

**Yakima County Fire District 12**

**10000 Zier Rd**

**Yakima, WA 98908**

**(509) 966-3111**

**[www.westvalleyfire.com](http://www.westvalleyfire.com)**

**2020-2024 Strategic Plan**



## **Executive Summary Yakima County Fire District 12 Strategic Plan 2020-2024**

Benjamin Franklin is quoted as saying “Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning.” After several years of strategic planning focused on key “Critical Issues”, the District has moved from improving critical issues to focusing on “Strategic Priorities”.

This Strategic Plan is focused on continuous improvement through four Strategic Priorities that are key to the continued success of the District. Each Strategic Priority has goals and specific objectives identified for continuous improvement of the District’s ability to meet our mission of preserving and protecting life then property. Through the process of updating our plan it became apparent to the planning committee that our Department is doing well and currently not facing any major critical issues which shifted our focus to continuous quality improvement. Henry Ford once said, “if you always do what you’ve always done, you’ll always get what you’ve always got”. This plan focuses on going from good to great while raising the bar for our District and the citizens we serve.

This plan covers 2020 through 2024 and provides significant direction and opportunity for the District’s effectiveness. Fire District 12’s mission, vision, values and beliefs provide general direction while the Strategic Plan communicates more specific direction over the next five years.

The process of developing and updating our Strategic Plan is both internal and external over a period of three months; a Department wide process where all members have an opportunity to provide input into the future of the District as well as citizen input are used. Information collected is then brought to our planning committee consisting of citizens, commissioners, members, and staff who are tasked with prioritizing needs while combining strategies for effectiveness. Transparency throughout the update is key to receiving member feedback and ensuring the plan meets the future needs of the District.

To meet the need for fire and life safety in West Valley, the District plans to continue its focus of on-call members supported by a small cadre of fulltime personnel. We will continue to initiate and encourage cooperation with adjoining fire departments as well as private companies to meet the expectations of our citizens for fire and life safety balancing available resources with acceptable risk.

Four Strategic Priorities have been identified in the plan along with goals and objectives to address each priority:

**Strategic Priority 1: Personnel recruitment, selection, retention and development.**

**Strategic Issue:** Attract and maintain sufficient and effective personnel available 24/7/365 to safely and effectively serve our community with high professional standards.

**Goal: Maintain an adequate number of members and fulltime staff to meet our mission through established and expected service levels for response of within one mile 8 minutes and two minutes per mile thereafter.**

**Strategic Priority 2: Financial management and accountability.**

**Strategic Issue:** Maintain a strong financial position for the District through effective policies/management practices with regard for cost-benefit, efficiency and impact on District taxpayers.

**Goal: Meet the financial needs of the District while ethically and accurately managing the financial resources of the District in accordance with State and County laws.**

**Strategic Priority 3: Resource management.**

**Strategic Issue:** Manage resources to ensure our facilities, apparatus and planning keep pace with current and projected changes in the community; ensuring efficient, well-placed facilities are located to meet the service demand.

**Goal: Provide a sufficient number of stations and apparatus strategically located throughout the District to meet 8 minute response one mile from a station to all areas of high growth, population and commercial areas in the District as well as provide and maintain efficient and effective apparatus and equipment to safely carry out the mission of the department.**

**Strategic Priority 4: Community Accountability.**

**Strategic Issue:** Ensure the District meets community expectations for operations, fiscal accountability and public education.

**Goal: Identify level of satisfaction, opinions and priorities of the community in addition to community awareness of current and proposed programs and capabilities.**

The District Business and Capital Improvement Plans work in conjunction with the Strategic Plan. Because emergency services are a dynamic work environment all plans have built in flexibility and are reviewed annually to ensure the District is able to adapt to emerging issues effectively. Annually a work plan for the following year is developed, applied and progress reported on monthly to the Board of Commissioners and Officers Management Team to keep the plan on track.

For an in-depth understanding of how the District plans to address each Strategic Priority identified please read through each objective and the strategies developed to accomplish our goals in this Strategic Plan.

**Fire Chief Nathan Craig  
Yakima County Fire District 12  
2020-2024 Strategic Plan**

**Table of Contents:**

Organizational Overview .....	5
Introduction.....	6
Purpose.....	6
Mission Statement.....	6
Vision.....	7
Values.....	7
The District Believes In.....	7
District Motto.....	7
Strategic Priority 1 Personnel recruitment, selection, retention and development	6
Strategic Priority 2 Financial management and accountability.....	16
Strategic Priority 3 Resource management .....	23
Critical Issue 4 Community Accountability .....	30
Appendix A Business Plan .....	
Appendix B Capital Improvement Plan .....	

**Strategic Planning Committee:**

Commissioner Paul Barham	Captain Carl Hendrickson
Commissioner Jim Borst	Captain Jim Johnston
Commissioner Ken Eakin	Captain Brian Vetsch
Community Member Mary Turley	Lieutenant Scott Wellner
Admin/Finance Officer Christy Boisselle	Firefighter Natalie Rivera
Captain Wayne Haubrich	Lieutenant Chris Lyons

## Organizational Overview

### About Us

Yakima County Fire District 12 is a combination fire department with 94 dedicated citizens that are on-call members supported by six full time members (Chief, Administration and Finance Officer, Training Captain, Training Lieutenant and two Firefighters) that respond to all risks within our 90 square miles from four fire stations protecting a population of 14,155 citizens.

### What We Do

- Provide Public Education in Fire Prevention and Life Safety
- Fire Suppression to save lives and minimize property damage
- Fire Investigation, cause and origin to improve life safety
- Rescue/Extrication to save lives
- Emergency Medical Services, BLS first response
- Hazardous Materials Emergency Response for life safety
- Emergency/Disaster Management using the Incident Command System
- Administrative Services, human resources, accounting and administration
- Support Services, maintaining buildings and equipment
- Member Safety through a safety committee and training

