

# Proposed Annual Budget



**Fiscal Year 2025-2026**





## **MISSION**

THE MISSION OF THE  
SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT  
IS TO MINIMIZE COMMUNITY RISKS AND  
IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE  
FOR ALL PERSONS WITHIN  
SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT.



# From the Board and Chief Janik

The Saugatuck Township Fire District (Fire District) Board proposes the following budget for the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 to the City of Saugatuck, Saugatuck Township, and the City of the Village of Douglas. The 2025/2026 budget, consisting of a millage of 2.90 mills, is levied against the real property taxable value within the Fire District. As the result of Saugatuck Township Fire District Administrative Board (Fire District) Strategic Planning Sessions, the Fire District has determined the following prioritized specific courses of action.

- 1) Provide Municipal Sewer and Water to Saugatuck Township Fire District. The 39-year-old septic tank and 2-inch water main are obsolete and do not meet the current, and the next 30-year, health, safety, and operational needs. The Fire District finds it is necessary to appropriate a one-time, one year only 0.4 mil increase, (4 tenths of a mil), to provide essential municipal sewer and water infrastructure to the Saugatuck Township Fire District station at 3342 Blue Star Highway. The current millage is 2.50, plus 0.4 mils for a total of 2.90 mills for the 2025/2026 Fiscal Year.
- 2) Expansion of the Fire District Emergency Services Facilities in Douglas.
- 3) Submittal of Letter of Intent to Purchase a portion of the facility at 415 Wiley Rd. from The City of the Village of Douglas. A lease agreement will be proposed as well. Contingencies are mutually acceptable terms and subject to funding.  
Background: The City of the Village of Douglas has acquired a structure and real estate ideally suited to consolidating the city's operations and citizen-support functions in one location. This site will house the city administration, Department of Public Works, and Police Department, including garage and maintenance facilities for the city's fleet of vehicles and equipment. The site is conveniently located on the southeast corner of Wiley Road and Blue Star Highway and will permit the city's sale of several other buildings and real estate now to excess to the city's needs.



## Saugatuck Township Fire District Board:

Jane Verplank	- Chairperson, City of Saugatuck Representative
Eric Beckman	- Vice Chair, Saugatuck Township Representative
Dan Fox	- Secretary, City of Saugatuck Representative
Scott Phelps	- Vice Secretary, At Large Member
Tarue Pullen	- City of the Village of Douglas Representative
Cathy North	- City of the Village of Douglas Representative
Stacey Aldrich	- Saugatuck Township Representative

## *From the Board and Chief Janik, continued*

The new Douglas facility (currently being remodeled to suit the city) will occupy roughly two-thirds of the existing structure. The remaining third (and adjacent real estate) is ideally suited - with remodeling and construction of emergency-vehicle garage facilities-to meet the Saugatuck Township Fire District's known and planned needs now, and well into the future.

The citizens of Douglas and those individuals living in the south half of Saugatuck Township will be the direct beneficiaries of this addition to STFD facilities. Response times in this geography (south of the Kalamazoo River) will improve; emergency personnel and equipment will be located closer to high-population/demand facilities including Douglas Elementary School, Douglas Cove Rehabilitation and Nursing Facility, Douglas Community Church, downtown Douglas commercial structures, and Interstate 196 (by way of Exit 36) where motor-vehicle accidents requiring emergency assistance are increasingly common. With the new STFD facilities, the area's emergency-service resources will also be positioned proximate to the geographic areas of Douglas and the Township with the highest degree of future residential development already in planning.

- 4) Resource and Staffing Demands. Staffing levels will be increased with two 24-hours firefighter/EMS/STR inspectors and the part-time office position modified to a full-time position. The Fire District finds additional staffing necessary to meet the demands of construction plan reviews and short-term rental inspections. The three positions are budgeted.
- 5) The Fire District Administrative Board and Chief will be negotiating with ALS provider, Life EMS, an Ambulance Support Subsidy based agreement to continue maintaining the same level of service as provided in the pilot program in the Fire District coverage area, The long-term agreement will include a 12-hour shift with a paramedic and EMT, ALS vehicle, staging/responding from the Fire District, and terms.

