

METRO FIRE STRATEGIC PLAN

2026-2031





DOCUMENT INFORMATION

PLANNING PERIOD	2026-2031
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ADOPTED	AUGUST 2026
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PLAN VERSION	1.0
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LAST UPDATED	JULY 2026
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THIS PLAN IS REVIEWED PERIODICALLY AND UPDATED AS APPROPRIATE, GIVEN PROGRESS, EMERGING NEEDS, AND BOARD DIRECTION.

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A full-page background image showing a residential house on fire. A firefighter in full gear is positioned on the right, spraying water at the flames. Thick black smoke billows from the burning structure, partially obscuring the sky. The scene is set in a suburban neighborhood with trees and a sidewalk in the foreground.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2031

INTRODUCTION

MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF



COMMAND STAFF

Fire Chief Adam A. House

Deputy Chiefs

Joseph Fiorica *Administration*

Tyler Wagaman *Operations*

Adam Mitchell *Support & Emergency
Medical Services*

Chief Development Officer

Jeffrey Frye

Chief Financial Officer

Dave O'Toole

Chief Human Resources Officer

Melisa Maddux

Assistant Chiefs

Ross Carollo *A Shift*

Michael Johnson *B Shift*

Joe Aldrich *C Shift*

Jon Rudnicki *EMS*

Chris Greene *Training*

Amy Nygren *Fire Marshal*

Tony Peck *Wellness, Health & Safety*

Parker Wilbourn *Comms Center*

It is my honor to present our Strategic Plan, which reflects our commitment to the people who make this organization strong and the community we serve. Developed in close collaboration with our Board of Directors, this plan sets a clear path forward to strengthen operations, support our personnel, and enhance public safety.

Our top priority is taking care of our people. The health, safety, and professional growth of every team member is essential to maintaining a resilient and effective organization. By fostering a supportive and inclusive environment, we ensure our personnel are empowered to perform at their best.

We are equally committed to responsible fiscal stewardship and innovative service delivery. This plan guides us in making thoughtful financial decisions, modernizing operations, and embracing new approaches that improve efficiency, readiness, and the quality of service for our community.

Finally, communication and collaboration remain central to our success. Strengthening dialogue within the department, with our Board, and across the community builds trust, transparency, and partnerships that allow us to achieve our shared goals. I am proud to serve alongside our dedicated team and confident this plan will guide us forward with purpose and accountability.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. House'.

Adam A. House
Fire Chief

METRO FIRE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



John Costa
Division 9 | President



Robert Webber
Division 3 | Vice President



Brian Rice
Division 7 | Secretary



Cinthia Saylor
Division 1



Grant B. Goold
Division 2



Ted Wood
Division 4



Shawn Stark
Division 5



D'Elman Clark
Division 6



Gay Jones
Division 8

Proudly Serving the Communities of

*Antelope
Arden/Arcade
Carmichael
Citrus Heights
Elverta
Fair Oaks
Florin
Foothill Farms*

*Gold River
Mather
McClellan
North Highlands
Orangevale
Rancho Cordova
Rancho Murieta
Rlo Linda*

ABOUT METRO FIRE

The Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (Metro Fire) was established on December 1, 2000, through the merger of the American River and Sacramento County Fire Protection Districts, consolidating 16 predecessor agencies into a unified organization. Governance is provided by a nine-member Board of Directors, each elected by residents of one of the nine geographical divisions within the District, ensuring accountability and alignment with community priorities.

As the largest fire agency in Sacramento County and one of the largest in California, Metro Fire delivers comprehensive fire protection, emergency medical services, and public safety programs across 359 square miles, serving over 720,000 residents. The District's jurisdiction includes the cities of Citrus Heights and Rancho Cordova, most unincorporated areas of Sacramento County, and portions of Placer County.

Metro Fire's mission extends beyond emergency response. Through a combination of fire suppression, medical services, hazard mitigation, and community outreach initiatives, the District proactively enhances public safety, strengthens community resilience, and supports the well-being of all residents within its service area.

The District has 780 authorized positions, including safety, prevention, and support personnel, to provide all-risk suppression and emergency medical services from 41 stations and 36 frontline apparatus. In 2025, Metro Fire responded to 95,302 emergency calls within its jurisdiction, of which 84% were for medical aid. Additionally, the District is routinely deployed to local, state, and federal emergencies, with 15 state deployments and three national in 2025.

Routine and emergency operations are managed by five battalion chiefs, with oversight provided by an assistant chief assigned to a 24-hour shift. Metro Fire comprises the Office of the Fire Chief and three branches: Operations, Administration, and Support & Emergency Medical Services.

Operations includes Suppression, Wellness, Health & Safety, Staffing, and RMS/NERIS.

The Administration Branch consists of Finance, Human Resources, IT & Communications, Training, Special Operations, and Air Operations.

Support and Emergency Medical Services oversees Community Relations, Community Risk Reduction, Fire Investigations, Emergency Medical Services, Mobile Integrated Health, Facilities, Fleet, Logistics, and Planning & Development/Government Affairs.





STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2031

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

MISSION & VISION

OUR PURPOSE & OUR FUTURE

MISSION

To provide professional and compassionate protection, education, and service to our community.

The mission statement serves as a guiding compass for Metro Fire, clarifying its core purpose and priorities. In strategic planning, it anchors all decisions and initiatives, ensuring that actions taken align with the organization's fundamental values and objectives. By articulating what the District stands for, the mission statement provides clarity for employees, stakeholders, and the community, helping to shape goals and measure progress throughout the strategic plan.