### 2019 Fire Fund

Property Tax Levy Amount: \$1,700,000.00

Levy Rate: \$1.38/1000

2018 Carryover \$401,346.00

Grants \$850.00

Misc. \$8,000.00

EMS transfer in for payroll \$105,000.00

Total Revenue \$2,215,196.00

Total Expenditures \$1,729,312.00

### 2019 EMS Fund

Property Tax Levy with Formula Amount: \$189,552.00

County Levy Rate: \$0.239/1000

2018 Carryover \$25,725.00

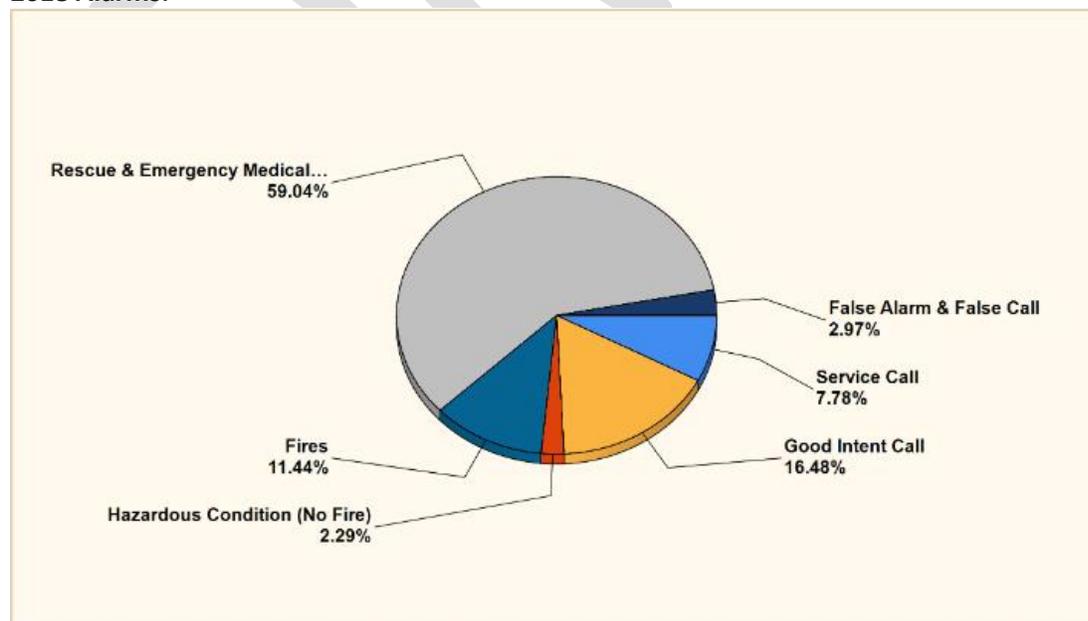
Grants \$1,200.00

Misc. \$250.00

Total Revenue \$216,727

Total Expenditures \$231,950

### 2018 Alarms:



**Introduction:**

We live in a rapidly changing world; therefore, we need to be flexible in our decision-making, decisions we make today will affect outcomes long into the future. Use of public resources will always be competitive with respect to desired outcomes for quality of life. Fire and life safety are a priority for the citizens of our District, our citizens expect effective and efficient delivery of services. For these reasons, it is important that the decisions we make today lead us in the right direction for the future.

It is projected that over the next five to ten years the boundaries of the District will not change significantly, annexations by the City of Yakima on our eastern boundary have slowed significantly with the City having no plans for major annexations in the near future, all annexations in the last 5-7 years have been single land owners petitioning the City for annexation of vacant land to develop with reduced rates for sewer connections, these annexations pose little threat to the economic future of the District. Yakima County's 2017 review of the Yakima Urban Growth Area (UGA) concluded Yakima's city limits can accommodate 36 years of projected urban growth and the unincorporated UGA can accommodate an additional 62 years of projected urban growth provided that urban water and sewer systems are developed concurrently with growth. Because urban growth projected for the succeeding 20 years can be accommodated within Yakima's current UGA no changes to the designated UGA or to the densities permitted were required and Yakima was not proposing any changes to the UGA. Areas of the District inside Yakima UGA are potentially subject to annexation however following a few major annexations in the mid 2000's Yakima has changed its approach to annexation and at this time has no plans for large scale annexations within West Valley and prefer to in-fill the current city limits. For these reasons the District will need to continue to base on reality of the current area to protect and growing service need in District.

To meet the need for fire and life safety in West Valley, the District plans to continue its focus of on-call members supported by a small cadre of fulltime personnel. We will continue to initiate and encourage cooperation with adjoining fire departments as well as private companies to meet the expectation level of our citizens for fire and life safety balancing available resources with acceptable risk.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to provide significant direction and opportunity for the District's effectiveness. Fire District 12's mission, vision, values and beliefs provide general direction while the Strategic Plan communicates more specific direction over the next five years. Collectively, these elements give structure and order to programs by identifying strategic priorities that require increased attention and potentially funding.

**Mission Statement:**

The West Valley Fire Department is dedicated to the preservation and protection of life then property through education, prevention, emergency services and disaster preparedness.

**Vision:**

The West Valley Fire Department will continue to be a leader in the community providing fire and life safety utilizing the most efficient staffing model to accomplish the mission.

**Values:**

- The honesty, integrity and loyalty of our members
- Professional conduct and performance of our responsibilities
- Teamwork & cooperation with all elements of the community
- Flexibility to adjust to a growing & changing community
- Cooperation with other emergency response agencies within the Local County, Region and State
- Efficient use of resources

**The District Believes In:**

- On-Call Members is the most effective and efficient resource for responding to emergency incidents within the community
- The professionalism of our members in all aspects of serving the public need
- The dedication and integrity of all members of the department is critical to our mission of protecting lives and property
- Respecting safety, each other and those we serve
- A core of full-time personnel to SUPPORT our on-call response system
- Empowering personnel assigned to each fire station to assist the public in anyway so long as it is legal, ethical and the right thing to do
- Knowledgeable and dedicated Fire Commissioners who provide policy leadership on behalf of the public interest
- The involvement of all personnel in the decision-making process
- Creating opportunities to share in our successes

**District Motto:**

“All members share in the PRIDE”

## **Strategic Priority 1: Personnel recruitment, selection, retention and development.**

**Strategic Issue:** Attract and maintain sufficient and effective personnel available 24/7/365 to safely and effectively serve our community with high professional standards.

**Goal: Maintain an adequate number of members and fulltime staff to meet our mission through established and expected service levels for response of within one mile 8 minutes and two minutes per mile thereafter. (Target numbers 30 active volunteers at Stations 51 & 52, 25 active on-call members at Station 53, 15 active on-call members at Station 54, 12 active on-call members for rehab/support and sufficient fulltime personnel to manage 112 on-call members, the day to day operations and business side of the Department.) By January 2022 meet staffing recommendations for number of on-call members (active, well trained and responding) at each station.**

### **Introduction:**

The West Valley Fire Department's mission is to protect lives then property, the most efficient and productive method for serving the public fire and life safety need in our District is with on-call members. On-Call Members are the primary resource for responding to emergency incidents within the community supported by a core of fulltime personnel for both administrative and operational functions. This Strategic Priority encompasses both day and night staffing, weekday and weekend staffing and relates to retaining and developing current members while recruiting and selecting the right new members. An adequate number of on-call members to meet the fire and life safety needs benefits the District through reduced labor costs which allow for costs to be kept lower and a higher percentage of the budget going toward capital projects without the need to pass bonds or levies. Today 41% of the District budget is spent on labor costs, these costs encompass all wages and benefits for both on-call (part-time) and fulltime members, by contrast Yakima Fire Department's fulltime labor cost is approximately 92% of their budget. Through policy, on-call members are required to respond to 25% of the calls at their assigned station as well as participate in 50% of the training drills to remain a member in good standing, with on-call members required to respond to one out of every four alarms and nearly 800 alarms a year you understand the need to reach our goal of 112 on-call members to meet the needs of the community.

### **Objective I: Retention of On-Call Members.**

#### **Strategies:**

- A. Enhance internal and interpersonal communications across the District to understand and meet our mission while adhering to our core values and the District PRIDE motto.**
  1. Promote effective communication and positive interactions throughout the District by learning to communicate, respectfully disagree and focus on the 10 rules of building trust while living our PRIDE motto.

