



PALO ALTO Fire Department

2014-2018 STRATEGIC PLAN



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Introduction

Palo Alto Fire Department (herein also referred to as “PAFD”) provides fire suppression, emergency medical services, technical rescue, hazardous materials mitigation, fire prevention, public education, and disaster preparedness to approximately 26 square miles of Palo Alto, California. The PAFD is consistently working to achieve and/or maintain the highest level of professionalism and efficiency on behalf of those it serves, and thus contracted with the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) to facilitate a method to document the agency's path into the future via a “Community-Driven Strategic Plan.” The following strategic plan was written in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the CFAI *Fire & Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual* 8th Ed., and is intended to guide the organization within established parameters set forth by the authority having jurisdiction.

The CPSE utilized the Community–Driven Strategic Planning process to go beyond just the development of a document. It challenged the membership of the PAFD to critically examine paradigms, values, philosophies, beliefs and desires, and challenged individuals to work in the best interest of the “team.” Furthermore, it provided the membership with an opportunity to participate in the development of their organization’s long-term direction and focus. Members of the agency’s external and internal stakeholders’ groups performed an outstanding job in committing to this important project and remain committed to the document’s completion.

This strategic plan, with its foundation based in community and membership input, revisits the agency’s pillars (Mission, Values, and Vision) and sets forth a continuous improvement plan that offers a road map for justifiable and sustainable future.



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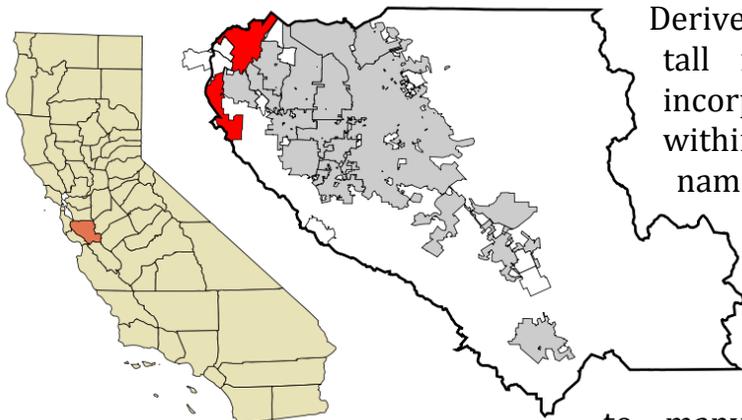
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Organizational Background



Derived from the Spanish *El Palo Alto* meaning tall redwood tree, Palo Alto was first incorporated in 1894 as a city. Many names within the community still bear the Spanish names, indicating the early settlement and culture that built the city. Prior to incorporation, Stanford University was founded in 1891, which has become a continuous landmark within Palo Alto. The city is also home to many technology corporations, such as Hewlett Packard, Xerox and Tesla Motors.



Figure 1 Palo Alto Fire Trucks Pictured in Front of Fire Station, circa 1933
(courtesy of www.archives.pahistory.org)

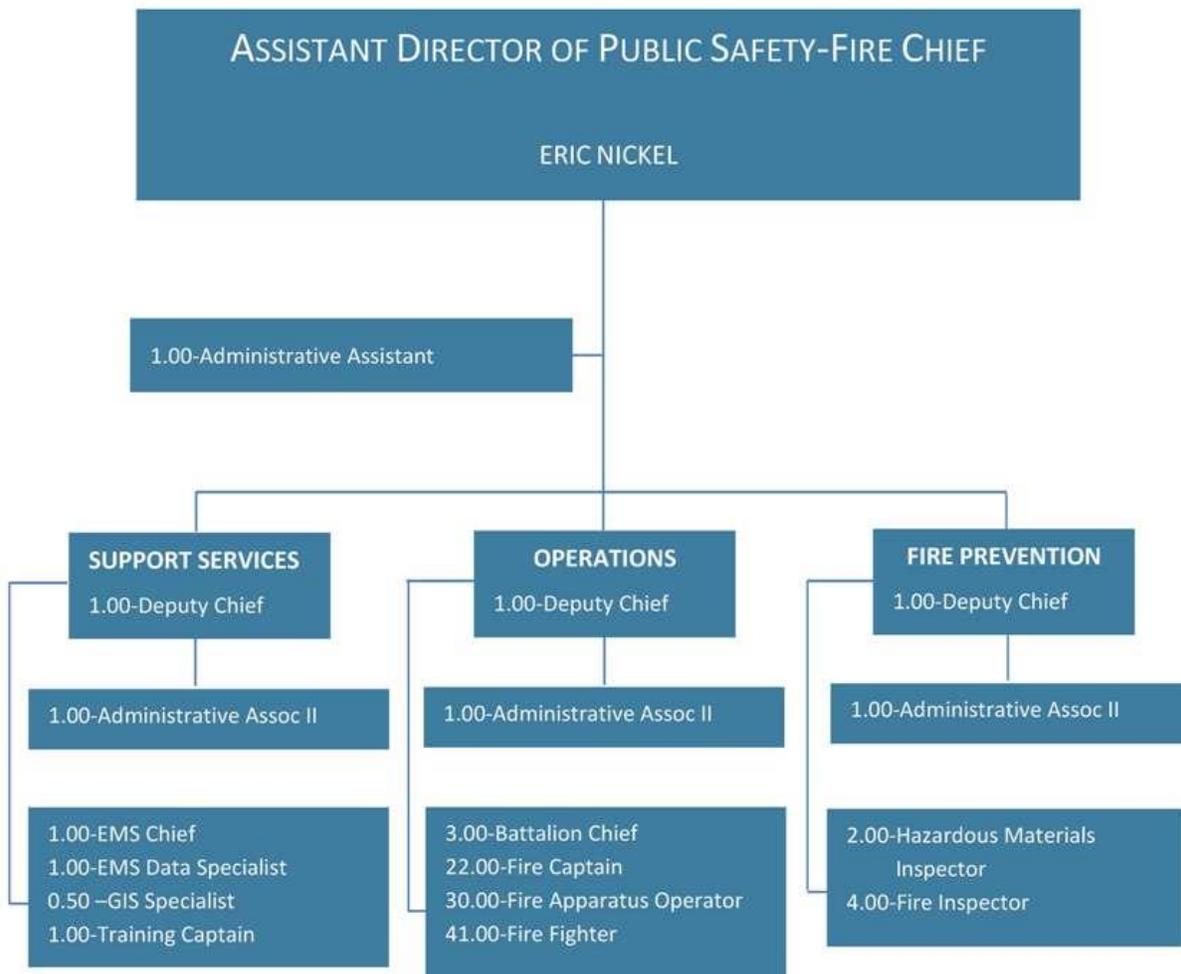
Today, Palo Alto is comprised of nearly 26 square miles with a population of approximately 65,000 with a council-manager type government. Located in the coastal region of Northern California, Palo Alto's climate consists of cool, wet winters and warm, dry summers.

The Palo Alto Fire Department has remained progressive. The department was the first to offer advanced life support (ALS) transport in Santa Clara County. Presently, PAFD is still the only fire department in the county that routinely transports patients to the hospital. Today, the department provides its emergency services with 115 personnel from 7 fire stations located strategically throughout the city.



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Organizational Structure



FY 2014 Position Totals
113.50 Full-time
5.03 Hourly

This organizational chart represents citywide Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) for this department. The Department Summary tables summarize FTEs by position allocation.



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Definition of a Community-Driven Strategic Plan

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

To ensure that community needs were incorporated, the Community-Driven Strategic Planning process was used to develop this strategic plan. Businesses employ this type of process to identify market trends, allowing the service provider to focus resources while reducing risk and wasted effort.

