



WILLISTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

2025-2030

STRATEGIC PLAN



Facilitated by



Center for
Public Safety
Excellence

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

This community-driven strategic plan was developed in March 2025, 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

Jason Adams	Josh Estey	Steven Lutton	Eric Shepard
Todd Ambroz	Shirley Goodell-Lackey	Terence Macaig	James Unsworth
Holly Amin	Sara Howe	Greg Marino	Erik Wells
Kiersten Aston	Michael Hughes	Nick Perkov	Onan Whitcomb
Joseph Bernard	Jennifer Jones	Bruce Roy	Daniel Wolfson
Cathy Braxton	Mindy Kilburn	Eric Santos	Mike Yandow
Carol Burbank			

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

Agency Stakeholders

David Auriemma	Ryan Hill	Vincent Moeykens	Anthony Simanskas
Keith Baker	Tyler Kardashian	John Ouellette	Trevor Tessier
Aaron Collette	Nathan Libby	Ryan Prouty	Joe Valentine
Dylan Garside	Eric Martens	Gerald Russin	James Wells
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Message from the Fire Chief

Since my appointment in 2020, I have recognized the need for a comprehensive, community-driven strategic plan for our department. Every day, I witness our dedicated firefighters and fire officers providing high-quality, professional services to our community. While we assumed we understood the public's expectations, we had never formally reached out to gather their insights. To develop this plan, we actively engaged a broad cross-section of community members to ensure their input was included.



Equally important is understanding what our firefighters and fire officers want from their department. Over the course of three days, CPSE facilitators challenged our team to reflect on the Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (SOAR) of our department. Members from all ranks and tenures participated, speaking openly and sincerely as they navigated this process.

As Henry Gantt wisely said, "We cannot drive people; we must direct their development." Our data reveals a challenge with retaining both career and call staff. By engaging with our internal stakeholders, we aim to gain a deeper understanding of the organizational challenges affecting our ability to retain and develop our team. This process has provided valuable insights into the factors and emotions of our emergency service professionals.

I extend my gratitude to Town Manager Erik Wells and the Williston Selectboard for their support and funding, which made this plan possible. Our town leadership recognizes the importance of this strategic plan as we continue to evolve the department into one of the most respected fire and EMS teams in the state.

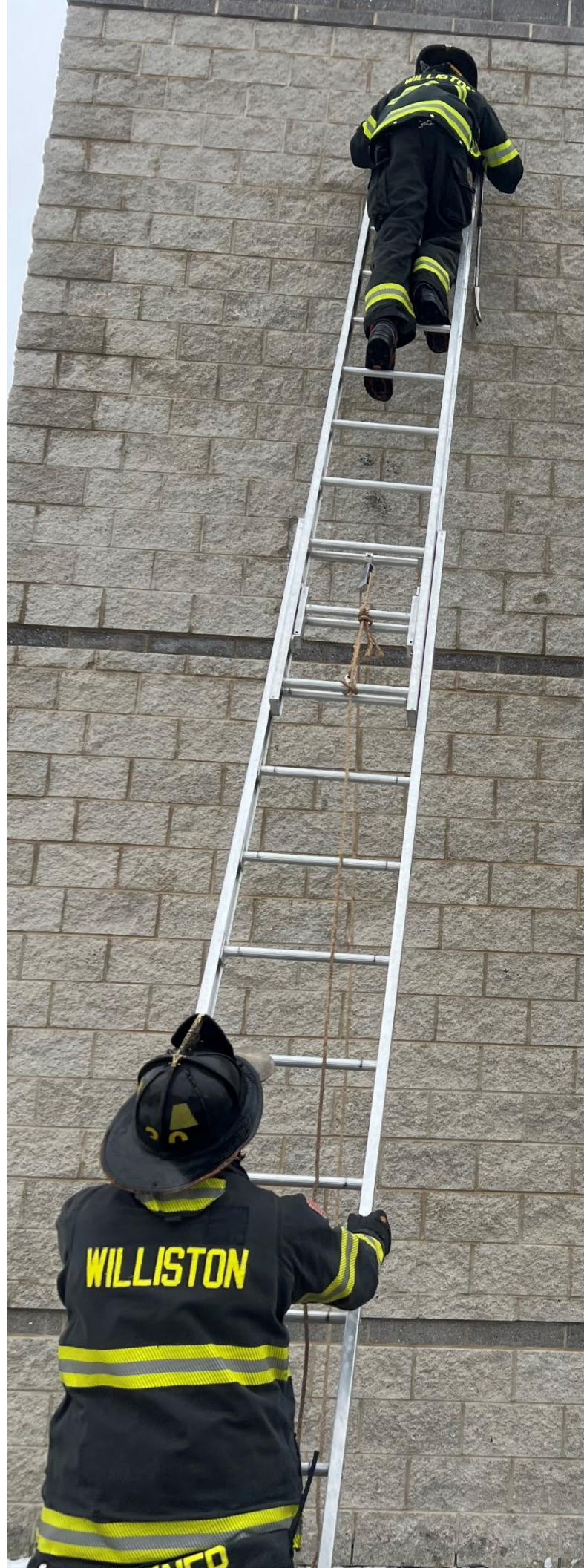
In closing, I want to personally thank the dedicated members of the Williston Fire Department. Each day, they rise to the occasion and fulfill their duties with unwavering commitment. Even at a time when many were working extra hours, our team embraced the planning process, engaging in long, thought-provoking discussions to help shape this plan.

