

Cape Coral Fire



Department

Strategic Plan 2020-2025



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Executive Summary

In February 2019, Cape Coral Fire Department completed a strategic visioning process that would become the CCFD Strategic Plan 2020-2025. The process included a sixteen-member group of internal and external stakeholders, a review of the value of strategic planning, a review of the community stakeholders' perception of Cape Coral Fire Department, an analysis of the department's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges, and a review of the department's desired strategic planning statements. In addition, this process served as an introduction to the Commission on Fire Accreditation International fire department accreditation process.

Organization Background and Introduction

Cape Coral Fire Department (CCFD) is a full-service fire agency. It provides an all-hazards approach through fire suppression, fire prevention, advanced and basic life support (ALS/BLS) response, hazardous materials mitigation, marine/dive rescue, and emergency management for the City of Cape Coral.

CCFD began in late 1961 when the citizens of the community started talking about the need for a fire department and began to seek volunteers. Interest spread throughout the city, and in early 1962 a fire board was established, and CCFD was chartered as a fire tax district. In August 1970, Cape Coral was incorporated as a city. However, it was not until the following year that the city abolished the fire district and took over the fire service as a city department.

CCFD's organizational structure serves to coordinate its employees' responsibilities in achieving the mission of protecting and serving the Cape Coral community through risk reduction and prompt emergency response by professionals. In May 2023, CCFD adopted a new vision statement that is aimed to be all-inclusive of the city's service needs: Exceptional Service Together!

Cape Coral is committed to continuous quality improvement, following the model set forth by the Center for Public Safety Excellence.



Purpose of Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is an intentional process by which a department or organization surveys the industry trends; the customer's needs and wants; the current and future available resources; and the current and future capabilities of the department to determine performance gaps. Once these gaps are identified, the department can determine organizational objectives, supporting goals, and critical tasks necessary to close or eliminate the performance gaps. After the process, the department will possess a planning document that helps better focus organizational resources toward measurable outcomes versus possible inefficient or counterproductive activities. Strategic planning also provides additional value when many stakeholders come together to develop a consensus on organizational performance gaps and potential solutions. The team's effectiveness is enhanced through shared vision and goals.

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City of Cape Coral Strategic Plan – Cape Compass

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS

CITY SERVICES AND AMENITIES		Deliver exceptional City services and high-quality amenities
COMMUNICATION		Cultivate an engaged and informed community and workforce
ECONOMY, EDUCATION, AND WORKFORCE		Create a community of prosperous residents, thriving neighborhoods, and successful businesses
FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY		Maintain a financially sound government and high-performing organization
INFRASTRUCTURE		Invest in resilient infrastructure
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY		Preserve Cape Coral's natural resources for current and future generations

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Methodology

A team of sixteen Cape Coral Fire Department members and external stakeholders from the community it serves met for a three-day process facilitated by a senior consultant from Fitch & Associates, LLC. The sixteen-member group consisted of representatives from all ranks and positions within the organization, including command officers, ranking firefighters, various support personnel; plus, former elected officials, and various community leaders. The stakeholders were tasked with providing input and feedback throughout the planning process as advocates from the sub-groups they were asked to represent.

The process included a review of the value of strategic planning; a review of the community stakeholders' perception of Cape Coral Fire Department before and after the facilitated process; an analysis of the agency's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges; an introduction to the Commission on Fire Accreditation International fire agency accreditation process; plus, a review of the agency's desired strategic planning statements for final inclusion into a strategic plan. At the conclusion of the process, the stakeholders derived three key themes:

1. How do we continue to improve on saving lives during emergency events?
2. How do we meet the increasing service demands over the coming years?
3. How do we better market our services and demonstrate our value to our community?

From these key themes, members of the agency's command staff developed a list of 11 strategic objectives, 19 outcome measurements, and 35 supporting goals to prepare the Cape Coral Fire Department to meet the needs and expectations of their community and remain a "value-added" organization in the future.

A draft of the proposed strategic plan was provided to the agency to review for errors before publishing. The final report also included an internal progress tracking spreadsheet.



