



9.0 STUDY CONSULTATION

The Sarnia Fire Master Plan study was launched through a Steering Committee meeting on July 25, 2006. As the study progressed, various forms of consultation took place. As outlined in the study proposal, Steering Committee meetings were held at critical points, important stakeholders were included through presentations and discussions, and the broader public was invited to gain more information through two Public Open Houses. A summary of overall study consultation activities follows.

Project Meetings

Throughout this study, the Dillon team met with the Steering Committee to keep them abreast of study progress. The Steering Committee was comprised of the following members:

- Lloyd Fennell, Director of Corporate Services;
- Brian McKay, Deputy City Treasurer;
- P.M. (Pat) Cayen, Fire Chief;
- D.A. (Dana) Pitts, Deputy Fire Chief;
- John Bernier, Sarnia Professional Fire Fighters Association; and
- Chris Jewell, Sarnia Professional Fire Fighters Association.

The following project meetings took place:

- Meeting 1: Project Initiation – July 25, 2006, Sarnia City Hall;
- Meeting 2: Study Progress Meeting – November 21, 2006, Station 1, 240 East Street North;
- Meeting 3: Interim Modelling Results – January 22, 2007, via web conference (partial Steering Committee); and
- Meeting 4: Draft Recommendations and Preparation for Open House – June 25, 2007

Public and Stakeholder Consultation

Fire and Rescue Services are very important to the community at large. As such, the public consultation approach sought to gain as much input from study stakeholders as possible within the study timelines.

Presentations were made to the Community Awareness Emergency Response (CAER) Board and to the Chemical Valley Emergency Coordinating Organization (CVECO). The Fire Master Plan study presentations made to both groups were very similar; the CVECO presentation was held on September 14, 2006, and the CAER Board presentation was held as an agenda item during their monthly meeting on September 25, 2006. Attendees at both of these presentations were encouraged to bring forward any comments or concerns, however, none were received.



Consultation took place with members of the general public to inform them of the purpose of the study; its scope and findings through two Community Information Open Houses. Stakeholder comments were received to get a sense of the overall satisfaction with the current levels of service, to ascertain whether there were any areas requiring improvement, and to hear suggestions of different ways the department could operate in the future. The City of Sarnia notified residents, employers and other groups of the Open Houses through newspapers advertisements.

Initial Public Open House

The Sarnia Fire Rescue Services hosted the first Public Open House on November 21, 2006 at Sarnia City Hall. The consultation included information display boards and a presentation providing an overview of the existing conditions of the Sarnia Fire Rescue Services and a description of the study process. Copies of the display boards presented at this initial Open House are contained in **Appendix C**.

Project staff was on hand to provide comments and informally answers questions. A presentation was made in Council Chambers at 7:30 PM. The majority of those in attendance filled out a sign in sheet, with a total of 19 names being registered.

All attendees were encouraged to fill in and submit comment sheets regarding the project and the information presented. Comments received were reviewed and have been summarized below.

Summary of Comments Received from the Public Open House held on November 21st, 2006:

- Stakeholder suggested that the fire department has limited role in fighting fires at the chemical/petrochemical plant due to their lack of knowledge of the “chemical processes”.
- Stakeholder was satisfied with the level of service in both residential and industrial areas and would have no issue amalgamating or closing one or more of the present fire halls providing level of service could be maintained.
- Stakeholder suggested that composite force of both full-time and volunteer firefighters should be considered.
- Concern was expressed that unionized staff were attempting to improve job security by enhancing their role as “emergency responders”.
- Stakeholder pointed out that the response of fire, police, and Ambulance to “every call” could be considered indiscriminate use of resources.
- Concern was expressed over the design and intent of the study.
- Stakeholder suggested that the Sarnia City Council decide what an acceptable level of risk would be and which standard should be used.
- Stakeholder was very satisfied with Fire Prevention and Public Education.
- It was suggested that more of the department budget should be directed towards “following through” with training exercises.
- Several of the stakeholders expressed significant concern that having less than four men on a truck does not meet the NFPA standards.
- Stakeholder expressed concern that the age of the trucks presents a significant safety concern.
- The need to make the job of a fire fighter as safe as possible was stressed by one stakeholder.



Final Public Open House

A second public consultation took place on June 26, 2007 to confirm that the public's main concerns had been addressed through the draft study recommendations. At this stage all workplan activities had been completed and stakeholders were provided with the most complete and up-to-date information.

The consultation included information display boards and a presentation providing an overview of the draft study findings and recommendations.