The Fire District endeavors to forge relationships with our ever-changing communities and remain strong with community involvement. This strong connection does not form in a vacuum, it requires embracing diversity, collaboration, anticipating change, and preparing ourselves to meet the ever-evolving needs of our communities by providing exceptional fire and life safety services. The Fire District continues to focus on one of its essential core values - Community Risk Reduction. This process identifies and prioritizes our community risks, which is followed by an integrated and strategic investment of resources (emergency response and prevention) to reduce their occurrence and impact.

Included in the packet is a copy of the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 budget adopted unanimously by the Fire Board.

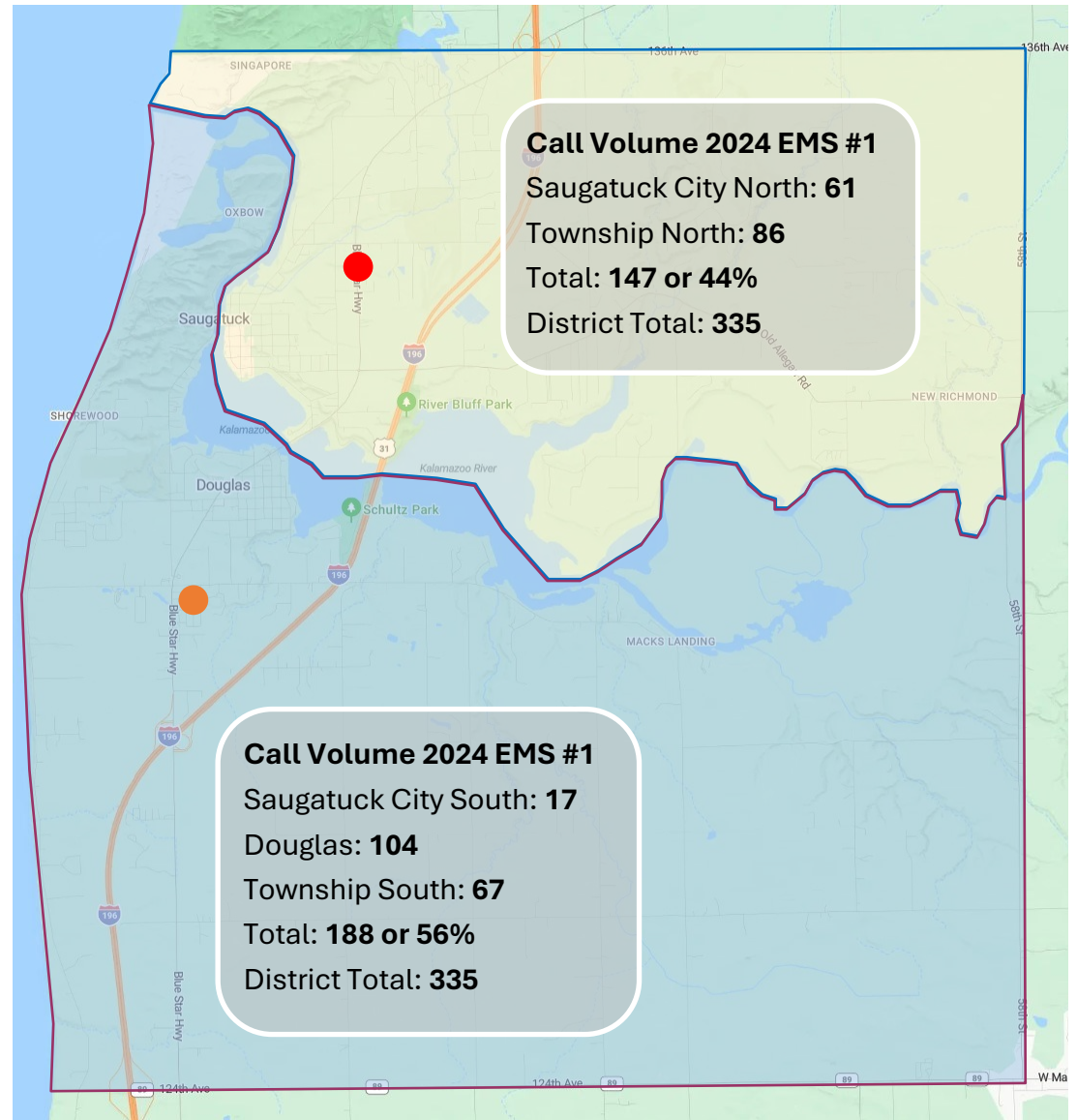
The Fire Board will hold a public presentation and briefing on the budget at Saugatuck Township Fire District, 3342 Blue Star Highway, Saugatuck, MI 49453 on May 19, 2025, at 4:00PM. The Council members of Saugatuck and Douglas as well as the Township trustees are strongly encouraged to attend. The joint meeting is designed for the local units of government as well as the public to become familiar with the hard work of the Fire District to continually improve efficiency and services. The Fire Board and Fire District personnel will be available to answer questions. We look forward to seeing you on May 19th, at 4:00 PM.

