



# BELLEVUE FIRE DEPARTMENT

# 2023-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN



Facilitated by



The Center for Public Safety Excellence® (CPSE®) acknowledges and thanks the community and Bellevue Fire Department (BFD) stakeholders for their participation and input into this community-driven strategic planning process. The CPSE also recognizes Fire Chief Jay Hagen and all who participated for their commitment to this process.

This community-driven strategic plan was developed in April 2023, beginning with a meeting facilitated by representatives from the CPSE for community members, as named below. The community stakeholders' feedback considered by agency stakeholders in developing this strategic plan can be found in [Appendix A](#).

### **Community Stakeholders**

Marc Bellis	Matt Cowan	Laurie Leland	Scott Pingel
Demetri Bergeron	Kelly Cross	Janeen Loughin	Nicolas Quijano
Pete Bourgeault	Matt Gau	Laura Mathers	Dean Robla
Jeff Brauns	Joe Harbour	Nathan McCommon	Gregg Schrader
Steve Burns	Nikita Huson-Thompson	Mike McCormick-Huentelman	Joy St. Germain
Matt Chambers	Douglas James	Jessica Nadelman	Todd Yeager
Helen Chatalas	Carl Kleinknecht	Todd Nejbauer	

The agency stakeholder work sessions, conducted over three days, involved a group representing a broad cross-section of the BFD, as named below.

### **Agency Stakeholders**

Mark Anderson	Jeff Hackmeister	Ellen Montañana	Diane Swanberg
Emilie Barbosa	Kris Johnson	Russ Ordonia	Dave Tait
Dave Beste	Charlie Kimball	Eric Pedferri	Steve Thomas
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Chris Burris	Danyel Korpe	Jessica Slider	Nick Yencopal
Natasha Grossman			

# Message from the Fire Chief

The world of fire suppression and emergency medical response as we know it is rapidly changing. New technologies are reshaping the tasks needed and how we do those tasks. In addition, cultural and social needs are reshaping our roles.

As an organization, we strive to keep pace with those changes. I am proud to present to the community the work accomplished toward that end in the pages of this document. It outlines how we will uphold the City of Bellevue Core Values of innovation, exceptional customer service, integrity, stewardship, and a commitment to employees. I am also grateful for the guidance and support from the Bellevue City Council and City Manager Brad Miyake. This plan strives to achieve the vision of “Bellevue, a place you want to be.”

Bellevue Fire strives to continuously improve to meet the emerging needs of its service area. As we embrace data-driven decision-making that meets the community’s needs, I am confident we will successfully achieve our stated goals.

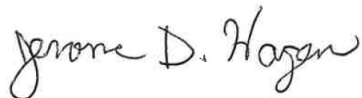
This Strategic Plan is one component of our overall efforts as an accredited agency. It is our hope that the important conversations and deliberations completed by a cross-section of our stakeholders will provide us with the guidance needed to complete our revised mission statement in the months and years to come:

***The Bellevue Fire Department exists to serve the evolving needs of the community by protecting people, property, and the environment. with courage, compassion, and commitment.***

The six strategic goals outlined reflect the difficulties many industries are facing, including succession planning, recruitment and retention of employees, and the necessary and important work of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

I am excited for the future of the fire service. As we continue expanding Mobile Integrated Health services to the most vulnerable members of the community, with kindness and empathy, we will embody the excellent public service the community has come to expect.

Respectfully,



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Jay Hagen  
Fire Chief

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# Introduction

The community serviced by the Bellevue Fire Department (BFD) receives high levels of professionalism and efficiency from the agency's proactive approach to risk reduction and emergency mitigation. As such, the BFD contracted with the CPSE to facilitate a community-driven strategic plan. The process utilized by the CPSE aligns with the Commission on Fire Accreditation International® (CFAI®) fire and emergency services accreditation model but also considers all parameters prescribed by the authority having jurisdiction.

The CPSE's approach to community-driven strategic planning gathers feedback and input from community and agency stakeholders while focusing on future change beyond the status quo. Beliefs, concepts, current processes, and values were among the many pieces considered and questioned to bring this planning document to reality. The BFD exhibited a commitment to the implementation and execution of this plan to become more efficient and effective in alignment with its community.

# Process

Understanding what the customer desires is vital to the success of any organization. In this case, the customer is the community that the Bellevue Fire Department serves. This applies even if the service organization is a governmental entity. Community-driven strategic planning ensures the community remains a focus of the organization's direction and community feedback is at the heart of all deliberations and development of this strategic plan.

The process of community-driven strategic planning and the plan itself represents the embrace of transition away from how an organization has always done things, seeking to find efficacies and outcomes based on change. The community-driven strategic plan provides a management roadmap built on a shared vision and structured for measurable results. With the involvement of a diverse group of agency stakeholders, the Bellevue Fire Department's community-driven strategic plan encompasses various experiences, perceptions, and perspectives that can also work to build more internal organizational symbiosis. For the desired, measurable results to be realized, the process and the strategic plan must focus on substance, not form. Only then can the BFD truly benefit from the process and realize its ultimate vision.

## Community Stakeholder Findings

- ✓ Identify, from the community perspective, things the agency should and should not change.
- ✓ Identify the community's expectations for the agency, concerns about or for the agency, and aspects the community views as strengths or positives.
- ✓ Define the programs provided to the community.
- ✓ Establish the community's prioritized view of the programs and services provided by the agency.



**Community Stakeholders Work Session**

## Agency Stakeholder Work

- ✓ Identify the agency's strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results.
- ✓ Revisit the mission statement, giving careful attention to the services and programs currently provided and which logically can be provided in the future.
- ✓ Revisit the values of the agency's membership.
- ✓ Revisit the agency's current vision considering the consensus built from the strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and desired results.
- ✓ Identify the agency's challenges, service gaps, and causal effects through a thematic sifting process.
- ✓ Determine, by consensus, strategic initiatives for outcome-based organizational improvement.
- ✓ Develop strategic goals, SMART objectives with relative timelines, and comprehensive critical task concepts focusing on outcomes.

# Agency Background

The Bellevue Fire Department was first organized in 1965 as a fire department for the city of Bellevue, Washington. A few years later, the department merged with the King County Fire District 14, increasing the number of stations, personnel, and coverage area.



