



Dear Families and Community Members:

Projections show that we will have a budget deficit in the near future. Funding has not kept up with increasing costs to provide services like public safety, road maintenance, garbage pickup, and snow plowing. Making matters worse, the number of calls for service from our Fire and Rescue Department has tripled since 2017.

Balancing our budget will require tough decisions in the years ahead. Our top priority is keeping residents safe. **Therefore, this survey focuses on how best to provide high-quality fire, EMS, and police services. Paying for this staffing may require the Village to explore a referendum.**

To keep all feedback confidential, survey responses are collected by Community Perceptions, an independent survey research firm.

TWO WAYS TO TAKE THIS SURVEY

Online: (Saves postage expense)

Go to:

www.Survey2000.com

Enter your code:



Paper: Return to the Village office or mail to Community Perceptions, PO Box 607, Slinger, WI 53086.

The survey code can be used only once. To obtain additional surveys for other adults in your household, please call the Somers Office at 262-859-2822.

Para realizar la encuesta en español, vaya a www.Survey2000.com, ingrese el código de arriba, luego haga clic en el enlace que se encuentra en la esquina superior derecha.

Survey deadline: November 24

If you need additional support to complete this survey, please contact the Village Office. Survey results will be reported at a board meeting and available on our website.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

Sincerely,

Ben Andersen

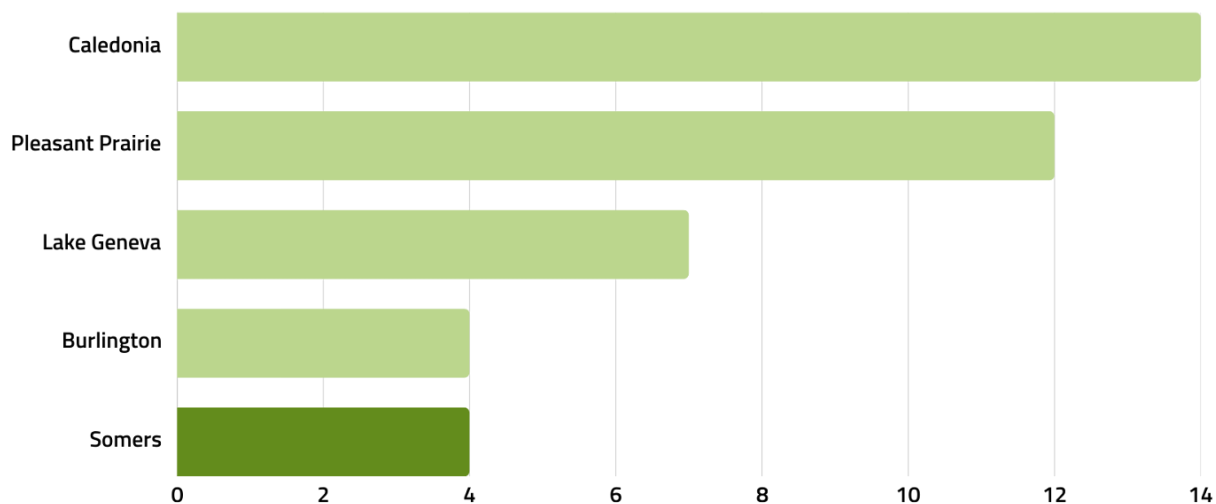
Fire Chief/

Emergency Manager

Fire and Rescue Staffing Challenges

The Somers Fire & Rescue Department has 13 full-time firefighter/paramedics and two chief officers operating out of two stations. There are two full-time staff assigned to each station on each shift. This level of staffing puts Somers at the bottom compared to communities in our region.

Daily Full-Time Staff in Comparable Communities' Fire Departments



The Department relies on approximately 45 part-time or on-call responders. However, many of these individuals do not have advanced medical certifications, which limits the level of care they can provide during an emergency response.

Unfortunately, since 2016, 216 of our part-time and on-call responders have left the department, a reflection of broader trends across the state and country.

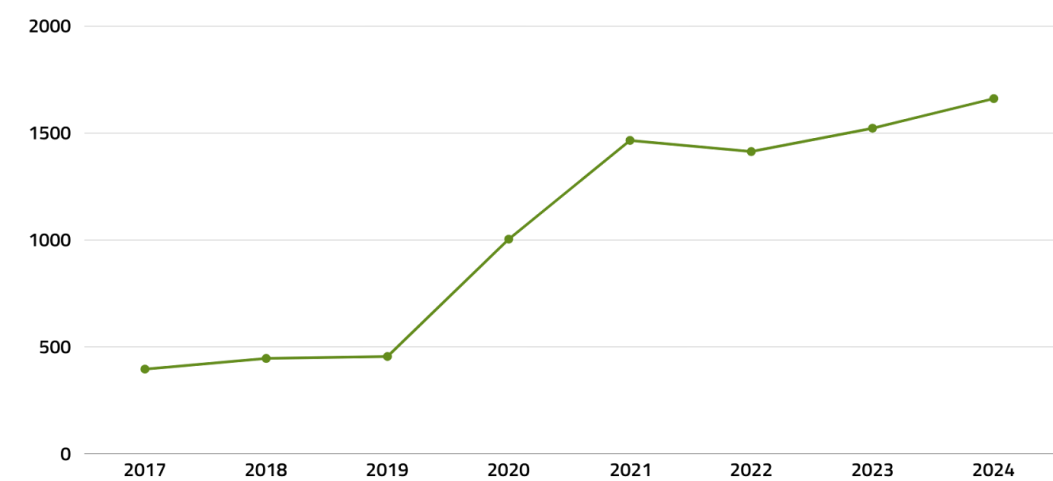
The Department invests in training part-time staff to become fully certified firefighter/paramedics. However, these staff often leave to find full-time positions elsewhere.

Comments/questions/suggestions:

Increasing Fire and Rescue Calls

As shown in the chart below, Somers has seen a significant increase in calls for service. Call volume is expected to increase as more housing developments are built in the Village. In 2024, more than 67% of our calls required medical services delivered by certified personnel.

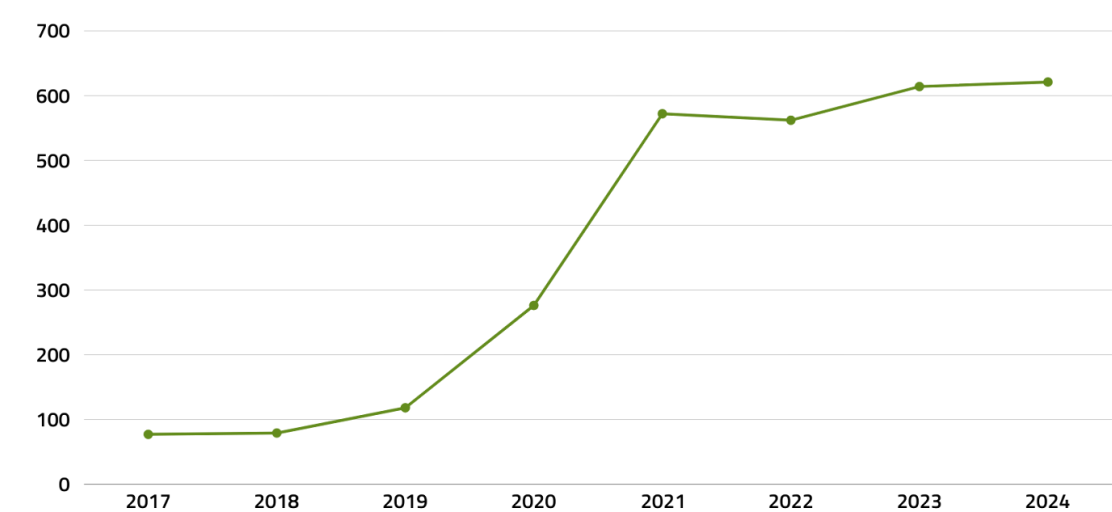
Annual Somers Fire & Rescue Calls for Service



The Department is increasingly called upon to respond to multiple emergencies at once, further stretching our limited staffing.

In some cases, this means the Department is unable to respond to a call for service, forcing us to rely on neighboring departments. This delays response times when every second counts. If we don't increase the number of staff, these gaps in service will become more common.

Increasing Simultaneous Calls for Somers Fire & Rescue



Comments/questions/suggestions:

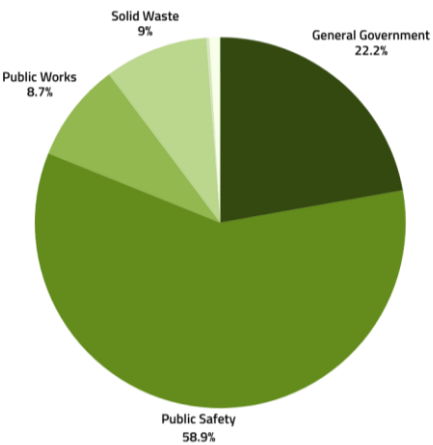
Financial Challenges

The Village has explored multiple options to pay for additional Fire and Rescue staff:

1. Making cuts in other areas

Public safety spending already makes up nearly 60% of our budget. Even if we cut all of the following, it would not be enough to pay for the additional positions needed:

- \$230,000 for liability insurance
- \$125,000 for road maintenance and other public works expenses
- \$24,000 for street lights to be on at night
- \$11,000 for recreation
- \$10,000 for animal control



2. Searching for outside funding

We are happy to report that we have been awarded and accepted a federal Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant. However, the funding only partially pays for the additional positions and expires after three years. Therefore, the Village needs a sustainable, long-term solution.

3. Expanding the budget

State law limits how much money we are allowed to raise through property taxes. We also cannot increase fees enough to cover our costs. The most realistic long-term solution is to consider a voter-approved operational referendum.

Somers is not alone. Over the last 10 years, more than 75 Wisconsin municipalities have pursued an operational referendum, including the City of Kenosha, Village of Pleasant Prairie, City of Racine, and the Village of Caledonia.

Would you support the Village pursuing a referendum to pay for additional full-time Fire and Rescue staff?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
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Comments/questions/suggestions:

Funding Support

What would the referendum pay for?

If the community supports us pursuing a referendum, we have developed a plan that would add eight additional full-time firefighter/paramedics. A third-party study shows this would allow the Department to send out all three ambulances at once, when necessary, with paramedic-level service on all shifts.

How much would it cost?

An additional eight full-time firefighter/paramedics would cost \$1.3 million each year. This would increase taxes by \$110 for every \$100,000 of property value beginning next year.

Please note: The SAFER grant will cover 75% of these costs for the next two years, 35% in year three, and then expires. We would use the funding from a referendum to cover the remaining costs and pay for other public safety needs during these years.

Would you support a \$1.3 million referendum to pay for the additional full-time Fire and Rescue staff?	<input type="checkbox"/> Definitely yes <input type="checkbox"/> Probably yes <input type="checkbox"/> Undecided <input type="checkbox"/> Probably no <input type="checkbox"/> Definitely no
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How should the Village use the additional public safety funding in years 1 through 3?

(Select all that apply.)

- ☐ Apparatus replacement (fire trucks, ambulances, etc.)
- ☐ Equipment replacement/upgrades (radios, cardiac monitors, etc.)
- ☐ Pay for part of new fire station
- ☐ Other:

If you are undecided or would not support the referendum, what are the main reasons?

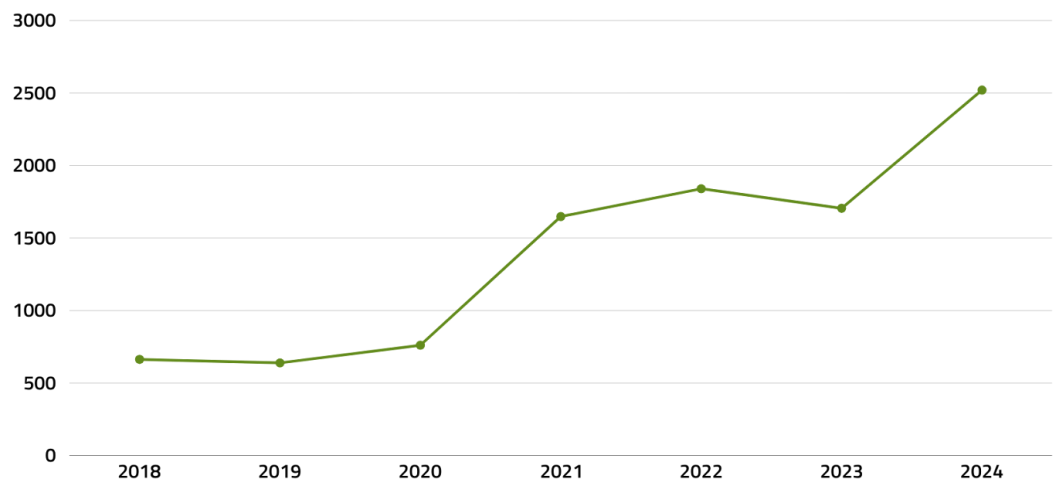
Is there any other information you would need before making a decision?

Additional Funding for Law Enforcement

Village officials have also heard concerns from residents about an increase in speeding and other traffic issues, especially as some roads have expanded to four lanes.

