

NORTH CHARLESTON FIRE DEPARTMENT



2016-2021 STRATEGIC PLAN



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Introduction

North Charleston Fire Department (NCFD) provides the community with fire suppression, emergency medical services, basic and technical rescue, hazardous materials mitigation, water-related emergency response, public fire and life safety education, fire investigation, community risk reduction, and emergency management and preparedness to North Charleston, South Carolina’s residents, businesses, and visitors. The agency is consistently working to achieve and/or maintain the highest level of professionalism and efficiency on behalf of those it serves, and thus, 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 CFAI *Fire & Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual 9th Ed.*, and 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 agency’s members to critically examine paradigms, values, philosophies, beliefs and desires, and challenged individuals to work in the best interest of the “team.” It further provided the agency with an opportunity to participate in the development of their organization’s long-term direction and focus. Members of the organization’s external and internal stakeholders’ groups demonstrated commitment to this important project and remain committed to the document’s completion.

This strategic plan, with its foundation based in community and membership input, revisits the organization’s pillars (Mission, Values, and Vision) and sets forth a continuous improvement plan that offers a road map for a justifiable and sustainable future.



**NORTH CHARLESTON FIRE DEPARTMENT
STRATEGIC PLAN
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Community and Organizational Background

North Charleston is the third-largest city in South Carolina, with incorporated areas in Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties. The city has experienced significant growth since its incorporation in 1972, boasting a population of more than 104,000 in 76.6 square miles.

The jurisdiction is bordered by the Ashley River to the west and the Cooper River to the east. The terrain is generally level, ranging from sea level to twenty feet on the peninsula, with gradual elevation toward inland areas. Marsh areas surround the river banks and low-lying areas, and roadways crossing those areas are limited. Interstate 26 and 526 provide access to many key areas in the jurisdiction, though traffic congestion can greatly hamper the use of those interstates during morning and afternoon rush hours.

The first fire department serving the area now known as North Charleston was the St. Phillip's and St. Michael's Fire Department, founded in 1935. Just two years later, the North Charleston Fire Department was also formed. In 1959, the departments merged to become the North Charleston Consolidated Fire Department. With the incorporation of the city of North Charleston incorporated, the fire department became two separate entities - the City of North Charleston Fire Department and the North Charleston Fire District - but again merged in 1996 as the present day North Charleston Fire Department.

