



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL **DATE: MAY 23, 2017**
FROM: FIRE DEPARTMENT **WARDS: ALL**
SUBJECT: FIRE DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2022

ISSUE:

Approve the Fire Department Strategic Plan 2017-2022.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council receive and approve the Fire Department Strategic Plan 2017-2022.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Public Safety Committee met on April 19, 2017, with Chair Perry, Vice Chair Melendrez and Member Burnard present, to receive an informational report on the Fire Department Strategic Plan 2017-2011. After discussion the Committee unanimously voted to recommend that the City Council approve the Fire Department Strategic Plan 2017-2022.

BACKGROUND:

In January 2015, the Fire Department embarked upon a strategic planning process to ensure that the Department continues to provide a high level of emergency care, and to better understand and address current and emergent organizational needs. The overall objective was to discover how to tailor Fire Department services to satisfy the changing needs of Riverside's residents.

DISCUSSION:

A Strategic Planning Executive Committee consisting of six Fire Department managers oversaw the efforts of the Strategic Planning Working Group, a cross-sectional body of thirty Fire Department employees representing all levels of the organization. At the conclusion of nine community meetings and seventeen internal departmental meetings, and review of online Citizen Survey results (Attachment 3 to this report), ten areas of primary importance were identified that will guide the Fire Department's goals and objectives. The Strategic Plan's ten primary focus areas encompass Staffing, Fiscal Sustainability, Accreditation, Service Delivery, Fire Prevention, Public Education, Emergency Planning, Workforce Development, Communications, Infrastructure and Technology Development. With a clear direction outlined for the future, the Strategic Plan

will serve as the Fire Department's primary guidance document to navigate challenges and opportunities over the next five years.

Mission Statement and Core Values:

The Fire Department updated its mission statement and core values to better reflect current operations. Formerly, the mission statement read:

The mission of the Fire Department is to preserve and enhance the quality of life for the citizens of the City of Riverside. The Fire Department shall protect life, property, and the environment within the City through proactive life safety, community education, and emergency service programs utilizing responsible fiscal management, a highly trained workforce, progressive technology, and modern equipment. We do this in order to preserve and enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Riverside.

The revised Mission Statement reads:

The mission of the City of Riverside Fire Department is to protect life, property, and the environment by providing exceptional and progressive, all-hazard emergency services, public education and safety programs.

Core Values: Professionalism, Integrity, Teamwork, Ethical, Honesty and Trust.

Strategic Plan Overview – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The strategic planning process provided a unique opportunity for the Fire Department to engage in meaningful dialogue with both internal and community stakeholders. The feedback obtained formed the basis of determining the Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) facing the Fire Department. A brief synopsis of the SWOT analysis is as follows:

Strengths

1. The strength of the Fire Department is dependent upon the hiring and retention of quality employees.
2. The Fire Department is an all-hazards organization that is prepared to respond to a wide array of calls.
3. The Fire Department strives to be accessible to the community at all times.

Weaknesses

1. The Fire Department needs to provide more training for non-sworn personnel.
2. The majority of front line fire apparatus exceeds life expectancy. At this time, there is no vehicle replacement program for fire apparatus.
3. The Fire Department needs a full time supervisor in the 9-1-1 Communications Center.

Opportunities

1. Fire Department operations will be improved by Innovations in technology and equipment.
2. The Fire Department will be strengthened by professional development of personnel.
3. Fire Department resources will be leveraged by Inter-agency collaboration.

Threats

1. The Fire Department may be negatively impacted by evolving hazards and risks.
2. The Fire Department may lose institutional knowledge and experience through staffing attrition.
3. Fire Department response may be hindered by aging vehicle fleet.

Strategic Plan Overview - Ten Focus Areas:

The Strategic Plan encompasses all aspects of operations and all members of the organization. A major objective is to improve the Fire Department's emergency response capability through heightened focus on ten areas of primary organizational importance: Staffing, Fiscal Sustainability, Accreditation, Service Delivery, Fire Prevention, Public Education, Emergency Planning, Workforce Development, Communications, Infrastructure and Technology Development. Following is a brief synopsis of each focus area:

1. Staffing

The Fire Department's civilian support staff is lean for an organization with over 240 full-time positions. Currently, an administrative staff of 17 handles all of the support functions associated with the operation of a large department, including public information and customer service, personnel, payroll, finance and clerical support. The Fire Department will conduct feasibility studies to identify critical staffing needs to ensure all Department divisions and functions are appropriately staffed, and to augment Department programs and services.