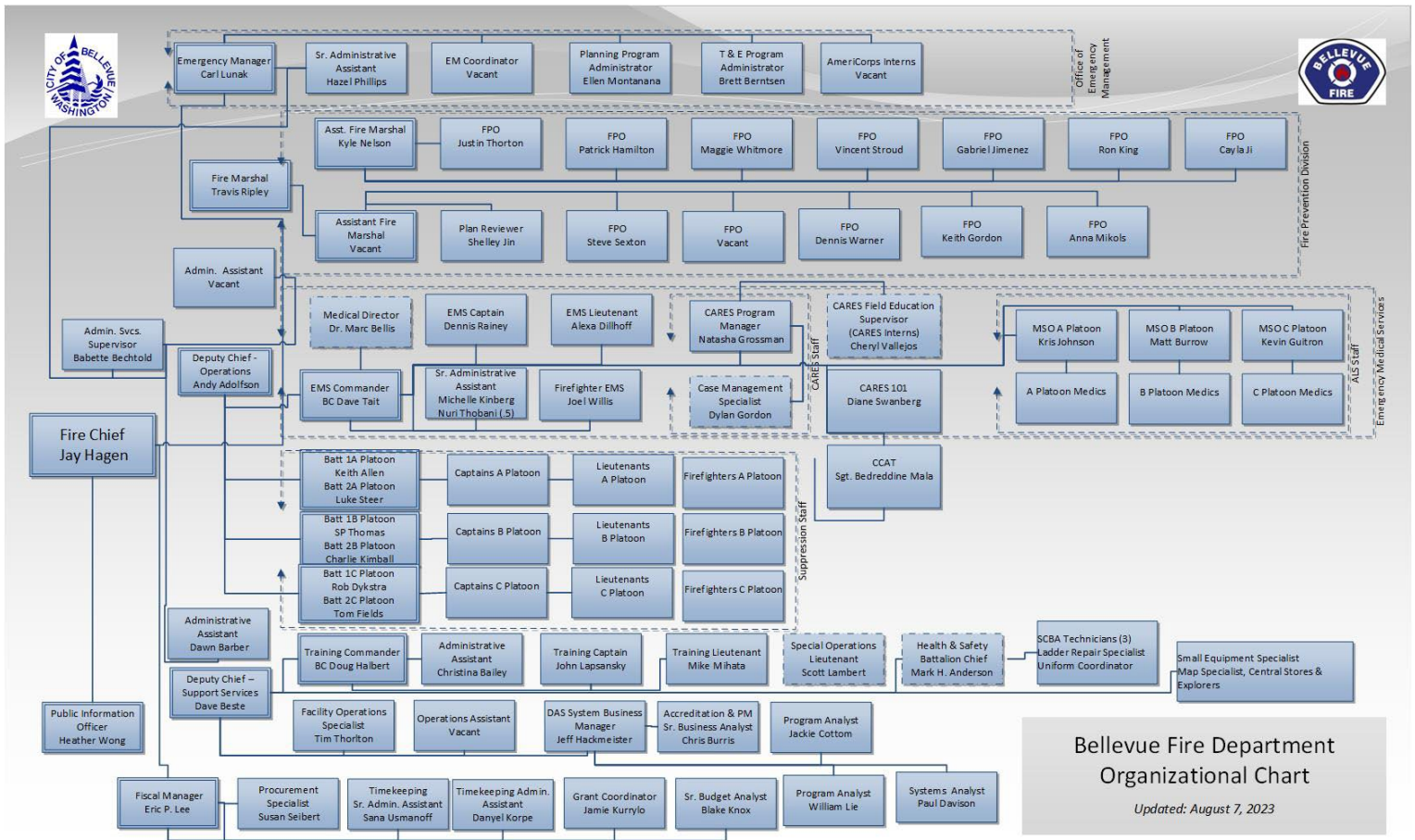
Further merging and annexation actions resulted in the current configuration and service delivery capabilities. In addition, the department also provides contractual services to six neighboring jurisdictions: Beaux Arts, Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Medina, and Yarrow Point. The Bellevue Fire Department's personnel have been highly effective in providing a full spectrum of services and community involvement. Their efforts have resulted in being recognized as a Washington State Bureau Rating (WSRB) 2 rated fire department.

The Bellevue Fire Department serves an approximate population of 170,000 residents. In addition, the local area has thousands of visitors and many others employed within the community. Growth and increase in population have and will provide for specific risks for which the Bellevue Fire Department considers, prepares, and deploys its resources and personnel.



Today, BFD reflects on its history and remains committed to providing all-hazards emergency services and education to its community with courage, leadership, and duty. The Bellevue Fire Department continues to honor its community with the provision of quality services through its proactive focus on risks and deployment from nine stations that are located strategically throughout the 40 square miles of coverage area. In addition, the department's ALS coverage encompasses 350 square miles. Staffed to support the community, BFD embraces its future vision and excellence in service delivery.

# Organizational Chart



**Bellevue Fire Department Organizational Chart**

Updated: August 7, 2023



**Agency Stakeholder Work Session Participants**



# Mission

The mission provides an internal aspect of the existence of an organization and, to a degree, an empowering consideration for all BFD members. The purpose of the mission is to answer the questions:

- Who are we?
- Why do we exist?
- What do we do?
- Why do we do it?
- For whom?

A workgroup met to revisit the existing mission and after ensuring it answered the questions, the following mission statement was created, discussed, and accepted by the entire group:

**The Bellevue Fire Department exists to serve the evolving needs of the community by protecting people, property, and the environment with courage, compassion, and commitment.**



Agency Stakeholders Work Session

# Values

Values embraced by all members of an organization are extremely important, as they recognize the features that make up the personality and culture of the organization. That is why the City of Bellevue has adopted a set of core values for all employees. A fire department workgroup met to revisit the existing city values and agreed that they share the same values.

The mission and values are the foundation of this department. Thus, every effort will be made to keep these current and meaningful to guide the individuals who make up the Bellevue Fire Department to accomplish their goals, objectives, and day-to-day tasks.

<b>Exceptional Public Service</b>	<b>Stewardship</b>	<b>Commitment to Employees</b>	<b>Integrity</b>	<b>Innovation</b>
<i>We deliver outstanding service to the customer.</i>	<i>We preserve and enhance the community's environmental, financial, human, and physical resources.</i>	<i>We value all employees and their contributions and treat each other with caring and respect.</i>	<i>We are trustworthy, truthful, and ethical.</i>	<i>We encourage and reward creative ideas and solutions.</i>
We are committed to exceptional service for all our customers. We demonstrate quality, caring, and sensitivity in every process, service, and product we deliver. We value the contributions of citizens and partners. Our community can expect open, fair, consistent, and responsive service.	We provide diligent and visionary management of all 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 determine tomorrow's community.	The city invests in its employees and continually demonstrates how valuable each person is to the organization. We encourage and reward employee growth and development. We treat each other equitably and with caring, respect, and trust. We recognize each other's contributions. We build on our commonalities and our differences. We believe that investing in employees fosters good government and quality public services.	Our leadership is centered on sound principles. We behave ethically, honestly, and fairly. We perform our work with steadfastness to truth, responsibility, and open communication. We adhere to visible values that are consistent throughout the organization.	We encourage and reward proactive, creative problem-solving, planning, and service delivery. We continue our tradition of leadership. We are empowered to explore new ideas and introduce cutting-edge solutions. We support taking reasonable risks to find better ways to deliver our services.