What is a Strategic Plan?

It is a living management tool that:

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

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

Peter F. Drucker,
Professor of Social Science
and Management

Effective strategic planning benefits from a consistent and cohesively structured process employed across all levels of the organization. Planning is a continuous process, one with no clear beginning and no clear end. While plans can be developed on a regular basis, it is the process of planning that is important, not the publication of the plan itself. The planning process should be flexible and dynamic, with new information from community members, like-providers, and life changes factored in appropriately.

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

Successful organizations, from government agencies to Fortune 500 companies, have recognized that attaining community focus is essential. Aware of this necessity, public safety agencies must strategically plan how they will deliver high-quality products and services to the public through better, more efficient, and less expensive programs.



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Once their strategic goals are established, agency leaders must establish performance measures, for which they are fully accountable, to assess and ensure that their departments and agencies are, indeed, delivering on the promises made in their strategic plans. Goodstein, Nolan, & Pfeiffer define strategic planning as

a continuous and systematic process

where the guiding members of an organization make decisions about its future,

develop the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future, and

determine how success is to be measured.¹

The U.S. Federal Consortium Benchmarking Study Team goes on to explain that to fully understand strategic planning, it is necessary to look at a few key words in the strategic planning definition:

- **continuous** refers to the view that strategic planning must be an ongoing process, not merely an event to produce a plan;
- **systematic** recognizes that strategic planning must be a structured and deliberate effort, not something that happens on its own;
- **process** recognizes that one of the benefits of strategic planning is to undertake thinking strategically about the future and how to get there, which is much more than production of a document (e.g., a strategic plan);
- **guiding members** identifies not only senior unit executives, but also employees. (It also considers stakeholders and customers who may not make these decisions, but who affect the decisions being made.);
- **procedures and operations** means the full spectrum of actions and activities from aligning the organization behind clear long-term goals to putting in place organizational and personal incentives, allocating resources, and developing the workforce to achieve the desired outcomes; and
- **how success is to be measured** recognizes that strategic planning must use appropriate measures to determine if the organization has achieved success.

Most importantly, strategic planning can be an opportunity to unify the management, employees, and stakeholders through a common understanding of where the organization is going, how everyone involved can work to that common purpose, and how progress and levels will measure success.

¹ Federal Benchmarking Consortium. (1997, February). *Serving the American Public: Best Practices in Customer-Driven Strategic Planning*



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Where Does the Community Fit into the Strategic Planning Process?

For many successful organizations, the voice of the community drives their operations and charts the course for their future. A "community-driven organization" is defined as one that

*maintains a focus on the needs and expectations, both spoken and unspoken,
of customers, both present and future,
in the creation and/or improvement of the product or service provided.²*

Again, it will be useful to use the U.S. Federal Consortium Benchmarking Study Team's definitions of the specific terms used in the above definition:

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

Performance Assessment

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

² Federal Benchmarking Consortium. (1997, February). *Serving the American Public: Best Practices in Customer-Driven Strategic Planning*



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The Community-Driven Strategic Planning Process Outline

The specific steps of the process are as follows:

1. Define the programs provided to the community.
2. Establish the community's service program priorities.
3. Establish the community's expectations of the organization.
4. Identify any concerns the community may have about the organization.
5. Identify the aspects of the organization that the community views positively.
6. Revise the Mission Statement, giving careful attention to the services and programs currently provided, and which logically can be provided in the future.
7. Revise the Values of the organization's membership.
8. Identify the Strengths of the organization.
9. Identify any Weaknesses of the organization.
10. Identify areas of Opportunity for the organization.
11. Identify potential Threats to the organization.
12. Identify the organization's critical issues.
13. Identify the organization's service gaps.
14. Determine strategic initiatives for organizational improvement.
15. Establish realistic goals and objectives for each initiative.
16. Identify implementation tasks for the accomplishment of each objective.
17. Determine the Vision of the future.
18. Develop organizational and community commitment to accomplishing the plan.



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Process and Acknowledgements

The Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) acknowledges Palo Alto Fire Department's external and internal stakeholders for their participation and input into the Community-Driven Strategic Planning Process. The CPSE also recognizes Fire Chief Eric Nickel for his leadership and commitment to this process.

Development of the PAFD's strategic plan took place in October 2013, during which time representatives from the CPSE and the PAFD held an open meeting where members of the public, or external stakeholders, were invited. Input received from the meeting revolved around community expectations, concerns, and other comments about the agency. The agency and the CPSE expresses a special 'thank you' to community members who contributed to the creation of this strategic plan, as it was truly a team effort. Those present at this meeting were as follows:

Table 1: Palo Alto Fire Department's External Stakeholders

<i>Kenneth Allen Adobe Meadow Neighborhood Association</i>	<i>Fred Balin College Terrace Residents</i>	<i>Daniel Bellville Menlo Park Fire Protection District</i>
<i>Brandon Bond OEM Stanford University Medical Center</i>	<i>Karen Bouvier XEROX PARC Stanford Industrial Park</i>	<i>Lynn Brown City of Mountain View Fire / Emergency Services</i>
<i>George Browning Charleston Gardens</i>	<i>Jessica deWit Palo Alto Housing Corp</i>	<i>Steve Emslie Palo Alto Rotary Club</i>
<i>Susan Fineberg</i>	<i>Frank Fraone Menlo Park Fire Protection District</i>	<i>Shelly Gillin Kara Grief Support</i>
<i>Annette Glanckopf Midtown Residents / Emergency Services Volunteers</i>	<i>John Goldman Premier Properties</i>	<i>Candice Gonzales Palo Alto Housing Corporation</i>
<i>Cynthia Greaves Palo Alto Medical Foundation</i>	<i>Kay Iida Stanford University</i>	<i>Iris Korol Korol Group</i>
<i>Lydia Kou Alain Pinel Realtors</i>	<i>Art Lieberman Barron Park Association</i>	<i>Janet Rimicci Stanford Hospital</i>
<i>Gennady Sheyner Palo Alto Weekly</i>	<i>Ron Smith Palo Alto Unified School District</i>	<i>Jan St. Peter</i>
<i>Eric Weiss, MD Stanford Hospital</i>	<i>Ryan Zollicoffer Menlo Park Fire Protection District</i>	<i>Jason Green The Daily News / San Jose Mercury News</i>



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Community Group Findings

A key element of the PAFD's organizational philosophy is having a high level of commitment to the community, as well as recognizing the importance of community satisfaction. Therefore, the agency asked representatives from their community to participate in a meeting which would focus on their needs and expectations of the agency. Discussion centered on the present service programs provided, and on priorities for the future.

Community Priorities

In order to dedicate time, energy, and resources on services most desired by its community, the PAFD needs to understand what the customers consider to be their priorities. The external stakeholders were asked to prioritize the programs offered by the agency through a process of direct comparison.