VISION

RESPECTING THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE

Forged from a long line of tradition, we are Metro Fire—working together to serve our community with honor, integrity, and selfless devotion to duty.

WITH AN EYE TO THE FUTURE

To be the trusted partner and innovative leader delivering the highest level of all-risk service to our community.

A vision statement serves as an aspirational description of what the organization hopes to achieve in the future. It provides a clear picture of the desired long-term outcomes and inspires stakeholders by outlining a shared goal. In strategic planning, the vision statement is important because it guides decision-making, motivates employees, and aligns resources to fulfill the organization's future objectives. It acts as a source of inspiration and direction, ensuring all efforts are focused on achieving the highest standards of service and leadership.

During the 2026 board strategic planning workshop, the consultant observed that Metro Fire's previous vision statement, "forged from a long line of tradition, we are Metro Fire—working together to serve our community with honor, integrity and selfless devotion to duty," did not align with conventional standards for vision statements, which are typically aspirational and forward-looking. The newly crafted vision statement was designed to inspire progress and innovation, yet the District recognizes that history, culture, and tradition remain vital to the fire service. Therefore, Metro Fire aims to blend the aspirational qualities of the new vision with the deep-rooted values reflected in the former statement, ensuring both forward momentum and respect for tradition are integral to its organizational identity.

VALUES

OUR PRINCIPLES

DEVOTION TO DUTY

At Metro Fire, we recognize that we are an important part of something bigger than ourselves. Many of us have taken an oath to protect and safeguard the citizens of our communities despite the dangers and risks involved. Each of us has a duty to do our part to create a positive outcome for our community and the district. We each accept our role in the success of the District, and our customers know they can depend on us to be reliable and trustworthy.

Our behavior and the way we provide services have a direct correlation to the public's respect for and support of our district. We take a proactive, forward-leaning posture, demonstrating the initiative to address issues when we first see them. Accepting responsibility for the greater good and providing our services with unwavering compassion—these are at the core of what we do in our devotion to duty.

INTEGRITY

We adhere to a rigorous code of conduct built on honesty, courage, and accountability. We keep our word and count on each other to do what we say we will do as we said we would do it. We maintain integrity in relationships—with fellow members, the union, the public, our board of directors, and stakeholders—seeking understanding through clear communication and promoting goodwill through openness and transparency.

Accountable for our decisions and actions, we demonstrate the courage to own mistakes and use them to improve next time for the common good of Metro Fire and those it serves. We bring empathy and compassion to our work, being mindful of the human dimension required to be nice as we protect and serve our neighbors. We do our best to walk our talk in all we do.

PROFESSIONALISM

Setting the bar high, we take pride in being the best of the best as we fulfill our duty to serve. When we put on the uniform or take up our position, each of us proudly embodies the values and ideals of Metro Fire.

We step up to set the example. We act in the best interest of the public, providing responsible leadership, capable operations, and transparent management. We are well-trained and proficient in the practical tools and knowledge required in our respective positions. We hone our decision-making skills so that we are adaptable and flexible in the face of the inevitable changes in our work environment. We take concrete steps to build our reputation as the *pros who do things right*.

TEAMWORK

We are the driving force of the organization, and our strength comes from the ability to work together as a cohesive team. The way we interact with each other reflects the overall health of Metro Fire and our ability to deliver services to internal and external customers.

To this end, we intentionally build trust with one another: showing respect, demonstrating self-discipline both on- and off-duty, listening and providing emotional support, challenging team dysfunction, and generally looking out for our teammates' well-being. In order to best serve the public, we first must take care of each other and ourselves.

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT ASSESSMENT



PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION

A credible set of strategies must be based on an honest and clear-eyed assessment of the external and internal operating environment and the forces affecting Metro Fire today and expected over the planning horizon (the next five years). This assessment draws upon the Board's December 2025 strategic planning workshop, stakeholder interviews conducted during the planning process, the District's 2024 Standard of Cover, Capital Improvement Plan, and Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (FY2023–24), and an independent review conducted by the District's strategic planning consultants (ICS Consulting) based on a review of Metro Fire materials, interviews, and independent research.



THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

The forces acting on the District from outside its organizational boundaries are significant, compounding, and in several cases accelerating simultaneously – arriving not in sequence but all at once. This is the defining characteristic of a VUCA operating environment (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous) – a concept developed by the U.S. Army War College to describe conditions that challenge rigid hierarchies, long planning cycles, and ineffective communication, and reward organizations that are adaptive, fast-communicating, and resilient. The external forces below compound each other, and their combined effects are what the new Strat Plan must be built to withstand.

Service demand is growing faster than infrastructure. The Sacramento Region continues to experience population growth, infill development, and urban densification across Metro Fire's 359-square-mile service area, which now encompasses approximately 770,000 residents.¹ Over the past decade, medical emergency calls have increased by approximately 30% and fire calls by approximately 40%, while four out of ten medical calls now experience response times exceeding 20 minutes.² This growth is not matched by a proportional expansion of station coverage, unit hours, or apparatus capacity. Response time performance – a core measure of public safety effectiveness – is under structural pressure that cannot be resolved through operational efficiency alone. New stations, repositioned resources, and long-lead capital investments are required. Regional, state and national demands also put a strain on Metro Fire service capacity, particularly as a large, all-risk agency. Regional mutual and auto-aid agreements consistently have Metro Fire sending more resources out than it receives. At the state level, continued wildfire risk and other disasters continued to strain the Mutual Aid system. Metro Fire resources are also deployed outside of California, requiring backfill.

