



Staff Report ES-2025-021

Council
October 15, 2025

TO: Mayor Kelley and Members of Council

AUTHOR: Ryan Murrell, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: Fire Station Location Study 7 Station Model Feedback

RECOMMENDATION

WHEREAS On August 13, 2025, General Finance Committee recommended adopting the 7 Station Model contained within the Fire Station Location Study;

AND WHEREAS prior to final adoption, staff were directed to notify the community of the proposed decision and report back on any feedback received;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council confirm its approval of the 7 Station Model and implementation plan attached as Appendix I to report ES-2025-021;

AND THAT the Township 10 year Capital Plan be updated accordingly.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

This report summarizes the feedback collected over the 60-day period. During this time, staff notified the community of the General Finance Committee's intent to proceed with the 7-station model and received and analyzed public input and conducted consultations.

BACKGROUND

The General Finance Committee received report [ES-2025-017](#) on August 13, 2025, recommending that Committee adopt a 7 station model as identified in the Fire Station Location Study. Subsequently, the Committee directed staff to inform the public of the selection of the model, be available for public consultation, and compile analysis on the feedback received.

ANALYSIS

Public Engagement

Community Consultation Sessions

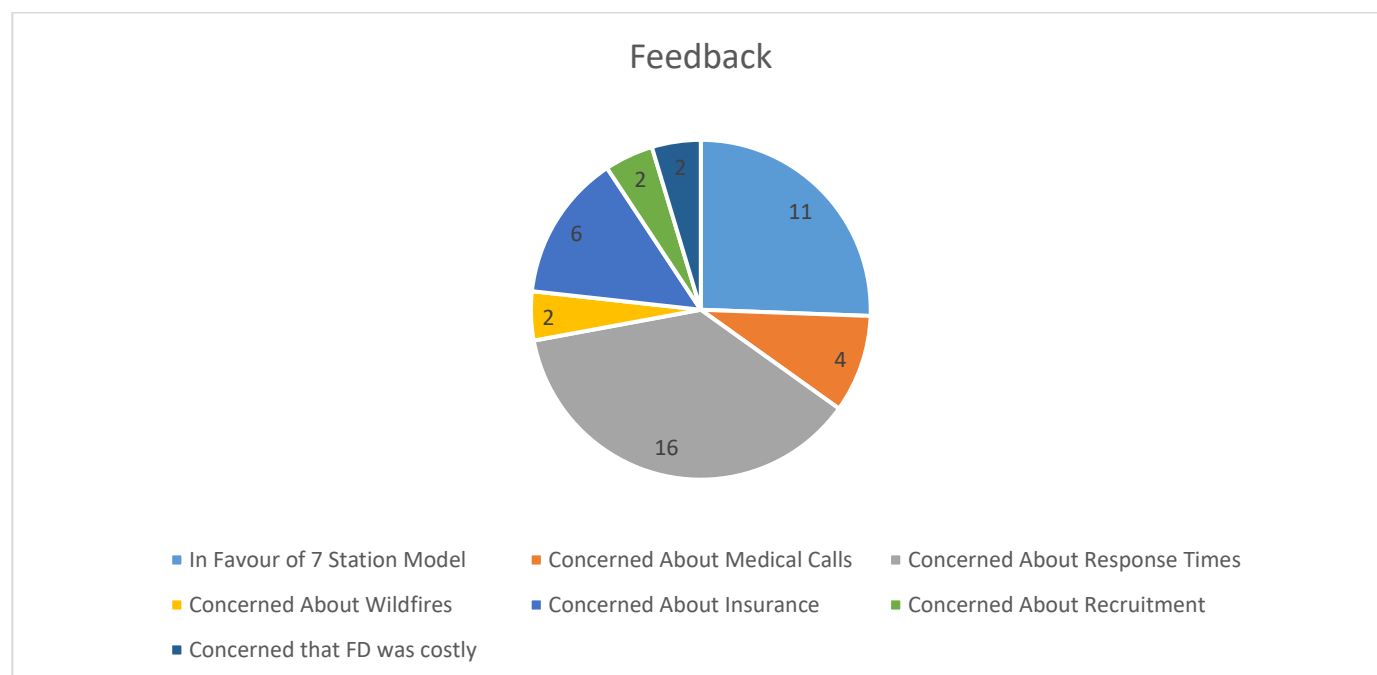
Upon notifying the community of General/Finance's recommendation, several requests were received to attend community consultation sessions. There were three 2-hour evening public consultation sessions, one online (zoom) meeting hosted by the Skeleton Lake Cottagers Association on September 17th, one in-person meeting Monday September 22nd hosted at the Raymond Community Centre and one in-person meeting Tuesday September 23rd hosted at the Torrance Community Centre.

All of these public sessions were attended by Fire Chief Ryan Murrell, and included a powerpoint presentation that provided detailed background information on the type of fire services currently provided, history of fire station location recommendations, key issues driving the consultant recommendations and proposed implementation plans. Key to these sessions was the ability for the public to ask questions and have their individual concerns heard, addressed, and documented.

A list of the general themes of concerns raised at these sessions and staff's response is included in Appendix "I".

Engage Muskoka Lakes

At both in-person sessions, the public was informed that the municipality would gather any feedback online through engagemuskokalak.es.ca. Chart 1 summarizes the 57 key feedback points that were received via engagemuskokalak.es.ca. Appendix "II" provides all of the submissions received.



Next Steps

Overall, staff remain confident that the seven-station model affords the required fire protection while balancing the responsible capital tax-funded investment with the needed upgrades identified in the fire station location study. Staff recommends Council confirm the General/Finance Committee recommendation, implementation plan, and that the 10-year Capital Plan be updated accordingly.

ALTERNATIVES

Council could direct staff to choose a different station model. This is not recommended as it was not the original recommendation of the fire station location study consultant and does not balance fiscal sustainability against service level performance.

Council could direct staff to delay the implementation plan. This is not recommended due to the fact that any delay could jeopardize fire service levels.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications are estimated in report [ES-2025-017](#).

STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal: Deliver Sustainable Public Services and Infrastructure

COMMUNICATIONS

This staff report was distributed to Council and all those registered to receive notification through the meeting agenda electronic notification system, and was published on the Township's website in accordance with the Township's Procedural By-law.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix I – Consolidated public feedback and analysis Muskoka Lakes
Appendix II – Feedback Package from engagemuskokalakelakes.ca

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