



AGENDA ITEM REQUEST

Meeting Date: January 06, 2026

Presenter: Beth Milton, County Manager

Department: Administration

Subject: **North Carolina Fire Chief Consulting's presentation of the 2025 Fire Protection Service Delivery System Analysis.**

Background Information:

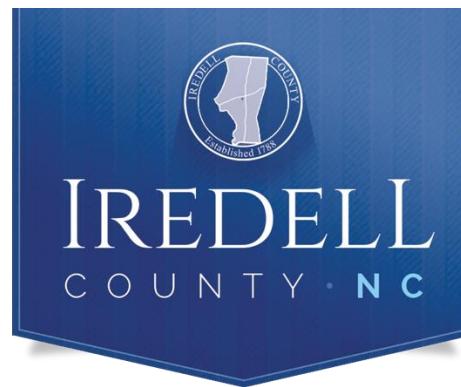
North Carolina Fire Chief Consulting (NCFCC) is the exclusive fire services consulting partner for the NC League of Municipalities and many local governments providing strategic analyses of fire protection systems to enhance organizational performance, operational efficiency, and public safety outcomes.

Manager's Comments:

4pm

Attachments:

[Commissioner Presentation January 2026](#)



IREDELL COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM ANALYSIS

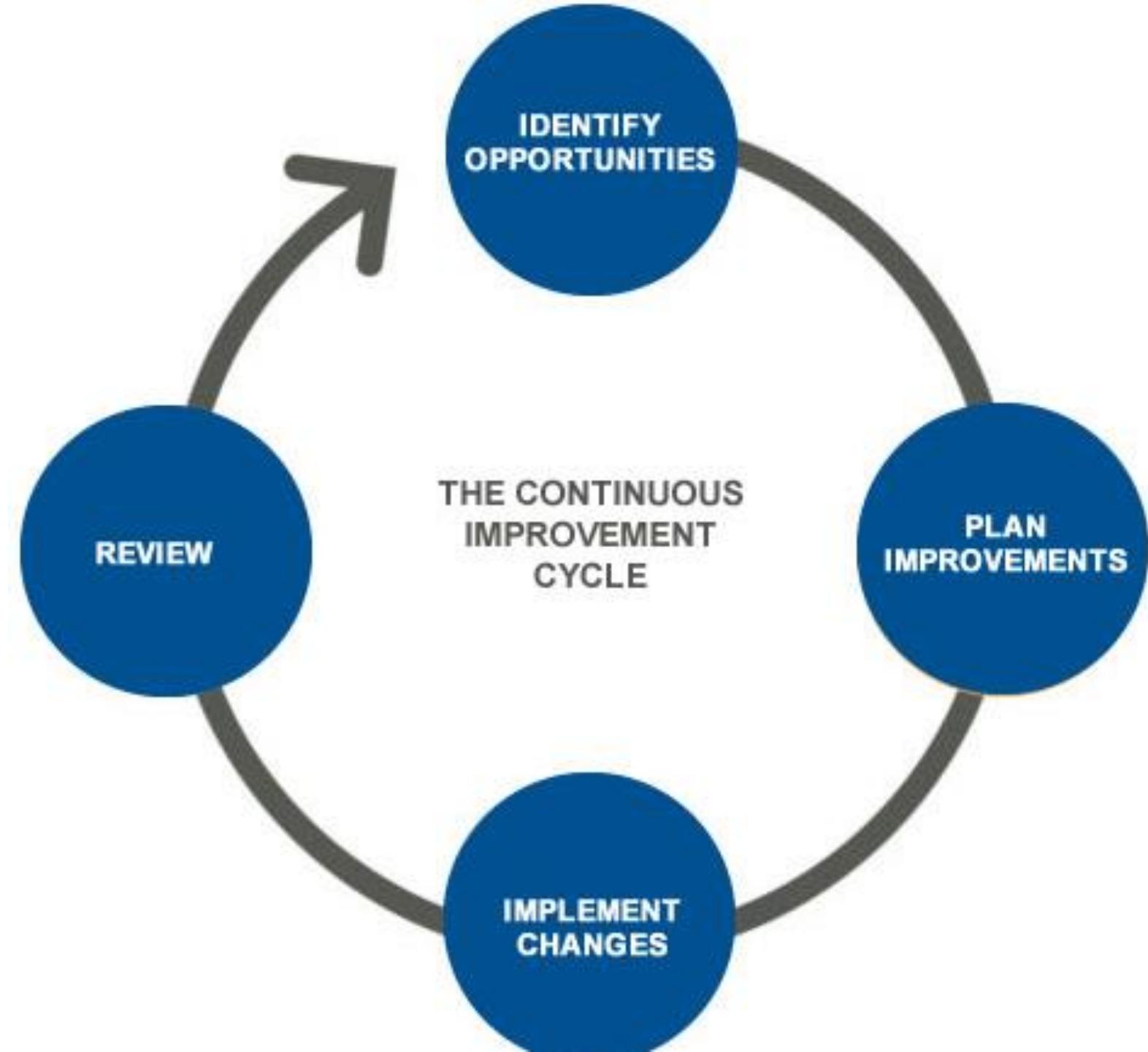
January 2026



NCFCC Long-Term Commitment to NC Counties



NC Fire Chief
Consulting
work is based
on the principle
of continuous
improvement.



NC Fire Chief Consulting is a Full-Service Fire Consulting Provider

