

BELLEVUE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Strategic Plan 2016

Protecting Our Community, Strengthening Our Organization

September 2016



**City of Bellevue
Council**

John Stokes
Mayor

John Chelminiak
Deputy Mayor

Conrad Lee
Councilmember

Jennifer Robertson
Councilmember

Lynne Robinson
Councilmember

Vandana Slatter
Councilmember

Kevin Wallace
Councilmember

**Fire Department
Executive Team**

Mark Risen
Fire Chief

Mark Moulton
Deputy Chief, Bureau of
Operations

Marty LaFave
Deputy Chief, Bureau of Support
Services

Andy Adolfsen
Battalion Chief, EMS Commander

Stacie Martyn
Fiscal Manager

Babette Bechtold
Senior Administrative Assistant

**Planning
Committee**

Andy Adolfsen
Battalion Chief, EMS Commander

Todd Dickerboom
Battalion Chief, "A" Platoon
Commander

Lieutenant Ryan Armstrong
Public Information Officer

Lieutenant Troy Donlin
Fire Station 1

Stacie Martyn
Fiscal Manager

Kieron Gillmore
Business Analyst

Heather Wong
Community Risk Reduction
Specialist/ Educator

Luke Steere
Firefighter/ Staff Assistant

Bob Wentland
Firefighter/ Engineer

Pat Nipert
Firefighter/ Paramedic

Sophia Lopez
Acting Emergency Manager

Dennis Warner
Fire Prevention Officer



Brian Murphy, Project Manager
Tashiya Gunesequera, Analyst

2025 First Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, Washington 98121
P (206) 324-8760
www.berkconsulting.com

Letter from the Chief



I am very proud to present our updated 2016 Bellevue Fire Department Strategic Plan: *Protecting Our Community, Strengthening Our Organization*. This update of a plan originally adopted in 2012 is the direct result of the hard work of Department personnel, City staff, and community members who contributed their time and effort.

In this update, we maintained the plan's original framework and focused on identifying what work has been achieved, what work remains to be completed, and what new challenges and opportunities face the communities served by the Department. This update identifies several current topics and critical issues that the Department will address in the coming years, including changing community demographics, fiscal challenges, technology innovation, and internal and organizational issues.

The direction set by this Plan will guide us in building a stronger organization, better equipped to deliver on our Mission to "Assist the public in the protection of life and property by minimizing the impact of fire, medical emergencies, and potential disasters or uncontrolled events." We will use this document according to the process and commitments described on pages 10 and 11 to inform our decisions and actions, and to guide our organization in meeting current and future challenges.

I ask that all members of Bellevue Fire refer to this document to understand the Department's strategic focus and the organization we wish to be today and in the future. My thanks go to all who will make the aspirations described in these pages a reality.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Risen". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Chief Mark Risen

Contents

Introduction	1
Current Topics & Critical Issues	3
Governing Statements	6
Plan Themes	9
Managing From This Plan	10
Summary of Goals & Action Strategies	12
Goal 1. Keep Our Community Safe	14
Goal 2. Invest in Our Employees & Expertise.....	23
Goal 3. Maintain Appropriate Infrastructure.....	30
Goal 4. Strengthen Our Ability to Engage Effectively with Our Public	36
Summary of the Strategic Planning Process	41

Contract Cities

The following cities currently contract with the Bellevue Fire Department for the provision of services: Beaux Arts, Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Medina, Newcastle, Yarrow Point.

Introduction

The Bellevue Fire Department (the Department) has a long tradition of excellence, as evidenced by our: performance in preventing, preparing for, and responding to emergencies; strong public image; and reputation among partners and peers in the region. The Department has passed a rigorous accreditation process by the Center for Public Safety Excellence four times since 1998 making it one of six fire departments in the State of Washington to currently hold this designation.

Rather than seeing these accomplishments as a reason to rest, we see them as a challenge. To meet our own standards and the expectations of the communities we serve, we must continue to improve and address both areas of strength and areas of weakness. The ambitions of this Strategic Plan are inspired by that commitment to continuous learning and improvement.

We recognize that we do not act alone in this effort. The Department is deeply committed to our ongoing partnerships with the City of Bellevue; the cities that contract with us to provide services; the residents, businesses, and community-based organizations that make up those communities; and other providers serving those communities and the region.

This Plan has been designed to provide guidance while allowing for ongoing flexibility and adaptation as conditions change. While we know the major issues and challenges we will continue to face, we do not know specifically when and how they will manifest, or if additional important issues will surface. Many actions or decisions throughout this document are dependent on particular “triggers,” or changes in the environment, which will bring us to respond. The following section outlines the most significant of such changes we see occurring in the environment and within our own organization.





Current Topics & Critical Issues

Public safety continues to be a high priority for Bellevue residents. The City of Bellevue’s 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016 Budget Surveys asked Bellevue residents about their top budget priorities for City services. “Safe Community” was identified as the most important priority in both 2010, 2012, 2014 and the second most important priority in 2016 as the chart below indicates.

BUDGET PRIORITIES	RANKING			
	2010	2012	2014	2016
Safe Community	1	1	1	2
Improved Mobility	6	2	1	1
Economic Growth and Competitiveness	4	3	6	7
Health and Sustainable Environment	2	4	3	3
Responsive Government	5	5	4	5
Quality Neighborhoods	3	6	7	6
Innovative, Vibrant, and Caring Community	6	7	5	4

Survey respondents were also asked to rank the importance of a long list of City services, as well as their relative satisfaction with each. “Responding to fires” was identified as both the most important service and the function residents are most satisfied with for 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016. “Providing emergency medical services” ranked second in 2014 and fourth in 2016.

Currently, there are four primary topics that impact how the Department provides services:

- Changing Demographics and Calls for Service
- Fiscal Challenges
- Technology Innovations
- Internal and Organizational Issues

The impacts of these forces have been felt for some time, and will no doubt persist into the future. While this Plan is influenced and informed by these factors, it cannot and does not offer a final resolution. These forces, which manifest as both opportunities and challenges, will continue to be the issues that City leaders and Department leadership and personnel wrestle with for the foreseeable future. What this Plan does is acknowledge their significance, establish a structure that we can use to frame the issues, and create a sense of direction, purpose, and priority.

Each of these four forces of change are explored in some detail on the following pages, with more information provided in this Plan’s Technical Appendices, which include a compilation of the analytic inputs that were considered in the development of the document. The following section describes in more detail how this Plan will be used to help the Department navigate and make decisions going forward.

Changing Demographics & Calls for Service

Between 2010 and 2014, the population of the Department's service area grew by approximately 10%, with the City of Bellevue accounting for approximately 89% of this increase. The Downtown, BelRed/ SR 520, and Eastgate/ Factoria neighborhoods are projected to gain high levels of housing and employment growth through 2035.

The density and 24/7 nature of this population creates particular challenges and demands for fire, emergency medical, and emergency management services that will require ongoing adaptations in the Department's facilities and staffing. While continued future growth is assured, it is difficult to predict at precisely what rate it will occur for the service area overall. As a result, this Plan makes no assumptions but establishes trigger points and performance measures that will indicate when changes are necessary, allowing the Department sufficient time to adapt in anticipation of new concentrations of population density and related demands for services.

The region is becoming more diverse by any measure, including race, ethnicity, country of origin, and language spoken at home. In the Bellevue School District, more than 80 languages are spoken, 11% of the population qualifies for the English-Language-Learners Program, and 34% of the student population speaks a language other than English. While enriching the fabric of the communities we serve, this diversity creates particular challenges for the Department. More than half of the residents of some neighborhoods and one third of the City of Bellevue's overall population speaks a language other than English at home. The presence of populations with different cultural backgrounds, life experiences, and native languages requires fire personnel to be flexible, creative, and sensitive in communicating and interacting effectively. This is true both during preparedness outreach prior to an emergency and during an actual event. These requirements have clear implications for the Department's hiring practices, training of staff, communications systems, and community outreach

efforts. The Department is focused on strengthening current community engagement strategies and developing additional engagement strategies that improve access to public safety information for all populations.

Changes in our communities' demographics and the success of fire prevention efforts are also contributing to a shift in the nature of the calls we receive. Strengthened building codes and other fire prevention efforts have contributed to reducing the number of fires and suppression calls per 1,000 people over the past decade. Fueled by an aging population, calls for emergency medical services have increased by 12% since 2006, and constitute 80% of call volume.

This trend, being experienced by communities across the country, has an impact on the way we train, equip, and otherwise prepare our personnel for duty, and will be a continued area of innovation. It is also important to note that the Department's current facilities and staffing models are highly efficient in this context, with fire personnel well-positioned to respond quickly and effectively to both fire and emergency medical incidents. We are proud of this dual role that our Firefighters play and believe strongly that this model makes the most sense for the communities we serve, with opportunities to continue to improve and innovate.