Table 2: Community Service Program Priorities of the Palo Alto Fire Department

PROGRAMS	RANKING	SCORE
Emergency Medical Services	1	153
Fire Suppression	2	139
Technical Rescue	3	111
Fire Prevention	4	87
Hazardous Materials Mitigation	5	86
Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response	6	55
Public Fire/EMS Safety Education	7	54
Fire Investigation	8	43





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Community Expectations

Understanding what the community expects of its fire and emergency services organization is critically important to developing a long-range perspective. With this knowledge, internal emphasis may need to be changed or bolstered to fulfill the community needs. In certain areas, education on the level of service that is already available may be all that is needed. Following are the expectations of the community's external stakeholders:

**Table 3: Community Expectations of the Palo Alto Fire Department
(Verbatim, in priority order)**

1. To respond in a timely manner and effectively put out fires. To respond to all emergencies in a timely manner.
2. Coordination with police and OES. Work with city departments.
3. Effective services = quality.
4. Adequate staffing and training to support the high-tech business community - both in prevention and response. Ongoing training.
5. Have proper equipment. Equipment readiness / including ALS/BLS capabilities.
6. Mitigation and prevention - public education. Education of community re: prevention and medical emergency.
7. Professional manner with interacting with the public. To represent the fire service in a professional and ethical manner.
8. Media accessibility - taking calls from reporters and providing timely information.
9. Private - Public partnership in preparedness and response.
10. Be there with right people and equipment with minimal delay for life/property emergencies.
11. Ensure that environment is safe for residents - safe structures (both residential and commercial) without hidden hazards from poor construction or hazardous materials near residential areas.
12. Professional competence of each individual within PAFD with specific regard to the tasks and responsibilities each is assigned.
13. To be a reliable and responsive neighboring fire agency to Menlo Park.
14. Clear communication of program / service commitments.
15. Outreach to public.
16. Community centered service attitude.
17. Residents value EMS service from the city rather than private for profits with poorer service. Keep this!
18. Cost efficient management and staffing operation.
19. Level of dedication to his or her position regardless of position or tenure.
20. How a citizen can best prepare to cope with a fire - day and night?
21. Perform primary functions.
22. Balanced review of industry requirements to allow business to succeed while protecting the community.





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23. Increase exercises community based on natural disasters. Better community interaction or management process for managing large-scale events.
24. Consideration given towards 12-hour shifts as opposed to 24-hour shifts with built in sleep time.
25. Early in process with fire prevention.
26. Continuity in department personnel.
27. Department have sufficient staff and equipment and voters will pay for this as priority over the hair-brained project other staff comes up with.
28. To review policies by planning department and other city agencies that will affect emergency response time.
29. Have fire stations and equipment located close to residential areas and able to respond quickly.
30. Ability to assist with other types of emergencies.
31. What "tools" e.g. garden hoses, smoke alarms, flashlights, etc. are most useful to a resident?
32. Identify and mitigate hazards.
33. Versatility and ability to assist individuals in non-fire related emergencies (i.e. - stuck in vehicle).
34. To provide additional emergency response resources to MPFPD as necessary to mitigate emergencies.
35. Have resources needed to help victims.
36. Push harder on fire protection ordinances.
37. Maintaining strong ties with the community which includes contract services. Always looking at ways to "do more with less."
38. Public health and safety is #1 priority of government.
39. Stand up to the City Council when it comes to protecting the community.
40. Tune the tradeoff between medical and fire team response that reflects current actual community response experience.
41. Openness to inquiries by the public and opportunities to meet local PAFD personnel as appropriate.
42. What information does the fire department or EMT need from the resident?
43. Expertise in handling hazardous materials spills and other potentially harmful situations that have low public visibility.
44. To consider partnering or collaborate on shared services, projects or programs when possible.
45. Consistent enforcement of regulations and clear communications of expectations.
46. Focus on school safety (fire and EMS) training to faculty.
47. Follow through on investigations into suspicious incidents.
48. Coordination of services for maximum efficiency i.e. working with regional resources where available.
49. To continue to be community ambassadors - setting a good example for service providers, which you do!
50. Use annual open house to communicate latest techniques, etc.





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- | |
|---|
| 51. A personal firewall between professional duties and those related to efforts to improve conditions via contract, work rules and other [undetermined] but not - on the job issues. |
| 52. A leadership role in emergency preparedness and prevention. |
| 53. Inclusion of the business community in development of policies and procedures. |
| 54. Updated stations. |
| 55. "Advanced pre-hospital care? - follow up care and determination of transport. |
| 56. Smart planning in order to leverage resources including Stanford, state, county, Federal, city and other available resources. |
| 57. Industrial pre-planning. |



Figure 2 External Stakeholders during a Work Session



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Areas of Community Concern

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

**Table 4: Areas of Community Concern about the Palo Alto Fire Department
(Verbatim, in no particular order)**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firefighters don't live here. They are not available for emergencies / disaster when at home in other communities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mood of voters is one of general distrust / dissatisfaction with city government. This does not bode well for potential upcoming bond measure for infrastructure needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate staffing levels should be maintained to balance safety needs <u>and</u> cost effectiveness. This should not be a matter determined by union politics. Council was correct to change policy governing this.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire department review of new projects seems to be a perfunctory rubber stamping function. Real analysis needs to consider safety of narrow substandard streets, high density and taller buildings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department / City is not prepared for tidal flooding if the bay levees are breached or overtopped. Huge section of town (east of Ross) from Menlo Park to Mountain View could be under 3-5 feet of water. This would take out the city service yard, the water treatment / supply plant and the electric feed PG&E plant.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That they will be defunded by the city to give less service.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "That our planning department will make roadways unsafe by reducing lanes (as proposed on Cal Ave and on Arastradero).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the PAFD will lose its voice, it should have a stronger voice for making sure the city roadways are accessible for fire trucks and emergency vehicles.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overly-sensitive to satisfying the demands and concerns of developers and companies that end up putting residents at risk.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate deployment of equipment and personnel in case of medical emergency - overdone sending fire truck as well as ambulance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization and access to hazardous material inventory statements at Fire Marshal's office and their use (as repository versus investigative tool).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not informing residents when issues of hazardous material safety may affect them.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Them vs. Us.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A department that can only give recommendation to the City council and Manager.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fire department should be independent in its analysis of the safety and environmental health of the city.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on cost savings and/or revenue generating functions at expense of other PAFD functions, if not unequivocally identified as being a higher priority in terms of public safety.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive movement of personnel away from fire suppression.





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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to stay on top of emergencies in a rapidly developing town with higher buildings, more workers per square foot in commercial space, increased traffic and congestion and budgetary constraints and priorities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to handle hazardous releases in an area of biotech, industrial use, chlorine.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of training for all demands it must meet.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it have funds to meet its mission statement?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it have city government support?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue public outreach after initial efforts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why does the PAFD deploy a full company when only a single EMT is sufficient? (See motorcycle suggestion.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are areas of Palo Alto where parking interferes with traffic. (e.g., Palo Alto Avenue in downtown north).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There appears to be a lack of communication and functional integration among police, fire, OES and CERT/Block Leaders and volunteers - ARES/RACES and Red Cross.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been losses of important information in databases, etc. when personnel have changed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department is undergoing a profound transformation because of the high volume of EMS calls, <u>but</u> this is happening largely behind the <u>scenes</u> and should be made more public.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the senior population growing, the fire department can do a better job educating seniors on injury prevention.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FD should make better use of phone apps and other technology.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor conflict in past distorts image of the fire service (Menlo has done the same) Too much negativity vs. good.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical image of some personnel. One chief was talking to a recruit academy while sporting a white beard (3-4 years ago).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the quality care, service that is essential to the fire service.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in service and training for HazMat and other tech industry issues.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are service reductions in emergency medical response, businesses should be informed so we can react with increased internal services.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of public education.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department needs to work more closely with OES. We need to be more integrated - fire, OES, police. Better coordination and working together.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing - do we really need as many engines to respond to a minor incident? Do we really need current shift staffing? Is there the correct mix of fire and EMS?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries / benefits.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fortunately, I've not had occasion to use services. From what I've seen / heard in community, our fire services are excellent.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdated or broken equipment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large number of firefighters live out of the area due to cost of living. How would 1st responders get to the city in a time of disaster?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough firefighters to cover shifts when out sick or vacations.





