

Rockford Fire Department



Strategic Plan 2007



Center for
Public Safety
Excellence

Rockford Fire Department – Strategic Plan

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INTRODUCTION

The Rockford Fire Department has a long history dating back to 1881 when it was first formed. The Rockford Fire Department is consistently working to achieve the highest level of professionalism and efficiency on behalf of those it serves. Recently the Fire Department decided to enter a self-assessment process for the purpose of self-improvement and attaining international fire service accreditation.

In their goal to pursue Accredited Agency status, the Rockford Fire Department contracted with the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc. (CPSE) to facilitate a method to place into writing the department's path into the future. The methodology chosen was to develop and implement a "Community-Driven Strategic Plan" for the Fire Department. This plan is intended to guide the organization within established parameters set forth by the City Administrator and Mayor of Rockford, Illinois.

The Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc. (CPSE) utilized the Community-Driven Strategic Planning process to accomplish more than just the development of a document. It challenged the membership of the Rockford Fire Department to look critically at paradigms, values, philosophies, beliefs and desires. It challenged individuals to work in the best interest of the "team." Further, it provided the membership with an opportunity to participate in the development of their organization's long-term direction and focus. The members of the Rockford Fire Department External and Internal Stakeholder Groups did an outstanding job in committing to this important project and remain committed to the document's completion.

The Rockford Fire Department's Strategic Plan sets forth a comprehensive vision and mission statement that provides the agency with a clear path into the future. Additionally, this Strategic Plan identifies the core values that embody how the agency's members, individually and collectively, will carry out the agency's mission. In the following pages, the Rockford Fire Department identifies their goals, objectives and strategies that will allow the agency to realize its vision.

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The Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of an organization is intended to describe, in succinct terms, the purpose for the organization's existence. It articulates the principal reason for the agency's presence within the community.

The Rockford Fire Department, through a collaborative process, developed the following Mission Statement:

**The mission of the
Rockford Fire Department is to
protect the lives and property
of our citizens and customers
by ensuring “Excellence in Services”
in fire protection and life safety.**

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

The Rockford Fire Department is the second largest career fire department in the State of Illinois. Founded in 1881, the department currently holds an Insurance Services Office (ISO) Public Protection Classification (PPC) rating of "Class 2." The department currently provides services through the work of five (5) divisions:

- Administration Division
- Prevention Division
- Operations Division
- Training Division
- 9-1-1 Division

Staffed with 333 (sworn, support and Emergency 9-1-1) members, the department responded to over 21,000 calls in 2006; a 6.9% increase from year 2005. Utilizing eleven (11) fire stations, the department operates with eight (8) engine companies, three (3) quint companies, two (2) ladder companies and five (5) advanced life support (ALS) ambulances. All fire companies have the capability of providing ALS emergency medical care.

The fire department provides many special operations. These include: response capabilities with a Hazardous Materials Team; Water Rescue and Recovery Team; Technical Rescue (extrication, trench, confined space, structural collapse, and high/low angle rope) Team; and crash rescue ARFF services at the Chicago Rockford International Airport.



The Rockford Fire Department is a member of Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) Division Eight. There are twenty-five (25) fire departments that belong to MABAS Division Eight sharing resources on a regular basis. The Rockford Fire Department responds to MABAS Division Eight requests and has the potential to respond for assistance to over 794 square miles.

In addition, the Rockford Fire Department has written agreements with five (5) other MABAS Divisions, which cover 5,000 square miles, to provide assistance with water rescue, hazardous materials and technical rescue.

The City of Rockford currently is 59 square miles. Between 1970 and the present, the City has grown geographically by 69%. The City has continued to be served by eleven (11) fire stations since 1974. The current population is 152,000.

DEFINITION OF A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN STRATEGIC PLAN

The fire service has entered into a very competitive evolutionary cycle. Public demands continue to increase, while dollars and other resources continue to shrink. These trends place increased pressure on the modern fire service manager, policy makers, and staff to develop ways to be more effective and more efficient. In many cases, the public is demanding the accomplishment of specific goals, objectives, and services with fewer resources. To do a more efficient job with the available resources, organizations must set objectives based on constructive efforts while eliminating programs that do not serve the community.

To ensure that citizen needs were incorporated, the Community-Driven Strategic Planning process was used to develop the Rockford Fire Department strategic plan. Businesses employ this type of process to identify market trends, allowing the service provider to focus efforts while reducing risk and wasted effort. This process was adapted to meet the Rockford Fire Department's specific needs. This document is the result of several strategic planning sessions and includes valuable citizen input.

What is a Strategic Plan?

It is a living management tool that:

- Provides short-term direction;
- Builds a shared vision;
- Sets goals and objectives; and
- Optimizes use of resources.

What we have to do today is to be ready for an uncertain tomorrow.

Peter F. Drucker,
Professor of Social Science
and Management

Effective strategic planning benefits from a consistent and cohesively structured process employed across all levels of the organization. A sense of urgency pervades the community-driven 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. The planning process should be flexible and dynamic. New information from citizens, like-providers, and life changes are to be factored into the planning process. ***The strategic plan should be an operationally useful document.***

Community-Driven Strategic Planning creates a platform for a wide range of beginnings. The approach comes to life by being shared, debated, and implemented in the context of organizational realities.

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Successful organizations, whether they are Fortune 500 companies, federal agencies, or state or municipal governments, have recognized that developing customer focus is an absolute necessity. With this information, government agencies must strategically plan how they will deliver high quality products and services to the public and their other customers through better, faster, and less expensive programs.

