

**Yakima County Fire District 12**

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**2025-2029 Strategic Plan**



# Yakima County Fire District 12 Strategic Plan 2025-2029

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

This strategic plan for 2025-2029 outlines the direction and priorities for the West Valley Fire Department over the next five years. It is designed to guide our decision-making, resource allocation, and organizational focus to achieve our mission of preserving and protecting life, then property. The plan emphasizes sustainable growth, innovation, and the strengthening of our core capabilities, ensuring that we are well-positioned to meet the evolving needs of our community.

### Mission and Vision

- **Mission:** The West Valley Fire Department is dedicated to the preservation and protection of life, then property. To accomplish our Mission, we focus on:
  - **Community Education:** Providing public safety, first aid, accident prevention, and preparedness training, along with fire and injury prevention information and supplies.
  - **Emergency Services:** Serving the public by responding to and mitigating emergencies.
  - **Preparedness:** Ensuring members are trained, educated, and certified for all-risk hazard response, with equipment and resources maintained in a ready state.
- **Vision:** We strive to be a dynamic, innovative, and proactive response organization committed to the highest standards to meet the community's needs.

### Strategic Goals and Priorities

To achieve our Mission and Vision for 2025-2029, we have identified four strategic priorities, each addressing key issues and goals:

#### Strategic Priority 1: Personnel Retention, Development, Recruitment, and Selection

- **Objective:** Build a highly skilled, motivated, and diverse workforce by enhancing employee retention, investing in professional development, and refining our recruitment and selection processes.
- **Challenge:** Ensure a full complement of skilled personnel available 24/7 to deliver safe, effective, and professional service.
- **Goal:** Maintain an optimal workforce to fulfill our mission and meet our Standards of Cover.

## **Strategic Priority 2: Financial Management and Accountability**

- **Objective:** Ensure the financial sustainability of the West Valley Fire Department through rigorous financial management, transparency, and accountability.
- **Challenge:** Sustain a robust financial position with sound policies balancing cost-effectiveness and taxpayer impact.
- **Goal:** Responsibly manage financial resources to meet the District's needs, in full compliance with State and County regulations.

## **Strategic Priority 3: Infrastructure Management**

- **Objective:** Maintain and upgrade our infrastructure to support current and future operations, ensuring reliability, efficiency, and scalability.
- **Challenge:** Align staffing, facilities, and equipment with the evolving needs of our community.
- **Goal:** Ensure strategically located stations and well-maintained apparatus to meet an 8-minute response time in high-density areas, while maintaining a WSRB rating of 4 or better.

## **Strategic Priority 4: Community Engagement**

- **Objective:** Strengthen our relationship with the community by increasing engagement, transparency, and collaboration.
- **Challenge:** Meet the community's expectations for operational excellence, financial transparency, and public education.
- **Goal:** Gauge community satisfaction, enhance awareness of our programs, and foster public involvement in District activities.

## **Business and Capital Improvement Plans**

The District Business and Capital Improvement Plans work in conjunction with the Strategic Plan. Because emergency services are a dynamic work environment, all plans have built-in flexibility and are reviewed annually to ensure the District can adapt to emerging issues effectively. Each year, an action plan is developed and implemented, with progress reported monthly to the Board of Commissioners and Officers Management Team to keep the plan on track.

## **In-Depth Strategic Plan**

For an in-depth understanding of how the District plans to address each Strategic Priority identified, please read through each objective and the strategies developed to accomplish our goals in this Strategic Plan.

## **Market and Competitive Landscape**

The 2025-2029 period presents both opportunities and challenges, with rapid technological advancements, evolving community needs, and increased demand for services. Our strategic plan is designed to address these trends, positioning the West Valley Fire Department as a leader in public safety and emergency response.

## **Financial Overview**

The financial strategy for 2025-2029 targets sustainable growth and financial stability. Key financial goals include:

- Achieving cost efficiency while ensuring that all operations and services meet the highest standards.
- Implementing budget management practices that allow for flexibility and responsiveness to unforeseen events.

## **Risk Management**

To ensure the success of our strategic plan, we have identified key risks and developed mitigation strategies. These risks include:

- **Emergency Response Challenges:** Continuous training and resource planning to address all potential hazards.
- **Regulatory Changes:** Regular compliance reviews and engagement with policymakers to stay ahead of regulatory shifts.

## **Conclusion**

This 2025-2029 Strategic Plan positions the West Valley Fire Department to achieve sustainable growth, enhance our service delivery, and strengthen our community relationships. Through focused execution of our strategic priorities, we are confident in our ability to navigate the complexities of the future and achieve long-term success.

**Fire Chief Nathan Craig  
Yakima County Fire District 12  
2025-2029 Strategic Plan**

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**Strategic Planning Committee:**

Commissioner Paul Barham  
Commissioner Jim Borst  
Commissioner Ken Eakin  
Admin/Finance Officer Christy Boisselle  
Deputy Chief Jim Johnston  
Lieutenant Jim Petersen  
Firefighter Justin Nickolaus  
Firefighter Chris Payne  
Firefighter Hope Wilson  
Chief Nathan Craig

## Organizational Overview

### About Us

Yakima County Fire District 12 is a combination fire department with 75 dedicated citizens that are on-call members supported by seven full time members (Chief, Administration and Finance Officer, Deputy Chief, Duty Crew Lieutenant and three Firefighters) that respond to all risks within our 90 square miles from four fire stations protecting a population of 15,100 citizens.

### What We Do

- Provide Public Education in Fire Prevention and Life Safety.
- Fire Suppression to save lives and minimize property damage.
- Fire Investigation, cause, and origin to improve life safety.
- Rescue/Extrication to save lives.
- Emergency Medical Services, BLS first response.
- Hazardous Materials Emergency Response for life safety.
- Emergency/Disaster Management using the Incident Command System.
- Administrative Services, human resources, accounting, and administration.
- Support Services, maintaining buildings and equipment.
- Member Safety through a safety committee and training.

### 2024 Fire Fund

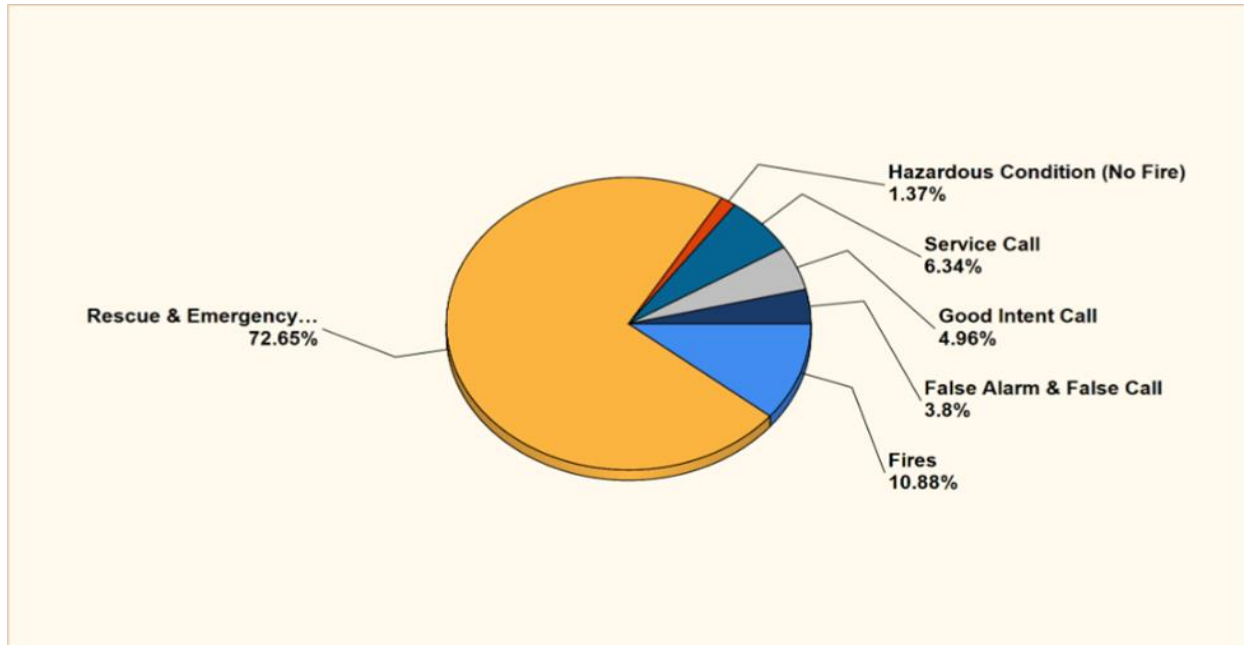
Property Tax Levy Amount: \$1,887,075.00  
Levy Rate: \$0.89/\$1000  
2023 Carryover \$577,985.11  
Grants \$135,000.00  
Misc. \$20,500.00  
EMS transfer in for payroll \$200,000.00  
Total Revenue \$2,820,505.11  
Total Expenditures \$2,379,657.00