Data from the Kenosha County Sheriff’s Office shows that citations in Somers have been increasing, with more than four times as many given out in 2024 compared to 2018. Among the 2,520 citations given out last year, 420 were for speeding. **The Sheriff’s Office had already issued 428 speeding citations as of July 2025.**

Annual Citations in Somers from the Kenosha County Sheriff’s Office



The Village could contract with the Sheriff’s Office to pay for additional police staff dedicated to Somers to help improve proactive policing and address traffic concerns. **This would cost \$230,000 each year. This would increase taxes by an additional \$18 for every \$100,000 of property value.**

<p>Would you support <u>expanding</u> the referendum by \$230,000 to pay for additional police dedicated to Somers?</p>	<div><input type="checkbox"/> Definitely yes</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Probably yes</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Undecided</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Probably no</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Definitely no</div>
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Comments/questions/suggestions:

Respondent Information

What is your age? ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65+

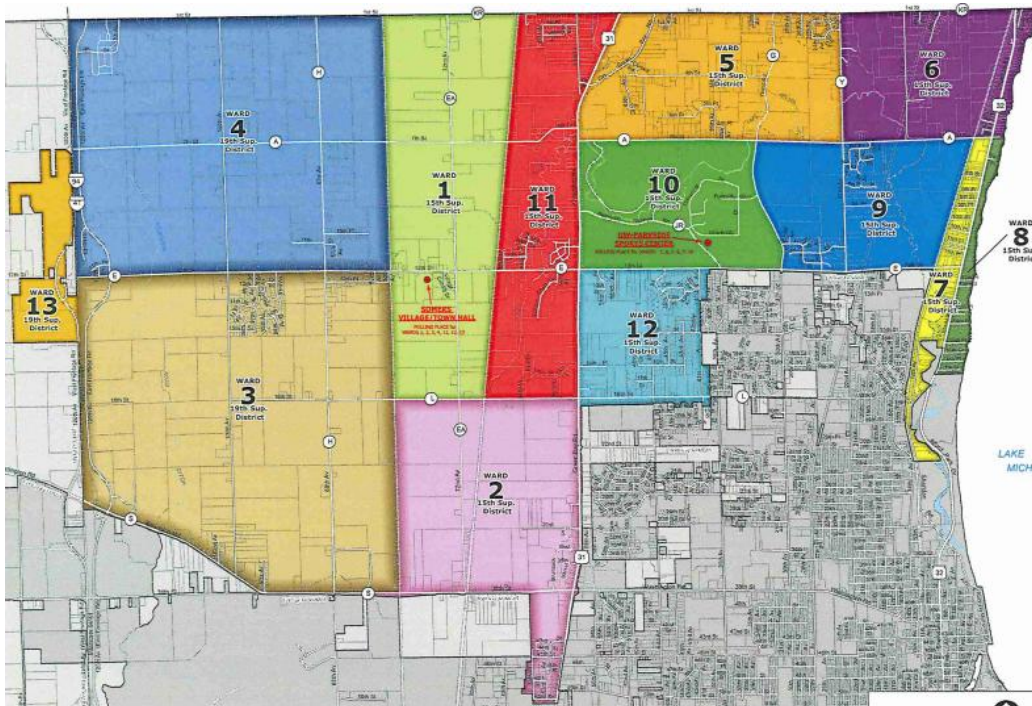
Is your primary residence in the Village of Somers? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

In which municipality do you live?

☐ Village of Somers ☐ Town of Somers ☐ Not sure

If you live in the Village, which ward do you live in? (See map below.)

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐ 12 ☐ 13



How would you like to receive information from us? (Select all that apply.)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Website | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletters (mailed) | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletters (online) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Emails | <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook/social media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kenosha News | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |

On a scale of 0 – 10, how likely would you be to recommend Somers to a friend or family member?

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10
Extremely Unlikely Neutral Extremely Likely

If you'd like to explain why you gave us this rating, please use the space below:

Thank you for your participation! We sincerely value your time and input.

Village/Town of Somers
7511 12th Street
Kenosha, WI 53144

**IMPORTANT PUBLIC
SAFETY SURVEY
ENCLOSED**

Questions?

Contact the Somers Office at
262-859-2822.



***Please complete this
survey by November 24.***



*This publication was produced for the residents of the **Village & Town of Somers**. Due to the overlap of postal routes, residents from neighboring school districts may receive this publication. Given the limitations of bulk mailing, this overlap was difficult to eliminate without significant cost. Thank you for your understanding.*