The call type mix is shifting in ways that strain traditional models. Emergency medical calls, behavioral health incidents, and non-fire all-hazards events now constitute the dominant share of Metro Fire's call volume. The District has begun responding to this shift – the Mobile Integrated Health program, telehealth capability, and the Mobile Mental Health Partnership are making headway – but sustainable funding for these programs remains a challenge, and the workforce preparation, staffing models, and interagency coordination infrastructure to support them at scale are still developing. The fire service model that Metro Fire was built on originally is increasingly out of step with what Metro Fire does every day, and all signs point to this change intensifying over time.

The fiscal environment is tightening. Metro Fire enters this next planning cycle with flat revenue growth anticipated over the near term. Property tax revenue, the District's primary funding base, is sensitive to broader economic conditions and to the assessed value trajectory of the region. There is a qualified positive on the fiscal ledger: Metro Fire is on track to fully retire its pension bond debt in FY2025–26, a milestone that will free up debt service capacity for other priorities.³ However, this does not resolve the broader fiscal constraint. **Measure O** represents a substantial and important capital investment commitment, but as a general obligation bond, its monies are restricted to capital purposes and cannot be used to fund operations, overtime reduction, or workforce investment. It does not address the District's operating cost pressures. California's broader fiscal environment — the CalPERS safety plan funded at 63.8% as of June 30, 2024, and the ongoing cost structures of public safety labor agreements — creates a ceiling effect on the District's financial flexibility that will persist over the next five years (2026–2031).³

Labor markets for sworn and professional staff remain competitive. Recruiting and retaining qualified firefighters, paramedics, and administrative professionals in the Sacramento region is not a Metro Fire-specific challenge, but competing agencies are improving compensation packages, and a national pipeline of sworn personnel has not kept pace with retirement rates and attrition, creating chronic pressure on Metro Fire's workforce depth. Diversity hiring goals, which the Board has identified as a priority, add a further dimension of complexity to recruitment that requires intentional, sustained investment in pipeline development, not just point-in-time hiring campaigns.

Mental health and behavioral health costs and responsibility are shifting toward fire. Across California, the contraction of community-based mental health infrastructure, combined with the limitations of law enforcement response to behavioral crises, has transferred a growing share of mental health incident response to fire and EMS. This is not a trend Metro Fire can opt out of. It is a structural change in the public safety ecosystem that will continue to shape call volume, workforce wellness demands, and interagency coordination requirements. The question is not whether Metro Fire will absorb this responsibility — it already is — but whether it can resource and structure it effectively without exhausting its workforce through unmanaged demand growth.

External policy and regulatory pressures are evolving. Changes to CAL FIRE coordination agreements, CalOES reimbursements, state EMS regulatory frameworks, local LEMSA credentialing requirements, and federal funding program eligibility criteria all create compliance and adaptation demands on the District that consume planning capacity and may require operational adjustments. The District must maintain situational awareness across this landscape while executing a multi-year internal improvement agenda — a dual burden that requires administrative capacity the organization has not historically built at scale.



INTERNAL CONDITIONS

Metro Fire's foundational strengths are real and significant. The District's scale — its regional footprint, highly qualified and experienced personnel, depth of specialized capability, special operations teams, and fulltime fire investigation function — gives it a structural capacity advantage that smaller agencies in the region cannot match. Its 2024 Standard of Cover is an evidence-driven, analytically rigorous document that provides leadership with an honest picture of service delivery performance and a defensible basis for difficult resource allocation decisions.⁵ The District's governance structure is clear, its command structure is effective, and its external reputation with partner jurisdictions, the broader fire service community, and the public is strong.

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT ASSESSMENT, CONTINUED

Measure O, approved by voters on November 5, 2024 with 68.12% in favor — clearing the two-thirds supermajority threshold required for general obligation bonds — represents a strong voter vote of confidence in Metro Fire and a substantial capital resource. Together, these strengths put Metro Fire in a strong position to navigate the VUCA environment ahead.

However, the organization faces several persistent structural challenges that will not resolve themselves without deliberate strategic attention.

A capital deficit gap. The District's Capital Improvement Plan identifies approximately \$181 million in deferred maintenance and capital backlog.⁶ Fleet replacement, facility condition, and technology modernization all draw from a CIP pipeline that has limited slack. Every dollar committed to catching up on deferred maintenance is a dollar unavailable for innovation, expansion, or workforce investment. Measure O will address a significant portion of this backlog, but capital deployment takes years, and the operational gap continues to accumulate in the interim. This constraint will shape every strategic choice the District makes between now and 2031.

A structural overtime and staffing cost problem. Like many agencies, Metro Fire's operational model is heavily dependent on overtime to maintain minimum staffing levels. This is a symptom of a staffing model whose authorized positions, actual filled positions, and operational minimums are not in alignment. Overtime dependence drives labor costs upward, contributes to workforce fatigue, elevates workers' compensation and leave usage, and creates a chronic cycle of exhaustion that undermines retention and morale. Without a deliberate, structured plan to reduce overtime dependence, not merely manage its cost, the District will continue to fatigue its workforce from within, regardless of what compensation packages or wellness programs it puts in place.

A cultural and organizational cohesion challenge. The SWOT process surfaced what Board members, staff, and labor representatives all recognize in different language: Metro Fire continues to struggle to align its station-level culture and communication practices with enterprise-level expectations. Internal communications are siloed, with limited grassroots engagement and inadequate modern communication infrastructure. Having been identified as a priority issue, the management team has begun to make practice changes, but more work lies ahead.