Once their strategic goals are established, agency leaders must establish performance measures, for which they are fully accountable, to assess and ensure that their departments and agencies are indeed delivering on the promises made in their strategic plans. In the publication "Serving the American Public: Best Practices in Citizen-Driven Strategic Planning Federal Benchmarking Consortium Study Report" dated February 1997, Citizen-Driven Strategic Planning is defined as

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

To fully understand strategic planning, it is necessary to look at a few key words in the 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 includes all employees. (It also considers stakeholders and community members 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 whether the organization has achieved success.

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Most importantly, strategic planning can be an opportunity to unify the management, employees, stakeholders and citizens 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.

Where Do Customers Fit into the Strategic Planning Process?

For many successful organizations, the voice of the customer drives their operations and charts the course for their future. Companies, as well as state and city governments, have begun focusing on citizens as one of the key motivators in planning for the future.

A "community-driven organization" is defined as one that:

*"maintains a focus on the needs and expectations,
both spoken and unspoken,
of the community, both present and future,
in the creation and/or improvement of
the product or service provided."*

Again, it will be useful to define specific terms used in this definition:

- **focus** means that the organization actively seeks to examine its products, services, and processes through the eyes of the citizen;
- **needs and expectations** means that community's preferences and requirements, as well as their standards for performance, timeliness, and cost, are all input to the planning for the products and services of the organization;
- **spoken and unspoken** means that not only must the expressed needs and expectations of the citizens be listened to, but also that information developed independently "about" the community and its preferences, standards, and industry will be used as input to the organizational planning; and
- **present and future** recognizes that the community drives planning and operations, both to serve the current community and its future.

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Performance Assessment

Implied within every stage of the planning process is the ability to determine progress made toward the goals or targets set. This assessment ability is a monitoring function that simply tracks activities. It may be as simple as a “To Do List” or as complicated as a plan of action with milestones and performance measures. Also implied within the planning process is the ability to measure effectiveness of the actions taken in the conduct of the organization's business.

The Community–Driven Strategic Planning Process Outline

The specific steps of the process are as follows:

1. Define the services provided to the community;
2. Establish the community's service priorities;
3. Establish the community's expectations of the organization;
4. Identify any concerns the community may have about the organization and its services;
5. Identify those aspects of the organization and its services the community views positively;
6. Develop the Mission Statement, giving careful attention to the services currently provided and which logically can be provided in the future;
7. Develop a Vision of the future;
8. Establish the Values of the organization's membership;
9. Identify the Strengths of the organization;
10. Identify any Weaknesses of the organization;
11. Identify areas of Opportunity for the organization;
12. Identify potential Threats to the organization;
13. Establish realistic goals and objectives for the future;
14. Identify implementation tasks for each objective; and
15. Develop organizational and community commitment to the plan.



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PROCESS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc. acknowledges Rockford Community External Stakeholder Group and the Rockford Fire Department's Internal Stakeholders for their participation and input into the "Community-Driven Strategic Planning Process." The Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc. would also like to acknowledge Chief Bill Robertson for his leadership and commitment to this process.



Development of the Rockford Fire Department's Strategic Plan was not limited to internal participants alone. In September 2007, a representative from the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc. and staff from the Rockford Fire Department held an open meeting where members of the public were invited.

Valuable commentary and useful concerns were collected.

The discussion at the meeting revolved around citizen concerns, expectations and comments about the Fire Department. The Rockford Fire Department and the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc. would like to express a special thank you to the citizens who contributed to the creation of this Strategic Plan. The development of this plan was truly a "team effort." Community members present at this meeting were as follows:

Table 1: The Rockford Community External Stakeholder Group

<i>Virginia Smalley</i>	<i>Sue Schreiber</i>	<i>Ed Whittington</i>
<i>Brian Nyquist</i>	<i>Thom Corirossi</i>	<i>Marilyn Marie Calvagna</i>
<i>Dewanda Thomas</i>	<i>Gail Hughes</i>	<i>John Martin</i>
<i>Russ Johansson</i>	<i>Jane Billeter</i>	<i>Beverly Kelso</i>
<i>Brad Smith</i>	<i>John Royster</i>	<i>Ken Deill</i>
<i>Garry Hartman</i>	<i>Gordy Alexander</i>	<i>Jeff Lindstrom</i>
<i>John Underwood</i>	<i>Carm Herman</i>	<i>Hattie Box</i>
<i>Shirly Glinke</i>	<i>Denny Schrader</i>	<i>Ronald Graw</i>
<i>Bill Sjostrom</i>	<i>Cathy Waters</i>	<i>Matt James</i>
<i>Tom Fitzgerald</i>	<i>Bill Mohr</i>	<i>Jim Powers</i>
<i>Elizabeth Powers</i>	<i>Kim Smith</i>	<i>Janette Crowell</i>
<i>Midge Anderson</i>	<i>Gary Peterson</i>	<i>Wray Howard</i>
<i>Mianne Nelson</i>	<i>Bob Jakeway</i>	<i>Chris Bellone</i>

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Table 1: The Rockford Community External Stakeholder Group (Continued)