The Fire District Board is requesting the City of Saugatuck, Saugatuck Township, and the City of the Village of Douglas to review and adopt this proposed budget during *their next scheduled board meeting or before*.



# Call Volume 2024 EMS #1— North and South

The purpose of the map at the right is to provide data charting that indicates the majority of priority-one emergency medical services call volume is south of the bridge, 56% south of the bridge and 44% north of the bridge.



# Estimated Response Time from Station South

The information provided in this slide is intended to show call location and the reduction in travel (response) times from the proposed Douglas location at 415 Wiley Rd., versus travel (response) from the north station at 3342 Blue Star Highway, Saugatuck Township.

The last two columns in blue, titled Responding from 415 Wiley, indicate the estimated reduction in travel time from each location and the percentage of change, ranging from 50% - 32%.

Responding from 3342 BSH - 2024 Priority 1 Calls					Responding from 415 Wiley	
Call Location	Number of Calls	Enroute Time	Travel Time	On Scene Time	ESTIMATED Travel Time from Douglas	ESTIMATED Travel Time in Percent
Douglas	104	02:04	04:22	06:26	02:11	-50%
Saugatuck City South	17	02:14	06:18	08:32	04:00	-36%
Township South	67	02:13	07:29	09:42	05:00	-32%



# Call Volume Trend 2004-2024

## Call Volume Trends:

- 5.4% decrease in Fire Calls
- 129% increase in Total Calls
- 72% increase in Emergency Medical Service Calls
- 498% increase in Other Calls

Year	Fire Calls	EMS Calls	Other Calls	Total Calls	Total Calls %
2024	35	668	443	1146	14.4%
2023	25	566	390	981	-4.3%
2022	26	659	338	1023	5.8%
2021	37	594	333	964	10.6%
2020	33	533	296	862	-13.3%
2019	21	514	442	977	7.2%
2018	30	501	376	907	10.4%
2017	28	469	316	813	-7.6%
2016	32	560	283	875	10.5%
2015	31	522	230	783	4.9%
2014	31	565	149	745	7.4%
2013	36	506	148	690	-6.2%
2012	54	521	158	733	12.4%
2011	24	485	133	642	4.8%
2010	38	465	108	611	3.1%
2009	30	441	121	592	5.7%
2008	34	402	122	558	-0.2%
2007	56	413	90	559	5.7%
2006	44	408	75	527	-5.5%
2005	67	411	78	556	10.3%
2004	37	388	74	499	

# 10 Year Trends

## Call Volume Trend:

- 130% increase in Total Calls since 2004



Year	Total Calls	Total Calls %
2024	1146	130%
2014	745	50%
2004	499	-



# 2013-2025 Millage

2025 call volume is estimated from April 30 totals of 330 calls. Same level as 2024.