# Vision

An organizational vision exists to keep all agency members focused on the successful future of the Bellevue Fire Department and to guide quality change and improvement in alignment with the community. In support of the future created within the community-driven strategic planning process, the CPSE facilitated (the revision) of the BFD's vision for the future. The agency will support the reality of this vision through successful plan implementation and goal achievement.

**Our vision is to deliver the highest level of public service while enabling a safe and healthy workforce. We will be collaborative fire service leader, empowering our team and community with the knowledge and skills to prevent and mitigate emergencies while responding to evolving needs.**

**We commit to being an exceptional and diverse organization guided by excellence, professionalism, and respect. We aspire to be at the forefront of our profession, fostering a culture of innovation, and leveraging the latest technologies and techniques to keep our community safe and secure.**

# Goals

Community feedback and the SOAR process led to the determination of strategic initiatives representing the high-level issues the agency stakeholders developed into goals. The BFD must now make the following goals a focus of efforts that will direct the agency to its desired future. Goals with complete objectives, tasks, timelines, and assignments are included in a separate **Management and Implementation Guide**.



**Create and execute a succession plan to train and prepare our staff to transition into new roles within the organization, ensuring effectiveness, continuity, and the preservation of institutionalized knowledge.**

**EXCEPTIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE**

**COMMITMENT TO EMPLOYEES**



**Ensure that all fire department personnel receive comprehensive training, education, and resources to promote safety, prevent injuries, and enhance team members' knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform their duties with excellence and consistency.**

**EXCEPTIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE**

**COMMITMENT TO EMPLOYEES**

**STEWARDSHIP**



**Create and execute a recruitment and retention program that will lead to a dedicated and diverse workforce.**

**INNOVATION**

**COMMITMENT TO EMPLOYEES**

**STEWARDSHIP**



**Design and implement a documented Health and Wellness Program that empowers employees with lifestyle skills that enable them to achieve their best possible health.**

**COMMITMENT TO EMPLOYEES**

**STEWARDSHIP**



**Establish a department-wide staffing model based on industry best practices that assesses current staffing needs, adapts to dynamic community changes, allows for proactive responses to those changes, and aligns with the City of Bellevue's core values.**

**EXCEPTIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE**

**COMMITMENT TO EMPLOYEES**

**STEWARDSHIP**



**Develop a plan for the integration of existing technology, adoption of new technologies, and investment in the technical literacy of the workforce at all levels to increase efficiency and effectiveness, and reduce workloads.**

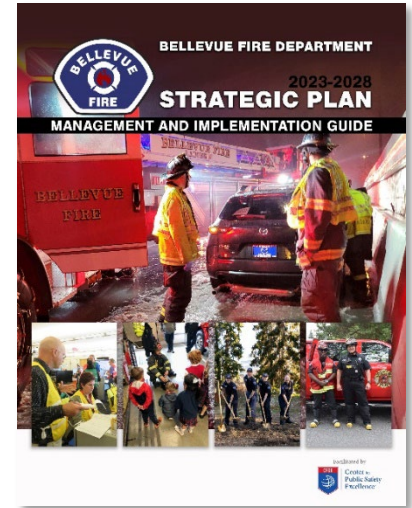
**INNOVATION**

**STEWARDSHIP**

**EXCEPTIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE**

# Conclusion

Working with community and department members from all levels, this strategic plan was developed...but the work is truly just beginning. Agency stakeholders must now execute and institutionalize the plan to ensure the community's expectations and the Bellevue Fire Department's vision remain congruent. The accompanying **Management and Implementation Guide** will assist the BFD in the mechanics of implementation. The guide is not intended to be all-inclusive; rather, it provides flexibility to ensure future success.



**“...we will chase perfection, and we will chase it relentlessly, knowing all the while we can never attain it. But along the way, we shall catch excellence.”**  
*Vince Lombardi*

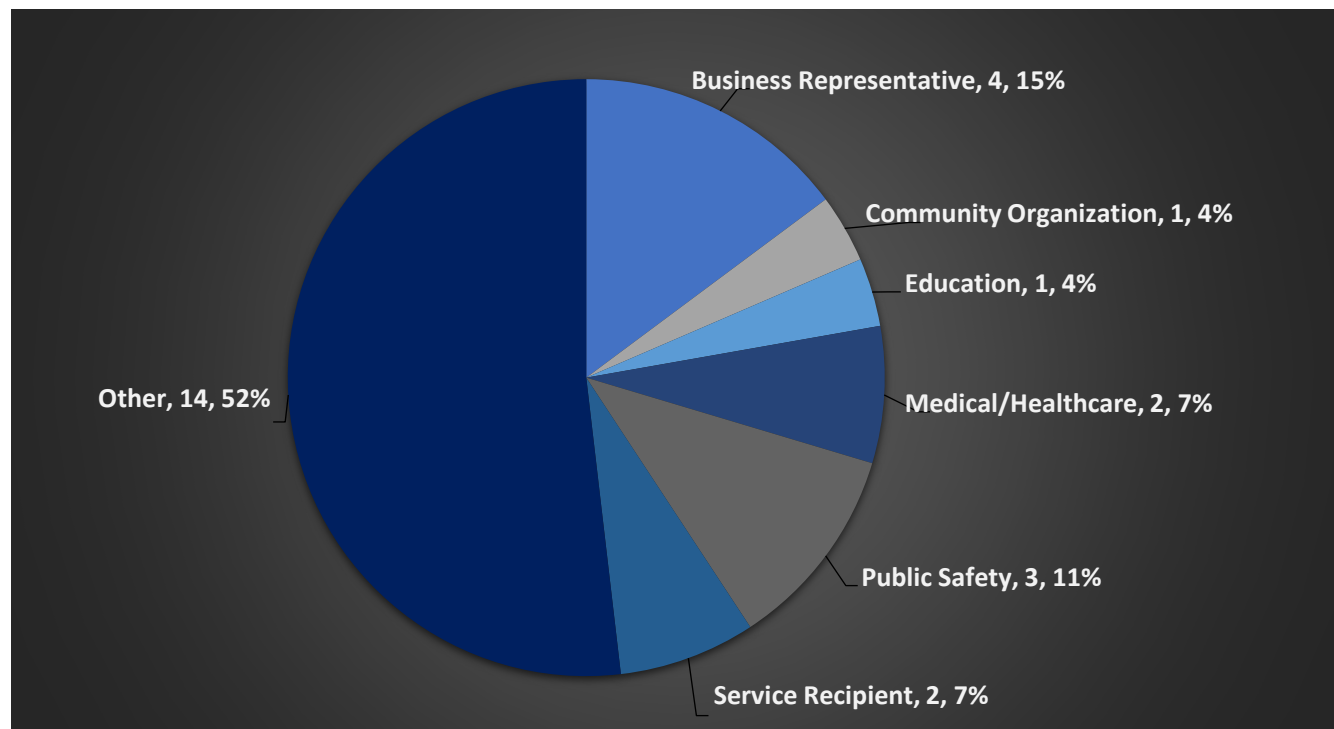
It must be remembered that during this journey of regeneration through change and improvement, recalculation may need to occur to find the success desired. This strategic plan is a roadmap to help the Bellevue Fire Department navigate that change and futurity. The ability to pivot to meet the current environment as institutionalization and implementation occur provides a greater likelihood that the desired outcomes and efficacies will be realized as envisioned.