As Fitzhugh Dodson once said, "Without goals, and plans to reach them, you are like a ship that has set sail with no destination." With the publication of this plan and its implementation guide, I am confident that the Williston Fire Department is on the path to a rewarding destination.

Aaron J. Collette, EFO, CFO
Fire Chief

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Introduction

The community serviced by the Williston Fire Department (WFD) receives high levels of professionalism and efficiency from the agency's proactive approach to risk reduction and emergency mitigation. As such, the WFD contracted with the Center for Public Safety Excellence® (CPSE®) to facilitate a community-driven strategic plan. The process utilized by 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.

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 WFD 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 Williston 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 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 Williston 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 WFD 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 Stakeholder Work Session Participants

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 can be provided in the future.
- ✓ Revisit the values of the agency's membership.
- ✓ Determine 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

Before establishing its fire department, Williston depended on nearby departments for fire protection. Following a serious fire at Williston Academy, Howard Lunderville and Roland Osborne sought to create a local fire department. Initially declined by the Selectboard in early 1949, they persisted and were accepted in August of that year, co-founding the Williston Volunteer Fire Department. They acquired a 1930 Maxim pumper truck for the department.



Charter members included Adrian Fortier, Preston Charland, Ernest Gaudette, Eugene Hanson, Edward Roberts, and Oscar Staple. Howard Lunderville served as the first fire chief for 45 years, with Roland Osborne as assistant fire chief.

The department had about 12-15 members in its first year and responded to five calls. Over the years, membership increased, primarily consisting of local farmers who could respond during the day. In 2003, the department added its first full-time firefighter/EMT. In 2006, three additional career staff were added while the construction of a new station was taking place. In 2010, the career staff expanded with two additional firefighter/EMTs and also was the launch of the department providing a transport ambulance service. In 2022, as a result of a comprehensive staffing study, the department increased its career staff by nine, for a total of 24 career members. Today, the department answers

over 2,500 emergency calls. Many families, including the Bessettes and Lundervilles, have contributed decades of service. Recruiting and retaining members remains challenging, but the impact of all who have served is deeply appreciated.

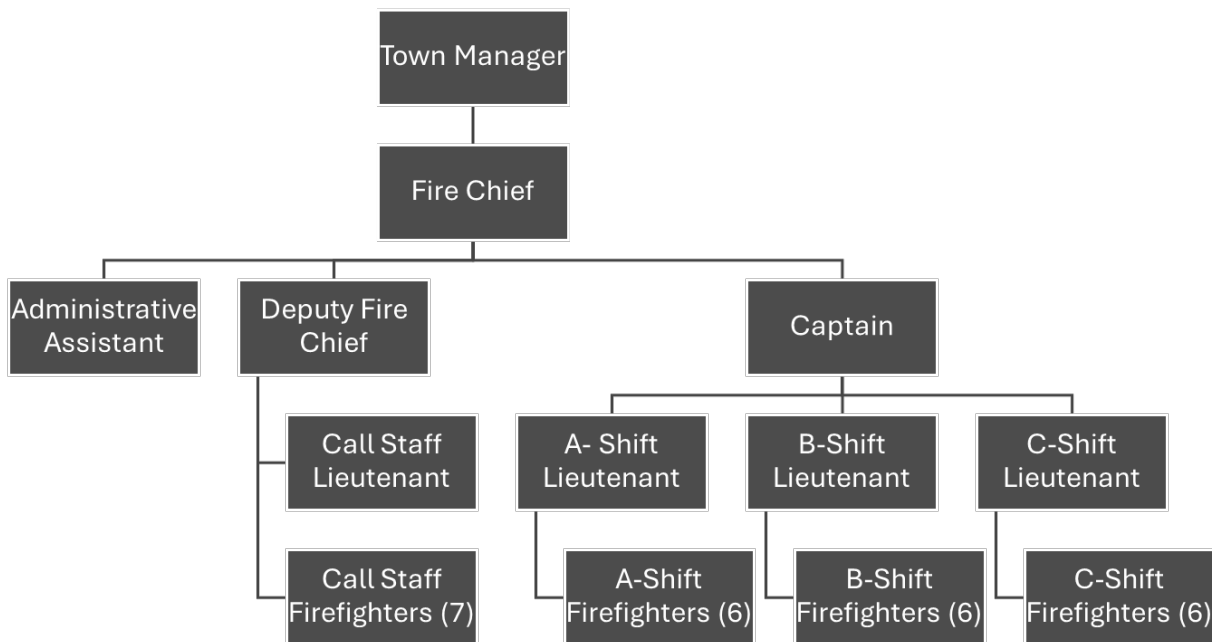


Today, the Williston Fire Department serves just over 10,000 residents from a single station and provides advanced life support (ALS) transport. Its fleet includes two engines, three ambulances, one ladder truck, one tanker truck, a utility truck, and an off-road utility vehicle. The department has twenty-four full-time members and eight on-call volunteers.



