

Fire Services Study

City of Dubois and Sandy Township
Clearfield County, PA

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Pennsylvania
Governor's Center for
Local Government Services

Governor's Center for
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Executive Summary

In March of 2024 the City of DuBois and Sandy Township entered into an agreement with the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) in the Governor's Center for Local Government Services to study the potential outcomes and efficiencies of a consolidated fire department. The DCED's Fire Service Peer Consultants, J. Levi Hipps and Daniel P. Wauthier, were assigned to this project to provide recommendations to the Governor's Center for Local Government Services, the governing bodies, and the nine separate volunteer fire service organizations.

The consultants were tasked with creating a plan for fire protection for the new municipality as the result of the combining of the City of DuBois and the Township of Sandy. The recommendations contained in this document are based on data provided, site visits, and the expertise and experience of the consultants themselves. They were formulated to serve the residents to the greatest extent possible now and in the future.

The top priority to provide continuity, consistency, and a smoother transition for this endeavor is that the nine departments merge into a new single entity at the earliest possible time.

To achieve this, we recommend the following be completed as soon as possible:

Joint Board to appoint a fire committee including:

Two elected officials, one from each municipality that is not affiliated with any fire department.

The two designated municipal Fire Chiefs.

The Department Nominated appointee (They are already in place and working on our initial recommendations) from each of the nine departments.

Merger and Articles of Incorporation

The nine separate organizations will need to be legally merged into one entity with one Articles of Incorporation.

New Bylaws

Establish and adopt bylaws to define the operational framework of the new department. As part of the bylaws, standardized officer qualifications and a working SOG/SOP will be developed and recognized. The use of term limits for officers should be abolished.

Property and Equipment ownership

All property and equipment owned by the Township of Sandy departments will be formally transferred to the City of DuBois to bring them in line with the DuBois departments.

Introduction: Objectives & Study Design

The City of DuBois and the Township of Sandy requested technical assistance from the Department of Community and Economic Development, Governor's Center for Local Government Services, to carry out an assessment of fire services and deliver a plan on consolidating the nine volunteer fire departments into a single cohesive entity.

This *Assessment of Fire Services Delivery* was conducted by J. Levi Hipps and Daniel P Wauthier, DCED Fire Services Peer Consultants. They were assigned to carry out this scope of services and provide a report of observations and recommendations to the Governor's Center for Local Government Services, the governing bodies, and the volunteer fire service organizations.

Scope

The scope of services for this project includes the following elements:

- Recommendations for organizational structure.
- Recommendations for station needs and locations.
- Recommendations for apparatus needs and locations.
- Recommendations on a leadership hierarchy.

Methodology

The procedures used to conduct this study included a review of fire service literature including journal articles, national standards, ISO ratings, best management practices, and other various manuals and information available via the Internet. In addition to the initial meeting to develop a scope of services, the consultant visited each fire department and interviewed the chief officers.

Throughout the study, the fire departments were requested to provide specific information related to workload, policies and procedures, practices of each service provider, and staffing. For comparison purposes, the consultants relied on benchmarks and "best practices" developed by the:

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) - The National Fire Protection Association is an organization that develops, publishes, and disseminates timely consensus standards covering all areas of fire safety. These NFPA standards have been adopted by numerous state and federal authorities, giving them the force of law. In Pennsylvania, NFPA standards are recognized as voluntary consensus standards.

Insurance Services Office (ISO) - The Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS) is a manual containing the criteria ISO uses in reviewing the firefighting capabilities of individual communities. The schedule measures the major elements of a community's fire-suppression system and develops a numerical grading called a Public Protection Classification (PPCTM).

The author assumes no responsibility for any errors or omissions in the accuracy of the content as the information contained in this report was provided by the fire departments and their officials.

The intent of this report is to improve the organization, operations, deployment, and management of the fire departments. The primary focus of this report is the future of fire service delivery to the residents of the new municipality.

Many of the challenges faced by the fire departments regarding fire services delivery have developed over a long period due to a combination of declining volunteerism, time commitments, increased regulatory requirements, and service demands. The members of each department and the township officials should be commended for their efforts, service to their community, and the commissioning of this study to improve fire services delivery.