Budget Year	Millage	Budget Amount		Difference in %	Number of Calls
2025/26	2.9000	\$	2,986,000	13.5%	1,150
2024/25	2.5000	\$	2,631,000	22.9%	1,143
2023/24	2.5000	\$	2,140,000	26.7%	981
2022/23	2.2000	\$	1,689,500	7.1%	1,023
2021/22	2.2000	\$	1,577,500	5.6%	964
2020/21	2.2000	\$	1,494,500	3.4%	862
2019/20	2.2000	\$	1,446,000	18.6%	977
2018/19	2.0000	\$	1,219,000	4.7%	907
2017/18	2.0000	\$	1,164,730	23.8%	813
2016/17	2.0000	\$	940,684	4.3%	875
2015/16	1.7000	\$	901,754	19.5%	783
2014/15	1.5000	\$	754,523	15.2%	745
2013/14	1.3000	\$	655,030		690

# Additional Revenue 2014-2025

**Cost Recovery:**  
Initiated in 2008, however not enforced before 2014.

**Grants:**  
FEMA, State and private businesses and insurance companies.

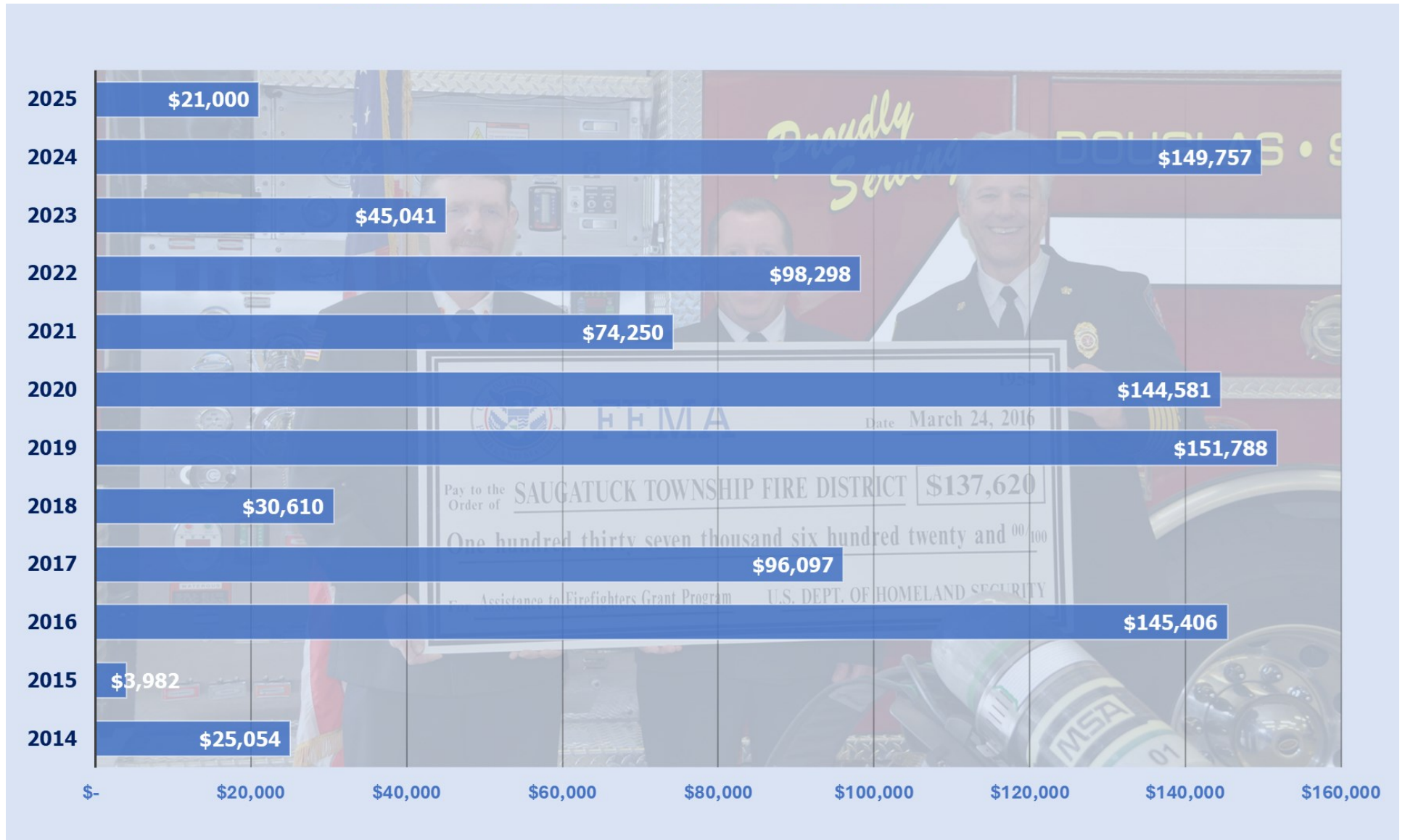
**Donations:**  
Private donations to help offset cost i.e. Live Fire Training Facility and Emergency Medical Equipment and Services