- Strategic Planning
- Service Delivery Needs Analysis
- Standards of Coverage Analysis
- Contract Development and Facilitation
- Fire District Transition
- Transition of Private, Non-Profit Fire Department to Municipal Fire Department
- Fire Station Placement
- Fire Chief Selection and Promotional Processes
- Human Resource Assistance
- Professional Development, Mentoring and Coaching
- Human Resource Based Causation Analysis
- Interim Chief Fire Officer Leadership
- Fire Apparatus Evaluation and Fire Station Facility Analysis
- Capital Improvement Plan Review and Analysis
- Emergency Operations Post Incident Analysis



North Carolina Association
of County Commissioners

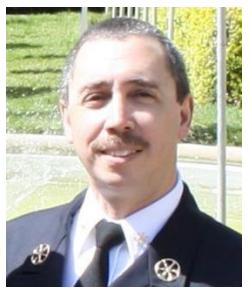
Fire Management Core Team Capability



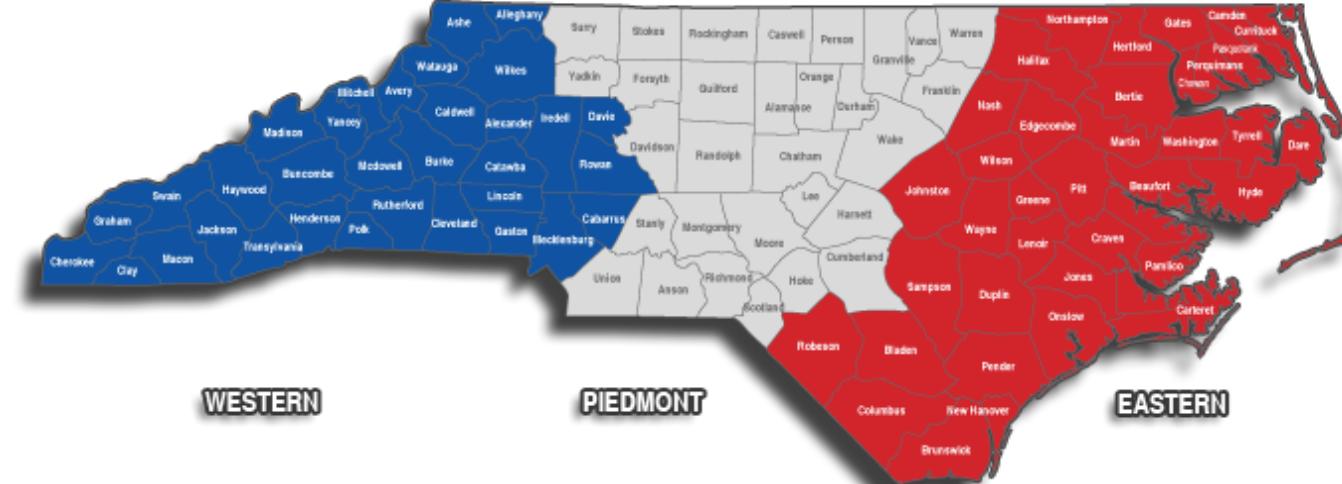
Scott Burnette



Barry Hendren



Nick Campasano



Wayne Hamilton



David Bullins



Andy Sannipoli



Todd Tuttle



Wes Hutchins



Mike Varnell



Frank Blackley



Donna Black



NCFCC's Purpose:

- This independent, third party, analysis is to guide county staff and fire service leaders towards building the strongest, most sustainable fire and rescue service delivery system possible that is in the best interest of protecting and serving the people of Iredell County, North Carolina.





Principal Process Components:

1. Stakeholder Communication
2. GIS and Statistical Analysis
3. Fiscal and Capital Analysis
4. Apparatus & Facility Analysis
5. Contract & Auto Aid Review
6. Service District Analysis
7. Hazard Risk Analysis
8. Strategic Plan Formulation

Iredell County

21 Core

Recommendations:

- #1 - Maintain a unified service district system.
- #2 – Utilize an alternative funding model to support core fire departments.



Alternative Core Fire Department Funding Model:

- **A** - Continue to Provide Capital Expenditures.
- **B** - Provide Base Operational Funding to Each Department.
- **C** - Address the Hazard and Risk Protected in Each Area.
 - *Population*
 - *Address Points*
 - *Valuation*
 - *Square Miles Covered*
- **D** - Establish Supplemental Grants Annually.

<u>Element</u>	<u>Weight</u>	Entire Iredell County Total <u>Unincorp.</u>	This District's % of Unincorp. Area	<u>Multiplied</u>
Population	25%	200,000	12%	3%
Address Points	25%	70,000	15%	3.75%
Valuation	25%	\$25 Billion	8%	2%
Total Square Miles Covered	25%	500	11%	2.75%
TOTAL	100%			11.5%



Iredell County

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Recommendations:

- #3 – Evaluate out-of-county fire departments using a cost share model.
- #4 – Utilize municipal fire departments where feasible using a cost share model.



Cost Share Models: Out of County and Municipal

It is recommended that cost share funding models be revised annually and that a three-year rolling average of data be used in cost-share computation to ensure fairness and equitability.



Element	Weight	Adjoining County	Iredell County	Total Served	Iredell's %	Multiplied
Population	25%	20,000	10,000	30,000	33%	8.25%
Address Points	25%	500	200	700	29%	7.25%
Valuation	25%	\$10 Million	\$8 Million	\$18 Million	44%	11%
Total Square Miles Covered	25%	35	20	55 mi ²	36%	9%
TOTAL	100%					35.5%