Agency Stakeholder Work Session Participants

Organizational Chart



Mission

The mission provides an internal aspect of the existence of an organization and, to a degree, empowering consideration for all WFD 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 and revise the existing mission. After ensuring it answered the questions, the following mission statement was created, discussed, and accepted by the entire group:

The Williston Fire Department is dedicated to providing continuous and reliable service as ambassadors of humanity. We are committed to protecting life and property through an all-hazards approach, enhancing the quality of life for those we serve. Through continuous improvement, we strive to enhance our skills, service, and operations to meet the evolving needs of our diverse community, all while upholding the highest standards of professionalism.

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. A workgroup met to formally establish and document values agreed upon by the entire group. As the mission and values are the foundation of this agency, every effort will be made to keep these current and meaningful to guide the Williston Fire Department in accomplishing its goals, objectives, and day-to-day tasks.

Respect

We treat everyone with dignity, fostering an environment of inclusion, understanding, and collaboration both within our **department** and with the people we serve.

Compassion

We approach each emergency with care and empathy, recognizing the emotional and physical impact of those affected.

Courage

We face challenges and risks to protect lives, property, and the environment, understanding the critical role we play in the safety of the community.

Innovation

We are open to new ideas and technologies, constantly evolving to meet the ever-changing needs of the community and department.

Integrity

We act with honesty and accountability, ensuring the trust given by the Town of Williston and its citizens.

Teamwork

Successful operations depend on seamless coordination and collaboration. A strong sense of teamwork ensures all personnel work together toward a common goal, respecting each other's roles and responsibilities.

Excellence

We aim for the highest standards in our performance, training, and service, always striving to exceed expectations.

Vision

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

The Williston Fire Department will be a leader in emergency services, known for its excellence, professional growth, and member well-being. We are committed to achieving effective staffing levels while becoming a destination department that attracts and retains the highest caliber professionals. We will foster a culture that prioritizes our firefighters' health, wellness, and work-life balance while providing professional development opportunities that ensure our team remains highly trained and prepared. Through strategic resource management and innovative approaches, we will increase our operational reliability and capabilities to meet the growing demands of our community.



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 WFD must now make these 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 the separate **Management and Implementation Guide**.



Develop and sustain meaningful community connections through strategic outreach and educational initiatives to enhance public safety and build relationships to strengthen the fire department's role as a valued community resource.



Improve the existing level of services provided to the community to better serve our ever-changing environment and community growth.



Improve staffing, retention, and work-life balance at the Williston Fire Department by implementing a new work and staffing model, which enhances hiring, retention, and employee health.



Build a comprehensive program addressing health and wellness concerns to improve firefighter short, and long-term well-being.

Conclusion

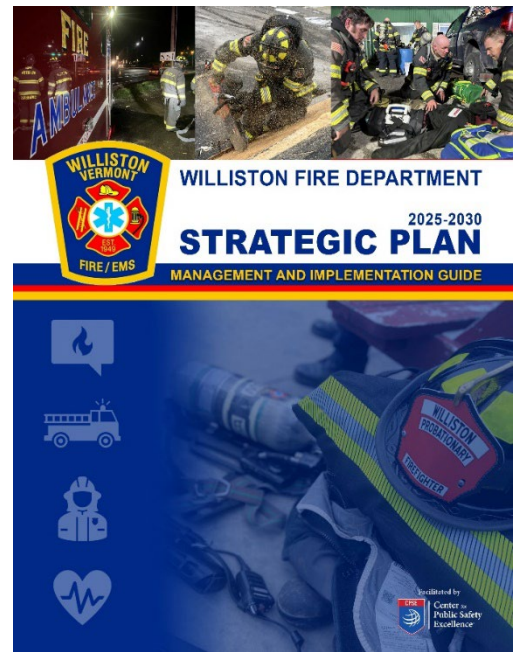
Working with community and department members from all levels, this strategic plan was developed...but the work is truly just beginning. Agency stakeholders must now execute and institutionalize the plan to ensure the community's expectations, and the Williston Fire Department's vision remains congruent.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

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

"...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

the Williston Fire Department navigate that change and future. 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.