Year	Cost Recovery Filed	Cost Recovery Collected	Grants Received	Donations Received	Totals Collected by Year
2025	\$ 26,146	\$ 9,635	\$ 21,000	\$ -	\$ 30,635
2024	\$ 67,729	\$ 38,159	\$ 41,000	\$ 108,757	\$ 187,916
2023	\$ 31,940	\$ 21,460	\$ 28,068	\$ 16,972	\$ 66,500
2022	\$ 44,312	\$ 26,220	\$ 65,388	\$ 32,910	\$ 124,518
2021	\$ 25,137	\$ 6,155	\$ 74,250	\$ -	\$ 80,405
2020	\$ 14,200	\$ 11,726	\$ 144,581	\$ -	\$ 156,307
2019	\$ 25,632	\$ 19,633	\$ 148,398	\$ 3,390	\$ 171,421
2018	\$ 16,872	\$ 10,142	\$ 13,600	\$ 17,010	\$ 40,752
2017	\$ 18,960	\$ 5,413	\$ 78,072	\$ 18,025	\$ 101,510
2016	\$ 32,034	\$ 21,577	\$ 145,406	\$ -	\$ 166,983
2015	\$ 25,262	\$ 23,028	\$ 3,982	\$ -	\$ 27,010
2014	\$ 14,843	\$ 12,032	\$ 2,490	\$ 22,564	\$ 37,086
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>\$ 343,067</b>	<b>\$ 205,180</b>	<b>\$ 766,235</b>	<b>\$ 219,628</b>	<b>\$ 1,191,043</b>



# Grants and Donations 2014-2025



# Estimated Revenues

GL NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	2023-24 ACTIVITY	2024-25 AMENDED BUDGET	2024-25 PROJECTED ACTIVITY	2024-25 ACTIVITY THRU 04/16/2025	2025-26 REQUESTED BUDGET
Dept 000						
206-000-401.000	SAUGATUCK CITY	518,829.93	559,500.00	559,346.97	559,346.97	714,000.00
206-000-402.000	SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP	1,069,709.31	1,191,206.31	1,191,206.31	1,191,206.31	1,489,000.00
206-000-403.000	DOUGLAS CITY	546,472.68	594,167.45	594,167.45	594,167.45	737,000.00
206-000-450.000	FIRE SERVICES	1,190.00	3,000.00	2,780.00	3,000.00	1,000.00
206-000-460.000	INSPECTION & PLAN REVIEW FEES	38,800.00	50,000.00	50,765.00	52,000.00	25,000.00
206-000-465.000	COST RECOVERY	35,960.83	31,000.00	30,052.86	31,000.00	3,000.00
206-000-528.000	OTHER FEDERAL GRANTS					1,000.00
206-000-560.000	GRANTS & DONATIONS	130,987.59	40,000.00	38,787.48	40,000.00	1,000.00
206-000-665.000	INTEREST	34,662.28	35,000.00	33,991.19	35,000.00	10,000.00
206-000-669.000	INSURANCE PROCEEDS	4,400.00				
206-000-685.000	SALES OF ASSETS	67,467.52				5,000.00
<b>Totals for dept 000 -</b>		<b>2,448,480.14</b>	<b>2,503,873.76</b>	<b>2,501,097.26</b>	<b>2,505,720.73</b>	<b>2,986,000.00</b>
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED REVENUES</b>		<b>2,448,480.14</b>	<b>2,503,873.76</b>	<b>2,501,097.26</b>	<b>2,505,720.73</b>	<b>2,986,000.00</b>



