chief	3.5	1	-2.5
Fire Marshal	1	1	0
Battalion Chief	0	4	+4
Captain	5	16	+11
Lieutenant	11	0	-11
Firefighter	36.5	32	-4.5
Fire Inspector	0	1	+1
Clerical	2	2	0

**Combined Staffing Plan – Operations Minimum Staffing**

<b>Station</b>	<b>Consolidated</b>
1	1 Engine (3) 1 Ladder (cross-staffed)
2	1 Engine (3) 1 Ladder (cross-staffed)
3	1 Engine (3) 1 Heavy Rescue (cross-staffed)
4	1 Engine (3)
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 Engines (12)</b> <b>2 ladders (cross staffed)</b> <b>1 Heavy Rescue (cross staffed)</b> <b>2 Reserve Engines (Volunteers)</b>  <b>12 Staff Required (24 hour shifts)</b>

The response system shown above consists of a single Fire District serving approximately 19 square miles and 21,105 residents. This is the result of combining the six (6) existing Fire District into a single Fire District operating from four (4) stations.

The personnel costs associated with the combined operation are illustrated in the table below:

**Consolidated Staffing Cost – Standardized Staffing**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Combined</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Each</b>
<b>Administration</b>			
Fire Chief	1	\$72,590	\$72,590
Deputy Chief	1	\$64,133	\$64,133
Fire Marshal	1	\$64,133	\$64,133
Fire Inspector	1	\$37,805	\$37,805
Clerical	2	\$56,800	\$28,400
<b>Administration Subtotal</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>\$295,641</b>	
<b>Operations</b>			
Battalion Chief	4	\$246,255	\$61,653
Captain	16	\$947,136	\$59,196
Firefighter Full Time	16	\$756,544	\$47,284
Firefighter Part Time	51	\$630,720	\$12 per hour
<b>Operations Subtotal</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>\$2,580,652</b>	
<b>System Staffing Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>\$2,876,113</b>	
Benefits		\$1,438,057	
<b>Total Salaries and Benefits</b>		<b>\$4,134,170</b>	
<b>Operations</b>		<b>\$647,125</b>	
<b>Total Annual Budget</b>		<b>\$4,961,295</b>	

As shown above, consolidating into a single fire district will provide 24/7/365 coverage from four (4) stations with a minimum staffing of 3 personnel in each station and a Battalion Chief on duty to provide 24-hour management and command of emergency scenes for a total annual budget cost of \$4,961,295, which is a reduction of \$161,017 annually or approximately 3%, while providing enhanced service through 24/7/36 staffing at all stations and a dedicated 24 hour Battalion Chief position. This staffing plan ensures the District is capable of developing an effective response force for

the fire and non-fire risks typical in Lincoln. Larger scale incidents would require the use of mutual aid from surrounding communities.

Part-time personnel are calculated at \$12 per hour and factored to provide 52,560 hours of service to allow coverage during times full-time personnel are on vacation or sick leave.

It is important to note that while this staffing plan ensures an effective response force can be assembled in the Town, the use of neighboring mutual aid and part-time personnel are critical in the staffing plan. A move away from part-time and paid call personnel would greatly increase system costs and result in a fire system that is not sustainable from a budgetary standpoint. With effective automatic aid agreements and immediate dispatching of outside resources, there would be sufficient capacity to handle the risks present in Lincoln.

The governance of this consolidation would be greatly dependent on the strategy chosen to implement the consolidated agency. The agencies may choose to execute an Interlocal Government Agreement (IGA) and have one existing District serve as the lead with the remaining Districts contracting for services or forming a single new Fire District under the Town Charter with a single Fire Board appointed to oversee the District operations. This would effectively create a single taxing entity to fund the newly created District.

***Recommendation: Consider Fully Consolidating the Fire Districts into a single fire service agency for the Town of Lincoln.***

***Recommendation: Staff the consolidated Fire District with 13 personnel operating from 4 stations 24/7/365. Staff administration with a Chief, Deputy Chief, Fire Marshal, Fire Inspector and 2 clerical positions.***

**(2) The Consolidation of the Fire Agencies Would Require Key Implementation Strategies.**

The current governing bodies of each of the Fire Districts in Lincoln should establish an intergovernmental committee represented by members of each District's governing body to serve as the focal point in the unification effort of the Fire Districts. This committee should be tasked with developing the intergovernmental agreements and funding plans necessary to implement the Town wide approach to providing fire protection in Lincoln.

The committee should also conduct a strategic planning process to identify specific objectives and tasks with associated timelines to transition from the current operations to the merged Fire District.

The agencies can then be merged in accordance with the selected strategy and through execution of an IGA or successful outcome, State approval and a corresponding election to form the single Fire District.

There are also funding options to consider, as a newly created Fire District would have to establish a Town wide mill rate for residential real estate, commercial properties, tangibles and automobiles, which is different than what currently occurs where each Fire District sets their own mill rate for each of these taxes collected.

The following table illustrates the average mill rate of the current taxes being charged by the six (6) Fire Districts.

**Current Average Tax Rate**

<b>Town</b>	<b>Assessed Valuation</b>	<b>Real Estate Tax</b>	<b>Business Tax</b>	<b>Tangible Tax</b>	<b>Automobile Tax</b>
<b>Lincoln</b>	\$2,662,532,632	\$1.63	\$1.89	\$3.08	\$1.88

If a single District is formed, there would have to be a current assessed value developed for each of the taxing areas above and an effective tax rate developed that would ensure adequate funding of the District and allow planning for Capital Asset purchases and improvements as required.