2. Fiscal Sustainability

The Fire Department will continue to look for funding outside of the City's general fund to sustain the needs of the organization. The Department will explore partnerships with the community and continue to research available grants and endowments. The Fire Department will also explore new avenues for cost recovery for services, such as pursuing homeowner and commercial insurance reimbursement.

3. Accreditation

The Fire Department will pursue becoming an Accredited Fire Department through the Center of Public Safety Excellence (CPSE). Accreditation is a comprehensive self-assessment and quality improvement model that enables organizations to examine past, current, and future service levels and internal performance and compare them to current research and industry best practices. This process will lead to a more efficient and effective emergency service organization.

4. Service Delivery

The Fire Department strives to provide the best possible emergency medical services (EMS) and pre-hospital health care possible. EMS generates 70 to 80% of total call volume. The Fire Department will emphasize EMS through expanding education and training centered on patient outcomes and best practices within the industry. The Fire Department will participate in trial studies to advance EMS services. The EMS coordinator will also continue to evaluate patient outcomes and to tailor a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Program that will improve treatment methodology in the field.

5. Fire Prevention

Fire Prevention is the Fire Department's number one priority. The Fire Department will compare historic benchmarks to current workloads to evaluate the effectiveness of fire prevention efforts. Based on the analysis, the Fire Marshal will develop recommendations to enhance Fire Prevention programming. Throughout this strategic planning cycle, the Fire Department will emphasize activities to educate the public on the Riverside Municipal Code as it pertains to fire safety. To this end, the Fire Department and Police Department will work collaboratively on curtailing illegal fireworks activity in the City.

6. Public Education

The Fire Department will also expand Public Education outreach. Currently the Fire Department provides public education to the community upon request. The Fire Department's goal over the next two years is to develop a more robust approach to public education. By 2019, Fire will offer more safety-related content and information online and as an application for download to mobile devices. Expanded educational offerings will include topics of general interest including home fire safety, drowning prevention and fireworks safety.

7. Emergency Planning

The City has experienced a noticeable increase in attendance at special events throughout the community. The Fire Department will attempt to mitigate potential incidents that endanger the City's ability to function through enhanced Emergency Planning. The Fire Department will evaluate all special events within the City and develop a process to properly manage the event based on the size and anticipated attendance. The Fire Department will work collaboratively with the Police Department and Museum staff to develop policies and procedures to help ensure that these events remain safe, and to provide for an adequate public safety personnel presence. In the next two years, the Fire Department will also update Pre-Fire plans to reflect hazards that currently exist in the community. In addition, the Fire Department will update its Record Management System with a comprehensive inventory of emergency resources.

8. Enhanced Training and Workforce Development

The Fire Department's main training focus will always be on preparing for emergency incidents that may occur within the City. Over the next five years, the Department will augment existing training programs to include supervisory training specialized for Fire Captains and Chief Officers. The Department will also expand existing employee wellness programs to include physical well-being and mental health components.

9. Departmental Communications

The Fire Department will strive to improve information sharing with all members of the organization and the community. Over the next 12 months, an internal Communications Committee will form to evaluate current communication methods and develop recommendations for improvement. The Department will also evaluate technology needs and make upgrades as necessary.

10. Infrastructure and Technology Development

The Fire Department must provide adequate resources to ensure excellent service to the community. The Fire Department will thoroughly evaluate current vehicle replacement needs.

Along with recommendations on replacing fire apparatus, the Fire Department will place a higher emphasis on maintaining and replacing life safety equipment as required. The Fire Department will continue to evaluate capital improvement needs with the intent of “modernizing” existing facilities. Lastly, the Fire Department will improve information technology by expanding online services. This effort will result in a greater presence to the community.

Next Steps

Upon City Council Approval, the Fire Department will begin implementation of the Strategic Plan. An implementation team consisting of staff from various divisions within the Department will assume responsibility for completing assigned portions of the Strategic Plan. As part of their duties, they will at times bring together working groups of other staff tasked with a specific element of the plan. The Fire Department will return to the City Council with a Strategic Plan progress update in July 2019.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this informational report. Items with a significant budgetary impact, such as augmented staffing, will be addressed as funding allows.

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availability of funds: Scott G. Miller, PhD, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer
Approved by: Alexander T. Nguyen, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form: Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Concurs with;



Jim Perry, Chair
Public Safety Committee

Attachment:

1. Presentation
2. Fire Department Strategic Plan 2017-2022
3. External Survey Summary