# Appendices

## A. Community Stakeholder Findings

The Bellevue Fire Department demonstrates a commitment to its community via a focus on community input and satisfaction. A community stakeholder session was held to gather feedback from the respondents on the agency and its various services delivered. The information gathered from the community stakeholder feedback provided understanding to the agency stakeholders of any misalignment with its organizational foundation and performance or values-based expectations or concerns from which new improvement strategies and processes may be created.

**Community stakeholders** were identified by the agency to ensure broad representation. The breakdown of groups represented is presented here:



Respondents were asked to list, in priority order, up to three subjects relative to expectations, concerns, and strengths or positives for the BFD. Expectations and concerns were then analyzed for themes and weighted. The numbers in the parentheses are the cumulative weighted value that correlate with the themes identified. While the themes are listed in prioritized, weighted order, all responses were important in the planning process. Strengths or positives are listed verbatim and may be repeated based on different respondents.

The specific data and findings from the community stakeholder respondents are provided to follow.

## Community Expectations of the Bellevue Fire Department (in priority order)

1. Timely and responsive emergency medical services with advanced life support and fire suppression efforts. Delivering timely, competent first response. Quick response time to all calls. Response time. Hold the nation's best response times in serving the public. Maintaining quick and consistent response times. Short response times. (46)
2. Protect lives and property. Responsiveness and readiness for all types of calls, hazards, and emergencies. Respond to fires and medical emergencies. When one calls 911, the fire department shows up. Provide assistance and resources to vulnerable community members that otherwise would be unavailable or unattainable. Organize for success in responding to fire and emergency events. Post-disaster (earthquakes etc.) response. Arrive when called. (37)
3. Competent response to fires and health events. Train and develop staff to create a plan to ensure there is knowledgeable leadership in the department for the long term. A well-trained and equipped department. Proper staff training. Adequately certified and trained team members to meet current and future needs. Trained employees. Updated training, including professional standards in diverse communities, new technologies, and remote virtual healthcare. (29)
4. Excellent fire response service. Provide exceptional service to the community/citizens of Bellevue. Be an industry leader in all areas of fire prevention/apparatus/management. High-level delivery of services. (20)
5. More interaction with fire personnel onsite within buildings. Community outreach and public education efforts, i.e., emergency preparedness, CPR, AED, and bleeding control. Prevention focuses through education, outreach, communications on "how to be prepared, etc. Engaged with the community. Strong community involvement. (17)
6. Prudent use of public resources. Fiscal controls. Fiscally responsible. That it uses taxpayer funds wisely. Fiscally responsible. Cost vs. value should align. (14)
7. Continue to grow and adapt technology changes in order to continue providing excellent patient care. Flexible in adapting to the changing needs of the community. Adapt and change as needed to meet the needs of the community. Adapting to changing environments, including high-rise risk, diversity, and training. (12)
8. Caring about people, those served, partners, neighbors, and superiors. Caring, knowledgeable employees that are responsive and have a problem-solving attitude and follow-up. Service with compassion. (11)
9. Professional demeanor. Quality and professional staff. (6)
10. Safety. Work safely to protect selves and others. (6)
11. Maintain and improve quality of medical response. (5)
12. reflect the community we/they serve. That it has personnel that reflect the demographics of its community. (4)
13. Have an actionable plan for addressing the community's needs now and into the future. A current long-range facilities and fleet master plan which is reviewed regularly updated and followed. (4)
14. Prepare the community before an emergency event and have clear plans/actions in place to deal with an event in process and afterward. Provide training to the public that is readily available. (4)
15. Having updated equipment, training, and strategy to quickly contain emerging threats such as electric vehicle lithium battery fires. Quality/well-maintained equipment. (4)
16. Work with fire inspectors more closely. (3)
17. Collaboration across all COB departments - especially police. Coordinate and collaborate with the community, especially areas/peoples/communities that may be marginalized or underserved to maximize efficiency and efficacy of fire and medical emergency response. Strategize in developing and maintaining systems and relationships with key stakeholders; medical, hospitals, other jurisdictions, police, etc. (3)
18. Provide services as efficiently as possible while ensuring to provide the identified level of service. (3)
19. Be available when my building needs them. Availability. (2)
20. Experienced firefighters and EMTs. (1)



21. Utilize firefighter shift time while not responding to an incident. (1)

### **Areas of Community Concern about the Bellevue Fire Department** (verbatim, in priority order)

1. Recruiting in a competitive environment. Risk of losing experienced personnel to retirement. The attrition and turnover in the department has left very “green” leaders with a lack of leadership experience. Lowering standards to recruit diversity goals/needs, recruiting qualified individuals/staff. Loss of institutional knowledge with retiring staff. Fewer people are willing to become firefighters. (28)
2. Budget constraints/competitiveness with other department budgets and social justice priorities. Cost containment of operations while maintaining high-quality service. Control of cost escalation. Can the department operate with current funding, are there other options? Cost to taxpayers. Rising costs. Long-term viability of funding model. (27)
3. The city is growing faster than the department. Ability to keep up with growth of the city - population/businesses. Growth in community size. Keeping up with the economic growth. Demands on BFD are increasing and broadening as density increases. How does the department keep up with all the needs and demands to provide services to this growing community? (26)
4. Staffing/budget constraints and ability to adequately fulfill various programs/initiatives, i.e., OEM, mental health, and CERT. The department needs to think dynamically about maintaining staffing levels to meet the needs of the community. Future staffing. Achieving adequate staff levels. Need to hire more FFs/EMTs and paramedics, the department is understaffed. adequate staffing for a growing population. (23)
5. Concerned you may not be nimble enough to adjust or redirect your services when needed. Ability/capacity to be innovative and creative enough to assist with healthcare needs of the community. Resistant to change. Preparation for the increased diverse population that likely will come with the new transit line arriving in Bellevue and surrounding communities. Ability to innovate service delivery approach. (19)
6. Secondhand exposure to dangerous drugs such as fentanyl and carfentanil, mental health support. Fire personnel burnout from having been run ragged over the past three years. (13)
7. Aging infrastructure. State-of-the-art equipment. Facilities are out of date. (13)
8. General lack of understanding of the City of Bellevue as an organization and how the pieces connect. Communication of fire system policy that affects business and not communicating at implementation. Effective communication amongst internal departments - communication is key. (11)
9. Lack of diversity in staffing, or perception of this. Low diverse membership compared with regional pool. A lack of diversity in staffing and attentiveness to the needs of historically underserved communities. (11)
10. Response times in an ever-changing environment from density and traffic. Response times when fire station five is re-developed. (10)
11. Not engaged with other departments of the city or other organizations. Equal mutual aid partners. (8)
12. Having so many responsibilities that they become overwhelmed. The question is about how BFD clearly prioritizes its role in public safety and boundaries around what it provides. Service levels are we meeting and managing service demands. (7)
13. Sense of myopic entitlement. Overly proud. (6)
14. The opening of the men’s shelter in Eastgate and the potential for a substantial increase in call volume. (5)
15. Adequate training for the staff. (5)
16. Ability to deliver on the projects identified in the fire levy to meet expectations of the community. Ability to respond to mass casualty situation like a school shooting. (4)
17. High-rise response for firefighters. (3)
18. Fire system policy is consistent for all. (3)
19. Potential liability for response /medical treatment. (3)

20. Keeping up with technological advancements. Ability to stay up to date on new technologies and treatment recommendations. Using technology to stay efficient and reduce risk. (3)
21. Getting dragged into politics. Union dynamics. (2)
22. Firsthand exposure to unpredictably dangerous patients (i.e., untreated mentally ill, violent drug offenders, random violent crime. (1)
23. Imposing policies that impact the health and wellbeing of firefighters, i.e., vaccination requirement. (1)
24. Succession planning, need to plan for the future. (1)
25. Planning for future needs and how this may affect the department. (1)
26. Supply chain challenges and cost increases. (1)

### **Positive Community Comments about the Bellevue Fire Department** (verbatim, in no order)

- Professionalism.
- Trusted and skilled personnel.
- Strong, positive culture.
- Willingness to collaborate on projects and efforts.
- Dedication of fire employees.
- Field staff (engine company) appreciate and welcome feedback and help from engineers.
- When called, always can contact someone to answer a question.
- Responsiveness to community questions/concerns.
- Positive work environment/culture/professionalism.
- Commitment to accreditation and the strategic planning process.
- Commitment to excellent service.
- Open and accessible to the community.
- They act competently when called.
- Community outreach/education/engagement.
- Excellence in patient care.
- The department has embraced the use of data to inform decisions.
- Significant knowledge/skills/abilities and experience at middle management level through the fire chief.
- Solid reputation regionally and locally.
- Great leadership with Chief Hagen.
- Every individual I have worked with has been professional, enthusiastic, and optimistic about their role and the department.
- A great culture has been built that is respectful, gets it done, and has a positive attitude. They have first-rate people!
- Accessible to the public.
- Open to growth and change.
- Professional.
- Comprehensive preventive maintenance programs for builders.
- Community involvement.
- Positive attitudes with internal staff.
- Individual members of the BFD are experts, caring, and attentive.

- Fire chief and fire leadership are visible in the community and or communicating through updates and information.
- Emergency management and preparedness.
- Strong commitment to exceptional service.
- Training opportunities.
- Medical program.
- Love the Cares Program-innovative, financially responsible, results-orientated.
- Department's commitment to data cleanliness, completeness.
- Personnel love what they do -are committed to the agency and the community.
- Dedicated leadership.
- Commitment, CARES.
- Respected and appreciated the community.
- Willingness to seek information, learn from it, and improve.
- Engaged and committed staff.
- Open and approachable to the community and stakeholders.
- A long history of accreditation and being a recognized industry leader.
- Well respected leadership, well-run organization.
- Perform at a very high level.
- Professional.
- Committed to the mission and ability to get input.
- BFD provides exceptionally high standards for community response-is trusted and respected.
- Commitment to adapt! Love the innovation and ability to change.
- The efforts to integrate the surrounding communities into how we care for all patients on the east side, providing a cohesive support system.
- Willingness to change or adapt.
- The leadership in the BFD!
- They seem to be responsive.
- Well respected in the community.
- Participate in the community.
- Very well prepared-high level of response.
- Regionally regarded as a leader in the Fire/EMS system.
- Very well qualified, professional, capable.
- Quick response times.
- Outstanding leadership (Hagen/Beste).
- Staff are positive to work with.
- Strong relationships with other jurisdictions.
- Takes a regional leadership role.
- Leadership.
- Community.
- People.
- Dedication to what they do.

- Adaptability to any situation.
- Proximity.
- Responsive.
- Care for the community.

## **Other Community Comments about the Bellevue Fire Department** (verbatim, in no order)

- Consider an internal promotion path and a competitive process to fill vacancies. This may help to narrow gaps in experience, or experience that is solely focused on firefighting. Very important to feeding into the department's leadership.
- With diverse communities, ensure they have the ability to connect with them, even diverse community, and education on fire prevention, etc.
- BFD is a high-quality organization.
- We are usually utilizers of fire services at Kemper Development, and I am proud of the work that they do. It gives my security officers great comfort in the quick response time.
- Keep up the good work.
- It is a pleasure to work with the Bellevue Fire staff that I have had the opportunity to work with. They are good and dedicated people.
- You have multiple firefighters with cancer currently, energize health and wellbeing activities across the board.
- Thank you for inviting and sponsoring this opportunity.
- The future of BFD will involve greater community partnerships for changing needs. As the diversity of our community is more complex, so is the physical landscape, light rail, etc. Limitations in hospital space is also a factor.
- Bellevue is continually on a forward path. Progressive, innovative, yet not forgetful of their foundation.
- Growth plan at same rate as actual plan. Light rail tunnel safety.

