Corning Joint Fire District and Forest View Fire District

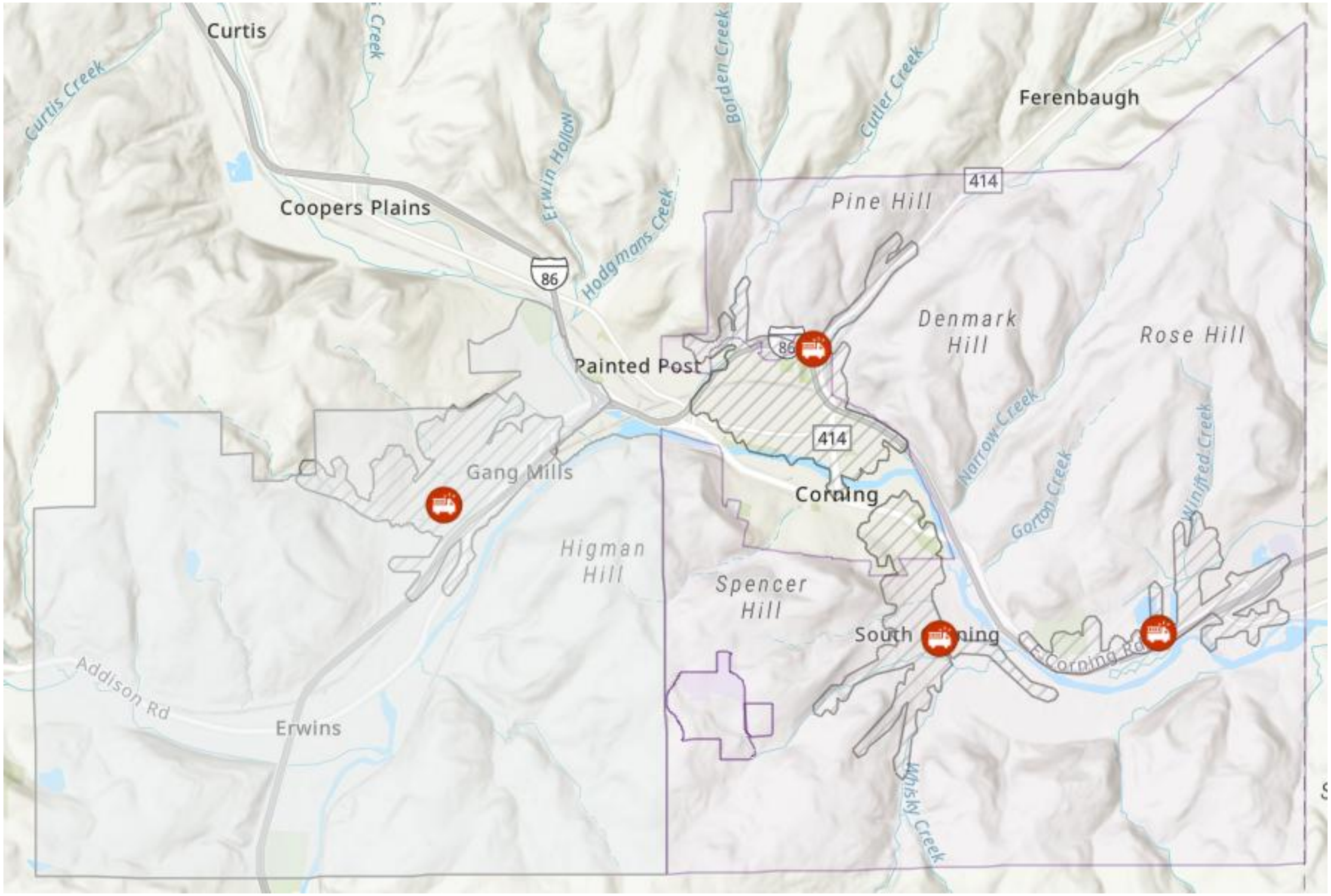
Recommendations for the Future

Since 1915

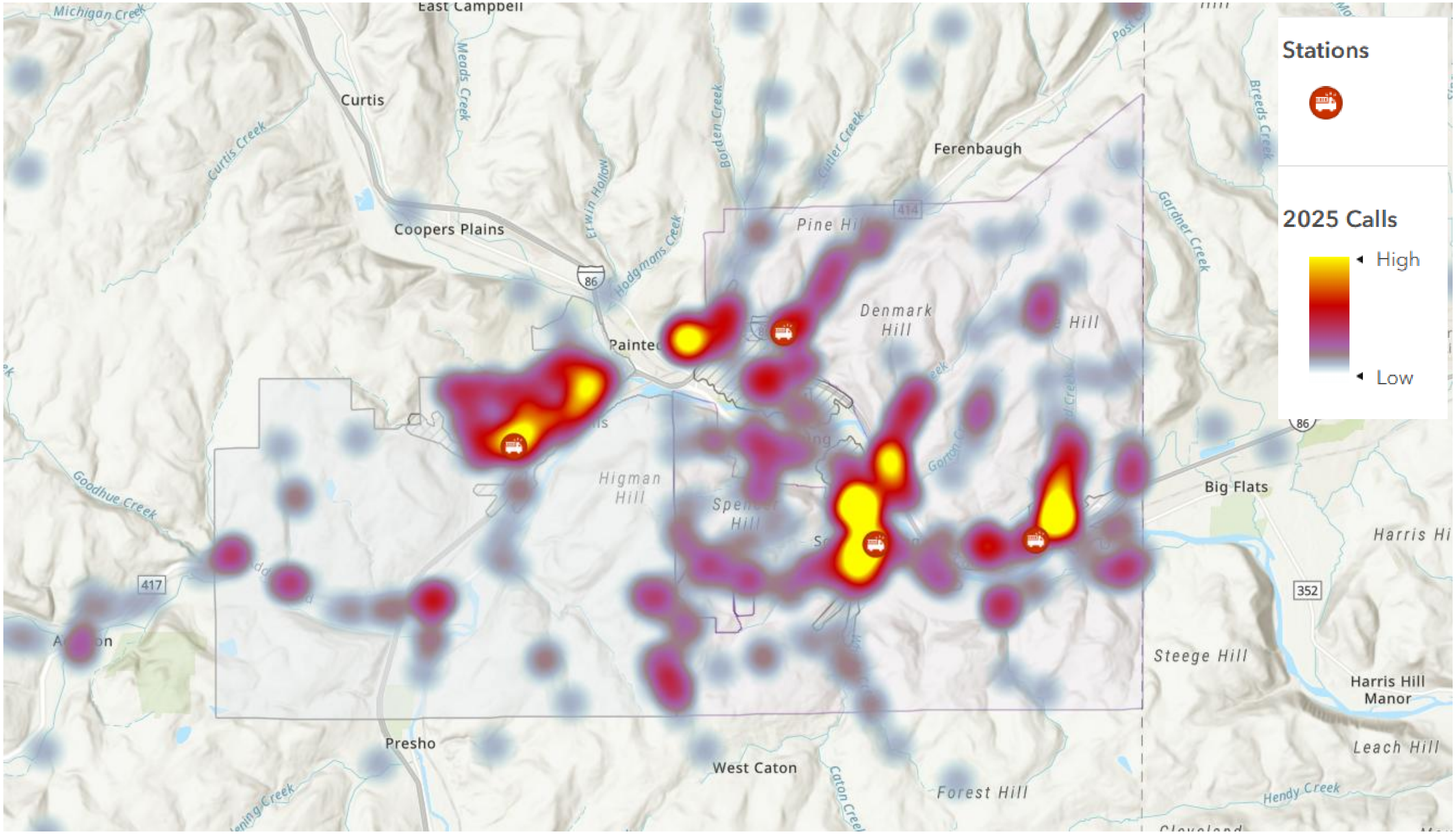
Key Findings

Category	CJFD	FVFD/GMFD
Members (Share Interior)	53 (40%)	27 (50%)
Engines/Aerials/Other	5/0/5	2/1/5
Stations	2 active	1
Calls for Service (Share EMS)	485 (37%)	258 (5%)
Annual Budget Income	$697,032	$661,161
Long Term Debt	$2.2 MM	None
Equalized Tax Rate (per $1,000)	$0.970	$0.955

Map – Stations and 1.5 Mile Drive



Map – Heat Map of 2025 Calls



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Reorganization

- Reorganizing the two existing fire districts into a single fire district has the potential to benefit the community with few drawbacks, *but a larger regional fire service is an even better solution*
  - Benefits
    - Larger tax base to share with upcoming capital needs and potential staffing costs
    - More volunteers to draw from for response and administrative work
    - Opportunity to reduce fleet size while maintaining ISO rating
  - Drawbacks
    - Substantial work for current volunteers to implement merger
    - LOSAP program reorganization could be a negative for some members (esp. GMFD)
    - Response districts are not cohesive
  - Key Factor
    - Debt can be isolated to originating district

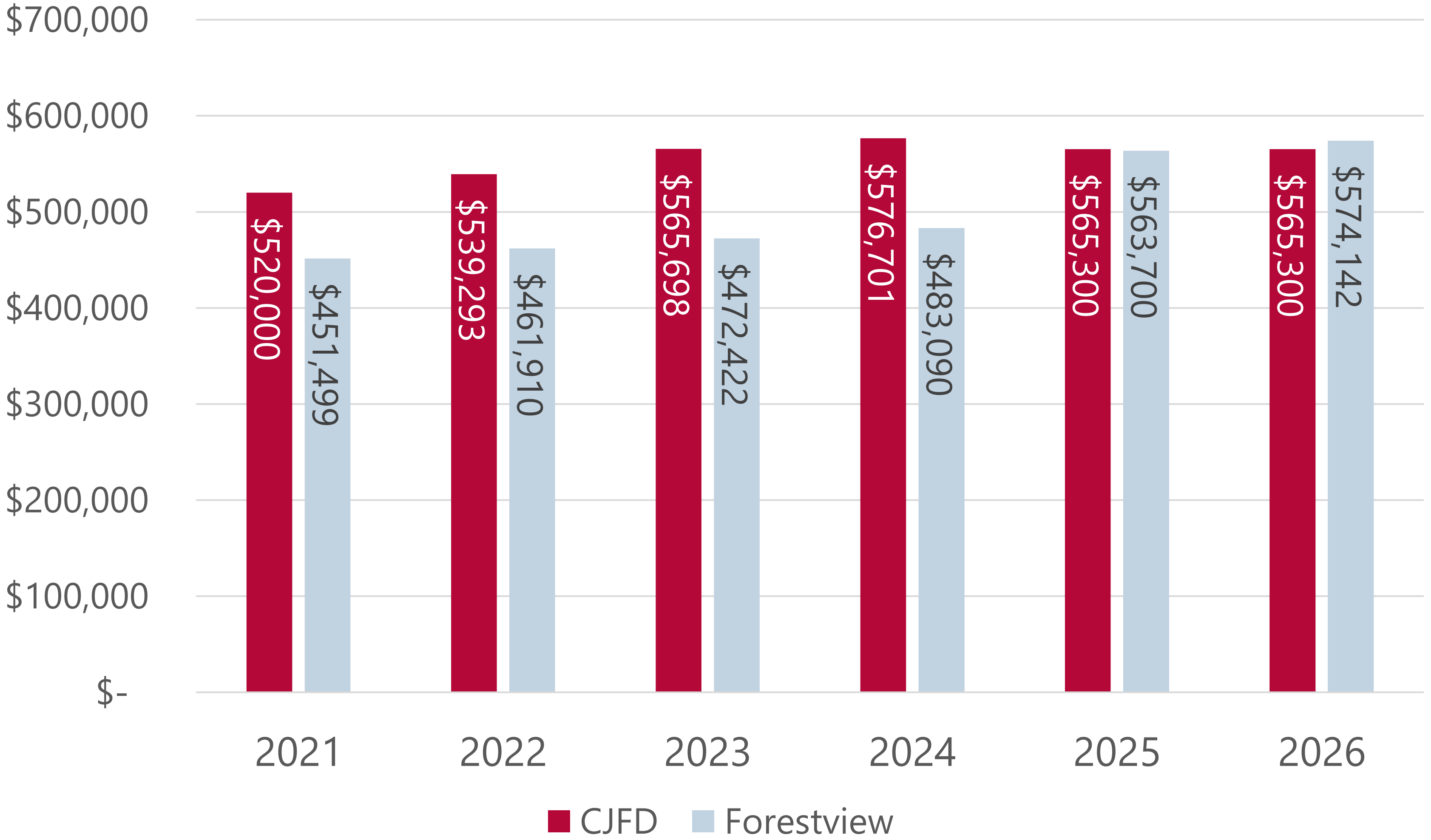
LOSAP Plan Differences

LOSAP Comparison	CJFD	FV/GM
Award Type	Defined Contribution	Defined Benefit
Award Amount	$1,000 per qualifying year	$10 per month of qualifying service, capped at 40 years
Award Payout	Lump sum at 62 or 65 (with deferral)	Lifetime annual payments from age 60
Eligibility Age	62	60
# Qualifying Members, 2025	23	12

LOSAP Changes in Merger