# Appropriations

GL NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	2023-24	2024-25	2024-25	2024-25	2025-26
		ACTIVITY	AMENDED	PROJECTED	ACTIVITY	REQUESTED
			BUDGET	ACTIVITY	THRU 04/16/2025	BUDGET
Dept 336 - FIRE FUND						
206-336-702.000	BOARD SALARY	3,350.00	5,000.00	4,150.00	5,000.00	10,000.00
206-336-704.000	CHIEF SALARY	110,000.02	125,000.00	106,615.30	125,000.00	133,000.00
206-336-705.000	OFFICER SALARIES	7,479.36	10,000.00	7,396.03	10,000.00	10,000.00
206-336-708.000	CAREER FIREFIGHTER	488,197.56	615,000.00	473,810.50	615,000.00	700,000.00
206-336-709.000	OPERATIONAL WAGES	96,817.83	110,000.00	100,571.43	110,000.00	116,000.00
206-336-709.500	PAID ON CALL STIPEND	88,946.75	95,000.00	66,663.56	95,000.00	100,000.00
206-336-710.000	FIRE CALLS	56,934.06	70,000.00	48,245.14	70,000.00	70,000.00
206-336-711.000	MEDICAL CALLS	34,289.42	35,000.00	33,139.23	35,000.00	40,000.00
206-336-712.000	TRAINING	23,550.63	35,000.00	18,297.84	35,000.00	35,000.00
206-336-713.000	SPECIAL EVENTS	14,029.92	15,000.00	7,547.04	15,000.00	15,000.00
206-336-720.000	PAYROLL TAXES	72,244.55	111,000.00	69,994.29	111,000.00	125,000.00
206-336-721.000	EMPLOYEE INSURANCE BENEFITS	107,430.92	150,000.00	130,318.49	150,000.00	150,000.00
206-336-722.000	WORKER COMP INSURANCE	48,485.06	100,000.00	50,039.85	100,000.00	100,000.00
206-336-723.000	RETIREMENT	142,000.00	150,000.00	133,718.66	150,000.00	150,000.00
206-336-727.000	OPERATING SUPPLIES	15,097.26	25,000.00	25,796.28	25,000.00	26,500.00
206-336-728.000	GAS & OIL	19,391.54	20,000.00	15,255.63	20,000.00	20,000.00