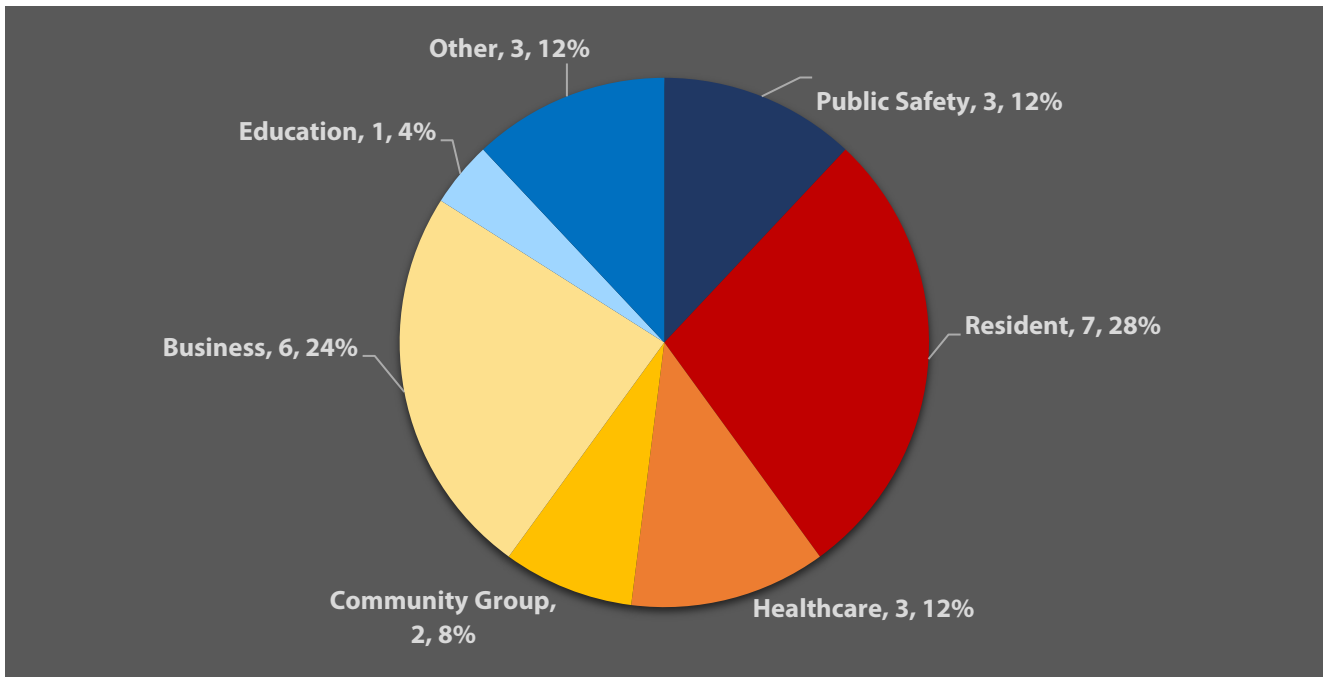


Appendices

A. Community Stakeholder Findings

The Williston 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 WFD. Expectations and concerns were then analyzed for themes and weighed. The numbers in the parentheses are the cumulative weighted values 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 Williston Fire Department (in priority order)

1. Response, being able to arrive on site in time for any situation. Prompt response for all emergencies as well as non-emergencies. The department comes with the necessary people and equipment when the call comes to them. Fast response time. When called for service, expect a response within a reasonable time. Rapid response for service. Response time, professional experience, and education to the public. To promptly respond to emergency calls. Accessibility 24/7. Respond in a quick and timely manner. Quick response time for fire and EMS. Prompt response. Reasonable response times. Rapid and reliable response. Timely arrival. First response in a timely manner. Reliable, timely service in a financially responsible way. (77)
2. Having proper training and continuous improvement. That the staff is fully trained. Highly skilled firefighters. Expect professional, knowledgeable, and courteous staff. The widest range of skills possible for any/all scenarios. Readiness. Readiness, skills, and equipment. Expertise. Be well-trained and proficient at their job. Ongoing training. Knowledgeable staff to prioritize the care of the scene. Year-round training. Professionally trained staff. (39)
3. Good community engagement. Community interaction. To facilitate community engagement to ensure residents and property owners understand their responsibility. Community engagement and cares for maintaining positive relationships. Collaborate with local schools and provide expertise, knowledge, and skills toward enhancing the safety of schools. Responsiveness not just being on call. Keep strong community ties. Community outreach, CPR training, blood drives, fire safety education in schools. (18)
4. The right equipment that is functional and capable of assisting the job. Functional apparatus that exceeds industry standards. Fire truck upkeep inspected. Proper equipment to do their job. Proactive training and drop-ins for healthcare staff to assist with their understanding of expectations on their part. (15)
5. Highest level of medical care possible in the field. Paramedic response capability. Paramedic level of service for medical calls. (11)
6. Staff to provide services at an appropriate level. Proper staffing for community needs. Adequate staffing for fire and EMS. (11)
7. Prioritize staff health, wellness, and safety on the emergency scene. Safety of themselves and the community during emergency response. Staff are well rested and ready to do their job. (11)
8. Properly funded. Balance capabilities with the community's ability to pay. (6)
9. If they are on a call at a senior housing, please walk around the building to see if someone is on the back porch and needs help. Understanding appropriate and effective communication and de-escalation procedures to use with special needs populations (persons living with dementia in local assisted living). (6)
10. That they are well-versed in the properties in their town. Knowledge of the community and how best to respond. Understanding of local healthcare environment (internal and external layout). (3)
11. Empathy and kindness to all. Follow up on best practices for fire and EMS. (2)
12. To engage with town planners regarding municipal growth. Adaptive to changing community needs. (2)
13. Provide community education on fire prevention, CPR, or related topics and services like car seat inspection. (1)
14. Ability to handle multiple incidents within the town. (1)
15. Provide service to other communities, mutual aid. (1)

16. Knowledge of how to respond in all situations. Assessing each situation, as they are all different. (4)
17. Safety towards themselves and others. (5)