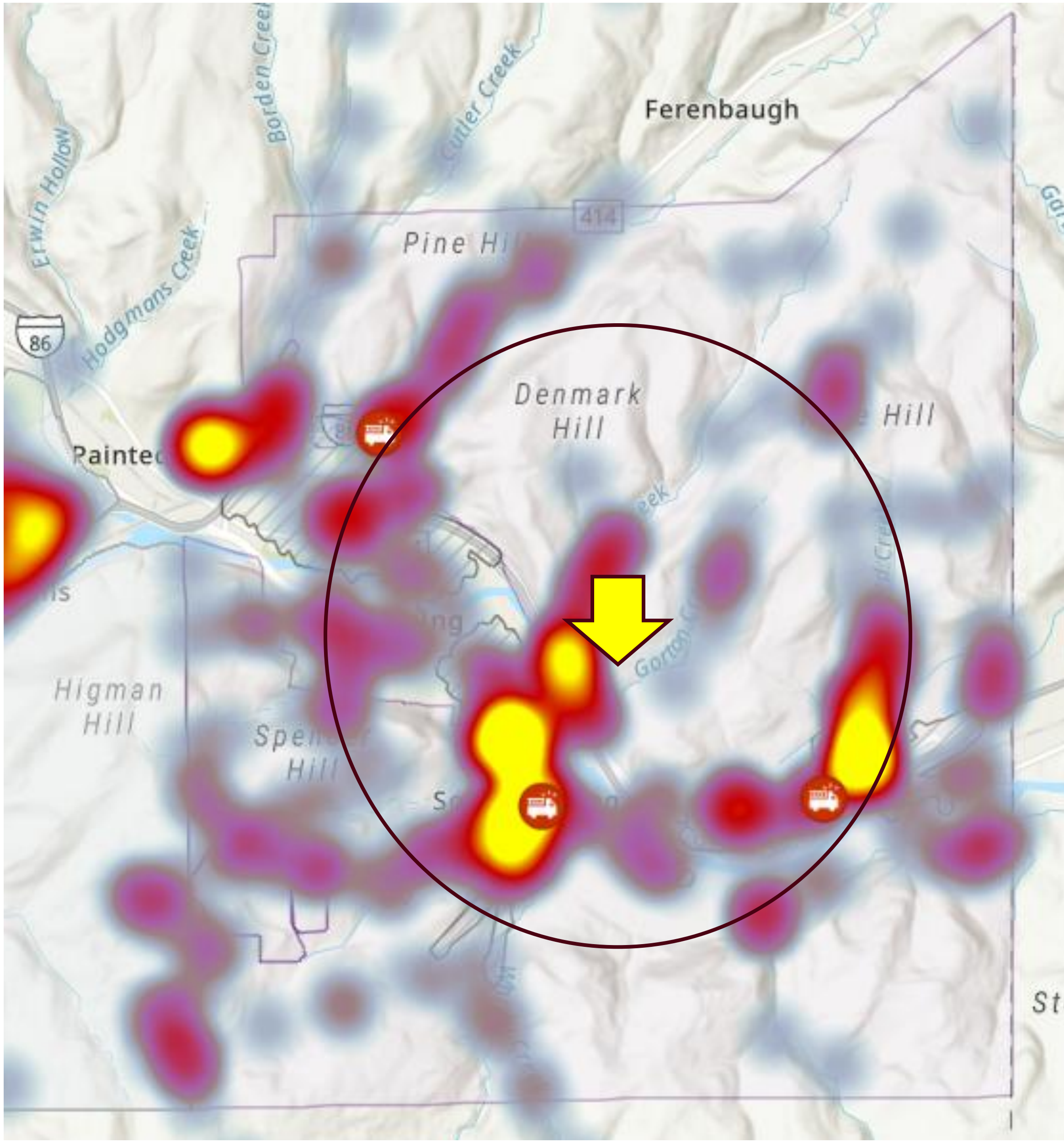
- Under NYS law, can't merge different LOSAP programs
- So, in a dept./district merger, 2 options:
  - Close one plan, merge everyone into remaining plan
  - Close both plans, start a new plan
- If CJFD LOSAP terminated:
  - All members receive single lump-sum payout, taxable in year received.
- If FV/GM LOSAP terminated:
  - Group 1: Members already at entitlement age & receiving payments would continue to receive lifetime benefit as before, no change.
  - Group 2: Members not yet entitled/receiving benefits would get a single lump-sum payout, taxable in year received.