<i>Fritz Jacobi</i>	<i>William L. Camilletti</i>	<i>Ray Grundstrom</i>
<i>Charlotte Erickson</i>	<i>Gordon VerWayst</i>	<i>Mike Willard</i>
<i>Doby Patton</i>	<i>Steve Anderson</i>	<i>Phil Rubin</i>
<i>Nicholas J. Giacone</i>	<i>Steve Graceffa</i>	<i>Matt Hopkins</i>
<i>Doc Ward</i>	<i>Jeff Lee</i>	<i>Judy VonGlockner</i>
<i>Jessie Haun</i>	<i>Kevin Ruclly</i>	<i>Matt Smazik</i>
<i>Tom Habing</i>	<i>Tim Dimke</i>	<i>Dick Todd</i>
<i>Patricia Gibbs</i>	<i>Joe Owen</i>	<i>Robert R. Anderson</i>
<i>Phil Eaton</i>	<i>Phylli Jensen</i>	<i>Keith Neilsen</i>
<i>Chris Masters</i>	<i>Lynn Reid</i>	<i>Gloria Gonigam</i>
<i>Fay Muhammad</i>	<i>Grant Bush</i>	<i>Maralyn Kloweit</i>
<i>Denise Giakas</i>	<i>Alberta Jones</i>	<i>Gordon Eggers</i>
<i>Mike Dunn</i>	<i>Ron Meadors</i>	<i>Anthony Cellitti</i>
<i>Wayne Spitzer</i>	<i>John Eksery</i>	<i>Mike Bacon</i>
	<i>Mario Calvagna</i>	

A two-day work session was conducted with representatives of the City Administrator's office, the Finance Department, IT Department, Community Development Department, Public Works Department, IAFF Local 413 and the Fire Department. The purpose of these work sessions was to review and discuss the agency's approach to "Community-Driven Strategic Planning." The work sessions generated a high level of interest and participation.

Discussion at the work sessions focused on the Fire Department's Mission. Also discussed were the Vision and Values of the agency, as well as the organization's perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

In the process of strategic planning, the following are important:

- To review the agency's history, culture and evolution;
- To identify the current status of the agency; and
- To determine where and what the agency desires to be in the future.

This process could not have been completed without the participation of the members of the Rockford Fire Department and their internal stakeholders. Their insights were invaluable in putting together this strategic plan. The assistance and resources graciously made available to the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc. (CPSE) are appreciated.

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The participants took their work very seriously and accepted the challenge to develop a quality product. Internal stakeholders who participated included the following:

Table 2: Rockford Fire Department Internal Stakeholder Group

<i>Gorkem Tolan Project Manager – Public Works Department</i>	<i>Chris McGarry GIS Coordinator – IT Department</i>	<i>Jon Hollander City Engineer – Public Works Department</i>
<i>Jonah Katz Planner II – Community Development Department</i>	<i>Michael Allen Financial Analyst – Finance Department</i>	<i>Todd Cagnoni Manager of Current Planning – Community Development Dept.</i>
<i>Sandy Stansell 9-1-1 Training Supervisor</i>	<i>Georgeann Dahm 9-1-1 Division Administrator</i>	<i>Sileena Crawford Telecommunicator-Fire</i>
<i>Jim Ryan City Administrator – Mayor’s Office</i>	<i>Bill Hyde Fire Investigator</i>	<i>Julia Valdez Assistant City Administrator – Mayor’s Office</i>
<i>Ali Villafuerte Firefighter/Paramedic</i>	<i>Ernie White Firefighter</i>	<i>Barry Fitz Safety and Equipment Manager</i>
<i>Jim Strey District Chief/Accreditation Mgr.</i>	<i>Jimmy Krein Firefighter</i>	<i>Tracy Renfro IAFF Local #413</i>

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Table 2: Rockford Fire Department Internal Stakeholder Group (Continued)

<i>Derreyl Brown Driver/Engineer</i>	<i>Bill Robertson Fire Chief</i>	<i>Kelli Ingardona Driver/Engineer</i>
<i>Bill Beaman Division Chief of Operations</i>	<i>Kirt Croutcher Lieutenant</i>	<i>Greg Castronovo Captain</i>
<i>Pat Keehnen Division Chief of Administration</i>	<i>Joe Cascio Lieutenant</i>	<i>Frank Schmitt Division Chief of Prevention</i>
<i>Brad Donnelly Division Chief of Training</i>	<i>Steve Preiss Captain</i>	<i>Chuck Martini District Chief</i>

SERVICES PROVIDED

In following the steps of the Community–Driven Strategic Planning Process Outline, the Rockford Fire Department was asked to identify the most important functions and services it provides and offers to the community. It was important to identify these by priority to assure that these services are consistent with the critical needs of their community. The Internal Stakeholders identified the following services in this priority:

Table 3: Core Services

- Fire Suppression
- Emergency Medical Services
- Fire Prevention
- Special Operations
- Disaster/Emergency Preparedness
- 9-1-1 Emergency Communications

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Table 4: Support Programs

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water Distribution System• Hydrant Maintenance• Building Addressing• Pre-incident Planning• Street Mapping• Street Maintenance• Information Technology• Capital Improvement Program• Apparatus Maintenance• Tools and Equipment• Clothing and Turnout Gear• Human Resources• Fire Investigations• Public Education• Code Enforcement• Training• Traffic Signal Integration• Traffic Signal Pre-emption• Police Support• Public Works• Transportation Planning• Illinois Department of Public Health• Fuel• Red Cross• Mutual Aid Box Alarm System• School Transportation Services• Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System• Federal Emergency Management Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salvation Army• Communications Technical Support• Utilities Support• Fuel• School Transportation Services• 10-87 Club• Building Department• Health Department• Finance Department• Surcharge Funding• Animal Control• Specialized Heavy Equipment• Station Maintenance• Remediation Companies• Outside Contractors• Elected Officials• Corporate Support• Local 413 City Firefighters• Media• Winnebago County• Office of the State Fire Marshal• Illinois Fire Chiefs Association• Salvation Army• Communications Technical Support• Utilities Support• EMS Billing Service• Illinois Department of Transportation• Illinois Emergency Management Agency
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COMMUNITY EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER GROUP FINDINGS

A key element of the Rockford Fire Department’s organizational philosophy is having a high level of commitment to citizens, as well as recognizing the importance of community satisfaction. Therefore, the Fire Department asked community representatives to participate in a meeting, which would focus on their needs and expectations of that agency. Discussion centered not only on the present services provided but also on priorities for the future.

