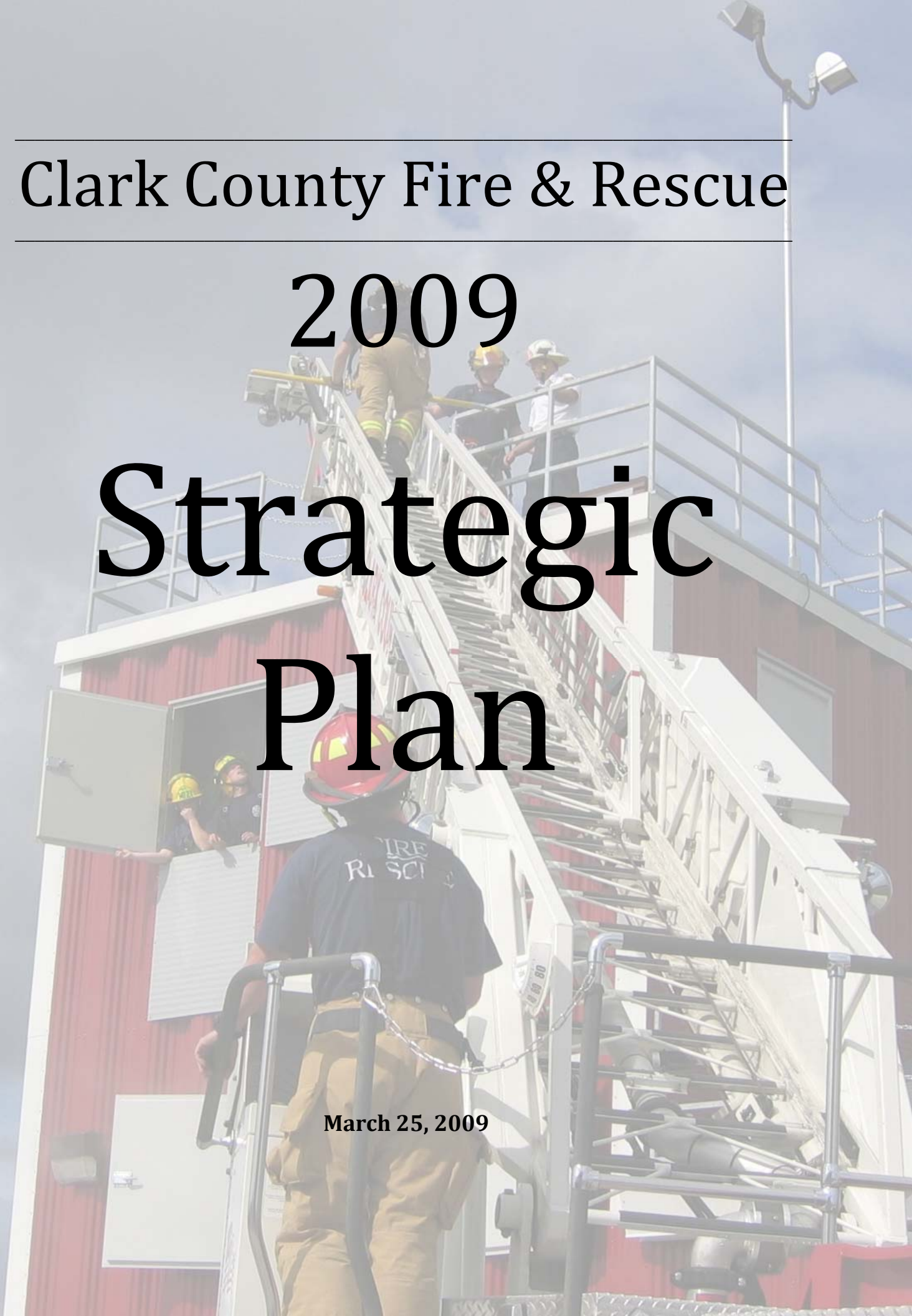

Clark County Fire & Rescue

2009

Strategic Plan

March 25, 2009





Clark County Fire & Rescue

2009 Strategic Plan

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Basic Information

Clark County Fire & Rescue

Department Name:	Clark County Fire & Rescue
Year Formed:	2008
Board of Fire Commissioners:	Chair – Jerry Kolke Jon Babcock Linn “Penny” Dollar Bill Hargett Bob Johnson Michael Lambrecht
Fire Chief:	Dennis Mason
Deputy Chiefs:	Larry Bartel Dan Yager
Division Chief:	Mike Ciraulo
Battalion Chiefs:	Tim Dawdy Max Konkright Dean Lange Jim Langborg
Finance Manager:	Kathy Streissguth
Human Resources Manager:	Jennifer Yager
Office Manager:	Christi Linn
IAFF Local 3674:	President – Jason Leavitt Vice-President – Brian Stewart Secretary – Dan Ferber Treasurer – Sean Kerns Member at Large – Travis Smith
Website:	www.clarkfr.org
Department Address:	911 N. 65 Ave Ridgefield, WA 98642
Department Phone Number:	(360) 887-4609
Size:	120 Square Miles
Cities Served:	Battle Ground La Center Ridgefield



Clark County Fire & Rescue *2009 Strategic Plan*

1. Introduction to Plan

Welcome to the Clark County Fire & Rescue 2009 Strategic Plan. This document is designed to provide a guide for management decision-making, resource allocation, and prioritization of resources over the next three to five years.

In February 2008, the Board's of Fire Commissioners from Clark County Fire District's 11 & 12 voted to merge the two organizations into one agency known as Clark County Fire & Rescue (CCF&R). While both agencies had completed a strategic plan in recent years, it was determined that the new organization needed a new plan to help identify and provide the best possible services to the community. With this vision in mind, Chief Dennis Mason recruited an internal and external strategic planning team (see Appendix A and B). The process began on June 30th, 2008, with a department wide meeting and kick-off.



At this gathering, all members gave input into the values and vision for the future of CCF&R. These values and vision served as the foundation for the internal and external planning teams to build upon.



An external stakeholder group was asked to assist CCF&R through this process. This group consisted of representatives of our partner cities, various community groups and organizations, and key citizens in the community. This group was given an overview of the services provided by CCF&R and asked to give direction on service priorities and needs. After several meetings the group was able to provide specific lists of their desired levels of service, expectations, and areas for expanded services. This information was shared with the internal planning team to assist them in the planning process. The internal planning team consisted of representatives of the following groups within the department:

- Volunteer Firefighters
- Part-time Firefighters
- Full-time Firefighters