Tax Levy Comparisons



Stations

- FV/GM Station is well maintained and has no immediate needs, but would need renovation to accommodate 24/7 staffing
- CJFD should plan for a new single station centrally located in its response area.
  - Immediate Actions: Lease North Station to AMR for 5 years and lease space from South Corning for 3 to 5 years.
  - Identify potential locations for a new consolidated station
  - Plan for engine, tanker, rescue/utility and reserve apparatus at this station
  - Plan for space for administration, training and full-time staffing
  - Sufficient storage and training spaces need to be incorporated



Location Considerations

District Size

Volunteer Staff

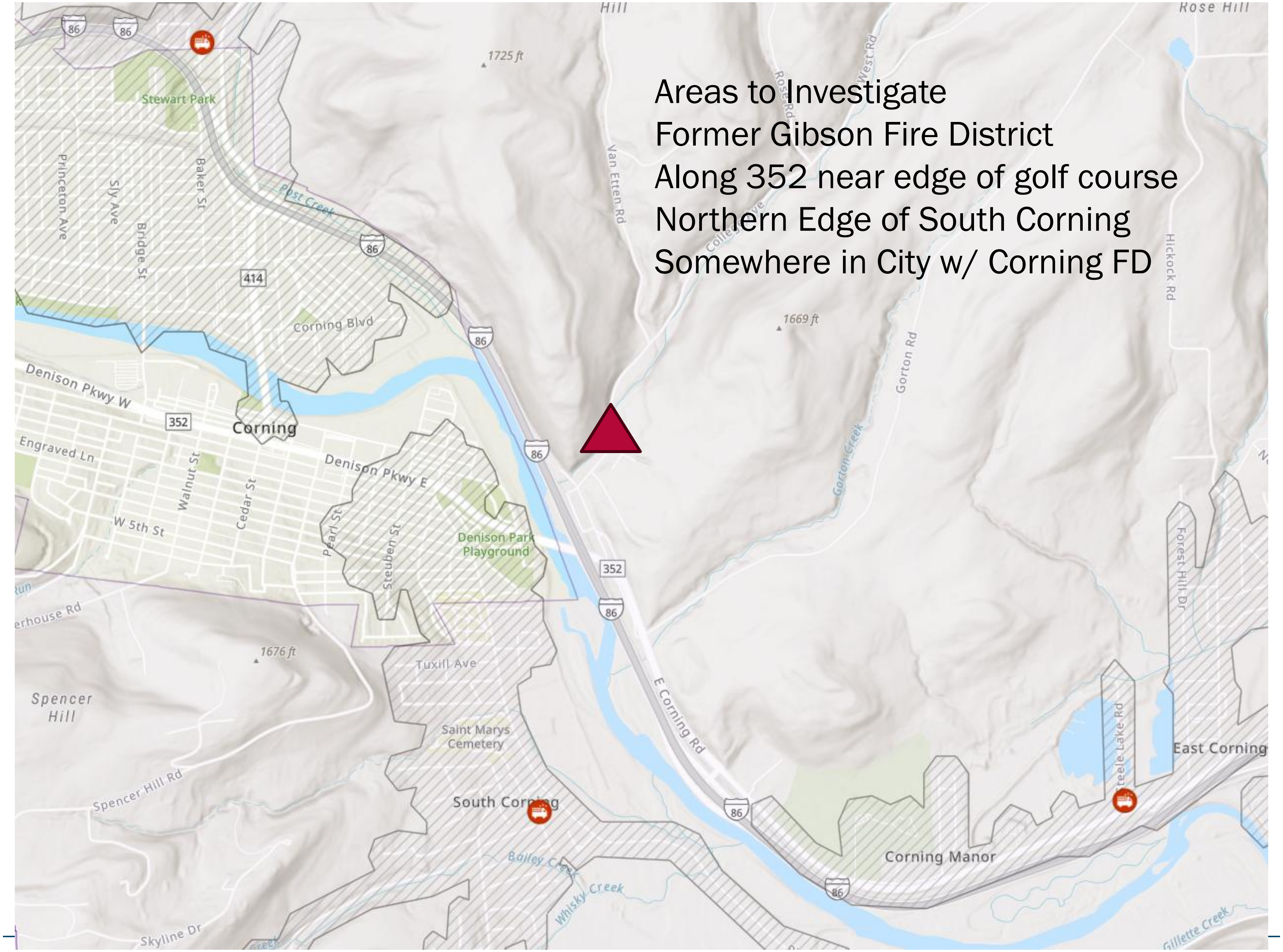
Road Network

Flood Plain

Other Hazards

Ability to Acquire Land

Neighbors and Zoning


Areas to Investigate
Former Gibson Fire District
Along 352 near edge of golf course
Northern Edge of South Corning
Somewhere in City w/ Corning FD
Stewart Park
Princeton Ave
Sly Ave
Baker St
Bridge St
Post Creek
Corning Blvd
Denison Pkwy W
Corning
Engraved Ln
Walnut St
Cedar St
Denison Pkwy E
W 5th St
Pearl St
Steuben St
Denison Park Playground
Van Etten Rd
Gorton Rd
Hickock Rd
Forest Hill Dr
Tuxill Ave
Spencer Hill
Saint Marys Cemetery
South Corning
Spencer Hill Rd
Skyline Dr
E Corning Rd
Corning Manor
East Corning
Steele Lake Rd
Whisky Creek
Bailey Creek
Gillette Creek
Rose Hill
1725 ft
1669 ft
1676 ft

Apparatus

- Current Fleet Size is slightly larger than needed if combined
  - Could reduce by one engine and one tanker
  - Would still maintain adequate fire flow and first alarm water supply for rural areas
- Combining ladder and rescue for FV/GM is good practice to reduce costs
- CJFD fleet reduction is appropriate
- Joint boat purchase is good solution to aging current unit
- Merged Fleet Size
  - 3 or 4 frontline engines plus 1 reserve
  - 1 aerial
  - 2 tankers
  - Squad/utility vehicle for each station

Staffing

- Two goals
  - Relieve burden on volunteer administrative and operational staff
  - Ensure a prompt and robust response especially for high-risk events
- Need for administrative support from a paid person is apparent and a shared position would be helpful
- A joint district should consider a 24/7 staffing model that combines duty shifts for volunteers with paid staff to respond to “single company” events
- If decision is made to hire, consider a SAFER grant to soften impact
- Consider contract staffing with City of Corning

Other Opportunities

- Continue to segment the workload based on geography
  - 12 minutes between Gang Mills and East Corning through 2 other fire department territories
  - CJFD has more EMS resources and responds more often to those events
  - Without paid staff, unlikely that GMFD would expand EMS responses, but it could be a selling point
- Regional solution for fire service would be the "home run" solution
  - Regional Fire Authority has never been established in NY, but is a legal option
  - Contracted services between City and District(s) are a potential short-term solution
  - Steuben County could also be "contract staffing" solution

Prioritization

- Immediate
  - Consider risks vs. benefits of consolidation of districts
    - More benefits, but the risks could detract from support
    - Still potential for merger in 2026?
  - Hire a shared district administrator to handle administrative tasks
  - Develop a review process for high impact events to assess staffing needs
  - Engage AMR in long-term (5 year) lease and discuss sale of property
  - Lease South Corning for 3 to 5 years
  - Begin planning for new CJFD station
- 3-year horizon
  - Consider career staff for gaps such as EMS in GMFD and ensuring minimum responses
  - Select site and begin build on new CJFD central station
  - Champion regional fire service solution
  - Continue responsible fleet-replacement scheduling

Costs and Tax Impact

Table is the forecasted tax bill for a home with a market value of $200,000. The tax rate can be estimated by dividing by $200.

Scenario	Corning Joint District	Forest View District
2026 Tax Bill	$174.00	$190.00
2027 No Change to Levy - Separate	$172.00	$189.00
2027 2% Levy Increase – Separate	$175.00	$193.00
2027 Combined No Change to Levy – Debt Shared	$180.00	$180.00
2027 Combined No Change to Levy – Debt Split	$200.00	$168.00
2027 Combined 2% Levy Increase – Debt Shared	$184.00	$184.00
2027 Combined 2% Levy Increase – Debt Split	$203.00	$172.00
2027 Combined 10% Levy Increase – Debt Shared	$198.00	$198.00
2027 Combined 10% Levy Increase – Debt Split	$217.00	$185.00

Potential Impact of Recommendations

The table below provides a rough illustration of the impact on the tax levy of those recommendations, looking at FV/GM property and a property in the combined district with all debt shared. The percentage increases would be slightly higher to CJFD.

Change Needed in a Combined Tax Levy	Estimated Cost	Approximate Levy Increase to Forest View	Cost to a $200k property	Approximate Levy Increase Combined District	Cost to a $200k property
Administrator	$ 140,000	24%	$233.91 ($44 increase)	12%	$202.19 ($12 increase)
100 hours of part-time firefighters	$156,000	27%	$239.00 ($49 increase)	13%	$204.68 ($15 increase)
2 full-time firefighter positions	$ 910,000	157%	$482.77 ($292 increase)	78%	$325.54 ($135 increase)

Next Steps

- Each commission consider the immediate priorities
  - A merger for 2026 would require almost immediate action
  - If merger is determined worthy of discussion for 2027, form a joint merger committee and gather support from constituents
  - Consider inviting other departments to the discussion
- Operations and planning need to continue
- Regional solutions should be part of further discussion

Questions