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

1. Fully staffed and trained properly. Staffing. That the current staff is over-stressed and not 100%. Amount of turnover. Maintaining staffing in a challenging employment environment and meeting work demands with the current work schedule. Difficulty hiring. Having difficulty keeping current staff, the employee moves to another FD for better pay and benefits. Can we compete for top talent or build effective talent versus buying high-cost talent? Staffing issues. Retention of staff. Wages: are we below comparable departments in the area? Adequate staffing to allow the fire department to meet NFPA recommendations. Regular staff turnover: why is WFD not a destination department? Retention. Quality hiring versus quantity. Retention of well-trained staff. How could the response to an emergency change if it is short-staffed? Ability to find recruits. Turnover of staff. Ability to hire replacements. Lack of on-call staff. Recruitment and retention. (91)
2. Ensuring the right budget is available to accomplish the mission. Are they properly funded? Sustainability of assets regarding ever-increasing costs. The current fiscal environment and economic pressures of the state will cause the department to make compromises in service. Increasing costs and the need for more staffing and specialized equipment will continue to place a greater burden on the taxpayer. Monetary support from town and community. Budget. Lack of \$ to train and equip (property taxes are out of control). Not being financially responsible. (37)
3. How they keep up with growth in Williston. How they adapt to the new zoning bylaws, which will lead to more growth that is more dense and taller. Can WFD keep up with the needs of a growing community? The inspection process for new residential units may end up causing delays in occupancy as growth increases. That growth in the community, especially commercial, outpaces their ability to serve the community. Ability to maintain service level with town growth. (20)
4. Are medical calls keeping the staff so busy that fire calls are delayed or need other departments to help? Work hours would provide a different schedule for more work/life balance and a more positive work environment. Increased demand for mutual aid is given. Resources are being depleted from numerous and repetitive drug-related calls. Overworking current staff. Mass casualty response. (16)
5. Ensuring they continue to grow, receive more educational possibilities for promotion or special skill development. Ensure training is up to date. Highest level of training (well documented). Lack of facility knowledge. Career opportunities for members. (15)
6. Inability to handle multiple incidents at the same time. Being pulled to a different district on a call, but then a new call in Williston occurs. Are there enough of you and equipment to go around? (8)
7. Helping seniors get out of the housing unit. Have a meeting in the senior housing to introduce the firefighters to the people living there. (8)
8. Community involvement, partnering with the community. The schools and the fire department could partner more effectively to engage students and families in fire and personal safety. Having the best equipment to do their job with a limited budget. Communication. (6)
9. Agriculture response. Access to rural areas. (6)

10. Newest tech. Is the equipment up to today's standards? Future facility capacity, radio comms infrastructure, and CAD for dispatch. (5)
11. Are we meeting community needs? (3)
12. A preventive approach at all times for ages and citizens. (1)
13. Honesty, integrity, and respect. (1)

Positive Community Comments about the Williston Fire Department (verbatim, in no order)

- All are well trained and provide service.
- Very friendly and community-oriented.
- Fire and EMS equipment are in good shape and on a replacement schedule.
- Great leadership.
- Dedication.
- Informing the community.
- Invite the community to visit the fire station when they move into Williston.
- Visit schools and work to meet the children in the community.
- Have a special get-together in the spring to make sure kids have helmets for school.
- Response time.
- Patience and communication with folks having medical concerns.
- Willingness to involve and educate the community.
- Great response time on arrival at our facility.
- Response time.
- Leadership (chief).
- Commitment to serving the community.
- They have a fairly new ambulance service, and it is highly successful.
- Come to tour our farm and talk with us.
- Excellent leadership.
- Professional, great team.
- Open to change and improvement.
- Professional, friendly, and reachable.
- Always a prompt response.
- We are always involved and made to understand what is going on.
- Knowledge of what needs to be done (training).
- Execution- able to load up with what is needed and arrive promptly.
- They have great community engagement.
- Firefighters/EMTs and staff are always friendly and approachable.
- They have the forethought to plan ahead!

- Their high-quality service, professionalism, and commitment to this field.
- They have a beautiful facility that is well-maintained and appreciated by staff.
- The department works well with neighboring departments and mutual aid. You need to let the public know.
- Low response times.
- Well equipped.
- Very professional.
- Try to be an active participant in the community, a “two-way street” that helps with public safety.
- The department and staff are really professional.
- Training commitment.
- Paramedicine program.
- Our people are committed to the job.
- Have served the Williston Fire Department. Very good overall service culture.
- Good experience resolving an assist with my grandchild stuck. Very professional, compassionate, and respectful.
- Personal experience with Tim Gerry and Prescott Nadean. Both have earned my respect.
- They have a great reputation in the community.
- They are always approachable.
- They seem to maintain their equipment and vehicles.
- They have always responded promptly to fire alarms in our commercial portfolio.
- They have worked with us to understand our role and responsibilities regarding our properties.
- Always available, and never have we needed the Williston Fire Department and not have them show up with protection and expertise.
- Accessibility, especially administratively. Chief Collette and Deputy Chief Gerry have always made resources available.
- Reputation.
- Commitment to quality.
- Leadership within the organization.
- Excellent community service.
- Nicest firehouse in the state and newer apparatus.
- Progressive fire chief.
- Positive visibility in the community. Housing community events and open houses.
- Faithful partners on the school safety committee. Willing and gracious partners in school safety, drills, improvement, etc.
- Social media is used to inform the community about the department’s activities, events, and emergencies, enhancing trust and engagement.
- Dedication to serving the community.
- Responsive.
- Educated and willing to educate others.