- IAFF Local 3674
- Captains
- Battalion Chiefs
- Training
- Support Staff
- Chaplains
- Administration

The team, under Chief Masons' leadership, participated in an intense process facilitated by Mike Ciraulo and Tamara Bailey. During the meeting, members of the team identified trends and issues that would influence CCF&R and community over the next three to five years. The internal planning team analyzed the input received by the external planning team and from their respective groups. Team members were also asked to present their own thoughts on trends and issues that CCF&R would be facing over the coming years. Many economic, political, technological, social, environmental, and legal issues were identified. The planning team also conducted a candid assessment of CCF&R's strengths and weaknesses, and identified opportunities and challenges (threats) to CCF&R and the community. The team identified the core values of the organization, developed a vision for the future, and constructed the mission statement. Utilizing these core building blocks, the team then identified key strategic goals for CCF&R to address in the coming years.

A key tool in the planning process was the perspective of the elected officials of CCF&R. Each Commissioner was interviewed and the results of these interviews (see Appendix "C") assisted the planning team in understanding the thoughts and insights of the elected officials responsible for CCF&R.



2. Mission, Vision, Values, & SWOT

2.1. Mission

The foundation of any organization's plan is its mission statement. It tells the public, our stakeholders, and our members why we exist.

Proudly protecting life and property through preparation, prevention, education, and response.

2.2. Vision

The vision articulates what we want our organization to become in the future.

Strive for perfection to achieve excellence.

In support of the vision we will:

- Be the leader in the provision of emergency services to the communities we serve.
- Recognize that serving our community is a privilege.
- Conduct ourselves in a professional manner at all times.
- Take every opportunity to nurture and facilitate regional partnerships and programs where we can.
- Assure our divisions and programs are cost effective, efficient, and that expenses are well managed.
- Place a high value on the development of future leaders.
- Value teamwork and the strength of decisions developed through open and collaborative processes.
- Treat our personnel and the citizens we serve with respect and dignity at all times.



2.3. Values

The following core values indicate how our organization is operated. These are the things we believe in and tell how we will conduct ourselves:

Safety – We believe the safety of our personnel is of utmost importance. We are committed to providing effective and comprehensive training programs, policies, and guidelines to assure the safest working environment possible.