## **Things the Community Feels the Bellevue Fire Department Should Change**

(Verbatim, in priority order)

1. How it fills deputy chief's roles. Rotation of staff in charge of fleet and facilities. Leadership rotations-hire for the long term to allow consistency in implementing instead of changing priorities every two-three-year period. (3)
2. Be more collaborative. Continue to be forward-thinking in partnering with the community and other agencies. (2)
3. Better use of technology. Technology usage. (2)
4. Engage with and keep the perspective of all aspects of public health and public safety needs. (1)
5. Look at life cycles of infrastructure and budget accordingly. (1)
6. Current approach to union negotiations. (1)
7. Incorporate younger voices in feedback and decision-making, design, etc. (1)
8. Develop an empathic perspective as one of several municipal departments. (1)
9. Renewed/increased focus on public education. (1)
10. Opening up paramedic hiring to outside agencies. (1)
11. Commitment to excellence. (1)
12. Response approach-innovate. (1)

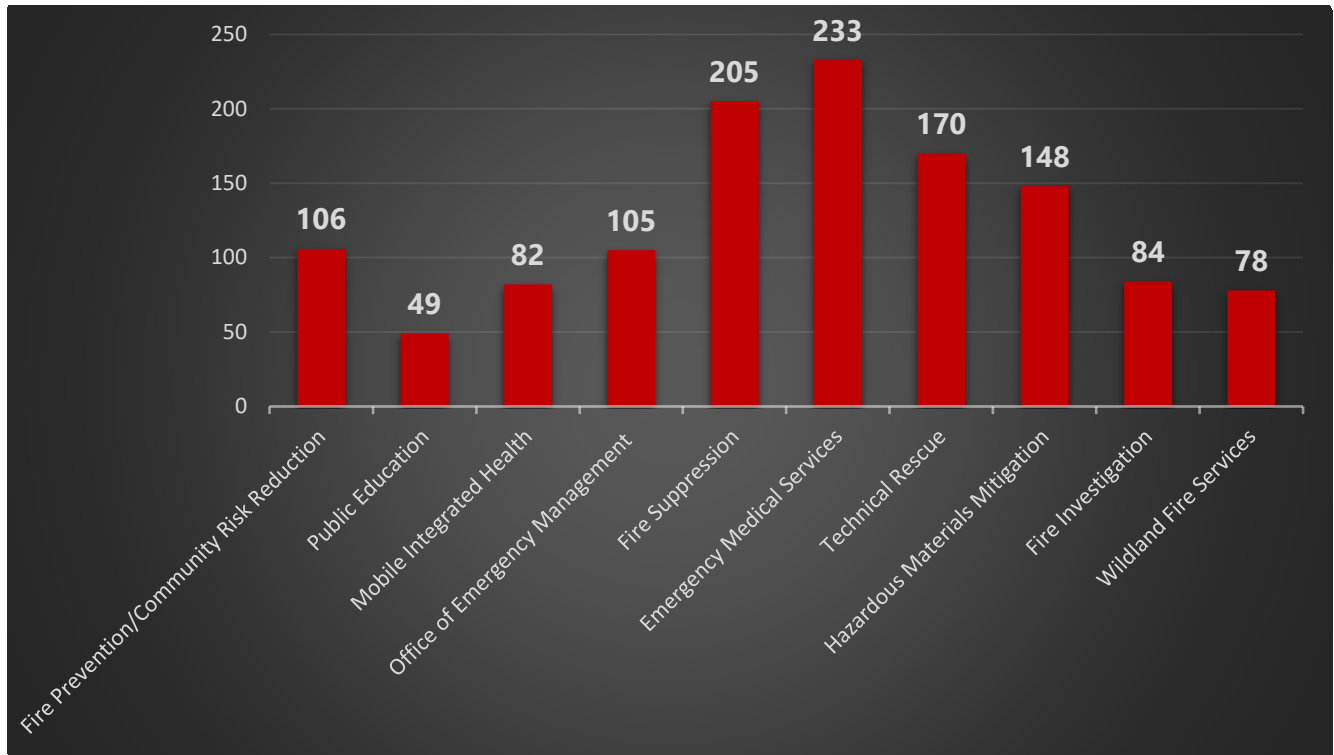
**Things the Community Feels the Bellevue Fire Department Should NOT Change**

(Verbatim, in priority order)

1. Communications and community engagement opportunities. Willingness to engage with the community. Commitment to excellence and the culture of service to the community. Deep roots in the community and always seeming to put the community first. Commitment to community input. Comments outreach is good. Focus and dedication to the public and community. Level of service to the community. Focus to protect the community. Focus on community and service attitude. (10)
2. Reputation-always high performing. Professionally driven for excellence. Level of standards-keep them high. High level of professionalism and integrity. Staff professionalism. Quality. (6)
3. Support of B.F. Cares. Cares program. (2)
4. Medical response. The excellent BLS/ALS response. (2)
5. Its core mission. (1)
6. Continue with the annual accreditation and continuous improvement. (1)
7. Expectations of firefighters during shift downtime. (1)
8. Contracted services with smaller cities. (1)

## Community-Prioritized Programs

Understanding how the community prioritizes the agency’s programs and services allows the Bellevue Fire Department to ensure its focus on resource allocation aligns. With that, prioritization feedback was garnered with an instrument that compared the prioritization of the programs and services offered by the BFD. The results were as follows:



Community Stakeholders Work Session

## B. Agency Stakeholder Work

A group of agency stakeholders representing the various segments of the BFD attended a three-day work session to review the community feedback, develop or revise the agency’s mission and values, and establish a quality focus on the way forward in developing this community-driven strategic plan. Additionally, the process included an environmental scan in the form of a strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results (SOAR) analysis to better understand the current situational aspects impacting the agency.

### SOAR

The agency’s internal stakeholders utilized a strategic environmental analytic method known as SOAR: where members consider the organization’s current strengths, opportunities, future aspirations, and strategic results to formulate a path for continuous improvement. The SOAR process was conducted for reflection, focus, and alignment with the organization’s set of values, its vision, and its mission. This appreciative inquiry process provided environmental scanning for strategic direction, associated plans through the application of innovative ideas, and a positive strategic framework that brings clarity to the agency’s vision for leadership in day-to-day functions.

### Strengths

Department-wide professionalism as it builds community trust.	Dedicated and engaged personnel get stuff done.
STEMI/CVA response results in better patient outcomes.	Confining fires to the room of origin.
CARES/CCAT program helps underserved, increases innovation, stewardship and keeps crews open for emergencies.	Dedication to training ensures constant improvement and preparedness.
Community partnerships and regional leadership lead to collaboration and help drive the mission.	The department’s increased commitment to diversity instills trust within our community.
Fiscally responsible in a challenging environment allows us to maintain services.	Opportunity to employ flexible member work schedules such as the 48/96-hour firefighter schedule.
On-going accreditation demonstrates commitment to continual improvement.	Peer support and mental health helps to ensure the overall health of our members.
30% of fire budget from outside sources, reducing the cost to the community.	Adaptability and responsiveness to the needs of our community helps keep us prepared for the future.
Good reputation within the community and among our peers.	Positive working relationships/staff culture
Hiring quality/emphatic people.	High standards and hold people accountable.
Training with and providing mutual aid	High-quality professional appearance.
Good stewards who maintain resources (equipment, facilities).	Commitment to data-based decisions.
Supportive external stakeholders	The recognition of accomplishments and service.
Maintaining current recruitment standards that emphasize diverse top candidates.	Good working relationships with internal city departments and external fire departments.
Awareness to embrace new systems	Hire motivated people.
The identification and utilization of members’ skills for the management of decentralized processes.	Diverse set of equipment/resources to address multiple problem sets.
Standard professional credentialing.	Resilient workforce regardless of conditions.