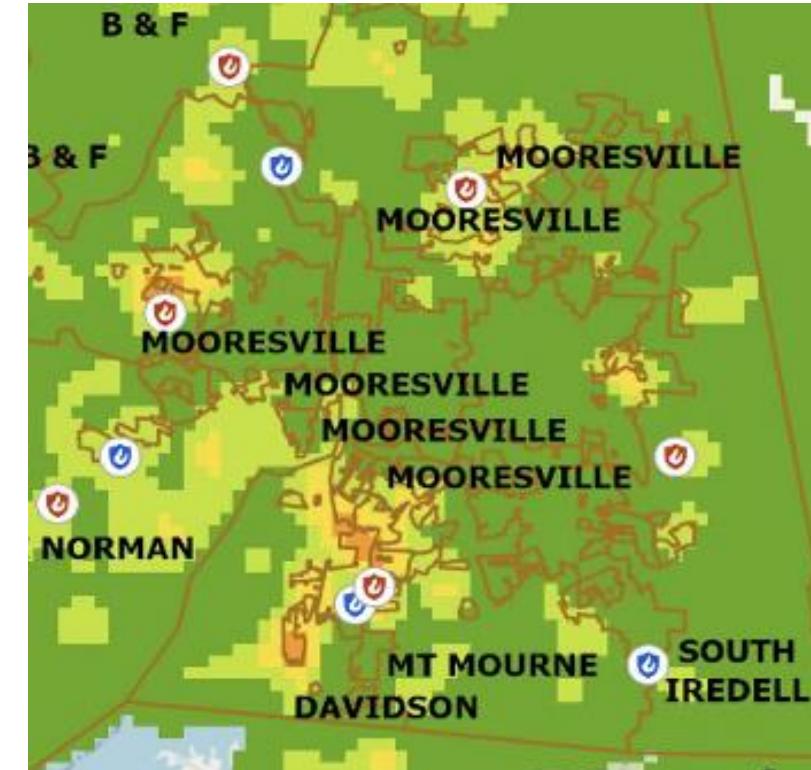
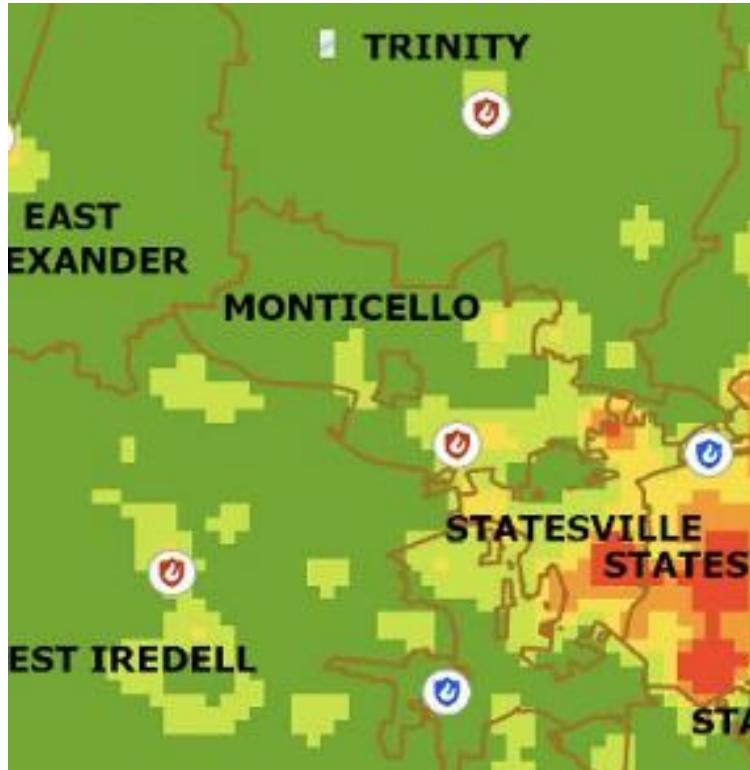


Element	Weight	Total Served by the Municipality (Includes Unincorp.)	Unincorporated Portion of the Total Served by the Municipality	Unincorp. Iredell's %	Multiplied
Population	25%	50,000	10,000	20%	5%
Address Points	25%	15,000	2,500	17%	4.25%
Valuation	25%	\$5 Billion	\$1 Billion	20%	5%
Total Square Miles Covered	25%	35 square miles	5 square miles	14%	3.5%
TOTAL	100%				17.75%



Iredell County 21 Core Recommendations:

- #5 – Evaluate out-of- county fire department response districts.
- #6 – Begin transition for Monticello.
- #7 – Begin transition for Mount Mourne and Mooresville.