**(3) A Consolidated Agency Would Have Lower Vehicle and Apparatus Needs.**

As stated earlier in the report, the agencies currently have a large fleet of apparatus and vehicles to serve their independent service areas. The following table illustrates the vehicle and apparatus needs of a single Fire District:

<b>Apparatus</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Admin Vehicles	Front-Line	7	4	-3
Engine Companies	Front-Line	8	4	-4
Quint/Ladder	Front-Line	2	2 Cross Staffed	0
Brush Unit	Front-Line	1	1 Cross Staffed	0
Heavy Rescue	Front-Line	1	1 Cross Staffed	0
ATV Rescue	Front-Line	1	1 Cross Staffed	0
Boat Inflatable	Front-Line	3	1 Cross Staffed	-2
Engine	Reserve/Paid Call	2	2	0
Ladder/Tower	Reserve	0	0	0
Ambulance	Reserve/Paid Call	5	3	-2

As shown a consolidated agency could reduce the vehicle and apparatus inventory by 11 vehicles and apparatus. This would result in significant long-term capital cost reductions for the agencies. The following table illustrates the recommended vehicles and apparatus to retain as part of a single Fire District. The remaining vehicles

and apparatus can be sold as surplus to reduce any outstanding debt currently owed by the individual Fire Districts.

Year	Make	Model	Position	Replace
<b>Administrative Vehicles</b>				
2013	Ford	Expedition	Chief	2021
2008	GMC	Envoy	Deputy Chief	2016
2009	Ford	Expedition XLT	Fire Marshal	2017
Lime Rock	Command	Unit	Fire Inspector	Unk
<b>Emergency Response</b>				
2000	American LaFrance	Engine	Front-Line	2020
2005	American LaFrance	Engine	Front-Line	2025
2006	Spartan	Engine	Front-Line	2016
2008	Pierce	Engine	Front-Line	2028
1995	E-One	Engine	Reserve	N/A
1996	Spartan	Engine	Reserve	N/A
2015	E-One	Ladder	Front-Line	2035
2005	Pierce	Ladder	Front-Line	2025
1995	Ford	Brush Unit	Cross Staffed	As Needed
2005	Pierce	Heavy Rescue	Cross Staffed	As Needed
2009	Ranger	ATV Rescue	Cross Staffed	As Needed
2005	Mercury	Boat	Cross Staffed	As Needed

**Recommendation:** *The single Fire District should have the following fleet and apparatus - 4 front-line, 2 reserve engines, 2 ladders, 1 brush unit, 1 heavy rescue, 1 boat, 1 ATV rescue and 4 administrative vehicles.*

**(4) Surplus Capital Facilities, Furniture and Equipment Should Be Sold.**

As stated earlier in the report, a single Fire District would require four (4) stations to effectively serve the Town of Lincoln. The additional stations and associated furniture and equipment should be sold with proceeds used to pay off any current and outstanding debt held by the individual Districts and surplus funds used to fund a reserve fund balance for the newly created Fire District.

**Recommendation:** *Sell surplus capital items and use the proceeds to pay off outstanding debt and develop a reserve fund.*

**(5) Implementation Steps for Consolidation.**

The following table provides the basic implementation steps that will be required as well as other employee and District engagement guidance as the Town works toward being served by a single Fire District.

<b>Step</b>	<b>Critical Tasks</b>
<b>Gain Fire District support for consolidation of Fire Services in Lincoln.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town manager and elected officials should meet with Fire District Leadership and elected officials to discuss the viability of consolidation and get support.</li> <li>• The Town and Fire District leadership should meet with Fire District staff (career, part-time and volunteers) to discuss the options and get staff support for consolidation.</li> </ul>
<b>Gain public support for the consolidation of Fire Services in Lincoln.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold Town Hall meetings with Citizens and conduct a public campaign outlining the benefits of operating as a single Fire District compared to operating as six (6) independent Districts.</li> </ul>
<b>Get approval from the State of Rhode Island to hold a local referendum election to allow voters to vote on the consolidation of Fire Services in Lincoln.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with State officials to get approval to put a local referendum on an upcoming ballot.</li> <li>• Place referendum on ballot and allow citizens to vote on consolidation of Fire Services.</li> <li>• If referendum passes adopt a local resolution for the consolidation of Fire Services with an effective date.</li> <li>• Seek State approval for the final consolidation and passage of an ACT allowing the consolidation to occur.</li> </ul>
<b>Begin Consolidation Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select the Chief and command staff for the newly consolidated District.</li> <li>• Schedule the election of a Board to govern the newly created Fire District.</li> <li>• Establish tax rates for the Consolidated District.</li> <li>• Begin process of negotiating labor contracts with employees of the Consolidated District, understanding that existing labor agreements will remain in place until they expire or a new agreement is in place.</li> <li>• Hold public hearings and post public notices related to establishing the new tax rates for the Consolidated District.</li> <li>• Hold public hearings and post public notices regarding the adoption of the annual budget for the Consolidated District.</li> <li>• Dissolve the current Fire District Boards upon the election of the new Fire District Board.</li> <li>• The new Board should execute new mutual and automatic aid agreements with surrounding communities.</li> </ul>