2. Establish group cohesion through participation in Association events, station to station drills and family activities.
    - Officer/Firefighter communication is a critical component to the right message being delivered. The grapevine/rumor mill must be addressed at every drill/meeting with the simple question of “what have you been hearing?”
    - Opinion sharing must be encouraged at group events and misinformation corrected immediately for improved knowledge overall.
  3. Utilize the most appropriate means of communicating based on the message, audience, importance and timeliness.
    - Face to Face, Email, Text, ISPY, Facebook, All Fired Up Newsletter, Flyers, Meeting Minutes, Association Meetings are all currently used to communicate with members.
    - Communication platforms are not one size fits all, to be effective the District must find out individually what method works best for each member.
    - Research feasibility of improving communication through a message board app or scrolling message boards in all stations.
  4. Ensure full time members are supporting on-call member operations, post daily training schedule so on-call members can join, more involvement and better understanding of roles by all.
- B. Develop and highlight Department culture to promote, reward and evaluate the elements of PRIDE across the District as it directly relates to every member understanding and supporting our mission of preserving and protecting life then property.**
1. Professionalism- attitude, training, no excuses we do our best.
    - Apply structure to all aspects of the Department to encourage a culture of professionalism where it is about the job getting done not who does it.
  2. Respect- the job, each other and those we serve.
    - Respect each other’s time, start drills on time and give 100% effort to ensure we are not wasting members time. Communicate effectively, treat others as they want to be treated.
  3. Integrity- trustworthy, hold each other to higher standards.
    - Support each other, build each other up, not talking about others behind their backs, if you have a problem say it or let it go, don’t bring it up months later.
  4. Dedication- be there, be trained and help out.
    - Ensure all members understand our mission and maintain their basic training to support the mission. Members must be active and responding regularly for our mission to be successful.
  5. Empowered- if it’s legal ethical and the right thing to do, we do it.



2. Partner with Ambulance service:
  - Under the county-wide ambulance contract, partner with the ambulance company to house an ambulance in District.
  - In the partnership consider staffing the ambulance with our EMT and the company's paramedic if economically feasible.
  - Adjust dispatch recommendations to only send ambulance to BLS calls not life threatening.
3. Continue staffing daytime Duty Crew:
  - A high percentage of on-call members are in town at work unavailable during the regular work week. Providing a daytime response crew reduces the number of calls per station allowing a member working a regular 40-hour work week in town to not have calls count against their participation levels while away from home at work.
  - Staff crew with a minimum of three members daily based on available funding.
  - In addition to alarm response the duty crew is responsible for general operation and maintenance of the District under the Training Lieutenant.
  - During the summer months consider a wildland fire crew assigned to District projects but available in ROSS to respond to wildland fires across the west to generate revenue for the program.
  - Annually in late summer prior to the next year's budget, evaluate the number of available members to staff the duty crew fully with on-call members. (Staffing with all on-call members will require either a full willingness to complete District maintenance projects while working on a stipend or the creation of a maintenance position outside of using the duty-crew.)
4. Provide the most appropriate service efficiently.
  - Not all alarms require a response from WVFD, automatic aid and ambulance only responses will be determined by proximity and severity.
  - Automatic Aid or ambulance only calls will be evaluated by our mission statement. Our mission is preserving and protecting life then property regardless of who provides the service.
  - Review annual call volume to determine what calls we are dispatched to that we have no effect on the outcome and our response does not lead to meeting our mission. Examples of calls to consider response level changes are power problems, smoke in the area, flooding and automatic alarms (medical and fire).
  - Adjust dispatching standards to meet the needs of county residents rather than city services. Who dispatches our calls effects what calls

we are dispatched to, if necessary, change from a city oriented dispatch to a county on-call oriented dispatch center.

5. Public Education.
  - Develop Public Safety Announcements (PSA) to reduce non-emergency calls. Provide the public with who to call for certain incidents outside of 911.
  - Provide community outreach to educate our citizens on our capabilities and limitations.
  - Educate the public on outdoor burning and reduce false alarms caused by controlled burns.

## **Objective II: Recruitment of On-Call Members.**

### **Strategies:**

#### **A. Recruitment advertising:**

1. Determine the best way to advertise the need, how to advertise and where to advertise.
2. Determine based on availability of recruit training the appropriate time to recruit.

#### **B. Perform targeted recruiting for new members to be selective:**

1. Recruit for values, beliefs and integrity.
2. Apply the profile of longer serving members to the recruitment, application and testing process for new members.
3. Emphasize recruiting members that will remain in the Department for five or more years to recoup training costs.
4. Emphasize recruiting members with daytime availability, hold a daytime recruit academy to facilitate initial training for daytime available members.
5. Review physical requirements to ensure recruits are not intimidated or excluded.

#### **C. Strengthen high school CTE program:**

1. Establish a second-year program for advanced training of Cadets.
2. Establish an Emergency Medical Responder Program.
3. Consider creating a three-period block.
4. Increase revenue from school district for program.

#### **D. Seek out community members already certified**

1. Recruit healthcare professionals capable of “bridging” current certifications with pre-hospital certifications.
2. Recruit career firefighters active and retired.

#### **E. Selection process:**

1. Invite all potential new members to their station for a meet and greet prior to interviews.
2. Quality over quantity, selection of the right people is more critical than having the most people.

3. Test potential recruits to determine if their values, beliefs and integrity match that of the department members.
  - Update our application, interview process and consider a written exam to discover prospective members values and beliefs during the application process. (Within the laws of WA State)

**F. Update written recruitment plan annually.**

1. Three months prior to an upcoming recruit academy update written recruitment plan to develop strategy for recruiting successful new members.
2. Evaluate past recruitment benefits.
3. Develop a booklet for prospective members that covers our culture, who we are, what to expect from us and what we expect from members.

**Objective III: Member Development.**

**Strategies:**

**A. Succession planning for leadership positions:**

1. Maintain a healthy organization throughout transitions of key leadership and administrative positions with proactive and positive successional planning.
2. Establish and maintain training and certification requirements for each officer position in District.
3. Make available required training and certification courses on a three-year cycle.
4. Conduct promotional testing every two years to establish two-year eligibility lists for Lieutenant and Captain.

**B. Two years prior to the planned retirement of a key position begin the process of identifying key job functions, development of job description for replacement and begin a search for qualified candidates with a goal of having replacements selected up to three months before the position is vacated.**

1. Key positions are Station Captain and above.
2. Key positions mentor all eligible members during the two years.

**C. Determine Key Functions of leadership positions.**

1. Review and update job descriptions to reflect actual work performed every two years in conjunction with promotional testing.
2. Capturing all functions of each position into one complete document will serve to identify key job functions for each position.

**D. Share institutional knowledge with staff members.**

1. Include members of the staff in capital project planning and development of the business plan and budget.
2. Include members of the staff in county-wide planning sessions.

**E. Provide certification and education to staff members to fill roles above.**

1. Encourage staff members to gain certifications for the next level in the organization.

2. Encourage staff members to take advantage of fire service education to assist them in current positions and possible advancement.
3. Provide on-the-job training to assist in understanding all positions in the Department.