An integrated planning and governance gap. Metro Fire has not historically operated with a formalized, structured strategic planning process. Prior planning cycles produced documents that did not generate the accountability, implementation follow-through, or organizational alignment the Board expected. The December 2025 workshop itself called out the need for a new approach. This plan's strategy section addresses that gap directly, but the framework is only as strong as the organizational discipline and staff capacity that sustain it. Building an enterprise-wide planning culture — one in which goals are tracked, strategies are owned, and results are honestly reported — is itself a strategic objective.

A succession and leadership continuity risk that is not yet systematically managed. The District's pipeline for developing mid-level managers into future executive leaders has not kept pace with the scale and complexity Metro Fire has reached, nor with the turnover. When experienced personnel leave the institutional knowledge, relational capital, and operational judgment they carry is not quick or easy to replace. Succession planning is viewed as both a weakness and a threat in the Board's own assessment.



THE CRUX: WHAT THIS PLAN MUST SOLVE

Taken together, the external forces and internal conditions described above converge on a central strategic challenge that the new Strategic Plan must confront:

Metro Fire is a high-capacity, high-reputation organization operating under uncertain and complex conditions of simultaneous demand growth and internal structural strain. Continued success depends upon strengthening internal foundations like improved communications and rapid planning and decision-making while building the organizational capacity to meet a fundamentally different service and risk environment over the next five years.

This is not a single problem. It is an intersection of problems that compound each other. Fiscal constraint limits the capital investment needed to meet demand growth; high overtime drives workforce fatigue and discontent which undermines the labor-management cooperation needed to implement change; and the absence of a strong planning culture means prior attempts to break these cycles have not held. Each problem makes the others harder to solve.

The strategic goals that follow from this diagnosis directly address these challenges and put in place practices to ensure regular accountability and follow-through.

Sources:

¹ Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District, Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR), Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2024. Service area: 359 square miles; population served: approximately 770,000.

² Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District, Measure O Voter Information Materials and FAQ (2024). Call volume figures: medical emergency calls up approximately 30%, fire calls up approximately 40% over the prior decade; 40% of medical calls with response times exceeding 20 minutes.

³ Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District, ACFR FY2023–24. CalPERS safety plan funded at 63.8% as of June 30, 2024; pension bond debt expected to be fully retired in FY2025–26.

⁴ Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District, Labor Agreements page (metrofire.ca.gov). Local 522 MOU extended via side letter through June 30, 2026.

⁵ Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District, 2024 Standards of Cover (completed 2024; referenced on metrofire.ca.gov homepage).

⁶ Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District, Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), as referenced in ICS Consulting SWOT Assessment, April 2026. Deferred maintenance and capital backlog: approximately \$181 million.

This section was developed in May 2026 and reflects conditions as of the 2025–2026 planning cycle. It should be revisited and updated at each planning cycle's outset as the environmental scan is refreshed.

STRENGTHENING STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Strategic planning is a foundational process that ensures Metro Fire remains forward-focused, adaptable, and aligned with the needs of the community it serves. For future leaders and employees of Metro Fire, this plan provides a roadmap for the organization's priorities and direction over the next five years. Through clear goals, thoughtful initiatives, and ongoing evaluation, strategic planning supports the District's mission of providing professional and compassionate service. It also reinforces a culture of accountability, innovation, and shared commitment to the greater good of the region.

During the Board workshop held in December 2025, as participants conducted a comprehensive Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, it became evident that Metro Fire lacks a structured, formalized process for organizational improvement. This absence of an established framework has contributed to communication breakdowns and hindered the creation of a unified strategic plan. Consequently, the Board's Strategic Goals reflect these challenges arising from ambiguity in direction and communication, as well as perceived frustration among the Board of Directors and members. Recognizing these challenges underscored the need for a more systematic approach to planning and collaboration moving forward.

This section of the document is designed to address these persistent challenges by establishing a robust strategic plan framework and an integrated planning process. Drawing on lessons learned from previous strategic planning cycles, we propose a new framework to enable the Board of Directors to carry out its responsibilities more effectively and efficiently. By refining the structure of our approach, we seek to bridge the gaps between authority, responsibility, and communication, ensuring that all stakeholders are aligned and empowered to contribute to our shared objectives. This new strategic plan framework will define clear roles, processes, and expectations, fostering collaboration and transparency and ultimately supporting Metro Fire's mission to deliver innovative, high-quality service to the community.

Through this renewed planning process, we aim to create a foundation that supports continuous improvement, strengthens organizational culture, and enables responsive decision-making. By integrating best practices from past experiences with forward-thinking strategies, the Board of Directors will be better equipped to guide Metro Fire toward its enduring goals and ensure lasting value for all stakeholders.



A photograph of three firefighters in full gear working on a house. One firefighter is on a ladder near a roof window, another is on the ladder below, and a third is in the foreground holding a hose. The house has a dark brown roof and a damaged front door area. The scene is set against a backdrop of green trees under a clear sky.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2031

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

FROM VISION TO ACTION: STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Each planning cycle produces its own set of strategic goals, indicators, strategies, and implementation pathways. These components are built on top of the strategic planning framework and reflect the District's priorities for the current cycle.



PURPOSE OF STRATEGIC GOALS

The Board of Directors establishes the foundation for each strategic planning cycle by creating Strategic Goals. These narratives define the intent, priorities, and expectations that guide the District's strategic direction. Each narrative expresses why the goal is significant at this moment in Metro Fire's evolution, identifies the problem or opportunity it seeks to address, and demonstrates how the goal aligns with the Board's Enduring Goals. The narratives also articulate the outcomes the Board expects to achieve over the planning cycle. By developing these narratives, the Board ensures that the Strategic Plan reflects its collective voice, values, and strategic intent, providing clear direction for the organization's leadership and workforce.



