

# PEDERNALES FIRE (ESD 8)

MOVING FORWARD  
TO SERVE YOU BETTER


Date: 10/29/2025



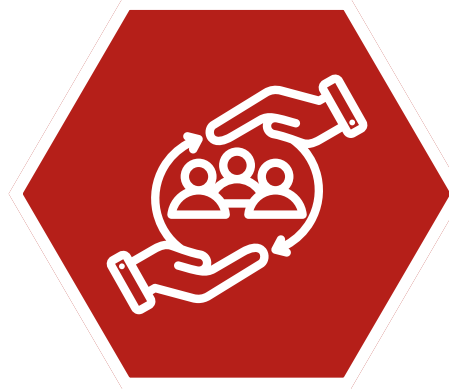




# Agenda

- Overview: Fire Chief Tony Haden
  - Board Direction:  
Debra Opdahl, Board President
  - Employee Engagement:  
Lieutenant Jared Mikeska, President/Local 4820
  - Fire Chief's Summary: Fire Chief Tony Haden
  - Questions
- 

# Overview



## Timeline

- March 2025: ESD 8 Board voted unanimously to direct Fire Chief to pursue fact-finding regarding options for shared services, including a possible merger with Lake Travis Fire Rescue (ESD 6). That feasibility study is ongoing.
- 2017 - 2018 Discussions:
  - Directed by both ESD Boards
    - ESD8 President Gail Zahara/FC Gerald Deming
- 2019-2020 Discussions: ESD8 President Debra Opdahl/FC Wenzel



## Possible Advantages

- New/enhanced programs (e.g., emergency preparedness for natural disasters, wildfire mitigation, increased community outreach/public education, etc.).
- Operational Efficiency/Service Delivery:
  - Enhanced administrative support/services
- Larger workforce and additional career opportunities
- Long-term stability



## Key Stakeholders

- **ESD8 Community Members**
- **Firefighters and their families**
- ESD8 Commissioners
- ESD6 Commissioners
- Pedernales FD Executives
- LTFR Executives
- Local 4820
- Local 4117

# Frequently Asked Questions

**Is the merger a done deal?**

**I keep hearing rumors that the Fire Chief  
has already made the decision.**

**Don't taxpayers have to vote?**





# Frequently Asked Questions



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No, this is not a done deal; no decisions have been made. This phase is only an exploration into what options may exist. We regularly look at the best ways to serve our community and these discussions with ESD 6 are part of that; we would not be serving you well if we did not investigate opportunities that may benefit you.

Additionally, the Fire Chief does not have the authority to make this decision. There are several options we are currently investigating as part of the feasibility study. Both boards would have to approve a full merger; if that action were to create a new tax district, then citizens would vote.

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# Frequently Asked Questions



**If this merger were to happen,  
what does it mean for me and to our firefighters?**

**Will my taxes increase?**



# Frequently Asked Questions

Our firefighters' pensions, pay, and tenure are some of the key areas where we are asking questions. We will only pursue these discussions if they — and you — are better served, and if we can ensure our identity, history, and partnerships within the community are not lost. Again, NO decisions have been made. We are also looking at what programs we may be able to offer or enhance if this merger moves forward (e.g., emergency preparedness for natural disasters, wildfire mitigation, increased community outreach/public education, etc.).

The tax question is one we are extremely sensitive to and part of our investigative process; it doesn't necessarily mean your taxes would increase. Generally speaking, as we balance our budget every year, a potential increase in taxes can occur within the rules and regulations that govern the ESD.




# Frequently Asked Questions

**I heard that everyone in Briarcliff is against this  
and that Chief Haden told all of the firefighters  
that the Auxiliary supports this.**

**What's the truth?**




# Frequently Asked Questions



To date, no formal survey of Briarcliff residents has been conducted to gauge public opinion on this matter — by PFD or, to our knowledge, by anyone else. Additionally, neither PFD leadership nor the Board has stated or implied support for a merger, and no one within PFD has represented that the Auxiliary supports such an effort. Any claims to the contrary are inaccurate and misleading.

It is both appropriate and expected that we continually explore ways to improve service to our citizens. We're unsure as to how the rumors surrounding this discussion got started, but they are simply not true.







# In Summary...

Misinformation — even when shared unintentionally — can create confusion and make it harder for all parties to work together productively. Our goal is to maintain open, respectful communication and to foster a spirit of collaboration with our community. We truly value hearing from everyone who wants to engage and operate in good faith.

To ensure information is clear and consistent, please remember: unless details come directly from us — through a public forum like this, an ESD8 Board Meeting, or our Hot Topics sheet — they should not be considered official or factual.

If you ever have questions, please reach out; we're always glad to share accurate, confirmed information. And if we don't yet have an answer, we'll be honest about that and let you know when to expect one.



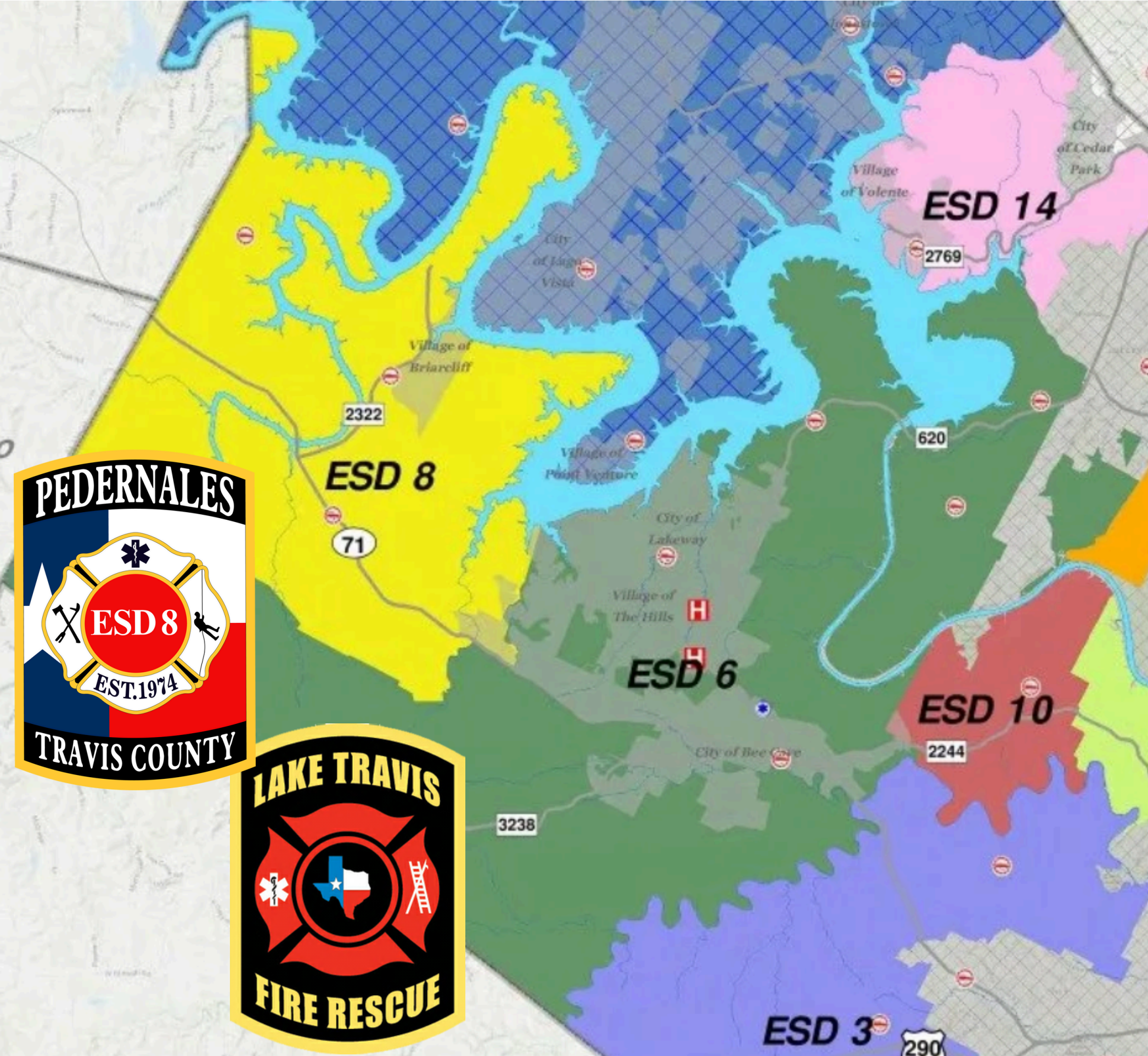


# Ongoing Communication

- Meetings between ESD8 and ESD6 staff
- Meetings with department personnel
- ESD8 board meetings
- Monthly updates:
  - Employee meetings
  - ESD8 board meetings
    - Fire Chief update
    - Quarterly employee update

## ***Focused priorities in all communications:***

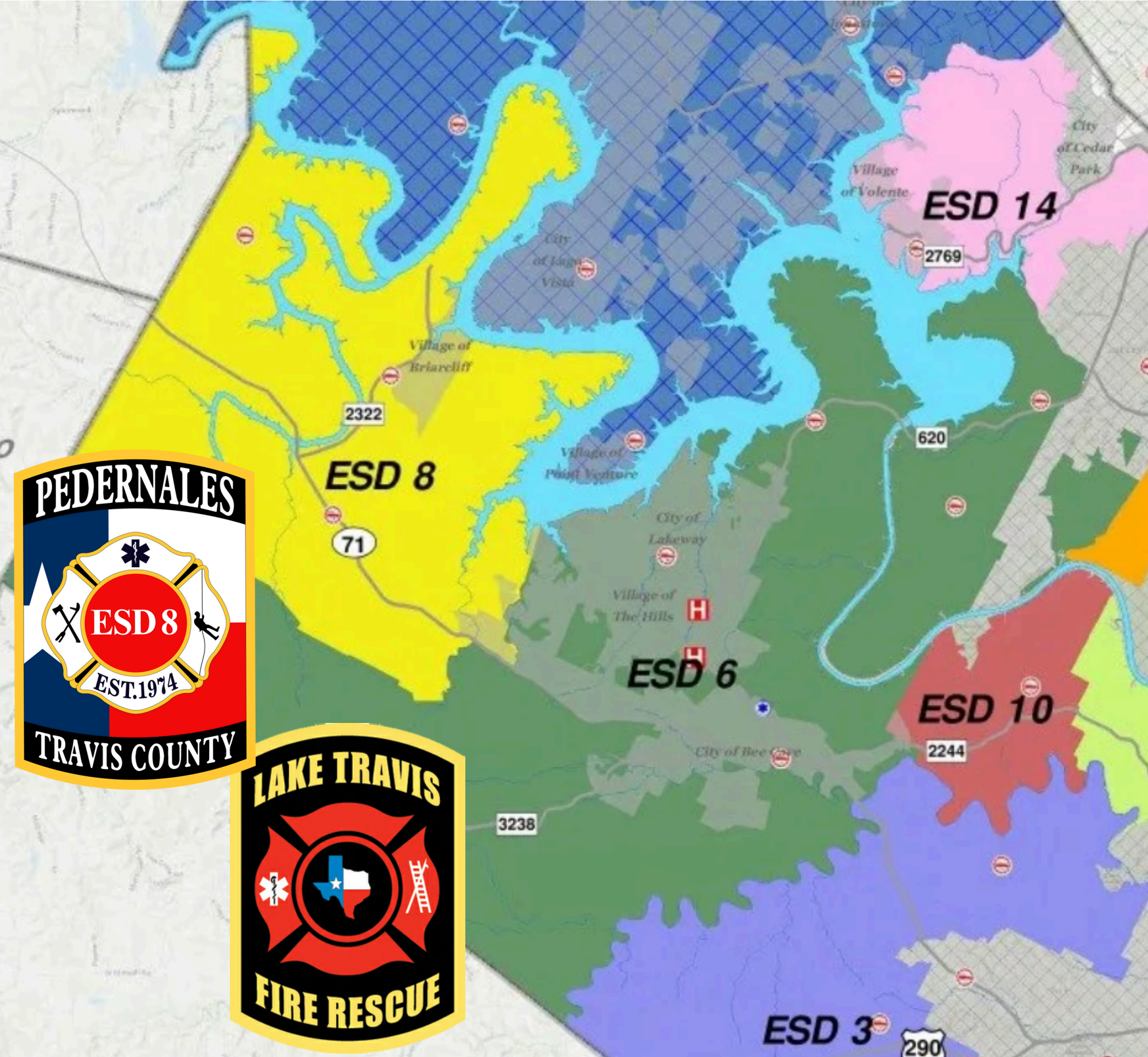
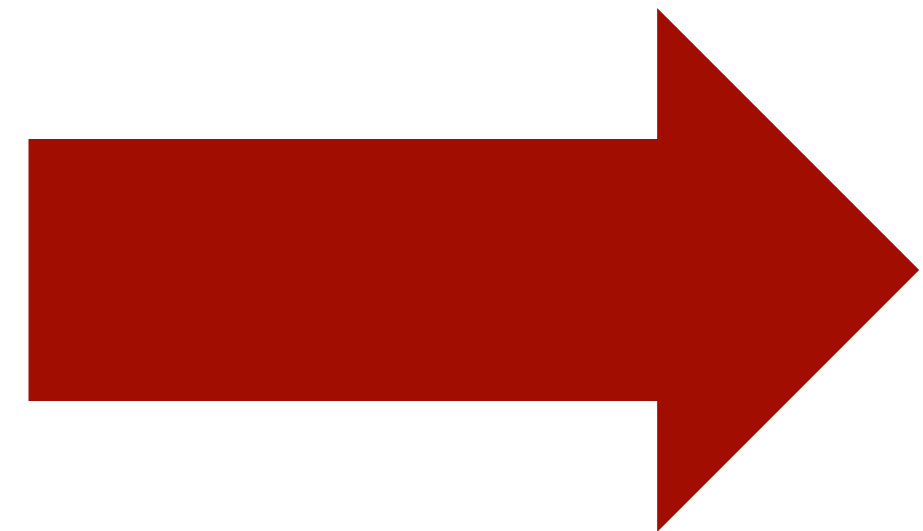
- ESD8 Community/ESD8 Firefighters
- Financial Health
- Pension Options
- Labor





## What's Next

- Continued meetings with ESD6 executives and labor representatives
  - Ongoing fact-finding to determine feasibility
- Receive guidance from ESD8 legal counsel
- Findings report to ESD Commissioners
  - Decision point





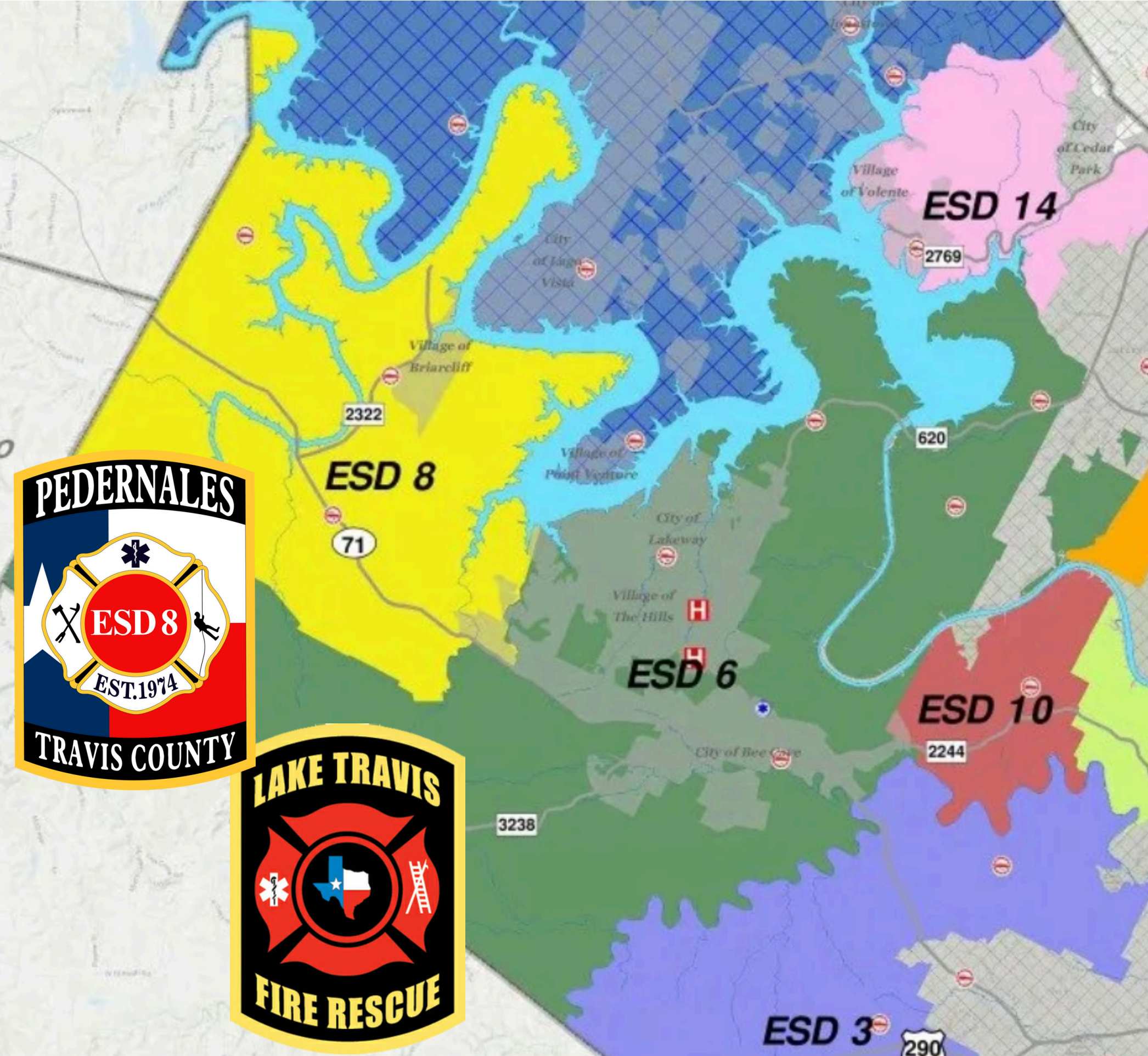
## Decision Point

***If the decision is to move forward with additional shared services, then:***

- Work with ESD6 to determine cost for required services.
- Work with ESD6 to determine which ESD8 services are needed in ESD6.

***If the decision is to move forward with a full merger, then:***

- Vote from ESD6 and ESD8 Boards
  - If in favor, then:
    - Vote from ESD6 and ESD8 citizens.
    - If approved, then implementation (timing TBD).





# Board Direction



**Debra Opdahl**  
**ESD8 Board President**

# Employee Engagement



**Lieutenant Jared Mikeska**  
**President, Local 4820**

# Fire Chief's Summary



**Fire Chief Tony Haden**



# I HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS...

**We would love to hear from you! Feel free to reach out:**

- Call us: (512) 264-1476
- Stop by: Our Headquarters are located at 22404 State Hwy 71, Spicewood, TX
- Drop us a letter: Station 805, 22404 State Hwy 71, Spicewood, TX 78669
- Send us an email: [info@pedernalesfd.org](mailto:info@pedernalesfd.org)
- Attend one of the regularly scheduled board meetings. You can find that information — as well as minutes from past meetings — on our website:

**<http://www.tcesd8.org>**





# THANK YOU!