Community Priorities

In order to dedicate time, energy and resources on services most desired by its citizens, the Rockford Fire Department needs to understand what the community considers to be their priorities. The Community External Stakeholders were asked to prioritize the services offered by the Rockford Fire Department through a process of direct comparison.



Table 5: Community Service Priorities of the Rockford Fire Department

<u>SERVICES</u>	<u>RANKING</u>	<u>SCORE</u>
ALS Paramedic EMS	1	487
Fire Suppression	2	465
Basic Rescue	3	373
Advanced Rescue	4	341
Hazardous Materials Mitigation	5	320
WMD/Bioterrorism	6	251
Fire Inspection	7	203
Fire Investigation	8	161
Community Fire/EMS Safety Education	9	134

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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's needs. In certain areas education, on the level of service that is already available may be all that is needed. The following are the expectations of the community's External Stakeholder Group.

Table 6: Community Expectations of the Rockford Fire Department

- *Quick response to emergency calls.*
- *Response with expertise and equipment needed for the emergency.*
- *Safety education for the community.*
- *Strong interaction with the community.*
- *Diverse workforce that matches the community profile/culture.*
- *A fire department presence at community festivals, events and activities.*
- *In partnership with local health care providers.*
- *Readiness to deal with weapons of mass destruction.*
- *Timely paramedic services with state of the art pre-hospital care.*
- *Courtesy and professionalism.*
- *Fair and equal treatment /response city-wide.*
- *Public awareness of fire department activities and services.*
- *A knowledgeable, well trained, qualified workforce.*
- *Emphasis on community fire and injury prevention.*
- *A safety focus on the citizen and the firefighter.*
- *To have the necessary staff, equipment and training to provide their services.*
- *Mandates and support programs for child safety.*
- *Media relations and control.*
- *Leadership and control during emergencies.*
- *Code enforcement.*
- *The provision of fire and EMS services that represent the best quality and standards.*
- *Participation with the development of safety procedures in manufacturing.*
- *Continuous improvement.*
- *Knowledge of the streets and addresses of buildings in the city.*
- *A physically fit and well disciplined department.*

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Areas of Community Concern

The Community–Driven Strategic Planning Process would fall short and be incomplete without an expression from the community regarding their concerns about the agency. Some areas of concern may in fact be a weakness within the delivery system. However, some weaknesses may also be misperceptions of the community based upon a lack of information or incorrect information.

Table 7: Areas of Community Concern of the Rockford Fire Department

- *Response times to the far East side of town.*
- *Should the fire department be in control of the 9-1-1 system in Rockford?*
- *I would encourage a “live in Rockford” policy for all fire employees.*
- *The age of the firefighting equipment.*
- *Rockford FD should recruit more minorities.*
- *Emergency units having to stop at every intersection when on emergency response.*
- *Concerned about the ability to respond quickly to growth and changes in the community demographics.*
- *Proper budget to maintain and/or upgrade emergency equipment.*
- *Is the number of fire stations adequate to cover all of the city equally?*
- *Cost efficiency.*
- *Need more education of the public about safety.*
- *Make sure the most qualified person is doing the job.*
- *Great fire and EMS skill, but poor customer service and attitude in the streets.*
- *Need to see more professionalism when serving the community.*
- *Poor response times in some areas.*
- *Don't understand why large pieces of fire equipment with large numbers of people go to minor/small incidents.*
- *Fire Stations need to be strategically placed to reach all areas of the community.*
- *Adequate staffing and response times.*
- *I would like to know where the fire station is that serves my home, and who the firefighters are. They should be engaged with the community. A community newsletter?*
- *We need to be more informed about our fire department.*
- *Do we have enough fire department protection for the increased Rockford population?*
- *Under staffed, under funded.*
- *Too many firefighters are getting up in age and out of shape.*
- *EMS does not seem to be as much of a priority for staff as fire is.*
- *Media control.*
- *Improve communication regarding services provided to the community.*

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Table 7: Areas of Community Concern of the Rockford Fire Department (Continued)

- *As the city expands, are response capabilities keeping up? If not, services are declining.*
- *Take the politics out of the job.*
- *Are you equipped to handle bioterrorism events?*
- *Community development out growing emergency service capability.*
- *The politics of the department.*
- *The fire department isn't growing with the community.*

Positive Community Feedback

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



The Community External Stakeholder Group provided the following comments when asked to identify the positive aspects of the department.

Table 8: Positive Community Comments about the Rockford Fire Department

- *Warm and friendly customer service.*
- *Well trained personnel.*
- *Quality professional personnel.*
- *A well run administration.*
- *Excellent Fire Chief.*
- *This process shows a willingness to involve the community.*
- *Very professional approach to issues.*
- *Knowledgeable and professional staff.*
- *Very pleased with the department's efforts to support industry.*
- *Professional, courteous and professional.*
- *Rapid response to emergency calls.*
- *Amazingly positive department and people who make due with out-dated apparatus and facilities.*
- *Personnel seem well motivated and trained.*
- *You care about the job you do. Thank you!*
- *Well trained firefighters willing to face any challenges they encounter.*
- *Professional, compassionate, skilled and visible.*
- *The personnel I have dealt with have been so courteous and concerned about my welfare.*
- *Top management and quality crews.*

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Other Thoughts and Comments

The Community External Stakeholder Group was asked to share any other comments they had about the Rockford Fire Department or its services. The following written comments were received.

Table 9: General Community Comments about the Rockford Fire Department

- *Keep up the good work!*
- *Tremendous job!*
- *Thanks for all that you do!*
- *Do what you should do at all levels needed in the most efficient, technologically expert and cost effective way.*
- *I have not seen a lot of prevention programs as compared to the past.*
- *I would like to see the department conduct home inspections sponsored by the home owners association.*
- *I am glad to see ongoing planning and improvement processes.*
- *I would like to see help and training with conducting fire drills and self inspection.*
- *I would like to be able to have a member attend a neighborhood meeting to inform members of safety procedures in and around the home.*
- *Good luck on your accreditation.*
- *I am very happy to be a part of your accreditation process and journey.*
- *Work closer with manufacturing.*
- *There is a desire to be able to obtain feedback on fire code questions and concerns in a productive manner without the concern of issues escalating unnecessarily.*
- *Thank you for including me in your process.*
- *One of the best departments in the USA. Keep up the good work.*
- *They need more paramedic units and ambulances to handle a city of this size.*
- *Continue to collaborate with the local health care provider to improve services.*
- *I have a strong sense of confidence in the Rockford Fire Department.*



INTERNAL STAKEHOLDER FINDINGS

The Mission Statement

The purpose of the Mission Statement is to answer the question “Why do we exist as an organization?” After a great deal of work and discussion by the Rockford Fire Department Internal Stakeholders, the intentionally simplistic, yet meaningful statement is provided below:

Table 10: Rockford Fire Department Mission Statement

The mission of the Rockford Fire Department is to protect the lives and property of our citizens and customers by ensuring “Excellence in Services” in fire protection and life safety.

The Vision Statement

In addition to knowing who they are and understanding their beliefs, all successful organizations need to define where they expect to be in the future. After having established the organization’s Mission, the next logical step is to establish a vision of what the Rockford Fire Department should be in the future. Vision statements are built upon the framework of the Mission Statement.



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Vision Statements provide targets of excellence that the organization will strive toward and provide a basis for their goals and objectives. The following Vision Statement was developed for the Rockford Fire Department.

Table 11: The Rockford Fire Department Vision Statement

Five years from now, the Rockford Fire Department will be recognized by local businesses, residents, and regional fire and health care agencies as a progressive, well trained citizen-centered department that places a high premium on the emergency services that are delivered. This extends to include an efficient and proficient 911 Telecommunication Center that works to remain on the leading edge of technology that is available.

Our workforce culture will reflect a progressive, cooperative and respectful team atmosphere that is nurtured by fair practices, open communication processes and up-to-date procedures that guide the decisions of our personnel. Our mission will be accomplished by a physically fit, healthy, and increasingly diverse work force, well trained in a multitude of specialized skills and empowered with a high level of involvement in our success. We will work within structured planning processes which identify, and work toward the accomplishment of organizational priorities and community needs.

We will honor our community trust by providing the most effective, efficient and fiscally responsible service possible to all population groups in all areas of the City. By evaluating and improving our apparatus, facilities and equipment infrastructure, and the distribution and concentration of response forces, all areas of the community will receive equal quality service that meets or exceeds our customers' expectations.

We believe applying our A.C.T.I.O.N. values as we partner with our community and expand our citizen information initiatives through customer interaction so that our organizational priorities, philosophy, programs and operations are well understood by the residents of Rockford.

Through improved external relationships, we will explore all opportunities for improved fire and rescue service delivery, particularly expending time and energy towards developing the best strategy possible for providing special operations activity required in our community. We will become an Internationally Accredited Agency and meet or exceed national best practices ensuring that the Rockford Fire Department operates as a responsible quality organization providing "Excellence in Service."

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Values

Establishing values embraced by all members of an organization is extremely important. Values recognize those features and considerations that make up the personality of the organization. Those assembled for the Rockford Fire Department during the strategic planning process felt it absolutely necessary to declare the following statements as values for the organization.

Table 12: The Rockford Fire Department Value Statements

A.C.T.I.O.N.

We value **Accountability** in the execution of fire suppression, emergency medical and rescue services through the continued career development of fire personnel, systems safety and performance measurement.

We value a strong **Customer focus** for all those that live, work and visit the City of Rockford to ensure a safe and secure community served by a compassionate, professional, and diversified workforce.

We value a **Team oriented** approach with community and city-wide partnerships to promote public safety that is based upon the strengths of all its members. This encourages all members to be responsible to each other, to be well trained, and ready to provide service at all times and in all situations.

We value the **Innovation** and creativity of each individual member to bring to the department the desire to teach, learn and approach each challenge with new ideas and strategies.

We value an environment that encourages strong communications and will be **Open for new suggestions** ensuring that continuous improvements are made to respond to community needs and concerns.

We vow **Never to give up** our commitment to pursuing innovative ways to provide the highest level of services and ensure that our present and future responses will provide ***excellence in services***.

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With the completion of the Mission, Vision and Values, the Rockford Fire Department established the operation of the organization. The Mission, Vision, and Values are the foundation of any successful organization. Every effort should be made to keep these current and meaningful so that the individuals who make up the organization are well guided by them in the accomplishment of the goals, objectives, and day-to-day tasks.



S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis is designed to have an agency candidly identify their positive and less-than-desirable attributes. The Rockford Fire Department participated in this analysis and recognized its strengths and weaknesses, as well as the possible opportunities and potential threats.

Strengths

It is important for any organization to identify their strengths in order to assure that they are capable of providing the services requested by citizens 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 precious staff time. Through a consensus process, the Internal Stakeholders identified the strengths of the Rockford Fire Department (RFD) as follows:

Table 13: Strengths of the Rockford Fire Department

RFD Academy	Class 2 ISO rating
High percentage of personnel are certified instructors	All personnel are involved in certification programs
Good water distribution system	Advanced Life Support ambulance service
We can train in-house for state certifications	Trained staff on all companies
Staffing on apparatus in-line with Collective Bargaining Agreement	Low accident record (driving fire/EMS apparatus)
Physical fitness equipment at stations	Strong Special Operations
Excellent teamwork and morale	Professional workforce
Good rapport and support with elected officials	We have state-of-art 9-1-1/dispatch center
Functioning well with aging apparatus	ALS providers on all apparatus
Excellent emergency response training	Management/labor working relationship

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Table 13: Strengths of the Rockford Fire Department (Continued)

Public Education Program Grades 1 thru 6	Rockford Fire Department Fire Investigators
Strong Union	State-of-the-art Personal Protective Equipment
EMD/CCC trained Telecommunicators	Updated Standard Operating Procedures
Emergency Operations Plan	NIMS compliant

Weaknesses

Performance or lack of performance within an organization depends greatly on the identification of weaknesses and how they are confronted. While it is not unusual for these issues to be at the heart of the organization’s overall problems, it is unusual for organizations to be able to identify and deal with these issues effectively on their own.

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:

Table 14: Weaknesses of the Rockford Fire Department

Suspect station locations	Too few stations
Inadequate capital equipment funding	Lack of station location study
Too few ambulances	Extended response times to Eastern area
Lack of internal IT position	Aging fleet (frontline and reserve)
Lack of personnel with specialized training	Lack of Adult public education
Lack of public awareness of services provided	Lack of dedicated physical fitness program and medical screening
Deficient leadership development program	Interdepartmental cooperation
Interaction with media needs improvement	Lack of Mobil Data Terminals in apparatus
Inadequate fire prevention staffing	Lack of FMLA understanding
Lack of communications/information sharing within the department	Unincorporated areas in the city

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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. Many opportunities exist for the Rockford Fire Department. The Internal Stakeholders identified the following opportunities:

Table 15: Opportunities for the Rockford Fire Department

Compete for training funding grants
Grant funding for equipment
Opportunity to recruit and create diverse workforce
Opportunity to show presence at community events
Growth in the community
Create new partnerships with industry and health care organizations
Media outlets for education and information
R.A.T.S. assistance and funding
Fire Sprinkler/Code Adoption reducing fire loss
ESRI planning tools (GIS Mapping)
Emerging technology to advance fire services
Regional educational opportunities for personnel and community
Opportunity to develop a long term plan for service growth and planned community growth
Opportunity to be more active in neighborhood organizations
Promote legislation for public and firefighter safety by requiring sprinklers in all structures
Use of GPS/AVL technology
Address management system development and deployment
Opportunity for automatic aid with Cherry Valley
Expand our training facility with Federal money
Develop outside partnership for emergency planning
Create better relationship with the media
Building interaction with other City Departments
Opportunity to develop programs to overcome language/culture barriers with the growing diversities of our population

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Threats

To draw strength and gain full benefit of any opportunity, the threats to the organization, with their new risks and challenges, must also be identified in the strategic planning process. By recognizing possible threats, an organization can greatly reduce the potential for loss.

Fundamental to the success of any strategic plan is the understanding that threats are not completely and/or directly controlled by the organization. Some of the current and potential threats identified by the Internal Stakeholders were as follows:

Table 16: Threats to the Rockford Fire Department

<i>Privatization of EMS</i>
<i>Unfunded mandates</i>
<i>Legislative effects on surcharge for 9-1-1 revenue</i>
<i>Change in political landscape effecting resources, budgets and service</i>
<i>Loss of political support</i>
<i>Inability to meet grant funding requirements due to additional requirements</i>
<i>Economy/reduction of revenues</i>
<i>Increase in poverty levels</i>
<i>Increasing land area</i>
<i>Increased disasters</i>
<i>Aging housing stock</i>
<i>Dilapidated infrastructure</i>
<i>Crime levels</i>
<i>Abuse/inappropriate use of EMS service</i>

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Table 16: Threats to the Rockford Fire Department (Continued)

<p><i>Increasing homeless population</i></p>
<p><i>Terrorism</i></p>
<p><i>Statewide changing performance measures</i></p>
<p><i>Increasing vehicle maintenance and acquisition expenses</i></p>
<p><i>Uncontrolled community growth</i></p>
<p><i>Dysfunctional building address system</i></p>
<p><i>Mutual aid may not provide the same level of care</i></p>
<p><i>Weak local applicant pool for diversity</i></p>
<p><i>Growth of suburbs around us</i></p>
<p><i>Losing tax base to companies that relocate</i></p>

CRITICAL ISSUES AND SERVICE GAPS

After reviewing the Rockford Fire Department's core services, the organizational strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities and threats posed by industry and the community environment in which the agency operates, the Internal Stakeholders identified the primary critical issues that face the Fire Department. By participating in the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis, the Rockford Fire Department was able to produce a tangible list of critical issues and service gaps that provided the foundation for the establishment of goals and objectives, in order to meet the future vision of the Rockford Fire Department.

The list below reflects the issues identified by the Internal Stakeholders that pose the greatest risk to the department's services and organizational health. In addition, the Stakeholders also identified gaps in the Rockford Fire Department's activities that need to be addressed in order to provide the levels of service it has pledged itself to fulfill.