Strategic Planning Stakeholders

External Stakeholders	
Sandra Aguilar	Southwest Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Naldyne Light	CERT
Joe Mazurkiewicz	BJM Consulting, Inc.
Linda Prince	Cape Coral Civic Association
Donna Schuman-German	Cape Coral Civic Association
George Stamer	City of Cape Coral Budget Review Committee
Daryl Teblum	Cape Coral Civic Association
Phyllis Tompkins	CERT
Dave Willis	Neighborhood Watch Cape Coral

Internal Stakeholders	
Dave Arnold	Lieutenant
Mike Bush	Division Chief
Eric Chudzik	Cape Coral Professional Firefighters L2424
Jean Etcheverry	Firefighter
Brendan Fonock	Fire Engineer
Joe Glaser	Cape Coral Professional Firefighters L2424
Meischa Jackson	Emergency Management
Ryan Lamb	Fire Chief
Mathew Marshall	Battalion Chief
Mark Muerth	Cape Coral Professional Firefighters L2424
Steve Olson	Division Chief
Jim Parker	Battalion Chief
Dave Raborn	Fire Marshal
Mike Russell	Division Chief
Andrea Schuch	Public Affairs Specialist
Robert Topoleski	Deputy Chief



Mission Vision Values

Mission

To protect and serve our community through risk reduction and prompt emergency response.

Vision

Exceptional Service Together

Values

We are entrusted with a noble duty to our Cape Coral Fire Department family and our community through the **CAPE** way:

Commitment:

Dedication to the health, safety, and well-being of all we serve.

Accountability:

Actions that uphold the trust of ourselves, our members, and our community.

Professionalism:

Working in unity to provide compassionate service with integrity and respect.

Excellence:

The pursuit to be the best in everything we do.



Agency Status Analysis - Critical Issues and Service Gaps

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOC) analysis is designed to help the organization evaluate itself in order to determine its current state of effectiveness as well as its future competitiveness/survival based on foreseeable changes. Stakeholders were asked to develop a broad list of items from each category, which was then summarized as follows:

Strengths:

Things the agency does particularly well, competitive advantages, and preparedness investments that are paying off.

People/Quality of FD Team	Culture of empowerment/leadership throughout the organization	Commitment to professionalism and Inclusivity
Vision driven agency	Public affairs program	A very little history of litigation
Organizational transparency	Professional development	Communication on-scene with customers
Public perception of services	The health of the fleet	Relationship with city leadership
CERT program	Community involvement	Internal succession planning



Weaknesses:

Things that the agency doesn't do particularly well, competitive disadvantages, blind spots not prepared for, liabilities, etc.

Lack of quality fleet repairs and extended turnaround times	Funding that keeps up with growth	Community understanding of emergency management (hurricane preparation, all hazards threats)
Pay disparity for certain positions – pay compression	Outdated technology (Communications network, Infrastructure, Software/multiple platforms)	No advanced cardiac/stroke/pediatric/trauma
Lack of proper FD facilities (Logistics, EOC, Training)	Lack of fire inspectors	Treatment availability at the local hospital
Staffing growth keeping the pace of city population growth	Number of stations versus the geographic size of the city	Feedback on patient outcomes to providers - QA/QI
Dispatch center operational efficiencies	Water system – hydrants	Lack of compliance with existing firefighter health and safety program policies
Lack of an adequate training program	Public understanding of services provided	Lack of data collection/analysis processes



Opportunities:

Opportunities the agency should explore that would improve its mission, service delivery, efficiencies, reputation, and survivability as an organization.

Sustainability plan for fire facilities and apparatus (remodel/replace) that is accepted and supported by the city	Improve the quality of the training program	Enhance the use of volunteers/CERT
Update fire prevention fees – in-line with the cost of service	Improve diversity within the organization	Expand service opportunities for Community Emergency Response Teams to remain engaged
Explore the cost-benefit or feasibility study of the EMS transport program	Expand the Community Risk Reduction program (Community paramedicine, Outreach to seniors, Post-incident education/neighborhood canvassing)	Cost recovery for nuisance or preventable incidents (DUI, arson, etc.)
Enhance Fire Facilities (Training, Logistics, EOC, HQ, Stations)	Become part of the Lee County US&R Task Force	Accreditation through Commission on Fire Accreditation International
A growing population and tax base	Improved response times and service levels	Improving ISO Class
Reduce fires to room of origin for structure fires	Improved reputation with the community through marketing and social media	Data reporting and tracking



Challenges:

Things that threaten to undermine the agency's mission, service delivery, efficiencies, reputation, and survivability as an organization.

Shorter-term vision and outcome measurements versus longer-term and more valuable strategic planning processes	New and evolving risks with expanding responsibilities (mission creep)	Lack of quality training for operational staff
Increase in EMS calls for service due to aging/growing population	Funding to keep up with new and expanding responsibilities	Geography of the city and street network
Higher-density development creating an increased demand for services designed for less density	Organizational effectiveness while still recovering from the impacts of the last economic downturn	Risk vulnerability of the city
Divergent interests and priorities among some internal stakeholders	First responder/all staff mental and physical health	Unfunded political/regulatory mandates (state and federal)



Goal 1: Improve Community Emergency Response, Safety, and Survival

Objective 1.1	Keep the rate of structure fire growth equal to or below annual population growth
Objective 1.2	Contain structure fire to room of origin 80% of the time
Objective 1.3	Zero civilian fire deaths (accidental/unintentional)
Objective 1.4	All fire station demand zones maintain a response time within 10, 85% of the time
Objective 1.5	Achieve response time as defined in the CRA/SOC
Objective 1.6	"Water on Fire" within 5 minutes 90% of the time
Objective 1.7	Primary search completed within 5 minutes 90% of the time
Objective 1.8	Maintain a cardiac survival rate at or above the national average (ROSC)

Critical Tasks

- Implement "fire station alerting systems" in all fire stations
- Develop strategies to improve the quality and quantity of incident data reporting by officers and paramedics
- Construction of a Fire Training Facility
- Explore strategies that measure and improve cardiac survival
- Maintain good Inter-Department Operability and Resource Relationships
- Develop Active Assailant Response through policy and training
- Equip all stations with an advanced life support unit
- Implement and become fully operational with USAR FL-6
- Develop a smoke alarm program and installation policy



Goal 2: Improve Fire Firefighter/Employee Safety

Objective 2.1	Zero Firefighter line-of-duty deaths
Objective 2.2	Maintain an employee injury rate below 10% of total allocated staffing positions
Objective 2.3	Completion of 95 percent of assigned training annually
Objective 2.4	Conduct required post-fire decontamination 100% of the time
Objective 2.5	Review and update governing documents (name) in accordance with the annual accreditation compliance schedule
Objective 2.6	Develop a Post-Incident Analysis Process
Objective 2.7	Development of a Wellness Fitness Initiative

Critical Tasks

- Implement and track a PPE/turnout gear replacement program
- Provide risk assessment/management training for all employees
- Develop a cancer prevention/decontamination policy
- Review and revise incident guidelines
- Assign a dedicated Accountability and Safety Officer
- Implement Fire Pre-Plan Program
- Conduct training on handling challenging situations



Goal 3: Maximize Budget and Value to the Community

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| Objective 3.1 | Zero cases of harassment/discrimination |
| Objective 3.2 | Maintain a "cost per capita" equal to or below the regional comparative average |
| Objective 3.3 | Maintain worker's compensation costs below 10% of the annual personnel budget |
| Objective 3.4 | Achieve and maintain an ISO rating of Class 2 |
| Objective 3.5 | Save 95% of the value of property and contents threatened by fire |
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Critical Tasks

- Review/update all disciplinary policies and procedures
- Provide liability prevention/people-skills training to all employees every two years
- Develop a policy to lower adverse impact on lift assist calls for service
- Invest in station improvement projects that provide economic savings measured in lower ongoing maintenance or utility costs
- Invest in high-quality equipment/apparatus that increases longevity
- Development, management, and tracking of the City of Cape Coral Fire Department Assets and Sustainability Programs
- Develop an apparatus health scoring methodology and replacement plan to ensure all frontline and unassigned apparatus are reliable



Goal 4: Improve Quality of Life for the community and provide value beyond emergency services.

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| Objective 4.1 | Inspect all structures based on SO 501.001 – Fire Safety Inspections/Fire Code Enforcement |
| Objective 4.2 | Achieve and maintain CFAI Accredited Status |
| Objective 4.3 | Ensure employee demographic makeup represents the community through diversity, equity, and inclusion |
| Objective 4.4 | Develop and implement a program to assist the community after a structure fire |
| Objective 4.5 | Provide fire safety programs for all kindergarten students. |
| Objective 4.6 | Develop and implement senior citizen safety programs |
| Objective 4.7 | Ensure residents and media have access to timely and accurate information |
| Objective 4.8 | Development of a Culture of Pride, Ownership, and Engagement |

Critical Tasks

- Develop a program to assist the community "after the fire" and develop senior citizen safety programs
- Development of an Annual Report
- Development and an annual education and public messaging calendar
- Promote the department's goals, initiatives, programs, and services
- Develop a policy regarding Department support of community groups/events
- Obtain customer service surveys
- Increase public awareness of the CCFD's daily activities
- Development of free door alarm and smoke alarm program
- Develop a home safety evaluation program and post-incident deliverable for the residents



Goal 5: Improve Internal operations of the Cape Coral Fire Department

Objective 5.1	Improve Internal Communications
Objective 5.2	Improve/Maintain a Good Public Perception
Objective 5.3	Improve Customer Service
Objective 5.4	Improve the Quality of Training
Objective 5.5	Enhance Promotional Testing
Objective 5.6	Improve Officer Development

Critical Tasks

- Provide clear and concise directions and improve interpersonal communication skills and improve technology in communication
- Deliver soft skills course to all department personnel tri-annually
- Develop ten training Thursday courses focused on officer development, delivered on an annual basis
- Revise the officer development course and extend it to two weeks, including more administrative skills, e.g., sexualharassment scenario
- Implement a WFI Committee based on the IAFF/IAFC to include physicals, fitness, and mental health
- Increase personnel engagement and foster a culture growth and assist with career goal setting
- Conduct a minimum one live fire training per year for 90% of operations personnel
- Conduct three DPS-sponsored trainings per year
- Post-training evaluation goal of a least a "three out of five"
- Evaluate time in grade and time acting credit through negotiations
- Revise the post-test review and grievance process
- Evaluate planned acting testing and course delivery schedule
- Evaluate the quality of the lieutenant tactical scenario and explore improvements
- Deliver soft skills course to all department personnel quarterly
- Develop annual 360 evaluations for all officers
- Explore formal peer-to-peer mentorship program



Goal 6: Improve City and Community All -Hazards Approach to Emergency Management

Objective 6.1	Achieve and maintain Accreditation and certification in support of a robust, professional, and dynamic EM program
Objective 6.2	Foster a Community-wide Culture of Preparedness
Objective 6.1	Enhance and train employees on the Community Lifelines Initiative
Objective 6.2	Reduce City-wide Risk and Enhance Prevention Capabilities
Objective 6.3	Enhance Volunteerism in Support of the Department's Mission
Objective 6.4	Identify and Develop Mitigation Strategies
Objective 6.5	Develop a Recovery Framework through proficient All-Hazards
Objective 6.6	Ensure City-wide Emergency Management Capabilities through training and exercises
Objective 6.7	Strengthen response capabilities through the use of technology, collaborative partnerships, community support, and resource

Critical Tasks

- Minimize preventable disasters through information gathering and stakeholder collaboration
- Strengthen community volunteer engagement and capability in support of whole-community preparedness and response
- Develop and implement mitigation strategies for threats and all hazards impacting the community
- Develop a recovery framework and implement recovery strategies
- Develop and maintain a comprehensive all-hazards training and exercise program to evaluate and test the emergency management system
- Strengthen community engagement efforts through cutting-edge programs and initiatives to develop a culture of preparedness management