**F. Develop Company Officers.**

1. Provide mission focused officer development refresher training monthly.
2. Focus on officer/firefighter communications and leadership training.
3. Continue every three years teaching officer development academy to new and perspective officers.
4. Develop officers to be accountable to our mission and core values, specifically train on mission and values.

**G. Develop all members:**

1. Develop separate tracks for additional training for members to specialize in different aspects of operations, leadership and training.
2. Develop assistant training officers at each station to lead their station during training drills where the Department training officers are not at drill.
3. Develop cadres of specialized members. Cadre to train all members within their specialty through recruit school and regular training.
4. Focus on education and training that leads to certification (FFI, II, Officer I, II, Instructor I, II etc.)
5. Encourage members to know all jobs and work toward the next level of certification, training and education.

**Objective IV: Maintain sufficient administrative staffing to manage members.**

**Strategies:**

**A. Evaluate member needs vs. staff availability:**

1. When we reach our goal of 112 on-call members, evaluate the need for an additional staff member to meet the needs of the District and members.

**B. Review organizational chart responsibilities vs. available time:**

1. As personnel, equipment, operations and complexity increase, evaluate positions to determine the need for additional staffing.
2. Balance staff workload by evaluating time spent in each area of responsibility, meeting attendance, hours worked and job satisfaction.
3. Look for efficiencies in workload, balance the organizational chart.
4. Review position responsibilities related to rank to determine if or where to add personnel.
5. More members, more equipment and more alarms lead to more staffing.

**C. Equipment, Supplies and Services:**

1. Administrative staff will make a conscious effort to conserve time by adhering to the following guidelines:
  - When possible do business locally.

- Businesses that will pick up/deliver goods are preferred, unless there is a large difference in price or an immediate need all goods, whenever possible, shall be delivered.
- Convenience is a factor when selecting vendors, if one company offers a shuttle and the other doesn't choose the shuttle so only one person is needed to drop off and pick up equipment.
- Communication and planning are key to reducing unnecessary trips to stations and town. Several times a week someone is going to town for a meeting or other business, upcoming projects that have a material list can be communicated to those going into town.
- When traveling to an outlying station, communication is key to reduce multiple trips to the same place for minor items.

## **Strategic Priority 2: Financial management and accountability.**

**Strategic Issue:** Maintain a strong financial position for the District through effective policies/management practices with regard for cost-benefit, efficiency and impact on District taxpayers.

**Goal: Meet the financial needs of the District while ethically and accurately managing the financial resources of the District in accordance with State and County laws.**

- **Maintain a Reserve Fund equal to 20% of the general tax levy amount by February of 2020. (cap of \$350,000)**
- **Forecast capital expenditures through a Capital Improvement Plan and match the plan to the Capital Fund. Annually during budget creation review Capital Improvement Plan for necessary purchases, the next year as well as 3 years out to adjust the Capital Fund.**
- **Seek grant funding to offset expenses in both personnel and equipment, using the Capital Improvement Plan apply for all grants we qualify for.**
- **Maintain fiscal accountability for clean audits, monthly apply a check and balance process to all expenditures.**

### **Introduction:**

The District's financial condition determines our ability to fund operational priorities, which ensure our ability to provide quality community services in a dynamic and adverse fiscal environment. By law the District is limited to a 1% budget increase annually with a maximum general levy taxing authority of \$1.50/\$1,000 of assessed value based on RCW 52.16.130 and RCW 52.16.140. In addition to general levy taxing, the District has the availability to run levies and bonds on the ballot for approval or Commissioner approved bonds. Fire Districts with a CIP in place may also request impact fees for new development under WAC 365-196-850 where appropriate. The District faces fiscal threats in personnel costs, apparatus costs, equipment costs and facility maintenance. Maintaining an adequate number of members is crucial to keeping personnel costs down, our two non-exempt members that are utilized for projects and response when the majority of our on-call members are unavailable are the only employees eligible for overtime which is a cost factored into the budget and each positions value to the organization. Training costs are figured into personnel costs, whether it be in-house training or outside training, part of member retention is providing quality training. Apparatus costs continue to increase making it difficult to forecast the 15-20-year replacement cost of each individual apparatus, an estimate based on percentage increase is currently used and at best is an educated guess. Equipment costs continue to increase as more standards are developed requiring more frequent replacement of equipment as well as new technology improving firefighter safety. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for structural firefighting per NFPA standards must be replaced every 10 years, the current price for head to toe PPE is around \$3000, presently the District aspires to maintain 100 sets of turnouts plus spare sets at each station therefore 10 sets are purchased annually. Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) air bottles must be replaced every fifteen years, typically at that time the whole SCBA is

replaced not just the bottle due to two or three new safety upgrades being in place since the original purchase, in 2027 all the SCBA equipment in the District will need to be replaced. As electronic devices become more portable the FCC continues to narrow the bandwidth available for emergency services which in time will result in the District having to replace radios and pagers to accommodate a new frequency type. EMS supplies, as health care costs continue to increase so do the cost of supplies, additionally, new advancements in medicine typically lead to increased field interventions which require additional equipment for responders. The current county-wide EMS levy and formula will not cover increases in the cost of materials without changes to the system either in funding or in how it is distributed. As our buildings and infrastructure age the cost to maintain those increases in addition to regular increases in utility costs, a separate critical issue will address the facilities meeting the need, this is just covering the cost of operating them.

**Objective I: Annually update the Capital Improvement Plan to encompass the lifespan of all major equipment, apparatus and buildings.**

**Strategies:**

**A. Utilize recognized standards for improving and replacing capital assets.**

1. For the purpose of this plan a combination of the District's Strategic Plan, WSRB's grading schedule and WAC 296-305 are used as industry standards. ([www.wsrb.com](http://www.wsrb.com), <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=296-305>)
2. Recommended standards for fire protection and emergency services issued by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) are important considerations. Many NFPA standards are incorporated into Washington Administrative Code 296-305 Safety Standards for Firefighters.
3. The Washington Survey and Rating Bureau (WSRB) evaluates communities across the state and establishes the protection class grading for the community on a scale of 1 through 10. The fire department is reviewed for distribution of companies/stations, response to alarms, equipment, pumping capacity, maintenance, reserve apparatus, personnel and training

**B. Invest in preventative maintenance.**

1. Annually staff will tour each station prior to budget development to review building and apparatus needs for a pro-active response to potential problems.
2. Maintain a maintenance schedule for all buildings and systems within each building for preventative work.
3. Fix small problems before they become large expensive problems.

**C. Utilize bonds for major purchases.**

1. Forecasting the Capital Fund against upcoming projects consider lumping several projects together under one bond.
2. Bond repayment must not exceed the life of the purchased item.

3. Commissioner approved bonds to be paid out of the general fund.
4. Voter approved bonds must be weighed against political climate and need for levy lid lifts.

**Objective II: District provide input to growth in West Valley.**

**Strategies:**

**A. Lobby against changes to the Urban Growth Area Boundary.**

1. At the last review of the Urban Growth Area (UGA) for the City of Yakima (August 2016) it was determined the current city limits can accommodate 36 years of projected growth and the unincorporated UGA can accommodate an additional 62 years of projected urban growth.
2. Yakima County Planning Division in accordance to the Growth Management Act designates urban growth areas for cities within our County. Yakima County found that urban growth projected for the succeeding 20-year period can be accommodated with Yakima’s current UGA that no changes were necessary.
3. Based on the land capacity analysis and current zoning it is determined the city would fill in its current boundary in 2052 and fill in the current UGA by 2114. The District needs to continue to lobby against UGA boundary changes as they are unnecessary for the foreseeable future.