### 2024 EMS Fund

Property Tax Levy: \$377,100.00  
County Levy Rate: \$0.25/\$1000  
2023 Carryover \$37,590.33  
Grants \$500.00  
Misc. \$1,000.00  
Total Revenue \$416,190.33  
Total Expenditures \$348,800.00

**2024 Reserve Fund Beginning Balance: \$360,914.04**

## 2023 Alarms:



### Purpose:

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to provide significant direction and opportunity for the District's effectiveness. Fire District 12's mission, vision, values and beliefs provide broad long-range direction while the Strategic Plan communicates more specific direction over the next five years. Collectively, these elements give structure and order to programs by identifying strategic priorities that require increased attention and potentially funding.

### Mission Statement:

**The West Valley Fire Department is dedicated to the preservation and protection of life then property.**

To accomplish our Mission, we focus on:

- **Community Education:** We provide public safety, first aid, accident prevention, and preparedness training in addition to fire and injury prevention information and supplies.
- **Emergency Services:** We are here to serve our public by responding to and mitigating emergencies.
- **Preparedness:** Members are trained, educated and certified for all risk hazard response. Equipment and resources are maintained in a ready state.

### Vision:

We strive to be a dynamic, innovative, and proactive response organization committed to the highest standards to meet the community's needs.

**Values:**

A plan cannot anticipate every decision that we will make, and no amount of training can cover every situation that will confront Members of our Department. That is why we have established organizational values as a reminder to all Members of WVFD that excellence is achieved only when decisions are made consistent with these values.

- All Members share in the **PRIDE**:  
Professionalism- attitude, training, no excuses we do our best.  
Respect- the job, each other, and those we serve.  
Integrity- trustworthy, hold each other to highest standards.  
Dedication- be there, be trained and help.  
Empowered- If it's legal, ethical and the right thing to do, we do it.
- The physical, mental, and emotional health and safety of our Members.
- Professional conduct and performance of our responsibilities.
- Teamwork & cooperation with all elements of our community.
- Flexibility to adjust to the growing & changing needs of our community.
- Cooperation with other emergency response agencies
- Efficient use of resources.

**The District Believes In:**

- A combination of full-time and on-call Members as the most effective and efficient resource for responding to emergency incidents within the community.
- The professionalism of our members in all aspects of serving public needs respectfully.
- The dedication and integrity of all members of the Department is critical to our Mission of protecting lives then property.
- Respecting safety, each other, and those we serve.
- A core of full-time personnel to SUPPORT our on-call response system.
- Empowering personnel assigned to each fire station to assist the public in any way so long as it is legal, ethical and the right thing to do.
- Knowledgeable and dedicated Fire Commissioners who provide policy leadership on behalf of the public interest.
- The involvement of personnel in key decisions
- Creating opportunities to share in our successes.

**District Culture:**

Unique individuals that form a team to preserve and protect life then property for our neighbors. Community Service bonds us to our District motto of Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Dedication and Empowerment.



### **Expected Behavior of all Members:**

- **Honesty-** We tell each other the truth in a non-blaming respectful manner. We have the courage to address tough issues TOGETHER.
- **Personal responsibility-** take responsibility for our actions. We do not blame others; we admit and learn from mistakes.
- **Disagreement DOESN'T mean disrespect-** Reasonable people can agree to disagree.
- **Understanding-** Listen to each other, we may not always see eye to eye but will work to understand our differences. We are committed to resolving conflicts with one another rather than complaining about one another.
- **Teamwork-** Help each other out, take care of one another, share the work and share the credit recognizing each other for work well done. Always support the team!
- **Respect-** Treat each other with professional courtesy, honor the role and position of each Member. We accept a diversity of ideas and styles among our Members and treat everyone with dignity.
- **Communication-** Share complete, relevant, accurate information with all Members.
- **Collaboration-** Work cooperatively, share ideas, solve problems together, base decisions on the Mission of the District.

## **Strategic Priority 1: Personnel retention, development, recruitment, and selection.**

- **Objective:** Build a highly skilled, motivated, and diverse workforce by enhancing employee retention, investing in professional development, and refining our recruitment and selection processes.
- **Challenge:** Ensure a full complement of skilled personnel available 24/7 to deliver safe, effective, and professional service.
- **Goal:** Maintain an optimal workforce to fulfill our mission and meet our Standards of Cover.

### **Objective I: Retention of On-Call Members.**

#### **Strategies:**

#### **A. Enhance internal and interpersonal communications across the District to understand and meet our mission while adhering to our core values, culture and the District PRIDE motto.**

1. Promote District culture as it relates to our Mission and PRIDE motto.
2. Establish group cohesion through participation in Association events, station to station drills and family activities.
  - a) Provide opportunities for families to participate in Department activities.
  - b) Periodically rotate stations to drill together with opportunity to work together and communicate. Equipment inspection drills provide time to talk and learn each other's equipment.
  - c) Officer/Firefighter communication is a critical component to the right message being delivered. The grapevine/rumor mill must be addressed at every drill/meeting with the simple question of "what have you been hearing?"
  - d) Opinion sharing must be encouraged at group events and misinformation corrected immediately and respectfully for improved knowledge overall.
3. Utilize the most appropriate means of communicating based on the message, audience, importance, and timeliness.
  - a) Face to Face, Email, Text, ISPY, Facebook, All Fired Up Newsletter, Flyers, Meeting Minutes, Association Meetings are all currently used to communicate with members.
  - b) Communication is a two-way street, Members must be an active participant to remain informed on upcoming events, training and operational changes.
  - c) Use electronic station message boards to post events, training, and general information weekly.
4. Adjust shift hours to emphasize full time Firefighters attending Wednesday night drill at different stations each month.

**B. Value Member's time through solid time management strategies:**

1. For alarm response, Members that are not needed on scene or for clean up after the incident will be released by the Incident Commander as soon as it is determined no additional manpower is necessary.
2. Drills will be planned, with clear objectives and start on time every week.
3. Meetings will start on time and follow an agenda.
4. All activities need to be evaluated for time management with respect to reducing the amount of time necessary for Members to remain active.
5. Staff to support On-Call Members in preparation for drill and activities to reduce extra time spent by On-Call Members for tasks that could be done ahead of time.
6. Long duration incidents, the Incident Commander will poll all Members on scene to determine if any Members need to leave for work or other activities as soon as the incident is stabilized.
7. As soon as an incident is mitigated or the risk to the public is eliminated apparatus will go in service, no waiting for tow trucks, utility companies or any other service.

**C. Highlight Department culture to promote, reward and evaluate the elements of PRIDE across the District as it directly relates to every member understanding and supporting our Mission of preserving and protecting life then property:**

1. **Professionalism**- attitude, training, no excuses we do our best.
  - Apply structure to all aspects of the Department to encourage a culture of professionalism where it is about the job getting done not who does it.
2. **Respect**- the job, each other, and those we serve.
  - Respect each other's time, start drills on time and give 100% effort to ensure we are not wasting members' time. Communicate effectively, treat others as they want to be treated.
3. **Integrity**- trustworthy, hold each other to higher standards.
  - Support each other, build each other up, do not talk about others behind their backs, if you have a problem say it or let it go, don't bring it up months later.
4. **Dedication**- be there, be trained and help.
  - Ensure all members understand our Mission and maintain their basic training to support the Mission. Members must be active and responding regularly for our Mission to be successful.
5. **Empowered**- if it's legal ethical and the right thing to do, we do it.
  - Seek out opportunities to make a difference in the community and for our customers based on the preservation and protecting of life then property.