Integrity – We understand the trust placed in us by the public and our colleagues. We are committed to honest and ethical behavior at all times. As such, we will conduct ourselves in a manner that brings credit to CCF&R and the fire service while on-duty as well as off-duty, where the actions of every member models the highest ethical values of public service. We pledge to do the right thing, at the right time, for the right reasons.

Professional Excellence – We believe that the pursuit of perfection whenever possible will help us achieve excellence throughout the entire organization. We will ensure the best possible service to our community by requiring our personnel maintain the highest professional standards. We will support continuous training and encourage the professional development of our personnel whenever possible.

Community Service and Involvement – We believe we have a duty to be involved in the community where we work. We will encourage outside community involvement and service wherever possible.

Teamwork and Shared Leadership – We believe individuals have the capacity to lead and our organization values leadership at all levels. Teamwork and shared leadership are integral to our organization, and we will seek out and value the opinions of our members.

Effective Communication – We believe open communication is essential to the success of our organization. Opinions and input are welcomed at all levels of the organization and from the community.

Innovation – We recognize and understand that there will be constant change in our community and in our industry, and that change impacts our daily business. We are committed to seeking out and implementing innovative and progressive thinking to benefit those we serve.

Diversity – We recognize that diversity is what makes us strong. We will respect the diversity of our community and our personnel, and will provide compassionate and quality service to all.



2.4. SWOT

The strategic goals were primarily identified through a SWOT analysis (together with reflection on our mission, vision, and values). A SWOT analysis is an honest look at the Strengths and Weaknesses internal to the organization and the Opportunities and Threats in the environment external to the organization.

SWOT Analysis for Clark County Fire & Rescue	
<p><u>Strengths:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible leaders • Communications • Consolidation • Training • Accountability • Staff Support • Geographic size • Personnel willing to better themselves and learn • Interoperability • Equipment and stations • Age • Community relations – Education and prevention • Cadet program • Relationships with elected officials, administration, and labor union 	<p><u>Opportunities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open to change • Relationship with the Cowlitz tribe • Regionalization/partnerships • New SCBA technology • Marine/boat program • Economic recession • Contract with the city of Battle Ground is up in one year • Mold our leaders • High industrial growth potential • Additional funding from citizens • Potential training consortium • Continued staffing growth • Increase/different model – Fire Marshal services • Marketing



<u>Weaknesses:</u>	<u>Threats:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Try to do too much/spread too thin• Staffing levels• Geographic size• Multiple hazards• Retention• Funding• Consolidation• Job design• Communications• Volunteer program• Mission focus• Lack of consistencies• Lack of focus on fire prevention• Lack of experience/young department• Succession planning• Reactive organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduction in growth• Loss of Battle Ground contract• Current economic situation• Unfunded mandates• Poor planning• Lack/loss of internal support• High industrial development• Aging population• Funding of radio system• Tax initiatives• Revenue stability• Loss of public support• It all comes back to \$\$\$• Vast and poorly planned residential development

2.5. External Stakeholder Expectations

Key stakeholders shared with the planning team their expectations for service as well as their wants and desires for future services provided by CCF&R.

- Rapid fire and EMS response.
- Highly trained and competent Firefighters.
- Be the leader in the profession.
- Continued high levels of customer service.
- No Firefighters injured due to equipment malfunctions.



-
- Paramedic level service 24/7 from all stations.
 - More time off for Firefighters to compensate for the high stress imposed by the job.
 - Be part of the communities' economic development. Decrease number and severity of fires to help lower insurance costs to businesses and residents.
 - Don't decrease the level of service provided.
 - Be involved in drug and alcohol prevention programs.
 - Explore ways to self fund.
 - Increase the recruitment of women.
 - Bring a state sponsored Firefighting academy to Southwest Washington.
 - Continue partnerships that are in place and expand where possible.
 - Look for additional regionalization opportunities.
 - For each dollar saved on programs, place those back into ensuring a better response capability.
 - Be prepared for high risk/low frequency incidents.
 - Increase marketing and prevention activities.





3. Goals

Goals – sometimes called objectives – are developed to bridge the gap between the current capability and the vision we have for our organization. They are aligned with the mission and values and they form the basis for action plans.

3.1. Administration & Financial

3.1.1. Tax Rate

Take appropriate steps to maintain a millage rate of \$1.50. Put a lid lift before the voters prior to the rate falling more than 20 cents below the legal limit.

3.1.2. Contract with Battle Ground

Work with the City to identify the preferred option for service delivery. Develop an implementation plan by December 2010.

3.1.3. Grants

Actively pursue opportunities to obtain government and foundational grants. Grant priorities should be directed to offset existing program costs first and then toward implementation of new programs or services second.

3.1.4. External Funding Sources

Develop a long-term funding strategy that expands the use of alternative funding sources including fees for service.

3.1.5. Cadet Program

Complete an in-depth cost analysis of the Cadet program in 2009 and take appropriate measures to ensure the 2010 budget is cost neutral.

3.1.6. Cowlitz Tribe

Negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding with the Tribe to ensure that CCF&R provides all Fire, EMS, and Prevention services to the new facility by January 2010.

3.1.7. Communications Plan

Develop an internal and external communications plan by September 2009.



3.1.8. **Regionalization**

Pursue regionalization with other agencies as opportunities arise.

3.2. **Operations**

3.2.1. **Staffing levels**

Identify minimum staffing levels and goals for implementation by 2010.

3.2.2. **Job Descriptions**

Job descriptions for all of positions in the organization will be completed in 2009.

3.2.3. **Part-Time Program**

Develop a plan for the future use of part-time Firefighters by December 2009.

3.2.4. **Response Times**

Identify response time goals in 2009.

3.2.5. **Fire Marshal Services**

Expand current service agreements with the cities of Battle Ground, Ridgefield, and La Center. Develop a partnership with the Clark County Fire Marshal for the unincorporated areas of CCF&R by January 2011.

3.2.6. **Deployment Standards**

Develop and adopt deployment standards utilizing the development matrix recommended by the Washington State Association of Fire Chiefs.

3.2.7. **Marine Program**

Develop partnerships with associated agencies such as US Coast Guard and MFSA to enhance CCF&R's water rescue and marine firefighting capabilities.



3.3. Logistics

3.3.1. Facilities Assessment and Upgrades

Determine functionality of current stations and identify needed upgrades by December 2009. Complete identified upgrades by 2013.

3.3.2. Station 2-5

Analyze the viability of the continued use of station 2-5 by June 2009.

3.3.3. Facilities for Marine Program

Determine facility needs for boat/marine program by June 2009. Obtain identified facilities by 2011.

3.3.4. Future Station Needs/Location

Identify future station needs/locations by January 2010. Secure future sites by 2011.

3.3.5. Apparatus Needs Assessment

Assess and identify apparatus needs by June 2009.

3.3.6. Apparatus Replacement Plan

Complete an apparatus replacement plan by August 2009. Update the apparatus replacement plan annually.

3.3.7. Technology Plan

Develop a replacement/upgrade plan (to include system security) by December 2009.

3.4. Public Education

3.4.1. Public Education Plan

Develop a three to five year public education plan by June 2009. This plan shall include a community risk reduction program that will:

- Expand and enhance CCF&R's smoke alarm installation program.



-
- Increase fire safety and injury presentation messages and delivery methods to high-risk audiences (children under five, low-income, and adults 65 and older).
 - Identify key public relation/education events.

3.4.2. Community Risk Reduction Plan

Implement a community risk reduction program by December 2013 that will:

- Increase fire safety and injury prevention messages and delivery methods to high-risk audiences by 50%.
- Provide fire safety messages in the form of newsletters to 100% of the occupied multi-family and manufactured housing units within CCF&R boundaries.
- Increase the presence and maintenance of smoke alarms for residents identified as low-income by 35%.
- Address all preschool and kindergarten classes to present fire safety messages designed to reduce the fire safety risks to children under five.
- Identify all community public relation/community events that CCF&R members will participate in annually.

3.4.3. Budgetary Support

Increase budgetary support of public education programs by 20%, using internal and external sources by December 2009.

3.4.4. Statistics

Obtain 100% statistics of call types and locations to identify the greatest fire and injury risks to residents of CCF&R by December 2009 and annually thereafter.

3.5. Volunteer Program

3.5.1. Program Size

Establish a volunteer program that supports 40 volunteers; 75% of whom re-cycle every two to three years. To be completed by 2014.



3.5.2. Support Program

Build a fire ground support program that responds the rehab, air rig, boat, and water tenders by January 2010. Maintain a minimum of 12 volunteers able to respond these apparatus by January 2011.

3.5.3. Volunteer Staffing

Add one qualified volunteer firefighter to each regularly staffed engine/tower company by 2014.

3.5.4. Residents

Identify minimum staffing levels of the resident program and training/education goals for residents by December 2009.

3.5.5. Interns

Develop a plan for the utilization and goals of the Intern program by December 2009.

3.5.6. Volunteer Participation at Community Events

Provide volunteer crews to staff engines at community events in order to allow the paid crews to remain in service by June 2010.

3.5.7. Joint Education/Projects with the Firefighters Association

Research joint community education/projects with the CCF&R Firefighters Association by January 2010.

3.6. Training

3.6.1. Succession Plan

Develop a succession plan for the organization by 2010. This plan shall include:

- An update of the department's career development manual to address all positions in the department.
- Identify specific training needs at all levels to ensure support of the plan.
- Training needed for all levels in the organization to support the plan



3.6.2. Training Plan

Develop a 3-5 year training plan in 2009.

3.6.3. Training Consolidation

Consolidate the Training Divisions of CCF&R, Clark County Fire District No. 6, and the Vancouver Fire Department by December 2009. Included in the consolidation will be co-locating personnel at station 15-1.

3.6.4. Regional Recruit Academy

Work with the Washington State Patrol, Clark College, and other Southwest Washington Fire Departments to solidify a local fire training academy.

3.6.5. Cadet Program

Develop a strategic plan for the Cadet program by 2010.

3.6.6. Station 15-1

Identify future space needs by December 2009. Complete construction by 2015.





Appendix -A

Internal Planning Team

The department is grateful to the following members of the department who contributed countless hours to this planning process.

- Jon Babcock
- Tamara Bailey
- Larry Bartel
- Mike Ciraulo
- Tim Dawdy
- Karen Estep
- Jerry Kolke
- Sam LaPore
- Jason Leavitt
- Christi Linn
- Dennis Mason
- Abe Rommel
- Eamonn Ryan
- Brian Stewart
- Kathy Streissguth
- Dan Yager
- Doug Yager
- Jennifer Yager
- Harrison Zieverink



Appendix -B

External Planning Team

The department is grateful to the following community members who contributed their time, talent, and collective insights in assisting the department with the development of this plan.

- Justin Clary, City of Ridgefield
- Mark Eaton, Ridgefield Business Association
- Bill Ganley, City of Battle Ground
- Tim Hopkins, City of La Center
- Maureen Jondahl, Fairgrounds Neighborhood Association
- Elizabeth Madrigal, Ridgefield Junction Neighborhood Association
- Denis Marsh, Battle Ground Chamber of Commerce
- Mike Nolan, City of La Center, Clark County Sheriff's Department
- Dave Taylor, City of Ridgefield
- Millie Thomas, Community Member
- Phil Thomas, Community Member
- Todd Snider, La Center/North Clark County Chamber of Commerce
- Vern Veysey, Community Member
- John Williams, City of Battle Ground



Appendix - C

Fire Commissioner Interviews

As part of the strategic planning process, the elected Board of Fire Commissioners were asked a series of questions. During the month of September 2008, the facilitator met with each Commissioner and conducted a one-on-one interview. Below are the answers (listed randomly) to the questions posed.

Question 1: Overall, how would you rate the public's perception of the fire district?

- People think highly of our organization.
- Good comments heard.
- Doing a good job overall.
- Received one concern regarding pay raises.
- Very high.
- Exceptional, even before the consolidation.
- Good reputation and good community involvement.
- We have a positive image in the community and the public appears to like us, but may not support us financially.
- Some people fear losing the boat house.
- Good to very good.

Question 2: What do you see as the strengths of our fire district?

- People, staffing, and youth.
- Good learning attitude.
- Chiefs are knowledgeable and dedicated to the fire service.
- Personnel show a willingness to learn and to accept change.
- Very good (outstanding) leadership.
- Good fiber of people.



-
- Most people seem excited about the merger.
 - We are at the level of having more full-time personnel with the SAFER grant.
 - We have good personnel and good upper management.
 - Good internal communications.
 - Outstanding training program.
 - Our people – our most valuable asset.
 - Good screening and hiring.
 - Highest quality of people.
 - Our people do an outstanding job. They come across in a good way.
 - Our people make the difference.

Question 3: What do you see as the weaknesses of our fire district?

- More training needed. Individuals should have the flexibility and a say in their training.
- Poor inventory.
- Financial/levy's. Lack of understanding by the public on our financing.
- Having a relationship with AMR – what is the long term plan.
- Station sizes (too small).
- Need more room for resident firefighters.
- Concerned about District 10 and their funding and the impact on our agency.
- Staffing still an issue as well as retention.
- Larger department – larger job, more criticism.
- Need for all personnel (especially volunteers) to raise the bar.
- Waterfront firefighting.
- Financial/monetary.
- Getting hands around the size of the new organization.
- Commissioners are older; however they bring a wealth of knowledge.