**B. Assist landowners with zoning changes.**

1. Many areas of the fire district fall under zoning for Agriculture (AG), Valley Rural (VR) or Rural Transitional (RT). Some zoning changes would allow for property to be broken into smaller lots for development.

**Table 19.11.030-1. New Lot Requirements**

Zoning District		Minimum Lot Area <sup>(1)</sup> (acres)	Minimum Lot Width
R/ELDP-40		40 or legally described as 1/16 of a section	
R-10/5	• County maintained hard surfaced roadways are used for access	Project site lacks one or more of these elements	25% of lot depth
	• New development is within a fire district	Project site meets all three of these elements See <a href="#">19.11.030(3)(b)(ii)</a>	

**Table 19.11.030-1. New Lot Requirements**

Zoning District		Minimum Lot Area <sup>(1)</sup> (acres)	Minimum Lot Width
	• New development is within 5 road miles from a year-round responding fire station		
RT		5.0 <sup>(4)</sup>	

- a) The purpose of the Agriculture (AG) district is to preserve and maintain areas for the continued practice of agriculture by limiting the creation of small lots, permitting only those new uses that are compatible with agricultural activities, protection of agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance, and providing measures to notify and separate especially sensitive land uses from customary and innovative agricultural land management practices. Typical AG zoned property is subject to 40 acre lots, however small lots and special exceptions can be made to put homes on lots 3 acres in size.
  - b) The Rural-10/5 (R-10/5) zoning district is intended to maintain rural character and provide density incentives to encourage development where fire protection services and access to roads with a paved or other hard surface are available.
  - c) The Rural Transitional (RT) zoning district is intended to provide for rural development in areas near Urban Growth Area boundaries to encourage clustering, minimize public expenditures, and coordinate land uses with public infrastructure investment.
2. RCW 36.70A.030 (16) "Rural development" refers to development outside the urban growth area and outside agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands designated pursuant to RCW [36.70A.170](#). Rural development can consist of a variety of uses and residential densities, including clustered residential development, at levels that are consistent with the preservation of rural character and the requirements of the rural element. Rural development does not refer to agriculture or forestry activities that may be conducted in rural areas.
  3. As a property tax-based agency in rural Yakima County the District needs to encourage rural development where possible to increase assessed value of vacant lands zoned agriculture yet not used for agriculture.
  4. Zoning changes would lead to increased growth in the District in areas outside of the UGA.

**C. Annexation.**

1. Work closely with the City of Yakima regarding any potential annexations larger than a single landowner petitioning to join the City.
  - a) Annexation has slowed considerably.
  - b) The city is interested in filling in their border before expanding.
  - c) The most likely annexation areas are where sewer lines are already located and typically is vacant land.
  - d) The city has ended the practice of extending annexations to capture more land while maintain 60% outside utility agreements.
2. Areas outside of the District boundary but within our EMS boundary should be considered for annexation into the District. Typically, these properties will receive a response during an emergency therefore they should pay for fire protection and enjoy the benefits of being in a fire district.
3. Areas of “no-man’s land” adjacent to the District boundary will be considered for annexation if they have structures on them, access through a road network and assessed value equal to the protection risk.

**D. Where possible work with builders for affordable housing.**

1. High home prices and the lack of rental properties near fire stations is a detriment for the District when recruiting on-call members.
2. Consider impact fees for large housing developments.
3. The District should consider building or purchasing affordable housing to rent to members in the event of a housing crisis.

**Objective III: Levy Rate.**

**Strategies:**

**A. Legislative Priorities 1% lid limit:**

1. Protect fire district tax authority from any reform measures that impact property tax rates.
2. Encourage re-structuring the 1% lid limit to a system based on inflation like how the legislature is approaching education funding.

**B. Annually review the tax rate generated by the budget:**

1. Ensure the District is not “banking” public money, all funds generated continue to support the Strategic Plan, Business Plan, Capital Improvement Plan or annual operating expenses.
2. Compare annual budget to previous year CPI for goods and services to ensure the District can financially support operations before expanding.
3. Based on operational needs, rising CPI and lowering cost per thousand annually consider the need to cut services or request a levy lid lift from voters to maintain or improve service.
4. Review budget annually to ensure expenses match the level of service requested by citizens through surveys.

**C. Incident Cost:**

1. Determine the average cost of each incident type in District as well as auto and mutual aid based on:
  - a) Dispatch fee
  - b) Labor cost
  - c) Fuel
  - d) Maintenance
  - e) Insurance
  - f) Overhead
  - g) Consumables
2. Number of incidents affects operational capabilities which drives staffing, funding and resource management.

**D. EMS Funding:**

1. Annually review the county-wide EMS levy formula distribution to ensure accuracy and fairness to our taxpayers.
2. Work with partners to ensure the next EMS levy renewal in 2024 is fair and equitable for District taxpayers.
3. Ensure EMS funds are appropriated for EMS eligible budget items.

**E. Lid Lift:**

1. As the 1% limit erodes the District taxing authority to meet the public need, trigger points must be established based on service levels to determine the need for the District to go to the voters for a lid lift.
  - a) Goods and services continue to rise faster than the 1% limit, trigger points will be based on amount of new construction, population growth, call volume and availability of members to determine when it is appropriate to ask the voters for a lid lift.
  - b) Ideally a permanent levy lid lift would provide consistent funding for the future, the external environment will determine what is best to ask of the voters.

**F. External Environment:**

1. Levy rate changes require public education regarding the District's financial position and challenges.
2. Levy rate factors
  - a) Other special districts levy rates and bonds must factor into the overall tax burden on our citizens.
  - b) The median household income and ability to afford a levy increase.
  - c) Average assessed property value.
  - d) Current economy.

**Objective IV: Aggressively apply for available grant funding.**

**Strategies:**

**A. Utilize available grants to offset costs in all areas of the budget.**

1. Apply for grants to cover the cost of capital projects to stretch Capital Fund and free up money for personnel costs and unforeseen expenses.
2. Assign a staff member to search available grants on a monthly basis.
3. Attend grant writing seminars.
4. Major projects such as communications system overhauls apply for regional grants with our partners.
5. Consider hiring a grant writing company to review Capital Improvement Plan to search for potential grant funding sources.

**Objective V: Fiscal Accountability.**

**Strategies**

**A. Maintain appropriate checks and balances for all financial transactions.**

1. The Administrative and Finance Officer maintains the books with the Fire Chief monthly reviewing all accounts, bills and balances to ensure no one person controls the finances.
2. The Board of Fire Commissioners approves all bills to be paid monthly based on the established budget to ensure the District stays within budget.

**B. Every three years provide the Washington State Auditor's Office all information for a complete audit.**

1. Make appropriate changes to business practices prior to an audit based on suggestions/findings from other fire department audits in the state.
2. Hold an exit interview post audit to understand all accounting practices are within state guidelines.