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

- I would like hands-on, expert opinions on fire safety within a long-term care building, physical hazards, and a review of potential hazards of patient evacuation.
- We are lucky to have full-time firefighters and EMS. Thanks!!
- Awesome communication on-site during a call at one of the company's facilities.
- I can't imagine the increase in calls for low-income housing and senior housing calls. In Burlington, I have seen an increase in problems caused by homelessness. I have found it very helpful when the fire department sends a two-person team in a pickup truck to help assess the situation. The response time is much quicker, and you don't feel like you're wasting the time of a fire truck. A unit/vehicle like that would be a good idea for Williston, mainly for low-income and senior housing buildings.
- I think the Williston Fire Department does a great job with community engagement. Still, as the town grows and evolves, people's expectations become more unreasonable, and common sense gets thrown out the window. I think community engagement and education need to increase to combat people's changing expectations and ability to problem-solve.
- How do you share all the positive outcomes with those without Facebook or other modern information technology and applications?
- Town employee with a knowledge of operations.
- As always, the efforts are much appreciated. It's a tough job!
- Push for more regional capabilities where possible, for example, technical rescue and fire investigations.
- I am grateful for the department Williston has.

Things the Community Feels the Williston Fire Department Should Change

(verbatim, in priority order)

1. Ability to provide a second ambulance service.
2. Increase recruitment.
3. Ensure they arrive timely or get more people to help or volunteer with the department.
4. Add a high school mentorship and internship program.
5. There is always room for more training for special needs individuals.
6. Priority dispatch.
7. Better communication with Williston, such as a monthly local paper report.
8. Bring back the pancake breakfast.
9. Accept more offers for training in our operation.
10. Consider adding a small response unit for senior housing calls.
11. Update its website with weekly, daily, and monthly happenings and photos of all staff.
12. Proactive home safety screening visits.
13. More open houses and interaction with the public.
14. Modernize the staffing model to better support and enhance the role of part-time staff.
15. Reliance on on-call staff (voluntary).

Things the Community Feels the Williston Fire Department Should NOT Change

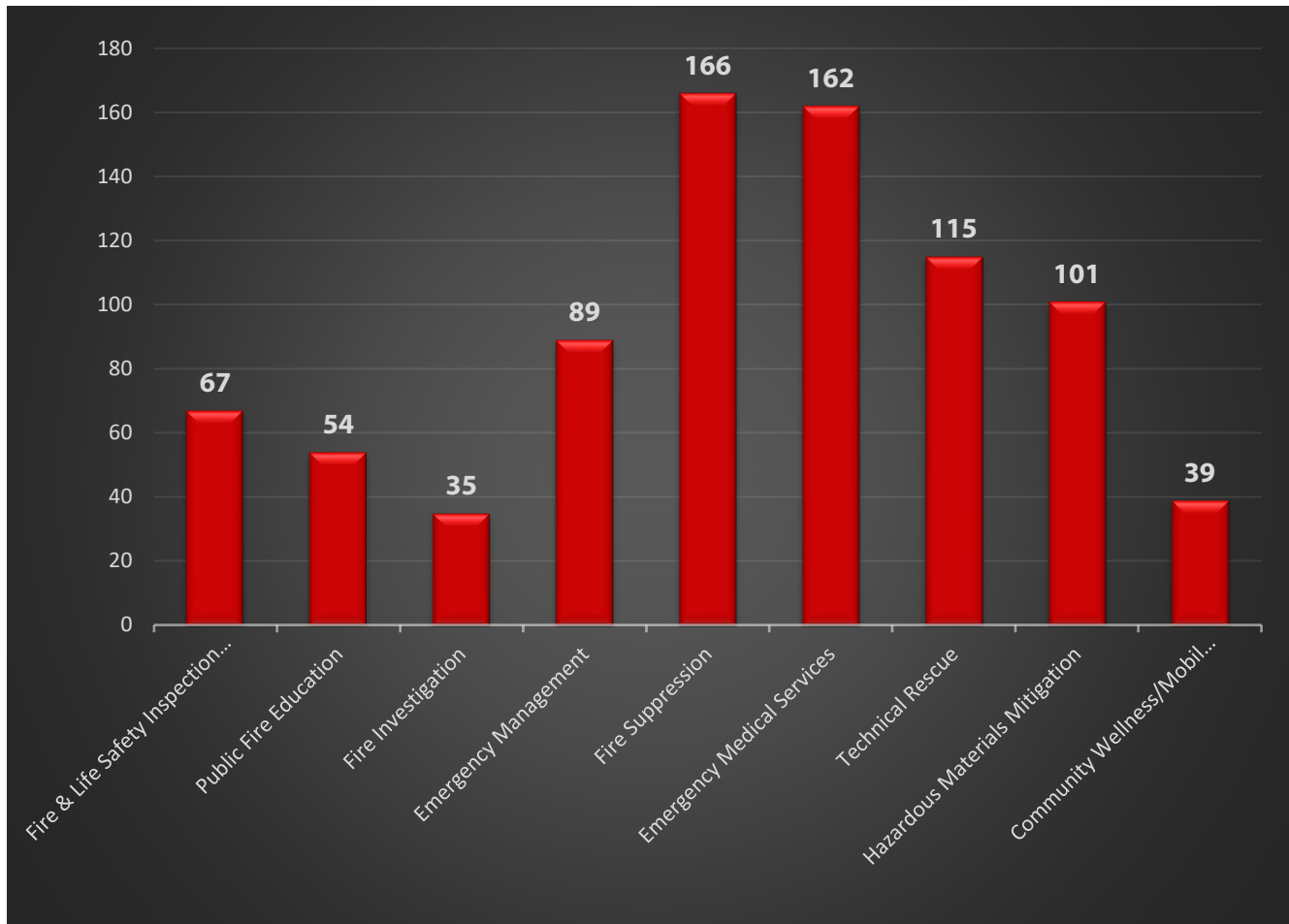
(verbatim, in priority order)