Fiscal Challenges

Although the overall economy has recovered following the 2007-09 recession, the City's financial resources are not growing as fast as the demand for City services and additional financial resources may be needed. The Department has maintained a disciplined, deliberative approach to extracting the most value possible from each dollar. Efficiencies have been used to maintain established levels of service, but 2012 cuts in training and on-the-ground staffing continue to meaningfully impact the Department's core functioning. Department staffing remains below pre-recession levels.

We recognize the importance of strong financial stewardship, creativity, and collaboration with community partners and the broader City government. This Plan identifies many such opportunities to achieve our Mission more cost effectively. When requests for additional resources are made, we are careful to describe why such items have been identified as a priority investment for the good of the communities we serve.

While Bellevue is considered a prosperous community, almost one out of every five Bellevue School District students were eligible for the National School Lunch Program in the 2014-15 school year. Keeping these economic disparities in mind is important for the Department when determining diverse outreach efforts and a focus on vulnerable populations.

Technology Innovations

Rapid changes in technology continue to revolutionize the fire, emergency medical, and emergency management disciplines. New tools allow us to respond to emergencies with effectiveness we would not have hoped for ten years ago. In addition to technological innovations in our equipment, apparatus, and facilities, changes in communication technologies have significantly affected how we communicate internally, with partners, and with the public. Additionally, the Department is focused on working with the Information Technology Department and regional partners to better share technology efforts. Technology enhances capabilities as well as creates challenges, most notably the challenge of remaining current. The need for continued investment in training and equipment is in tension with our fiscal environment, and these demands must be weighed against other potential investments.

Internal & Organizational Issues

In addition to the environmental changes described above, there are specific pressures and challenges internal to the Department that require our attention. More than 21% of our employees are eligible for retirement today, and almost 39% will be eligible for retirement in the next several years. With this aging workforce comes a need to focus on the health and wellness of our personnel, as well as succession management, ensuring we establish a healthy work environment, retain staff, attract the very best new personnel, and cultivate the next generation of Department leadership.

The 2016 City of Bellevue Staff Survey analysis highlighted the need to: invest in how we communicate internally; train for professional growth and development; and, have a better shared understanding of the Mission, Vision, and strategic direction of the City.

We know our team members are our most important asset. In addition to their skills in fire, EMS, emergency management, administration, and organizational management, many have additional interests and talents that can be used to strengthen the Department, pilot innovative ways of approaching our work, and fill targeted gaps. The Department will empower employees to take initiative and apply their skills and talents to areas that may not directly relate to their assignments. These leadership roles and internal projects will strengthen the Department and the individual's connection to the organization, giving people the opportunity to shine and advance in different ways. This effort, which is further described in Goal 2, Action Strategy D, may be used to advance many of the ideas articulated in this Plan, or other long-standing and emergent Department needs.

“[I have] always enjoyed going to open houses and getting a glimpse of what goes on behind the garage doors. [It] definitely builds confidence knowing there is such a well-lead, trained, and equipped fire department ready to respond.”

Response to Bellevue Fire Resident Survey 2016

Governing Statements

Our Vision

A protected, prepared, and healthy community.

Our Mission

Assist the public in the protection of life and property by minimizing the impact of fire, medical emergencies, and potential disasters or uncontrolled events.

Our Values

Bellevue Fire embraces the City of Bellevue's Core Values and is committed to upholding and embodying them in our policies, culture, and daily actions. The nature of our work brings a particular focus to these Values, as described below and on the following page:

Exceptional Public Service

To effectively accomplish the Mission of the Department and to exceed the expectations of the people who depend on our services, we will provide exceptional public service to all of our customers. This means:

- Adhering to the highest ethical standards.
- Valuing the contributions of citizens, partners, and stakeholders.
- Providing equitable, consistent, and responsive service.
- Striving to anticipate the needs of our diverse customer base.
- Maximizing the utilization of current resources before additional requests.

"I brought my husband directly to the fire station in Factoria when he was not feeling well one evening. [Bellevue Fire staff] were calm, professional, checked his blood pressure, ran an EKG, and then took him to the hospital where it was determined that he was having a Myocardial Infarction (MI) due to blocked arteries. Their calm but firm recommendation to take him directly to the hospital and not wait probably helped save his life. We're very grateful!"

Response to Bellevue Fire Resident Survey 2016

Our Values, continued

Stewardship

We take pride in the visionary and diligent management of all of the community's resources – environmental, financial, human, and physical. We accept the responsibility for enhancing and preserving our resources and for balancing competing needs. We value the public trust and recognize that today's decisions will have a significant impact on the health of tomorrow's community.

Commitment to Employees

The Department invests in its employees and continually demonstrates how valuable each person is to the organization by:

- Encouraging and rewarding employee development and personal growth.
- Striving for a culture in which we treat each other with dignity, respect, and trust, recognizing each other's contributions.
- Empower all employees to take initiative and suggest ways to improve how the Department functions.
- Building on our commonalities and diversity.
- Believing that investing in employees fosters good government and quality public services.

Integrity

Our leadership is centered on sound principles of trust:

- We behave ethically, honestly, and fairly.
- We perform our work with steadfastness to truth, responsibility, and open communication.
- We are explicit about our Values and strive to make them visible and consistent throughout the organization.

Innovation

Continuous improvement requires a solid foundation and a commitment to innovation, adaptability, and a willingness to embrace appropriate change. We pledge to:

- Encourage and reward proactive and creative problem solving and planning.
- Be empowered to explore new ideas and introduce cutting-edge solutions.
- Support taking reasonable risks to find better ways to deliver our services.
- Continue our tradition of leadership.

Guiding Principles

Operational decisions related to our facilities, staffing, training, apparatus, and equipment are informed by our commitment to meet specific requirements and standards. These Guiding Principles give us direction and remind us of the high standards we are dedicated to meeting. In particular, the Bellevue Fire Department will continue to:

- Attempt to utilize efficiencies, prevention, automation, and technological solutions before requesting additional staffing to accomplish our service mission.
- Strive to meet appropriate response time standards for fire, basic life support, and advanced life support services as described in the Center for Public Safety Excellence Deployment Manual and as established by the City of Bellevue.
- Ensure that staffing, operations, training, and equipment decisions reflect all legal requirements for worker safety and risk management.
- Maintain present standards of quality, safety, and capability of our apparatus, equipment, and facilities. The Department will take reasonable measures to ensure that fire facilities can function during foreseeable disasters at the Operational Continuity Level.
- Assert a leadership role in promoting strong partnerships with public safety organizations throughout the region.
- Ensure that the Center for Public Safety Excellence accreditation status is maintained, along with the best possible Fire Protection Insurance Class rating.

“When having inspections or (incredibly fast) responses to medical emergencies, it’s always a pleasure. All personnel inspire confidence and have a calming effect, particularly in the case of emergencies in the wee hours. We are so grateful for the sacrifices they make to serve our community.”

Response to Bellevue Fire Resident Survey 2016

Plan Themes

The following Themes are interwoven throughout this Plan's four Goals and supporting Action Strategies. These Themes highlight key points of focus for the Department in the coming five years.



Bellevue City Council Priorities: The Department seeks to implement Citywide priorities established by the Bellevue City Council.



Regional Collaboration: The Department continues to be a public safety leader in the region and seeks to advance the safety of the region by providing exceptional service to contract cities and by leading collaborative regional efforts.



Community Engagement: The Department is focused on engaging the communities we serve in our outreach and public education efforts.