# Appropriations continued

GL NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	2023-24	2024-25	2024-25	2024-25	2025-26
		ACTIVITY	AMENDED BUDGET	PROJECTED ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY THRU 04/16/2025	REQUESTED BUDGET
206-336-730.000	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	43,954.74	40,000.00	36,120.90	40,000.00	35,000.00
206-336-742.000	TESTING, REPAIR & REPLACEMENT	19,148.87	22,000.00	5,328.51	22,000.00	23,000.00
206-336-745.000	STATION TOOLS	1,103.22	3,250.00	264.18	3,250.00	4,000.00
206-336-746.000	FIRE FIGHTER TOOLS	10,244.35	10,000.00	3,613.80	10,000.00	20,000.00
206-336-751.000	PHONES	13,509.91	19,000.00	12,776.42	19,000.00	20,000.00
206-336-752.000	UTILITIES	14,922.01	20,000.00	14,153.97	20,000.00	21,500.00
206-336-760.000	VEHICLE/ EQUIP REP & MAINTENANCE	66,034.10	70,000.00	50,591.93	70,000.00	75,000.00
206-336-761.000	BOAT MAINTENANCE	11,543.09	19,000.00	20,271.65	19,000.00	20,000.00
206-336-762.000	RADIO & PAGER R&R	7,416.17	10,000.00	503.56	10,000.00	10,000.00
206-336-763.000	BUILDING REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	26,544.12	33,000.00	33,550.75	33,000.00	35,000.00
206-336-764.000	BUILDING SECURITY	1,669.20	2,000.00	2,639.00	2,000.00	2,500.00
206-336-767.000	DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	3,845.89	5,000.00	4,502.66	5,000.00	4,000.00
206-336-770.000	OFFICE EXPENSES	9,874.34	12,000.00	9,142.97	12,000.00	10,000.00
206-336-771.000	TECHNOLOGY	22,568.46	36,000.00	33,618.01	36,000.00	32,000.00
206-336-775.000	BUILDING INSPECTIONS	75.00	2,500.00	1,806.69	2,500.00	5,000.00
206-336-780.000	UNIFORMS	10,989.89	12,000.00	5,706.13	12,000.00	13,500.00
206-336-781.000	TURN OUT GEAR		40,000.00	47,262.26	48,000.00	40,000.00



# Appropriations continued

GL NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	2023-24	2024-25	2024-25	2024-25	2025-26
		ACTIVITY	AMENDED BUDGET	PROJECTED ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY THRU 04/16/2025	REQUESTED BUDGET
206-336-785.000	EDUCATION	25,787.42	33,000.00	9,442.28	33,000.00	33,000.00
206-336-791.000	MEDICAL SUPPLY	13,512.97	20,000.00	9,537.54	20,000.00	25,000.00
206-336-795.000	COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION	12,760.43	15,000.00	5,691.66	15,000.00	15,000.00
206-336-796.000	PHYSICALS		15,000.00	12,698.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
206-336-815.000	GENERAL INSURANCE	38,073.00	40,000.00	34,306.43	40,000.00	44,000.00
206-336-861.000	TAX CHARGE BACK	811.09	1,000.00	636.22	1,000.00	1,000.00
206-336-985.000	LONG TERM CAPITAL	171,320.86	480,250.00	285,782.42	480,250.00	682,000.00
Totals for dept 336 - FIRE FUND		1,853,954.01	2,631,000.00	1,931,507.21	2,639,000.00	2,986,000.00
<b>TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS</b>		<b>1,853,954.01</b>	<b>2,631,000.00</b>	<b>1,931,507.21</b>	<b>2,639,000.00</b>	<b>2,986,000.00</b>
<b>NET OF REVENUES/APPROPRIATIONS - FUND 206</b>		<b>594,526.13</b>	<b>(127,126.24)</b>	<b>569,590.05</b>	<b>(133,279.27)</b>	
<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE</b>		<b>646,144.41</b>	<b>1,240,670.54</b>	<b>1,240,670.54</b>	<b>1,240,670.54</b>	<b>1,107,391.27</b>
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE</b>		<b>1,240,670.54</b>	<b>1,113,544.30</b>	<b>1,810,260.59</b>	<b>1,107,391.27</b>	<b>1,107,391.27</b>

# Rental Permits Issued in District

This chart indicates the trends in the quantity of rental Inspections conducted annually in our Tri-Community area.

The Fire District's Department of Fire Prevention will be adding short-term rental inspectors to assist with the rental program.

Saugatuck Township Rental Permits						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Rental Inspections	11	80	72	82	81	326

Saugatuck City Rental Permits						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Rental Inspections	10	101	124	84	132	451

City of Douglas Rental Permits						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Rental Inspections	10	44	58	46	55	213

# New Addition - 2120 Traffic Management Apparatus

- Traffic Management Apparatus (TMA)
- 2025 Freightliner
- Royal Truck
- Price tag: \$211,336
- Incidents on I-196 since 2019:  
272 incidents and a total of 285 hours.