6. Promote a culture of belonging through esteem in PRIDE. Motivate each other to live the culture of mission first. Truly be a brother/sisterhood where members all work together for the common good.
7. Encourage station pride through personalization and customization where possible at the station level.

**D. On-Call Member retention program:**

1. Annually collect data regarding operational, personnel or policy changes to be considered to improve member retention with consideration given to time required to be a member in good standing from recruit training through ongoing commitments. Share this data with the retention committee and all Members for feedback.
2. Officers maintain an open dialogue at their station on the morale of our members and any issues outstanding discussed and passed up the chain of command as needed for retention.
3. Monthly review call and drill attendance for changes in member's activity, Deputy Chief follow-up with company officer of member if a negative change in activity is detected to check in and see how the department can help the Member meet policy.
4. Ensure members are aware of benefits offered for their service.
5. Put members first for knowledge, communications, equipment, and incentives. Members are the backbone of the organization, retaining members is paramount to Mission success. Utilize all communication methods to ensure all are informed.
6. Continue Member of the Month program to highlight all aspects of the District and the work our members do.
7. Staff will attend drills regularly to receive feedback from Members regarding general attitude, morale, and ideas for improving retention. Staff to ask, "what can we do better" and discuss with the group or individual solutions to improve the department.
8. Strengthen the mentor program for new recruits/cadets, where possible providing training for mentors. Assign a mentor to support each new member. Set the expectations up front for the mentor and mentee and encourage them to get to know each other.
9. Conduct exit interviews with any member that leaves the department, including questions regarding culture or issues that lead to resignation. Compile the reasons in a document to be used for updating retention programs.
10. Evaluate retention program annually.

**E. Review and update incentives offered to Members:**

1. Ensure any changes to incentives or compensation are fully vetted by the Members and Admin before moving forward.

2. In July of odd numbered years review the current LOSAP retention program to ensure it meets the District's needs.
3. Research additional incentive programs for Members. Evaluate what programs similar type departments are doing to keep their members active.
4. Ensure member wages are at appropriate levels to fairly compensate members for their time away from their families and regular jobs. Participate in the WFCAs wage and benefit study to create a chart of where our compensation falls in line with similar departments.
5. Work with legislature on improving member benefits.
6. Utilize a focus group of Members with 1-6 years on the department to advise on retention strategies.

**F. Purchase and maintain modern equipment and PPE:**

1. Maintain apparatus replacement schedule and make purchases on time.
2. Maintain PPE replacement schedule and make purchases on time.
3. Maintain Capital Improvement Plan and update annually.

**G. Reduce number of non-emergency calls our Member's answer:**

1. Expand criteria-based EMS dispatching.
2. Partner with Ambulance service:
  - a) Under the county-wide ambulance contract, partner with the ambulance company to house an ambulance in District.
  - b) Adjust dispatch recommendations to only send ambulance to BLS non-life-threatening calls.
  - c) Contract with ambulance for lift assists nights and weekends.
  - d) Utilize ProQA and the AMR contract for nurses help to minimize non-emergent EMS calls.
  - e) Utilize Duty Officer for unknown smoke responses.
3. Continue staffing Duty Crew:
  - a) Providing a daytime response, the crew reduces the number of calls per station allowing a member working a regular 40-hour work week in town to not have calls count against their participation requirement levels while away from home at work.
  - b) Provide five day/week staffing of two crews, one north and one south to reduce response times. Consider contracting with nearby Districts to add a fifth full time Member to the Duty Crew in exchange for daytime response.
  - c) Review alarm day, times, and location against manpower availability to determine the need for additional duty crew staffing hours to meet Standards of Cover.

- d) Develop a pool of trained firefighters from other departments as volunteers to sign up for shifts working on a stipend when we are short-handed.
  - e) Research the need for 24/7 coverage through full-time staffing, sleeper programs, resident programs or part time positions.
  - f) For single apparatus responses 0600-1500 only tone the Duty Crew unless On-Call response is needed.
  - g) Staff crew with a minimum of two members daily based on available funding.
  - h) In addition to alarm response the Duty Crew is responsible for general operation and maintenance of the District under the Duty Crew Lieutenant.
  - i) Track alarm location and time of day to determine which stations to staff a duty crew at.
4. Provide the most appropriate service efficiently.
- a) Not all alarms require a response from WVFD. Automatic aid and ambulance only responses will be determined by proximity and severity.
  - b) Automatic Aid or ambulance only calls will be evaluated by our Mission statement. Our Mission is preserving and protecting life then property regardless of who provides the service.
  - c) Review Automatic Aid responses for the previous year to determine how often automatic response generates a false alarm for our Members and its effect on Member turnout. If false alarms affect turnout overall, work with Auto Aid partners to mitigate false alarms and weigh benefit of agreement to the District.
  - d) Review annual call volume to determine what calls we are dispatched to that we have no effect on the outcome and our response does not lead to meeting our mission. Examples of calls to consider response level changes are power problems, smoke in the area, flooding, and automatic alarms (medical and fire).
5. Public Education.
- a) Utilize Public Safety Announcements (PSA) to reduce non-emergency calls. Provide the public with who to call for certain incidents outside of 911.
  - b) Provide community outreach to educate our citizens on our capabilities and limitations.
  - c) Educate the public on outdoor burning and reduce false alarms caused by controlled burns, continue to tone duty officer for “smoke checks”. When possible, install a live feed camera at Station 51 for dispatch to view smoke calls before toning them out. Work with BOCC to develop an annual residential burn ban for the summer

months. Work with Regional Clean Air to not permit residential burning in the summer months.

## **Objective II: Member Development.**

### **Strategies:**

#### **A. Mission, Vision, Values, Culture Training:**

1. Promote District culture as it relates to our Mission and PRIDE motto.
2. Empower Members to speak up when another Member regardless of rank strays from our Mission, Values or Culture. The morale of the department resides with our Members, remaining quiet but miserable does not improve our department, members must own the morale and safeguard it from any negative influence.

#### **B. Succession planning for leadership positions:**

1. Maintain a healthy organization throughout transitions of key leadership and administrative positions with proactive and positive successional planning.
2. Establish and maintain training and certification requirements for each officer position in District.
3. Make available the required training and certification courses over a three-year cycle.
4. Conduct promotional testing as needed no later than every four years to establish four-year eligibility lists for Station Lieutenant and Station Captain.
5. Maintain a written succession plan for key positions based on projected retirement dates.
6. A minimum of two years prior to the planned retirement of a key position begin the process of identifying key job functions, development of job description for replacement and begin a search for qualified candidates with a goal of having replacements selected up to three months before the position is vacated.
7. 2025 Succession Plan
  - **Commissioners:**  
Election Years Borst 2029, Eakin 2025, Barham 2027
  - **Chief:**  
Eligible to draw retirement year 2031. Projected retirement year 2033. Preferred to have an in-house candidate trained to step in. If unavailable must be advertised and testing begun up to a year prior to planned departure.
  - **Administrative & Finance Officer:**  
Eligible to draw retirement year 2026. Projected retirement year 2032.

Preferred to have Office Assistant know the role of Admin/Finance to either promote or assist in transition.

- **Deputy Chief:**  
Eligible to draw retirement year 2021. Projected retirement year 2031.  
Required to have 5 or more years at Captain or higher level, plan to hire a Captain by 2026 if budget can support.
- **Station 51 Captain:**  
Eligible to draw retirement year 2028.
- **Station 52 Captain:**  
Eligible to draw retirement year 2046.
- **Station 53 Captain:**  
Eligible to draw retirement year 2033.
- **Station 54 Captain:**  
Eligible to draw retirement year 2036.
- **Support Services Captain:**  
Eligible to draw retirement year 2026.

Maintain a cadre of Lieutenants at each station continuing training and education in fire service leadership capable of stepping in when a Station Captain retires.