In today's busy and litigious society, with the increased service demands and time requirements placed on volunteers, fire departments cannot continue to operate autonomously with little to no oversight, exercising the excuse "we are only volunteers" while local governments look the other way. Accountability for providing adequate delivery of fire services is the responsibility of both the municipalities and the fire departments.

The implementation of any or all the recommendations included in this report, either in their entirety or in some other form, can be accomplished in several ways. There is not a "one-size fits all" solution as political will and levels of cooperation often vary greatly from community to community. Implementation methods other communities have found to be necessary and/or successful include:

- The establishment of a public safety oversight committee with representation from the department and local government.
- The adoption of regulations and standards by local government.
- Facilitation by a third-party representative.
- Any combination of the above.

Additional recommendations are included throughout the body of this report.

Municipal Overview

The City of DuBois and the Township of Sandy are located in Clearfield County, approximately 100 miles northeast of the City of Pittsburgh. The city has a population of 7510, according to the 2020 census, residing in an area of 3.26 square miles. The Township of Sandy surrounds the city with 11,852 residents and an area of 52.99 Square miles.

There have been numerous attempts in previous years to merge the two municipalities into one entity. However, in the election of November 2021, the residents of both municipalities approved the merger into a third-class city retaining the DuBois name.

Current Situation

Currently, there are nine independent volunteers fire departments serving the area, five in the City of DuBois and four in the Township of Sandy.

The departments in the city are independent organizations but operate as the City of Dubois Volunteer Fire Department. The city owns and maintains all the apparatus, as well as the fire stations.

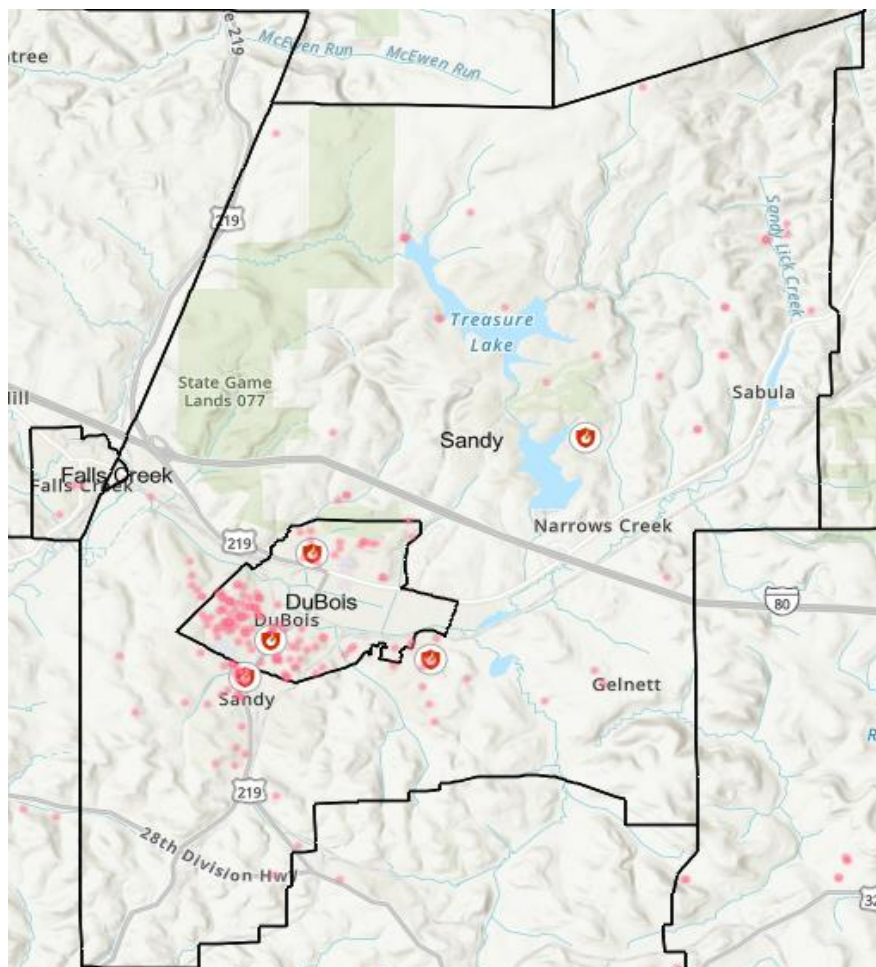
In the township, all the volunteer fire departments are also independent organizations. But they own and maintain their apparatus and buildings themselves.