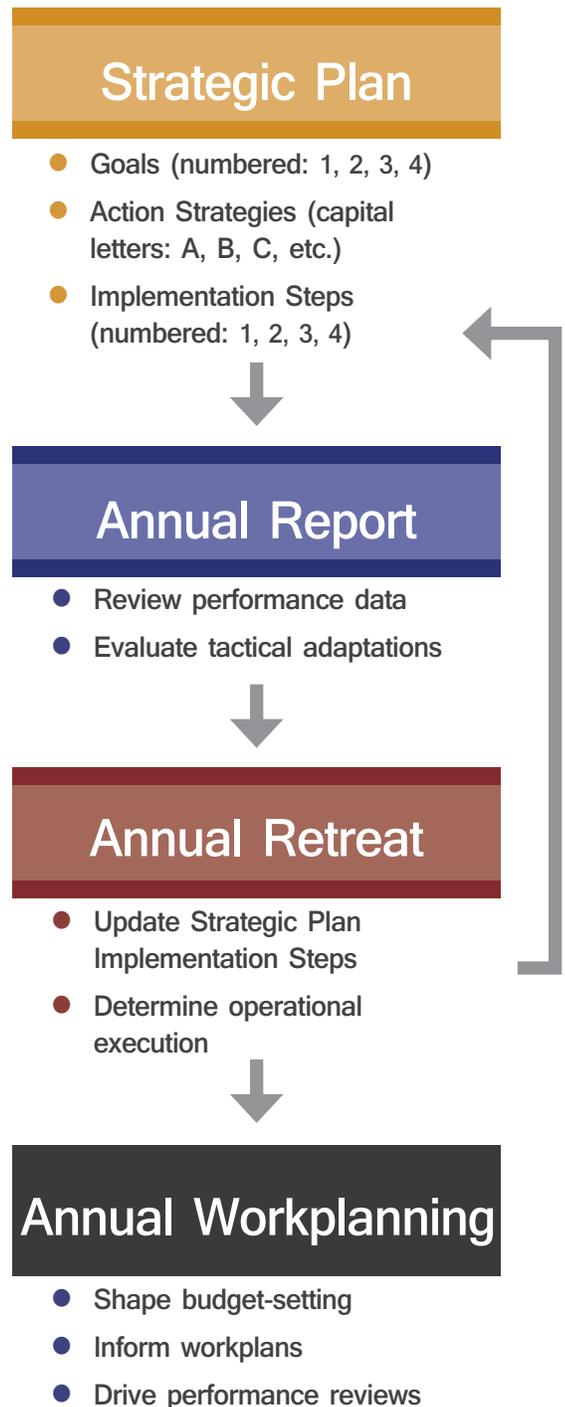
Managing From This Plan

This Plan identifies the most significant issues and opportunities facing Bellevue Fire today and establishes the foundation for the Department's response. Every action and investment contained in this document is important to protecting the safety, well-being, and prosperity of the communities we serve. The Department has the capacity to advance all the action items contained in the Plan, allocating existing resources when possible, and requesting additional resources when necessary.

Given the fluid nature of our operating environment and the need to continue to be flexible and adaptive, adoption of this Plan does not mark the end of discussion and decision making. This document identifies decision points that will be evaluated when key indicators are seen in the environment or when our performance tracking indicates change is necessary. When our service area's population grows beyond the ability of the Department to continue to perform according to specified standards, for example, changes in staffing and facilities may be necessary. This Plan identifies those decision points, triggers, or indicators, but does not specify when they are likely to be reached for tactical implementation. The ongoing process of monitoring the need for change and adapting when appropriate given changes in our environment is illustrated to the right.

Goal I, Action Strategy C on page 19 describes our commitment to publish an annual report of the Department's performance. This report will be shared broadly with internal and external audiences, ensuring that we continue to operate in a transparent fashion while being fully accountable for our successes and shortcomings.

Annual Review & Workplanning Process



Implementing from this Plan

For the ideas in this Plan to be actualized, the Department commits to:

Keep the Plan central.

- Make the document central and public - use it for day-to-day discussions as well as to inform important reports and decisions.
- Celebrate accomplishments and successes of the Plan.
- Use the update as an opportunity to connect with staff about the Plan and how to use it moving forward.
- Link people's jobs to items in the Plan and use it in recruitment and performance evaluations at all levels. Incorporate it appropriately into promotions tests.

Link the Plan to budgeting and work planning processes.

- Use the Plan to test and screen budget requests.
- Set specific annual objectives and track performance measures for each Goal.
- Use the Plan to set divisional or unit work plans.

Stay focused on implementation.

- Establish co-chairs for each Goal that are empowered to keep moving the Goals forward.
- Review quarterly progress of Goals at Executive Team meetings.
- Review annual progress via Chief's message once a year.
- Post implementation updates on our website.

"The fire department medic units have been to our home on multiple occasions and have done an outstanding job with the patient as well as [with the] family. We hope never to need your services for a fire call but know your department would do an outstanding job if ever needed."

Response to Bellevue Fire Resident Survey 2016

Summary of Goals & Action Strategies

1 Keep Our Community Safe

- A. Prevent Fire & Medical Emergencies
- B. Prepare for Disasters in the Communities We Serve
- C. Provide Timely, Effective, & Consistent Emergency Responses Across the Communities We Serve
- D. Maintain Our Standard of Excellence in Pre-hospital Medical Care
- E. Assert a Leadership Role in Crafting Regional Solutions

2 Invest in Our Employees & Expertise

- A. Continue to Invest in & Find More Efficient Ways to Provide Employee Training and Professional Development
- B. Improve Our Internal Communications
- C. Continue to Invest in Our Employees' Safety, Health, Career, & Future
- D. Empower Our Employees to Take Initiative



3 Maintain Appropriate Infrastructure

- A. Ensure Our Facilities Meet Current & Future Department Needs
- B. Ensure All Necessary Apparatus & Equipment are in Good Working Order
- C. Employ Technology & Communication Solutions that Provide Efficiencies & Improve Services



4 Strengthen Our Ability to Engage Effectively with Our Public

- A. Build the Department's Multicultural Connections & Capabilities
- B. Expand Our Opportunities for Effective, Quality Public Engagement



1 Keep Our Community Safe

The Fire Department's fundamental role is to create a safe environment so the communities it serves and the individuals, families, and businesses that make up those communities can thrive. The Department's first focus is to protect life and property, whether from fire, natural or human-caused disasters, or medical emergencies. We are recognized as a leader in the region because of our excellence in providing these services, and the residents of the communities we serve rely on our expertise and responsiveness. Because of the trust the Department has earned in our communities, we are relied on not only for fire and emergency medical calls, but also for any number of other situations when individuals simply do not know who else to call or have no other options.

The Department's first strategies in addressing our public safety mission are prevention and preparedness, with the understanding that it is better to prevent fire and medical emergencies than it is to have to respond to them. Similarly, when considering natural and human-caused disasters, it is important first to prepare for and second to respond to, the full range of events that may occur. When emergencies do happen, the Department strives to provide excellent service quickly and efficiently with well-trained staff and the most up-to-date equipment.



This Goal also addresses the importance of leveraging regional partnerships and constant innovation to be as effective and efficient as possible.

A. Prevent Fire & Medical Emergencies

The best way the Department can serve the public safety needs of the communities we serve is to prevent as many fire and medical emergencies as possible. For fire safety and emergency management, this involves establishing a strong foundation in public education, building codes, inspections, and code enforcement.

The Department has had a long and successful history of preventing fires. We are now taking a similar stance with health, seeking to prevent medical emergencies through proactive health education and by promoting healthy lifestyles. Some of the many ways to help prevent life-threatening medical emergencies include partnering with local hospitals, clinics, and medical insurance providers to develop innovative healthcare delivery options that decrease the need for 911 responses; following up with patients who are discharged from hospitals with certain diagnosis; providing services to homeless populations who may otherwise lack access to care; and supporting institutions in the rapidly evolving healthcare space.

1. **Prioritize resources for prevention activities to reduce the frequency and severity of fires and medical emergencies in the communities we serve.**

- a. Leverage building codes and inspections to ensure that new construction and existing buildings in Bellevue and the communities we serve are as fire-resistive as reasonably possible.



- b. Invest proactively in the health of our communities by providing public education on a wide range of preventative health topics. [See the full discussion of community engagement in Goal 4.]



- c. Evaluate options and, if appropriate, implement a Mobile Integrated Healthcare-Community Paramedicine (MIH-CP) program.

Mobile Integrated Healthcare - Community Paramedicine (MIH-CP)

Mobile Integrated Healthcare - Community Paramedicine (MIH-CP) programs are a new concept in medicine which are becoming more common across the United States. These programs leverage fire service resources to address short-term follow-up on certain types of patients who have recently been discharged from a hospital, persons who are under-insured or have no medical insurance and those who frequently call 911 for non-emergent issues. These programs are designed to reduce the number of non-emergency medical calls to which the fire service is currently required to respond.

2. Ensure the effectiveness and consistency of fire inspections.

- a. Adapt as necessary to the City Council's policy decision about Bellevue's Washington Surveying and Rating Bureau (WSRB) rating.
- b. Ensure adequate technical and customer service training for personnel conducting fire inspections to ensure a consistent, fair, and practical application of the fire code.
- c. Ensure there are adequate and visible mechanisms to hear, record, and address public concerns related to fire inspections, including improvements to our website and phone systems.

Performance Measures

- Complete 100% of scheduled fire and life safety inspections every two years.
- Administer the completion of 100% of high-rise evacuation drills by building owner per year.
- 90% of fire code violations cleared on re-inspection per year.
- \$1M or less total loss from fire per year.

Budget Considerations

The approach described in Action Strategy A does not carry significant budget considerations as it reflects a continuation and focusing of existing performance. If performance begins to deteriorate, the Department will work through the budget process to request new resources.



