

COLORADO SPRINGS FIRE DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN 2012-2016

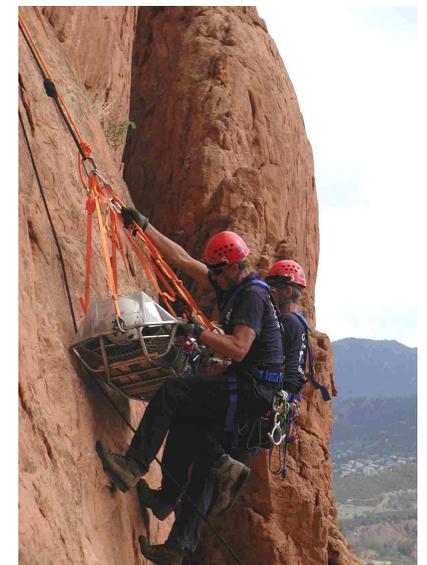


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FIRE DEPARTMENT
Rich Brown
Fire Chief

January 3, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

In 2011, a work group was formed with the intent to produce a strategic plan for the Colorado Springs Fire Department. Through many meetings and lengthy discussions, the following is the product of that work. The strategic plan not only outlines our mission and values, it also provides strategies and outcomes to guide us to becoming a world class fire department. We believe we have a strategic planning process that will assist the Colorado Springs Fire Department in meeting the mission.

As with all plans, the only way it will work is if we all embrace the plan and work together to achieve the mission. The first step was writing the plan. The next step will be applying the actions necessary to achieve the outcomes. The work group considers this the first version of the plan. It is a dynamic document that will go through many versions prior to meeting the mission. As new ideas are identified and old ones become unworkable, the plan will be revised.

The strategic plan, in conjunction with the accreditation process, is intended to be the framework for our future.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Rich Brown
Fire Chief

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Colorado Springs Fire Department Strategic Plan summarizes the department's key goals and objectives for the next five years, 2012-2016. The department has not had a strategic plan since 2008 and department leaders believed it was critical to the success of the organization to implement a new strategic plan. The goals and objectives contained in this plan will help guide the department in continuing to satisfy the mission statement and providing core services to the community.

The strategic planning process was started in August, 2011, when all divisions were asked to develop an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (S.W.O.T.). Each division submitted its own S.W.O.T. analysis, which was then given to the management team for review. A strategic planning retreat was conducted and included the Fire Chief and his direct reports, as well as the Fire Marshal. This group conducted a S.W.O.T. analysis for the department as a whole, from which a list of specific goals was developed.

The five major goals are:

1. Strengthen the delivery of our core services to provide the best value to the community we serve.
2. Encourage innovation and creativity that results in the most efficient use of our resources.
3. Promote the safety of employees and the community through comprehensive education and training.
4. Maintain a highly effective, efficient, and diverse workforce.
5. Engage the community and our employees in creating an effective and consistent exchange of information.

After the strategic planning retreat, these five goals were communicated to the divisions with the assignment of developing objectives to support and facilitate these goals. The divisions met again within their specific units to complete this task. Another meeting was held with the management team to review and discuss every objective to decide where it would fit in the overall strategic plan and a final plan was completed.

The management team included the following: Fire Chief, Deputy Chief of Operations, Deputy Chief of Support Services, Finance, Planning and Analysis Manager, Fire Marshal, and Director of Emergency Management. The development of the S.W.O.T. analyses and strategic objectives included Battalion Chiefs, division supervisors, and staff. Unfortunately, due to resource and budgetary constraints, external stakeholder input was not solicited during this process. The management team agreed that when this plan is renewed in five years a public input process will be used.

The goals and objectives contained in this strategic plan are items that the department has identified as important, but with the understanding that it is not a budget document. Financial constraints over the past several years have restricted and even eliminated some services formerly provided by the department. These goals and objectives were developed in spite of this fact with the idea that the department will explore new and creative ways to implement them, such as procuring non-traditional sources of funding.

This strategic plan will be reviewed annually to document progress and discuss relevance. A constantly changing economic and political climate may drive the need to change direction and adjust goals accordingly. The entire strategic planning process will take place no later than 2016 for the following five years.

DEPARTMENT PROFILE:

The City of Colorado Springs marked its beginning on July 31, 1871, when the first stake was driven at what is now the southeast corner of Cascade and Pikes Peak Avenues. Fire prevention and protection activities began not long after with a volunteer department. On January 29, 1894, the city council held a special meeting and introduced an ordinance organizing a paid department and disbanding the volunteers. The Colorado Springs Fire Department went into service on February 12, 1894, with one fire station, a staff of six and a horse-drawn pumper.

Today, the department has 20 fire stations, 468 full-time employees, and 30 front-line emergency apparatus. These apparatus include 20 engine companies, six truck companies, a heavy rescue team, a hazardous materials response team, and two medical squads. Additionally, the department has 11 brush trucks for wildland firefighting, one air supply truck, one hazardous materials decontamination vehicle, and one hose wagon.

Fire stations are staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week with daily minimum staffing of 115 personnel. Major programs include Hazardous Materials Response, Heavy Rescue, High Angle Rescue, and Wildfire Suppression, with many other programs that support the department's mission. The Colorado Springs Fire Department is the first responder on all medical emergencies within the city, as well as the provider of all fire code enforcement activities.

The department responds to an average of 50,000 calls annually and approximately 68% of those are medical emergencies. The standard for delivery of service, as established by City Council Resolution, is for arrival of the first responding unit within eight minutes or less for 90% of all calls, and arrival of minimum effective firefighting force within 12 minutes or less for 90% of calls. The all funds total for the department 2012 budget is \$57,569,786.

COMMUNITY PROFILE:

The City of Colorado Springs is located in south-central Colorado between the foothills of the Rocky Mountains and the eastern plains of Colorado. The city is 195 square miles and the elevation is 6,035 feet with an estimated 2012 population of 428,277. Colorado Springs is the state's largest city in terms of area and second only to Denver in population. The city lies in a semi-arid climate with an average snowfall of 42.7 inches annually.

There are five major military institutions in Colorado Springs: Fort Carson, Schriever Air Force Base, Peterson Air Force Base, Cheyenne Mountain Air Station, and the United States Air Force Academy. These bases are a significant factor in the local economy, constituting over 20% of all employment. Other major industries include defense contracting, healthcare, software development, semiconductor manufacturing, telecommunications, data centers, religious and nonprofit organizations, and tourism.

Some of the major attractions in Colorado Springs include Pikes Peak, Garden of the Gods, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, Broadmoor Hotel, Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame, United States Olympic Training Center, and United States Air Force Academy.

The city is serviced by the Colorado Springs Airport, where more than 2 million passengers pass through annually. The airport accommodates both commercial and military air service, as its runways are shared with neighboring Peterson Air Force Base. Colorado Springs is bisected by Interstate 25, a north-south highway that carries an average of 100,000 vehicles daily through the city.

Colorado Springs is a home-rule city and is governed by a Council-Mayor form of government, which includes a nine-member Council (five members elected at-large and four elected by district) and a popularly elected mayor. The all funds total for the city 2012 budget is \$379,897,040.

MISSION STATEMENT:

“Providing the highest quality problem solving and emergency service to our community since 1894.”

SHARED VALUES:

All members of the Department will:

- Conduct themselves in a professional manner
- Respect others and expect to be treated respectfully by others
- Act with integrity
- Strive for excellence
- Be accountable
- Remain objective in all dealings
- Be dependable
- Are expected to demonstrate a strong work ethic
- Conduct themselves in a disciplined manner
- Shall be open to innovative ways of completing the Department’s mission

CODE OF CONDUCT:

- Know policy and procedure manuals
- Treat people with respect
- Use the chain of command
- Drive in accordance with State and Federal law
- Strive toward the betterment of the CSFD
- Support the actions of the CSFD
- Do not engage in activities which are in conflict with professional duties
- Tell the truth
- Be professional
- Report the filing of criminal charges
- Keep information confidential
- Maintain equipment
- Maintain good order
- Keep accurate records
- Adhere to the established work schedule

S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

Each division conducted their own S.W.O.T. analysis. These divisions included: Operations, Medical, Training, Human Resources, Fire Marshal, and Emergency Management. The management team, with consideration of this work, then developed a S.W.O.T. analysis for the department overall (see Figure 1 below).

<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer service • Talented and capable employees • Highly efficient • Clearly defined mission • Community support • Positive reputation • Flexible/adaptable • Partnerships • Innovative • Grants 	<p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget restrictions • Employee retention • Communication • Paternal management • Organizational immaturity • Information technology support • Redundancy • Mission creep • Political awareness • Narrow view of organizational challenges
<p><u>Opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Collaboration • Partnerships • Volunteerism • Regionalization • Technology • Revenue generation • Diversity • Social media • Creativity 	<p><u>Threats</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain future • Employee morale • Workload • External negative scrutiny • Public trust • Leadership turnover • Budget • Employee retention • Economy • Political climate

Figure 1

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL #1: Strengthen the delivery of our core services to provide the best value to the community we serve.

Core service delivery is the foundation of the Colorado Springs Fire Department. The primary core services are identified as fire suppression, emergency medical services, code enforcement activities, mitigation and education. These objectives were developed to increase and enhance the standard of service delivery that is currently being provided to the citizens of the community.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1.A. Augment medical services through enhanced community health services and programs.
 - 1.A.i. Provide enhanced Advanced Life Support response capability by adding paramedics to remaining heavy apparatus after the openings of Fire Stations 21 and 22.
 - 1.A.ii. Develop strategic partnerships with community health agencies to provide enhanced community health delivery by offering staff inoculation and health wellness clinics.

- 1.B. Develop regionalization opportunities through partnerships with area fire agencies.
 - 1.B.i. Formalize partnerships with area fire departments to standardize terminology, share training and improve communications.
 - 1.B.ii. Host or participate in 3-5 regional training opportunities annually.

- 1.C. Manage the wildland risk through mitigation efforts and education.
 - 1.C.i. Mitigate a minimum of 1,000 acres primarily through grant-funded mitigation activities.
 - 1.C.ii. Develop and implement process to automatically refresh data layers in wildland urban interface mapping.

- 1.D. Maintain apparatus in an extremely high state of readiness.
 - 1.D.i. Comprehensively inspect and conduct preventive maintenance at established intervals.
 - 1.D.ii. Reduce out of service time for front-line apparatus to less than one per month.

GOAL #2: Encourage innovation and creativity that results in the most efficient use of our resources.

The Colorado Springs Fire Department has faced financial constraints in recent years as a result of city budgetary issues. The department realizes that this is beyond its control and that there are other ways to effectively use its resources. These objectives were developed to augment existing resources without the need for increased funding, and to make better use of what is currently available.

OBJECTIVES:

- 2.A Utilize the Community Advancing Public Safety (CAPS) program to expand volunteer participation in the department.
 - 2.A.i Expand Community Services capabilities by using volunteers a minimum of 4 hours per month.
 - 2.A.ii Develop volunteers through in-house training, online training and conference opportunities.

- 2.B Leverage available technology and research new opportunities to improve the department's ability to provide core services.
 - 2.B.i Expand department broadcasting capabilities and utilization.
 - 2.B.ii Enhance training delivery to employees through web-based resources.
 - 2.B.iii Develop system-wide EMS interconnectivity to establish patient data sharing between EMS and hospitals.
 - 2.B.iv Maintain apparatus in service and in their districts by completing 90% or more of non-critical repairs in the fire stations.
 - 2.B.v Develop an efficient method for hazardous materials reporting that is available to the community and a benefit to the department.

- 2.C Identify process improvements and implement cost-saving changes.
 - 2.C.i Create a Sustainability and Innovation Team.
 - 2.C.ii Develop methods to enhance response coverage to high volume run districts.
 - 2.C.iii Perform an emergency response review.
 - 2.C.iv Evaluate sustainability of CSFD programs.
 - 2.C.v Coordinate business processes with city and CSPD.

GOAL #3: Promote the safety of employees and the community through comprehensive education and training.

The safety of employees and citizens is a top priority for the Colorado Springs Fire Department. The health and fitness of employees is vital to keeping them safe while performing their duties. The safety of the community is also important to ensure that citizens remain productive and protected through their public safety services. These objectives were developed to increase methods for promoting safety.

OBJECTIVES:

- 3.A Encourage employee health, safety, wellness and fitness through education and prevention programs.
 - 3.A.i Establish a Health, Wellness and Fitness Committee to create a comprehensive wellness and fitness plan.
 - 3.A.ii Use near-miss occurrence information to enhance learning.
 - 3.A.iii Review and update of policies that govern sick leave and on/off duty injuries.
 - 3.A.iv Partner with Risk Management, CSFD Training Division and district chiefs to reduce the reoccurrence of workers compensation claims through accurate data reporting.

- 3.B Develop and offer community education and training programs designed to inform citizens of the challenges and opportunities regarding fire and personal safety.
 - 3.B.i Perform an incident response type review with follow-up community education.
 - 3.B.ii Create community oriented safety programs in conjunction with Parks and CSPD.
 - 3.B.iii Deliver the FireFactor and SafetyFactor programs to the community.
 - 3.B.iv Develop and launch a comprehensive program to educate the public on wildfire mitigation issues and grass fire potential.
 - 3.B.v Provide a minimum of 6 Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) classes to the community.

GOAL #4: Maintain a highly effective, efficient, and diverse workforce.

The Colorado Springs Fire Department places an extremely high value on its employees. Recognition for the talent, accomplishments, and desires of employees is very important in retaining and keeping them satisfied. These objectives were developed to focus on methods for creating a positive work environment.

OBJECTIVES:

- 4.A Foster an environment that recognizes our employees as a valuable part of the department.
 - 4.A.i Promote the CSFD Awards and Recognition program.
 - 4.A.ii Create annual company recognition and monthly recognition as part of the Awards and Recognition program.
 - 4.A.iii Determine the expectations and desires of employees for recognition.
 - 4.A.iv Establish a CSFD Employee Spotlight.

- 4.B Enhance service delivery through a highly trained, professional workforce.
 - 4.B.i Develop a quality assurance process focused on defined medical clinical benchmarks.
 - 4.B.ii Implement field medical supervision and oversight on every shift.
 - 4.B.iii Institute semi-annual Paramedic meetings.
 - 4.B.iv Facilitate and complete statewide communications interoperability training for officers.
 - 4.B.v Develop and complete incident communication training.

- 4.C Develop a process to provide for succession planning.
 - 4.C.i CSFD staff will implement cross-training of core functions to provide the best customer service possible.
 - 4.C.ii Survey civilian employees on job functions to explore opportunities for periodic cross-training.
 - 4.C.iii Implement department-wide mentorship program.

- 4.D Explore methods for attracting and retaining a diverse workforce.
 - 4.D.i Partner with CSPD, City HR, community groups, and the Mayor's office to establish links to events that demonstrate our commitment to hiring a diverse workforce.
 - 4.D.ii Enhance recruitment activities through a dedicated recruiter position.
 - 4.D.iii Sponsor 3-5 events annually aimed specifically at increasing diversity.

GOAL #5: Engage the community and our employees in creating an effective and consistent exchange of information.

Communicating its purpose is essential to the success of the Colorado Springs Fire Department. Citizens need to be made aware of the services provided by the department and what they can expect when they dial 9-1-1. Employees need to be made aware of organizational operations from every aspect, and they also need to understand all influencing factors on the department. These objectives were developed to increase awareness and understanding to both citizens and employees alike.

OBJECTIVES:

- 5.A Fully develop and utilize the internal website to provide meaningful tools and information for employees.
 - 5.A.i Establish an Administrative Chiefs' blog.
 - 5.A.ii Create a Communications intranet page.
 - 5.A.iii Develop business process functionality for the department's intranet.
 - 5.A.iv Establish station email accounts.

- 5.B Fully develop and utilize the external website to provide meaningful tools and information for citizens.
 - 5.B.i Automate the process for scheduling fire station tours, fire engine visits, community room requests, fire extinguisher training, and CPR and AED demonstrations.
 - 5.B.ii Develop division online newsletter/bulletin/blog.
 - 5.B.iii Utilize the internet to provide an interactive repository for emergency plans and communications with city employees and outside emergency management partners.

- 5.C Increase opportunities for face-to-face interaction to provide and exchange information.
 - 5.C.i Create an employee group to meet quarterly and discuss communications issues.
 - 5.C.ii CSFD HR staff will visit 50% of all stations and shifts to discuss human resources related issues.