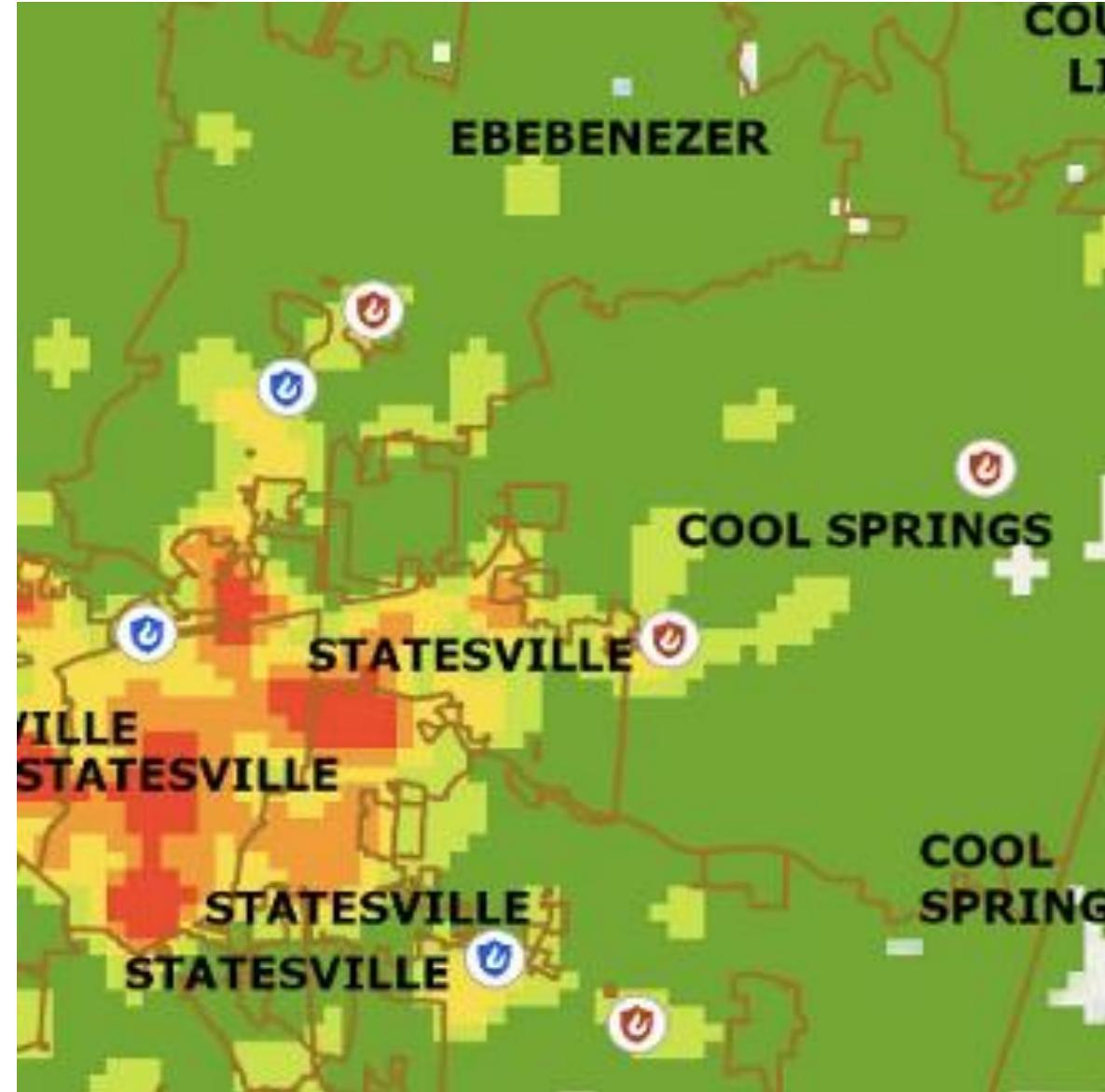


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Recommendations:

- #8 – Begin transition for Shepherds 1 and 2 with Mooresville.
- #9 – Begin transition for Shepherds 3 and Statesville as well as Ebenezer and Cool Springs Considerations.