BOARD-LED DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The development of the **Strategic Goals** follows a structured, repeatable process that ensures consistency, transparency, and alignment across planning cycles.

STEP 1: PRE-WORK AND BRIEFING MATERIALS

The consultant prepares a comprehensive briefing packet for the Board. This packet includes the District's Mission, Vision, and Values; the Board's Enduring Goals; an internal and external environmental scan; input from the Board of Directors, Executive Team, labor representatives, and subject-matter experts. Emerging operational themes are also summarized to provide context. This preparatory work ensures that all participants begin the process with a shared understanding of the District's current environment and strategic needs.

STEP 2: BOARD STRATEGIC WORKSHOP

The Board convenes in a facilitated workshop to reflect on the **Enduring Goals**, reviews organizational strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities, and identify priority areas for the upcoming planning cycle. Through guided discussion, the Board provides direction for the development of the Strategic Goals. The workshop serves as the creative and analytical forum where the Board's insights and expectations are captured and refined into strategic intent.

STEP 3: DRAFTING THE STRATEGIC GOALS

Following the workshop, the Strategic Planning Team drafts the initial Strategic Goals. Each draft is written to ensure alignment with the Enduring Goals, integration with the District's planning processes, and consistency of tone and structure. The drafts are designed to accurately reflect the Board's intent and are returned to the Board for review and refinement.

STEP 4: BOARD REVIEW & REFINEMENT

The Board reviews the draft narratives to clarify intent, adjust emphasis, and ensure alignment with community expectations and organizational priorities. This step confirms that each narrative accurately represents the Board's strategic direction and communicates its expectations for the planning cycle.

STEP 5: FINAL ADOPTION OF STRATEGIC GOALS

Upon completion of the review, the Board formally adopts the Strategic Goals. Once adopted, these narratives become the foundation for strategy development, the guide for Executive Committee work, the anchor for performance indicators, and the narrative frame for the public-facing Strategic Plan.

CONNECTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

The Board's Goal Narratives serve as the bridge between the **Enduring Goals**, which define the District's long-term priorities, and the **cycle-specific strategic goals**, which focus on current needs and opportunities. Through this connection, the narratives guide strategy development, align the planning process, inform performance measurement, support resource allocation, and facilitate communication with both internal and external stakeholders. This integration ensures that the Strategic Plan remains Board-driven, operationally grounded, and responsive to the evolving needs of the community and organization.

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Executive Committee and Strategic Planning Staff Collaboration

Once the Board of Directors has reviewed and approved the strategic goals and accompanying Goal Narratives, responsibility for advancing those goals transitions to the **Executive Committee** and the **Strategic Planning Staff**. Together, these groups translate the Board's strategic direction into actionable strategies and projects that drive organizational performance. This phase ensures that the Board's strategic intent is operationalized through well-defined strategies, measurable objectives, and structured implementation plans. The Executive Committee provides leadership oversight and alignment with organizational priorities, while the Strategic Planning Staff provides analytical support, project management expertise, and documentation.

PHASE 1: STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Working under the guidance of the Executive Committee, the Executive Committee and staff develops strategies designed to accomplish each Board-approved goal. These strategies are informed by operational data, stakeholder input, and resource considerations. Each strategy is evaluated for feasibility, alignment with planning domains, and potential impact on service delivery, fiscal stewardship, and organizational culture.

PHASE 2: PROJECT CHARTER DEVELOPMENT

The Board reviews the draft narratives to clarify intent, adjust emphasis, and ensure alignment with community expectations and organizational priorities. This step confirms that each narrative accurately represents the Board's strategic direction and communicates its expectations for the planning cycle.

- **Project Identification** – A clear description of the initiative and its connection to the Board's strategic goals.
- **Scope Definition** – Boundaries of the project, including deliverables and exclusions.
- **Goals and Objectives** – Specific outcomes the project is intended to achieve.
- **Indicators of Achievement** – Quantitative and qualitative measures that demonstrate progress toward the Board's expectations.
- **Tactics and Timelines** – Key milestones, components, and completion targets.
- **Resource Allocation** – Staffing, funding, and material resources required for execution.
- **Implementation Framework** – Defined responsibilities, reporting cadence, and integration with existing planning processes.

This structured approach ensures that every initiative is documented, measurable, and aligned with the District's strategic architecture.

PHASE 3: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REVIEW & BOARD PRESENTATION

After the Executive Committee and Strategic Planning Staff finalize each Project Charter, the completed documents are presented to the full Board of Directors for review and acknowledgment. This presentation provides transparency, confirms alignment with Board intent, and establishes accountability for implementation. Once accepted, the Project Charters become the operational instruments for executing and monitoring the Strategic Plan.



OUTCOME

Through this collaborative process, Metro Fire ensures that strategic goals evolve into actionable, well-managed initiatives supported by clear governance, defined resources, and measurable outcomes. The integration of Board oversight, executive leadership, and planning expertise creates a unified system for translating vision into results.

THE BOARD'S ENDURING GOALS

The Board's Enduring Goals are the District's long-term priorities that guide all strategic planning and organizational decision-making. Unlike the Strategic Goals, which establish priorities for the current five-year planning cycle, the Board's Enduring Goals remain constant and provide the foundation for the District's mission and future direction.

By focusing on outcomes that benefit both the community and Metro Fire personnel, the Board's Enduring Goals reinforce a culture of excellence, accountability, innovation, and continuous improvement. They ensure the District's mission, vision, and values are reflected across all aspects of the organization—from emergency response and employee well-being to fiscal responsibility and community engagement.