8. Determine Key Functions of leadership positions:
  - a) Review and update job descriptions to reflect actual work performed every four years in conjunction with promotional testing.
  - b) Capturing all functions of each position into one complete document will serve to identify key job functions for each position.
9. Share institutional knowledge with staff members:
  - a) Include members of the staff in capital project planning and development of the business plan and budget.
  - b) Include members of the staff in county-wide planning sessions.
10. Provide certification and education to staff members to fill roles above:
  - a) Encourage staff members to gain certifications for the next level in the organization.
  - b) Encourage staff members to take advantage of fire service education to assist them in current positions and possible advancement.
  - c) Provide on-the-job training to assist in understanding all positions in the Department.
11. Develop Company Officers:
  - a) Provide mission focused officer development refresher training monthly.
  - b) Focus on officer/firefighter communications and leadership training.
  - c) Continue every three years teaching officer development academy to new and perspective officers.



- d) Develop officers to be accountable to our Mission and core values, specifically train on Mission and values.
  - e) Evaluate the effectiveness of each Officers leadership style to improve overall leadership.
  - f) Officers that are unable to lead not only on the fireground but in the station will need to step down from their position.
  - g) Bring in leadership courses for our Officer cadre.
12. Develop all Members:
- a. Provide opportunities for Members to be involved in day-to-day operations with increasing responsibility as they grow.
  - b. Provide training opportunities in different aspects of operations, leadership, public education and firefighter training.
  - c. Utilize Training Committee Members at each station to lead their station during training drills where the Department training officer is not at drill.
  - d. Focus on education and training that leads to certification (FFI, II, Officer I, II, Instructor I, II etc.). Require International Fire Services Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) testing for all new recruits and current Members to encourage certification. Announce all IFSAC testing opportunities, work toward IFSAC FFI certification for all members.
  - e. Utilize our training center to bring in operational, leadership and safety classes available to all Members on a quarterly basis.
  - f. Focus on realistic relevant training that improves proficiency and capabilities of all members tied to an ap based task book covering the basic functions of firefighting to be completed annually to show proficiency.
  - g. Encourage members to know all jobs and work toward the next level of certification, training, and education. Utilize a flow chart by year of where each member should be in their training and education for continuous improvement.
  - h. Provide tender operator training at all stations, hold more driver/operator related drills and training sessions. Focus on certifying driver/operators within 2 years of joining.
  - i. Emphasize physical fitness for all members through incentives, provide workout facilities and specifically designed workouts for Members to improve our overall health and fitness level.
  - j. Educate Members on responder mental health and provide support when necessary. Counselor and Chaplain to visit regularly with each station to familiarize everyone with them and evaluate what educational needs we have.
  - k. Where feasible participate in county-wide training.

### **Objective III: Recruitment of On-Call Members.**

#### **Strategies:**

##### **A. Paid on Call Hiring Schedule:**

- Bi-Annual Hiring Application Deadlines: May 31 & Nov 30
- January Medical Physicals for Nov applicants
- February Advanced First Aid for Nov applicants
- March- Wildland Firefighter II class (both May and Nov applicants)
- April Wildland Firefighter II class (both May and Nov applicants) Recruiting for May Applications
- May 31st Applications due. Recruiting for May applicants
- June Interviews/Physical Ability May's applicants
- July Medical Physicals for May's applicants
- August Advanced First Aid for May's applicants
- September- Structural Academy (both May and Nov applicants) Recruiting for Nov Applications
- October- Structural Academy (both May and Nov applicants) Recruiting for Nov Applications
- November- Structural Academy (both May and Nov applicants)
- December Interviews/Physical Ability for Nov applicants

##### **B. Recruitment advertising:**

1. Hold recruitment drives on weekends at Stations and local establishments.
2. Provide information regarding what we do and how we do it to all applicants and utilizing social media.
3. Use available media to recruit. Consider media training days with other Districts where all media is invited to participate in live fire training.
4. Advertise the ability to get in the door for a full-time career utilizing certifications gained by joining WVFD.
5. Utilize ChatGPT for efficiency and engagement with potential recruits, through marketing material, marketing plans and engaging content for social media.
6. Incorporate front desk cell phone for text response for applicants.
7. Shorten the application to just the essential information necessary to contact the applicant, other information can be obtained later. Where possible application be a fillable form online that the applicant can start and go back to when convenient as well as interactive with the simplicity of making an online purchase.
8. Locate recruitment signs on major arterials not just in front of Stations. Example many people living off Slavin may never drive past Station 54, off Wide Hollow, Tieton Drive before 53 etc.

##### **C. Perform targeted recruiting for new members to be selective:**

1. Recruit for values, beliefs, integrity as it fits in with District culture.

2. Emphasize recruiting members that will remain in the Department for five or more years to recoup training costs.
3. Share Recruit training schedules with other departments to allow for a Recruit to make-up a missed class at another class like OTEP make ups.
4. Review physical requirements to ensure recruits are not intimidated or excluded.
5. Hold recruitment drives/booths at West Valley events, specifically in areas of the District we have the most openings.

**D. Strengthen high school Cadet program:**

1. Recruit Juniors and Seniors to serve as Cadets.
2. Continue dialogue with School District regarding CTE class.
3. Provide opportunities for Cadets to be involved in all functions of the District.

**E. Recruit students starting in 6th grade.**

1. Research and review what programs we can get kids involved in to lead them to join the department in the future.
  - Youth Fire Camp
  - Girl Empowerment Camp
  - Fire Explorer Programs
  - Learning for Life Programs
  - Mentorships
  - WV Innovation Center and YV Tech ProgramAre potential programs to improve recruitment that will be researched.

**F. Selection process:**

1. Invite all potential new members to their station for a meet and greet during equipment check drill prior to interviews. Discuss time commitments and dedication with prospective Members, hold a Q&A session at the meet and greet where prospects can ask current members questions.
2. Quality over quantity, selection of the right people is more critical than having the most people.
3. Test potential recruits to determine if their values, beliefs, and integrity match that of the department culture.
  - a) Review medical physical testing to review psychological capabilities.
  - b) Physical test for claustrophobia.
  - c) Provide training for all members evaluating potential recruits.
  - d) Provide new Members with an employee handbook.
  - e) Bi-annual hiring requires a strong task based mentoring program that includes task books for completion throughout the year to stay on track. When issuing PPE to new recruits prior to receiving training the

PPE and/or passports must differentiate from active trained firefighters such as blue helmets or stripes.

**G. Update written recruitment plan annually:**

1. Annually update written recruitment plan to develop strategies for recruiting successful new members in the next year.
2. Evaluate past recruitment benefits.
3. Provide a booklet for prospective members that covers our culture, who we are, what to expect from us and what we expect from members.

**Objective IV: Maintain sufficient administrative staffing to manage members.**

**Strategies:**

**A. Evaluate member needs vs. staff availability:**

1. Based on our ability to meet our Mission and manage the needs of our Members. Evaluate the need for an additional staffing for response, maintenance, or other needs.
2. Hire replacements in time to train prior to projected retirement dates, this could lead to times of over-staffing in the short term, however it will pay off in the long term with continuity of operations.

**B. Provide Service for Members:**

1. Administrative staffing exists to support our on-call members.
2. Handle issues for on-call members during the work week they are unable to handle while at their regular job.
3. Stay in touch with members by participating in training, drills, and alarms.
4. Provide opportunities for members to grow in their position.
5. All staff provide leadership to on-call members regardless of rank or position.

## **Strategic Priority 2: Financial management and accountability.**

- **Objective:** Ensure the financial sustainability of the West Valley Fire Department through rigorous financial management, transparency, and accountability.
- **Challenge:** Sustain a robust financial position with sound policies balancing cost-effectiveness and taxpayer impact.
- **Goal:** Responsibly manage financial resources to meet the District's needs, in full compliance with State and County regulations.
  - Forecast capital expenditures through a Capital Improvement Plan and match the plan to the Capital Fund. Annually during budget creation review Capital Improvement Plan for necessary purchases, the next year as well as 3 years out to adjust the Capital Fund.
  - Seek grant funding to offset expenses in both personnel and equipment, using the Capital Improvement Plan apply for all grants we qualify for.
  - Maintain fiscal accountability for clean audits, monthly apply a check and balance process to all expenditures.