Fiscal responsibility/consistency.

Personnel are hungry to train and improve.

## Opportunities

Employee retention and avenues to entice people to stay will reduce turnover.	Fully use technology to enable options, such as auto-populate, simplification, consolidation.
Staffing, CCAT, light rail, homeless shelter-we can showcase how we are addressing them.	Water department collaboration to help with WSRB-education on how.
Create assessment process that identifies then manage priorities to improve the systems.	Make access to information more available to staff-too many apps and programs.
Enhancing recruitment activities with city resources.	GIS lives in IT-balance, control, collaboration
Improve our department wellness and mental health program.	Institutionalized our model to the CFAI process.
Increase CRR efforts in public safety and mitigation of emergencies.	Community paramedicine added to current MIH program leads to better public health.
Regional collaboration, including opening medic program which aids recruitment/retention.	Scenes of violence - collaboration with police and the community to train and be better prepared.
Increase staffing in anticipation of, and to keep pace with, community growth and scope of the mission.	Increase workforce diversity to better reflect our community.
Impact fees would provide funding for increased training and technical rescue.	Implement badging/tracking system for overtime and training.
Increased consistency of special event planning and staffing for better preparedness.	Commissary and consolidation of support/logistics positions to increase efficiency and organization.
Better job educating the community about services and the operation of the department.	Streamline pre-fire maintenance process with fire prevention division interaction.
Increase travel training funding/opportunities to increase KSAs.	Personnel assignment tracking for payroll.
Expansion of designated training cadre for signoffs.	Replace FireTrex with a modern training platform.
Better integration for Telestaff, JDE, and HR place.	Implement green power initiatives.
Install electric vehicle charging at stations.	More robust payroll system to ensure accuracy.
Implement password management system.	Continued regional fire service partnerships.
Leadership training with a focus on succession training assists with institutional knowledge to avoid setbacks.	



**Aspirations**

To have a more robust mental health service (afterhours CARES).	More availability for staff opportunities and development for fire admin.
More specialized technical training and programs in the department (water rescue).	A comprehensively certified staffing model that includes case management for the CARES program.
Add data literacy to recruit academy.	Add technical/admin skills to promotional exams.
Understand what diversity is from our community and department standpoint and how we are addressing the ever-changing climate.	System in place that engage the community to understand and meet their needs to make them an advocate for us.
Consistent leadership for EMS (deputy chief).	CARES as its own division.
CCARES as national model for training social work students.	24/7 dedicated fire investigator.
CCAT/CARES as national model for integrated MHPs into Fire/PD corresponded.	The growth of the department to growth of the city using metrics to maintain service levels.
Publish near real time performance metrics to the public.	No one dies, no one gets hurt.
Comprehensive community education/risk reduction program to meet changing community demographics.	Institutionalize CFAI model for a program to a process model integrated throughout the department.
Zone 1 dispatch Seattle model with firefighters as operators.	No fatalities/no accidents for responders.
Develop a training model for staff transitions at all levels.	Continue to be leaders in the region.
Mental health program and quicker access for employees.	Keep injured or light duty personnel more in the loop.
To provide a reasonable accommodation pathway for all members, including fire protection officer, admin, etc.	To be an agency that has a high member retention rate in the fire prevention division.
To have a system in place that allows the department to hire people more quickly.	Reduce workload for admin duties both in city hall and on the line.
Reduce vehicle accidents to help reduce cost of the department as well as paperwork.	Plan for and implement strategic increase in our regional consolidation.
Create MIH and CRR divisions that are staffed and managed for better span of control and leading to less siloed work.	Equipped, trained, and ready to respond to all the community needs.
Create a deputy chief position for training for better span of control.	Adopt four-person engine company would increase firefighter safety and effectiveness.
Create an assistant fire chief position to oversee operations and allow the fire chief to be fully in leadership.	Commissary/warehouse creation would consolidate resources and specialized positions.
Dedicated fire control center location to better manage deployed staff for larger scale incidents.	FTE added to OEM to support the emergency operations center.
Safe, updated, and efficiently designed fire stations.	Fully staffed Battalion 102.
A more robust health and wellness program for all members.	Expand bureaus to address current and future needs.
Be a department that has a comprehensive collaborative and inclusive staff onboarding process.	Washington State Rating Bureau rating 1.

## Results

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuous surveys reflect community/stakeholder perspective on services and professionalism.</li> <li>- Increase the percentage of credentialed staff.</li> <li>- Model agency regionally.</li> <li>- More diversity in the ranks.</li> <li>- Maintain accreditation.</li> <li>- More logged training hours and travel training attendance.</li> <li>- STEMI/CVA QA/QI shows continued improvement.</li> <li>- Evidence-based decisions using clean data.</li> <li>- Reduced sick leave, cancer, injuries, mental health/PTSD equates to a more resilient workforce.</li> <li>- Increased staff retention due to an alternate work schedule (48/72, telework)</li> <li>- Stay within budget without decreasing services due to communications between divisions.</li> <li>- Monitoring patient contacts and reduction of 911 calls.</li> <li>- Reduce maintenance costs and replacement fees for equipment.</li> <li>- Outside fire service members able to test.</li> <li>- Decreased fires, number of accidents, decreased medical emergencies.</li> <li>- Documented knowledge gain amongst community members and fire and life safety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Semi-annual SOC/fire planning zone update.</li> <li>- Employee resiliency planning.</li> <li>- Fully enable ESO function (auto-populate).</li> <li>- CCAT/light rail survey results have clear success, document shelter staff, CCAT and CARES proactive prevention focus.</li> <li>- Achieve class 1 WSRB in fire flows and water supply.</li> <li>- Hydrant database report problems and pre-fire plans.</li> <li>- Employee report workload balance.</li> <li>- Fewer applications/better single-source answers.</li> <li>- Annual physicals, cardiac screening, improved follow-up on annual safety report.</li> <li>- Improved workload optimization</li> <li>- Improved availability of investigators.</li> <li>- Better continuity of FPO staff/limited onboarding.</li> <li>- More resources available for new assets.</li> <li>- Algorithm tying operations staffing with call volume, population, and the ripple effects to admin, IT, apparatus, etc.</li> <li>- More efficient hiring process and time to hire.</li> <li>- Given an opportunity and encouragement to find and develop their passions in the fire service.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demonstrate to public we are expanding services to meet the population growth.</li> <li>- 100% investigation record.</li> <li>- Decreased number of staff using modified duty from mental health and injuries.</li> <li>- Adequate funding for identified needs.</li> <li>- Increased interest in filling admin positions.</li> <li>- Probationary firefighters fully trained upon assignment.</li> <li>- Additional career paths for firefighters, more efficient dispatch.</li> <li>- WSRB rating of 1 achieved.</li> <li>- Reduction in time between referral and follow-up for CARES.</li> <li>- 24-hour MHP from CARES</li> <li>- Provide training and technical assistance for replication of CCAT/CARES in other departments.</li> <li>- Decrease in staff turnover.</li> <li>- Develop a regular community survey program that leads to an increase in client satisfaction measured by additional surveys.</li> <li>- Would meet 2 in 2 out, immediately provide suppression efforts.</li> <li>- Regular staffing, no gap days</li> <li>- Comprehensive training to city staff regarding their role in a catastrophic event.</li> <li>- Increased candidate pool for paramedic testing</li> </ul>