These enduring goals guide Metro Fire's strategies, investments, and daily operations while promoting organizational resilience, accountability, and continuous improvement. They ensure the District's mission, vision, and values are reflected across all aspects of the organization and provide the framework for the Planning Domains and Strategic Goals that follow.

- 1 *Ensure that the public served by the District continues to receive the best quality fire protection, fire prevention, fire safety education, emergency medical aid, and other emergency response services.*
- 2 *Ensure that the Board of Directors' management of District activities is accomplished in an open environment to promote responsiveness to public concerns and encourage public participation.*
- 3 *Foster productive community relationships with community entities and the public.*
- 4 *Provide appropriate and timely fiscal oversight to District operations.*
- 5 *Ensure that the District has a fully qualified management team to address future challenges and opportunities, and that employees are qualified, well-trained, properly equipped, and motivated to perform their duties.*
- 6 *Foster a productive working relationship with District management staff and promote a positive relationship with employee labor organizations.*

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOUNDATION

Domain: A specified sphere of activity or knowledge.

Metro Fire organizes its long-term planning around five Planning Domains: Service Delivery Innovation, People & Culture, Resource Management, Fiscal Stewardship, and Communications. These domains provide a consistent framework for translating the Board's Enduring Goals into organizational priorities, guiding decision-making, aligning resources, and measuring progress across the District.

Over the past several years, Metro Fire has developed numerous plans, studies, policies, and organizational initiatives within each Planning Domain. Together, these efforts lay the foundation for the 2026 Strategic Plan and demonstrate the District's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, organizational excellence, and exceptional service to the community. The following pages highlight these foundational efforts and illustrate how they support the strategic direction outlined in this plan.

The five Planning Domains translate the Board's Enduring Goals and Strategic Plan into coordinated organizational systems, ensuring that strategic priorities are supported through integrated planning, resource management, and continuous improvement.



SERVICE DELIVERY INNOVATION

Service Delivery Innovation is essential for first responders because the environments in which they operate are constantly changing, with new challenges arising from evolving community risks, technological advances, and shifting public expectations. By embracing innovation, first responders can better protect lives and property, respond more efficiently, and adapt to complex incidents. Innovation drives the development and integration of new technologies, refined operational procedures, and evidence-based best practices. This enables agencies to deliver high-quality services, optimize resource allocation, and maintain readiness for both routine and large-scale emergencies. Furthermore, a culture of innovation supports continuous improvement, empowering personnel to identify opportunities to enhance effectiveness and resilience. Ultimately, prioritizing innovation in service delivery ensures that first responders remain capable, agile, and responsive to the diverse needs of the communities they serve.

Previous Strategic Successes

► Standards of Response

Standard of Cover (2026)

Established data-driven response performance standards by evaluating community risks, service demands, deployment strategies, and response capabilities to ensure resources are positioned to meet community needs.

► Community Risk Reduction

Community Risk Reduction Plan (2022)

Implemented a strategic framework to identify, prioritize, and mitigate community risks through prevention, education, engineering, enforcement, emergency response, and evaluation.

► Crisis Response Planning

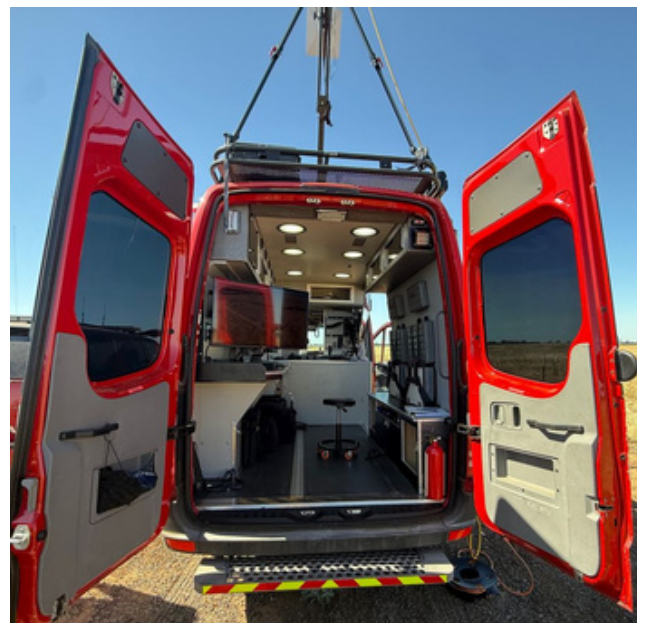
Crisis Response Plan

Enhanced the District's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from significant incidents and operational disruptions affecting the organization or community.

► Emergency Preparedness

Emergency Response Plan

Strengthened emergency operations through coordinated planning, defined response procedures, and enhanced readiness for large-scale emergencies and disasters.



PEOPLE & CULTURE

People & Culture are vital for organizational improvement, covering employees' values, behaviors, and systems supporting their growth. A strong culture fosters duty, accountability, and collaboration, ensuring staff are qualified, motivated, and capable of providing high-quality service. Investing in professional development, recognizing achievements, and promoting open communication create a valued, empowered environment. This boosts morale, performance, and adaptability to community needs. Ultimately, People & Culture ensures sustainable success by aligning employees with organizational goals.

Previous Strategic Efforts

► Organizational Culture

The Metro Way (2020)

Established a shared culture, values, and expectations for how we accomplish our mission.

► Succession Planning

Firefighter Mentoring & Succession Program (2023)

Strengthened workforce readiness and continuity in mission-critical positions.