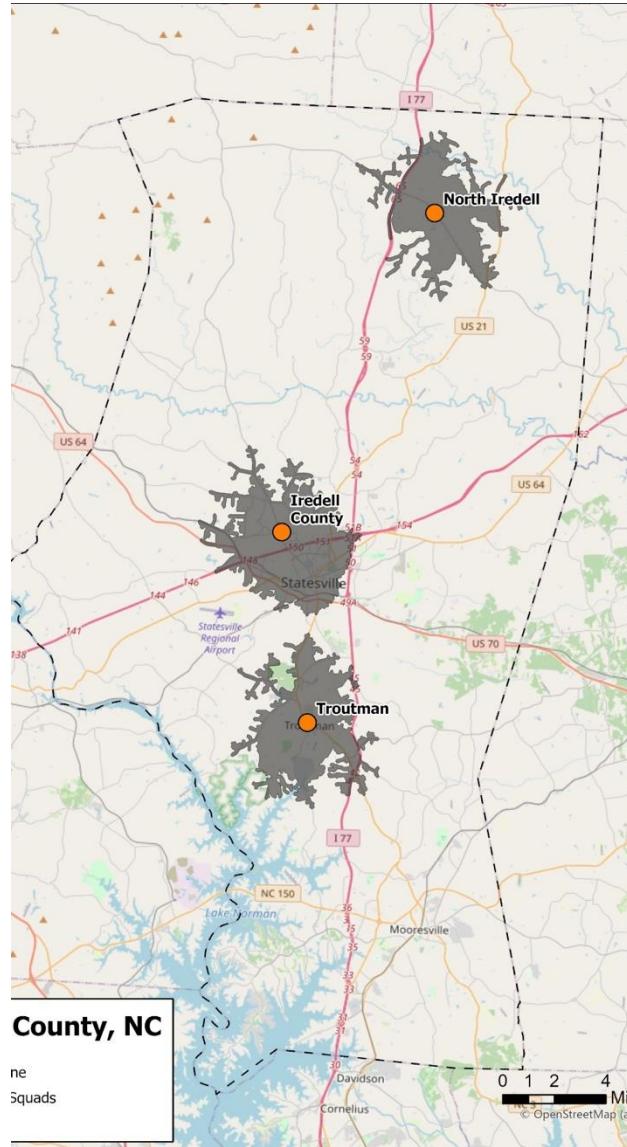




Iredell County 21 Core Recommendations:

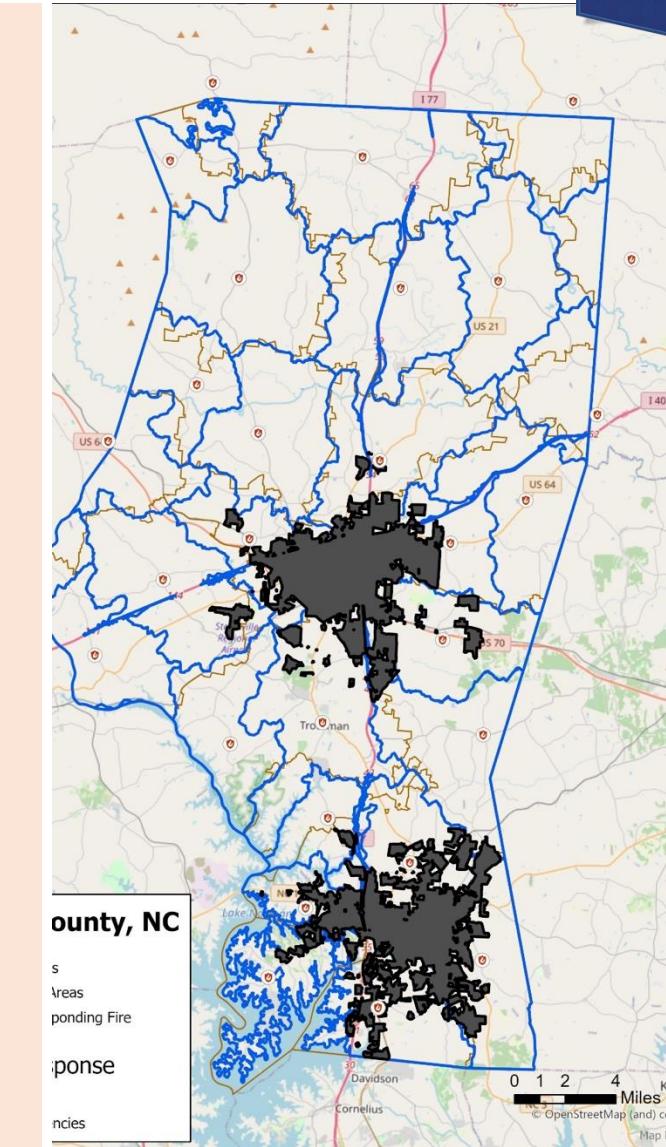
- #10 – Encourage voluntary mergers where feasible.
- #11 – Strengthen firefighter staffing, especially with the Lake Norman District and utilize firefighter staffing squads.





Iredell County 21 Core Recommendations:

- #12 – Consolidate and focus current rescue squads.
- #13 – Re-Align fire district boundaries when necessary for closest station response.



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Recommendations:

- #14 – Update county service agreements.
- #15 – Establish a career pay and compensation plan.



ILLUSTRATIVE Position Titles and Minimum Salary	Rank differential	Min Pay	Midpoint (+30%)	Max Pay (+30%)
Iredell County, NC Baseline Living Wage (2025)		\$48,939		
Firefighter 1		\$48,939	63,621	82,707
Firefighter 2	(+ 5%)	\$50,780	66,014	85,818
Firefighter 3	(+5%)	\$53,319	69,315	90,109
Fire Engineer	(+5%)	\$55,985	72,781	94,615
Fire Lieutenant	(+5%)	\$58,784	76,419	99,345
Fire Captain	(+10%)	\$64,663	84,062	109,280
Fire Battalion Chief	(+10%)	\$71,129	92,468	120,208
Fire Division Chief (Exempt)	(+10%)	\$78,242	101,715	132,229
Fire Assistant Chief (Exempt)	(+10%)	\$86,066	111,886	145,452
Fire Deputy Chief (Exempt)	(+10%)	\$94,673	123,075	159,997
Fire Chief (Exempt)	(+15%)	\$108,874	141,536	183,997

Iredell County 21 Core Recommendations:

- #16 – Establish a county-wide firefighter retention and recruitment program.
- #17 – Utilize standard specifications.



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Recommendations:

- #18 – Improve firefighter training programs and systems.
- #19 – Provide attention to the safety of fire facilities.



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Recommendations:

- **#20 – Continue to principally use the service district tax model and minimize the older Chapter 69 rural fire tax districts.**
- **#21 – Periodically update the strategic plan.**

Goal 1: Iredell County Fire Departments will wisely steward the resources provided by the community through transparency and seeking efficiency in all operations.

Objective 1A: Evaluate all contractual agreements with fire departments and rescue squads and develop agreed upon expectations of performance related to emergency response.

Timeframe: Short Term

Critical Tasks: Review all contracts and agreements with private non-profit and municipal fire departments in Iredell County.
Modify as needed to ensure all departments are funded adequately and equitably.
Establish performance measures for all agencies contracting with Iredell County.
Ensure a culture of transparency in all contracting agencies.
Determine feasibility of creation of fire service advisory committee or commission.

Objective 1B: Review Service District Agreements with contracting agencies.

Timeframe: Short Term

Critical Tasks: Review statutory requirements of Service District Agreements for Iredell County.
Determine appropriate tax rates for the Service District.

Objective 1C: Determine if duplication of services exist within the emergency services of Iredell County and look for opportunities to utilize economy of scale in delivering effective services to all of Iredell County.

Timeframe: Short Term

Critical Tasks: Identify areas where multiple agencies are providing services.
Review community fire station locations and district boundaries to determine the most efficient response model for the community, including municipal departments.
Evaluate response trends in affected areas.
Identify opportunities for collaboration with other agencies.
Develop mechanisms for municipal and county governments to share proposed annexations to ensure tax payer equity.





Iredell

Short-Term Next Steps for Iredell County Elected Officials:

- A. Direct the County Manager to develop a task team of county staff and representative fire chiefs to evaluate the recommended alternative funding model and municipal/out-of-county cost share plan for FY 26-27 implementation.





Short-Term Next Steps for Iredell County Elected Officials:

- B. Direct the County Manager to evaluate first due response areas for closest station response, including municipal feasibility for coverage.

Short-Term Next Steps for Iredell County Elected Officials:

- C. Direct the County Manager to hold discussions with key stakeholders with both Statesville and Mooresville municipalities and neighboring fire departments of Monticello, Mount Mourne, Shepherds, Ebenezer and Cool Springs to develop a plan of action for service delivery moving forward.



Short-Term Next Steps for Iredell County Elected Officials:

- D. Direct the County Manager to develop a plan to implement an initial supplemental firefighter staffing squad plan for a mid year FY 26-27 implementation.



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Questions?



Credit to Iredell Firewire for several photos in the presentation.





THANK YOU!

North Carolina Fire Chief Consulting
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