### **Objective I: Annually update the Capital Improvement Plan to encompass the lifespan of all major equipment, apparatus, and buildings.**

#### **Strategies:**

##### **A. Utilize recognized standards for improving and replacing capital assets.**

1. For this plan a combination of the District's Strategic Plan, WSRB's grading schedule and WAC 296-305 are used as industry standards. ([www.wsrb.com](http://www.wsrb.com), <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=296-305>)
2. Recommended standards for fire protection and emergency services issued by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) are important considerations. Many NFPA standards are incorporated into Washington Administrative Code 296-305 Safety Standards for Firefighters.
3. The Washington Survey and Rating Bureau (WSRB) evaluates communities across the state and establishes the protection class grading for the community on a scale of 1 through 10. The fire department is reviewed for distribution of companies/stations, response to alarms, equipment, pumping capacity, maintenance, reserve apparatus, personnel, and training.

##### **B. Invest in preventative maintenance.**

1. Annually staff will tour each station prior to budget development to review building and apparatus needs for a pro-active response to potential problems.
2. Maintain a maintenance schedule for all buildings and systems within each building for preventative work.
3. Fix small problems before they become large expensive problems.

**C. Request Levy Lid Lifts or specific voter approved bonds as needed.**

1. Funding must keep up with the Capital Improvement Plan for equipment/supply needs to meet mission and have sufficient personnel to meet service demand. Due to inflation if our budget cannot sustain adequate personnel and equipment to meet our Standards of Cover and needs of our community this must be articulated to the voters and additional funding requested providing the community with the choice of protection level.
2. Voter approved bonds must be weighed against political climate and need for levy lid lifts.

**D. Utilize Commissioner approved bonds or loans for major purchases as needed.**

1. The escalating cost of apparatus and equipment paired with inflation in all areas of purchasing may require purchasing equipment utilizing bonds rather than saving out of the general fund. The CIP is developed to offset large expense years with a few years of lower expenses to rebuild the Capital Fund, however, if the cost of goods and fuel rise faster than the District budget the amount of money available for the Capital Fund decreases annually making purchases out of the fund near impossible within 10-15 years if not sooner.
2. Forecast the Capital Fund against upcoming projects, if funding will fall short consider lumping several projects together under one bond/loan.
3. Bond/loan repayment must not exceed the life of the purchased item.
4. Any Commissioner approved bonds or loans to be paid out of the general fund.

**Objective II: District to provide input to growth in West Valley.**

**Strategies:**

**A. Lobby against changes to the Urban Growth Area Boundary.**

1. At the last review of the Urban Growth Area (UGA) for the City of Yakima (August 2016) it was determined the current city limits can accommodate 36 years of projected growth and the unincorporated UGA can accommodate an additional 62 years of projected urban growth.
2. Yakima County Planning Division in accordance with the Growth Management Act designates urban growth areas for cities within our County. Yakima County found that urban growth projected for the succeeding 20-year period can be accommodated with Yakima's current UGA that no changes were necessary.
3. Based on the land capacity analysis and current zoning it is determined the city would fill in its current boundary in 2052 and fill in the current UGA by 2114. The District needs to continue to lobby against UGA boundary changes as they are unnecessary for the foreseeable future.
4. The next review of the UGA will take place 2025-2026.

**B. Assist landowners with zoning changes.**

1. Many areas of the Fire District fall under zoning for Agriculture (AG), Valley Rural (VR) or Rural Transitional (RT). Some zoning changes would allow for property to be broken into smaller lots for development.
2. RCW 36.70A.030 (16) "Rural development" refers to development outside the urban growth area and outside agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands designated pursuant to RCW [36.70A.170](#). Rural development can consist of a variety of uses and residential densities, including clustered residential development, at levels that are consistent with the preservation of rural character and the requirements of the rural element. Rural development does not refer to agriculture or forestry activities that may be conducted in rural areas.
3. As a property tax-based agency in rural Yakima County the District needs to encourage rural development where possible to increase assessed value of vacant lands zoned agriculture yet not used for agriculture.
4. Zoning changes would lead to increased growth in the District in areas outside of the UGA.
5. Monitor ability to drill wells in Station 54 area and assist where possible.

**C. Annexation.**

1. Work with the City of Yakima Planning Division regarding any potential annexations larger than a single landowner petitioning to join the City.
  - a) Annexation has slowed considerably.
  - b) The City is interested in filling in their border before expanding.
  - c) The most likely annexation areas are where sewer lines are already located and typically vacant land.
  - d) The City has ended the practice of extending annexations to capture more land while maintaining 60% outside utility agreements.

**D. Housing.**

1. Work with Yakima County Planners regarding station location related to proposed housing projects for ingress, egress and nearest fire station.
2. Work with Department of Health and USDA regarding location of H2A housing and ensuring assessed value of land containing H2A housing is accurate.
3. Consider impact fees for large housing developments to include land for future stations.
4. In the event of a housing crisis, the District will consider building or purchasing affordable housing to rent to members to remain on-call.

**Objective III: Levy Rate.**

**Strategies:**

**A. Legislative Priorities 1% lid limit:**

1. Protect fire district tax authority from any reform measures that impact property tax rates.
2. Work with State Commissioners and Chiefs Associations to encourage restructuring the 1% lid limit to a system based on inflation comparable to how the legislature is approaching education funding.
3. Work with legislature to reduce the damage Tax Increment Financing (TIF) has on fire district budgets and closely monitor and potential TIF's within our boundaries.

**B. Annually review the tax rate generated by the budget:**

1. Ensure the District is not "banking" public money, all funds generated continue to support the Strategic Plan, Business Plan, Capital Improvement Plan, or annual operating expenses.
2. Compare the annual budget to previous year's CPI for goods and services to ensure the District can financially support operations before expanding or adding new programs.
3. Based on operational needs, rising CPI, and lowering cost per thousand annually consider the need to reduce services or request a levy lid lift from voters to maintain or improve service.
4. Review budget annually to ensure expenses match the level of service requested by citizens through surveys.
5. Evaluate all programs for cost/benefit including personnel and wages.

**C. Incident Cost:**

1. Comparing incidents to District Mission, incidents that do not fit under our Mission should be reduced or eliminated, possibly contracting the service to other agencies.
2. The average cost of each incident including dispatch fee, labor, fuel, maintenance, insurance, overhead and consumables is considered when making operational changes.
3. The number of incidents affects operational capabilities which drives staffing, funding, and resource management. Additionally, reducing incidents assists with retention of Members in good standing.

**D. EMS Funding:**

1. Annually review the county-wide EMS levy formula distribution to ensure accuracy and fairness to our taxpayers.
2. Ensure EMS funds are used only for EMS eligible budget items.

**E. Alternative Funding:**

1. As the 1% lid lift limit erodes the District taxing authority, the District will need to look for alternative funding sources to meet our Mission and the public's expectations.



- a) Goods and services continue to rise faster than the 1% limit, as costs rise the District will need to determine if there are cost savings available, services that can be reduced or alternative funding sources available.
- b) Levy lid lift, voter approved bonds, special levies or service fees are all potential funding sources.
- c) Any funding source that comes from our constituents must provide a direct benefit to our customers and the need be clearly articulated to our constituents to be successful.
- d) Grant funding see Objective IV.

**F. External Environment:**

- 1. Levy rate changes require public education regarding the District's financial position and challenges.
- 2. Levy rate factors:
  - a) Other special districts levy rates and bonds must factor into the overall tax burden on our citizens.
  - b) The median household income and ability to afford a levy increase. The median household income in 2023 in our District is \$71,900.
  - c) Average assessed property value. The average home value in District in 2023 is \$393,400.
  - d) Current economy.

**G. Economy:**

- 1. Inflation has affected every portion of the District budget from 2021-2023, the rate at which inflation is occurring is difficult to budget for, until the economy stabilizes subsequent budgets must factor in actual 2024 cost plus 5% for goods and supplies and 10% for fuel. Budgeting against inflation may result in utilizing reserve funds to create a balanced budget.
- 2. Rising fuel prices are of concern to the District with no viable option to go electric in fire apparatus currently. The fuel budget must be monitored quarterly to determine if adjustments to training activity, apparatus type used for calls and travel need to be adjusted to reasonably fit the fuel budget. Reducing fuel consumption must not reduce our ability to meet our mission with well-trained firefighters, should fuel rise out of control cuts to other areas of the budget or utilizing reserve funds to offset costs will be necessary.
  - a) Work with legislature to include Emergency Services in the exemption provided for the climate law's carbon fuel taxes on food production and transportation.