**C. Partner with public agencies to generate revenue and save taxpayer dollars.**

1. Once Station 51 phase II is complete, vacant offices on the administrative side should be rented out for public entities.
2. The 5 acres of vacant land at Station 51 would be good for another public agency to utilize for building or rented out to local farmers or sports associations to generate revenue.
3. Partner with other departments for group purchasing to receive better pricing on consumables and equipment.

**D. Purchasing.**

1. Utilize State bid accounts for qualifying equipment purchases.
2. Research both government and private purchasing contracts to determine if a savings on consumables and equipment is possible through cooperative purchasing.
3. EMS alarms are 60% of our call volume, work to establish a county wide purchasing agreement or supply warehouse.

### **Strategic Priority 3: Resource management.**

**Strategic Issue:** Manage resources to ensure our facilities, apparatus and planning keep pace with current and projected changes in the community; ensuring efficient, well-placed facilities are located to meet the service demand.

**Goal:** Provide a sufficient number of stations and apparatus strategically located throughout the District to meet 8 minute response one mile from a station to all areas of high growth, population and commercial areas in the District as well as provide and maintain efficient and effective apparatus and equipment to safely carry out the mission of the department.

- By July 2020 review available water supply in the District to meet fire flow requirements in high density areas.
- The District to maintain one “weight room” where free weights can be used in a space designed and built for that purpose.
- By January 2022 complete a station location study to identify underserved areas of the District.
  - Station location to be based on availability of on-call members to staff the station as well as impact on Critical Issue 2, Objective II.
  - Station locations to be considered based on available and planned road systems throughout the District that allow suitable ingress for responding on-call members and egress for apparatus.
  - Request neighboring fire departments participate in the study.
  - Include study recommendations in Capital Improvement Plan for future growth of the District.
- By January 2022 provide a washer/extractor at each station for PPE washing to prevent carcinogens and limit time PPE is out of service for cleaning.
- By January 2022 move all ice machines out of the apparatus bays.

#### **Introduction:**

Apparatus, Personnel and Equipment (APE's) are used to complete our mission of protecting lives then property, APE's must be strategically located throughout the response area, have the appropriate capabilities and be housed in fire stations of sufficient size and functionality to be effective. Additionally, the District has a need to ensure facilities are available for ongoing firefighter training to ensure the members of the department are trained in all aspects of all risk fire service to provide a high level of operational safety for our members. The Capital Improvement Plan is tied to the Capital Fund to ensure major expenses such as buildings, apparatus and equipment are planned out and expenditures made on time. Maintaining quality facilities, apparatus and equipment ties directly to retaining members as identified in Strategic Priority 1, when members have PRIDE in their stations and equipment, they are encouraged to be more active, additionally, the public perception of our equipment and facilities assists in recruiting additional members. Stations need to be of sufficient size to house both apparatus and personnel, having sufficient space for members to train and socialize at

their station is critical to providing a positive experience for members while carrying out their assigned duties. Likewise, station apparatus bays must be of sufficient size to house both the number of necessary apparatus as well as the size of today's firefighting vehicles. Future use of stations must be planned according to use, as identified in the goal of Strategic Priority 1 by January 2022 the District plans to house 112 on-call members within our stations, planning for office space, gear storage and member comfort must be accounted for in the Capital Improvement Plan. Providing workout facilities in stations not only allows firefighters to be physically fit but also when members are in the station working out rather than in town at a gym, they are available for response. Things like fitness centers, cable TV and meeting rooms provide comforts to on-call members that keep them in the stations for longer periods of time which in turn provides faster response to alarms. As areas of the District grow the District needs to review station locations, an example of one area of current concern for the District is the Falcon Ridge housing development, this gated community has risen out of sagebrush in an area of the District that is difficult to access due to station location and road systems, because this area is further than five miles from a fire station the residents in this area typically have higher insurance premiums and growth is limited to one house per 10 acres, if a sufficient number of residents in this area were able to respond, a station within five miles would allow more homes to be built and lower insurance premiums for residents in the area. In addition to Falcon Ridge the entire District outside of the UGA needs to be monitored for growth to ensure stations are located to meet the needs of the community. Replacing apparatus on schedule ensures the District can meet our mission as well as reduces costly repairs as equipment ages, establishing an apparatus replacement schedule tied to the Capital Fund ensures purchases are made on time.

## **Objective I: Facilities.**

### **Strategies:**

#### **A. Facilities General:**

1. Base station locations on the availability of enough housing to staff with on-call members
2. Conduct station location studies every 10 years. Study to focus on available responders, emergency response history and forecast, response distribution and performance outcomes.
3. Stations should be comfortable for members with typical amenities found in fire station day rooms.
4. Stations should be maintained to be visually appealing to the public yet functional for fire department response.
5. To ensure continuity of operations during natural disasters, stations should be outfitted with emergency generators.
6. Preventative maintenance is the key to cost reductions and long facility life. Monthly a member of the admin staff shall visit each station during daylight hours to look for any emerging issues with landscaping, buildings and parking lots.

7. Workout facilities provided in the stations keeps members in District while improving physical fitness.
8. Office space for District Officers to conduct Department business is required.
9. Enough bay space to house all apparatus indoors is a priority.
10. Suitable day room space is required for the planned number of members at each station.
11. Ice machines should not be in apparatus bays due to carcinogens.
12. All stations require equipment decontamination facilities.
13. Station construction and updates should focus on carcinogen exposure reduction, where possible hard surfaces instead of carpet should be used as well as positive air pressure in day rooms.

**Objective II: Apparatus.**

**Strategies:**

**A. Apparatus General:**

1. Maintain enough apparatus necessary to meet the operational needs of the District.
2. Maintain apparatus and systems to NFPA and/or manufactures recommendations.
3. All apparatus will meet or exceed all recognized State and National standards for inspections, testing, fueling and emergency repair or emergency vehicles.
4. Pre-plan replacement so specifications are written and out for bid greater than 365 days before an apparatus is scheduled to move to reserve.
5. All apparatus will be equipped with adequate hose, nozzles, SCBA, radios and other equipment to assure safe operations to achieve Department performance objectives in compliance with industry standards.
6. Maintain sufficient engine pumping capacity within five miles driving distance from all commercial and industrial areas to provide fire flow as specified by the Washington State Survey and Rating Bureau.
7. To the extent possible equipment storage location on each apparatus type should be standardized for members to know location regardless of apparatus.

**B. Replacement Schedule:**

- |                               |                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Fire Pumpers               | 20 Years                  |
| 2. Water Tenders              | 25 Years                  |
| 3. Emergency Medical Vehicles | 15 Years                  |
| 4. Command Vehicles           | 80,000 Miles              |
| 5. Support Vehicles           | 80,000 Miles or as needed |
| 6. Brush Trucks               | 15 Years                  |

### **Objective III: Equipment.**

#### **Strategies:**

##### **A. Personal Protective Equipment:**

1. Maintain equipment according to NFPA and/ or manufacturer specifications.
2. Track all equipment replacement dates and repairs in ERS.
3. Provide the safest equipment possible for our members.
4. Issue individual SCBA masks to members for safety and sanitary reasons.
5. Hydro-test SCBA bottles every five years.
6. Flow test and inspect all SCBA and masks annually.
7. Maintain a sufficient number of SCBA and spare bottles to equip all response apparatus first out and reserve.
8. Monthly inspect all equipment to ensure working order.
9. Maintain enough hose to meet WSRB minimums on apparatus and in reserve.
10. Provide spare sets of turnouts at each station to encourage members to decontaminate PPE immediately following carcinogen exposure without fear of being out of service.
11. Provide spare hoods and gloves for an exchange program at each station to limit carcinogen exposure.

### **Objective IV: Technology.**

#### **Strategies:**

##### **A. Communications/Dispatch:**

1. Radio pagers remain the most effective way to notify members of alarms however systems utilizing new technology often do not have the ability to utilize radio pagers for alarm notification.
2. Major radio changes require buy-in from all partner agencies. When purchasing communications equipment multi-band equipment with the ability to meet future needs is critical.
3. Maintain 115 radio pagers or other means of reliable member alarm notification devices, 50 portable radios and 24 mobile radios.
4. The ability to program radios and pagers in-house is critical to keeping members in service.
5. Seek out and utilize the newest technology for alarm notification and inter-department communications using mobile phones.
6. Working with all emergency services in Yakima County establish a county wide radio network that includes infrastructure, software, hardware and a funding mechanism. The District must plan for the costs associated with this system.
7. Determine the best means possible to dispatch alarms. Based on dispatch center call volume, call type, customer service, use of Spillman, planned

infrastructure upgrades, system and cost select the best possible dispatch center for operations.

8. Work with dispatch center to have CAD correctly identify closest resource for incidents with the potential for borderless dispatching.
9. Educate dispatch on the needs of a rural fire district regardless of how they dispatch their home agency.

**B. Spillman:**

1. Evaluate Spillman for its ability to meet the need of the fire service.
2. The system should be able to calculate response times and send appropriate level of service based on call type.
3. Work with other fire agencies in Yakima County to determine if a system change needs to be made to meet the needs of the County fire departments.

**C. Emergency Reporting System (ERS):**

1. ERS is the reporting system used by the District to report alarms to NFIRS and NEMIS as well as track training, maintenance and inventory.
2. Look for modifications to the system to allow for easy input and data analysis.
3. District on-scene written reporting should be written to flow with the input of data in ERS.
4. Future consideration should be given to potentially utilizing tablets on scene to directly input alarm information into ERS on scene with a goal of being paperless by 2024.
  - i. Encourage ERS to develop fillable forms that interface with ERS for on-scene data collection via rugged tablets.
5. Maintenance and equipment inspections where possible will be inputted into ERS by 2024.

**Objective V: Organizational Response:**

**Strategies:**

**A. Members:**

1. Maintain enough members at each station available 24/7/365 to adequately respond to all alarm types.
2. Train members in all aspects of all-risk fire service.
3. Maintain appropriate partnerships with neighboring fire departments, Department of Natural Resources and Bureau of Indian Affairs for response. Closest resource aligns with our mission, we don't have to be the ones to answer the call to meet our mission of preserving and protecting life then property.

**B. EMS/Rescue:**

1. Provide quality BLS service through a mix of Emergency Medical Technicians and Advanced First Aid members.

2. Work with partners to develop a county-wide EMS system for 911 transport ambulances that ensures transport ambulances are available for projected call volume.
3. A mix of ALS/BLS transport ambulances shall be located to meet WAC 246-976-390 (7) *Ground Ambulance Service Response Time Requirements*: Verified ground ambulance services must meet the following minimum agency response times for all EMS and trauma responses to response areas 80% of the time within urban areas **10 minutes** or less, suburban areas **20 minutes** or less, rural areas **45 minutes** or less and wilderness as soon as possible.
4. Ensure county-wide EMS system is appropriate for call type and volume, consideration given to BLS transport ambulances both private and public.
5. By 2021 if a county-wide 911 ambulance system cannot be developed the District should develop a system for ambulance transport within our boundaries.
6. Monitor the distribution of the county-wide EMS levy distribution to determine the need for the District to request changes and/or run our own levy.
7. Maintain one transport capable rescue in District.
8. Pre-plan response through CAD dispatch to provide the appropriate response level for quality patient care to all alarm types with consideration to ALS/BLS response and need for fire response.
9. Utilize air ambulances where necessary for best patient outcome.

**C. Structure Fire:**

1. Ensure staffing, equipment and apparatus are available 24/7/365 to adequately respond to fires in residential and commercial properties.
2. Pre-plan response through CAD dispatch to provide the appropriate amount and type of apparatus dispatched to fires have the appropriate fire flow capabilities on the first alarm.
3. Pre-fire plan all commercial buildings and have available on scene.
4. Maintain appropriate mutual and automatic aid agreements to handle escalating incidents.
5. Provide a District rescue response on all structure fires for the treatment and transport of injured members.
6. Maintain an elevated master stream response to commercial fires either through auto aid or District owned.

**D. Wildland Interface Fire:**

1. Ensure staffing, equipment and apparatus are available 24/7/365 to adequately respond to wildland interface fires.
2. Pre-fire plan historic wildland interface challenges and have available on scene.
3. Work with partners to develop Fire-Wise communities and encourage fuel mitigation programs.

4. Develop members from firefighter I, Engine Boss up to NWCG strike team leader.
5. Work with WADNR and BIA Fire to mitigate fire in urban interface areas.
6. Participate in state mobilization fires to provide experience for members and revenue for the District.

**Objective VI: Inner-Agency Cooperation:**

**Strategies:**

- A. It is the intent of YCFD12 to maintain a cooperative working relationship with all service providers, specifically the following agencies:**
  - a) All bordering fire departments- Response through mutual and automatic aid, fire investigation and training.
  - b) Yakima Sheriff's Office- Response, facility use and training.
  - c) Bureau Indian Affairs- Response on jointly protected lands and training.
  - d) Washington Department of Natural Resources- Response in jointly protected lands, training, equipment procurement and facility use.
  - e) Yakima EMS office- Training, levy funding and protocols.
  - f) SunComm- Dispatching and 911 call center.
  - g) Private ambulance- ALS/BLS patient transport.
  - h) Yakima County Search & Rescue- Response to wilderness areas.
  - i) Yakima County Office of Emergency Management- Training, Planning and disaster response.
  - j) West Valley School District- Planning, facility use, Fire Science Class, Cadet Program.

## **Strategic Priority 4: Community Accountability**

**Strategic Issue:** Ensure the District meets community expectations for operations, fiscal accountability and public education.

**Goal:** Identify level of satisfaction, opinions and priorities of the community in addition to community awareness of current and proposed programs and capabilities.

### **Introduction:**

Yakima County Fire District 12 strives to provide the highest level of safety for the people who live, work and travel in the District and to do so in the most efficient manner. Therefore, it is important that the Department be continuously monitored and evaluated to assure that the values and performance standards established for the Department are being met – not just as viewed from within the Department, but with oversight of citizens, peer groups and general fiscal accountability. Historically it is difficult for fire districts to receive feedback from the community as citizens typically don't have the fire department on their mind except during times of emergency. In the past the District has mailed surveys to every address we've responded to review our operational performance as well as developed a citizen survey to reach citizens we haven't responded to. Community feedback is important to decision making in the District and effective feedback will require the District to take a proactive approach to soliciting information from our constituents.