► Employee Support

Workers' Compensation Guidebook (2024)

Improved employee understanding of benefits and the workers' compensation process.

► Leadership Standards

Command Manual (2021)

Defined command expectations and leadership standards for emergency incidents.

► Career Development

Firefighter Career Development Guide (2023)

Provided a roadmap for promotional and in-rank development opportunities.

► Digital Resources

HR, Training, and WHS Apps

Expanded access to employee information, services, and wellness resources through the District intranet.



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Metro Fire's duty extends beyond daily tasks. It ensures essential resources—personnel, equipment, and funds—are available when needed. Achieving this requires long-term planning, forecasting community needs, and aligning resources. This involves recruiting and training staff, upgrading equipment, and managing budgets to maintain readiness. Through strategic planning, Metro Fire keeps its teams prepared to respond effectively, ensuring quality service and community safety during emergencies and regular operations.

Previous Strategic Efforts

▶ Service Planning

Municipal Service Review & Sphere of Influence (2026) – A comprehensive study evaluating the agency's ability to provide services, identify future growth needs, and support long-term regional planning and governance decisions.

▶ Strategic Staffing

Staffing Plan (TBD) – A strategic workforce roadmap that aligns staffing levels, recruitment, training, succession planning, and retention efforts with current and future service demands.

▶ Capital Planning

Capital Improvement Plan (2026) – A five-year blueprint that prioritizes facility improvements, apparatus and equipment replacements, infrastructure upgrades, and major capital projects needed to support community service needs.

▶ Operational Readiness

Service Delivery Plan (2024) – A resource management roadmap that evaluates service demands, deployment strategies, staffing requirements, and operational resources to ensure effective and sustainable service delivery.

▶ Financial Sustainability

Fee Studies (2020–2026) – Municipal user fee and impact fee analyses that evaluate the true cost of services and ensure sustainable funding for service delivery and future growth.



FISCAL STEWARDSHIP

Fiscal stewardship is crucial for organizations like Metro Fire, ensuring responsible financial management to support operations, emergency preparedness, and innovation. Careful budgeting and monitoring align resources with priorities and community needs. This approach allows investments in training, equipment, and new technologies, enhancing readiness and service quality while maintaining accountability. Incorporating fiscal stewardship into strategic planning helps the organization fulfill its mission with integrity, adaptability, and excellence.

Previous Strategic Efforts

▶ Financial Planning & Stewardship

Preliminary, Mid-Year, and Final Budgets (2026)

Established transparent and legally compliant financial plans that guide how the District allocates resources and invests in services.

▶ Financial Accountability

Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (2025)

Provided audited financial statements that demonstrate fiscal accountability, transparency, and the District's overall financial condition.

▶ Community Transparency

Community Annual Report (2025)

Expanded public understanding of District finances and accomplishments through a concise and accessible summary of key information.

COMMUNICATIONS

Effective communication is pivotal to building better organizations by fostering transparency, facilitating collaboration, and ensuring accurate information flow across all levels. It enables the timely sharing of goals, expectations, and feedback, strengthening trust and alignment between staff and leadership. By establishing clear channels for dialogue and information exchange, organizations can proactively address challenges, enhance decision-making, and drive continuous improvement.



STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2031

STRATEGIC PLANNING GOALS



GOAL 1

CARE FOR ALL OUR PEOPLE



People & Culture | Communications | Resource Management

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

GOAL 1



CARE FOR ALL OUR PEOPLE

Desired Outcome

Metro Fire fosters a workplace where every employee is valued, supported, and equipped to thrive, resulting in a healthy, resilient, and engaged workforce prepared to serve our community.

Indicators of Achievement

- Employees are healthy, supported, and have access to comprehensive wellness, health, and safety resources.
- Work-related injuries, illnesses, and workers' compensation claims are reduced through a proactive culture of safety and prevention.
- Employee wellness improves, resulting in reduced unscheduled absences and increased workforce reliability.
- Metro Fire attracts and retains a highly qualified, engaged, and committed workforce.
- Employees report increased morale, resilience, and confidence in the organization's commitment to their well-being.
- Metro Fire is recognized as an employer of choice, resulting in fewer employees leaving for opportunities with other agencies.
- The organization maintains sustainable staffing levels through effective workforce planning, recruitment, and succession planning.
- Staffing levels and workforce planning support improved schedule stability and reduced reliance on mandatory overtime.



STRATEGIES

TACTICS

LEAD

1

TBD

2

TBD

3

TBD



GOAL 2

ENSURE FISCAL STEWARDSHIP



Fiscal Stewardship | Resource Management | People & Culture

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

GOAL 2



ENSURE FISCAL STEWARDSHIP

Desired Outcome

Metro Fire responsibly stewards public resources through sound financial management, strategic investment, and long-term planning to ensure the organization remains financially resilient, operationally effective, and positioned to meet the evolving needs of the community.

Indicators of Achievement

- Metro Fire maintains healthy financial reserves that strengthen long-term fiscal stability and organizational resilience.
- Compensation and benefits remain competitive and financially sustainable, supporting the recruitment and retention of a high-performing workforce.
- Voter-approved funding is managed transparently and fulfills the commitments made to the community.
- Metro Fire's financial practices consistently demonstrate accountability, transparency, and excellence.
- The organization successfully pursues and leverages grants, partnerships, and other funding opportunities to enhance services and reduce reliance on traditional revenue sources.
- Financial planning keeps pace with community growth, ensuring resources and service levels remain aligned with current and future demand.



STRATEGIES

TACTICS

LEAD

1

TBD

2

TBD

3

TBD



GOAL 3

PROVIDE INNOVATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY



Service Delivery Innovation | Resource Management | Fiscal Stewardship

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

GOAL 3



PROVIDE INNOVATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

Desired Outcome

Metro Fire delivers exceptional, innovative, and adaptive emergency services through regional collaboration, technology, strategic investment, and continuous improvement to meet the evolving needs of the communities we serve.

Indicators of Achievement

- Strategic regional expansion enhances Metro Fire's ability to deliver high-quality, efficient, and sustainable emergency services.
- Emergency response performance consistently meets or exceeds established service level objectives.
- Innovative EMS delivery programs are sustainable, integrated, and improve outcomes for the community.
- Metro Fire supports a coordinated Continuum of Care system that improves community access to timely, appropriate, and integrated support services.
- Service delivery evolves with community growth through strategic deployment of personnel, stations, and resources.
- The community experiences uninterrupted emergency service delivery through sustained station availability and strategic deployment of resources.
- Fleet and emergency response equipment are reliable, well-maintained, and replaced through a sustainable lifecycle management program.



STRATEGIES

TACTICS

LEAD

1

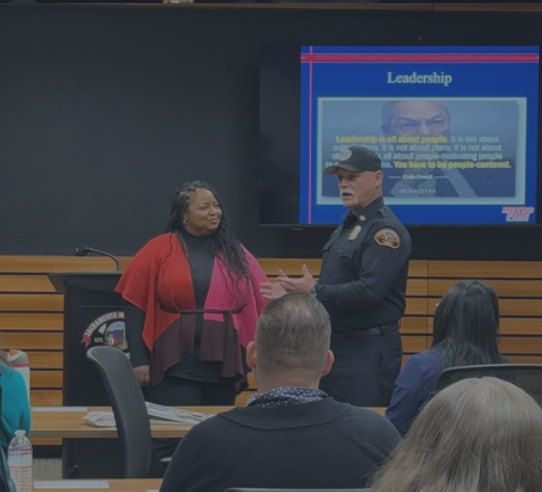
TBD

2

TBD

3

TBD



GOAL 4

STRENGTHEN & EXPAND COMMUNICATION



Communications | People & Culture

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

GOAL 4



STRENGTHEN & EXPAND COMMUNICATION

Desired Outcome

Metro Fire fosters a culture of transparent, timely, and meaningful communication that strengthens trust, promotes organizational alignment, and builds strong relationships with employees, the Board, partners, and the community.

Indicators of Achievement

- Employees are informed, engaged, and connected through consistent, transparent, and meaningful internal communication.
- Leadership and employees maintain open dialogue that strengthens trust, collaboration, and organizational alignment.
- Labor-management relationships are strengthened through proactive communication, shared understanding, and constructive engagement.
- Leaders are equipped with the skills and tools to communicate effectively and consistently across the organization.
- Community engagement programs and outreach opportunities strengthen awareness, understanding, and trust in Metro Fire services, initiatives, and investments.
- Metro Fire maintains strong relationships with regional partners and jurisdictions through consistent collaboration and communication.
- The Board and community have confidence and understanding of District priorities, initiatives, and use of Measure O funding.



STRATEGIES	TACTICS	LEAD
1 Strengthen and Expand Communications Between the Board of Directors and the Office of the Fire Chief	4.11	Increase the Board's Executive Committee's role in strategic planning and communications OFC
	4.12	Submit monthly Emerging Trends reports for Board awareness OFC
	4.13	Develop comprehensive briefs with messaging frameworks, stakeholder maps, and milestone calendars for all Critical Issues OFC
	4.14	Develop full issue briefs and communications work plan for all Public Trust Projects OFC
	4.15	Develop an Integrated Communications Strategy OFC
	4.16	Unified KPI dashboard across all strategies AS
	4.17	12-Month Executive/Board Communications Calendar AS
2 Strengthen & Expand Communications Between Labor and Management	4.21	Establish a Structured Labor-Management Communication Framework
	4.22	Implement Predictable and Consistent Labor-Management Collaboration Meetings
	4.23	Improve Transparency Through Coordinated Communications
	4.24	Strengthen Collaborative Problem-Solving Between Executive Staff and Local 522 Leadership
	4.25	Increase Board Visibility Into Labor-Management Collaboration
	4.26	Evaluate and Continuously Improve Labor-Management Communications
3 Strengthen & Expand Communications Between the Office of the Fire Chief and all Members	4.31	Executive Communications (All-Staff, Strategic Direction/Policy) AS
	4.32	Change Management Communications (New program launches, reorganization announcements, leadership transitions) AS
	4.33	Recognition and Awards AS
	4.34	Wellness, Health & Safety AS

GOAL 4, CONTINUED

STRENGTHEN & EXPAND COMMUNICATION

STRATEGIES	TACTICS	LEAD
4 Strengthen Public Trust	4.4.1 Implement Fire Chief Voice and Visibility Strategy	AS
	4.4.2 Integrated Stakeholder Engagement Matrix across all three categories	CE
	4.4.3 Federal & State Advocacy Plan	CE
	4.4.4 Local government partnerships	CE
	4.4.5 Enhance Community Relations programs	COR
	4.4.6 Business community engagement	P&D, CRRD
	4.4.7 Business development programs	P&D
	4.4.8 12-Month Executive/Board communications calendar	AS

AS= Administrative Services
 CE= Communications & Engagement
 COR= Community Relations Division
 CRRD= Community Risk Reduction
 OFC= Office of the Fire Chief
 P&D= Planning & Development