**Objective IV: Aggressively apply for available grant funding.**

**Strategies:**

**A. Utilize available grants to offset costs in all areas of the budget.**

1. Apply for grants to cover the cost of capital projects to stretch Capital Fund and free up money for personnel costs and unforeseen expenses.
2. Staff will regularly monitor and apply for open grant opportunities we are eligible for.
3. Attend grant writing seminars.
4. Major projects such as communications system overhauls and SCBA apply for regional grants with our partners where feasible.

**Objective V: Fiscal Accountability.**

**Strategies**

**A. Retain Members to save on initial training, outfitting and HR costs.**

1. Research ways to keep On-Call Members active to reduce the need to continuously train new members.

**B. Maintain appropriate checks and balances for all financial transactions.**

1. The Administrative and Finance Officer maintains the books with the Fire Chief monthly reviewing all accounts, bills, and balances to ensure no one person controls the finances.
2. The Board of Fire Commissioners approves all bills to be paid monthly based on the established budget to ensure the District stays within budget.
3. Mid-year analyze the budget for over and under expenses, provide information to Commissioners and Management Staff.

**C. Every three years provide the Washington State Auditor's Office all information for a complete audit.**

1. Make appropriate changes to business practices prior to an audit based on suggestions/findings from other fire department audits in the state.
2. Consider a financial audit to improve the District's borrowing capabilities.
3. Hold an exit interview post audit to understand all accounting practices are within state guidelines.

**D. Partner with public agencies to generate revenue and save taxpayer dollars.**

1. Consider renting vacant space to public entities.
2. Consider the vacant land west of Station 51 for another public agency to utilize for building or rented out to local farmers or sports associations to generate revenue.
3. Partner with other departments and contracted ambulance company for group purchasing to receive better pricing on consumables and equipment.

**E. Purchasing.**

1. Utilize State bid accounts for qualifying equipment purchases.
2. Research both government and private purchasing contracts to determine if savings on consumables and equipment is possible through cooperative purchasing.
3. EMS alarms are 60% of our call volume, work to establish a county wide purchasing agreement or supply warehouse.

**F. Accounts Payable.**

1. Monitor costs associated with County A/P and develop trigger points for when the District will develop a complete check and balance for A/P checks as well as a system for printing and mailing checks.

**G. Policies.**

1. Review all fiscal policies to update, remove ineffective, add new or determine if they should be a Standard Operating Guideline rather than policy.

### **Strategic Priority 3: Infrastructure management.**

- **Objective:** Maintain and upgrade our infrastructure to support current and future operations, ensuring reliability, efficiency, and scalability.
- **Challenge:** Align staffing, facilities, and equipment with the evolving needs of our community.
- **Goal:** Ensure strategically located stations and well-maintained apparatus to meet an 8-minute response time in high-density areas, while maintaining a WSRB rating of 4 or better.

#### **Objective I: Facilities.**

##### **Strategies:**

##### **A. Capital Improvement Plan.**

1. Annually review the plan for changes, additional items to track and update the plan in early fall prior to budget development.

##### **B. Facilities General:**

1. Determine station locations on the availability of enough housing in the area for staffing with on-call members.
2. Station locations drive development regarding subdividing property for residential development, in some cases a station may be required before the area can be developed to support the station.
3. Two identified station locations are Cottonwood Rd and Hubbard Rd area and Ahtanum Rd and Sagebrush Heights.
4. Where possible extend roads or install gated access to utilize current fire stations to shorten the distance to developments and commercial properties. 96<sup>th</sup> Ave through to Occidental, North Cottonwood to Falcon Ridge.
5. Conduct station location studies every 10 years. Study to focus on available responders, emergency response history and forecast, response distribution and performance outcomes. Next review 2030.
6. Stations should be comfortable for members with typical amenities found in fire station day rooms.
7. Stations should be maintained to be visually appealing to the public yet functional for fire department response.
8. To ensure continuity of operations during natural disasters, stations should be outfitted with emergency generators.
9. Preventative maintenance is the key to cost reductions and long facility life. A member of the admin staff shall visit each station during daylight hours monthly to look for any emerging issues with landscaping, buildings, and parking lots.
10. Workout facilities provided in the stations to keep members in District while improving physical fitness.

11. Office space for District Officers to conduct Department business is required.
12. Enough bay space to house all apparatus indoors is a priority. Station 54 apparatus bays are too short for most Type I engines except for Engine 54 and possibly Engine 2-53 Extending the bay will be around \$160k for minimal square footage, the alternative is to have a suitable reserve which can be accomplished by purchasing a used engine and/or replacing Engine 54. Suitable dayroom space is required for the planned number of members at each station.
13. All stations require equipment decontamination facilities.
14. Station construction and updates should focus on carcinogen exposure reduction, where possible hard surfaces instead of carpet should be used as well as positive air pressure in day rooms.
15. Future changes to facilities should include provisions for charging electric vehicles both of Members and apparatus. Where possible and economical include alternative energy production into fire stations such as solar or wind.
16. When Station 52 heating units require replacement if solar is not installed compare the cost of electric heat to adding propane to the station.

**Objective II: Apparatus.**

**Strategies:**

**A. Apparatus General:**

1. Maintain enough apparatus necessary to meet the operational needs of the District including reserve apparatus. Enough manpower to staff apparatus located at each station is critical to getting apparatus to incidents.
2. Maintain apparatus and systems to NFPA and/or manufactures recommendations.
3. All apparatus will meet or exceed all recognized State and National standards for inspections, testing, fueling and emergency repair or emergency vehicles.
4. Pre-plan replacement so specifications are written and out for bid greater than 365 days before an apparatus is scheduled to move to reserve.
5. All apparatus will be equipped with adequate hose, nozzles, SCBA, radios and other equipment to assure safe operations to achieve Department performance objectives in compliance with industry standards.
6. Maintain sufficient engine pumping capacity within five miles driving distance from all commercial and industrial areas to provide fire flow as specified by the Washington State Survey and Rating Bureau.
7. To the extent possible equipment storage location on each apparatus type should be standardized for members to know location regardless of apparatus.

8. Build dual purpose apparatus like a Brush/Rescue unit whenever possible.
9. Contract heavy equipment for operational use in large fires.
10. Build brush trucks with front mount monitors to accommodate smaller crews' effectiveness.
11. Certified Staff in Emergency Vehicle Technician.

**B. Current Replacement Schedule:**

- |                               |                                     |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Fire Pumps                 | 20 Years refurbish or replace.      |
| 2. Water Tenders              | 25 Years refurbish or replace.      |
| 3. Emergency Medical Vehicles | 15 Years refurbish or replace.      |
| 4. Command Vehicles           | 80,000 Miles replace or reallocate. |
| 5. Support Vehicles           | 80,000 Miles or as needed.          |
| 6. Brush Trucks               | 15 Years refurbish – (New Chassis). |

**C. Review Capital Improvement Plan for Apparatus.**

1. Determine the possibly of balancing the fleet for replacement rather than by years. Review annual number of responses, mileage, and repairs per apparatus, move apparatus from stations with less responses and miles to stations with higher levels to balance the fleet.
2. Establish trigger points for replacement to continue staggered replacement, don't wear them all out at the same time by moving them around.

**Objective III: Equipment.**

**Strategies:**

**A. Personal Protective Equipment:**

1. Maintain equipment according to NFPA and/ or manufacturer specifications.
2. Track all equipment replacement dates and repairs in reporting software.
3. Provide the safest equipment possible for our members.
4. Issue individual SCBA masks to members for safety and sanitary reasons.
5. Hydro-test SCBA bottles every five years.
6. Flow test and inspect all SCBA and masks annually.
7. Maintain enough SCBA and spare bottles to equip all response apparatus first out and reserve.
8. 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2025 demo SCBA models, based on lead times place order in 2026 or early 2027. Grant writing starting in 2025.
9. Monthly inspect all equipment to ensure working order.
10. Maintain enough hose to meet WSRB minimums on apparatus and in reserve.
11. Provide spare sets of turnouts at each station to encourage members to decontaminate PPE immediately following carcinogen exposure without

fear of being out of service. Working toward providing all Members a spare set.