Table 17: Critical Issues of the Rockford Fire Department

- The collection and integration of data (Need software, hardware and credible analysis)
- Proper station location and establishment of response time benchmarks
- Aging apparatus fleet, stations and equipment
- Leadership/personnel development
- Public education and awareness

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Table 18: Service Gaps of the Rockford Fire Department

- Technology
 - GIS mapping technical training and use
 - Lack of an internal IT position
 - Lack of information management hardware
- Professional Development
 - Cross-training in special operations
 - Deficient leadership development
 - No dedicated physical fitness program and medical monitoring/screening
- Communications
 - Interdepartmental cooperation
 - Public education / media interaction
 - Need to improve partnerships with industry and health care organizations
 - Need to develop programs to overcome language/cultural barriers with growing diverse populations
- Need to recruit and develop a diverse work force
- Lack of grant funding
- Address creation and management
- Legislative advocacy

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Community-Driven Strategic Planning Process implemented by the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc. has, to this point, dealt with establishing the Mission, Vision, and Values of the Rockford Fire Department. In addition, the identification of strengths, weaknesses and needs of both the organization and citizen was accomplished. In order to achieve the mission of the Rockford Fire Department, realistic goals and objectives must be established. Goals and objectives are imperative to enhance strengths, to address identified weaknesses, to provide the individual members with clear direction and to address the concerns of the citizens.

In order to establish the goals and objectives, the Rockford Fire Department Internal Stakeholders met a number of times to complete this critical phase of the planning process. As goals and objectives are management tools, they should be updated on an on-going basis to identify what has been accomplished and to note changes within the organization and the community. The attainment of a performance target should be recognized and celebrated to provide a sense of organizational accomplishment.

***If you don't keep score,
you're only practicing.***

Vince Lombardi,
American Football
Coach and Motivator

The goals and objectives should now become the focus of the efforts of the Rockford Fire Department. Care was taken by the staff of the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc. to ensure that the critical needs and areas of needed enhancement previously identified were addressed within the goals and objectives.

By following these goals and objectives carefully, the organization can be directed into their desired future. These established goals and objectives should also greatly reduce the number of obstacles and distractions for the organization and its members.

The Internal Stakeholders set priorities for the accomplishment of specific objectives. Those objectives that carried higher priorities have been identified for completion first and those objectives with a lower priority can be accomplished later. Overall, these goals and objectives provide very specific timelines within the next two years and more general timelines beyond that period of time. The leadership of Rockford Fire Department should meet periodically to review progress toward these goals and objectives and adjust timelines and specific targets as needs and the environment change.

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Goal 1	Identify, analyze and upgrade the required fire prevention and injury reduction programs necessary to effectively and credibly carry out our mission.
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Objective 1A	Identify all current programs and perform a needs analysis to determine effectiveness.
Timeline	6-9 months
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List all public education, code enforcement and engineering activities. • Determine the time investment and costs in existing programs. • Determine the value of programs as critical, nominal, or of limited value. • Review local loss history to identify specific immediate needs. • Identify programs to address immediate needs.

Objective 1B	Enrich current fire prevention and injury reduction programs to become informative and effective.
Timeline	Ongoing
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the target audiences. • Identify the learning objectives. • Design age and culturally appropriate presentations. • Assemble a diverse pool of presenters. • Determine location and method of presentation. • Develop evaluation and measurement methodology. • Adjust programs to reflect the results of the measurement and evaluation.

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Objective 1C	Develop a comprehensive public information and outreach program to ensure the community is fully informed about service delivery issues and needs facing the City.
Timeline	6-9 months
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess current communication processes, protocols and tools. • Establish rapport and team concept with all local media outlets (to include non-traditional outlets). • Determine effectiveness of technology based information dissemination. • Develop internal information sharing portal. • Increase non-incident based fire department activities within the community. • Create a safety partnership with local businesses, schools, and neighborhood organizations.

Objective 1D	Educate fire personnel as to public education goals based upon community needs to ensure buy-in and ownership.
Timeline	12 months
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine current knowledge levels. • Have personnel identify their specific needs to promote the programs that are developed. • Design roles for personnel to participate in the programs. • Design reward program for employee participation. • Use internal information sharing portal for feedback programs.

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Goal 2	Perform a community Hazard and Risk Assessment and Standards of Response Coverage document/policy necessary to effectively and credibly carry out our mission.
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Objective 2A	Develop a Community History/Existing Deployment Document
Timeline	November 30, 2007
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ the Technical Advisor Program to complete this objective.

Objective 2B	Obtain CFAI training in Standards of Response Coverage
Timeline	November 30, 2007
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ the Technical Advisor Program to complete this objective.

Objective 2C	Document a credible community Hazard and Risk Assessment
Timeline	January, 2008
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish OVAP scores for inspected occupancies within each planning/demand zone. • Determine the greatest fire and non-fire hazard in each planning/demand zone.

Objective 2D	Evaluate and validate deployment strategies for each operations program
Timeline	February, 2008
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the distribution and concentration of emergency forces given the profile of community hazards and risks. Determine resources necessary to mitigate emergency events.

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Objective 2E	Establish a Standards of Response Coverage based upon community hazard, risk and demand
Timeline	April, 2008
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Document and validate critical tasks and staffing required for emergency incident response service level objectives.• Document emergency incident response time service level objectives.• Document the quality of emergency incident response service level objective performance measurement for previous three years.

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Goal 3	Establish an Employee Development and Leadership Document/Policy, which clearly identifies certification, education opportunities and pathways that assist all personnel in their desired advancement in the Department.
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Objective 3A	Identify training needs for leadership positions.
Timeline	January, 2008 – July, 2008
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact other departments for requirements. • Conduct survey of current officers, drivers and 9-1-1 personnel. • Research/explore educational opportunities.

Objective 3B	Establish qualifications and standards for each position.
Timeline	July, 2008 – October, 2008
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile survey results. • Approval from Administration. • Approval from Union. • Approval from Board.

Objective 3C	Develop curriculum for each position.
Timeline	October, 2008 – July, 2009
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a budget. • Create a timeline for compliance. • Establish lesson plans. • Train the trainer (if in-house). • Integrate curriculum into overall training plan.