The Traffic Management Apparatus (TMA) is a crucial addition to our operations, especially given the increasing risks from distracted driving and high traffic volumes. The statistics provided highlight the significant exposure and danger our personnel face on the roadways.

The TMA's ability to respond to incidents quickly and efficiently since its deployment in late November 2024 is impressive. With 24 responses by April 26, it's clear that this apparatus is already making a positive impact on safety for our team and other first responders.



*2120 TMA on its maiden response on I-196 blocking 1 lane of traffic.*



# From the Archives...

**The Commercial Record**

OUR 18th YEAR SAUGATUCK, MICHIGAN, MARCH 13, 1969 10 Cents NUMBER ELEVEN

## Fire Sweeps Hotel, 2 Homes in Saugatuck

Fire whipped by freezing winds destroyed the Casablanca Hotel and damaged nearby homes Tuesday morning in Saugatuck.

No one was injured.

A determined fight by firemen from six departments kept the blaze from destroying an entire block of downtown Saugatuck.

In addition to leveling the three-story hotel, the fire gutted the home of Mrs. Ruth Walz, just north of the Casablanca, and badly burned the former home of Mrs. Grace Brackenridge east of the hotel. The John Geerdink home behind the hotel at 329 Water St. had some windows broken and was kept from burning by firemen who sprayed water on the corner nearest the fire.

The home of Jessie Veits southwest of the hotel had some smoke damage. A number of high school students and other Saugatuck residents helped carry the belongings out of the Veits home before it became apparent the house could be saved. The Saugatuck Beauty Salon evacuated some equipment and is closed for the rest of the week as a result of the fire.

According to Robert McCray, the Saugatuck police and fire radio operator, the blaze was reported at 9:16 a.m. by Mike Stillwell, son of Mrs. Leene Stillwell, operator of the Casablanca.

He said he smelled smoke and discovered the fire in a third-floor room rented to Chuck Diepenhorst. Diepenhorst had gone to work about 6 a.m. at the American Twisting Co. Cause of the fire had not been determined.

By the time firemen began playing hoses on the hotel, the fire was shooting out windows on the second and third floors and it looked like the hotel was lost.

Smoke roared hundreds of feet into the air. People said the flames themselves were visible at the Douglas Post Office. People driving across the Blue Star Highway bridge toward Saugatuck said the smoke and flames made it look like the fire whole town was burning.

An explosion about the time the fire was discovered was heard by Henry Hopper downtown and by Henry Hungerford up on the hill in Saugatuck.

The Saugatuck firemen were quickly supported by the Douglas fire department.

Cont'd on pg. 9

Fire pictures, pg. 9  
Elections, pg. 7



Skeleton of Casablanca Hotel begins to buckle before it falls to the ground.



Firemen spray caves of hotel.



Mrs. Walz, left, views flames as hotel fire creeps toward her home.

Commercial Record March 13, 1969

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The Saugatuck firemen were quickly supported by the Douglas fire department. Other trucks came from Fennville, Holland, Park Township, and the Clyde and Manlius Township departments. A number of the trucks, including the Clyde truck and the Douglas pumper wagon, headed for the Kalamazoo River and drew water directly from the river to fight the fire. As the walls of the hotel burned away and the heat grew stronger, firemen turned their hoses on nearby buildings.

Finally, the whole front of the structure fell in a cloud of smoke. A tall chimney toppled sideways across the Walz home, throwing bricks against the side of the Christian Science Society church building about 60 feet away. The south side of the church was bubbled by the heat.

After the building fell, firemen were able to begin quenching the flames. About that time, a gas main in the area of the hotel erupted in flames with a roar like a jet plane. Michigan Gas Utilities was called to seal off the main, workers from Consumers Power Co, cut power lines to the hotel. General Telephone Company workers later restored service on lines burned near the hotel.

By 11 a.m. the fire was under control. Firemen continued Tuesday afternoon to pour water on the rubble. The fire was believed to be the biggest blaze in Saugatuck since the Big Pavilion burned in May of 1960.

**Thank you for your support!**