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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formal feedback and communication/interaction between the medics and the Emergency Department personnel. I have not seen any feedback or interaction between the medics and ED physicians in the past 10 years. Do you have an active physician liaison?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and strengthen intergovernmental relations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership and direction work with your neighboring fire agencies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More integrated drills with neighboring cities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More community focused services.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More innovative projects change current delivery process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time spent "working" during a 24-hour shift. Looking at 24-hour work shifts as being an impediment when it comes to off hours productivity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ALS/BLS readily available services. The future of operational medical services.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being transparent with succession planning - are retired personnel being contracted back to work in a fashion where it becomes cost prohibited - as proposed to actually planning for promotions based on known "future" retirements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to a spokesperson at a scene can sometimes be problematic.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is no established public information officer beyond the battalion chiefs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Having timely access is important in getting information out to the general public (speaking as a member of the local media).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I want to make sure our community continues to adequately invest in our public safety partners / PAFD.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Union leadership.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not enough personnel or resources.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not having paramedics on all engines.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Succession planning and turnover.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Auto aid and share resources.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuing training.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Response time.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More public outreach / safety education.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are we prepared for large-scale emergencies, e.g. natural disasters (earthquakes), terrorist attacks, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not enough outreach to the business community for fire prevention.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not outreach to business community for emergency preparedness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fire inspections don't take advantage of the opportunity to educate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business community not being enlisted as deputies, supporters.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I am concerned that too many equipment investments are made when some items/services could be shared with other departments.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department being overwhelmed in a regional event.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paramedic attitudes when taking a patient handoff from a private citizen (had a personal bad experience).



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- Concerned about the age of some of the equipment as I often see the reserve apparatus at Station 6.
- Fire department can be isolated i.e. not coordinated with other city services or other regional agencies.
- Duplication of services i.e. using regional services when it's not economical to provide the service locally.
- Labor contracts limit flexibility to provide economically viable services.
- Attracting quality staff when benefits are being cut.
- Coverage when stations are closed in the hills.
- Protocols currently in place send 1-3 fire trucks when only one ambulance is needed, e.g. call for ambulance transfer from local medical center (urgent care center or outpatient surgery center) to area hospital. A smarter, more cost-effective approach would be to send only the ambulance. This is especially important at medical facilities where driveway access is limited and shared with patient traffic.
- Hazardous Materials Response.
- Road congestion and accessibility of emergency vehicles.
- Stanford expansion and Stanford contract.
- Database that identifies citizens who may not be able to self-evacuate.



Figure 3 External Stakeholders during a Work Session



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Positive Community Feedback

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

**Table 5: Positive Community Comments about the Palo Alto Fire Department
(Verbatim, in no particular order)**

• Very responsive and capable squads!
• Great regional resource.
• Easy to work with.
• Very professional.
• Motivated staff.
• Asking for citizen and peer input.
• Planning and plan check is great!
• Fire department is very community oriented.
• Quality response time.
• Quality EMS services.
• Emergency Preparedness coordination with the community.
• Community events are great. Love the PR at the station level.
• The Battalion Chiefs on all 3 shifts are great to work with.
• Appreciate the joint training and exercise.
• Very professional, courteous and respectful.
• Willing to educate and explain when asked.
• Appear to be well-trained and committed.
• Don't drive in a dangerous or risky manner.
• Relate well to the public.
• Collaborative approach to working through design items with other city departments during plan review.
• Prompt response times with plan review.
• Ability to be flexible when problem-solving options for working through design items.
• Positive attitude towards the community.
• Chief is friendly and accessible.
• Good community outreach events (chili cook-off, pancake breakfast).
• I have not been in P.A. very long at all, but I've enjoyed what I've witnessed so far.
• Fire Chief is active on social media and easily accessible.
• Battalion Chiefs, when reach, are great at relaying important info.
• Paramedics are well-trained, affable and perform EMS in an exemplary manner.
• Firefighters that I have interacted with are also very professional, affable and helpful.





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- Wonderful men and women. Very dedicated.
- Goes over and above when called.
- Always - always ready to go.
- A lot of community services and most do not live in the community.
- Appearing at neighborhood events - sharing equipment with children/adults.
- Quality.
- Professionalism.
- HazMat inspectors that work well with the industrial community and are technically knowledgeable.
- Support of our internal emergency response teams; recognition of our training; coordination of training and response.
- Inclusion of the business community in disaster response planning, including providing technical resources.
- Palo Alto firefighters, in my experience, have always been professional, courteous and deeply skilled.
- Palo Alto firefighters are being forced to transition because of changing demographics. They are admirably stepping up to this tough task.
- The department is deeply engaged in and admired by the community.
- The PAFD must be doing a good job because I've heard no complaints (except for the misuse of the emergency alert system).
- Trucks do attend block parties.
- EMT response seems to be good.
- Level of competence, commitment and community engagement of the vast majority of PAFD personnel I have interacted with.
- Willingness to go beyond what is expected, either when on an emergency call or in community interactions.
- Professionalism, leadership, knowledge and willingness to engage with the captains I have spoken to.
- Cheerful and upbeat can-do engaged manner of the firefighters.
- Good job Chief Nickel.
- Identifying needs and creating the means to acquire.
- Increased community involvement and participation.
- Effective and helpful attitude of fire personnel when responding to any emergency.
- Extraordinary professionalism of fire department staff - shows excellent training and positive attitude towards public.
- Community involvement of local fire department staff (Station 5).
- Great chili (4th of July celebration) and hot sauce (profits go to charity).
- The PAFD are ambassadors for our city. They set a good example for people in uniform for our city.





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- PAFD always sends a truck to our block party. The firefighters give tours of the engine and educate adults and kids. I have only had positive experiences with PAFD. Wonderful men and women.
- Response times for medical/fire emergencies have been excellent and need to stay that way.
- Fire department presence at community functions has been very nice over the years.
- Eichlers are fire traps so place stay prepared for fast response time!



Figure 4 External Stakeholders during a Work Session

Other Thoughts and Comments

The Community was asked to share any other comments they had about the PAFD or its services. The following written comments were received:

**Table 6: Other Community Comments about the Palo Alto Fire Department
(Verbatim, in no particular order)**

- I really appreciate the partnership with PAFD and feel the public/private partnership, training and exercise is critically important to the continued success of the community.
- I would like to see more cooperation/education with the business community - fire prevention talks/walks/inspections, earthquake preparedness, terrorism, etc. Businesses will pay to have audits or fire prevention seminars. Also, businesses are very interested in preventing fires - don't just inspect, educate! Invite the businesses to walk through with the inspector.
- I feel fortunate to work alongside such a great organization.
- Not clear on what feedback mechanisms exist between PAFD medics and hospital emergency department. Not aware of care reviews and both positive and constructive feedback.