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Goal 4	Identify, analyze and upgrade aging apparatus fleet, equipment and facilities necessary to effectively and credibly carry out our mission.
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Objective 4A	Develop a long range plan to monitor, maintain and replace frontline and reserve apparatus.
Timeline	4-6 months
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a plan that determines useful service life of current and new frontline apparatus. The plan will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical Condition Long Term Maintenance Replacement Needs Functionality Safety Concerns Funding

Objective 4B	Develop a plan for comprehensive facilities assessment, maintenance and upgrades.
Timeline	4-6 months
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select appropriate resources to conduct the assessment. • Evaluate physical condition. • Establish long term maintenance and replacement needs. • Determine functionality. • Develop long range facilities management plan (to include funding). • Periodically update the facilities plan to adapt to changing circumstances.

Objective 4C	Develop a plan for comprehensive equipment assessment, maintenance and upgrades.
Timeline	4-6 months
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select resources and process to conduct an assessment of current equipment • Establish long term repair and replacement schedule of equipment • Develop a long range equipment management plan (including funding considerations) • Develop and implement a process that continually assesses department equipment and allows for recommendations by researching and testing equipment for use on the fire department.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT “MANAGING FOR RESULTS”

Why Measure Performance?

It has been said that:

- 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

In order to establish that the Rockford Fire Department Strategic Plan is achieving results, performance measurement data should be implemented and integrated as part of the plan. An integrated process, known as “Managing for Results” is recommended, which is based upon the following:

- 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.

A “family of measures” that is typically utilized to provide indication and measure of performance include the following:

- **Inputs** Value of resource used to produce an output.
- **Outputs** Quantity or number of units produced which are activity-oriented and measurable.
- **Efficiency** Inputs used per output (or outputs per input).
- **Service Quality** The degree to which citizens 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 citizen. Outcome focuses on the ultimate “why” of providing a service.

THE SUCCESS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The Rockford Fire Department approached their desire to develop and implement a Strategic Plan by asking for and receiving input from the community and members of the agency during the development stage of the planning process. The Rockford Fire Department utilized professional guidance and the Community-Driven Strategic Planning Process to compile this written document. The success of the Rockford Fire Department Strategic Plan will not depend upon the implementation of the four (4) goals and their related objectives, but from the support received from the authority having jurisdiction, the membership of the agency and the community at-large.

The Rockford Fire Department Strategic Plan creates a platform for a wide range of beginnings. This Strategic Plan will come to life by being shared, debated, and implemented in the context of organizational realities.

The final step the Community-Driven Strategic Planning Process is to develop organizational and community commitment to the plan. Everyone who has a stake in the present and the future of the Rockford Fire Department also has a role and responsibility in this Strategic Plan.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

For the purposes of the Community-Driven Strategic Planning, the following terms have the meanings set forth below:

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.
Accredited	The act of accrediting or the state of being accredited , especially the granting of approval to an institution or agency by an official review board or organization that has established nationally accepted standards.
Advance Planning	That part of the planning process where organizational leaders, in concert with the strategic planning staff, define the planning process; establish membership, roles and responsibilities for the process; clarify expectations for process outputs and outcomes; and provide the necessary resources to ensure its success.
Customers	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).
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

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Key Performance Indicator	Measurable factors of extreme importance to the organization in achieving the strategic goals, objectives, vision, and values that if not implemented properly would likely result in significant decrease in customer satisfaction, employee morale, and financial management.
Master Planning	A combination of the organization's strategic plan and its operational plans. Master plans take the various plans and integrate them into one document. Master plans help define the anticipated future of the community's demographics and how the community is expected to develop or change in the timeframe covered by the master plan.
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 Management	Is the monitoring for improvement of performance through the on going process of goal setting, allocation of budget resources to priorities, and the evaluation of results against pre established performance criteria.
Performance Measure	A specific measurable result for each goal and/or program that indicates achievement.
Service Quality	A performance indication that identifies the degree to which customers are satisfied with a program, or how accurately or timely a service is provided.
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.

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Strategic Direction	The organization's goals, objectives and strategies by which they plan to achieve its vision, mission and values.
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 action. Something to accomplish in assisting the agency to move forward.
Strategic Management	An integrated systems approach for leading and managing in a changing world by building consensus of the leadership group both in shared vision of the desired future and a clarified mission for the organization, and by gaining support and participation of the people in the organization to identify the specific changes that must be made, implementing them, and assessing organizational performance.
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 provide 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.

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Support

As used in the objectives and strategies outlined in this plan, support may include, but is not limited to: information, facilitation, coordination, technical assistance or financial assistance.

Vision

An idealized view of a desirable and potentially achievable future state - where or what an organization would like to be in the future.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARFF	Aviation Rescue and Fire Fighting
CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch
CFAI	Commission on Fire Accreditation, International
CPAT	Candidate Physical Ability Test
CPSE	Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc.
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EMD/CCC	Emergency Medical Dispatcher/Continuous Chest Compression by trained telecommunicators
EMT-B	Emergency Medical Technician –Basic
EMT-P	Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic
ESRI	Environmental Systems Research Institute
FMLA	Family Medical Leave Act
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
IAFC	International Association of Fire Chiefs
IAFF	International Association of Fire Fighters
IFC	International Fire Code
IT	Information Technology
MDC	Mobile Data Computer
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
NFIRS	National Fire Incident Reporting System
NIMS	National Incident Management System
RATS	Rockford Area Transportation Study

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SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
VISION®	A web-based tool owned by the CPSE. This tool empowers fire and emergency service agencies to thoroughly analyze and categorize the risks found within their community.
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction