

VISTA Fire Department



2015-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN



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Introduction

The Vista Fire Department (VFD) provides fire suppression, emergency medical services, basic and technical rescue, hazardous materials mitigation, fire prevention, fire inspection and investigation, public education, and domestic preparedness planning and response to the City of Vista and the Vista Fire Protection District. The VFD 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" with the intent of meeting the goals of the VFD. 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 VFD 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 a justifiable and sustainable future.



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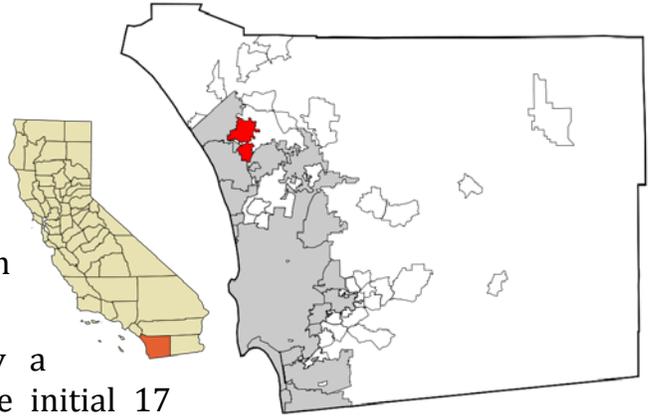
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Organizational Background

Vista, California, was founded on October 9, 1882, with the establishment of a post office and was incorporated January 28, 1963, as a general law city with council/manager form of government. Vista became a charter city on June 13, 2007.

The Vista Fire Department was originally a volunteer organization formed in 1928. The initial 17 member department operated from a station located at 125 S. Indiana Avenue, and has grown to the current 86 member department delivering emergency response and service programs from six strategically deployed stations to a combined population of 115,569.

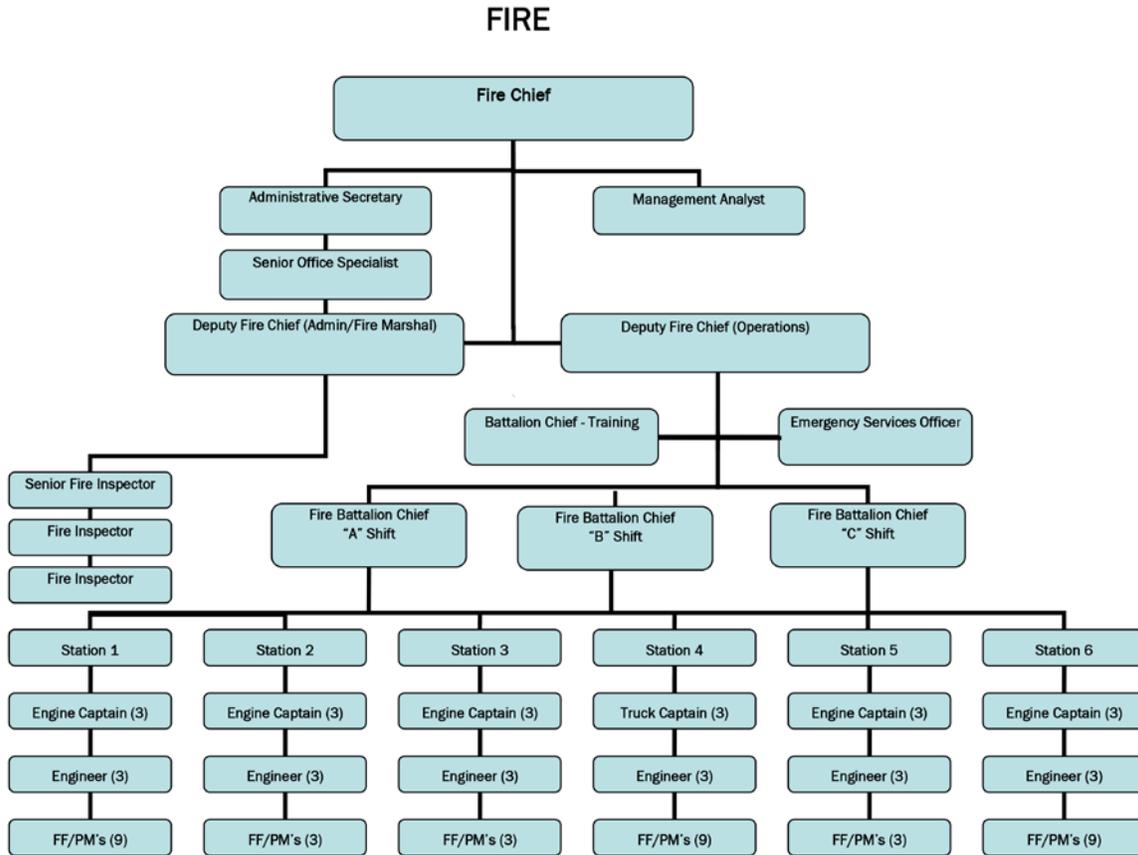
Located seven miles inland from the Pacific Ocean in northern San Diego County, the terrain varies from inland valleys to mountains and has a mix of light industry, commercial, residential, urban interface and wildland areas. Vista also includes portions of unincorporated San Diego County to the north and east, with a county island in the central west portion of the city. These 19 square miles of unincorporated area make up the Vista Fire Protection District which contracts with the City of Vista to provide fire protection services. This district combined with the City of Vista's 19 square miles constitutes the 38 square mile response area of the Vista Fire Department.





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Organizational Structure



UPDATED 03/16/2015

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.



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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.

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;

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



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- **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.

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.

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



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Performance Assessment

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

The Community-Driven Strategic Planning Process Outline

The specific steps of the process are as follows:

1. Define the 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 the Vista 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 Minnick for his leadership and commitment to this process.

Development of the VFD's strategic plan took place in October 2014, during which time representatives from the CPSE and the VFD 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: Vista Fire Department's External Stakeholders

<i>Daniel Alvarado</i>	<i>Melody Campbell</i>	<i>Margo Cobian</i>	<i>John Conley</i>
<i>Dave Cowles</i>	<i>Chuck Crist</i>	<i>Beverly Cusmano</i>	<i>Bill de la Fuente</i>
<i>Claudia Faulk</i>	<i>Robert Fougner</i>	<i>Robert Franks</i>	<i>Norm Halus</i>
<i>Kevin Ham</i>	<i>LaVonn Hines</i>	<i>Stephanie Jackel</i>	<i>Brett Killeen</i>
<i>Norma A. Morocco</i>	<i>Pat Morocco</i>	<i>Richard Hemenez</i>	<i>Dale Nielsen</i>
<i>Judy Ritter</i>	<i>Bret Schanzenbach</i>	<i>Linda Strand</i>	



Picture 1 External Stakeholders Work Session



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Community Group Findings

A key element of the VFD'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 invited community representatives to participate in a meeting focusing on the community's 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 to services most desired by its community, the VFD 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 Vista Fire Department

PROGRAMS	RANKING	SCORE
Emergency Medical Services	1	144
Fire Suppression	2	128
Rescue - Basic and Technical	3	109
Wildland Firefighting	4	80
Hazardous Materials Mitigation	5	58
Fire Prevention	6	52
Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response	7	46
Public Fire/EMS Safety Education	8	34
Fire Investigation	9	33



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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 Vista Fire Department
(verbatim, in priority order)**

1. Prompt response to emergencies. Rapid response. Help comes in a timely manner when called.
2. Specially trained staff for all aspects - especially dealing with the hurt or traumatized. Effective training (cross training).
3. Community outreach. Train and reach out to the community to give knowledge on how to prevent emergencies or handle them. Provide education and assistance to our community to be better prepared for when a disaster occurs.
4. Respond to every incident in the most professional manner as possible. Professional interface.
5. Emergency services.
6. State-of-the-art in equipment and procedures.
7. Focus on emergency at hand.
8. When arriving to an emergency, to be prepared and ready to handle. Be prepared to respond to any fire, large or small, in the City of Vista and surrounding unincorporated areas.
9. Personnel will use resources wisely - both dollars and materials/equipment. Maximize the most "bang for the buck."
10. Helpful attitude and clear information given before, during, and after an emergency. Effective communicators.
11. Checking to make sure fire prevention is maintained. Clearing brush areas and informing businesses and residents of what they need to do to prevent a fire from happening.
12. To keep the public safe.
13. Be highly visible in the community at civic functions, etc. Get involved in community activities - open fire stations for community events or to support small community organizations.
14. Accountable.
15. That 911 responders understand that a call to lift a resident cannot help assist in standing, the call must be made. The expectation is to not have the responders angry with staff.
16. To honorably and effectively serve the citizens and all stakeholders in the City of Vista.
17. Have a diverse workforce that represents the cultural makeup of our community.
18. To keep property damage to a minimum.
19. Try to determine the seriousness of the call - will one vehicle be adequate versus two?
20. Ethical.
21. Personable.
22. Safety consultants.
23. Area coverage.
24. Personnel put the needs of the community before the needs of themselves.
25. Highest caliber personnel attainable.



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26. To undertake duties in a supportive and helpful manner.
27. Assist the victims as much as possible.
28. You will be compassionate, understanding our distress, helping us to do the right thing.
29. Since most calls are medical assistance calls, have a smaller second unit attend.
30. Maintain adequate staffing in administrative and senior positions - pull from within.
31. Positive attitudes to work together and with the city.
32. Collaborative.
33. To provide your public service and remember that you are part of a team of public employees with the mission of providing the best customer and emergency services to all who live, work and play in Vista.
34. Understand the infrastructure of our roads to provide a prompt response to emergencies and provide feedback to the city where roads could be connected and/or improved.
35. Make effort to find ways to cut cost of department.
36. Well informed about specific attributes of the community; particularly as to how they affect the department's services.
37. To have property owners to clean dry weeds.
38. Friendly outreach to the community.
39. All personnel are EMTs.
40. Explorer program to train young people for future Vista firefighters.
41. Responsive.
42. Enforcement of "red zone" parking areas. (May be a police function?)
43. Notification for elderly people when they need to leave an area - they are not all computer savvy.
44. To pursue excellence in the role you are in currently and always.
45. The fire department to be courteous and helpful with all citizens.
46. Live in the community they service.
47. Be good ambassadors for the city.
48. Transparent communication of performance metrics and achievement.
49. Quality service.
50. You will regard this community as your community.
51. Continue high level of service.
52. To avoid isolating yourselves to believe you are the most important part of the workforce in the city.



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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 Vista Fire Department
(verbatim, in no particular order)**

• How businesses see and respond to fire prevention code issues. They need to see as helpful, but many times do not.
• Cost for services; make it clearer to public what the dollars go for.
• Cost of and for services / operations.
• Interface (during emergencies) with sheriff department.
• Loss of ambulance at the Taylor station.
• Maintaining leading edge in technology.
• Maintaining high level of morale.
• Avoiding becoming too insular in attitude about best practices and policies.
• Appreciation of level of resources prudently available from the community.
• Cost of overtime.
• Cost on general fund to maintain this portion of safety and security.
• Do not agree with firefighters association taking political sides or playing politics.
• Minority recruitment.
• Outreach to the community (on going education).
• The fire department needs the city to improve the road and streets to connect allowing more than one entry to a neighborhood or area. If the main entry to a neighborhood is blocked then there should be alternative entries to a street or neighborhood. In some cases a fire road exists, however the road is gated and <u>only</u> allows entry by the fire department with the use of a key. Everyone should be provided access to alternative routes and those routes should be improved as a street.
• Since the overall makeup of Vista is Latino/Hispanic then the fire department should have employees that speak Spanish and understands the culture. If they do not currently have Spanish speakers then they can hire translators.
• Enough firefighters and paramedics to handle the growing community.
• The firefighters should be visiting and giving feedback to businesses and community members to help with prevention.
• Follow up with schools on fire safety and interact with the community - instead of the "fire drill" or basic teacher lecture – a firefighter visit will be much more effective.
• One concern is the fire code visits to businesses – instead of coming in as a safety consultant who is trying to create a safe work environment – sometimes they come in as a road block to business.
• I would like to see them advise businesses on cost effective ways to create a safe environments instead of just quoting chapter and verse of city code, etc.



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- When taking calls at schools, ensure one person of crew is responsible for establishing a reassuring tone / communication so young children are not scared.
- Balance code compliance with educational programs/outreach/relationship building.
- Visit/give schools feedback on drills so they may improve their practice.
- Question: In the event of an active shooter in a public space, are fire rescue personnel held at bay until police secure scene?
- Advocate for coordinated training / parallel response to save lives.
- Ensure that the FD is aware of the trauma that victims have when treating them.
- The public is not fully aware of the programs of surrounding communities have in sending FD vehicles and personnel outside of Vista.
- To inform the community that all staff are paramedics.
- To inform the community that the neighbor cities are able and willing to assist each other.
- Very concerned, reference numerous families living garages.
- No concerns – feel you already fulfill my expectations.
- Excessive sirens?
- Could use more public interface with school programs and Explorer program.
- We need to bring pay up to median.
- Internal negative attitudes.
- Lots of new firefighter / paramedics – experience and history are important retention / recruitment.
- That our firefighters get relief when battling a fire(s) to make sure they can get breaks to rest and recuperate.
- Long term funding and desire for increased wages.
- Unfunded pension liability.
- Expectations of staff for higher pay and better benefits.
- Return the best people – promote from within.
- 100% commitment to the citizens, the city and department.
- Escalating retirement costs (PERS).
- Insurance, surety, and risk expense.
- Preparations made for staff to promote / be prepared for advancement.
- Dedication to selfless public service.
- Make sure staff is friendly and respectful during code enforcement visits.
- I have heard rumors that some fire people have “injuries” that they get permanent disability for life (when in reality this is just a model to not work, but to collect money). Not sure if this is true.....maybe urban legend.
- I would like to be sure they have the best equipment to fit our area to give them more effective and safer response to any fire, particularly large ones.
- When I look at the very fancy fire station on Melrose, I wonder if better equipment / less beautiful building = better ROI.
- Maybe some training in street closure near fire areas – there was a fire near us on a busy street and it seems like traffic was blocked inside the area of danger (streets blocked at wrong end).



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- Make sure businesses and owners' clear bush near community streets. There were a couple of small fires near our business that burned quickly up the brushy dry hillside. It's still dry and brushy there with burned trees.
- That the fire department notes they are being called when called from a skill nursing that regulations from the state dictate nurses must call for falls when resident has hit their head.
- That staff from nursing home must call when a resident complaints of chest pain or shortness of breath.
- If a resident asks staff to call and the resident does not have a cognitive impairment, for pain of any kind a staff member must call.
- After a patient is pronounced dead (at a skilled nursing facility) why do the paramedics leave the patient on the floor?
- Nurses have not memorized every detail of every patient's medication list, history, allergies, and family member.
- Please approach patients with a brief introduction. Have one person talk and ask questions of the patient. More than one person firing questions at elderly person causes confusion and panic.
- Firefighter dedication to the agency.
- Expectations of the firefighters.
- Morale of staff.
- Staff investment into the higher education for own development.
- Vehicle / fire engine safe driving.



Picture 2 External Stakeholders 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 of 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 Vista Fire Department
(verbatim, in no particular order)**

• I am very proud of our FD and wish it continued success and safety in protecting the people of Vista.
• I have had 911 calls to my home and both occasions the FD was exceptional.
• Chief is accessible.
• Department is responsive.
• Equipment is updated.
• Prevention seems to be working well – few large structure fires.
• Community, with its geography, should be prone to large brush / neighborhood fires, but that isn’t happening.
• Well trained enthusiastic force.
• Great camaraderie in the firehouse.
• Clean stations and equipment.
• Great “Dinner with Firemen” raffle prizes.
• Certified as leader in nation.
• When the guys come out to community events – they have a great attitude and interact well with the public.
• They take an active role in community which is appreciated.
• Fire Chief is accessible.
• Personally....all three of my children were involved in a car accident last February. I was not in the car and arrived scared and worried to the scene. The emergency staff handled the situation with confidence and ease. They helped my children feel SAFE and cared for. I could not have asked for a better group of people to handle it. THANK YOU.
• The Vista Fire Department has an excellent image in the community and they are well respected with their citizens.
• They get the job done.
• Willing to take risks to help others.
• Well trained, well led – terrific and personable management team.
• Very conversant and comfortable with technology.
• Solid relationship with surrounding community.
• High spirit of professionalism.
• This department appears and acts professionally.
• Executive staff is very good about connecting and communicating with community leaders and public.
• They are very responsive.



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- They keep us safe.
- VFD personnel spoken highly of regarding 911 responses.
- The senior VFD personnel and leadership values, ethics, and standards are exemplary and I hope the newer / younger personnel learn from their experience.
- I won a silent auction item a few years back to have dinner with a firehouse crew. They made me and my guest a wonderful dinner and spent a great deal of time touring, orienting, and educating us about life as a fire person, operations, and equipment. Very informative and memorable.
- I have yet to have any direct dealings with the fire department – so I'd say they are doing a fine job as a whole.
- Most paramedics and fire people are kind to nurses and patients.
- The firefighters and paramedics are calm and efficient in medical emergency situations that do not occur every day for the nursing facility staff.
- We appreciate the quick response to our calls.
- We appreciate the professionalism when treating a resident as they are looking to the responder for support.
- The patience with memory impaired residents is always appreciated.
- The first responders come out and educate from time to time.
- Management dedication to community
- Department commitment to continuous improvement.
- Training and development of new hires.
- Very well trained and led.
- Great attitude and people skills.
- The current chief is excellent and the senior admin staff.
- The current level of service is excellent and appreciated.
- I have had to call the paramedics and fire department via 911 on at least 3 occasions involving both my grandparents and mother. Each and every single time the response time was excellent! They handled the situation so efficiently, professionally and as courteous as could be. I knew that, should I have to call on them again, we are excellent hands.
- We have the best firefighters and paramedics in the county and we are known for that.
- Proud of the national certification you received – one of 200 cities in the nation.
- Always well received by community and kids love you – great community events.
- Always known for best Explorer training program in the county.



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Other Thoughts and Comments

Participants also shared the following written comments about VFD and/or its services:

**Table 6: Other Community Comments about the Vista Fire Department
(verbatim, in no particular order)**

• Thank you for what you do for the City of Vista.
• I am personally grateful for the two new stations, thank you very much.
• Vista loves our firefighters and paramedics.
• As a Vista resident I am very happy to belong to a community that has such an amazing and excellent fire department! I feel a sense of peace and relief knowing that we have the best fire department that responds quickly and effectively.
• Thank you for all your services.
• I view the VFD as a well-run, well managed team. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.
• They are doing a great job!
• My parents live in a mobile home park where the San Marcos Escondido fire was last spring. They did not know they needed to evacuate until the park managers went door to door – and were scolded for not being gone. They had no idea what was happening. Thanks for saving the park – but is there a way to contact them earlier?
• Keep up the effort to serve others faithfully throughout this fine city and organization.
• My contacts with community members indicate that the department is held in high regard. Let's keep it that way.
• We enjoy first rate metropolitan quality of service in a semi-rural community.
• Terrific team!!!
• Open forums at the fire departments would be helpful as the fire department visiting schools and businesses.
• It makes no sense at all to not allow "Santa" to ride on the back of a fire truck (Vista fire truck) for the Christmas parade.
• Provide competitive compensation to attract and keep the best.
• Thank you for getting our input.



Picture 3 External Stakeholders Work Session



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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 VFD's Mission, Values, Core Programs and Support Services, as well as the agency's perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. The work sessions involved participation by the broad agency representation in attendance, as named and pictured below.

Table 7: Vista Fire Department's Internal Stakeholders

Marilyn Anderson <i>ESO</i>	Chris Arens <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>	Matt Botz <i>Captain</i>	Sal Castaneda <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
Cary Childress <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>	Diane Collier <i>Captain</i>	Joseph Denhalter <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>	Emily Downing <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
Scott Duncan <i>Battalion Chief</i>	Mike Easterling <i>Battalion Chief</i>	Cindy Graciano <i>Management Analysis</i>	Brian Gregson <i>Captain</i>
Jeff Hahn <i>Deputy Chief</i>	Brendan Hammes <i>Captain</i>	Chris Hammond <i>Engineer</i>	Chris Jones <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
David Kennedy <i>Captain</i>	Eric Kilpatrick <i>Captain</i>	Greg McClellan <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>	Brien McDonald <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>
Rick Minnick <i>Fire Chief</i>	Casey Montes <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>	Joe Napier <i>Battalion Chief</i>	Marty Parish <i>Battalion Chief</i>
Chris Place <i>Engineer</i>	Chano Ramos <i>Engineer</i>	Matt Ryan <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>	Abel Santana <i>Engineer</i>
Hans Schmidt <i>Inspector</i>	Jeff Schroeder <i>Captain</i>	Mark Standifird <i>Captain</i>	Miles Sweeney <i>Captain</i>
Graig Usher <i>Captain</i>	Ross Vagelatos <i>Engineer</i>	Ned Vander Pol <i>Deputy Chief</i>	Mark Vierow <i>Inspector</i>
Steve Wecklich <i>Captain</i>		Francis Wirtz <i>Firefighter/Paramedic</i>	



Picture 4 Internal Stakeholders



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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 VFD’s internal stakeholders met to review the existing Mission and collectively agreed to the following.

Table 8: Mission of Vista Fire Department

<i>The Vista Fire Department is committed to ensuring the safety and maintaining the trust of our community, by providing professional service through teamwork and integrity.</i>

Values

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

Table 9: Values of Vista Fire Department

We understand that the success of the VFD is dependent on our exceptional customer service, which is achieved through these core values:
Wellness – Integrity – Professionalism – Unity - Leadership
We are committed to the safety and wellness of our organization and community through education, training and fitness.
We act with integrity in all aspects of our organization and the community we serve by committing to the highest ethical and moral standards.
We value professionalism and take pride in honorably serving our community in a timely manner, with respect, trust, and empathy.
We embrace unity in our organization by fostering open lines of communication that recognize the values, diversity and heritage of our personnel and community.
We value leadership which is committed to a knowledgeable, innovative and fiscally responsible organization. We are leaders in our department, in our profession and in the community we serve.

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 VFD 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 VFD internal stakeholders identified the following core programs provided to the community, as well as the services that enable the agency to deliver these programs:

Table 10: Core Programs of Vista Fire Department

• Emergency Medical Services	• Fire Suppression
• Rescue – Basic and Technical	• Wildland Firefighting
• Hazardous Materials Mitigation	• Fire Prevention
• Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response	• Public Fire/EMS Safety Education
• Fire Investigation	

Table 11: Support Services of Vista Fire Department

• Human Resources	• Dispatch	• Schools
• Senior Volunteers	• Fleet Maintenance	• Churches
• Information Technology	• Vendors	• Red Cross
• Facilities Maintenance	• Law Enforcement	• Burn Institute
• Public Works	• Hospitals	• CERT
• Mutual/Automatic Aid Agreements	• San Diego Gas & Electric	
• Charitable Organizations	• Air Ambulance	• Coast Guard
• Service Clubs	• Chamber of Commerce	• Railroads
• Water Purveyors	• Local 4107 IAFF	• Technical Specialists
• Community College	• City Council	• Lynx Technology
• Other City Departments	• Fire Protection District	• Billing Company
• Trauma Intervention Program (TIP) Volunteers	• Training	

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 VFD 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



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rate of return on staff time. Through a consensus process, the internal stakeholders identified the strengths of the VFD as follows:

Table 12: Strengths of Vista Fire Department

Station distribution – facilities – amenities	Highly trained
Wellness program	Equipment – PPE, apparatus, tools
People	Technology
Standards	Accountable
Quality of calls (execution)	Input at all levels
Empowerment	Adaptability
Reputation	Labor / management
Community oriented - 4107	Involvement in Joint Apprenticeship
Charitable work – 4107	Committee (JAC)
Dedicated / passionate / commitment	EMS program
Call volume philosophies	Young workforce
Level of training / education	Accredited
Diverse skill sets / backgrounds	Customer service
Progressive	Passionate
Patient care / bedside manner	Employee Assistance Program
Mentoring (internal and external)	Crew Resource Management (CRM)
Camaraderie	Innovative
Family oriented	Staffing levels (constant)
Fire Prevention Bureau	In house academy
Administration cooperation	Cooperation w/ multi agencies
Fiscally responsible	Motivated
Probationary involvement	



Picture 5 Internal Stakeholders Work Session



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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 Vista Fire Department

Communications	Lack of experience
Retention	Lack of training (high level)/ facilities
Low pay	Morale
Lack of succession planning (career development)	Diversity within the department does not reflect the community
Lack of engagement	Language barrier (bilingual)
Staff reduction (loss of truck / ambulance)	Complacency
Reliability of reserve apparatus – to meet need and length of service (standards)	Lack of prevention staff/ public education
Technology (FPB / inspections)	Lack of training cache
Empathy	Lack of number of chief officer
Academy length	Lack of a reserve program
Lack of dedicated 4-man truck	Explorer post
Labor / management relations	Internal trust
Minimal time to train	Lack of training facility
Lack of 4 person staffing all units	Sleep deprivation
Aging stations (Stations 2, 3 and 4)	Rumor mongering
Internal funding	Physical training not always a priority
Ego	Generation gap
Not fulfilling all goals of last strategic plan	Entitlement
Loss of institutional knowledge and experience	Lack of pride
Ambulance loss / ambulance call volume	Contingency planning – retirements
Disconnect between floor and administration	Consolidation support



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Long term injuries	Micro-management
Interdepartmental / outside community misconceptions	Lack of department support staff (Secretaries, Training Captain, etc.)
Outdated policies and procedures (too many)	Declining staffing levels
Engineer / company officer development	Department cohesiveness
Lack of an internal Certified Pump Operator program	Time management (calls, demands, training, wellness)
Arrogance (ego, dismissive, professional)	Emotional wellness – stress
Reduced funding for external training	Balance (life / work)



Picture 6 Internal Stakeholders Work Session



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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 Vista Fire Department

Grants	Training / instructing
Education	Technology
Consolidation	Community involvement
Community goodwill	Regionalization
Explorer program	Affordable Care Act
Senior volunteer program	Reserve program
Social media	Tiered dispatch
Media / Press	Marketing
Rancho Buena Vista High School internship program	Multi-agency cooperation – equipment, labor
Cost recovery (inspections)	Climate change
Development / Re-development	Emergency preparedness
Co-op Vista community clinic	Specialized training
Community paramedicine	Multinational fire agency (Swap)
Accreditation	Public support
Leadership development	Growing economy
201 ownership	Call diversity
Operational management	Labor management
Political support	Public education / CPR
Interdepartmental education	Academy (fire) involvement
Diversity (workforce)	Public visibility
Team building	Joint Apprenticeship Committee (JAC)
Morale improvement – no cost items	48/96 schedule
Family involvement (family activities/culture)	External relationships – colleges, hospitals, sponsorships
Dedicated truck	4 th ambulance
Citizen support	Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) / Dispatch
Law enforcement support	Fleet services



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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 Vista Fire Department

Other departments	Environmental threats (WMD, biological)
Fiscal threats	Drought
Federal and state mandates – unfunded mandates	Public perception about workers compensation
Politics	Pension costs/reforms
Private ambulance (201 , EOAs)	Rising call volume (population added)
Community paramedicine	External perception
Retention	Training mandates
Quality recruitment	Changing demographics
Campaign fires	Increasing population density
Faulty equipment	Public perceptions
Disasters	911 abuse
Philosophies / FD trends	Aging population
Language barriers	Grant cuts
Local infrastructure	Terrorism
Labor negotiations	Pandemic effects – Ebola
Hospital offload delays	Technology (hackers, being filmed etc.)
Privatization	Wildland urban interface
Affordable Care Act - Health care costs	Access roads
Water supply	Storm water run-offs
Local hospitals, declining finances	County fire authority
Political relationships	Interdepartmental relationships
Media / Social media	Healthcare access



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Critical Issues and Service Gaps

After reviewing the VFD'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 vision for the future.

Table 16: Critical Issues and Service Gap Issues Identified

Training	Internal Communications	Retention and Recruitment
Labor Management	Perception	Unfunded Mandates
Equipment and Facilities	Personnel Development	Succession Planning
Community Outreach	Diversity	Expectations
Physical Resources	External Communications	Wellness



Picture 7 Internal Stakeholders Work Session



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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 Vista Fire Department

Internal Communications	Community Outreach	Staffing
Personnel Development	Training	Retention
Sustainability of Service Delivery		

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 VFD. In order to achieve the mission of the VFD, 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 VFD 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 VFD 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

Since 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 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.



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Goal 1 Improve and enhance internal communications.

Objective 1A	Identify communication pathways, roadblocks, and practices.		
Timeframe	12 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a taskforce to identify current communication road blocks. • Develop department newsletters / blogs (etc.) utilizing digital media. • Establish regularly scheduled Captain / all hands meetings. • Identify current successful communication methods. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Objective 1B	Develop top down communications that encourages and rewards open collaboration that establishes a feedback loop.		
Timeframe	3 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement department “few notes” email to include lessons learned, near misses, kudos, and “caught in the act” from staff review co-Captain submissions (Captain ID’s call and sends to BCs). • Conduct department wide survey to solicit input to identify communication suggestions / identify problems. • Develop solutions to address feedback from survey. • Train personnel in the use of developed solutions. • Implement new processes. • Conduct follow up survey to measure effectiveness of installed processes. • Report findings 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Objective 1C	Enhance labor management communication.		
Timeframe	3 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly scheduled meetings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -agreed/approved minutes by all -mutual trust and respect -scheduled outside of regular staff meetings • Labor management to attend the LMI program. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	



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Goal 2	Enhance and implement outreach programs to meet the needs and expectations of our community.		
Objective 2A	Analyze and identify current programs.		
Timeframe	3 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form a committee for community outreach enhancement. • Evaluate current programs and resources for community outreach. • Evaluate current resources. • Report findings for further goal pursuit. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	
Objective 2B	Analyze and identify community outreach needs and expectations.		
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form a committee to evaluate the outreach needs and expectations of the community. • Perform a community risk analysis with outreach in mind. • Solicit community input on needs and expectations. • Report findings for further goal pursuit. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	
Objective 2C	Develop programs to meet the identified community needs and expectations.		
Timeframe	3 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify possible revenues sources to support the proposed programs. • Identify community partnerships for program delivery. • Develop an instructor cadre. • Submit for staff approval. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	
Objective 2D	Implement the developed community outreach programs.		
Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine all target audiences per program. • Provide community outreach to all target audiences. • Distribute focused advertising to multiple media outlets. • Deliver programs. • Solicit feedback. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	
Objective 2E	Conduct an evaluation of programs to determine if existing resources are adequate to meet the needs and expectations of the community.		
Timeframe	Annually	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate individual program effectiveness. • Revise programs based on needs. • Proceed with revised program. • Continue to gather feedback on revised programs. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	



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Goal 3	Develop an effective program of optimal employee staffing to ensure the safety of those we serve and their evolving needs.
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Objective 3A	Analyze the effectiveness of our current staffing levels.		
Timeframe	12 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the department's Standard of Cover. Examine national standards for effective staffing levels. Analyze the current staffing on all operational levels. Analyze the current staffing levels for the Fire Prevention Bureau. Analyze the current administrative staffing levels. Analyze commitment times for positions. Conduct a comparative analysis of like size and scope departments. Prepare report on current staffing and deliver the report. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Objective 3B	Identify projected staffing needs for the next five-year period.		
Timeframe	3 Months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compile statistics for the last 5 years to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Call volume -Call type -Population changes -Response times -Commitment times Identify trends for projected needs. Report findings. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Objective 3C	Prepare a comprehensive staffing plan and costs to meet the projected community needs.		
Timeframe	24 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify costs of personnel based on the projection. Identify costs of equipment needed based on the projection. Identify potential facility needs based on the projections. Identify staffing benchmarks. Identify additional revenue sources. Generate and deliver a comprehensive staffing and needs report. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	



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Objective 3D	Approval and implementation of staffing changes.		
Timeframe	24 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain approval from city executives. • Present plan to external stakeholders. • Present plan to internal stakeholders. • Implement approved staffing plan. • Re-evaluate the staffing plan on a five year cycle. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Goal 4 Retain a highly trained and experienced workforce.

Objective 4A	Identify employee retention issues.		
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze employee turnover over a ten-year period. • Identify cause of employee turnover. • Identify impact to the organization. • Perform a regional survey. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Objective 4B	Analyze and compile results of retention data.		
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a working group to devise a report. • Devise a plan utilizing retention data to include cost, implementation, and scheduling. • Present plan to all internal stakeholders. • Present plan to external stakeholders. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Objective 4C	Approval and implementation of programs and processes to retain employees		
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and obtain approval of elements of retention plan through appropriate levels. • Implement elements of plan as approved with workgroup oversight. • Re-evaluate retention plan at the end of three years or as needed. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	



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Goal 5

Enhance the professional development of our members.

Objective 5A	Identify all personnel's current level of education and certification.		
Timeframe	2 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile a list of each member and their education and certification. • Determine pertinent and relevant education and certification to pre-determined needs. • Continuously update the list and database. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Objective 5B	Identify the desired certifications, qualifications and education specific to each rank.		
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze local, state and national standards and best practices. • Identify what is required and desired for the department. • Identify the needs and expectations of the community. • Identify all personnel's desired goals (educational and career). • Establish a committee for future direction. • Re-evaluate this process at least annually. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Objective 5C	Implement procedures to assist members in attaining the desired education and certifications.		
Timeframe	1 year	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify alternate means of funding. • Identify current funding mechanisms/methods and evaluate effectiveness. • Explore and create incentives relevant to educational and certification accomplishments. • Re-evaluate annually for effectiveness and revise as needed. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Objective 5D	Re-evaluate and enhance the wellness program for all personnel.		
Timeframe	3 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify areas for improvement in the current program. • Analyze/review local, state, and national standards. • Investigate needs for minimum departmental standards. • Re-evaluate annually for effectiveness and revise as needed. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	



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Objective 5E	Create a succession planning program.		
Timeframe	18-24 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify potential future opening 1, 3, 5 years. • Create a list of future vacancies • Provide opportunities to facilitate personnel growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Task book -Desirable certs, education. -Certification program • Develop an all rank mentoring program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -BC fit, CPO, rank shadow program • Re-evaluate annually for effectiveness. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Goal 6 Improve and develop training of the Vista Fire Department.

Objective 6A	Identify current and future training needs.		
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form a working group • Inventory training cache • Identify funding sources • Identify training facility needs • Identify current strengths and weaknesses 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Objective 6B	Develop a plan to meet training needs.		
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize training needs • Address training mandates • Develop annual training plan • Coordinate with zone training resources 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Objective 6C	Develop a plan for additional training staff.		
Timeframe	1 year	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop job analysis • ID funding source • Collect data on like business models 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	



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Objective 6D	Identify EMS educational needs and gaps.		
Timeframe	12 – 18 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate funding sources for guest speakers • Participate in department training committee • Develop paramedic presented CEs • Enhance EMS training supplies and equipment • Incorporate QI based CEs • Solicit P.A.C. input on educational needs 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Objective 6E	Expand department specialization		
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding source • Develop subject matter qualifications • Maintain 80% department wide (RS1) certification level of operational personnel (LARRO, RS-1, trench, swift water, confined space) 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Goal 7 Institute a process to forecast the needs of our evolving community and address those needs through sustainable programs.

Objective 7A	Identify internal and external threats and opportunities.		
Timeframe	Ongoing – as needed	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form a committee. • Analyze industry trends. • Analyze local influences. • Analyze civic trends. • Analyze government regulations. • Identify impact to our organization. 		
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:	

Objective 7B	Develop a change process to meet the evolving needs of our community.		
Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to:	Staff Advisor:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forecast the need for change. • Develop a standard approach for change. • Implement the developed approach. • Evaluate the outcome. 		
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 VFD a vision for the future of the agency. This vision provides a target of excellence that the organization will strive toward and provides a basis for its goals and objectives.

Table 18: Vision of the Vista Fire Department

It is the vision of the Vista Fire Department to be an accomplished service provider that is recognized for its commitment to the safety, needs, and expectations of our community through a purposeful demonstration of department values.

Wellness: Our vision is for an organization that embraces a wellness culture, incorporating physical and mental wellness in our workplace. This will enable us to provide services that support the safety and wellness of our community.

Integrity: We will meet the needs of our community and fulfill the mission of our organization with integrity in all of our actions, efforts, and communications.

Professionalism: We will hold one another accountable for fulfilling our responsibilities by being highly trained, prepared, motivated, and efficient as we meet the challenges of our mission.

Unity: We will demonstrate unity by our teamwork, cooperation, participation, and communication as we serve the community.

Leadership: Leadership is at the heart of our individual and department goals, actualized by leading as individuals in the fire service and in our community.



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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 VFD'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 VFD 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 developmental 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 VFD’s strategic plan will depend not only upon implementation of the goals and their related objectives, but also upon support received from the authority having jurisdiction, from the membership of the agency, and from 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 that the community-driven strategic planning process is kept dynamic and is supported by effective leadership and active participation, it will be a significant opportunity to unify internal and external stakeholders through a jointly developed understanding of organizational direction. Within the organizational direction, all vested parties work to achieve the mission, goals, vision, and organization measures while being 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
CFAI	Commission on Fire Accreditation International
CPSE	Center for Public Safety Excellence
CRNB	Chemical, radiological, nuclear, biological
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.
DOE	Department of Energy
Efficiency	A performance indication where inputs are measured per unit of output (or vice versa).
EMR	Emergency Management - LANL
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
Environment	Circumstances and conditions (e.g.: economic, political, cultural, and physical), inside or outside boundaries, that interact with/affect an organization.
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FLSA	Fair Labor Standards Act
GED	General Education Diploma
Haz-mat	Hazardous materials
Input	A performance indication where the value of resources are used to produce an output.
IFSAC	International Fire Service Accreditation Congress
ISO	Insurance Services Office
IT/IM	Information Technology / Information Management
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.
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration



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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.
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PSA	Public Service Announcement
Q & A	Quality and Assurance.
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 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.
USFS	United States Forestry Service
Vision	An idealized view of a desirable and potentially achievable future state - where or what an organization would like to be in the future.
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction



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