With the vote to merge the City of DuBois and Township of Sandy, this study was commissioned by the joint board of municipal officials to analyze the fire service and provide recommendations for the future delivery of these services.

Fire Stations

There are currently nine fire stations in the combined area of the city and township. During the information gathering process, the consultants visited all nine stations and spoke to the individual station line officers. At the conception of the consolidation, it is obvious that all nine stations will remain open with the following recommendations implemented at the earliest possible timeframe.

In making these recommendations, the consultants investigated several key items including station locations and proximity to other stations, current conditions and accessibility, and the addresses of firefighters in relation to the station.



The following recommendations should be implemented at the earliest possible time:

- 145 Town Center Circle to remain
- 301 First Street to remain
- 250 S Brady Street to remain
- 15 Forest Avenue to remain
- 33 E Park Avenue and 1257 Chestnut Avenue to be consolidated in a new station at 1257 Chestnut. 33 E Park will then be closed.
- 83 Guy Avenue and 12 S Main Street to be consolidated in a new substation at a location between the two existing stations. Both stations will then be closed.
- 418 S State will be closed, and operations moved to 250 S Brady Street.

The new station located at 1257 Chestnut shall be considered the “*main*” station and provide facilities for executive officers, chief officers, meetings, and trainings. It will also house the equipment needed to refill SCBA cylinders, wash/dry turn out gear, etc. There are developed plans for a new station at this location, these will need reviewed and modified to fit this role.

Future substations should have adequate bay space for two to three apparatus, restroom and shower facilities, PPE storage, and a day/bunk room. All other functions should be centralized at the main station.

All stations should be constructed with modern accepted safeguards, (examples: diesel exhaust extraction systems, clean and dirty zones, personnel decontamination), and with considerations for volunteer staffing and, eventually, paid staffing.

After completion of these two new stations, it is recommended:

250 S Brady will be closed, and operations be moved to 15 Forest Avenue. Apparatus housed here would replace the oldest pieces in the fleet.

145 Town Center Drive should be rebuilt as a substation.

Additionally, consideration should be given to a future new substation located in the northern area of the new municipality to further serve the Treasure Lake area. This location would be based on property available and the concentration of volunteers to respond to this station.

Apparatus

Between the nine fire stations, currently there is a total of 24 fire apparatus, both front line and reserve. Some are specialty pieces, as to be expected, but there is considerable duplication of resources also. With the station realignment will also come apparatus moves and eliminations. These are the proposed apparatus assignments:

250 S Brady Station

Engine 75	Engine	2023
Engine 74	Engine Rescue	2017
Utility 75	Utility	2022

New Substation

Brush 38	Brush	2020
Engine 38	Engine Rescue	2008
Engine 71	Engine	2008

145 Town Center Drive Station

Engine 39	Engine Rescue	2020
Tanker 39	Tanker	2004
Quint 36	Ladder	2012
Utility 39	Utility	2008

301 First Street Station

Engine 75-2	Engine	1996
Tanker 38	Tanker	1997

New Main Station, 1257 Chestnut Street

Engine 37	Engine	2017
Truck 72	Ladder	2004
Rescue 37	Rescue	2003
Tanker 37	Tanker	2001

15 Forest Avenue Station

Engine 36	Engine Rescue	2002
Tanker 36	Tanker	2002
Brush 36	Brush	2003

The following apparatus will be retired and sold:

Engine 73-2	Engine	1990
Rescue 74	Rescue	1989
Engine 73	Engine	2002
Engine 72	Engine	1999
Engine 39	Tanker	1997

All the proposed retirements are currently listed in “fair” condition and are well over twenty years in service.