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- Would really like to get CISM training more active and support for the men and women who protect and serve our city.
- Thank you for including the community in this exercise.
- Entire fire department needs to know about the Palo Alto Emergency Service Volunteer Program (ESV). They need to know who they are and work (connect) with them.
- Must be able to work with ESV in emergency and use them as staff - not victims.
- The department's many programs and services often fall under the community's radar. Better public outreach would help the department get the respect it deserves.
- The neighbor's request that someone be charged with removal of overgrowth around fire hydrants and that leaky hydrants be repaired.
- The PAFD can promote bicycle safety by publicizing the hazards of cyclists riding at dusk without adequate lights and reflectors. This is an accident waiting to happen.
- The PAFD could be a useful tool to promote emergency communication infrastructure (better cell service and installation of mutual aid 911 call forwarding, use of SMS for 911 input)(Put SMS call-in number on emergency vehicles to promote).
- The PAFD should speak out in favor of better street/traffic flow control. I recommend that the PAFD provision EMTs with motorcycles (with EMT supplies) for rapid response. This is now in place in Jerusalem and elsewhere as a low cost, quick response solution to lack of ambulances and interference due to traffic congestion (transport is a secondary concern and can be a follow up).
- The Chief should plan now for his successor so "corporate" knowledge is not lost.
- Retain institutional memory.
- The more I have gotten to know members of PAFD, the more "stories" I hear from neighbors, the more my high-regard for PAFD personnel increases.
- Public safety should be a city's #1 interest/priority.
- Fire safety and other PAFD are important!
- Require unannounced inspections for facilities with hazardous materials. Conduct such inspections on an annual basis. Conduct practice drills of sites with extremely hazardous materials using new hazardous response equipment – measure response time. Review emergency response plans and contingency plans of sites with extremely hazardous materials.
- How are fire trucks able to navigate road construction, i.e. Arastradero in case of a fire? When new projects are proposed, shouldn't an independent determination be made instead of relying on the planning department? They should be doing master traffic flow and emergency access/egress mapping of all Palo Alto. Unfortunately, for us folks "whose lives have been saved in the past because of rapid response times," we no longer feel that emergency medical personnel will be able to get to us on time if we have an event during those critical hours.
- How will the increase in the number of persons in College Terrace and affordable housing along El Camino affect the fire department's ability to respond to emergencies? Any plans to reduce coverage in Palo Alto?
- What is the difference in the "medical" equipment carried by the fire truck paramedics and the paramedics in their paramedic van? Any difference in training? When do the police come too?





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Internal Stakeholder Group Findings

The internal stakeholder work sessions were conducted over the course of three days. These sessions served to discuss the agency's approach to Community-Driven Strategic Planning, with focus on the PAFD's Mission, Values, Core Programs and Support Services, as well as the agency's perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. The work sessions generated a high level of interest and participation by the broad agency representation in attendance, as named below and pictured on the next page.

Table 7: Palo Alto Fire Department's Internal Stakeholders

<i>Brian Baggott</i> Captain	<i>Christy Baird</i> Acting Training Captain	<i>Geo Blackshire</i> Deputy Chief
<i>Tony Blakely</i> Captain	<i>Niles Broussard</i> Battalion Chief	<i>Amber Cameron</i> Strategic Operations and Initiatives Manager
<i>Catherine Capriles</i> Deputy Chief	<i>Doug Conn</i> Battalion Chief	<i>David Dahl</i> Firefighter/Paramedic
<i>Bobby Davis</i> Captain	<i>Rich Dean</i> Interim Fire Marshal	<i>Shelia Donovan</i> Apparatus Operator
<i>Shannon Ford</i> Administrative Associate II	<i>Daniel Fortino</i> Firefighter/Paramedic	<i>Carter French</i> Captain
<i>Matt Goglio</i> Apparatus Operator	<i>Ken Green</i> Captain	<i>Ian Hagerman</i> Senior Management Analyst
<i>Eric Heller</i> Operator/Paramedic	<i>James Henrikson</i> Haz Mat Inspector	<i>Sunny Johnson Gutter</i> Firefighter/Paramedic
<i>Stephen Lindsey</i> Fire Inspector	<i>Toby McDonell</i> Captain	<i>Kevin McNally</i> Captain
<i>Suzan Minshall</i> Apparatus Operator	<i>Marc Muzzi</i> Apparatus Operator	<i>Eric Nickel</i> Fire Chief
<i>Mike Northup</i> Apparatus Operator	<i>Joe Ottolini</i> Captain	<i>Adam Palsgrove</i> Apparatus Operator
<i>Norm Park</i> Firefighter/EMT	<i>Nicholas Penko</i> Firefighter/EMT	<i>Kim Roderick</i> EMS Chief
<i>Nichole Single</i> Fire Inspector	<i>Doug Slezak</i> Firefighter/Paramedic	<i>Ryan Stoddard</i> Captain
<i>Mark vonAppen</i> Captain	<i>Brent White</i> Firefighter/Paramedic	<i>Chris Woodard</i> Battalion Chief
<i>Shane Yarbrough</i> Training Captain	<i>Jesus Zuniga</i> Firefighter/EMT	





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Figure 5 Internal Stakeholder Group



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Mission

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 work group of the PAFD's internal stakeholders met to review the existing Mission and collectively agreed to the following.

Table 8: Mission of the Palo Alto Fire Department

We are a professional team of men and women dedicated to safeguarding and enriching the lives of anyone, anytime, anywhere with compassion and pride.



Figure 6 Internal Stakeholders Conducting a Work Session



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Values

Establishing values and associated statements embraced by all members of an organization is extremely important. They recognize those features and considerations that make up the personality of the organization. The PAFD internal stakeholders agreed to the following revised values terms and supporting statements.

Table 9: Values of the Palo Alto Fire Department

The men and women of the Palo Alto Fire Department commit to the following values in serving our communities and each other:
INTEGRITY
We serve our community and support each other with respect and honesty. We approach our commitment with Dignity and Courage. We are accountable through our every-day actions and communication.
INNOVATION
We creatively integrate tradition with technology acknowledging the wealth of resources available in our community and department to improve health, safety and welfare.
PROFESSIONALISM
We are Dedicated to providing quality service in the delivery of a cost effective and superior service. Our attitude, appearance, knowledge, skills and abilities are reflective of our commitment to excellence.
DIVERSITY
The members of our department exemplify diversity on multiple levels. Our skills, backgrounds and experiences allow us to effectively respond to the vast range of emergencies and outreach opportunities.
COMPASSION
We exist to serve our communities and support each other with empathy, sincerity and respect.
EDUCATION
We strive to continually improve ourselves and our skills to increase our own safety and better protect the communities we serve. We strive to stay abreast of the latest developments in emergency response. We provide educational opportunities through community outreach to help increase knowledge of preparedness and personal, family and home safety.

The Mission and Values are the foundation of this agency. Thus, every effort will be made to keep these current and meaningful so that the individuals who make up the PAFD are well guided by them in the accomplishment of the goals, objectives, and day-to-day tasks.



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Programs and Services

The PAFD internal stakeholders identified the following core programs provided to the community, as well as the services that enable the agency to deliver those programs:

Table 10: Core Programs of the Palo Alto Fire Department

• Fire Suppression	• Fire Prevention	• Fire Investigation
• Emergency Medical Services	• Technical Rescue	• Office of Emergency Service's Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response
• Hazardous Material Mitigation	• Public Fire/EMS Safety Education	

Table 11: Support Services of the Palo Alto Fire Department

• Training	• Facilities
• Human Resources	• Administrative Services
• Information Technology	• Vehicle Maintenance
• Health/Wellness	• Finances
• Contract Management	• Communications -911
• Open Space Management	• Mutual Aid
• Community Outreach	• PG & E
• City Utilities	• City Police Department
• Public Works	• Stanford Environmental Health Services
• Coast Guard	• Stanford DPS
• CHP	• Park Rangers
• City OES	• Airport MGT
• SCC Fire Associates	• Red Cross
• 1-800-Board-Up	• Legal
• Vendors	• IAFF Local 1319
• Media	• VA Hospital
• Stanford Hospital	• Receiving Hospitals
• CERT	• Animal Control
• Parks/Recreation	• Stanford University
• Building Department	• Lucille Packard children's hospital
• Lifeflight	• Stanford FMO
• Calstar	• County ambulance
• County EMS	



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S.W.O.T. Analysis

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

Strengths

It is important for any organization to identify its strengths in order to assure that it is capable of providing the services requested by the community and to ensure that strengths are consistent with the issues facing the organization. Often, identification of organizational strengths leads to the channeling of efforts toward primary community needs that match those strengths. Programs that do not match organizational strengths, or the primary function of the organization, should be seriously reviewed to evaluate the rate of return on staff time. Through a consensus process, the internal stakeholders identified the strengths of the PAFD as follows:

Table 12: Strengths of the Palo Alto Fire Department

People (pride, passion, compassion, committed, flexibility)	Internal opportunity (promotion, programs, specialties, etc.)
Service	Paramedics / EMTs
Diversity	Relationships (internal)
Collective knowledge	The Local 1319
Equipment	Apparatus
Youth, energy, healthy	Adaptability
Engagement	Transport
Culture	Tradition
Sense of humor	Experience – years of service
Community outreach	Response times
Customer service	Training (EMS)
High approval rating	Stanford hospital relations/clinical studies
Quality public education	High quality education (EMS, etc.)
Short transport times	Dual medics on ambulance
Professionalism	Good external relationships
Uniforms	Fire Prevention Bureau – sworn personnel
Mutual aid	Innovative, progressive
Initiative, motivation	Job security
Diverse life experiences	



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Weaknesses

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

For any organization to either begin or to continue to move progressively forward, it must not only be able to identify its strengths, but also those areas where it functions poorly or not at all. These areas of needed enhancements are not the same as threats to be identified later in this document, but rather those day-to-day issues and concerns that may slow or inhibit progress. The following items were identified by the internal stakeholders as weaknesses:

Table 13: Weaknesses of the Palo Alto Fire Department

Communication	Retention challenges	Consistency
Multi-company training / technical rescue		Planning and preparation
Lack of support: Leaders and coworkers		Station maintenance
Follow-through	Negativity	Policies / SOPs
Morale (result of all weaknesses)	Operational efficiencies, training	
Lack of cross training: support staff		Succession planning
Continuing Education: Mastering a craft		Career development
Lack of peer mental health resources		Staff and line cohesiveness
Leadership (consistency, knowledge of rules, workload, application of policies)		
Spread too thin: Inspections, PubEd, Training, Ops		Bad attitude
Technology	Workforce not local	Stations (age/condition)
Decision making process (objective vs. subjective)		Budget process
Internal/external relationships – council / city departments		Lack of accountability
Information technology	Planning and preparation	Identify priorities
Clear set of goals / none	Indecision / procrastination	Marketing
Not recognizing strengths	Fire training	How we treat each other
Reactive instead of proactive	Lack of a training facility	Public education
Fireground discipline (emergency scene)		Lack of a hydrant program
No rescue (apparatus)	Equipment cuts	Lack of pre-fire plans
Staffing levels	Ops training	Media relations
Not always ALS on first responder unit		Outdated forms
Lack of a clear org chart (chain of command)		Data collection
Work schedule change	Deployment of resources	



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Opportunities

The opportunities for an organization depend on the identification of strengths and weaknesses and how they can be enhanced. The focus of opportunities is not solely on existing service, but on expanding and developing new possibilities both inside and beyond the traditional service area. The internal stakeholders identified the following potential opportunities:

Table 14: Opportunities for the Palo Alto Fire Department

Community relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve image • Public education • Support • Patient follow up 	City government relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase civic engagement • City Council invited to training and events
	Continue to be progressive with fire code adoption
	Continuing and improving social media outreach
Partnering with Stanford <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital • University 	Work schedule change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive impact to environment • Coordinate training with neighboring jurisdictions
Revenue generation	
EMS delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community medicine 	Business relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/public partnerships
Expansion of mutual aid	Youth outreach
Recruitment and Diversity – new hires	Grants
Feedback surveys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal • Community 	360 degree review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous • Internal and external
OES assigned to the Fire Department	Location (resources, climate)
Outside training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other fire departments • Regional • County EMS 	Shared services (with other agencies / departments) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialized equipment/personnel
	Community rooms in fire stations
Economic vitality of Palo Alto	Technology
Innovations	Changing demographics
Increased training budget	Dispatch (CAD)
Media	Participate in external studies (fire, EMS, prevention)
Keeping city staff informed	Regionalization



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Threats

To draw strength and gain full benefit of any opportunity, the threats to the organization, with their new risks and challenges, must also be identified in the strategic planning process. By recognizing possible threats, an organization can greatly reduce the potential for loss. Fundamental to the success of any strategic plan is the understanding that threats are not completely and/or directly controlled by the organization. Some of the current and potential threats identified by the internal stakeholders were as follows:

Table 15: Threats to the Palo Alto Fire Department

Politics	Under funding
Anti-government rhetoric	Poor public perception / opinion
Vocal minority	Negative media coverage
Private fire departments – competition	Stanford contract
Hostile legislation	Uninformed public
Infrastructure	High cost of living
Comparable share of general fund revenue for fire programs	Losing employees to other departments / cities / agencies and retention
Unhealthy economy	Negative community relationships
Cost of housing	Loss of tax base
Unrealistic service expectations	Anti-labor sentiment
Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative social media 	Competition for funding with other city departments
Desire to maintain suburban/residential feel and funding, yet expect metropolitan level of services	Disconnect between executive community and fire service workers
Community under values fire services	Natural disasters
Keeping up with change	Potential loss of mutual aid funding
Increase in threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires greater knowledge • Terrorism 	Rising healthcare costs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in healthcare (laws, requirements)
	Privatizing Fire Prevention Bureau (outsourcing)
Litigation	Workplace exposures



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Critical Issues and Service Gaps

After reviewing the PAFD’s core programs and support services, and identifying internal strengths and weaknesses along with external opportunities and threats, the internal stakeholders identified their primary critical issues and service gaps as the foundation for the development of goals and objectives in order to meet their future vision.

Table 16: Critical Issues and Service Gap Issues Identified

Technology	Communication	Infrastructure
Workforce	Public Education	People
Training		

Strategic Initiatives

Having reviewed the agency’s critical issues and service gaps, the following strategic initiatives were identified to guide the agency in establishing the goals and objectives.

Table 17: Strategic Initiatives of the Palo Alto Fire Department

Internal Communications	External Communications
Public Education	Training
Workforce Planning	Technology
Physical Resources	



Figure 7 Internal Stakeholders Conducting a Work Session



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Goals and Objectives

The Community-Driven Strategic Planning Process, to this point, has dealt with establishing the Mission, Values, S.W.O.T., Critical Issues and Service Gaps, and Strategic Initiatives of the PAFD. In order to achieve the mission of the PAFD, realistic goals and objectives must be established to enhance strengths, address identified weaknesses, provide individual members with clear direction, and address the concerns of the community. The internal stakeholders met for several hours to complete this critical phase of the planning process.

The internal stakeholders set timelines for completion of objectives supporting the goals. Leadership of the PAFD should establish work groups to meet periodically to review progress toward these goals and objectives and adjust timelines as needs and the environment change. Once the work groups are established and have had the opportunity to meet and review the goals and objectives, they should report back to the PAFD leadership with a plan on how the goals are to be achieved.

“If you don’t keep score, you’re only practicing.”

Vince Lombardi,
American Football Coach and Motivator

As goals and objectives are management tools, they should be updated on an on-going basis to identify what has been accomplished and to note changes within the organization and the community. The attainment of a performance target should be recognized and celebrated to provide a sense of organizational accomplishment.

The goals and objectives should now become the focus of the efforts of the agency. By following these goals and objectives carefully, the agency can be directed into its desired future while having reduced the obstacles and distractions along the way.



Figure 8 Internal Stakeholders Conducting a Work Session



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Goal 1 Establish an effective way to communicate with fire department personnel.

Objective 1A	Identify what information needs to be communicated.	
Timeframe	1 month	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey the department to determine what information is important. • Survey department to determine the best format to deliver communication. • Analyze survey data. • Report findings. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 1B	Develop a clean and organized portal for information dissemination.	
Timeframe	6 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the best portal for information, i.e. Target Solutions, intranet, etc. • Identify and create the team to develop the portal. • Implement the portal. • Beta test the portal and make revisions as determined. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 1C	Identify and update all relevant departmental documentation.	
Timeframe	6 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect all fire department forms. • Remove all irrelevant forms. • Update relevant forms. • Identify the need for new forms and create. • Make all documents electronic / .PDF format / writable. • Place all documents on the portal. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 1D	Provide training for the department on how to access and efficiently use portal.	
Timeframe	3 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a team of trainers. • Identify the necessary training for administration and access. • Develop the training programs. • Provide the developed training. • Create a user-guide for the portal. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:





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Objective 1E	Develop a system for maintaining, updating and improving the portal and information.	
Timeframe	3 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish timelines for frequency of information dissemination. • Establish a timeline for documentation preview. • Create a review team. • Create an innovation team to keep the portal up to date technologically. • Develop a formal process to submit changes. • Establish reoccurring surveys to determine efficiency. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:



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Goal 2 To develop a clear and effective external communication delivery model.

Objective 2A	Identify the target audiences for external communication delivery.	
Timeframe	2 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrieve City of Palo Alto lists from City Hall. • Get a list of businesses through the Chamber of Commerce and the Fire Prevention Bureau. • Get a list of Parent Teacher Associations from local schools. • Contact community and non-profit organizations. • Develop a list of other city departments. • Establish a contact list for other fire departments. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 2B	Conduct a needs assessment for identified audiences.	
Timeframe	3 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the methods for gathering data from all audiences previously identified. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Surveys (online, phone, mail, etc. ○ Meetings / gatherings. ○ Questionnaires ○ Public Education events. • Analyze data. • Prioritize needs. • Receive and develop messages. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 2C	Develop methods to deliver and receive information.	
Timeframe	Ongoing	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify communication channels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social media ○ Mailers ○ Newsletters • Develop communications channels. • Assign personnel for each channel / content / group. • Create policies. • Public Information Officers (PIO). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify volunteers and assign. ○ Train (classes, City of Palo Alto, media) ○ Introduce media • Distinguish appropriate delivery methods. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:



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Objective 2D	Analyze effectiveness of delivery method.	
Timeframe	Ongoing	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a method for feedback – based on audience. • Send a survey, mailer, evaluation form, etc. to a sample of users. • Analyze data. • Revisit the process and revise or enhance as needed. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:



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Goal 3 **Develop an effective Public Education Program in alignment with our mission.**

Objective 3A	Identify and analyze needs for a community Public Education outreach	
Timeframe	24 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify target audiences and key stakeholders. • Identify delivery model(s). • Identify funding needs. • Identify funding availability. • Identify alternative funding opportunities. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 3B	Investigate potential city and community partnerships.	
Timeframe	24 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify community partners. • Explore OES, PAUSE, CERT, HOAs, Stanford, Avenidas, service groups, Friends of the Library, other city departments for potential partnerships. • Recruit volunteers and community participants. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 3C	Develop programs to meet demographics and needs within the community.	
Timeframe	24 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather data to identify priority needs with respect to age demographics. • Develop marketing plans to meet the identified needs. • Design and purchase materials. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 3D	Implement the Public Education Program	
Timeframe	24 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit and fill a public education position. • Develop a delivery matrix / calendar of events. • Train internal personnel on programs. • Plan and organize events. • Evaluate effectiveness and impact on the department. • Evaluate and implement adjustments – ongoing. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:





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Goal 4 Create a comprehensive fire training program.

Objective 4A	Assess and analyze the current fire training program.	
Timeframe	4 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish what and/or who is available to accomplish the analysis. • Review current General Orders, training manual, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to meet or exceed the current city, county and state standards, as well as best practices. • Review current training manual to meet the current General Orders and SOPs. • Identify personnel with subject matter expertise. • Submit analysis to staff for approval. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 4B	Develop training programs based on the identified gaps from the analysis.	
Timeframe	6 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify subject matter experts / personnel. • Assign personnel to do the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Write / update the training manual based on “best practices,” as well as city, county and state standards. ○ Create SOPs, Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) and performance standards. ○ Complete General Orders. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 4C	Establish a training calendar to meet the city, county and state requirements.	
Timeframe	2 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize training / subjects to include mandated training. • Create timelines. • Coordinate with other training departments or divisions. • Fill in calendar to balance all shifts and make ups as needed. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 4D	Conduct standardized training to meet established policies and standards.	
Timeframe	Ongoing	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign a lead. • Develop learning objectives, incorporating new standards / policies. • Develop lesson plans. • Develop an evaluation system and revise as needed. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:





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Goal 5 Foster a healthy environment that allows our work force to flourish.

Objective 5A	Identify the wellness needs of the work force.	
Timeframe	November 2013 - ongoing	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a method of gathering information. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a Standards of Cover - Job Audit - Survey personnel • Educate personnel on how to gather the information. • Analyze 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 5B	Support the needs.	
Timeframe	November 2013 - ongoing	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify or develop the program to address personnel needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 360 degree evaluation - Peer support group - CISM - EAP • Connect the individual with the program. • Support the process. • Evaluate the outcome. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 5C	Track wellness.	
Timeframe	November 2013 - ongoing	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select a sample of personnel who have used the wellness programs. • Evaluate results. • Make adjustments to programs as indicated. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:



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Goal 6 To creatively integrate and enhance technology to improve health, safety, welfare and efficiencies in alignment with our mission.

Objective 6A	Determine the responsibilities and duties that require access to technology.	
Timeframe	3 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate areas technology could enhance and improve effectiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EMS, Inspections, staffing, payroll, inter. Dept. communications, info/data collection, training (policies, procedures, GOs) MDC • Identify needs and how technology will improve and simplify duties • Determine if existing technology helps or hinders achieving current mission • Determine if new technologies would improve effectiveness • Communicate with IT to describe the unique needs of the FD 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 6B	Determine resources available to affect necessary changes/restructuring.	
Timeframe	24 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify internal and external partnerships with skills and ability necessary to implement changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PAFD members, IT, community volunteers, start-ups, students • Partner with neighboring agencies who have experience with other options • Develop a plan to objectively test and evaluate new technologies • Develop a system for reevaluating relevance, redundancy and obsolescence of resources • Choose appropriate technologies in accordance to our mission and values 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 6C	Develop a training plan to educate users.	
Timeframe	24 Months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish training priorities • Identify skilled and capable people to training users (train the trainer) • Outline training objectives • Introduce new changes in consideration of internal comm., training needs. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:



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Objective 6D	Implement enhanced or new technology.	
Timeframe	24 Months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field test operability of new technology • Create simple user guide • Implement system to document failures, errors, user feedback • Provide a system to provide prompt resolution for concerns • Train end users • Create a system for regular and scheduled reevaluation • Start replacement process 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:



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Goal 7 Develop and implement a physical resource improvement plan to ensure contemporary facilities, updated, reliable apparatus and current equipment needs and replacement.

Objective 7A	Compile a detailed inventory of current facilities, apparatus and equipment.	
Timeframe	1 month	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain and review Blue Ribbon Document. • Obtain, review and update apparatus replacement/maintenance plan. • Create equipment replacement/maintenance plan. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 7B	Create a comprehensive needs assessment report for facilities, apparatus, and equipment.	
Timeframe	3 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify subject matter expert for facilities. • Identify subject matter expert for apparatus. • Identify subject matter expert for equipment. • Develop or obtain a needs assessment report for facilities. • Develop or obtain a needs assessment report for apparatus. • Develop or obtain a needs assessment report for equipment. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 7C	Compile a detailed cost analysis report for facilities, apparatus and equipment.	
Timeframe	3 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider and identify possible opportunities to regionalize training facilities for low or no cost. • Obtain quotes for needed equipment and/or tools. • Obtain quotes for repairing equipment and/or tools. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 7D	Determine internal and external funding options.	
Timeframe	6 months	
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for available funds within fire department budget. • Look for outside funding (sponsorships, grants, donations, fundraisers, etc). • Support City-wide infrastructure bond measure effort. • Submit options to department staff/City Management. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:



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Vision

On the final day of the process, the CPSE presented the PAFD a vision of where the agency will be in the future. This vision provides a target of excellence that the organization will strive toward and provide a basis for its goals and objectives.

Table 18: Vision of the Palo Alto Fire Department

The vision of the Palo Alto Fire Department is that by the end of 2018, we will be recognized by our community as an agency that delivers high-quality services with a commitment to excellence.

We will serve by implementing our industry's best practices and we will demonstrate dynamic continuous improvement that results in our members being masters of their craft, with a focus on action and strength in relationships.

We are committed to living our core values as we carry out our mission. We will apply our values of integrity, innovation and professionalism to serve as a catalyst to coalesce our fire department with our community.

We will invest in our workforce, which is our organization's most valuable asset. This will be accomplished through comprehensive and effective planning, through the development and enhancement of comprehensive training and education programs, through improved uses of technology, and through proactive communication initiatives; we will ensure that our workforce remains diverse, and is reflective of the community that we serve.

We will enhance our ability to use data driven intelligence to assist with our critical decisions in field operations and to help drive innovative solutions utilizing technologies that allow us to work smarter and more efficiently. These things, along with the necessary physical resources will ensure that our community receives the best service value for the funding provided.

Through compassionate behavior and a strengthened community outreach initiative, we will demonstrate our unified commitment to meet or exceed the expectations of our community as we hold one another accountable for accomplishing our mission, applying our values, and ensuring that this vision becomes a reality.



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Performance Measurement

“Managing for Results”

As output measurement can be challenging, the organization must focus on the assessment of progress toward achieving improved output. Collins states, “What matters is not finding the perfect indicator, but settling upon a *consistent and intelligent* method of assessing your output results, and then tracking your trajectory with rigor.”³ They must further be prepared to revisit and revise their goals, objectives, and performance measures to keep up with accomplishments and environmental changes. It has been stated that:

...successful strategic planning requires continuing review of actual accomplishments in comparison with the plan...periodic or continuous environmental scanning to assure that unforeseen developments do not sabotage the adopted plan or that emerging opportunities are not overlooked.⁴

Why Measure Performance?

It has been said that:

- *If you don't measure the results of your plan, you can't tell success from failure.*
- *If you can't see success, you can't reward it.*
- *If you can't reward success, you're probably rewarding failure.*
- *If you can't see success, you can't learn from it.*
- *If you can't recognize failure, you can't correct it.*
- *If you can demonstrate results, you can win public support.*

Reinventing Government
David Osborn and Ted Gaebler

In order to establish that the PAFD's Strategic Plan is achieving results, performance measurement data will be implemented and integrated as part of the plan. An integrated process, known as “Managing for Results,” will be utilized, which is based upon the following:

- The identification of strategic goals and objectives;
- The determination of resources necessary to achieve them;
- The analyzing and evaluation of performance data; and
- The use of that data to drive continuous improvement in the organization.

³ Collins Good to Great and the Social Sectors. Boulder, 2009

⁴ Sorkin, Ferris and Hudak. Strategies for Cities and Counties. Public Technology, 1984.



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A “family of measures” that is typically utilized to indicate and measure performance includes the following:

- **Inputs:** Value of resource used to produce an output.
- **Outputs:** Quantity or number of units produced which are activity-oriented and measurable.
- **Efficiency:** Inputs used per output (or outputs per input).
- **Service Quality:** The degree to which customers are satisfied with a program, or how accurately or timely a service is provided.
- **Outcome:** Qualitative consequences associated with a program/service; i.e., the ultimate benefit to the customer. Outcome focuses on the ultimate “why” of providing a service.

The Success of the Strategic Plan

The PAFD has approached its desire to develop and implement a Strategic Plan by asking for and receiving input from the community and members of the agency during the development stage of the planning process. The agency utilized professional guidance and the Community-Driven Strategic Planning Process to compile this document. The success of the PAFD’s strategic plan will not depend upon implementation of the goals and their related objectives, but from support received from the authority having jurisdiction, membership of the agency, and the community at-large.

“No matter how much you have achieved, you will always be merely good relative to what you can become. Greatness is an inherently dynamic process, not an end point.”

Good to Great and the Social Sectors
Jim Collins

Provided the community-driven strategic planning process is kept dynamic and supported by effective leadership and active participation, it will be a considerable opportunity to unify internal and external stakeholders through a jointly developed understanding of organizational direction; how all vested parties will work to achieve the mission, goals, and vision; and how the organization will measure and be accountable for its progress and successes.⁵

⁵ Matthews (2005). *Strategic Planning and Management for Library Managers*



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Glossary of Terms, Acronyms, Initialisms

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

Accreditation	A process by which an association or agency evaluates and recognizes a program of study or an institution as meeting certain predetermined standards or qualifications. It applies only to institutions or agencies and their programs of study or their services. Accreditation ensures a basic level of quality in the services received from an agency.
CERT	Community Emergency Response Team
Customer(s)	The person or group who establishes the requirement of a process and receives or uses the outputs of that process; or the person or entity directly served by the department or agency.
Efficiency	A performance indication where inputs are measured per unit of output (or vice versa).
EMT	Emergency Medical Technician
Environment	Circumstances and conditions that interact with and affect an organization. These can include economic, political, cultural, and physical conditions inside or outside the boundaries of the organization.
Input	A performance indication where the value of resources are used to produce an output.
Mission	An enduring statement of purpose; the organization's reason for existence. Describes what the organization does, for whom it does it, and how it does it.
MPFPD	Menlo Park Fire Protection District
OES	Office of Emergency Services
Outcome	A performance indication where qualitative consequences are associated with a program/service; i.e., the ultimate benefit to the customer.
Output	A performance indication where a quality or number of units produced is identified.
Performance Measure	A specific measurable result for each goal and/or program that indicates achievement.



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Stakeholder	Any person, group, or organization that can place a claim on, or influence the organization's resources or outputs, is affected by those outputs, or has an interest in or expectation of the organization.
Strategic Goal	A broad target that defines how the agency will carry out its mission over a specific period of time. An aim; the final result of action. Something to accomplish in assisting the agency to move forward.
Strategic Management	An integrated systems approach for leading and managing in a changing world by building consensus of the leadership group, both in shared vision of the desired future and a clarified mission for the organization, and by gaining support and participation of the people in the organization to identify specific changes that must be made, implementing them, and assessing organizational performance.
Strategic Objective	A specific, measurable accomplishment required to realize the successful completion of a strategic goal.
Strategic Plan	A long-range planning document that defines the mission of the agency and broadly identifies how it will be accomplished, and that provides the framework for more detailed annual and operational plans.
Strategic Planning	The continuous and systematic process whereby guiding members of an organization make decisions about its future, develop the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future, and determine how success is to be measured.
Strategy	A description of how a strategic objective will be achieved. A possibility. A plan or methodology for achieving a goal.
Vision	An idealized view of a desirable and potentially achievable future state - where or what an organization would like to be in the future.



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