1. Friendly, competent staff.
2. Their dedication to doing their best.
3. Dedication to community involvement.
4. The ability for rapid response.
5. Commitment.
6. Professionalism and dedication to Williston.
7. Fire safety education in schools.
8. The way they work together with Casella on every call and use all resources, theirs and ours.
9. Do not reduce community engagement; we need it now more than ever.
10. Full-time staff with 24-hour coverage.
11. Full-time staff.
12. Equipment replacement schedule.
13. Focus on keeping equipment current.
14. How the leadership is constantly looking to improve.
15. Staffing model, having full-time 24-hour coverage.
16. Community focus.
17. Providing paramedicine and EMS transport.

18. Positive visibility in the community. Community engagement, such as open houses and partnerships with schools.
19. Responsiveness.

Community-Prioritized Programs

Understanding how the community prioritizes the agency's programs and services allows the Williston 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 WFD. The results were as follows:



B. Agency Stakeholder Work

A group of agency stakeholders representing the various segments of the WFD 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 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

Community involvement through outreach and prevention.	Full-time staff (24-hour staff) availability compared to other departments.
Crew resource management.	Response times and staff competency.
Equipment upkeep.	Pediatrics.
Reputation!	Caring for one another, a family.
Support for advancing certs (AEMT/NRP, fire instructor with staffing).	Training opportunities; continuing education (proactive and progressive).
Emergency medical services competency.	Mutual aid and respect from partners.
Crew cohesiveness.	Shift and inter-shift dynamics.
Knowledge of district.	Doing more with fewer people.
Career staff are self-motivated.	Willingness to train call staff when requested.
CRM with career and call staff.	Employees are dedicated to showing up to work.
Operations with police.	Compassion and patience with the public.
Hot wash and check-ins.	Sanitation of latrines.
Firefighting competency.	Adaptability.
Public trust and perception.	Department history.
The fire chief.	A welcoming firehouse.
Wicked good records management.	Good patient communication.
The community cares about the fire department.	Diverse technical rescue abilities.
A good suppression package.	Capital budget.
Intercepts.	

Opportunities

Training opportunities.	Recruiter position.
Change in shift schedule, fourth shift.	Mentorship program.
Technical rescue training.	Paramedic training.
Community engagement.	Updated dispatch.
Staffing-retention/increased staffing.	Public facing data dashboard.
Pancake breakfast.	Promotional.
Community paramedicine.	Monthly observer article.
Public information officer.	Training official.
Inspection program.	Health inspections.
Call staff shift schedule.	Promoting personal expertise.
Competitive salaries for call and career employees.	Increased administrative staff.
Updated station alerting system to improve health and wellness (e.g., BRYX system and ramp-up tones).	Facility improvements include kitchen updates, HVAC improvement, and a bed replacement plan.
A second station to reduce response times.	Williston Fire Training Academy.
Increased emergency medical services training.	Pay for a paramedic educator and college.
Encourage cooperation between the town and the fire department.	Growth benchmarks/triggers (call volume increases staffing).
Phase out call staff and transition per diem union staff.	Fix priority and more significant issues first!
The captains' positions are important.	Increase in-house instructors.
Fire education and outreach (public, schools, and seniors).	Increase pay to promote retention and recruitment.
Promote health and wellness among members.	Shift commander position, battalion chief.
Healthcare after retirement.	Staff second ambulance.
Staff ladder 4	More data analysis to identify needs.
Continuous and robust data program.	Impact fees to offset the fire department.
Regionalization of dispatch and services.	More compensation.
Electronic timecards.	

Aspirations

High-quality firefighters and medical care.	High morale and energetic staff.
Adequate staffing to handle town call volume.	Better work/life balance (schedule change).
More community engagement (open houses and pancakes).	Aspire to be a destination department with a 24/72 schedule, competitive competition, training opportunities, and unique capabilities.
Prioritize training.	Confidence in training.
Aspire to be a healthier department (longevity).	Special teams training, rope rescue, ice water rescue, and TECC.
Priorities align with the training and capabilities needed to be effective in emergencies.	Standard of training with benchmarks.
Recognition that we are the second busiest fire station in the county and researched; operate appropriately.	More regular scheduled training.
Expectations for call staff.	Retain staffing.
Recruit high-quality applicants.	Convert high-quality call staff to career staff.
A training schedule that brings in the most participation.	Maintain proficiency in our skills.
Not be a stepping stone.	Second station.
Increase staffing.	Paramedic fly vehicles.
DROP program, retirement-Vermont's Municipal Employees Retirement System.	Promotional increases that are representative of responsibilities.
Safe staffing.	Professional growth.
PFAS free gear.	Yearly cancer screenings.
Formal training location.	Heavy rescue apparatus.
Bring your pet to work.	Childcare opportunities.
Department outings (Red Sox, paintball, bowling).	Internal succession planning.
Compensation to be able to live here.	Retirement healthcare.
Longevity pay.	Improve relationships of stakeholders.
Impact fees that support public safety.	Research levy funds.
Bring pride back and improve morale.	Call staff to attend the recruitment academy.
HAS versus HRA	Priority dispatch.
Chauffeurs position.	