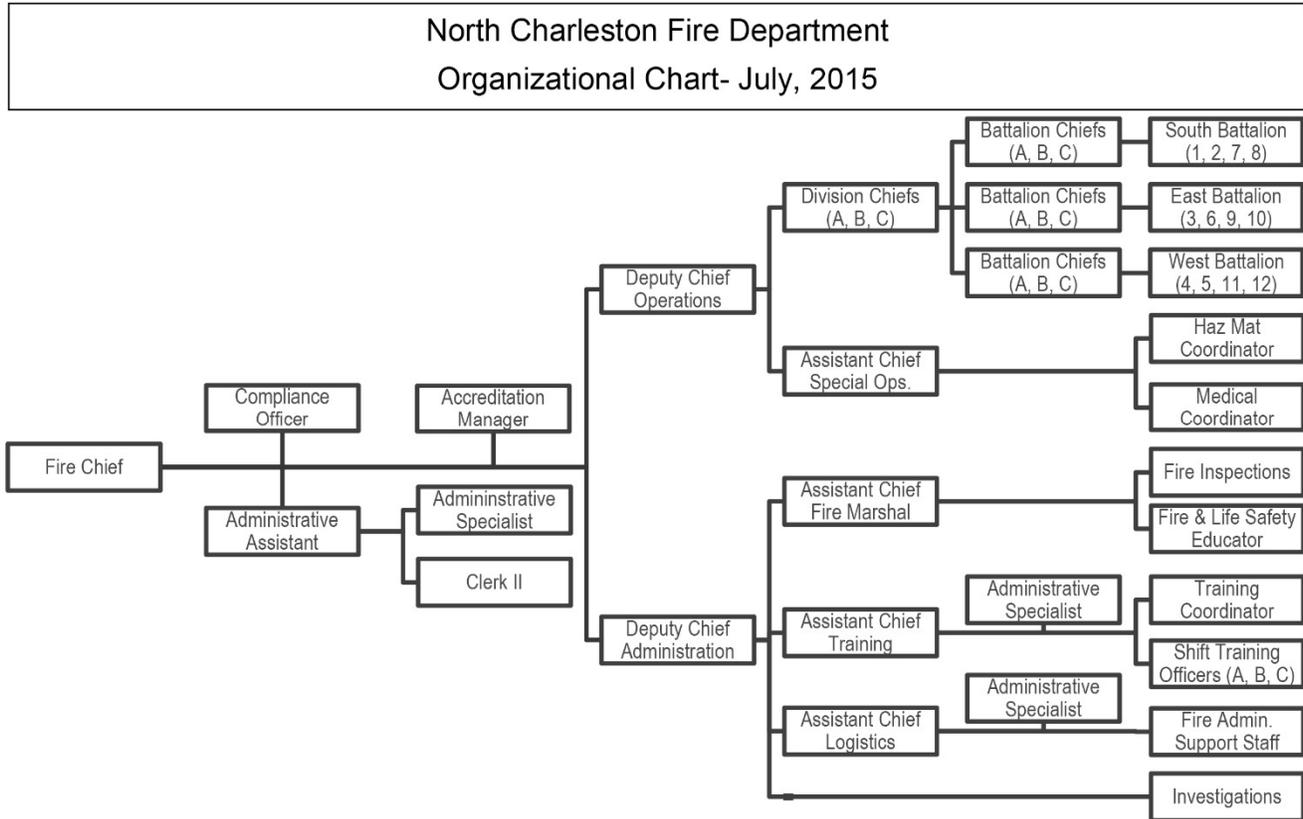


Today, the North Charleston Fire Department (NCFD) serves from 11 fire stations with more than 250 personnel responding to more than 22,000 emergency incidents annually. The NCFD also maintains a fixed training facility and an administrative headquarters that is located in city hall. A cadre of equipment is utilized to provide fire suppression, technical rescue, hazardous materials, first responder emergency medical services and marine rescue and shipboard firefighting services to the area.





Organizational Structure





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 In order to ensure that the community remains a 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. Goodstein, Nolan, & Pfeiffer define strategic planning 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

The U.S. Federal Benchmarking Consortium Study Team goes on to explain that, to fully understand strategic planning, it is necessary to look at a few key words in the strategic planning definition:

- **continuous** - refers to the view that strategic planning must be an ongoing process, not merely an event to produce a plan;
- **systematic** - recognizes that strategic planning must be a structured and deliberate effort, not something that happens on its own;
- **process** - recognizes that one of the benefits of strategic planning is to undertake thinking strategically about the future and how to get there, which is much more than production of a document (e.g., a strategic plan);
- **guiding members** - identifies not only senior unit executives, but also employees. (It also considers stakeholders and customers who may not make these decisions, but who affect the decisions being made.);
- **procedures and operations** - means the full spectrum of actions and activities from aligning the organization behind clear long-term goals to putting in place organizational and personal incentives, allocating resources, and developing the workforce to achieve the desired outcomes; and
- **how success is to be measured** - recognizes that strategic planning must use appropriate measures to determine if the organization has achieved success.

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

² Ibid





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, 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 to that common purpose, and how progress and levels 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

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 for, and 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. Develop 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 Gregory Bulanow and his team for their leadership and



External Stakeholders Work Session

commitment to this process.

Initial development of this strategic plan took place in May 2016, beginning with a meeting hosted by representatives from the CPSE for members of the community (external stakeholders). Input received from the meeting revolved around community expectations and concerns, as well as positive and other comments about the organization. Those present at the meeting were as follows:

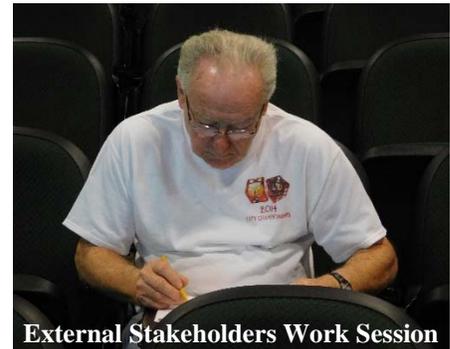
North Charleston Fire Department External Stakeholders			
<i>Neil Bailey</i>	<i>Ed Bergeron</i>	<i>Karen Brack</i>	<i>Ron Brinson</i>
<i>Shannon Cook</i>	<i>Rob Dewey</i>	<i>Gerinda Doctor</i>	<i>Tommy Doyle</i>
<i>Sequoia Grant</i>	<i>Tony L. Hill</i>	<i>Kay Hyman</i>	<i>Gene Ice</i>
<i>Virginia White Jamison</i>	<i>Rhonda Jerome</i>	<i>Lance T. Johnson</i>	<i>Gary Killough</i>
<i>Jeremiah D. Lee</i>	<i>Todd Musselman</i>	<i>Rashard Pratt</i>	<i>Ryan Reynolds</i>
<i>Mike Schnabel</i>	<i>Charlynnne Smith</i>	<i>Tawayne W. Weems</i>	<i>Mike Windham</i>
<i>Charles H. Yoho</i>			





Community Group Findings

A key element of NCFD’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.



External Stakeholders Work Session

Community Priorities

In order to dedicate time, energy, and resources to services most desired by its community, the fire 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 organization through a process of direct comparison. The results were as follows:

Community Identified Prioritized Programs of the North Charleston Fire Department		
PROGRAMS	RANKING	SCORE
Emergency Medical Services	1	130
Fire Suppression	2	125
Technical Rescue	3	86
Community Risk Reduction	4	71
Hazardous Materials Mitigation	5	68
Emergency Management and Preparedness	6	65
Water-Related Emergency Response	7	61
Public Fire and Life Safety Education	8	58
Fire Investigation	9	56





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 North Charleston Fire Department (verbatim, in priority order)