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Completed red books for all positions.</li> <li>- Identified and qualified staff ready as successors for all positions (minimum 2).</li> <li>- Increased staffing for B102, four-person engines, admin assistants, deputy chiefs, and administrative battalion chiefs.</li> <li>- Increased average tenure across staffing in all department divisions.</li> <li>- Built and staffed commissary and warehouse.</li> <li>- Documented increase in travel and training opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue in the future to be an “all hazard agencies.”</li> <li>- Working smoke and CO2 detectors in all Bellevue residences and facilities.</li> <li>- Increase in number of support positions.</li> <li>- Decreased calls to shelters and surrounding areas, decreased wall time and hospitals, decreased high utilization of 911 services.</li> <li>- Increased frequency of scenes of violence training.</li> <li>- All pre-fires for schools and high assembly locations completed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More efficient reporting for WSRB.</li> <li>- More efficient staff time.</li> <li>- Improved relationships with outside fire agencies.</li> <li>- Better alignment with city initiatives (environmental stewardships).</li> <li>- A more comprehensive payroll system.</li> <li>- Reduction in grievances related to payroll.</li> <li>- Staffed community paramedicine unit with increasing client load.</li> </ul>

**Programs and Services**

It is imperative that agency stakeholders distinguish between the core deliverables (programs and services) provided by the Bellevue Fire Department and those supporting services that help the agency provide the core programs and services. With this understanding, the agency stakeholders can further define where the issues and gaps exist within the organization and provide more basis for the environmental scan that is conducted. To bring this understanding to fruition, the CPSE provided guidance and gained consensus understanding with the entire group so that the difference between the deliverables and the supporting functions were understood.



**Agency Stakeholders Work Session**



### Challenges and Service Gaps

After sifting through data and feedback provided by the community stakeholders, and the internal environmental scan conducted, the agency stakeholders, by consensus and group effort, determined that the following challenges and service gaps exist within the Bellevue Fire Department. Each challenge or gap listed is accompanied by the causal effects determined by the two groups. They are then linked to the strategic initiative identified by the agency stakeholders.

Group 1	Group 2	Initiative Link
<p>Succession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Staff planning</li> <li>○ Training</li> <li>○ Attrition</li> <li>○ Funding</li> <li>○ Workload</li> <li>○ Professional development</li> </ul>	<p>Succession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Red books</li> <li>○ Shadowing</li> <li>○ Lack of mentoring</li> <li>○ Time/capacity</li> <li>○ Plan/processes</li> <li>○ Aging workforce</li> <li>○ Opportunity to see or work in other aspects of the department</li> </ul>	<p><b>Succession Planning</b></p>
<p>Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Portal to portal law</li> <li>○ Ongoing requirements</li> <li>○ Types of calls</li> <li>○ New emergencies</li> <li>○ Attrition</li> <li>○ Onboarding portal</li> <li>○ Culture of the fire department</li> <li>○ Funding</li> </ul>	<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Funding/costs</li> <li>○ Collective bargaining agreement</li> <li>○ Availability of courses</li> <li>○ Politics</li> <li>○ Communication models</li> <li>○ Work/life balance</li> <li>○ Credentialing</li> <li>○ CEU's</li> </ul> <p>Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pride</li> <li>○ Time</li> <li>○ Lack of awareness</li> <li>○ Institutional awareness</li> <li>○ Trust</li> <li>○ Lack of relationships</li> <li>○ Education</li> </ul>	<p><b>Training</b></p>
<p>Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Community education/recruitment staff</li> <li>○ Testing</li> <li>○ Interview process</li> <li>○ Retention</li> <li>○ Leadership</li> <li>○ Onboarding</li> </ul>	<p>Retention/Advancement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cost of living</li> <li>○ Traffic</li> <li>○ Work schedule</li> <li>○ Pay and salary.</li> <li>○ Benefits</li> <li>○ Opportunity to advance.</li> </ul> <p>Recruitment/Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Plan</li> <li>○ Budget</li> <li>○ Team</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recruitment and Retention</b></p>

# BELLEVUE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Group 1	Group 2	Initiative Link
N/A	<b>Health and Wellness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Funding</li> <li>○ Staff/personnel</li> <li>○ Education</li> <li>○ CBA/bargaining</li> <li>○ Insurance restrictions</li> <li>○ Peer support expansions</li> <li>○ Policy and procedures gaps</li> <li>○ Inclusive</li> </ul>	<b>Health and Wellness</b>
<b>Staffing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Onboarding</li> <li>○ Recruitment</li> <li>○ Diversity</li> <li>○ Retention</li> <li>○ Succession</li> <li>○ Expansion</li> <li>○ Attrition</li> <li>○ Zoning/demographics</li> <li>○ Cost of living/affordability</li> </ul> <b>Workload</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Call volume</li> <li>○ Types of calls</li> <li>○ Plans review</li> <li>○ Inspections</li> <li>○ Data capture</li> <li>○ Public relations/special events</li> <li>○ Funding</li> </ul>	<b>Staffing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Competitive</li> <li>○ Diversity</li> <li>○ Training</li> <li>○ Onboarding</li> <li>○ Workload</li> <li>○ Funding</li> <li>○ Slow hiring process</li> <li>○ Human relations (HR)</li> </ul> <b>Workload</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Staffing</li> <li>○ Retention</li> <li>○ Prioritization</li> <li>○ Expectation</li> <li>○ Training</li> <li>○ Expectation</li> <li>○ Resistance to change.</li> <li>○ Silos</li> <li>○ Regulations</li> <li>○ Funding</li> </ul>	<b>Staffing</b>
<b>Aging Facilities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Funding</li> <li>○ Staff relocation</li> <li>○ Zoning</li> </ul>	<b>Technology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Integration-lack of long-term plan</li> <li>○ Training and education process</li> <li>○ Funding</li> <li>○ Overlapping technology</li> <li>○ Too many programs</li> <li>○ Collaboration</li> <li>○ Resistance to change</li> </ul>	<b>Technology</b>

## Strategic Initiatives

Based on all previously captured information and determining critical issues and service gaps, the following strategic initiatives were identified as the foundation for developing goals and objectives.

**Succession Planning**

**Health and Wellness**

**Training**

**Staffing**

**Recruitment and Retention**

**Technology**