Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department

STRATEGIC PLAN
2017-2022

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Introduction

The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department (FRD) provides advanced life support emergency medical care, fire suppression services, basic and technical rescues, hazardous materials mitigation, domestic preparedness, fire/hazmat investigation, community risk reduction, fire and life safety education, and community outreach services to Fairfax County residents, businesses, and visitors.

As an organization that strives to maintain the highest level of professionalism and efficiency, the FRD contracted with the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) to facilitate a method to document the organization's path into the future via a "Community-Driven Strategic Plan." The following strategic plan was written in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Commission on Fire Accreditation (CFAI) *Fire & Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual* 9th *Ed.* It is intended to guide the organization within established parameters set forth by the authority having jurisdiction.

The CPSE utilized the community-driven strategic planning process to go beyond just the development of a document. It challenged the organization's members to critically examine paradigms, values, philosophies, and beliefs, and challenged individuals to work in the best interest of the "team." This provided the organization with an opportunity to participate in the development of its long-term direction and focus. Additionally, external and internal stakeholder groups demonstrated commitment to this important venture.

FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT
# STRATEGIC PLAN
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Organizational Background

Fairfax County was formed in 1742 from the northern part of Prince William County. The oldest settlements in Fairfax County were along the Potomac River including George Washington's home Mount Vernon. Comprising a total of 405 square miles (395 square miles of land and 10 square miles of water), Fairfax County is bounded by the Potomac River on the north and southeast with Washington, D.C. situated across the river to the northeast.

Today, Fairfax County is a diverse urban county and the most populous jurisdiction in both Virginia and the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. The county's population at over one million residents exceeds that of eight states and the District of Columbia. The county is home to numerous Fortune 500 companies, the headquarters of Central Intelligence Agency, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, and National Reconnaissance Office, as well as the National Counterterrorism Center and Office of the Director of National Intelligence.
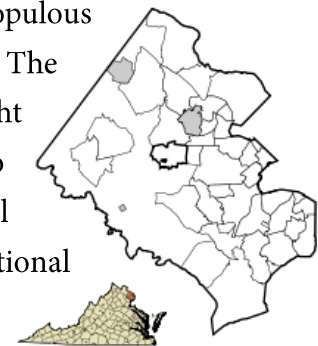
The FRD is a combination career and volunteer all-hazards department providing a full complement of emergency medical services, fire suppression, technical rescue, swift water rescue, hazardous materials response, arson investigation, fire and life safety education. Comprised of more than 1,400 uniformed men and women, 330 operational volunteers, and more than 175 full-time civilians, the FRD is the largest fire department in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The organization operates from 38 fire and rescue stations strategically positioned throughout the county to meet the emergency service needs of the residents, businesses and visitors in Fairfax County.

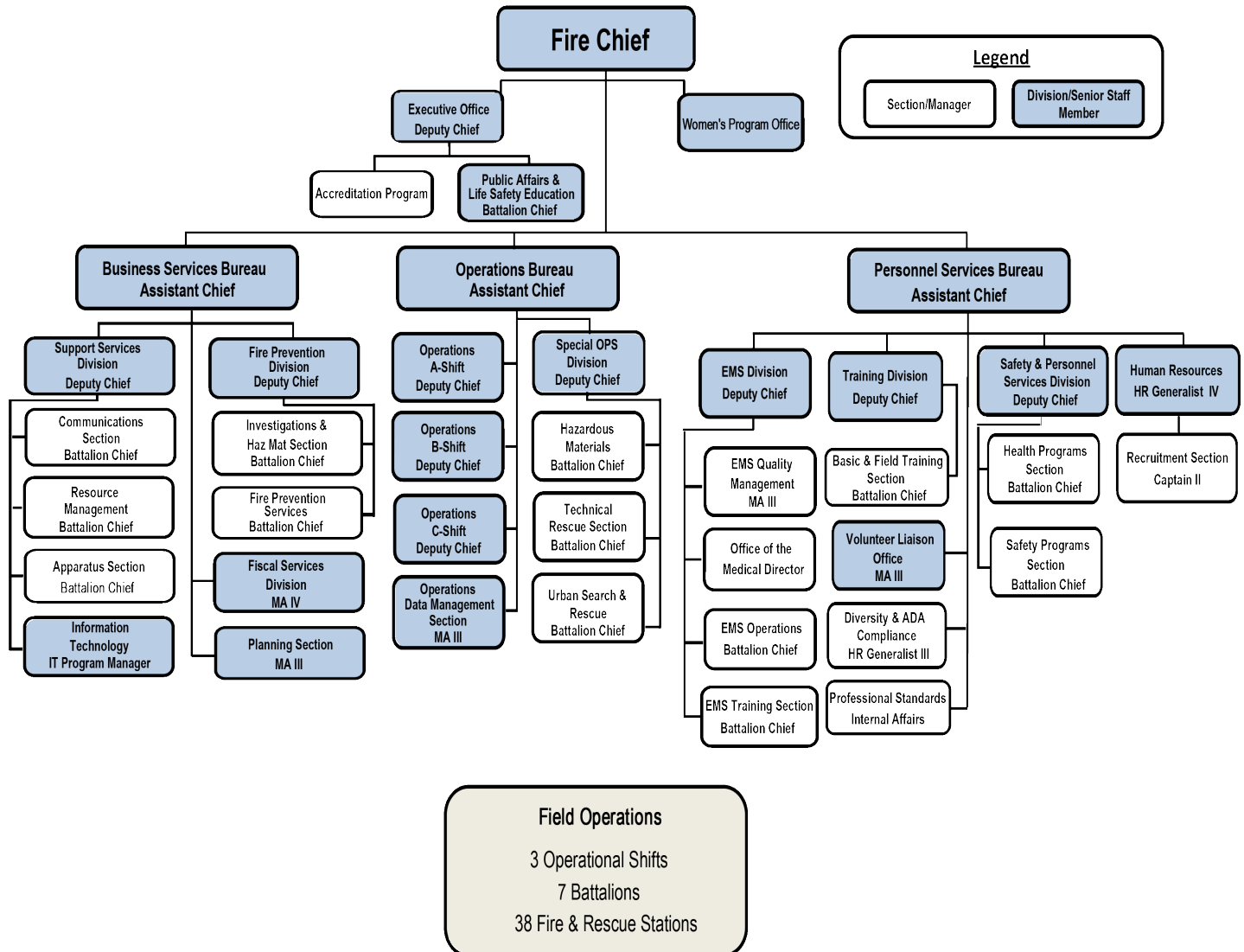The Urban Search and Rescue Team (known as USA-1/Virginia Task Force 1) is a premier disaster response and humanitarian resource maintained by the FRD through partnerships with the United States Agency for International Development, and the Department of Homeland Security through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). USA-1/VA-TF1 deploys nationally and internationally to natural and manmade disasters.

FAIRFAX COUNTY
FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT

2017-2022
STRATEGIC PLAN

FIRE & RESCUE DEPARTMENT
1742
FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA

Organizational Structure

Fire and Rescue Department Functional Organization Chart*

Fire Chief

Executive Office
Deputy Chief

Women's Program Office

Legend

Section/Manager

Division/Senior Staff Member

Accreditation Program

Public Affairs & Life Safety Education Battalion Chief

Business Services Bureau Assistant Chief

Operations Bureau Assistant Chief

Personnel Services Bureau Assistant Chief

Support Services Division Deputy Chief

Fire Prevention Division Deputy Chief

Operations A-Shift Deputy Chief

Special OPS Division Deputy Chief

EMS Division Deputy Chief

Training Division Deputy Chief

Safety & Personnel Services Division Deputy Chief

Human Resources HR Generalist IV

Communications Section Battalion Chief

Investigations & Haz Mat Section Battalion Chief

Operations B-Shift Deputy Chief

Hazardous Materials Battalion Chief

EMS Quality Management MA III

Basic & Field Training Section Battalion Chief

Health Programs Section Battalion Chief

Recruitment Section Captain II

Resource Management Battalion Chief

Fire Prevention Services Battalion Chief

Operations C-Shift Deputy Chief

Technical Rescue Section Battalion Chief

Office of the Medical Director

Volunteer Liaison Office MA III

Safety Programs Section Battalion Chief

Apparatus Section Battalion Chief

Fiscal Services Division MA IV

Operations Data Management Section MA III

Urban Search & Rescue Battalion Chief

EMS Operations Battalion Chief

Diversity & ADA Compliance HR Generalist III

Information Technology IT Program Manager

Planning Section MA III

EMS Training Section Battalion Chief

Professional Standards Internal Affairs

Field Operations

3 Operational Shifts

7 Battalions

38 Fire & Rescue Stations

(07/18/2017)

*Organization chart under review with County Human Resources.