### **Objective I: Citizen Review and Evaluation**

#### **Strategies:**

#### **A. Maintain a customer follow-up program:**

1. Within two weeks of an alarm, follow up with customers at the alarm address utilizing the duty crew and companies during driving drill depending on the hour of availability for the customer.
2. Follow-up to include ensuring their issue was taken care of, well-being of the patient for EMS calls, asking customer service survey questions, providing fire safety education, smoke detector/home safety inspections and information on upcoming department events.
3. Develop a brochure highlighting all aspects of the Department and include information on social services available to citizens.
4. Utilize a door hanger to leave when no one is available at the address to contact us with the best time to reach them.
5. On reports include space for customers email address to email survey link for those we are unable to reach.
6. Monthly as part of the Chiefs report review customer ratings with Board.

#### **B. Community feedback:**

1. Utilizing kiosks or tablets solicit community feedback at Fire Department events, school district events, community events and from civic groups.

2. Survey's should take less than 5 minutes to finish yet provide meaningful information to the Department.
- C. Annually prior to updating the Strategic Plan solicit community feedback.**
1. Utilizing the District newsletter invite the public to provide comments on fiscal accountability, public information and public education to ensure our mission meets public expectations.
  2. Information provided will be used to guide budget, policy and future planning.
- D. Review performance objectives for response.**
1. Review annual operations report for response times, call volume and call type to ensure we are meeting response objectives and developing operational plans that match the call volume.
  2. Response objectives:
    - a) WAC 246-976-390 (6) Aid Service Response Time Requirements of a verified aid service: Arrive at emergency medical situations 80% of the time within the suburban area in **15 minutes** and **45 minutes** in our rural areas from time of notification prepared to deliver basic life support until advanced life support arrives.
    - b) District PERFORMANCE MEASURE FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE: It is the goal of YCFD12 to have the first arriving unit on a fire scene within **one mile** of a station arrive within **8 minutes** of notification. The response time will be increased by **2 minutes** for each additional mile from a fire station.
  3. Utilize technology to correctly track incidents in ERS to measure response objectives.
  4. Monthly review alarms to determine nature of incident and mitigate false alarms.

**Objective II: Performance Comparisons with Districts.**

**Strategies**

- A. Conduct a review of performance comparison of fire districts with similar characteristics every two years.**
  1. Compare incident count, fire, EMS and other.
  2. Compare WSRB rating.
  3. Compare Budget with population, area, assessed value and stations.
  4. Compare personnel, on-call members, volunteers, full time, etc.
- B. Participate in the Washington Fire Commissioners Association wage and benefit survey.**
  1. Only participants in the survey can access the data.
  2. Use data from the survey to ensure the District is comparable to similar size Districts in wages and benefits offered to all members.
- C. Annually submit the District in the Washington Fire Commissioners Association Management Excellence Award.**

1. Results from this competitive award allow the District to know how we measure up to like sized departments.
  2. Review all entries for innovative ideas that may apply to the District.
- D. Review District WSRB rating every five years for comparison and prepare for next evaluation.**
1. Use WSRB rating as a tool for improving fire protection within our community.
  2. WSRB provides the Department a list of areas to improve fire protection, this list will be utilized to ensure equipment is available and maintained to provide sufficient fire protection in our community.
  3. Decisions regarding staffing and purchases may be made utilizing WSRB to help understand the level of fire protection that we will be capable of providing following the decision.
  4. Consideration will be given to costs associated with WSRB rating improvements for items that benefit single family residences.
  5. As a tool the WSRB rating shall be compared against industry standards for EMS response, ambulance response, fire response, dispatching, NFPA and WAC standards.

**Objective III: Public Relations.**

**Strategies: Develop and implement a strategic communications plan that includes the following elements.**

**A. Based on current or future need to disseminate specific information, create a common message across all platforms.**

1. Message should include:
  - a) Who we are and what we do.
  - b) Why the issue is important to our citizens and District.
  - c) Challenges facing the District.
  - d) Solution to these challenges.
  - e) Education for the recipient

**B. Provide Education.**

1. The District shall educate our citizens in the following subjects:
  - a) District funding mechanisms and challenges.
  - b) District boundaries.
  - c) Overall response capabilities with expectation vs. reality.
  - d) When to call 911 and what a true emergency is.
  - e) Fire and life safety.
  - f) Courses such as CPR, Safe-Sitter and safe car seat use.
2. Firsthand educational interactions:
  - a) Open house- every three years in the spring hold an open house at each station to invite our public into facilities to meet members.
  - b) Community events- partner with the Association to hold community events that include a specific message to the captive audience.

- c) Public meetings/presentations- When the District has a specific need to disseminate information host public meetings and/or attend local civic group meetings.
  - d) Seek out opportunities with West Valley School District. Work with the school district to develop a program like the old DARE program based on current and projected call volume to reduce fire, injuries and loss of life.
    - i. High School/Junior High- CPR blitz, shop safety, school safety, distracted driving, fire extinguishers, cooking safety, opioids, drugs, alcohol.
    - ii. Middle School- When to call 911 for true emergencies, basic first aid, home safety, pedestrian safety, cyber safety.
    - iii. Elementary School- EDITH house, Fire Safety-stop, drop & roll, bicycle safety, poisoning, water safety, firearms, know your address/phone number, stranger danger, 2 ways out.
    - iv. Partner with law enforcement and other subject experts.
    - v. Preferably a monthly theme across all schools and in line with regular public education events.
    - vi. School program can be a mixture of firsthand educational opportunities taught by members, school/teacher led, written communications and using technology videos.
3. Written Communications:
- a) Quarterly District newsletter to provide up to date information about the District as well as upcoming events/issues.
  - b) School flyers send home flyers with students approved through the District regarding events/issues.
  - c) District e-mail system encourage citizens to sign up for our direct e-mail list and utilize the system to disseminate information.
  - d) Utilize a direct mailing sparingly for critical issues.
  - e) Newspaper, letter to editor, opinions section and PSA's.
4. Media:
- a) Incident/event/issue press releases.
  - b) Public Safety Announcements.
  - c) Develop relationships with local media to be the go-to department for information.
  - d) Invite media into stations to highlight the department, hold training sessions for media to learn the job.
5. Technology:
- a) Keep District web site updated with current issues and information in a user-friendly format.
  - b) Expand social media platform to provide one-two messages per week to subscribers.

- c) Create on-hold message for main station phone calls specific to our message.
6. Advertising:
- a) Utilize public education boards in front of all stations to share fire safety information, upcoming events and solicit community feedback.
  - b) Utilize public use of Training Center and Tampico Community Center to share safety information, upcoming events and solicit community feedback.
  - c) Use reader boards at each station to share a common message.  
Improve Station 52 reader board.
  - d) Create signs or banners to highlight events and needs.
  - e) Utilize paid advertising sparingly based on the message.