B. Prepare for Disasters in the Communities We Serve

The Fire Department has two primary roles in emergency management and disaster preparedness. First, we have a responsibility to communicate effectively with the public before, during, and after an event. We work continuously to educate and inspire residents to prepare themselves, so that each member of the communities we serve has a plan in place and supplies on hand to get safely through an emergency. A key element of this work is creating a clear understanding of the limit of what the Department and other service providers will be able to do, and what members of the public will be responsible for doing.

Communication with the public during an event becomes more tactical, sharing details of what has happened, where and when resources and assistance will be available, and, if necessary, organizing evacuations. To ensure that our communities respond well during future disasters, we must continue to invest in the skills and abilities of Department staff tasked with public education and information, and in the procedures and systems required to convey consistent and accurate information.

We need to be sure that the City and the Department are themselves well-prepared, with plans in place to ensure the continuity of key decision-making and operational capacities. Our ability to effectively plan for, respond to, and recover from disasters is founded on our understanding of what events may occur. We need to invest in this basic intelligence by assessing and evaluating potential threats to the communities we serve, both natural and human-caused hazards. With this information and these plans in place, we will be able to focus on the needs of others when emergencies occur.

1. Enhance our public education and disaster preparedness outreach.

[See full discussion of community engagement in Goal 4.]



- a. Develop and document a program for engaging high-risk and vulnerable populations before, during, and after an emergency.
- b. Leverage new opportunities with community-based organizations and other advocacy groups to increase public outreach activities that advise and educate vulnerable populations.

2. Strengthen our ability to communicate with the public during a disaster.

- a. Facilitate the development of a Crisis Communications Plan (CCP) in coordination with the City Manager's Office. The CCP should identify where, when, and how department Public Information Officers should work together and form a Joint Information Center (JIC).
- b. Establish and improve strategies for issuing alerts and notifications as well as disseminating information to vulnerable populations during a disaster, working in conjunction with the City Manager's Office.
- c. Provide guidance to the Department's contract cities in developing their own programs for public outreach and citizen training, with an emphasis on integrating interested parties into Bellevue's offerings and providing logistical support on how contract cities may develop and implement volunteer programs to support ongoing activities.

3. Increase our awareness of local hazards and vulnerabilities.

- a. Update the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment for the geographic risks and vulnerabilities of people, property, environment, and City operations from natural and human-caused hazards.
- b. Develop a Hazard Mitigation Plan that identifies strategies for protecting people and property from future hazard events, including a consequence analysis for the identified hazards to consider the impact on continuity of operations and delivery of service, including high-risk, low-frequency events.

4. Improve operational and recovery planning.

- a. Expand and improve the Emergency Operations Center section and position-specific training.
- b. Expand depth of City staff who are assigned and trained to work in the Emergency Operations Center.
- c. Continuously improve the functionality of the Emergency Operations Center incident tracking system, develop processes and procedures to integrate City Departments' coordination center activities, and allow for connectivity to key outside stakeholders.
- d. Develop a Recovery Plan to address short- and long-term recovery priorities.
- e. Establish a plan to identify emergency operations and recovery issues as they occur and work with City Departments as necessary to develop solutions.
- f. Continue to improve plans that address Continuity of Operations (COOP), ensuring critical City of Bellevue functions continue to operate during a disaster.
- g. Explore options to provide emergency management planning services to contract cities as contract renewals occur.

Performance Measures

- 90% of residents surveyed agree that Bellevue plans for and is well prepared to respond to emergencies.
- 100% of City of Bellevue Departments that have met the COOP requirements.
- Conduct one Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) training per year at a minimum.

Budget Considerations

- Continue to leverage partnerships and grant funding to enhance planning capabilities and public outreach opportunities. As the downward trend in Federal and state grant funding continues, seek additional City funding or other regional funding to maintain planning and outreach activities.



C. Provide Timely, Effective, & Consistent Emergency Responses Across the Communities We Serve

When emergencies occur, the Fire Department must respond as quickly and as effectively as possible in all of the communities it serves. The Department regularly evaluates its performance across its geographic service area, comparing how quickly it responds to different types of calls and how quickly the emergency was resolved once the responders arrived, to established performance targets. If the Department finds it is not performing up to the standards it has set, it will take immediate action to understand and to address the factors contributing to this underperformance.

The Department commits to the regular and public review and communication of its target standards and its actual performance. Patterns of underperformance will be addressed in the most resource-efficient manner possible, focusing first on staff training, then the placement and location of staff, and environmental factors such as road design or traffic controls. Only after such lower cost options have been considered will a request for additional staffing be considered.

1. Adopt and adhere to measurable standards and clear performance targets.

Our core public safety performance measures include the following:

- Arrive within 6 minutes from the time of call 90% of the time.
- Arrival of complete first alarm assignment (effective firefighting force) within 10 minutes of alarm notification 90% of the time.
- Continue to study the effects of vertical response times on medical and fire-related incidents.
- Confine fires to the room of origin 85% of the time.
- Meet or exceed a cardiac save rate of 50% using Utstein Criteria.
- Maintain Bellevue's WSRB class rating as determined by the City Council.

2. Formalize our process of analyzing, evaluating, and communicating our performance.

- a. Annually evaluate our public safety effectiveness by sub-geography across the communities we serve, as well as by the many performance measures described in this Plan.
- b. Provide annual updates to the City Manager and City Council.
- c. Focus on developing a stronger communication rapport with contract cities.
- d. Communicate an annual report to our employees, contract cities, community groups, and business and regional partners.
- e. Continue to study the effects of vertical response times on medical and fire-related incidents.



3. Make changes to address under-performance.

If the Department is not meeting established performance targets, more cost-efficient adaptations will be considered before costlier options are considered. Changes will be considered in the following order, collaborating with other City Departments when appropriate:

- *Training*: evaluate training, route choices, and turnout times.
- *Environmental and Infrastructure Improvements*: evaluate need for road improvements, traffic signal control, and other potential improvements.
- *Resource Deployment*: redeploy or move resources from one station to another, either temporarily or permanently.
- *Facilities*: move or add stations. For more information, go to Goal 3A.
- *Staffing*: implement peak time staffing (partial shift staffing) and/or add resources to handle non-emergency calls for assistance and/or add resources to handle emergency calls.

4. Develop a system of measures to indicate when and where additional staffing should be considered in the Department.

- *Indicators may include the following*: response time increases, vertical response times, unit call volumes, unit out of service times, second due units responding into adjoining areas, and workload measures across the Department.

Performance Measures

- See performance measures listed above under Implementation Step 1. Adopt and adhere to measurable standards and clear performance targets.

Budget Considerations

- Budget implications will be driven by performance. As described, efforts will be made to be as efficient as possible in adapting to demand changes for our services. When additional resources are needed, the Department will work with the City Manager's Office and the Finance Department to include expenditures in the Long Range Plan.



D. Maintain Our Standard of Excellence in Pre-hospital Medical Care

Like many fire departments around the country, the Department is seeing an increase in calls for medical emergencies related to the aging of the population, and the national changes in healthcare. Prompt response to emergency medical incidents is critical if patient care is to be effective. While the Department is a national leader in resuscitation, our Core Values of Exceptional Public Service and Innovation fuel a desire to evaluate our performance critically and continue to learn how to improve.



1. Continue to effectively partner with King County Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

This role includes the following activities:

- Serving as a regional Advanced Life Support provider.
- Collaborating with other fire service agencies as part of the county-wide EMS delivery system.
- Fully engaging in King County EMS science-based initiatives and studies directed at improving resuscitation and other field EMS delivery outcomes.



2. Reintroduce the robust review of Basic Life Support Medical Incident Report Forms and expand it for our partner agencies as part of a countywide effort.

3. Continue a timely review process for resuscitation events.

4. Implement a system to track the upcoming Washington State Department of Health Key Performance Indicators and address any areas where we fail to exceed the standards for similar agencies.

5. Support passage of the 2019 King County EMS Levy to continue to provide effective services for the communities we serve.

Performance Measures

- Meet or exceed a cardiac save rate of 50% using Utstein Criteria.

Budget Considerations

- The strategies above do not carry significant budget considerations.

“I am proud of our Fire Department and feel at peace knowing they’re here and available for us when we need them. They are a great bunch of men and women serving our community.”

Response to Bellevue Fire Resident Survey 2016

E. Assert a Leadership Role in Crafting Regional Solutions

As part of its role in serving its residents, business owners, and visitors, the City of Bellevue has an important role to play as collaborative, regional approaches to fulfilling public safety functions can provide opportunities for more efficient and effective services for all.