1. Response time/Timeliness in response to fire calls. Timely/quick/rapid response to 911 calls, schools, homes, public, etc. Rapid response to medical/fire emergencies. Timely emergency response to all types of calls, with full resources. (46.5)
2. Public Education: Educate/Train public [on] fire safety and first aid. More community training. Community training on what to do in the event of certain emergencies. Public fire education. Help community in knowledge of how to prevent possible danger. Educate the public on the most current research and data related to fires and fire safety. Educate the public and schools on safety and fire prevention (i.e.: smoke detectors, flammable materials, first aid, responsibilities of community to prevent serious problems) (24)
3. Fire suppression: One of the keys to any fire department - this must come above all else as the primary initiative. Put fires out efficiently and [illegible] as possible. (24)
4. Internal Training/Education: Best of training. Continuous training. Well-trained department, capable of handling all situations. Staff well-trained for any emergency. Invest in personnel by continuing education, supplying all supplies needed. (20)
5. Community Involvement: [including] with non-profit organizations. Connect with community through events in schools, neighborhoods, etc. Be more involved in the community projects. (18)
6. EMS. Life support. Personnel able to provide life saving measures prior to ambulance arrival. Save lives of those in danger. (13)
7. Resources and Maintenance: Every resource needed to do their work and the best of equipment given and properly maintained. State-of-the-art resources – equipment and technology. Have all necessary equipment needed for any emergency. Maintain reliable, functioning equipment. Keep vehicles maintained. Testing hoses and other equipment regularly. (13)
8. Professional/Professionalism/Professional behavior – that the services provided are done so by well-trained, community oriented individuals. Quest for professionalism – informed leadership. Conducting oneself with the public as a highly-regarded member of the city. (12.5)
9. Save lives and property. Do the best of ability to stop fire/save life. (11)





10. Keep pace with growth: Establish fire stations in close proximity to public, adding stations as communities grow! North Charleston is growing very fast – One of the top priorities is to keep up so as to continue to provide the excellent services they now provide. (9)
11. Code Enforcement: Making sure the citizens/visitors are safe through code enforcement. Use common sense and practicality when enforcing codes. (8)
12. Recruitment/Hiring/Retention: Hiring of qualified personnel. Recruiting and maintaining qualified staff that care about public safety and work well with others from all backgrounds. Hiring bilingual staff and providing bilingual materials and education to the non-English speaking community. (8)
13. Youth Interaction: Help our youth through cadet/explorer programs to become better adults, citizens. Be concerned about the youth of the community. (7)
14. Fiscal Responsibility: That the services provided are done so at a cost that reflects good stewardship of resources (5)
15. Prevention: Working with the public and commercial businesses to mitigate structural fires before they occur. (5)
16. Respond to all emergency situations. (5)
17. Smoke Detectors: Continue to provide smoke detectors to residents, especially the elderly – and install and check them. Continue to make sure each residence has working smoke detectors. (4)
18. That the services are consistent with the identified needs of the community. (4)
19. Courteous interactions with public. (4)
20. Service: “Customer Service” mindset. Serve the community in any way. (4)
21. Getting to emergency area safely. (4)
22. Entrapment response. (4)
23. Fire Investigation: Investigate all fires. (4)
24. That services are equitable for all, regardless of income, religion, orientation, etc. (3)
25. More CPR training offered to churches for fire (impacting masses at one time). (3)
26. Work with school district to provide training and awareness to staff and students. (3)
27. External Relationships: Good working relationship with other public entities. Relating well with communities and all the public. (3)
28. Be helpful in cases when they can, not when they have to. (3)
29. Regular safety inspections of public venues. (3)
30. Always be prepared when on scene. (3)
31. The “Sofa Store Fire” will never happen (here again / never in North Charleston) – well organized, everyone doing their part. (3)
32. Respond to calls for vehicle-related incidents. (3)





33. That the organization reflects the community they serve. (2)
34. Community preparedness for disasters. (2)
35. Help resource officers in schools more with identifying high schoolers who would like to be firefighters. (2)
36. Positive attitudes – positive morale. (2)
37. Make sure construction companies are completely forthcoming with all permitted work, making sure owner is present with walk through. (1)
38. Show genuine care for community. (1)
39. Be well-prepared for terrorism and disasters. (1)
40. Commitment to job. (1)
41. Be the first on the scene. (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 or incorrect information.

Areas of Community Concern about the North Charleston Fire Department (verbatim, in priority order)

1. None. I have no concerns. No concerns – we continue to improve with new/increased personnel and equipment. (20)
2. Growth: Keeping up with city's growth and development – volume and diversity – structures and populace. With growth of the city, the infrastructure of the departments stays at pace. With the city growing, making sure there are enough fire stations. Maintaining rapid response times in this growing community. (16)
3. Internal Training: That all firemen are adequately trained prior to fighting fires. Making sure that everyone has enough training. Training may be too easy. (12)
4. Traffic Impact on Response: I am extremely concerned that train and truck traffic in the Park Circle area is affecting response time. Traffic has gotten extremely bad due to roads not keeping up with the growth of North Charleston. Plans should keep in mind that, however great the fire department is, it's useless if it can't get to where it needs to be. (10)
5. Quality of personnel. Quality of hires may be less than the best, based on salaries the city provides. (6)
6. Is there sufficient preparation in North Charleston? (5)
7. Not offering free fire inspections or fire extinguisher inspections. (5)
8. Blocking traffic needlessly for fire or rescue. (5)
9. That the city may not purchase all equipment that will be required. (5)





10. Adequate resources? Equipment? Technology? Manpower? (5)
11. Additional stations. (5)
12. Spread too thin. Not enough fire departments. (5)
13. First due engine being required to lay a supply line when the extra time is better served at the incident scene, when possibly might have a life safety issue. (5)
14. That the organization is adequately funded. (4)
15. Driving like a “maniac” to a non-emergency. (4)
16. Is there enough people in department to keep everyone safe? (4)
17. Continue truck replacement schedule. (4)
18. All fire stations should be modernized! (public perception and resources) (4)
19. Not paid well enough. (4)
20. Working closer with departments other than in Charleston County. (4)
21. Concern about the organization being internally focused as opposed to community focused – more outreach. (3)
22. Calling for units that are farther out, knowing a department closer has the said equipment and manpower for the incident. (3)
23. I worry that our fire personnel are not supported financially/mentally. (3)
24. That prevention educational services are adequately funded. (2)

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 North Charleston Fire Department (verbatim, in no particular order)

- The North Charleston [Fire Department] has great community admiration. Their participation in community activities is wonderful, including the “Citizen Public Safety Academy.”
- Response time excellent.
- Care for property for minimal damage.
- Emergency medical first responder (Great).
- Providing smoke alarms and annual checks great.
- Professionalism excellent.
- Great leadership.





- Excellent department.
- Represents the city excellent.
- Very qualified.
- Notable quality of leadership at command levels.
- Professionalism is growing.
- Pride in achievement.
- Planning for future – key to good management.
- Public approval!
- Doing a fantastic job.
- Excellent work – I can sleep well at night knowing we are safe.
- Pay raises!
- Updated training continuous.
- Have not had any encounters with fire department.
- My interactions with the department have always been positive.
- Response times have also been great! The EMS and fire always arrive quickly when contacted.
- Every firefighter that I have met seem to enjoy their job.
- Fire department gives back to the community.
- Making the effort to conduct training thru multi-department drills.
- Being invited to meetings.
- Closer working with back-filling during large scale operations.
- The department has been seen publicly as going through ground-up improvements over the past 10 years, maintain this.
- Professional.
- Upgrading equipment for firefighter safety and response.
- At our school, NCFD was called due to a fire extinguisher being released. It got into ventilation, etc. They were so quick to respond and very professional and kept us very safe.
- Speaking about my area, they're great.
- I would like to see them more with our kids because they are so respected.
- Departments are always checking equipment.
- Departments always seem in order.
- Firefighters always seem to want to serve their community.





- As a school representative, I can affirm the quick response by the NCFD to requests for medical aid and for fire alarms that are triggered.
- The NCFD is partnering with our school for an arts project. We appreciate the community partnership.
- Well trained.
- Positive attitudes.
- Compassionate.
- Great community outreach for low-income, disabled, and elderly families.
- We hope that the NCFD continues to share and provide safety and educational services to the community.
- Continue to provide (lifesaving) free services/smoke detectors and preventative fire equipment.
- The department has always worked well with Dorchester District 2.
- Always been available and a big help when needed.
- Leadership.
- Partnerships.
- Thoughtful processes – commitment to excellence.
- Willingness to examine processes and make adjustments.
- Responds timely and professionally.
- Is supportive of ALL citizens.
- Always professional (in dress and personality).
- Gets involved with local non-profits.
- Code officers do a great job.
- Firefighters do a great job.
- Facilities all look great.
- Fortunately, I haven't needed NCFD services!
- When in the community they are great role models.
- The community work they do on site is great.
- Good people to work with all around.
- My experience with North Charleston Fire and EMS has been very positive.
- Inspections always done correctly and thoroughly.
- Any incidents I've experienced have quick responses.





- Christmas parade shows tremendous care.

Other Thoughts and Comments

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

Other Community Comments about the North Charleston Fire Department (verbatim, in no particular order)

- Thank you for your service and all you do!
- Very proud of the amazing team of professional firefighters.
- NCFD is a very well led organization – kudos to Chief Bulanow and staff for their excellence.
- The fire department is doing an outstanding job.
- Excellent department with highly trained and qualified personnel.
- NCFD has made great strides in operational performance, [illegible], professionalism and strategic leadership!!
- I have a personal friend in the fire department of N.C. and I am very proud of their work. To me, everything is in order, just keep on doing what you are doing – constant improvement to always be the best!
- Would like to see a computer program (like the police “RAIDS Online”) so as a community we know why trucks are in our neighborhood and the type of call they respond to. I feel neighborhood associations could use this info to help within their community.
- Recruitment and retention of good people is important.
- Keep up the good work.
- Appreciate the high level of care the NCFD cares for its employees. The Coastal Crisis Chaplaincy is constantly notified of how we can be helpful.
- One of the best departments in the state.
- I live and work in North Charleston and appreciate you all!!
- We appreciate the response that is given to our area when they are needed.
- They are great.
- We are pleased with the services provided by the fire department.
- I may not be aware of any, but I have not seen any community outreach programs (I am sure they exist). I am also not aware of educating the less fortunate communities on public safety (this may require going into those communities due to high poverty rates). Also having bilingual employees on site.





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, as well as the organization’s perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. The work sessions involved participation by the broad organization representation in attendance, as named below and pictured to follow.

North Charleston Fire Department Internal Stakeholder Representatives			
Grey Allred <i>Captain</i>	Andrew Baker <i>Engineer</i>	Corey Bates <i>Firefighter</i>	Donald Blakeley <i>Engineer</i>
Karen Bosart <i>Administrative Assistant</i>	Bianca Bourbeau <i>Fire & Life Safety Educator/PIO</i>	Donald Bowen <i>Captain</i>	Michael Bowers <i>Captain</i>
Broderick Brayboy <i>Firefighter</i>	Benjamin Brinson <i>Firefighter</i>	Adam Brown <i>Engineer</i>	Gregory Bulanow <i>Fire Chief</i>
James Burton <i>Engineer</i>	Nicholas Bybee <i>Firefighter</i>	Steve Coffin <i>HazMat Coordinator</i>	Brandon Curran <i>Engineer</i>
Rick Dangerfield <i>Compliance Officer</i>	Bryan Delaney <i>Captain</i>	Stephen Feinberg <i>Battalion Chief</i>	Andrew Frattaroli <i>Engineer</i>
Shaun Gadsden <i>Shift Training Officer Captain</i>	Michael Gay <i>Captain</i>	Michael Goossens <i>Shift Training Officer Captain</i>	Tian Griffieth <i>Firefighter</i>
John Gypin <i>Engineer</i>	Dean Hatchell <i>EMS Coordinator</i>	James Heinzman <i>Firefighter</i>	John Henderson <i>Captain</i>
Gary Henry <i>Division Chief</i>	Norman Hritz III <i>Captain</i>	Stephanie Julazadeh <i>Captain</i>	William Kennedy <i>Engineer</i>
Cindy Killete <i>Fire Marshal</i>	Matthew McDowell <i>Assistant Chief of Training</i>	Brian Miller <i>Firefighter</i>	Kyle Minick <i>Deputy Chief of Operations</i>
Joseph Munn <i>Deputy Chief of Administration</i>	Paxton Parrish <i>Captain</i>	David Pfau <i>Captain</i>	Richard Porzia <i>Engineer</i>
Timothy Potter <i>Firefighter</i>	Christian Rainey <i>Firefighter</i>	Vince Ranucci <i>Captain</i>	David Reindollar <i>Captain</i>
Matt Rhoton <i>Division Chief</i>	Anthony Saraceni <i>Firefighter</i>	Greg Schelest III <i>Engineer</i>	Donovan Snovel <i>Engineer</i>
Nicholas Sooter <i>Firefighter</i>	Rebecca Sterner <i>Firefighter</i>	John Whetsell <i>Division Chief</i>	Andrew Woodall <i>Firefighter</i>
Jason Wooldridge <i>Firefighter</i>			





North Charleston Fire Department Internal Stakeholders

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. After presenting a revision to the entire workgroup and discussing the options, the consensus was to adopt the following:

The North Charleston Fire Department exists to improve and protect the quality of life within our service area through education, prevention, and emergency response.





Values

Values embraced by all members of an organization are extremely important, as they recognize the features that make up the personality of the organization. The agency's internal stakeholders agreed to the following:



Honor: To live up to and carry forward the noble traditions of our profession.

Courage: The physical and moral strength to venture, persevere, and overcome adversity.

Compassion: The desire to serve all in a time of need.

The Mission and Values are the foundation of this organization. The individuals who make up the North Charleston Fire Department will be guided by them in the accomplishment of organizational goals and achievement of NCFD's Vision.

Vision

Internal stakeholders collaborated on a vision of where the organization will be in the future, when this strategic plan is accomplished. This vision is intended as a target of excellence to strive toward, and provides a basis for NCFD's goals and objectives.

We envision that by 2021 the North Charleston Fire Department will provide industry-leading operational performance through values-based service to our personnel and our community.

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.





Strengths

It is important for any organization to identify its strengths in order to assure that it is capable of providing the services requested by the community and to ensure 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 North Charleston Fire Department	
People (Diversity, Pride, Brotherhood)	Interagency operability (auto aid)
Apparatus	Growth
Facilities	Cooperation
Insurance (health and supplemental)	Training
Outreach	Ownership
Response times	Self-evaluation and improvement
Special Operations	Professionalism and appearance
Kindness, compassion, community involvement -presence	Operating expertise
Committees (input from members)	Dedication
Reputation	Respect
Rewarding experience	Logistics and equipment
Community service	Command presence
Recognition	Promotion/opportunity
Flexibility and change	Squads
Aggressive	Fire suppression
Competitive	Fire prevention/education
Passion	Desire to serve/help
Reputation	Leadership (all levels)
Passion	Desire to serve/help
Reputation	Leadership (all levels)
Mayor/City Council relationship/support	Accreditation
Culture (firefighter attitudes and responses)	Relationship building
Fire department members as a whole	Our dispatchers
S.O.G. (value guideline vs procedure, can prove value of decision making process – autonomy)	





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 North Charleston Fire Department	
Morale (location-dependent)	Training -inconsistency among shifts
Uniforms	Special operations funding and staffing
Time management (Top to bottom, prioritizing, managing, communicating, last minute events/overlooking)	Morning schedule (events, etc.)
	Not enough squads
	Incident reports/Firehouse
Lack of personal responsibility (taking ownership and pride)	Communication - meaningful feedback – classes –scheduling (consistency)
Consistency in discipline and praise (perception)	Documentation (reporting, streamlining) preplans and EMS reports
Evaluation process	Event scheduling
Teamwork (one team, all shifts – equally)	Lack of reserve units
Hiring process (bring in those who share values)	Lack of trust and relationship between management and line personnel
Budget requests (process)	Lack of follow thru
Workload - management	Social media policy
Pay (reward) special assignments / specialized skill incentives	Probation/promotional manuals: process →re-evaluation of books, timeliness →revision
Public relations: Staffing, Partnerships	Micro management
Transfers	Freelancing
Committee selection or hiring board – need to define process and committee member sign-up (i.e. 1% activity)	Lack of perceived value in our jobs
	Station repairs
	Fast tracking personnel
Lack of meaningful critiques/hot washes	Maintenance
Some toxic personnel	Station supplies (batteries)
Professional development	Culture
Active and engaged leadership	Information sharing





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:

Potential Opportunities for the North Charleston Fire Department	
Increase coverage area: Ashley River, Old Fort, Lincolnton, C&B, Watson Hill, and Hanahan	Improve maintenance staffing/scheduling and quality
Improve ability to communicate with non-English speaking community	Increase pay for position and higher education (incentives)
Increase training opportunities: acquired structures, increased funding for travel/training, multi-jurisdictional training	Receive feedback from EMS, concerning medical calls to improve our care and for personal knowledge of outcome
Recruitment through community partnerships	Increase wages due to increased tax area
Improve maintenance staffing/scheduling and quality	Enhance relationships with other city departments (police, PW, etc.)
Additional PSA - better info to community, paid advertising and social media	Use our assets to attract higher-profile people to NCFD (regional meetings, training, etc.)
Technology improvements –software and tablets for apparatus	Staffing increase (training, PubEd, public information)
Charleston County training facilities	Work schedule
Expanding recruit school	ALS department
National Fire Academy and SCFA	Expanding automatic aid group
City allotting department-specific grant writers	Youth and school outreach



Internal Stakeholders Work Session

Threats

By recognizing possible threats, an organization can reduce the potential for loss.



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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 North Charleston Fire Department

Budget/finances	Unfunded mandates
Increase demand for service, increasing call volume, need for sooner apparatus purchasing	Public perception (misconceptions, cognitive dissonance)
Municipal administration (politics)	Lack of sufficient retirement
EMS short staffing/shutting down trucks	Unrealistic external expectations
Threat of violence	Threats to retirement system
Disparity of service with other agencies and departments (internal and external)	Growth and annexation, infrastructure -> increase response time (roadways)
Lack of perceived value in our job	Abuse of 911 system
General communication with other local agencies	Negative press
Recruitment and retention	Cyber attacks
Terrorist attacks	Weaker building codes
Crime	Pay scale of other departments
Increases in benefit costs	Lack of future funding
Increased departmental demands accelerating wearing down of apparatus/equipment	



Internal Stakeholder Work Session

Critical Issues and Service Gaps

Following the identification and review of the agency's SWOT, separate groups of internal



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stakeholders met to identify themes as primary critical issues and service gaps.

Raw Critical Issues and Service Gaps Identified by Internal Stakeholders		
Culture/Behaviors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of personal responsibility • Consistency in discipline and praise • Hiring process • Active and engaged leadership • Lack of trust in management • Lack of follow-through • Fast-tracking personnel • Micromanagement • Lack of perceived value in our jobs • Culture • Threat of violence • Recruitment and retention 	Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Committee • Consistency • Use of time • Multijurisdictional • Funding • Professional Development (and manuals) • Streamlining/improving use of FIREHOUSE/reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing information - EMS - Inspections • Evaluations • Probation • Lack of meaningful critiques 	Professional Development (personnel/cultural development) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward and recognition • Evaluation • Acting • Transfers • Micromanagement
Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public perception • Media • Internal • External • Consistency of recognition and discipline, rewards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Categories, levels, different criteria • Fire calendar • Information sharing • Municipal administration (politics)-positive relationship • Disparity of services with other agencies and departments • Public relations • Public education 	Use of time and resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training use • Reporting • Workload and management • Time management • Pay incentives • Staffing and partnerships • Transfers (TDY and permanent) • Committee selection • Events scheduling • Station repairs • Special operations • Traffic impact on response • Facilities • Annexation and expansion • Benefits • Wearing-down of apparatus and equipment • Unfunded mandates and expectations • Retirement • Abuse of 911 system • EMS staffing/shutting down trucks • Pay scales • Lack of future funding 	Scheduling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workload • Organization/planning • Public relations event • Acting • Transfers
Job Satisfaction / Personnel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hiring Process - Recruitment (specialization, language) - Retention - Workload - Uniforms/shorts - Pay and benefits - Additional education - Transfer and acting assignments 	Operational Performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning - Growth - Training - Communications 	Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active listening • Disconnect between management and line • Rigs out of service • Preplans • Hydrants • 0830 Events • Public relations events • Micromanagement • Free-lancing • Training • Manpower (1 crew, 2 apparatus)
		Customer Service Expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistent service - Education (PubEd, fire prevention, community risk reduction, social media, outreach) - Staff (shift PIO, shift Public Educator) - Growth (stations, traffic, emergency response planning)

Strategic Initiatives

Having reviewed the agency's critical issues and service gaps, the following strategic initiatives were identified as the foundation for the development of goals and objectives.





Strategic Initiatives Determined by Internal Stakeholders

Internal Communications	Workforce Planning	External Communications
Personnel Development and Training	Growth and Sustainability	Organizational Planning

Goals and Objectives

In order to continuously achieve the mission of the NCFD, 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 NCFD’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 NCFD leadership.

“Goals allow you to control the direction of change in your favor.”

Brian Tracy,
Author



Internal Stakeholders Work Session

Goal 1	Manage the workload to increase job satisfaction.
Objective 1A	Conduct a workload analysis for operations personnel.
Timeframe	1 year
	Assigned to: Deputy Chief of Operations
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the workload of operations personnel and identify time consuming and/or labor intensive tasks. Evaluate the value of these tasks and determine if the tasks can be eliminated or the



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frequency reduced.

- Identify more efficient ways to complete necessary tasks through process changes or through the use of technology.
- Evaluate the possibility of out-sourcing labor intensive tasks.
- Reduce, eliminate, outsource or streamline time consuming and/or labor intensive tasks.

Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: TBD
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Objective 1B Develop parameters to effectively manage daily tasks and assignments.

Timeframe	1 year	Assigned to:	Deputy Chief of Operations
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- Critical Tasks**
- Research workload management processes for operations personnel.
 - Research programs and process revisions for leave reporting and assignment notifications.
 - Evaluate various models and propose options to operations officers.
 - Develop and implement managed workload activity scheduling.

Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0
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Objective 1C Develop a standardized process for activity scheduling.

Timeframe	1 year	Assigned to:	Deputy Chief of Operations
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- Critical Tasks**
- Review the current process for activity scheduling and determine information gaps.
 - Identify specific information and units required for each event when entered into the calendar.
 - Develop an SOG for event scheduling.
 - Train personnel on the event scheduling procedures and implement the SOG.

Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0
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Objective 1D Determine and maintain sufficient in-service units to achieve response goals.

Timeframe	1 year	Assigned to:	Deputy Chief of Operations
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- Critical Tasks**
- Utilize the Standards of Cover to determine response goals.
 - Report findings and determine the number of units that are needed to stay in service to meet response goals.
 - Establish guidelines for when and how units go out of service.
 - Communicate and utilize these guidelines and limits when scheduling activities.

Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0
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Goal 2	Develop the workforce to provide operational performance in accordance with our values.	
Objective 2A	Conduct an analysis of the current positions within our organizational structure.	
Timeframe	1 year – 18 months	Assigned to: Deputy Chief of Administration
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review job descriptions to determine if they accurately describe current duties. • Research other staffing positions that are needed to accomplish our goals. • Identify staffing gaps that are needed to accomplish our mission. • Develop a report identifying needed job description changes and staffing gaps. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: City funded
Objective 2B	Develop a program to recruit a diverse and stable workforce.	
Timeframe	1 year	Assigned to: Deputy Chief of Administration
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify barriers to effective recruiting within our community. • Research best practices for effective recruiting. • Identify community groups or individuals who can assist with recruiting. • Create and implement a program to recruit candidates to meet our needs. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: TBD	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0
Objective 2C	Develop a values-based hiring process.	
Timeframe	6 months – 1 year	Assigned to: Deputy Chief of Administration
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research other organizations that are effective in values-based hiring. • Identify desired qualities for potential employees based on our values. • Develop a method to match desired qualities with potential employees. • Revise hiring procedures based on these findings. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0
Objective 2D	Utilize youth workforce development programs.	
Timeframe	2 years	Assigned to: Deputy Chief of Administration
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify existing youth workforce development programs. • Determine which programs would meet our needs. • Utilize existing programs or develop and implement new programs. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: TBD	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0
Objective 2E	Develop an employee retention program.	
Timeframe	2 years and ongoing	Assigned to: Deputy Chief of Administration
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify reasons for employee departure. • Identify reasons why long term employees have remained with the department. • Research successful retention programs from other organizations. • Develop and implement a retention program based on these findings. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0



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Goal 3	Improve internal communication to increase job satisfaction.		
Objective 3A	Reorganize the communications committee.		
Timeframe	3 months	Assigned to:	Fire Chief
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announce the reorganization of the communications committee and the process for selecting new members. • Evaluate the volunteers and select representatives from throughout the ranks of the department. • Identify an effective schedule for regular committee meetings. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0	
Objective 3B	Identify internal communication gaps and develop an improvement plan.		
Timeframe	1 year	Assigned to:	Fire Chief
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a survey to determine base level measures and identify communication gaps. • Evaluate results and formulate solutions to internal communication gaps. • Research other organizations to identify effective communication practices. • Develop a plan to improve internal communication. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0	
Objective 3C	Implement the internal communications plan.		
Timeframe	5 years	Assigned to:	Fire Chief
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train all personnel on the internal communications plan. • Implement the plan. • Conduct a follow up survey annually to determine the effectiveness of the plan in relation to the baseline measures. • Implement revisions in the internal communications plan if needed. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0	
Objective 3D	Utilize training programs to improve the communication skills of personnel.		
Timeframe	5 years	Assigned to:	Assistant Chief of Training
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize existing programs or develop the capability to offer internal communications training. • Schedule 90% of officers to complete communications training. • Provide opportunities for all personnel to participate in communications training. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0	



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Goal 4	Improve communication with external stakeholders to enhance service to our community.	
Objective 4A	Develop an external stakeholder communications plan.	
Timeframe	2 years	Assigned to: Fire Chief
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine communication themes and goals in coordination with the City. • Research external communications methods used by other fire departments and organizations. • Survey external stakeholder representatives to determine informational needs and preferred mediums for various audiences. • Develop an external stakeholder communication plan in coordination with the City. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0
Objective 4B	Implement the external stakeholder communications plan.	
Timeframe	3 years	Assigned to: Fire Chief
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present the external communications plan to department personnel. • Identify personnel with the skills and desire to implement the external stakeholder communications plan. • Develop an external communications team and implement the plan. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: TBD
Objective 4C	Revise and enhance the external communications plan.	
Timeframe	3 years and ongoing	Assigned to: Communications team
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather feedback from external stakeholder representatives. • Evaluate feedback and consider adjustments for improvement of the external communications plan. • Implement revisions in the external communications plan. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0



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Goal 5	Provide personal and professional growth opportunities to increase job satisfaction.	
Objective 5A	Identify and provide professional growth opportunities for all personnel.	
Timeframe	2 years	Assigned to: Division Chiefs
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a standardized process to identify the individual career goals for all personnel. • Identify the training and educational opportunities that are needed to achieve these goals. • Identify the station/apparatus assignments that are needed to achieve these goals and develop criteria and processes for assignment requests. • Identify the project, committee, special team assignments and other opportunities that are needed to achieve these goals. • Document these goals and track progress on an annual basis. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0
Objective 5B	Align committees with the current needs of the department.	
Timeframe	2 years	Assigned to: Deputy Chief of Administration
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify all department committees, current members and recent committee activities. • Evaluate the need for each committee based on current goals. • Add, eliminate or restructure committees to meet our current needs. • Define the committee participation process and qualifications for each committee. • Communicate committee opportunities and the selection process to all personnel. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0
Objective 5C	Communicate the personal and professional growth opportunities that are currently available.	
Timeframe	2 years	Assigned to: Communications Committee
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a comprehensive list of current personal and professional growth opportunities. • Develop a process to effectively communicate these opportunities to personnel. • Provide updates on an annual basis and as part of the new hire process. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0
Objective 5D	Enhance personal and professional growth opportunities.	
Timeframe	2 years	Assigned to: Deputy Chief of Administration
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey personnel to determine what additional personal and professional growth opportunities are desired or how current opportunities could be improved. • Evaluate and prioritize the results. • Research the feasibility of providing these opportunities including associated costs. • Develop a report of the desired opportunities with the cost estimates. • Communicate the availability of new or improved personal and professional growth opportunities to all personnel. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0



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Goal 6	Prepare for area growth through a standards of cover strategy to improve operational performance.	
Objective 6A	Identify growth trends and estimates for the service area.	
Timeframe	3 years	Assigned to: Accreditation Manager
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research population estimates for the service area. • Research traffic pattern/congestion estimates for the service area. • Identify planned development for the service area. • Review fire department plans for fire station locations and staffing growth. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: TBD	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: TBD
Objective 6B	Identify best practices for apparatus and staffing utilization.	
Timeframe	3 years	Assigned to: Accreditation Manager
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify unit hour utilization trends for North Charleston for the past five years. • Identify unit hour utilization recommendations for the fire service. • Research other fire department response strategies and staffing models. • Identify additional out of service time utilized by NCFD. • Develop apparatus utilization recommendations based on research. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: TBD	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: TBD
Objective 6C	Communicate standards of cover strategy to the authority having jurisdiction.	
Timeframe	3 years	Assigned to: Fire Chief
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise standard of cover strategy based on apparatus and staffing utilization research. • Identify potential implementation timelines and costs. • Communicate standards of cover strategy to the authority having jurisdiction for approval. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0
Objective 6D	Reevaluate area growth and fire department response statistics to ensure compliance with standards of cover strategy.	
Timeframe	3 years and on-going	Assigned to: Fire Chief
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate response statistics annually. • Evaluate area growth and development annually. • Determine compliance with standards of cover. • Communicate fire department response statistics to the authority having jurisdiction annually. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: 0 Personnel Costs: 0	Consumable Costs: 0 Contract Services Costs: 0





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

In order 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.

³ Collins Good to Great and the Social Sectors. Boulder, 2009

⁴ Sorokin, 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 degree to which customers are satisfied with a program, or how accurately or timely 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.”

Good to Great and the Social Sectors
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

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





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.
CFAI	Commission on Fire Accreditation International
CPR	Cardio Pulmonary 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.
Input	A performance indication where the value of resources are used to produce an output.
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.
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.
PSA	Public Service Announcement
SCFA	South Carolina Fire Academy
SOG	Standard Operating Guideline
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 the necessary 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.
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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