Results

Group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce accidental fire and injury reduction. - Able to provide full-time resources for emergencies. - Management of increased call volume. - Maintain or improve response times. - Maximize the longevity of equipment and the town's investments. - Well-rounded employees. - Continuing to improve reliability, fostering support from the town and the community. - Morale. - Staffed apparatus. - Increased funding for staffing, training, and equipment. - \$1.25 per 1,000 in assessed property value to the fire department. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff want to come to work and stay. - Increase and maintain fire department capabilities for the community. - Reliable supplemental staff. - Work-life balance (schedule), pay, staffing, and retirement improve. - Improves span of control and promotional opportunities. - Listen! Not focusing on money equals better communication. - Improve overall health, mental stability, and longevity. - Better retention and recruitment to attract talent. - Improves health and morale in the workplace and retirement.
Group 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More competent trained staff. - Larger applicant pool and more qualified staff. - Work-life balance and less burnout. - The ability to respond as an all-hazards department. - Raising the standard of care. - Political capital. - A safer and more informed community. - Professional, accredited dispatch center. - Increased morale and retained experience. - Demonstrates the need for the fire department. - Voter involvement. - Career growth. - Reduce transport and patient outcomes. - A more informed public. - Consistent training. - Increased building familiarization. - Legitimate authority for health and safety enforcement. - Flexibility for call staff participation. - Ownership. - Retention. - Better division of labor, increased compliance. - Decreased response times. - Increase unit reliability. - Continuous level of top-notch training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retention, longevity, and more opportunity. - Safer and additional promotional opportunities. - Less burnout. - Multiple apparatus. - Increase employee development. - Healthier. - Early detection. - Revenue and increased training opportunities. - Reduce apparatus size. - Employee retention and a welcoming workplace. - Increase morale. - Proactive development of staff. - Recruitment, ability to live here (callbacks). - Allows members to be secure in employment. - Retaining employees. - Better work environment. - Increased call staff competency. - Working toward national standards to improve responder safety. - Reduced response times. - Funding model, increased recruitment. - Increase to consistent paramedicine service. - Ability to do EMS certifications and fire certifications. - Reduced administrative workload.

Group 3

- Less turnover.
- Training at a higher level.
- Reduction in call turnover to mutual aid.
- Less reliance on special teams (CTR, USAR, Vermont Hazmat).
- An increase in qualified applicants.
- Reduction in medical errors/fire ground errors.
- Increased staffing, compensation, and satisfaction.
- More time with family.
- More people meet internal and external job standards and qualifications (i.e., ladder operator, TECC, pump operator).
- More paramedics on shift.
- Reduction of the 56-hour work week (24/72).
- No more paper timesheets.
- Fewer workplace injuries and illnesses.
- Increased percentage of call staff that become WFD career staff.
- An increased number of personnel on calls.

Programs and Services

It is imperative that agency stakeholders distinguish between the core deliverables (programs and services) provided by the Williston 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, CPSE provided guidance and gained consensus understanding with the entire group so that the difference between the deliverables and the supporting functions were understood.

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 Williston 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
Stakeholder Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community and town relations ○ Mutual aid ○ Dispatch ○ Williston Police Department ○ Transparency 	Community Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pancake breakfast ○ Open houses ○ Injury prevention program ○ Marketing the department ○ Public-facing data ○ Interact with senior living facilities 	Stakeholder Engagement

Group 1	Group 2	Initiative Link
Service Delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Station location ○ Dispatch ○ Technology and communications ○ Community risk assessment/standards of cover ○ Staffing 	Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Paramedic training ○ Dispatch capabilities ○ Effective response force ○ Specialized training, i.e., technical rescue ○ Mobile integrated health 	Service Delivery
Human Capital <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recruitment and retention ○ Staffing ○ Training ○ Work-life balance 24/72 ○ Health and wellness ○ Schedule ○ Retirement 	Staffing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff burnout ○ Professional development ○ Work-life balance ○ Recruitment ○ Retention ○ Better pay, benefits, and schedule ○ Call staff improvements 	Staffing
N/A	Health and Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Living quarters shortfalls ○ Progressive dispatch tones ○ Cancer screenings ○ Lack of fitness program ○ PFA free gear ○ Current shift schedule ○ Worker compensation denials 	Health and Safety

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.

Stakeholder Engagement Service Delivery Staffing Health and Safety

Final goals with complete objectives, tasks, timelines, and assignments are included in the separate **Management and Implementation Guide**.

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2025-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN