



Cambridge Community Fire & EMS Commission

Maureen Lien, Town of Christiana

Dave Schroeder, Town of Lake Mills

Julie Nelles, Village of Rockdale

Mark McNally, Village of Cambridge

Gene Kapsner, Town of Oakland, Commission Chair



Dear residents of the Cambridge Area Fire and EMS District,

As you probably already know, there has been a lot of discussion regarding the future home of the Cambridge Area Emergency Medical Services and the Cambridge Volunteer Fire Department, both of which provide essential services to your community. You might not be aware of the history behind this discussion and the need for a new station.

Built in 1984, the current station was designed for smaller organizations with less equipment that handled only a fraction of the calls they do today. As the organizations grew, station inadequacies began becoming a problem as early as 20 years ago. In 2015 a lack of local volunteers led to the recruitment of EMTs from outside our area. This required the rental of off-site housing for staff. The need for a larger facility was no longer a question and the Cambridge Fire and EMS commission moved forward with planning.

Inefficiency, congestion, dangerous crowding in apparatus bays, EMTs having to run across a highway when their pagers go off, and the inability to accommodate the entire staff in the meeting room are just a few of the many reasons a new station is needed. Responsible planning for the future while keeping an eye on the bottom line has led to the current design which uses the existing facility efficiently while adding safe and adaptable apparatus bays. The design also allows the organizations to remain in service throughout the construction process with very little impact to the delivery of the emergency services we all depend on.

As taxpayers, you naturally have a lot of questions about all of this. The purpose of this letter is to help you stay informed and learn where you can see plans and presentations and ask all the important questions you most certainly have. In the end, we feel confident that you will see the need for this project and will find the plans to be an excellent solution.

We live in uncertain times. Very few people or institutions have escaped the stressors of the COVID-19 pandemic. Your emergency service providers have experienced this more than most. It is times like this that make equipping and supporting them more important than ever. One certainty in all this is that the need for a new station will only continue to grow, perhaps at an even faster rate. Therefore, the commission believes it is important to move forward with the building design and planning process.

We are currently in a preliminary architectural design phase. In the fall of 2020 the 5 communities that make up our district, the Village of Cambridge, Town of Christiana, Town of Lake Mills, Town of Oakland, and Village of Rockdale will decide if the project's referendum should be placed on the spring of 2021 ballot. If approved by voters, the project's final design would occur in the summer of 2021. The project would go out for bids in the winter of 2021 with construction to start in the spring of 2022.

As you can see this is a long process. Delays now could be costly for years to come. It is our responsibility to provide important information to the public and work toward a facility that will support the emergency services needs of our communities both now and well into the future.

Thank you,

Your Cambridge Community Fire and EMS Commission



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Timeline

2016 – 2018: Research, Tours, Site Evaluations, and Evaluation Options

2019: Analyze Needs, Preliminary Architectural Design, and Preliminary Budgeting

2020: Informational meetings, Media, Community Engagement, and Educating Public

2021: Referendum, Construction Documents, and Bidding in Winter (2021/2022)

2022: Spring Groundbreaking

2023: Project Completion

Building Longevity

The addition and remodel of the Fire and EMS facility will result in a projected life of 50-75 years. The current building is 36 years old.

Estimated Tax Impact Based on \$6.5 Million Cost*

Cambridge, Christiana, Oakland, and Rockdale: \$50 – 60 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation annually

Town of Lake Mills: \$3 - \$5 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation annually

(Town of Lake Mills is only responsible for 3% of cost as the district covers only 7% of the town's area)

Stay Informed

- 1) Facebook – Either Cambridge Area Emergency Medical Services or Cambridge Fire Department pages
- 2) www.cambridgevfd.com
- 3) www.cambridgeareaems.com
- 4) Call CAEMS at (608) 423-4135 or CVFD at (608) 423-2014, or ask a firefighter or EMT
- 5) Community Engagement Meetings (contact local municipality for details)
 - Christiana presentation at 8/13 Board Meeting, 7:00pm
 - Rockdale presentation at 8/17 Board Meeting, 6:00pm
 - Oakland presentation at 8/18 Board Meeting, 7:00pm
 - Cambridge presentation at 8/25 Board Meeting, 6:30pm
 - Lake Mills presentation at 9/8 Board Meeting, 6:00pm

Show Your Support

Your support of the Cambridge Area Emergency Medical Services and the Cambridge Volunteer Fire Department is critical to the future of Emergency Services in your community. Now is the right time to invest in the future of these fine organizations.

*These are preliminary estimates based on assessed valuation numbers from 2019. Firm numbers will be finalized by a financial consultant once the decision to go to referendum has been made.