Community-Driven Strategic Planning

For many successful organizations, the voice of the community drives their operations and charts the course for their future. A "community-driven organization" is defined as one that *maintains a focus on the needs and expectations, both spoken and unspoken, of customers, both present and future, in the creation and/or improvement of the product or service provided.*[1] To ensure that the community remains the focus of an organization's direction, a community–driven strategic planning process was used to develop this strategic plan.

A strategic plan is a living management tool that provides short-term direction, builds a shared vision, documents goals and objectives, and optimizes use of resources. Strategic planning can be defined as

> "*a continuous and systematic process where the guiding members of an organization make decisions about its future, develop the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future, and determine how success is to be measured.*[2]"

Effective strategic planning benefits from a consistent and cohesively structured process employed across all levels of the organization. Planning is a continuous process, one with no clear beginning and no clear end. While plans can be developed on a regular basis, it is the process of planning that is important and not the publication of the plan itself. Most importantly, strategic planning can be an opportunity to unify the management, employees, and stakeholders through a common understanding of where the organization is going, how everyone involved can work towards a common purpose, and how progress will measure success.

> **"What we have to do today is to be ready for an uncertain tomorrow."**
>
> Peter F. Drucker,
> Professor of Social Science and Management

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[1] Federal Benchmarking Consortium. (1997, February). *Serving the American Public: Best Practices in Customer-Driven Strategic Planning*
[2] Ibid

The Community–Driven Strategic Planning Process Outline

1. Define the programs provided to the community.

2. Establish the community's service program priorities and expectations of the organization.

3. Identify any concerns the community may have about the organization, along with aspects of the organization that the community views positively.

4. Revisit the Mission Statement, giving careful attention to the services and programs currently provided, and which logically can be provided in the future.

5. Revisit the Values of the organization's membership.

6. Identify the internal Strengths and Weaknesses of the organization.

7. Identify areas of Opportunity or potential Threats to the organization.

8. Identify the organization's critical issues and service gaps.

9. Determine strategic initiatives for organizational improvement.

10. Establish a realistic goal and objectives for each initiative.

11. Identify implementation tasks for the accomplishment of each objective.

12. Determine the Vision of the future.

13. Develop organizational and community commitment to accomplishing the plan.

Process and Acknowledgements

The Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) acknowledges and thanks the community's and the agency's external and internal stakeholders for their participation and input into this Community–Driven Strategic Planning Process. The CPSE also recognizes Fire Chief Richard Bowers, Jr. and his senior leadership team for their vision and commitment to this process.

Development of this strategic plan took place in June 2017, beginning with a meeting hosted by representatives from the CPSE for members of the community. Typical participants for the external stakeholder meeting included representatives from the community, neighborhood organizations, local industry and business owners, healthcare and non-profit organizations, school districts, and the Chamber of Commerce. Input received from the meeting revolved around community expectations and concerns, including comments about the organization.

Community Group Findings

A key element of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department's organizational philosophy is having a high level of commitment to the community, as well as recognizing the importance of community satisfaction. Thus, the agency invited community representatives to provide feedback on services provided.

Community Priorities

To best dedicate time, energy, and resources to services most desired by its community, the department needs to understand what the customers consider to be their priorities. With that, the external stakeholders were asked to prioritize the programs offered by the agency through a process of direct comparison. The results were as follows:

Programs	Ranking
Emergency Medical Services	1
Fire Suppression	2
Rescue – Basic and Technical	3
Hazardous Materials Mitigation	4
Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response	5
Fire/HazMat Investigation	6
Community Risk Reduction	7
Public Fire Safety Education	8
Community Outreach	9

See Appendix 1 *for a complete list of the community findings including expectations, areas of concern, positive feedback, and other thoughts and comments.*

Internal Stakeholder Group Findings

The internal stakeholder work sessions were conducted over the course of three days. These sessions served to discuss the organization's approach to community-driven strategic planning, with focus on the agency's Mission, Values, Core Programs and Support Services, as well as the organization's perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. The work sessions involved participation by the FRD senior leadership team, members of Employee Groups and the Volunteer Fire Commission, and representatives from all ranks, positions, and functions within the department.

Mission

The purpose of the mission is to answer the questions:

- Who are we?

- Why do we exist?

- What do we do?

- Why do we do it?

- For whom?

A workgroup met to revisit the existing mission and, after ensuring it answered the questions, the following mission statement was created, discussed, and accepted by the entire group:

> **The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department**
> **provides the highest quality services to protect**
> **the lives, property, and environment of our community.**

Values

Values embraced by all members of an organization are extremely important, as they recognize the features that make up the personality and culture of the organization. A workgroup met to revisit the existing values and proposed a revision that was discussed, enhanced further, and agreed upon by the entire group:

FRD Core Values

To build and maintain public trust, we hold ourselves accountable to these core values:

Integrity

We commit to honest, trustworthy, and ethical behavior.

Professional Excellence

We support continuous training, mentoring and professional development to ensure the best possible service for our community.

Health, Safety and Wellness

We commit to providing the best health, safety and wellness programs for our members' well-being and operational readiness.

Diversity

We are dedicated to embracing and reflecting diversity throughout our department and community.

Teamwork and Shared Leadership

Teamwork and shared leadership are integral to our department; we will seek out and engage our workforce.

Community Engagement

We commit to fulfilling our responsibility and to deepening our involvement in the community we serve.

The Mission and Values are the foundation of this organization. Thus, every effort will be made to keep these current and meaningful so that the individuals who make up the FRD are guided by them in the accomplishment of the goals, objectives, and day-to-day tasks.

Programs and Services

The agency's internal stakeholders identified the following core programs provided to the community, as well as many of the services that enable the organization to deliver those programs:

Core Programs of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department Fire Department		
Emergency Medical Services	Fire Suppression	Rescue – Basic and Technical
Hazardous Materials Mitigation	Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response	Fire/HazMat Investigation
Community Risk Reduction	Public Fire Safety Education	Community Outreach

Supporting Services of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department Fire Department		
Committees	Resource management	Training
Human resources	Fiscal services	Wellness program
Apparatus	Quality management	Data analytics
Other public safety agencies	Emergency communications	Volunteers
Employee groups	County agencies	National associations
Tax base	Board of Supervisors	Office of the Medical Director
CERTs	State agencies	CPSE
Health care community	FEMA	State department
Foreign agencies	The Commonwealth	Council of Governments
Educational institutions	Fairfax schools	Law enforcement agencies
Other health care responders	Media	Faith based organizations
Federal Bureau of Investigation	NVERS	Fairfax Water Authority
Gas purveyors	Electric purveyors	Family support teams
Information Technology	Meter Shop	Gear Shop
Air Shop	Purchasing	Vendors

S.W.O.T. Analysis

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis is designed to have an organization candidly identify its positive and less-than-desirable attributes. Internal stakeholders participated in this activity to record their strengths and weaknesses, as well as the possible opportunities and potential threats.

Appendix 2 *consists of the SWOT data and analysis collected by the internal stakeholders.*

Critical Issues and Service Gaps

Following the identification and review of the agency's SWOT, two separate groups of internal stakeholders met to identify themes as primary critical issues and service gaps.

Critical and Service Gap Issues Identified by the Internal Workgroup	
Group 1	**Group 2**
- Service Delivery	- Changing to meet demands
- Response Times	- External Communications
- EMS Service Delivery	- Internal Communications
- Health and Wellness	- Employee Development
- Economic Development	- Organizational Priorities
- Technology	- Workforce Planning
- Workforce	- Accountability
- Leadership	
- Human Resources	
- Communications	
- Training	
- Infra-structure	

Strategic Initiatives

Based upon all previously captured information and the determination of critical issues and service gaps, the following strategic initiatives were identified as the foundation for the development of goals and objectives.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department Fire Department Strategic Initiatives		
Service Delivery	Human Resources	Training & Workforce Planning
Fire Prevention	Health & Wellness	Infrastructure
Technology	Internal Communications	External Communications

Goals and Objectives

To continuously achieve the mission of the FRD, realistic goals and objectives with timelines for completion must be established to enhance strengths, address identified weaknesses, provide a clear direction, and address the concerns of the community. These should become a focus of the FRD's efforts, as they will direct the organization to its desired future while having reduced the obstacles and distractions along the way. Leadership-established work groups should meet and manage progress toward accomplishing these goals and objectives, and adjust timelines as needs and the environment change. Regular reports of progress and changes should be shared with the FRD leadership.

Goal 1	Provide the highest quality service in the most efficient manner to meet current and future needs of our community.

Objective 1A	Identify and analyze the services currently provided.
Timeframe	6 Months

Critical Tasks	• Use the accreditation model to inventory services. • Identify additional services provided not included within the accreditation model. • Review outcomes of current services to determine if comprehensive and modern. • Create a list of needed adjustments required if the services will be provided going forward.

Objective 1B	Determine the current service needs of the community.
Timeframe	6 Months

Critical Tasks	• Determine what we are legally required to provide. • Ensure services delivered are aligned with mission of the organization. • Gather and review community expectations of the services we provide. • Utilizing a contemporary methodology complete a community risk assessment standards of cover (SOC) document in accordance with the accreditation model. • Use/leverage outcomes from the community risk assessment/SOC.

Objective 1C	Determine the future service needs of the community.
Timeframe	12 Months

Critical Tasks	• Review and analyze community and industry trends. • Review new and current legislation impacting service delivery. • Collaborate with external partners (health care community, county, SMEs, hospital alliance, Healthcare Advisory Board, county government, planning, County economic development, at higher risk populations, mutual aid partners, mental health community).

Objective 1D	Perform a gap analysis of services provided.
Timeframe	12 Months

Critical Tasks	• Identify what is measured. • Devise a methodology for measuring. • Analyze the metrics. • Complete and distribute results of the analysis. • Prioritize service delivery modification as needed.

Objective 1E	Implement or modify services provided to meet the needs of the community.
Timeframe	18 Months
Critical Tasks	• Develop an implementation plan. • Ensure the implementation plan is created in accordance with Federal, State, and County regulations. • Educate personnel. • Educate community in accordance with the external communications strategy. • Ensure service delivery changes are aligned with the FRD mission. • Execute implementation plan.

Objective 1F	Reassess service delivery model to ensure it meets the needs of the community.
Timeframe	Ongoing
Critical Tasks	• Perform continuous analysis to assess impact of our interventions. • Share results of the analysis with internal and external stakeholders. • Perform modification as needed.

Goal 2	Recruit, hire, retain and promote a highly-qualified and diverse workforce to meet the mission of the Fire & Rescue Department.
Objective 2A	Review current strategies for recruitment of new hires to identify areas for improvement.
Timeframe	1 year
Critical Tasks	• Review current platforms to advertise openings. • Assess current recruiting venues for effectiveness. • Review accessibility of initial application process. • Review current minimum qualifications against like public safety agencies. • Examine current pay scale and compare to other fire departments in the region. • Evaluate training and preparation for recruitment staff and adjuncts.

Objective 2B	Review current onboarding processes for new hires to identify areas for improvement.
Timeframe	6 months
Critical Tasks	• Identify and assess all current onboarding steps required by Fairfax County. • Evaluate purpose and effectiveness of FRD Orientation Day for uniformed new hires.

Objective 2C	Review current promotional processes to identify areas for improvement.
Timeframe	1 year
Critical Tasks	• Assess the promotional process for each uniformed rank. • Assess civilian and uniformed staff selection process. • Evaluate competencies for each uniformed rank. • Evaluate competencies for civilian positions.

Objective 2D	Review existing employee retention strategies to identify areas for improvement.
Timeframe	6 months
Critical Tasks	• Assess existing civilian career advancement pathways. • Evaluate currently available employee benefits and compare to similar jurisdictions. • Review Fairfax County exit interview data.

Objective 2E	Develop and implement strategies and processes to remedy identified gaps in recruitment, onboarding, promotion, and retention.
Timeframe	2 years
Critical Tasks	• Gather input from stakeholders. • Enhance recruitment process to broaden the pool of highly-qualified and diverse candidates for prospective employment. • Develop and implement a FRD-specific onboarding process for civilian new hires. • Implement identified improvements to uniformed FRD Orientation Day. • Develop a "quick reference" and FAQ guide for FRD new hires specific to uniformed and civilian employees. • Standardize a process for feedback to current employees not selected for civilian or uniformed staff position. • Revise promotional processes to eliminate/mitigate identified gaps. • Include a proposed civilian career pathway system in annual workforce planning.

Goal 3	Design and implement a high quality, comprehensive training program that develops personnel throughout their career.
Objective 3A	Identify current training programs and delivery platforms.
Timeframe	6 months
Critical Tasks	• Inventory current EMS training programs. • Inventory current suppression training programs. • Inventory current special operations (hazmat, tech rescue) training programs. • Inventory current officer development training programs. • Inventory current leadership training programs. • Inventory current administrative training programs.

Objective 3B	Identify training needs and assess current programs and delivery platforms.
Timeframe	18 months
Critical Tasks	• Assess current and future EMS training programs needs. • Assess current and future suppression training program needs. • Assess current and future special operations (hazmat, tech rescue) training programs needs. • Assess current and future officer development training programs needs. • Assess current and future leadership training programs needs. • Assess current and future administrative training programs needs.

Objective 3C	Develop and/or enhance training programs to fill identified deficiencies.
Timeframe	12 months
Critical Tasks	• Develop business plan for each identified program to include costs, staffing, resources, and training platforms/scheduling. • Request funding from appropriate source. • Develop curricula. • Seek approvals/delegated authority from sanctioning bodies, as required.

Objective 3D	Implement new or enhanced training programs.
Timeframe	12 months
Critical Tasks	• Identify prospective training staff. • Conduct instructor training (train the trainer). • Acquire needed course materials, prepare training props, etc. • Identify course delivery schedule based on training platform. • Deliver training. • Conduct course evaluations/feedback from both trainers and students.

Objective 3E	Conduct periodic reevaluation of training programs every 5 years.
Timeframe	On-going
Critical Tasks	• Gather input from stakeholders on the effectiveness of the training. • Compare outcomes to desired results. • Refine curricula to correct identified deficiencies. • Implement desired/identified changes to curricula. • Continue to evaluate feedback and course effectiveness.

Goal 4	Encourage economic growth and improve customer experience through prompt and consistent application of the fire code and county ordinance in the building plans, permits and inspection processes.
Objective 4A	Review current planning, inspection, and testing processes to identify potential inefficiencies.
Timeframe	6 months
Critical Tasks	• Compare processes to peer organizations experiencing similar growth rate and development. • Evaluate daily workload to develop realistic expectations and required staffing to meet growing demand. • Evaluate potential ROIs based on potential economic growth and employee retention. • Evaluate staffing levels in each section to determine if they can meet the growing demand/workload. • Incorporate customer feedback to identify means to improve processes. • Create customer survey tools to evaluate process efficiencies and effectiveness.

Objective 4B	Develop clear, predictable, and measurable plans review process.
Timeframe	12 – 18 months
Critical Tasks	• Establish realistic timeframes to achieve optimal customer time to market (comparable to or better than peer jurisdictions). • Determine and advocate for appropriate staffing levels to ensure realistic timeframes for optimal customer time to market. • Ensure and promote appropriate training and on-going education for staff to provide essential knowledge, skills, and abilities related to latest industry trends, codes and ordinances. • Refine and communicate process to remove ambiguity and promote ease of use. • Develop an outreach program to educate stakeholders and make information available; ensure customers have a realistic expectation and understanding of the process. • Create customer survey tools to evaluate process efficiencies and effectiveness.

Objective 4C	Develop clear, predictable, and measurable inspection process.
Timeframe	12 – 18 months
Critical Tasks	• Establish realistic timeframes to complete the initial, annual, and re-inspection process to ensure effectiveness and efficient customer experience. • Determine and advocate for appropriate staffing level to ensure realistic timeframes for effective inspection process. • Ensure and promote appropriate training and on-going education for staff to provide essential knowledge, skills, and abilities related to latest industry trends, codes and ordinances. • Refine and communicate process to remove ambiguity and promote ease of use. • Develop an outreach program to educate stakeholders and make information available; ensure customers have a realistic expectation and understanding of the process. • Create customer survey tools to evaluate process efficiencies and effectiveness.

Objective 4D	Develop clear, predictable, and measurable permitting process.
Timeframe	12 – 18 months
Critical Tasks	• Establish realistic timeframes to achieve code requirements and provide optimal customer experience (comparable or better than peer jurisdictions). • Determine and advocate appropriate staffing level to ensure realistic timeframes for optimal customer time to market. • Ensure and promote appropriate training and on-going education for staff to provide essential knowledge, skills, and abilities related to latest industry trends, codes and ordinances. • Refine and communicate process to remove ambiguity and promote ease of use. • Develop an outreach program to ensure customers have a realistic expectation and understanding of the process. • Create customer survey tools to evaluate process efficiencies and effectiveness.

Objective 4E	Develop a professional and customer-centric processes designed to encourage economic growth
Timeframe	3 – 5 years
Critical Tasks	• Ensure all staff attend the Joint Training Academy to ensure they have a broad base of knowledge regarding all land development processes. • Encourage staff to cross-train in other disciplines to enhance continuity of operations and enhance the customer experience. • Establish a mentoring program to ensure effective succession planning and continuity of operations. • Assign project managers to guide complex projects through the process to ensure a positive customer outcome and encourage further economic growth. • Develop a career path and update compensation model. • Create customer survey tools to evaluate effectiveness.

Goal 5	Develop, promote and enhance the health and wellness of all FRD members in order to improve operational effectiveness and quality of life.
Objective 5A	**Inventory current health and wellness programs and identify available data.**
Timeframe	6 Months
Critical Tasks	- Develop a list inclusive of: - Occupational Health Center (OHC) - Well-Fit - Behavioral Health - Operations - Safety Officer Program - Training - Risk Management - Return to work - Others - Identify best practices. - Inventory available data sources. - Identify an organizational fitness baseline.

Objective 5B	Analyze current programs and available data to determine trends and effectiveness of current programs and gaps.
Timeframe	12-18 Months
Critical Tasks	- Benchmark against best practices: Wellness/Fitness Initiative (WFI). - Meet standards of WFI - Measure our effectiveness against WFI - Benchmark with national standards in other industries. - Consolidate current data and provide accessibility for stakeholders. - Create data process and performance standards to enable analysis. - Convene key stakeholders to analyze and establish a performance report.

Objective 5C	Establish a culture of personal and organizational accountability to health.
Timeframe	3-5 years
Critical Tasks	- Evaluate and enforce current policies SOP 02.03.09 - Development of training sessions on nutrition, fitness, behavioral health and wellness. - Emphasize importance through Fire Chief/Battalion Chief asking Shift Leaders about leading daily physical fitness. - Incorporate into Office Development Training Program. - Incentivize performance criteria that "trigger" health intervention.

Objective 5D	Establish a culture that embraces wellness (mental/psychological health).
Timeframe	3-5 years
Critical Tasks	• Develop an officer/leadership training program to include recognition and first responder action for mental health issues. • Develop resiliency training for all employees. • Establish easier access to wellness resources.

Objective 5E	Enhance and improve current programs to address program deficiencies.
Timeframe	2-3 years

Critical Tasks	• Address gaps identified in the second objective. Such as:
	  – Fully implement WFI
	  – Expand the peer fitness training program to station level.
	  – Implement WPE for suppression volunteers and modified WPE for EMS-only volunteers.
	  – Evaluate sleep deprivation and impact on performance.
	• Identify necessary resources (funding, location, people).

Objective 5F	Initiate and develop new programs to address program gaps.
Timeframe	2-3 years
Critical Tasks	• Address gaps identified in the second objective. • Identify necessary resources (funding, location, people). • Develop and deliver curriculum or other educational needs to ensure an effective rollout of the program. • Collect and analyze data from program rollout and make necessary adjustments to reach agency goals.

Objective 5G	Examine effectiveness of programs annually.
Timeframe	2 years
Critical Tasks	• Evaluate data relevant to programs and develop performance metrics. • Analyze feedback from users. • Update current fitness plan and incorporate other avenues of physical fitness into plan. • Update programs as necessary.

Goal 6	Continuously maintain a sustainable, robust, and reliable infrastructure that is aligned to meet the current and anticipated needs of the organization in collaboration with our partner agencies.
Objective 6A	Ongoing analysis of current infrastructure to include fixed facilities, apparatus, equipment, personal protective equipment, and all supporting resources, to identify shortfalls and opportunities to increase efficiency and improve service delivery.
Timeframe	5 years - ongoing
Critical Tasks	• Continued involvement with county partners to maintain awareness of the comprehensive plan and continued county growth to meet response time goals. • Continue to align apparatus designs to meet service delivery needs. • Continue to assess and maintain functional and effective personal protective equipment to protect responders.

Objective 6B	Review the current level of support needed to maintain existing infrastructure and identify the levels needed to maintain and support proposed infrastructure changes or improvements.
Timeframe	1 year - ongoing
Critical Tasks	• Identify support expectations. • Identify gaps between expectations and current support levels. • Ensure that changes to infrastructure are shared with our partner agencies and that an appropriate level of support is in place to facilitate these changes.

Objective 6C	Maintain awareness and involvement in the development of new technologies to improve service delivery and efficiency.
Timeframe	1 year - ongoing
Critical Tasks	• Reenact the Innovative Ideas Committee to review internal suggestions for opportunities to improve service delivery. • Continue to participate in industry related conferences and symposiums to stay abreast of new and evolving technologies. • Continue to collaborate with partner agencies to implement technologies that increase efficiency and enhance service delivery. • Continue to invest in the implementation of green technologies when cost effective.

Objective 6D	Enhancing facility and apparatus communication capabilities inside and outside the county.
Timeframe	1 year - ongoing
Critical Tasks	• Radio dead spots due to insufficient coverage (including interior of buildings, Motorola ISSI). • Leverage the CAD2CAD technology/investment to reduce delay times. • Improvements to facility and unit dispatching (ex: fire station alerting, active 911, updating CAD system). • Reduce incident prioritizing and dispatching.

Goal 7	Develop and implement a strategic agency Information Technology (IT) plan in conjunction with the County IT Plan that will enhance overall agency efficiency and service delivery.
Objective 7A	Inventory existing technological environment to include hardware, applications, and interfaces to identify potential enhancements to agency functions.
Timeframe	8-12 Months
Critical Tasks	• Conduct division-level meetings to gather inventory on the current state of information technology in the agency. • Compile information in a useful format that facilitates meaningful analysis. • Evaluate information for deficiencies or areas of improvement. • Develop potential solutions based on findings. • Document and present final recommendations to appropriate staff.

Objective 7B	Implement hardware efficiencies to further enhance agency operational and administrative functions.
Timeframe	3-4 years
Critical Tasks	• Migrate physical servers to virtual machines when appropriate to achieve cost savings. • Consolidate devices where appropriate to achieve cost savings. • Monitor equipment inventory to ensure appropriate replacement schedules meet agency needs. • Provide mobile workforce solutions to increase productivity levels. • Monitor and evaluate new technologies that improve the agency's administrative or operational functions.

Objective 7C	Implement application efficiencies to further enhance agency operational and administrative functions.
Timeframe	3-4 years
Critical Tasks	• Migrate critical Microsoft Access databases or Excel spreadsheets to a more robust Microsoft SQL format. • Revamp Fire Intranet to provide enhanced functionality and user experience. • Increase overall agency awareness of available GIS data and tools that can assist at administrative and operational levels. • Provide county approved solutions for application use that is non-compliant. • Provide easier access to mobile workforce solutions to increase productivity levels. • Monitor and evaluate new technologies that improve the agency's administrative or operational functions.

Objective 7D	Implement system interfaces efficiencies to further enhance agency operational and administrative functions.
Timeframe	3-4 years
Critical Tasks	• Eliminate data silos by further utilizing the agency's data warehouse. • Create a process to validate all data stored on the agency's data warehouse to ensure accuracy. • Leverage data sharing opportunities within the region to enhance data analytics and operational response capabilities. • Research and implement real-time data sharing capabilities to enhance data analytics and operational response capabilities. • Provide a comprehensive data dashboard utility that can be customized based on the intended audience to increase situational awareness.

Objective 7E	Optimize organizational alignments and end user education.
Timeframe	Ongoing
Critical Tasks	• Move the agency's data management functions to the IT Section to align roles and responsibilities. • Create an IT Division and align it with the Business Services Assistant Chief to ensure clear direction of the agency information technology and data analytics initiatives. • Establish data analyst liaisons within the agency, with other county agencies, and external agencies (county/state/federal) to further enhance the overall data analytics capabilities of the agency. • Enhance end user IT awareness of county and agency policies, standards, and procedures to increase overall compliance levels. • Facilitate recurring IT security awareness training to reduce potential threats from being introduced to the county's enterprise network.

Goal 8	Cultivate a system of internal communication that disseminates timely, accurate and relevant information throughout the organization.
Objective 8A	Analyze existing systems of internal communication.
Timeframe	9 months

Critical Tasks	• Inventory all communication systems:
	  a) Written (ex. manuals, SOPs, meeting minutes, pass-on book)
	  b) Electronic (ex. emails, eforms, TargetSolutions, EAN alerts, Employee U, M5, CAD-messages, text messages, FIDO, Survey Monkey)
	  c) Social media (ex. Twitter, Facebook, other social media, etc.)
	  d) Oral communications (ex. teleconferences, meetings, Fire Chief's visits, phone calls, line-up)
	• Measure the volume of information associated with each type.
	• Evaluate what types of information are sent through each communication system.
	• Determine the effectiveness of each communication system.
	• Identify the shortfalls with communication delivery.

Objective 8B	Identify the optimal means of communication for the various messages.
Timeframe	6 months
Critical Tasks	• Research emerging trends within communication systems. • Research industry best practices. • Use the analysis to survey personnel on proper volume of information and preferred means of communication.

Objective 8C	Develop a system of information delivery that leverages the optimal means of communication for the various messages.
Timeframe	13 months
Critical Tasks	• Develop and plan for the implementation for any new communication systems. • Adjust and improve current systems to address the shortfalls. • Validate the plan is compliant with county policies. • Elicit feedback from senior leadership and the rank and file regarding the new communication systems. • Revise plan as needed based on results from county validation process and feedback from the agency.

Objective 8D	Determine the content and format of the information to be distributed.
Timeframe	1 month
Critical Tasks	• Categorize the different types of information. • Verify content complies with County and FRD policies. • Identify the appropriate mode of communication for each category of information (ex. Where and how do we communicate SOPs versus manuals, or forms).

Objective 8E	Ensure all the members of the organization understand the internal communication system.
Timeframe	3 months
Critical Tasks	• Create education program to inform throughout the organization (objectives and curriculum). • Deliver the education program in conjunction with on-boarding. • Gather feedback and evaluate program delivery for effectiveness. • Modify curriculum and delivery process based on feedback.

Objective 8F	Implement the system.
Timeframe	
Critical Tasks	• Beta test prior to implementation. • Analyze data from the beta test and make necessary adjustments. • Notify department members of implementation date and rollout program. • Track any issues associated with implementation and create fixes.

Objective 8G	Perform continual analysis of the internal communication system to assess effectiveness and efficiency.
Timeframe	Ongoing
Critical Tasks	• Determine the effectiveness of the current system. • Survey department members every 2-3 years. • Modify the plan as needed.

Goal 9	Develop effective communication strategies to maximize community engagement.
Objective 9A	**Identify communication and educational needs within the community.**
Timeframe	12 months
Critical Tasks	• Inventory current communication avenues. • Evaluate community demographics. • Identify high-risk and underserved populations. • Identify community groups and/or organizations. • Collaborate with community groups and/or organizations. • Evaluate recent response trends.

Objective 9B	Leverage mediums to communicate timely emergent and seasonal messages.
Timeframe	12 months – ongoing
Critical Tasks	• Expand social media platforms. • Develop and provide HOA/Community newsletter/email distribution. • Bolster PIO training for company officers. • Produce and distribute multi-lingual information. • Nurture relationships with local media outlets.

Objective 9C	Build and maintain fire station level relationships with the community.
Timeframe	Ongoing
Critical Tasks	• Explore pathways to BOS community meetings. • Increase FRD attendance at local HOA/Community meetings. • Establish relationships with educational institutions. • Explore opportunities to increase community presence at local fire stations. • Increase relationships with civic, faith-based, and other non-profit organizations.

Objective 9D	Develop community-based preparedness programs to prevent the 911 call.
Timeframe	12 months - ongoing
Critical Tasks	• Evaluate current Safety in Our Community (SIOC) program. • Evaluate current Wellness in Our Community (WIOC) program. • Expand Senior Safety Summits to all magisterial districts. • Increase Business Town Halls.

Objective 9E	Evaluate FRD's communication effectiveness.
Timeframe	Ongoing
Critical Tasks	• Develop multiple mechanisms to capture data from the community related to agency delivery of communications and education. • Review data to determine if outcomes are meeting the goals of the agency. • Identify any gaps and revise programs as necessary.

Vision

On the final day of the process, the CPSE presented a vision of where the organization will be in the future if the strategic plan is accomplished. This vision is intended as a target of excellence to strive toward, and provides a basis for its goals and objectives.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department's 2022 Vision:

to continue to be widely known for our commitment to providing quality services, while reflecting best practices as an internationally accredited fire and rescue service agency.

Foundational support of our greatest assets, our members, will be evident as we foster growth, broaden teamwork and strong leadership through enhanced training and development initiatives. Furthering our human resources management will guide diversity and sustainability for the future. Value-focused initiatives of health and wellness will ensure current and future personnel remain operation ready, while embracing safety.

Community will remain at the heart of the services we provide. We will continue community engagement with a focus on improving and increasing communications and outreach to remain connected to our community.

For our continued drive to meet our mission, we will strive to embrace emerging technology while managing key infrastructure. This will provide more effective and efficient delivery of our services. Internal communications will complement these efforts and support our growth.

Risk will be further researched and managed through a comprehensive approach to fire prevention and service delivery. We will continue to demonstrate excellence in the prevention, mitigation, and education that works to minimize loss.

Demonstrating integrity, we will commit to excellence while holding each other accountable for fulfilling our mission, living our values, accomplishing our goals, and making our vision a reality.

Performance Measurement

To assess and ensure that an organization is delivering on the promises made in their strategic plan, the organization's leaders must determine performance measures for which they are fully accountable. As output measurement can be challenging, the organization must focus on the assessment of progress toward achieving improved output. Jim Collins states, "What matters is not finding the perfect indicator, but settling upon a *consistent and intelligent* method of assessing your output results, and then tracking your trajectory with rigor."[3] Organizations must further be prepared to revisit and revise their goals, objectives, and performance measures to keep up with accomplishments and environmental changes.

> • If you don't measure the results of your plan, you can't tell success from failure.
> • If you can't see success, you can't reward it.
> • If you can't reward success, you're probably rewarding failure.
> • If you can't see success, you can't learn from it.
> • If you can't recognize failure, you can't correct it.
> • If you can demonstrate results, you can win public support.
> Reinventing Government
> David Osborn and Ted Gaebler

> . . . successful strategic planning requires continuing review of actual accomplishments in comparison with the plan . . . periodic or continuous environmental scanning to assure that unforeseen developments do not sabotage the adopted plan or that emerging opportunities are not overlooked. [4]

To establish that the agency's Strategic Plan is achieving results, performance measurement data will be implemented and integrated as part of the plan. An integrated process, known as "Managing for Results," will be utilized, which is based upon:

- The identification of strategic goals and objectives;

- The determination of resources necessary to achieve them;

- The analyzing and evaluation of performance data; and

- The use of that data to drive continuous improvement in the organization.