As a leader in the region, the Department is focused on exploring options to promote strong regional partnerships. Such partnerships are easier to consider for some public safety functions than others. The region has a long tradition of collaboration in training, purchasing and staging specialized equipment and teams, disaster preparedness planning, and mutual aid. As noted in the discussion on training in Goal 2, Action Strategy A, the demand for additional investments in training can be met in part by achieving cost efficiencies through a more formalized regional approach. Similar opportunities should be evaluated and – if appropriate – acted upon in other areas.

While regionalization efforts may promise cost efficiencies, it is also important to maintain services that are responsive to and reflective of the needs of individual communities. The pros and cons of regional partnerships need to be weighed on an ongoing basis to monitor quality service.

1. Advance the provision of regional public safety services.

- a. Work with the City Manager, Department leadership, and regional partners to establish and implement a shared vision for the most efficient and effective provision of public safety services regionally.
 - This vision should at a minimum address the following areas: regional training, regional purchasing, regional provision of specialized equipment and teams, and fire services.
- b. Reach out to healthcare stakeholders to assess how we can work collaboratively to address the needs of all parties involved, particularly the needs of the citizens.
- c. Evaluate regional partnerships on an annual basis for ways to improve.

2. Develop and support agreements or relationships that allow agencies to look at resources regionally rather than locally when considerations for deployment are made.

- a. Look for opportunities to combine resources with other agencies to minimize costs and improve service delivery.
-  b. Continue and potentially expand on current regional efforts such as the Eastside HAZMAT Consortium and Eastside Metro Training Group (EMTG).
- c. Continue initiative for regional use of Code 3 Software to further advance the accuracy of our service modeling.

Performance Measure

- 1,000 EMTG training hours delivered to Bellevue Firefighters per year.

Budget Considerations

- A greater focus on regional partnerships may lead to significant budget efficiencies.

2 Invest in Our Employees & Expertise

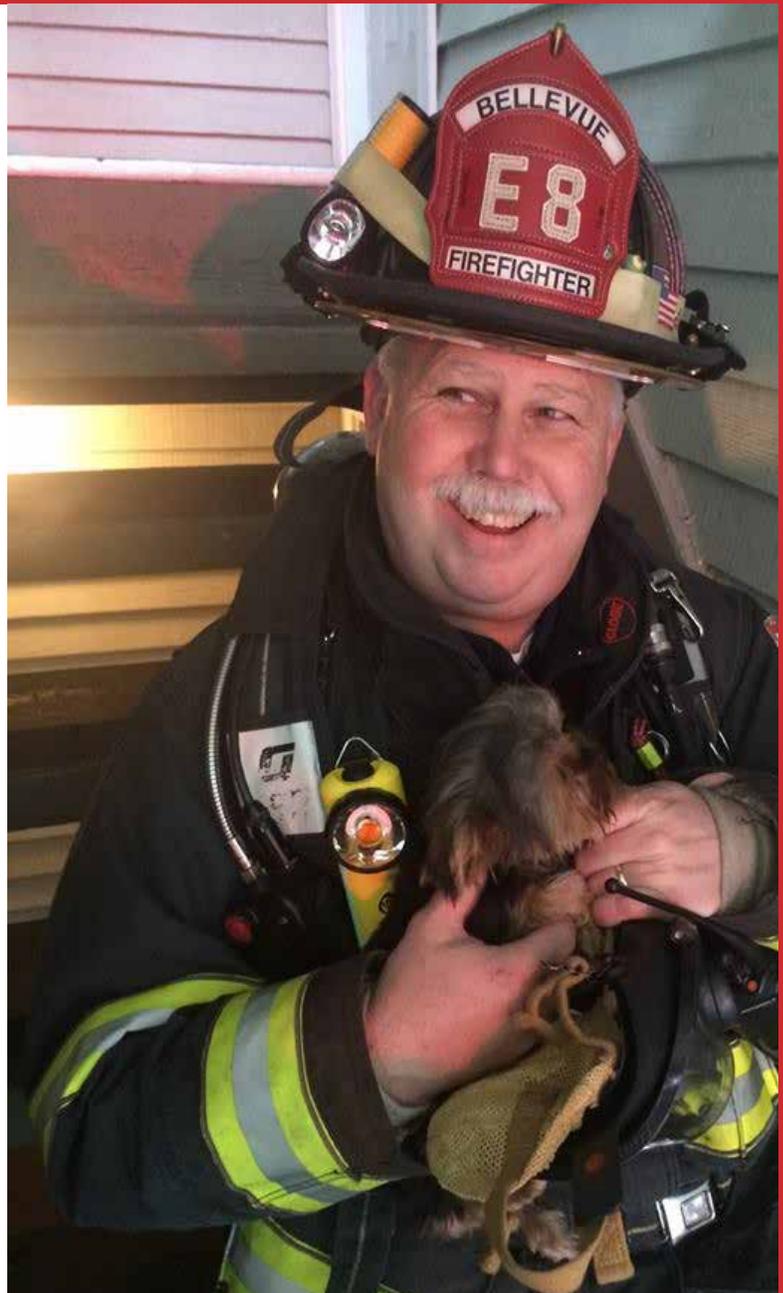
While a child's first association with the words "fire department" may be red trucks and fire stations, we recognize that the real core of the Department is the men and women who work here, whether in the field or at City Hall. This Goal focuses on strengthening our internal communications, aligning and coordinating the efforts of our employees, and investing in their safety, health, training, professional development, and future.

A. Continue to Invest in & Find More Efficient Ways to Provide Employee Training and Professional Development

Reflecting the diverse and complex array of emergency services we provide, we are motivated by state law, industry requirements, and our own high standards to provide significant training that is specific to the role of each staff person. Recent surveys of employees and citizens indicated areas in which we should focus improvement, while continuing to effectively manage ongoing programs and services.

In addition to increasing training focused on core and emerging areas of emphasis, the strategies below also identify ways to provide training more efficiently. By approaching our training needs in a regional and collaborative fashion, we can coordinate efforts with neighboring fire departments and other partners and find opportunities to share and reduce costs.

To grow our organization and increase institutional knowledge, the Department will focus on expanding professional development opportunities and providing clear paths for career advancement for interested staff members.



1. Focus our training efforts on core and emerging areas of need.

- a. Evaluate training needs.
- b. Increase the effectiveness of job-specific training.
 - Provide supervised training sessions that maintain and enhance core skills using Training Division staff.
 - Provide manipulative, practical drills.
 - Use subject matter experts to increase the quality of training.
 - Provide appropriate ongoing training for staff, including High-Performance Organization training.
 - Define and monitor training standards and goals.
- c. Ensure personnel assigned to specialty positions have received required training.
- d. Encourage all personnel to attend National Fire Academy and Emergency Management Institute training courses as appropriate given their position.
- e. Strengthen the Department's current and future leadership and management by providing officer development tools, leveraging technology where appropriate (see Goal 3, Action Strategy C).
- f. Provide cultural competency training to help staff interact appropriately with people of different cultural and language backgrounds during all Departmental actions per the Bellevue Diversity Advantage Initiative.
- g. Evaluate increasing the length of the Recruit Firefighters Academy by two weeks (establishing a 14-week academy schedule) to assure adequate recruit training with increased emphasis on basic firefighting and fire prevention skills prior to deployment on the line.



2. Increase the efficiency and impact of our training resources by exploring opportunities to provide training regionally or adopt “train-the-trainer” approaches.

- a. Train and utilize in-house instructors for required special rescue training to reduce the cost of sending additional personnel to outside training.
- b. Conduct joint Recruit Firefighter Academies with Zone 1 fire departments when appropriate based on class sizes.
- c. Continue to lead and participate in the East Metro Training Group (EMTG) to improve interagency coordination, gain efficiencies, and eliminate unnecessary redundancies where appropriate.

Performance Measures

- 34,000 training hours delivered by the Training Division per year.
- 100% of truck company members trained in all rescue disciplines per year.
- 100% of front line supervisors attended the Supervisor Training per year.
- 100% of fire fighter recruits graduated from the Firefighter Academy per year.
- 94% of City Employees have the required National Incident Management System (NIMS) training for their position.

Budget Considerations

- Requesting additional staff for the Training Division should be considered when revenues improve in future budget cycles to ensure resources to develop and train personnel. Creating partnerships and consolidating Zone 1 Fire Department Training Divisions could reduce redundancy, improve efficiency, and encourage collaboration.
- Each of the earlier recommendations for investing in employee training helps meet City goals for establishing a high performing workplace, continuous improvement, planning, and preparation.

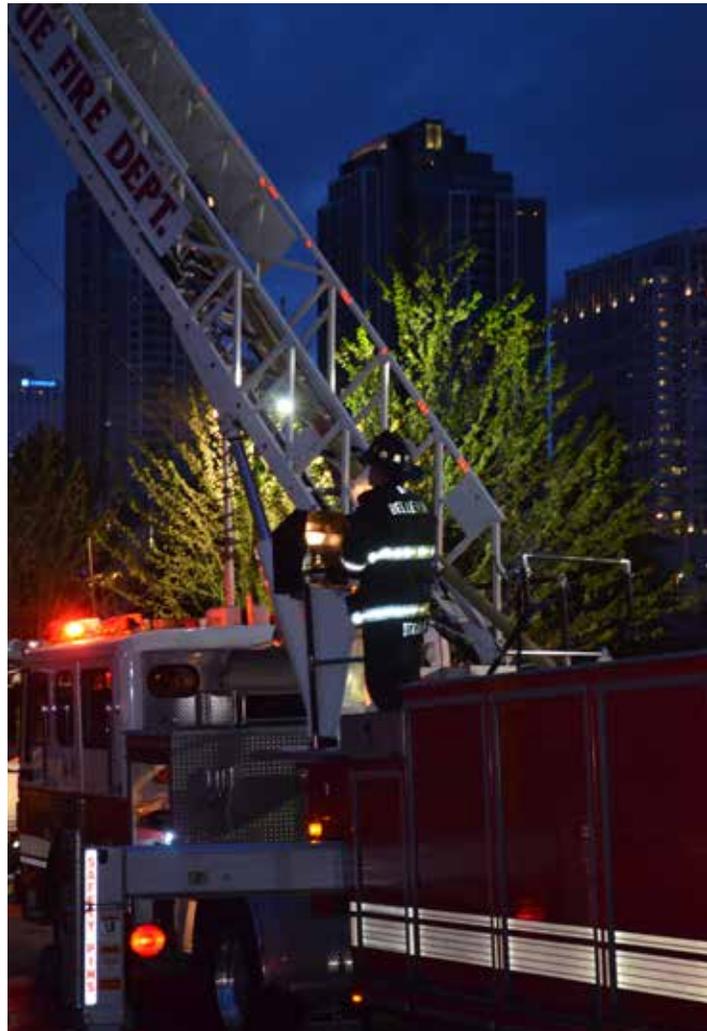
B. Improve Our Internal Communications

The Department is a complex organization, with more than 240 personnel assigned to various roles within fire prevention, fire suppression, emergency medical response, emergency management and disaster preparedness, and administration. Adding to this functional complexity is a staffing model that assigns personnel to City Hall or one of nine stations, and across a multitude of shifts to ensure coverage 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Effective and regular communication across this complex organization is critical to align and coordinate efforts. Perfecting effective communications requires dedication to constant re-evaluation and improvement.

1. Continue to conduct an annual detailed survey focused on internal communications to better understand how we can more effectively communicate in our modern environment.

- a. Collaborate with outside partners to provide employee training on effective communications to build teamwork, enable personnel to speak with complete candor, learn to promote the best ideas, save time with fewer meetings, and build stronger alignment around decisions.



- b. Promote more active communication between administration and fire stations.
 - Promote more in-person interactions among Chiefs and staff at fire stations. The Fire Chief and Deputy Chiefs will plan to visit each company and administrative division biannually, and Battalion Chiefs will plan to visit each company and administrative division quarterly.
 - Work with the City's Information Technology Department to explore technological solutions for improving communications within work groups and fire stations.
 - Explore the use of messaging within and across the Department through platforms such as Yammer or a private Facebook interface.
 - Continue the integration of technology via video conferencing for Battalion Chief Morning Messages, Post Incident Analyses following major incidents, trainings, interactions with City Council, and messages from the Fire Chief.
 - Share written products such as plans and reports, including annual reports, work plans, and performance reports, with the entire Department to improve awareness of current efforts.

Performance Measures

- Conduct an internal communications survey annually repeating a standard set of questions.
- The Fire Chief and Deputy Chiefs will visit each company and administrative division biannually.
- Battalion Chiefs will visit each company and administrative division quarterly.

Budget Considerations

- Providing every employee with training on effective communications would require commitment of funding for qualified trainers.
- Continue to encourage the technological solutions of linked video conferencing, currently being deployed throughout the City, to reduce the number of sessions needed to effectively train our staff.
- When necessary, look for grant opportunities and/or seek additional funding through the biennial budget process to maintain training standards.

C. Continue to Invest in Our Employees' Safety, Health, Career, & Future

As the communities we serve continue to change in demographic makeup and urban development, we require a more diverse workforce that is better able to meet today's challenges. To ensure Firefighters and administrative staff that are best equipped for these challenges, it is critical that the Department invest in the safety and health of our current staff, cultivate the next generation of Department leadership to lessen the impact from the pending retirements of current leadership, and focus on hiring new staff that better reflect the communities that we serve.

Each of the strategies described below confirms our commitment to our employees – a Core Value shared by the City of Bellevue and the Department – and prepares the Department for the future.

- 1. Prevent injuries and speed recovery through a robust wellness program.**
 - a. Establish a holistic approach to employee wellness and injury prevention, addressing environmental conditions, equipment, training, and fitness.
 - b. Explore incentives to encourage employee participation.
 - c. Seek grant funding to support the wellness effort and identify long-term funding sources.

- 2. Create a diverse and rewarding workplace to attract and retain quality employees.**
 - a. Continue to promote diversity through recruitment and hiring practices.
 - b. Conduct a comprehensive class and compensation study for all unrepresented staff positions.
 - c. Evaluate the administrative structure of the Department to ensure that all divisions are adequately supported and workloads are manageable.



“We had Medic One out to our house three times for medical emergencies. Each time ambulance transport to the hospital was required. The Firefighters, paramedics, and all fire department personnel were professional, helpful, and organized. You can tell that there is an established hierarchy so, even though there might be several [people] there, the best person answers each question and no wrong or conflicting information is given.”

Response to Bellevue Fire Resident Survey 2016

3. Establish a team to advance proactive succession management throughout the organization.

- a. Build a better model for officer training and succession management.
 - Require completion of the King County Officer Development Academy for all new officers.
 - Identify key leadership positions that will need replacement due to pending retirements.
 - Develop succession manuals containing job descriptions, position work assignments, responsibilities, and current projects.
 - Cultivate future leaders using current leaders as mentors.
 - Provide adequate transition periods with job shadowing immediately prior to job vacancy.
- b. Promote a system that encourages Firefighters to apply for the Paramedic Training Program (PTP).
 - Identify potential candidates and inspire them to consider the PTP.
 - Support those who express interest in the PTP by providing them with mentorship.
 - Evaluate why candidates may be reluctant to apply to the PTP and find solutions to encourage a broad spectrum and large number of applicants.
- c. Encourage employee development and cross-training for administrative staff to facilitate succession and promote staff retention.

Succession Management

Succession Management is a deliberate and systematic effort by an organization to encourage individual advancement and ensure continuity in key positions.

An effective succession management approach would create a clear pathway for advancement at all levels and everywhere in the organization, supported by a structural training and professional development system.

Performance Measures

- 100% of Firefighters with a second set of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- 85% of Firefighters express satisfaction with facilities and maintenance.
- 100% of operational Firefighters will be evaluated in the annual Firefighter Fitness Evaluation.
- 100% of operational Firefighters will be evaluated in the annual Firefighter Hearing Test.

Budget Considerations

- Wellness programs require initial startup costs but may reduce overall disability expenditures in the longterm.

D. Empower Our Employees to Take Initiative

While giving team members the opportunity to further develop their professional strengths, the Department can simultaneously fill certain program gaps within the organization through its employees, the Department's most valuable resource. This effort will develop team members' professional development by providing leadership opportunities and exposure to different topics, while at the same time strengthening the organization in key areas.

1. Create and manage a program that aligns individual talents with organizational needs.

- Generate principles of how best to operate this program.
- Determine how best to inventory employee skills, especially in areas that may not directly relate to their current assignments.
- Match appropriate employee to organizational needs, creating special duty assignments or other mechanisms to accomplish organizational needs in a managed way.

2. Create a workplace environment that rewards initiative and promotes professional development.



- Enhance the esteem of our employees by promoting High-Performance Organization (HPO) decision making and encourage employees to take the initiative in making change.

Performance Measures

- To be determined.

Budget Considerations

- To be determined.





3 Maintain Appropriate Infrastructure

Our facilities, apparatus, and equipment are essential to our ability to perform our duties. Without proper, well-functioning equipment, staff cannot perform their jobs at a high level, no matter how well-trained they are. Maintaining appropriate infrastructure involves ensuring our facilities, such as fire stations, are ready and well-positioned to support timely responses to changing call patterns, as well as making sure that the apparatus staff use to respond to calls and the equipment needed to respond to medical emergencies, fight fires, perform rescues, and other actions are in working order. It means planning for new construction and purchases before there is a deficiency, as well as maintaining existing structures and equipment to make them last for their full expected lifespan.