Due to their age and condition, consideration should be given to replacing the three remaining tankers at the earliest possible time with smaller, more agile single axle commercial chassis-based units. These units should have a shorter lead time for delivery and be less expensive than the larger tandem axle tankers. Purchasing all three at the same time will allow for standardization and should qualify for discounted pricing. The existing tankers would then be retired and sold.

Also, some type of utility vehicle, (pickup truck, SUV, retired police or fire chief’s vehicle) should be available at each station for personnel and equipment transport. Four stations currently have a utility or brush vehicle that can be used for this purpose.

Upon the closing of the 250 S Brady Street station, the two engines, 74 and 75, which are the newest in the fleet, should be moved to replace the oldest units in the fleet, Engine 36 and Engine 75-2, which then can be sold. This would reduce the fleet to a total of thirteen capital pieces of apparatus with five utility vehicles.

If a new substation is built in the northern area of the district, there is redundancy built in the fleet that an engine can be relocated from an existing station.

The next major pieces to be replaced should be Truck 72 and Rescue 37. With the current pricing and lead times of four to five years for these types of apparatus, not including the time needed for drawing up specifications, this process should be a priority for the new administration.

Also, all future engine purchases should have water tanks with a minimum of 750 gallons of water.

Leadership and Command Officers

The current systems utilized in the City and Township are similar in that they both recognize one overall Fire Chief. Each station then has its’ own Fire Chief and associated officers. This does not lend itself to one concise chain of command.

We recommend the following hierarchy:

- One overall Fire Chief elected by the membership and recognized by the municipality.
- One overall Deputy Fire Chief elected by the membership and recognized by the municipality.
- Three Assistant Chiefs appointed by the elected Chief and Deputy Chief. Each Assistant Chief would be assigned designated response districts along with two stations to monitor day to day operations and needs. The appointed Assistant Chiefs will also be responsible for department training, both internal and external.
- Each station would have one Captain and two Lieutenants appointed by the five Fire Chiefs. The Captain would be responsible for all vehicle and equipment maintenance for that station.

This hierarchy will conform with Clearfield County's 911 centers new designation for DuBois/Sandy as Station 60.

The Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief would be provided with vehicles for their use. If a third unit is available this unit should be rotated through the assistant chiefs as an Officer on duty unit.

Qualifications for each officer's position shall be established, approved by the membership, and given to all members.

Term limits should be abolished as they do not allow for continuity and the time needed to set or meet established goals for the department.

Summary & Recommendations

The City of DuBois and Township of Sandy Fire Service, following their merger, evaluates current operations and provides recommendations for future fire service delivery.

The top priority to provide continuity, consistency, and a smoother transition for this endeavor is that the nine departments merge into a new single entity at the earliest possible time.

The recommendations contained in this document were based on data provided, site visits, and the expertise and experience of the consultants themselves. They were formulated to serve the residents to the greatest extent possible now and in the future. There is not a “one-size fits all” solution as political will and levels of cooperation often vary greatly from community to community. The scope of services for this project includes the following elements:

Recommendation 1 – Organizational Structure

Fire Committee & Governance Summary

A fire committee will be appointed by the Joint Board, including two non-affiliated elected officials (one from each municipality), the two designated municipal Fire Chiefs, and department-nominated appointees from each of the nine departments.

To unify operations, the nine organizations will legally merge under a single Articles of Incorporation. New bylaws will be established, outlining officer qualifications and operational procedures, with term limits for officers removed.

All property and equipment from the Township of Sandy departments will be transferred to the City of DuBois to align assets across the newly merged department.

Recommendation 2 - Fire Stations

1. Stations to Remain Open:

- 145 Town Center Circle
- 301 First Street
- 250 S Brady Street
- 15 Forest Avenue

2. Stations to be Consolidated:

- 33 E Park Avenue and 1257 Chestnut Avenue → Merge into a new station at 1257 Chestnut (closing 33 E Park).
- 83 Guy Avenue and 12 S Main Street → Merge into a new substation between these locations (both to close).
- 418 S State → Close and relocate operations to 250 S Brady Street.

Main Station & Future Planning:

- **1257 Chestnut Avenue** will serve as the central station, housing executive offices, training areas, and specialized equipment.
- **Future substations** should include space for apparatus, restrooms, PPE storage, and bunk areas.
- **Facility improvements** should incorporate modern safety features and accommodate both volunteer and potential future paid staffing.

Long-Term Recommendations:

- **After new stations are completed:**
 - Close **250 S Brady Street** and relocate to 15 Forest Avenue with updated apparatus.
 - Rebuild **145 Town Center Drive** as a substation.
 - Consider an additional substation in the northern area to serve Treasure Lake, based on volunteer availability and property options.

These changes aim to improve efficiency, safety, and response capabilities while modernizing facilities for long-term sustainability.

Recommendation 3 - Apparatus

Apparatus Summary & Recommendations

Currently, the nine fire stations house **24 fire apparatus** (front line and reserve), including specialty units. Due to station realignment, apparatus will be reassigned, retired, and streamlined for efficiency.

Proposed Apparatus Assignments:

- **250 S Brady Station:** Engine 75 (2023), Engine 74 (2017), Utility 75 (2022)
- **New Substation:** Brush 38 (2020), Engine 38 (2008), Engine 71 (2008)
- **145 Town Center Drive Station:** Engine 39 (2020), Tanker 39 (2004), Quint 36 (2012), Utility 39 (2008)
- **301 First Street Station:** Engine 75-2 (1996), Tanker 38 (1997)
- **New Main Station (1257 Chestnut Street):** Engine 37 (2017), Truck 72 (2004), Rescue 37 (2003), Tanker 37 (2001)
- **15 Forest Avenue Station:** Engine 36 (2002), Tanker 36 (2002), Brush 36 (2003)

Apparatus to be Retired & Sold:

- Engine 73-2 (1990), Rescue 74 (1989), Engine 73 (2002), Engine 72 (1999), Engine 39 Tanker (1997)
- All retired units are **over 20 years old** and in **fair condition**.

Future Apparatus Considerations:

- **Tanker Replacement:**
 - The three remaining **aging tankers** should be replaced ASAP with **smaller, more agile, single-axle commercial chassis units** for cost savings and quicker delivery.
 - Purchasing all three simultaneously could allow for **discounted pricing** and fleet standardization.
- **Utility Vehicles:**
 - Each station should have **at least one utility vehicle** (pickup, SUV, or retired emergency vehicle) for personnel/equipment transport. Four stations already meet this requirement.
- **Fleet Reduction:**
 - When **250 S Brady closes**, the two newest engines (Engine 74 & 75) will be reassigned to replace **Engine 36 & Engine 75-2**, which will then be sold.
 - This would reduce the fleet to **13 major apparatus & 5 utility vehicles**.
- **Future Substation in the Northern District:**
 - An **existing engine** can be reassigned to this location if built.
- **Upcoming Priority Replacements:**
 - **Truck 72 & Rescue 37** should be next for replacement.
 - Lead times for these units are **4-5 years**, so planning/specifications should begin immediately.
- **Standardization for Future Engines:**
 - All **new engine purchases** should include **water tanks with at least 750 gallons** for improved operational capability.

These changes aim to **modernize the fleet, reduce redundancy, and improve cost efficiency** while ensuring response readiness.

Recommendation 4 – Leadership and Command Officers

Leadership and Command Structure Recommendations

The current leadership model in the City and Township lacks a clear chain of command due to multiple Fire Chiefs at individual stations. A **streamlined hierarchy** is recommended for improved efficiency and coordination.

Proposed Command Structure:

- **Fire Chief** – Elected by membership, officially recognized by the municipality.
- **Deputy Fire Chief** – Also elected and recognized by the municipality.

- **Three Assistant Chiefs** – Appointed by the Fire Chief and Deputy Chief.
 - Each Assistant Chief will oversee **designated response districts** and **two stations** for daily operations.
 - They will also be responsible for **training** (both internal and external).
- **Station-Level Officers:**
 - Each station will have **one Captain and two Lieutenants**, appointed by the five Fire Chiefs.
 - **Captains** will manage **vehicle and equipment maintenance** for their respective stations.

This new structure aligns with **Clearfield County 911's designation** for DuBois/Sandy as **Station 60** and provides a **centralized command system**.

Additional Leadership Policies:

- **Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief will be assigned vehicles** for department use.
- **A third vehicle, if available, will rotate among Assistant Chiefs as an "Officer on Duty" unit.**
- **Officer qualifications** should be clearly defined, approved by membership, and shared with all personnel.
- **Term limits should be abolished** to allow leadership continuity and the time needed to implement long-term department goals.

This structure enhances **command clarity, accountability, and operational efficiency** across the newly consolidated fire department.

Key Takeaways from the Executive Summary and Recommendations

1. Fire Department Consolidation & Governance

- The **City of DuBois and Sandy Township** initiated a study in March 2024 with the **Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)** to assess fire service consolidation.
- A **Joint Fire Committee** should be formed, including:
 - Two non-affiliated elected officials (one from each municipality)
 - The two designated municipal Fire Chiefs
 - A department-nominated appointee from each of the nine fire departments.
- The **nine independent fire departments will merge** into one legally incorporated entity.
- New **bylaws** will be created, including **standardized officer qualifications** and operational procedures.
- **All property and equipment from Sandy Township departments** will be transferred to the City of DuBois for unified management.

2. Fire Station Restructuring

- **Stations to Remain Open:**
 - 145 Town Center Circle
 - 301 First Street
 - 250 S Brady Street
 - 15 Forest Avenue
- **Stations to be Consolidated:**
 - 33 E Park Avenue and 1257 Chestnut Avenue → Merge into a new station at **1257 Chestnut** (33 E Park closes).
 - 83 Guy Avenue and 12 S Main Street → Merge into a new substation **between these locations** (both close).
 - 418 S State → Close and relocate operations to **250 S Brady Street**.
- **Future Planning:**
 - **1257 Chestnut Avenue** will serve as the **main station** for executive offices, training, and specialized equipment.
 - Future substations should include space for apparatus, PPE storage, restrooms, and bunk areas.

- **After new stations are built:**
 - **250 S Brady Street closes** and operations move to **15 Forest Avenue**.
 - **145 Town Center Drive rebuilt** as a substation.
 - A **future northern substation** should be considered for Treasure Lake based on property and volunteer availability.

3. Apparatus Optimization

- **Current Fleet:** 24 fire apparatus, including front-line and reserve units.
- **Apparatus to be Retired & Sold (due to age & condition):**
 - **Engine 73-2 (1990), Rescue 74 (1989), Engine 73 (2002), Engine 72 (1999), Engine 39 Tanker (1997).**
- **Key Apparatus Recommendations:**
 - **Replace three aging tankers** with **smaller, single-axle commercial chassis units** (cheaper & faster to procure).
 - Ensure **each station has a utility vehicle** (pickup, SUV, or retired emergency vehicle).
 - **Fleet Reduction Plan:**
 - When **250 S Brady closes**, move **Engine 74 & 75 (newest engines)** to **replace Engine 36 & 75-2** (then sell old units).
 - **New total fleet: 13 major apparatus & 5 utility vehicles.**
 - **Future Replacements:**
 - **Truck 72 & Rescue 37** should be prioritized (due to 4–5-year lead time for procurement).
 - **All future engines should have a minimum of 750-gallon water tanks.**

4. Leadership & Command Structure

- **Current system lacks a clear chain of command** due to multiple Fire Chiefs across stations.
- **Proposed Chain of Command:**
 - **One Fire Chief** (elected, recognized by the municipality).
 - **One Deputy Fire Chief** (elected, recognized by the municipality).
 - **Three Assistant Chiefs** (appointed by the Fire Chief & Deputy Chief).
 - Each will oversee **designated response districts** and **two stations**.
 - Responsible for **training programs**.

- **Station-Level Officers:**
 - Each station has **one Captain & two Lieutenants** (appointed by the five Fire Chiefs).
 - **Captains manage vehicle & equipment maintenance.**
- **Additional Leadership Policies:**
 - **Fire Chief & Deputy Fire Chief get dedicated vehicles.**
 - **A third vehicle (if available) will rotate among Assistant Chiefs** as an Officer on Duty unit.
 - **Term limits abolished** to ensure leadership continuity.
 - **Officer qualifications must be standardized** and approved by the membership.

Overall Goals of the Consolidation Plan

- **Unify fire service operations** under **one entity** to improve efficiency and response capabilities.
- **Reduce redundancy** in stations, personnel, and apparatus while ensuring **modernized facilities and equipment.**
- **Streamline leadership** for **better coordination, accountability, and training.**
- **Standardize policies, officer qualifications, and equipment** to enhance operational consistency.
- **Plan for future fire service demands** by considering **new substations and apparatus replacements.**

These recommendations provide a **strategic roadmap** for transitioning to **a single, efficient, and well-equipped fire department** serving the **newly merged municipality.**

Implementation Timeline

This timeline outlines the steps needed to consolidate the City of DuBois and Sandy Township Fire Departments into a single, unified entity.

Phase 1: Planning & Governance (March 2024 – March 2025)

March 2024 – March 2025

- Conduct assessment and site visits of all fire stations.
- Develop preliminary recommendations for governance, station alignment, and apparatus optimization.
- Form Joint Fire Committee, including two elected officials, two Fire Chiefs, and nine department appointees.
- Begin drafting Articles of Incorporation for the new fire department entity.

April – June 2025

- Finalize and legally merge the nine departments into a single entity. This process will take time.
- Develop new bylaws outlining operational procedures, officer qualifications, and chain of command.
- Transfer all property and equipment from Sandy Township to the City of DuBois.
- Establish leadership structure, including a Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief, three Assistant Chiefs, Station Captains, and Lieutenants.

Phase 2: Station Realignment & Apparatus Reallocation (July – December 2025)

July – September 2025

- Begin fire station consolidations:
 - Close 33 E Park Avenue and relocate operations to 1257 Chestnut Avenue (New Main Station).
 - Close 418 S State and move operations to 250 S Brady Street.
 - Identify a site for a new substation between 83 Guy Avenue and 12 S Main Street (both stations will close).
- Reallocation of apparatus:
 - Sell outdated units, including Engine 73-2, Rescue 74, Engine 73, Engine 72, and Engine 39 Tanker.
 - Reassign Engine 74 and Engine 75 to replace the oldest engines when 250 S Brady closes.

- Begin procurement process for three new tankers with single-axle chassis for improved efficiency.

October – December 2025

- Improve station facilities:
 - Officially designate 1257 Chestnut Avenue as the "Main Station" for administration and training.
 - Implement modern safety features in all remaining and new stations, including diesel exhaust extraction, personnel decontamination, and clean/dirty zones.
- Plan apparatus updates:
 - Order new tankers to improve operational efficiency.
 - Develop a procurement plan for the future replacement of Truck 72 and Rescue 37, considering their four-to-five-year lead time.

Phase 3: Full Operational Transition (January – June 2026)

January – March 2026

- Implement the new leadership structure, with the Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief, and Assistant Chiefs actively overseeing response districts.
- Integrate standardized training programs for all personnel.
- Deploy utility vehicles at all stations to enhance operational flexibility.

April – June 2026

- Close 250 S Brady Street and relocate remaining operations to 15 Forest Avenue.
- Rebuild 145 Town Center Drive as a modern substation.
- Finalize plans for a future substation in the northern district (Treasure Lake area), considering volunteer availability.
- Evaluate fleet efficiency and adjust apparatus assignments as needed.

Phase 4: Long-Term Sustainability & Future Planning (July 2026 – Beyond)

- Conduct regular evaluations of staffing, equipment, and station needs.
- Initiate a long-term fleet replacement cycle, prioritizing newer, standardized apparatus.
- Monitor volunteer retention and explore a gradual transition to paid staffing if necessary.
- Implement ongoing safety and training programs aligned with NFPA and ISO standards.

This structured timeline ensures a smooth transition, improved fire service delivery, and long-term sustainability for the newly consolidated fire department.

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