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[3] Collins Good to Great and the Social Sectors. Boulder, 2009
[4] Sorkin, Ferris and Hudak. Strategies for Cities and Counties. Public Technology, 1984.

A "family of measures" typically utilized to indicate and measure performance includes:

- **Inputs** - Value of resource used to produce an output.

- **Outputs** – Quantifiable units produced which are activity-oriented and measurable.

- **Efficiency** - Inputs used per output (or outputs per input).

- **Service Quality** - The <u>degree</u> to which customers are <u>satisfied</u> with a program, or how <u>accurately</u> or <u>timely</u> a service is provided.

- **Outcome** - Qualitative consequences associated with a program/service; i.e., the ultimate benefit to the customer. Focused on the "why" of providing a service.

The Success of the Strategic Plan

The agency has approached its desire to develop and implement a strategic plan by asking for and receiving input from the community and members of the organization during the development stage of the planning process. To assist in the development of this plan, the agency used professional guidance to conduct a community-driven strategic planning process. The success of this strategic plan will not depend upon implementation of the goals and their related objectives, but from support received from the authority having jurisdiction, the members of the organization, and the community-at-large.

> **"No matter how much you have achieved, you will always be merely good relative to what you can become. Greatness is an inherently dynamic process, not an end point."**
>
> <u>Good to Great and the Social Sectors</u>
> Jim Collins

Provided the community-driven strategic planning process is kept dynamic and supported by effective leadership and active participation, it will be a considerable opportunity to unify internal and external stakeholders through a jointly developed understanding of organizational direction; how all vested parties will work to achieve the mission, goals, and vision; and how the organization will measure and be accountable for its progress and successes.[5]

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[5] Matthews (2005). *Strategic Planning and Management for Library Managers*

Appendix 1

Community Expectations

Understanding what the community expects of its fire and emergency services organization is critically important to developing a long-range perspective. With this knowledge, internal emphasis may need to be changed or bolstered to fulfill the community needs. In certain areas, education on the level of service that is already available may be all that is needed. To follow are the expectations of the community's external stakeholders:

Community Expectations of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department (in priority order)

1. Employees should have the skills, education, and technology to address the problems at hand. Training provided should be the best, and should be ongoing. (70)

2. Fast, timely, and efficient response to all emergencies. (65)

3. To have crews which are engaged with the community to provide the best services, excellent customer service, and respect for the citizen. (24)

4. Offer excellent, dedicated services with sensitive staff to meet the needs of the community. (22)

5. Recruiting for a quality diverse workforce. Compensating well so that we attract and retain the best employees. (17)

6. Improve patient care, EMS response times, and track and report the quality of outcomes. Provide medical response and advanced life support readiness for our aging demographic trends. (15)

7. To be wise fiduciary stewards of limited county resources. (13)

8. Professional and ethical behavior should be the norm at all times. The firehouse environment should be collegial, and safe for all employees. Sexist, racist, and other types of bullying should not be permitted. Employees engaged in such behavior should be removed promptly. (12)

9. To have the best and most current equipment to do the job. (11)

10. Tight interaction with the medical community to co-share patient care. Real engagement with physicians or medical groups to have alternate destinations for less than critical patients. (10)

11. To be well prepared for emergencies. (8)

12. Pride in service with a courteous staff. (5)

13. Adequate staffing to provide necessary services. (5)

14. Pursue regular and on-going positive media reports on the good things that the department does to negate the occasional negative reports. (4)

15. Enhance outreach for community preparedness and prevention. (4)

16. Strategic station locations. (4)

17. Development of a community para-medicine program. (4)

18. Be an innovative leader. (4)

19. Specialized vehicular entrapment/rescue with the introduction of autonomously driven (driverless) vehicles. (4)

20. Value the input regarding public expectation and criticism. (3)

21. Increase partnership with the local school system for a career pathway opportunity for students. (3)

22. To have hazmat and rescue response preparation with the increasing risk of terrorism. (2)

23. Ability to handle diverse structures and situations in the county. (2)

24. Quickly and promptly handle fire code related applications and permits. (1)

25. Be efficient. (1)

Areas of Community Concern

The planning process would be incomplete without an expression from the community regarding concerns about the organization. Some areas of concern may in fact be a weakness within the delivery system, while some weaknesses may also be misperceptions based upon a lack of information, understanding, or incorrect information.

Areas of Community Concern about the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department (verbatim, in priority order)

1. Appropriate funding not being reduced to balance overall budget for the county. Loss of key staff to budget cuts/constraints - in same line, loss of training funds to budget shortfalls. Loss of key staff to budget cuts/constraints - in same line, loss of training funds to budget shortfalls. (26)

2. Better communication with the community; build relationships. (Fire stations and local community - HOAs, civic associations). I'd like to see more ongoing collaboration with the community - real input - not just events like open houses. (21)

3. Lack of equipment. Ability to maintain equipment. (19)

4. Their safety. Danger to firefighters as a spillover from public hostility to police (i.e. danger from the public). Their safety given outbreaks of violence against public servants and fire/police departments. (18)

5. Erosion of pay and benefits (this is an expensive county). Salaries and benefits may not be attracting/retaining the best firefighters. (18)

6. Ensuring that the Tysons area (an up and coming high growth area) has enough fire and rescue facilities and personnel to fulfill the demand. Population/business growth exceeding department capabilities. (13)

7. Inadequate staffing for police, fire, and rescue personnel given the growing county population. Personnel management. (12)

8. Fire marshals are number one concern - not service oriented, not consistent, hamper community development. Fire marshal office - ability to respond with appropriate level of professionalism and understanding. (10)

9. Union has too much control. Department caters to the union over the community. (6)

10. Handling of a terrorist attack. (6)

11. High-rise buildings - fire suppression and rescue. (6)

12. Fire station locations in the Tysons Comprehensive Planning document. (5)

13. Aging facilities and equipment (e.g. Bailey's Crossroads, prior to its rebuilding). (5)

14. Relationship to volunteer companies that own equipment or facilities. (5)

15. More engagement with community - particularly diverse and underserved populations. (5)

16. The seemingly large numbers of response vehicles to minor incidents such as a fender bender accident. (5)

17. Strong leadership. (5)

18. Transparency. (5)

19. Ability to meet the demand of increased elderly population. (5)

20. Ability to handle incidents happening in multiple locations at the same time. (5)

21. Overtasking distracting from core missions of fire/HazMat/EMS response - ex: investigations/security/education/outreach. (5)

22. Fire code application official process needs to be sped up. (5)

23. Opioid epidemic and FRD as part of prevention and rescue. (5)

24. How effective is outreach to vulnerable populations? (5)

25. One concern is when there is a car accident, for example, sometimes fire and police block lanes and flow of traffic more than might be necessary. It is important to address the accident scene, but more thought could be given to traffic around the accident. Be a little more aware of this and working with police, have them direct and move traffic around the incident. (5)

26. How many firefighters would be called upon by state department for international aid at one time? (5)

27. Maintaining local/regional/national reputation. (5)

28. I am concerned that bullying, sexism, and racism has been permitted to thrive within the department. (5)

29. Formation of CERT clusters. (4)

30. Relationship to neighboring jurisdictions that provide first response or high level or technical response. (4)

31. Preparedness training and opportunities for the public - better trained and more aware means fewer calls. Help communities build preparedness and emergency plans. (4)

32. Is the workforce representative of the community? (4)

33. Professionalism. (4)

34. Politically driven - externally. (4)

35. Handling of chemical, biological, nuclear, or weapons of mass destruction attack. (4)

36. Natural disasters affecting a large population. (4)

37. Ability to handle a domestic critical incident when the search and rescue team is deployed somewhere. (4)

38. Taxpayer dollars could be spent better/wiser. (4)

39. I did not know that the department had a citizen's academy, so more outreach and advertising may be needed there. (4)

40. I'd like to see more traffic pre-emptive devices - throughout the county. Traffic affecting response times. (4)

41. Is the department taking care of volunteers, civilian, and other staff as best as they should? (4)

42. Lack of bilingual staff to respond to an emergency. (4)

43. How to maintain a highly trained workforce with fast response time with increasing population density and decreasing budget? (4)

44. May not be as innovative as they could be. (4)

45. Ability to respond to changing kinds of threats. (4)

46. Formation of Citizen Advisory Committees (CAC) that meets monthly. (3)

47. Barriers of entry to transfer fire personnel. (3)

48. Respect for cultural differences (including knowledge and training). (3)

49. Top down and bottom up communications. (3)

50. Overtime pay seems to be high. (3)

51. Within the parameters of security, would like the firehouse to be as open, welcoming, and community-oriented as possible. (3)

52. Can social media be better utilized for community outreach? (3)

53. Ability to recruit adequately. (3)

54. Limited access to technology - traffic signal controls.

55. Ability to deal with changing demographics of the community. (3)

56. Formation of a Fire Chief Advisory Council that meets monthly. (2)

57. Role of union in fostering positive internal culture. (2)

58. Expand and strengthen CERT program - more accessible; more opportunities; better engagement between CERTs and FRD personnel. (2)

59. Explosives. (2)

60. Mission creep from other departments/services within the county and federal government. (2)

61. Tell your story about being the best in class. (2)

62. Exaggerations of any bad news. (2)

63. Discuss new building plan review code enforcement with citizens. (1)

64. Residents are not always aware of where stations are located (as heard during community open houses). (1)

65. Opportunities for women and minorities and LGBTQ. (1)

66. Advanced life support for large volume of people. (1)

Positive Community Feedback

The CPSE promotes the belief that, for a strategic plan to be valid, the community's view on the organization's strengths must be established. Needless efforts are often put forth in over-developing areas that are already successful. However, proper utilization and promotion of the strengths may often help the organization overcome or offset some of the identified weaknesses.

Positive Community Comments about the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department (verbatim, in no particular order)

- Professionalism and empathy of EMS response teams and willingness to work with hospitals and emergency rooms for patient preferences on transport.

- Overall positive community perception of EMS services and trust in their fire system.

- International search and rescue teams – an honor that should not be downsized.

- Well trained staff with a keen sense of pride in their work.

- Strong team work and coordination.

- Excellent training for firefighters.

- Quick response times on "good" days.

- EMT and Paramedic training are very good.

- Supporting the community – Fill the Boot campaign.

- Top of the line equipment and training.

- Well-trained personnel.

- Proactive prevention efforts.

- Nationally recognized Urban Search and Rescue team.

- Their resources to combat major fire and rescue events.

- Response times are outstanding.

- Personnel are professional and well trained.

- Community outreach.

- I would like to say positive results, but don't know how to measure that.

- Search and rescue team

- Professional conduct of staff when conducting emergency response as well as community outreach is fantastic.

- Performance driven.

- Leaders in the field.

- Fast response.

- Very professional.

- Mission oriented.

- Fabulous search and rescue.

- I love and admire your strong community outreach program.

- Very rapid response times.

- The USAR team is not only highly effective, but its great publicity for the department.

- Generally, a good group of public servants.

- Well maintained facilities and equipment.

- Good community interaction.

- My experience has been that fire and rescue services and personnel are very responsive, efficient, and professional.

- We appreciate community programs that the fire and rescue department holds, and would like to see more.

- My personal experience with EMS personnel – they are professional, courteous, reassuring, extremely competent – in short, excellent!

- The department overall holds itself to a high standard of performance.

- The department is appropriately aware of, and responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable members of our community.

- Rarely hear negative comments about response or treatment.

- The department continues to seek ways to improve service.

- Dedication, commitment, passion for the job, the department, and the community.

- Response time and effectiveness of dealing with every situation, large or small.

- The internationally recognized skills and training of our fire and rescue department.

- Exceptional leadership – Chief Bowers, his deputies, and the battalion chiefs.

- Quick responses when I needed them.

- Modern equipment.

- Respected internationally.

- Management team has continuity.

- Highly professional.

- Well trained.

- Compassionate.

- Experts in their field.

- Open minded.

- They have been responding quickly to our emergency.

- They are well trained firefighters.

- They provide training to the members of the community.

- They are doing outreach activities with the community.

- World-wide recognition.

- Celebrate your successes with the community.

- Work with fire and rescue daily – very professional organization and team members.

- Well educated team members – always open for training suggestions and input.

- Up-to-date on training for current events and hazards.

- Good working environment.

- Good working equipment.

- Making an effort to reach external stakeholders for strategic planning!

- Being present in elementary schools and day care facilities for fire safety education.

- Always smiling and being friendly when in public spaces such as the grocery store.

- Friendly and courteous employees who are active in the community.

- Well trained and fast response time.

- Strong leadership at the top.

- Capabilities are top notch as is training.

- Brilliant citizen's academy.

- Stellar reputation.

- USAR response team.

- Willie Bailey!

- Very professional crews.

- A forward-looking department that aims to evolve and grow.

- Response times appear fast.

- Friendly attitude of first responders.

- Concern for the community.

- Strong set of resources.

- Skilled, competent workforce.

- Community engagement.

- Collaborative relationships with partners and stakeholders.

- Quick response.

- Well trained.

- Polite and sensitive to individuals they serve.

- Open and friendly community engagement.

- Always available.

- Fast response in my area.

- Caring, well-trained personnel.

- A state of the art organization.

- I have had wonderful interactions with FCFRD on official calls, as members of state training courses and even as fellow grocery store shoppers.

- Responsiveness.

- Professionalism.

- Communications.

- Positive attitudes.

- Diverse workforce.

- Being a Community of Trust Committee member.

- Providing the Citizen Fire Academy.

- Professionalism and transparency of all personnel.

- Quick response time when called.

- Engaging open houses – personnel really go in to detail about what they do and how to mitigate risks of fire.

- International reputation speaks highly of the department.

- Cross training of personnel on all services provided.

Other Thoughts and Comments

The community was asked to share any other comments they had about the department or its services. The following written comments were received:

Other Community Comments about the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department (verbatim, in no particular order)

- I think that HR training could be more effective.

- Consider having future meetings in the center of the county in a place with adequate parking.

- I thank the service for their constant care of the community and their accessibility for engagement.

- Much improved interagency coordination with new chief (Bowers).

- Thank you for your exceptional work. I am proud to be a part of a community with such a skilled and dedicated fire and rescue service.

- I have had (thankfully) very little need to contact/use emergency services. However, I have found responders to be serious, capable, and caring about performing their jobs well for the community.

- May be worthwhile to develop a way for callers to talk in real time with incoming crews so that the situation is less surprising when crews show up.

- Having all firefighters certified as EMTs or paramedics is a best practice.

- Best wishes on certification (accreditation).

- Would like to see more staff involved in the community events and organizations that supports the residents.

- Can a majority of the staff afford to live in Fairfax County?

- I have not heard any complaints from Station 438. They are very professional and community driven. Bring back Captain George.

- Even though I ranked the community programs lower than the hard-skill programs like fire suppression and rescue, I believe they are also important to your mission and encourage you to maintain them!

- Fire and Rescue should become more nimble. Is a large fire truck really required to respond to a medical emergency?

- The fire marshal program needs to be reformed!

- Obviously on the cutting edge to include the community in their (strategic planning) process. Very forward thinking in that regard.

- At the community level, there should be more emphasis on fire station involvement with their communities. A two-way street – knows your neighbors and ensures that they understand what is available, and what they can do for themselves.

- From the business community's standpoint, we need to speed the permitting process to get buildings finished and on the tax rolls. We lose businesses to other counties because of the length and difficulty of the Fairfax process.

- More effort and emphasis should be put to building more and stronger ties between local fire stations and the community they serve. Firefighters need to get out more – attend HOA and community meetings; meet the local community; establish relationships.

- I had an incident where there was smoke or odor of fire in a computer. The crew could not find any problem and were skeptical that it even occurred. I did not follow-up but was concerned. I think this should have been raised to a higher level or manufacturer to determine whether similar events occurred.

- A resident of the neighborhood (of which I am president of the civic organization) is a firefighter of a neighboring jurisdiction. He shared with me that he cannot transfer into the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department because he would lose any seniority he has gained. In other words, with 15 years of experience, he would start at the same level as an academy graduate. He said that only leadership at the top levels can enter from the outside. Whether this is true, I do not know, but I would be remiss if I didn't share this potential barrier of entry. Thanks for this opportunity.

- Need to establish reporting of Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department service calls with the Fairfax County Police Department IBRs and go over with the citizens.

- Need to have the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department battalion chiefs meet regularly with the citizens and the Fairfax County Police Department district station commanders.

Appendix 2

Strengths

It is important for any organization to identify its strengths to ensure that it can provide the services requested by the community, and that strengths are consistent with the issues facing the organization. Often, identification of organizational strengths leads to the channeling of efforts toward primary community needs that match those strengths. Programs that do not match organizational strengths, or the primary function of the organization, should be seriously reviewed to evaluate the rate of return on staff time and allocated funds.

Through a consensus process, the internal stakeholders identified the agency's strengths as follows:

Strengths of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department	
Resource rich- funding, equipment, staffing	Personnel – labor groups
Dedication / Pride	Quality of training
Civilian support staff	Demographics / Diversity
Best practices	2017 version core values
Experience / longevity	Leadership
Life safety programs	Public Information Officer
USAR – VA-TF1	Behavioral health resources
Occupational Health Center	Schedule (24-hour shift)
Action oriented	Collaboration to resolve issues/problems
Volunteers	Progressive
Work performance exam	Service delivery model
Resilience	Informal leaders
Collaboration for innovation	Institutional knowledge
Opportunities (education & disciplines)	Information sharing/communication
Active labor groups	Career opportunities / promotions
Robust support services – apparatus, air shop, second set of gear	Fire-based EMS system
Reputation / exposure	Citizens Fire Academy
EMS Boarded OMDs	Return to work program
Community engagement	Outcomes from the Gallagher report

Weaknesses

For any organization to either begin or to continue to move progressively forward, it must not only be able to identify its strengths, but also those areas where it functions poorly or not at all. These areas of needed enhancements are not the same as threats to be identified later in this document, but rather those day-to-day issues and concerns that may slow or inhibit progress. The following items were identified by the internal stakeholders as weaknesses:

Weaknesses of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department	
Lack of empowerment (handling at lowest level)	Personal agendas driving decision-making
Accountability for physical fitness	Lack of budget accountability
Lack of preparation for officers / officer development	High turnover rate for staff jobs
Lack of selecting proper skill sets for uniform staff jobs (i.e. skillsets – needed KSAs)	Lack of transparency, communication, and consistency leading to rumors
Lack of better engagement with IT and solutions.	Outcomes from the Gallagher report.
Information overload (TargetSolutions)	Number of computers at stations
Unfunded initiatives	Generation gap
Too many employee groups	Insufficient number of civilian support staff
Data (systems, analysis, etc.) – too many	Training delivery – and application
Compensation for daywork opportunities - recognition	Inconsistent recurrent training for volunteers vs career
Cumbersome administrative procedures	Civilian turnover due to limited career path
Retention	All hazards approach
Succession planning	Competing priorities – e.g. master calendar
Hiring civilians – uniformed-interview-lack of ranking	Promotional exams – multi day process methodology
Communication	Disciplinary process leadership
Hubris	Excessive SOPs
Social media	Embodiment of a diverse culture

Opportunities

The opportunities for an organization depend on the identification of strengths and weaknesses and how they can be enhanced. The focus of opportunities is not solely on existing service, but on expanding and developing new possibilities both inside and beyond the traditional service area. The internal stakeholders identified the following potential opportunities:

Opportunities for the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department	
Alternative EMS transports - mode	Community paramedicine
Mobile phone apps "pulse point"	Social media / messaging
Educate business community with code regulations	Geographical advantages / resources funding, HazMat, political, national offices
Media	
Grant opportunities	Palliative care
Educational institutions	Specialized training opportunities
Teaching and publication opportunities	Alternate revenue sources
Industry leadership opportunities	Robust healthcare system
Work performance exam – revenue stream	EMS billing – additional revenue to FRD
Build on community volunteerism	Healthcare changes -ACA, AHCA, CMS
FirstNet	Growing technologies
Collaboration with FCPS, FPD, FCSO	Business support / economic development
Experience opportunities – IMT Deployment	Chamber of commerce
Partnerships with industry experts	Board of Supervisors / citizens support
Community engagement / community partnerships GMU smart cities	Relationships across region – mutual aid/COG/NVERS
Retirees / contacts	Fairfax First
Growth in tax base – high property values – tax revenue	Political support

Threats

By recognizing possible threats, an organization can reduce the potential for loss. Fundamental to the success of any strategic plan is the understanding that threats are not completely and/or directly controlled by the organization. Some of the current and potential threats identified by the internal stakeholders were as follows:

Potential Threats to the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department	
Economy	Changing demographics
Terrorism	Media / public image / fake news
Changing technology	Health care crisis
Politics	Medication shortages
Aging infrastructure	Inflation
ALS/paramedic shortages	Unfunded mandates
Epidemics	Natural disasters
Vehicle insurance	Documentation requirements
Dwindling grant funding	Cyber attacks
Privatization	Building construction (lightweight high rise)
Traffic congestion	Litigation
Lifestyle changes/off duty injuries	HIPAA violations
Generation gap	Apparatus and equipment costs
Businesses moving out of county	Aging population
Vehicle technology	Continued growth of mass transit
Lack of available land / property for fire stations	Vertical response
Cost of living / affordable housing	High community expectations
Increased mental health challenges	Airports (international)
Citizen complaints	Competitive hiring compensation
Out of county mutual aid, not reciprocal in frequency/volume/staffing/certifications	
Data demands/requests – FOIA and media	Mission creep
Secure building access	Taxes

Glossary of Terms, Acronyms, and Initialisms

Accreditation   A process by which an association or agency evaluates and recognizes a program of study or an institution as meeting certain predetermined standards or qualifications. It applies only to institutions or agencies and their programs of study or their services. Accreditation ensures a basic level of quality in the services received from an agency.

ACA   Affordable Care Act

AHCA   American Healthcare Act

CERT   Community Emergency Response Team(s)

CFAI   Commission on Fire Accreditation International

CISM   Critical Incident Stress Management

CMS   Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

CPR   Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation

CPSE   Center for Public Safety Excellence

Customer(s)   The person or group who establishes the requirement of a process and receives or uses the outputs of that process; or the person or entity directly served by the department or agency.

Efficiency   A performance indication where inputs are measured per unit of output (or vice versa).

EMS   Emergency Medical Services

Environment   Circumstances and conditions that interact with and affect an organization. These can include economic, political, cultural, and physical conditions inside or outside the boundaries of the organization.

FEMA   Federal Emergency Management Agency

HIPAA   Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

Input   A performance indication where the value of resources are used to produce an output.

ISO   Insurance Services Office

IT   Information and Technology

KSA   Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Mission   An enduring statement of purpose; the organization's reason for existence. Describes what the organization does, for whom it does it, and how it does it.

NVERS	Northern Virginia Emergency Response System
OMD	Office of Medical Director
Outcome	A performance indication where qualitative consequences are associated with a program/service; i.e., the ultimate benefit to the customer.
Output	A performance indication where a quality or number of units produced is identified.
Performance Measure	A specific measurable result for each goal and/or program that indicates achievement.
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
Stakeholder	Any person, group, or organization that can place a claim on, or influence the organization's resources or outputs, is affected by those outputs, or has an interest in or expectation of the organization.
Strategic Goal	A broad target that defines how the agency will carry out its mission over a specific period of time. An aim. The final result of an action. Something to accomplish in assisting the agency to move forward.
Strategic Objective	A specific, measurable accomplishment required to realize the successful completion of a strategic goal.
Strategic Plan	A long-range planning document that defines the mission of the agency and broadly identifies how it will be accomplished, and that provides the framework for more detailed annual and operational plans.
Strategic Planning	The continuous and systematic process whereby guiding members of an organization make decisions about its future, develop procedures and operations to achieve that future, and determine how success is to be measured.
Strategy	A description of how a strategic objective will be achieved. A possibility. A plan or methodology for achieving a goal.
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.
USAR	Urban Search and Rescue
Vision	An idealized view of a desirable and potentially achievable future state - where or what an organization would like to be in the future.

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