12. Provide spare hoods and gloves for an exchange program at each station to limit carcinogen exposure.

#### **Objective IV: Technology.**

##### **Strategies:**

##### **A. Communications/Dispatch:**

1. Radio pagers remain the most effective way to notify members of alarms a county wide radio system will need a conventional VHF system for paging.
2. Upgrade radios based on the dispatch center's recommendation.
3. Maintain 115 radio pagers or other means of reliable member alarm notification devices, 50 portable radios and 24 mobile radios.
4. Maintain enough spare mobiles, portable and pager radios to utilize while first out equipment is being repaired at the factory.
5. Seek out and utilize the newest technology for alarm notification and inter-department communications using mobile phones.
6. Monitor and participate with all emergency services in Yakima County to plan a county wide radio network that includes infrastructure, software, hardware, and a funding mechanism.
7. Review alternatives to ISPY that have advanced features for responders, utilize apparatus I Pads to track location, and utilize tablets for incident command. Encourage Member response on apps to call for additional resources early or prevent an over response to incidents where manpower is sufficient.

##### **B. Spillman:**

1. Continue to evaluate Spillman for its ability to meet the needs of the fire service. The current Spillman contract ends in 2029, work with agencies in county to determine best system to utilize in 2029 starting now.
2. The ideal CAD system will calculate response times and send appropriate level of service based on call type and travel time.
3. Work with all fire agencies dispatched by District 5 to determine if a system change needs to be made to meet the needs of County fire departments for CAD dispatching.

##### **C. Reporting System:**

1. Must have the ability to analyze data input into system.
2. The District to report alarms to NFIRS and WEMSYS as well as track training, maintenance, and inventory through reporting software.
3. On Scene reporting will move to paperless utilizing tablets on scene to directly input alarm information into reporting system on scene with a goal of being paperless in 2024.

4. Maintenance and equipment inspections where possible will be inputted into the system in 2024. Develop or purchase a system to track all equipment and maintenance.
5. Wherever possible ensure the District owns and has access to all our data.

**D. Utilize Drone technology on scene.**

1. Use drones to increase situational awareness and assist in operational decision making.
2. A combination of drones requiring a pilot and tethered drones overhead of command is ideal.
3. Train and FAA certify drone operators.
4. Strategically locate drones to be available on scene with sufficient run time.

**E. Training with Technology**

1. Utilize online based training programs for refresher and make-up training.
2. Where practical hold training and meetings via zoom type video calls to cut down on travel and times crews are out of their response area.

**F. Artificial Intelligence**

1. Research the use of AI in research, report writing, social media posts, recruitment, deployment and incident prediction.

**Objective V: Organizational Response:**

**Strategies:**

**A. Standards of Cover- (Will include B-G in the SOC and remove them from the plan.)**

1. Develop a clear Standards of Cover (SOC) Guide for the District to establish a framework for assessing and improving the fire district's emergency response capabilities.
2. The SOC will specify geographical areas, types of services provided and the target audience.
3. Analyze community risk using demographics, geographics, hazard identification, and historical incident data.
4. Utilize current service demand, predicted future service demand and current station location plans, performance measures for response time goals and staffing.
5. Analyze response resources including personnel, apparatus, equipment and stations.
6. Review operational procedures including dispatch protocols, SOG's, use of ICS, mutual and auto aid agreements to include in the SOC.
7. Define training requirements for all positions and ensure ongoing professional development is scheduled throughout each year.



8. Include community risk reduction programs already implemented, and review based on risk analysis the need for additional programs.
9. Establish or maintain a process for collecting and analyzing data for quality assurance with a plan for continuous improvement.
10. Review and update the SOC annually.

**B. Members:**

1. Maintain sufficient staffing at each station available 24/7/365 to adequately respond to all alarm types.
2. Utilize the best staffing model to meet Mission, part time paid on call, volunteers, resident program, sleeper program or an on-call program. Any changes in staffing types requires Members to understand how the changes improve our ability to meet our mission.
3. When planning a new station start recruitment process early to have responders trained prior to station going online.
4. Train members in all aspects of all-risk fire service.
5. While retention is a number one priority, we still must remove underperforming members in a timely manner.
6. Encourage members to respond at night and anytime they are available.
7. Maintain appropriate partnerships with neighboring fire departments, Department of Natural Resources and Bureau of Indian Affairs for response. Closest resource aligns with our Mission, we don't have to be the ones to answer the call to meet our Mission of preserving and protecting life then property.

**C. EMS/Rescue:**

1. Provide quality BLS service through a mix of Emergency Medical Technicians and Advanced First Aid members.
2. Work with partners to continuously improve the county-wide EMS system for 911 transport. Ensure transport ambulances are available for projected call volume.
3. A mix of ALS/BLS transport ambulances shall be located to meet WAC 246-976-390 (7) *Ground Ambulance Service Response Time Requirements*: Verified ground ambulance services must meet the following minimum agency response times for all EMS and trauma responses to response areas 80% of the time within urban areas **10 minutes** or less, suburban areas **20 minutes** or less, rural areas **45 minutes** or less and wilderness as soon as possible.
4. Ensure the county-wide EMS system is appropriate for call type and volume, consideration given to BLS transport ambulances both private and public.

5. Work with county partners to find solutions to minor EMS 911 calls that are not emergencies and don't require ambulance transport or response from fire.
6. Contract lift assists for evenings and weekends.
7. Monitor the distribution of the county-wide EMS levy distribution to determine the need for the District to request changes and/or run our own levy.
8. Maintain one transport capable rescue in District.
9. Pre-plan response through CAD dispatch to provide the appropriate response level for quality patient care to all alarm types with consideration to ALS/BLS response and need for fire response.
10. Train with and utilize air ambulances where necessary for the best patient outcome.
11. Provide mental health awareness training to include responder safety when responding to patients in crisis, training to include de-escalation techniques and self-defense tactics for Members to protect themselves in potentially violent situations.

**D. Structure Fire:**

1. Ensure staffing, equipment and apparatus are available 24/7/365 to meet NFPA 1720 table 4.3.2 staffing and response times for structure fires and SOG 2-2 3.1 Apparatus Staffing.
2. Pre-plan response through CAD dispatch to provide the appropriate amount and type of apparatus dispatched to fires have the appropriate fire flow capabilities on the first alarm.
3. Pre-fire plan all commercial buildings and have available on scene.
4. Maintain appropriate mutual and automatic aid agreements to handle escalating incidents.
5. Maintain an elevated master stream response to commercial fires.

**E. Wildland Interface Fire:**

1. Ensure staffing, equipment and apparatus are available 24/7/365 to adequately respond to wildland interface fires.
2. Provide education and mitigation for property owners to improve defensible space.
3. Work with partners to develop Fire-Wise communities and encourage fuel mitigation programs and citizens to "chip it not burn it".
4. Develop members from Firefighter I, Engine Boss up to NWCG Strike Team Leader.
5. Maintain a sawyer program to mitigate hazard trees on fire incidents.
6. Work with WADNR and BIA Fire to mitigate fires in urban interface areas.
7. Participate in state mobilization fires to provide experience for members and revenue for the District.

8. Improve wildland urban interface firefighting capabilities with equipment for fuel reduction and firefighting.
9. Annually determine what air resources are available for response, how to request them and how they will be funded.
10. Encourage the Board of County Commissioners to establish and adopt residential burn regulations for June through September annually.

**F. Support Services:**

1. Ensure staffing, equipment and apparatus are available 24/7/365 to adequately provide on-scene firefighter rehabilitation.
2. Ensure staffing, equipment and apparatus are available 24/7/365 to adequately provide on-scene breathing air support.
3. Develop Support Members in EMS, carcinogen reduction and SCBA maintenance.

**G. Special Emergencies:**

1. Train members to handle special emergencies.
  - a) Hazardous Materials including electric vehicles.
  - b) Power emergencies.
  - c) Drug labs.
  - d) Explosives.
  - e) Solar panels.
2. Combine several subjects into one drill night for each station, the drills should follow the Department SOG's.

**Objective VI: Inner-Agency Cooperation:**

**Strategies:**

- A. It is the intent of YCFD12 to maintain a cooperative working relationship with all service providers, specifically the following agencies:**
- a) All bordering fire departments- Response through mutual and automatic aid, fire investigation and training.
  - b) Law Enforcement (YSO, YPD, WSP, ATF)- Response, facility use and training.
  - c) Bureau Indian Affairs- Response on jointly protected lands and training.
  - d) Washington Department of Natural Resources- Response in jointly protected lands, training, equipment procurement and facility use.
  - e) Yakima EMS office- Training, levy funding and protocols.
  - f) Valley Fire- Dispatching.
  - g) SunComm- 911 call center.
  - h) Private ambulance- ALS/BLS patient transport.
  - i) Yakima County Search & Rescue- Response to wilderness areas.
  - j) Yakima County Office of Emergency Management- Training, Planning and disaster response.
  - k) West Valley School District- Planning, facility use, Cadet Program.

- l) Community Groups

**Objective VII: Maintenance & Repairs:**

**Strategies:**

**A. Train Members in proper maintenance of equipment, apparatus, and stations.**

- a) Provide ongoing training for Members to understand all aspects of maintaining equipment, apparatus, and stations for preventative maintenance.
- b) Ensure Members understand the importance of maintenance as well as how each item works.
- c) Ensure apparatus repairs are performed by EVT certified technicians, encourage Members to obtain EVT certs.

**B. Monitor repair costs.**

- a) Review annual cost of routine repairs vs cost to hire a mechanic.
- b) For major repairs review the Capital Improvement Plan for the life remaining of apparatus/equipment before initiating repair.
- c) As apparatus age review cost to maintain and repair vs. value to department.
- d) Review use, mileage and repair costs to pro-long the life of apparatus by rotating heavily used apparatus to less busy stations.

#### Strategic Priority 4: Community Engagement.

- **Objective:** Strengthen our relationship with the community by increasing engagement, transparency, and collaboration.
- **Challenge:** Meet the community's expectations for operational excellence, financial transparency, and public education.
- **Goal:** Gauge community satisfaction, enhance awareness of our programs, and foster public involvement in District activities.

#### Objective I: Citizen Review and Evaluation

##### Strategies:

##### A. Community feedback:

1. Solicit community feedback at Fire Department events, school district events, community events and from civic groups.
2. Surveys should take less than 5 minutes to finish yet provide meaningful information to the Department.
3. Utilize social media to conduct polls and surveys.
4. Consider a raffle attached to completed surveys to pique interest.

##### B. Annually prior to updating the Strategic Plan solicit community feedback.

1. Utilizing the District newsletter and social media, invite the public to provide comments on fiscal accountability, public information, and public education to ensure our Mission meets public expectations.
2. The information provided will be used to guide budget, policy, and future planning.

##### C. Review performance objectives for response in Standards of Cover.

1. Review annual operations report for response times, call volume and call type to ensure we are meeting response objectives and developing operational plans that match the call volume.
2. Response objectives:
  - a) WAC 246-976-390 (6) Aid Service Response Time Requirements of a verified aid service: Arrive at emergency medical situations 80% of the time within the suburban area in **15 minutes** and **45 minutes** in our rural areas from time of notification prepared to deliver basic life support until advanced life support arrives.
  - b) District PERFORMANCE MEASURE FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE: It is the goal of YCFD12 to have the first arriving unit on a fire scene within **one mile** of a station arrive within **8 minutes** of notification 75% of the time. The response time will be increased by **2 minutes** for each additional mile from a fire station.
3. Utilize technology to correctly track incidents in reporting system to measure response objectives.

4. Monthly review alarms to determine the nature of incident and mitigate false alarms.
5. For fire responses annually compare response to NFPA 1720 Table 4.3.2 Staffing and Response Time for rural areas, 6 Members on scene within 14 minutes of dispatch 80% of the time.

**Objective II: Performance Comparisons with Districts.**

**Strategies:**

**A. Conduct a review of performance comparison of fire districts with similar characteristics in odd years.**

1. Compare incident count, fire, EMS and other.
2. Compare WSRB rating.
3. Compare Budget with population, area, assessed value and stations.
4. Compare staffing, on-call members, volunteers, full-time, etc.

**B. Participate in the Washington Fire Commissioners Association Wage and Benefit Survey.**

1. Only participants in the survey can access the data.
2. Use data from the survey to ensure the District is comparable to similar size Districts in wages and benefits offered to all members.

**C. Review District WSRB rating every five years for comparison and prepare for next evaluation. 2028 next re-evaluation.**

1. Use WSRB rating as a tool for improving fire protection within our community.
2. WSRB provides the Department with a list of areas to improve fire protection. This list will be utilized to ensure equipment is available and maintained to provide sufficient fire protection in our community. Annually before the Capital Improvement Plan and Budget are updated review prior rating for areas needing improvement.
3. Decisions regarding staffing and purchases may be made utilizing WSRB to help understand the level of fire protection that we will be capable of providing following the decision.
4. Consideration will be given to costs associated with WSRB rating improvements for items that benefit single family residences.
5. As a tool the WSRB rating shall be compared against industry standards for EMS response, ambulance response, fire response, dispatching, NFPA and WAC standards.

### **Objective III: Public Relations.**

**Strategies: Annually update the strategic communications plan that includes the following elements.**

#### **A. Based on current or future need to disseminate specific information, create a common message across all platforms.**

1. Message should include:
  - a) Who we are and what we do regarding our Mission.
  - b) Why the issue is important to our citizens and District.
  - c) Challenges facing the District.
  - d) Solution to these challenges.
  - e) Education for the recipient.

#### **B. Community Outreach.**

1. The District shall educate our citizens in the following subjects:
  - a) District funding mechanisms and challenges.
  - b) District boundaries include roadside signs.
  - c) Overall response capabilities with expectation vs. reality.
  - d) When to call 911 and what a true emergency is.
  - e) Fire and life safety.
  - f) Courses such as CPR, Safe-Sitter, and proper safe car seat use.
  - g) Offer the Safe-Sitter Home-Along program early in the school year when kids tend to stay home after-school.
  - h) Work with the Fire Marshal and Community groups interested in creating Fire Wise communities.
2. Firsthand educational interactions:
  - a) Open house- during events open stations to the public as an open house. Consider rotating some events to Stations other than 51 to get more traffic at each station.
  - b) Community events- partner with the Association to hold community events that include a specific message to the captive audience.
  - c) Public meetings/presentations- When the District has a specific need to disseminate information, host public meetings and/or attend local civic group meetings.
  - d) Create opportunities to engage the community in fire prevention.
  - e) Seek out opportunities with West Valley School District.
3. Written Communications:
  - a) Utilize the quarterly District newsletter to provide up-to-date information about the District as well as upcoming events/issues.
  - b) School flyers- send home flyers with students approved through the District regarding events/issues.
  - c) Utilize a direct mailing sparingly for critical issues.
  - d) Newspaper, letter to editor, opinions section and PSA's.
  - e) Station reader boards.

4. Media:
  - a) Incident/event/issue press releases.
  - b) Public Safety Announcements.
  - c) Develop relationships with local media to be the go-to department for information.
  - d) Invite media into stations to highlight the Department, hold training sessions for media to learn the job.
5. Technology:
  - a) Keep District web site updated with current issues and information in a user-friendly format. Annually complete a full review of all pages on our website to purge and update information.
  - b) Expand social media platform to provide one-two messages per week to subscribers.
  - c) Create an on-hold message for main station phone calls specific to our message.
6. Advertising:
  - a) Utilize public education boards in front of all stations to share fire safety information, upcoming events and solicit community feedback.
  - b) Utilize public use of Training Center and Tampico Community Center to share safety information, upcoming events and solicit community feedback.
  - c) Use reader boards at each station to share a common message.
  - d) Create signs or banners to highlight events and needs.
  - e) Utilize paid advertising sparingly based on the message.