In 2014, the Department completed a Facilities Master Plan. The objective of the plan was to address three separate but associated elements:

- An evaluation of current station locations and deployment of personnel in light of current and projected changes in development and population, taking into account projected growth in Downtown and the planned redevelopment of the Bel-Red Corridor.
- A facility assessment of all nine fire stations and recommendations for long-range planning for repair and replacement of stations.
- An assessment and long-range plan for the Public Safety Training Center.

The Facilities Master Plan was completed to provide a framework and vision to meet the needs of the community for many years to come.

A. Ensure Our Facilities Meet Current & Future Department Needs

The Department, in partnership with the Bellevue Civic Services Department (Civic Services) has developed a major maintenance plan that identifies needed repairs and system replacements for all of our facilities. Facilities are inspected annually to track their condition. Major maintenance is funded through the City's Capital Improvement Plan.

The Department's facilities range in age from 14 to 51 years old. The Department will develop a long-range, major capital plan to ensure that we can continue to provide the same level of emergency services in the future. To keep pace with the maintenance needs of our aging facilities, the Department has requested an additional \$1M per year for facility maintenance beginning in 2017.

1. Maintain current facilities to ensure a safe and livable work environment.

- a. Continue to work with other City Departments to ensure that facilities are up to standard.
 - Establish and maintain minimum Department facility standards with Civic Services.
 - Annually update a preventative maintenance plan for all facilities with Parks and Civic Services.
 - Develop the major maintenance project schedule based on need, funding, and staffing levels with Civic Services.
- b. Annually assess facility conditions to ensure that they meet the Department's minimum standards.
 - Report on the condition of all facilities annually, and on changes in standards to ensure that the facilities remain safe.
 - Assess the amount of funding available, along with facility maintenance needs to ensure that the condition of the facilities is maintained to current standards. If necessary, request additional funds for preventative and regular maintenance plans.
- c. Invest in projects that minimize future facility repairs and operating costs.



2. Plan for future growth through the implementation of the 2014 Facilities Master Plan.

- a. Work with City leadership to identify funding for the Facilities Master Plan.
- b. Regularly monitor changes in the community and demand for services to determine future facility needs, paying particular attention to growth in Downtown, the Spring District and along the Bel-Red Corridor. Key indicators that we will continue to monitor include:
 - Demand for service: location, number, and type of calls for service.
 - Our performance: response times and other key performance statistics.
 - Land use policies and projected development.
- c. Continue to regularly review the Long Range Facility Plan to prioritize projects and ensure that the recommendations for each of the facilities are appropriate and continue to be

consistent with the current needs of the community.

- d. Establish a project schedule, based on available funding and the pressing needs of the community. The schedule should include a timeline for the following major projects:
 - The purchase of land and construction of a new fire station (Fire Station 10) in Downtown.
 - The replacement of Fire Station 5.
 - Remodel and expansion of Fire Station 6 to allow for the relocation of a ladder company.
 - Purchase of land for the reconstruction and relocation of Fire Station 4 to allow the addition of a second Battalion Chief and the relocation of personnel to better serve areas of the City south of I-90.
 - Refine the assessment and Long Range Facilities Plan for the Training Center while continuing to research potential regional partners and funding solutions.
- e. Complete the seismic and infrastructure upgrades at all stations.
- f. Ensure facilities are designed and equipped in a way that minimize impacts on the environment and surrounding neighborhoods.

Performance Measures

- 85% of facilities maintenance costs are attributed to preventative versus corrective action.
- 85% of Firefighters express satisfaction with the Department's facilities.

Budget Considerations

- Continue to work to improve annual facility maintenance efforts.
- Continue to work with City leadership to identify the funding needed to complete the capital facility projects identified in the 2014 Fire Facilities Master Plan.



B. Ensure All Necessary Apparatus & Equipment are in Good Working Order

To perform their jobs successfully, our personnel need apparatus and equipment that are in good working order. The Department currently depends on a number of internal and external specialists to test, maintain, and repair apparatus and equipment. These efforts will be continued to minimize failures during emergency responses.

In addition, the Department has separate Apparatus and Equipment Teams to assist with the development of acquisitions. Since the last Strategic Plan update, the role of the Teams has expanded to help manage apparatus and equipment beyond their initial acquisition.

Many of the Department's larger assets are on a regular replacement schedule; however, some essential equipment lacks funding for future replacement. To ensure essential apparatus and equipment are available in the future, the Department needs to continue to work towards establishing a replacement plan for all apparatus and equipment.

1. Inspect and evaluate apparatus and equipment annually.

- a. Create a strict schedule to ensure that all apparatus and equipment continue to be inspected annually to ensure it is in good working order.
- b. Involve internal and external specialists in the annual evaluation of apparatus and equipment to determine additional maintenance needs and an appropriate replacement schedule.
- c. Establish an effective method to report apparatus and equipment needs and requests outside of current/ existing replacement schedules.

2. Strengthen our systems and procedures for regular equipment testing and maintenance.

- a. Address maintenance requirements and testing in Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
- b. Record maintenance activities and testing results in a standard location. Continue to work with Station Captains to maintain up-to-date and complete apparatus and equipment inventories at the Department and station-level.
- c. Specify that inventory data should include: the date of purchase, value of apparatus and equipment, and the funding source if the purchase used grants, as well as the apparatus' and equipment's useful lifespan.

3. Work with the Apparatus and Equipment Teams to establish clear responsibilities and apparatus and equipment standards.

- a. The teams will continue to be responsible for:
 - Developing apparatus and equipment specifications and approving new acquisitions.
 - Developing maintenance and testing schedules for the new apparatus and equipment.

- Developing a training plan as necessary for new and/or replacement apparatus and equipment.
- Modifying existing SOPs to reflect the use of new and/or replacement equipment.
- b. Establish equipment standards that include estimated useful life and regular testing requirements.

4. Continue work to establish a replacement plan for all firefighting, rescue, and personnel protective equipment.

- a. Continue to work with the Finance Department to secure an ongoing funding source for all equipment replacements. If an ongoing funding source is not available, requests for required equipment replacement should become part of the Department's biennial budget process.

Performance Measures

- All reserve apparatus meets minimum standards for equipment.
- Record all hose and appliance testing and failures during annual testing.
- Evaluate fleet asset/ vehicle availability on a quarterly basis for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and fire apparatus. Work with Civic Services – Fleet & Communications to identify and rectify issues as they arise. Establish achievable targets to ensure adequate vehicle availability in order to minimize impacts to the Department operations.

Budget Considerations

- Establish a replacement timeline for firefighting equipment and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for all Firefighters. Seek ongoing funding to pay for worn out and outdated equipment.
- As part of the 2017-18 Biennial budget process, \$500,000 of one-time money was requested to replace worn out firefighting equipment and PPE. If the funding is not approved, the Department would need to work with City leadership to find an alternative funding source.

C. Employ Technology & Communication Solutions that Provide Efficiencies & Improve Services



Effective technology and communication tools help Department staff act in a more coordinated and efficient way and allow them to achieve better results. The Department will continue to advance a number of communication and technology projects that are in different stages of development. Additionally, the Department will refer to the City's Enterprise Technology Strategic Plan as a guide when appropriate.

1. Continue to advance and advocate the multi-faceted use of technology tools for efficiencies.

- a. Continue to use SharePoint as a project and document management tool that provides simultaneous access to multiple users.
- b. Continue to use DocuSign in a streamlined process for submitting several departmental forms.

- c. Continue to use Skype for Business video conference as a useful communication tool between command staff and line personnel, permitting crews to remain in their station and in service during post-incident review or training.
- d. Advocate for funding for tablets for electronic patient care reporting utilizing ESO Solutions Software, which allows for more regional coordination with King County EMS and hospitals, allowing them to both gather and incorporate patient care data.
- e. Advocate for the full implementation of Emergency Management Incident Tracking (EMIT) software and Bellevue Inform as an emergency notification system for incident management.

2. Continue to meet monthly with the Technology Team to discuss emerging technology ideas, trends, and needs.



- a. Discuss the policy issues and concerns around emerging technology ideas, trends, and needs.
- b. Promote regional collaboration on technology sharing through discussion with regional public safety providers.
- c. Maintain a list of current and future technology projects to be implemented.
- d. Evaluate new projects focused on enhancing internal and external communications and emergency/ non-emergency operations.
- e. Confer with the Department Executive Team to evaluate, prioritize, and identify funding sources for projects.

Performance Measure

- 50% of high-acuity Basic Life Support (BLS) incidents receive quality assurance review (Electronic Patient Care Reporting (EPCR) Initiative).
- 94% of Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff are trained in EMIT software.
- 100% of EOC staff have updated profile information for Bellevue Inform.
- 100% of pre-fire drawings are accessible on mobile devices.

Budget Considerations

- Work with King County EMS to obtain funding to offset the cost of implementing the County's EPCR system in Bellevue.
- Establish on-going funding sources for new and replacement smart phones and tablets to ensure that equipment will be available in the future.
- Work with other City departments to further the City's Smart City Initiative.

4 Strengthen Our Ability to Engage Effectively with Our Public



Public engagement is critical to prevention and preparedness, as well as to effective responses during a fire, medical emergency, or disaster. As our population continues to expand, we are challenged to meet increasing demands by the public for outreach activities, including safety fairs, visits to schools, public presentations and CPR training.



As the communities we serve grow more diverse, we recognize the need to better convey our messages to individuals from different backgrounds, including an increasing number of non-native English speakers. Aligning efforts and strategies with the City of Bellevue's Diversity Advantage Initiative, our emphasis continues on increasing the effectiveness of the tools and techniques we use to engage with the public as the current economic climate does not support substantial additional spending. Our focus, therefore, is on creating better results with our current staffing, tools, and level of effort. As discussed here, additional resources can be deployed when feasible to further strengthen our efforts in this important area.



A. Build the Department's Multicultural Connections & Capabilities

The population that the Department serves is comprised of people who communicate in a tremendous range of languages and styles. Some populations are not literate in written English or their home language, meaning that pictograms and other mechanisms must be used to convey information. *The Bellevue School District Report to Our Community 2014-15* indicates that more than 80 languages are spoken in the District, and 34% of the student population speak a language other than English. In addition to this cultural and linguistic diversity, the population in Bellevue is aging, which means more people are experiencing changes in their ability to hear and speak. The focus of the action items below is to increase our ability to communicate effectively with the diverse range of people living and working in the communities we serve.

1. Expand a prevention outreach program to use data-based research to target and communicate with groups facing the highest risks from fires, disasters, and health emergencies.

- a. Raise the participation of community members in our prevention outreach planning efforts to define community concerns, increase the effectiveness of our efforts, and increase the level of trust between the Department and the diverse communities we serve.
 - Improve access to public safety information through partnerships with community-specific media.
 - Support public safety programs that provide outreach to vulnerable people groups, including the elderly, disabled, and isolated communities.
- b. Establish policies and procedures to ensure that materials and outreach events are culturally-appropriate to reach the greatest percentage of our target audiences.



2. Increase the cultural competency of all staff through specialized training in multicultural connections and capabilities.

3. Leverage technology to improve communication with diverse communities when we are unable to deploy specialized personnel with relevant expertise.

Performance Measures

- Conduct at least one outreach event a quarter for seniors.
- Conduct at least four library outreach events per year.
- Meet 80% of public requests for outreach per year.

Budget Considerations

- Continue to seek alternative funding to enhance outreach activities.
- Work with City departments and other regional fire departments to leverage existing funding and to reach a larger, more diverse audience.

B. Expand our Opportunities for Effective, Quality Public Engagement

Many members of our community have indicated that they would like greater interaction, education, and communication with the Department. Our intention is to increase our ability to provide meaningful and effective public engagement, defined as interactions in which the member of the public feels that he or she has learned something useful.



1. Increase the effectiveness of our outreach efforts by prioritizing and coordinating with partners to develop new tools.

- a. Prioritize outreach projects that leverage coordinated City and community partnerships.
- b. Coordinate the community engagement efforts of the Department with other City of Bellevue Departments that include Bellevue Police, Parks and Community Services, Planning and Community Development.
 - Develop a citywide outreach calendar to coordinate efforts.
 - Leverage current citywide neighborhood programs to reach a greater proportion of the community.
- c. Periodically convene focus groups of people of various ages, abilities, and racial and ethnic backgrounds to explore appropriate public safety service delivery methods.
- d. Increase the number of people communicating our messages.
 - Include fire and disaster education communication training for all Firefighters.
 - Explore opportunities to leverage community volunteers.
- e. Develop more robust tools for communicating to the public. Consider the following ideas, among others:
 - Enhance the Department's website, allowing interested parties to register for classes, get disaster preparedness info, call volume statistics, performance metrics and reports etc.
 - Develop mechanisms to push external Department messages through email, social media, a newsletter, and other formats.
 - Periodically review and update the list of tools used to communicate with the public, drawing on input from Department staff and community members from a range of backgrounds.
 - Seek opportunities to partner with regional IT companies to establish better ways to present information and seek input from the public.
- f. Continue to use email and social media to raise awareness of Department services and successes.

"I love the egg drop every spring at Spiritridge Elementary, the open houses in October, the community outreach classes to teach emergency preparedness, and the fire explorers program!"

Response to Bellevue Fire Resident Survey 2016



2. Increase communication with contract city officials and outreach to residents of contract cities.

- a. Provide status updates on strategic issues and summary of services to both key partners and contract cities on a regular basis.
- b. Increase outreach to contract cities through more frequent communication with Public Information Officers and more planned and organized engagement.
- c. Ensure residents and businesses of our contract cities receive the same messages and level of attention as City of Bellevue residents and businesses.

3. Continuously improve our efforts through data-based assessments of the effectiveness of our outreach programs.

- a. Create tools to measure the effectiveness of our outreach and tailor our efforts to maximize effect (i.e. track outreach efforts through Community Connectors and other programs).

Performance Measures

- Levels of outreach:
 - Level 1: 1,500 individuals/ year attend trainings.
 - Level 2: 20,000 individuals/ year attend Department events or presentations.
 - Level 3: 30,000 responses to social media pushes/ year.



- Levels of training:
 - 400 individuals/year receive cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training.
 - 600 students/year receive Driving under the influence (DUI) Prom Night presentations.
 - Conduct one Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training per year at a minimum.
 - Bellevue Citizen Advocates for Resources and Education Services (CARES) indicators:
 - 100 Bellevue CARES referrals per year.
 - 70% Bellevue CARES client satisfaction per year.

Budget Considerations

- The number of people seeking a greater connection with the Department far outstrips the current resources available for meaningful public engagements. While we will continually seek to improve existing engagement opportunities, significant improvement will require additional funding.
- An immediate priority is funding for increasing community participation in our fire prevention outreach planning efforts as described earlier in Implementation Step B.1. Additional funds will also be needed for the creation of illustrations, translations, and to improve the overall impact of engagement opportunities.



Summary of the Strategic Planning Process

The process of developing this Plan was just as important and valuable as the outcome, creating an opportunity to engage our whole staff and members of the communities we serve in determining what role the Department should play and how it should pursue its business. The planning process followed guidance established by the Center for Public Safety Excellence and included the following components:

Situation assessment and strategy development by the Department's Executive Team and Strategic Planning Committee. The planning process began with an exploration of the internal and external challenges and opportunities by members of the Department's Executive Team and a Strategic Planning Committee created specifically to include a diversity of perspectives in this strategic planning process. The Strategic Planning Committee provided guidance on the survey instruments and interview protocols used to gather input from residents, key stakeholders within and external to the City, and Department staff. They were responsible for shaping the drafts and final version of this Plan as well as creating the implementation steps needed to realize the identified Goals.

Community Resident Survey. Community feedback was gathered through an online survey. The survey was conducted in May of 2016, and 339 service-area residents responded, which is an increase from the 271 respondents who responded to the same survey in January of 2012. This survey explored service priorities, levels of satisfaction with Department services, community expectations, and desired formats for ongoing communication. Both the 2012 and the 2016 surveys asked the same questions so the analysis of responses is comparable through time.

Interviews with External Stakeholders and City Leadership. In addition to the Community Resident Survey, targeted phone interviews were conducted

with key stakeholders representing local developers and property managers, the Bellevue School District, social service providers, fire and emergency management partners, the Downtown Bellevue Association, and the Department's contract cities. The interviews explored the Department's strengths, opportunities for improvement, meaningful changes occurring in the environment, and opportunities for enhanced collaboration. Phone interviews with leadership from other City Departments and an in-person interview with the City of Bellevue City Manager explored similar topics.

Analysis of Demographic and Economic Context. To recognize the importance of establishing a common and current understanding of the Department's operating environment, a compilation of current trends was created. This summary describes trends in population, demographics, race and ethnicity, school district data on enrollment in National School Lunch Program and Transitional Bilingual Program, housing stock, and employment at the City of Bellevue and the communities that contract services through the Department.

Other Surveys. Additional inputs from surveys such as the City of Bellevue Staff Surveys 2010 - 15, City of Bellevue 2015 Community Report, the City of Bellevue 2016 Budget Survey Report, the City of Bellevue 2015 Business Survey, and the Bellevue Fire 2016 Department Communications Survey helped to inform the environment around this effort.



Protecting Our Community, Strengthening Our Organization