Question 4: What are the opportunities that you see available to the fire district?

- Growth, increase in the tax base.
- Potential stations, consolidations, merged training.
- Industrial development, waterfront development – need for a larger boat and boat house.
- More training with other districts, specifically District 6.
- Awesome opportunity with regional training and capturing North Bend (state) dollars.
- Training and safety should be our top priority.
- Commercial opportunities (mostly residential in our history).
- Casino will drive many things on the west side.
- Boat program.
- The ability to offer a variety of opportunities to our personnel. The marine program, EMS, a possible air program, etc.

Question 5: What are the threats facing the fire district?

- Currently in an economic recession/depression.
- We are changing from a fire service to an EMS service.
- Lack of understanding by the public on our operations.
- People are not willing to pay for essential services.
- Statewide initiatives and tax measures.
- Funding, changing thought/patterns/culture in voters (what's in it for me?).
- It's (the department) a new organization – potential to screw it up.
- Annexations by the cities (BG and Vancouver).
- Unfunded mandates.

Question 6: What social cultural issues do you see impacting our fire district?

- Interaction between the cities. Impact of cities fighting each other.
- Increased diversity.



-
- Newcomers expectations of a higher level of service (those who come from an urban area). The need for good public relations and a marketing plan can help.
 - Old District 12 was too rigid, old District 11 too relaxed (the overall perception). Good blend now and very happy with results of the consolidation and the speed in which it happened.
 - All business, no social time.
 - Lack of social activities.
 - Potential harassment issues.

Question 7: What technological issues do you see facing the fire district?

- Boat, helicopter, EMS supplies and equipment – to provide everything the people want.
- Money is the limiting factor.
- Communications, CRESA and radio upgrades – need more information.
- Equipment needs, i.e. radios.
- New products. Can we fund the changes?
- Concerned about mandates.
- Training and personnel.

Question 8: What economic issues do you see facing the fire district?

- Positive - size of the district – spread out the cost, use of equipment more efficiently.
Negative – Economy, tax issues, the current situation in District 10 and East County.
 - Salary increase.
 - Price of equipment increasing.
 - Taxes that the district must pay on purchases.
 - Increase industrial base. Casino coming – will it be a benefit or a detriment?
 - Concerned about property tax devaluation. Needs answers to many “what if” questions.
 - May need to stop hiring employees.
 - People don’t want to pay taxes. Equipment gets old and needs replacement. Recommend rebuilding equipment instead of buying new.
-



Question 9: What environmental issues do you see facing the fire district?

- Air quality issues – SWCCA
- Water run-off
- Possible compensation for environmental work.
- Legal issue currently facing the district.
- From a security standpoint, need tightened security. We have access issues – need ID badges.
- Live fire training requirements.
- Wetland issues
- Increased environmental response maybe needed in the future.
- Port of Ridgefield – larger industrial impact on fire operations.
- Possible changes in operational response to fires.
- Boat issues.

Question 10: What political issues do you see?

- Commissioners currently work well together.
- Diverse board, they put aside personal issues.
- Potential issue after election – going from six to five commissioners.
- Age issues by most elected.
- Good interactions with other elected officials.
- Neighboring departments are hurting financially.
- We have good relationships with other jurisdictions (providing leadership to surrounding area).
- More reach out/marketing opportunities needed such as citizen’s fire academy.
- Internal – size of board.
- External – recommend yearly workshops with other governmental bodies.
- Other interested fire districts (consolidations).



-
- Change in size of board.
 - Residential sprinkler systems.
 - Legislative – LEOFF 2
 - Labor should get involved on the political side.
 - Good relationships with other boards.
 - Elected officials need training.

Question 11: Are there any issues you think we need to know about or address as part of this process?

- Good staff – they know what the department needs.
- Feel that the board needs more information.
- Battle Ground contract.
- Casino issue.
- District 3 (what are they going to do).
- Marine program.
- Make sure that the strategic plan is revisited at least annually.
- Flexibility in our interpretation is important.
- Communication – top to bottom, bottom to top.
- Communication with the board. Need more communication with staff.
- Keeping united board is important and a concern.

Additional comments:

- Very proud of the district and the entire structure from the newest Firefighter to the Chief.
- It is important that we cement the new District 11/12 relationship before we reach out to other departments.
- A high priority needs to be the regional training concept.