



TALLAHASSEE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT



Three Year Strategic Plan 2019 – 2021

A MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT

I was afforded the opportunity to serve as the President of the Tallahassee Fire Protection District in July of 2018, after serving as Treasurer for 18 months. I started service when the Volunteer Department decided it should formalize its structure and become a Colorado Special District. I then served as the Designated Election Official through two elections, under which the group organized as the Tallahassee Fire Protection District and was overwhelmingly supported the following year with passage of a mill levy.

This growth happened quickly. Now is the time to step back and evaluate our structure and goals to serve our community. The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to document those goals and the tasks needed to accomplish them.

As we continue to reach out to our citizens for input to the Strategic Plan, we will learn more about their vision for us. We encourage public comment on this current plan.

In closing, I would like to thank the Fire Chief, the Directors of the Board and everyone who contributed to the 2019-2021 Strategic Plan. I believe this is a critical step in supporting our great citizens who support us.

TALLAHASSEE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

By /s/ Donna Toeroek
Chairwoman/Board President

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STRATEGIC PLANNING OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1 – EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS)

Today, approximately 85% of our calls include the need for emergency medical treatment or assessment. In previous polls, our citizens have identified medical assistance as a high priority. Based on this need, we have given EMS our highest priority in the Strategic Plan.

The Tallahassee Fire Protection District (TFPD or the District) is a rural fire department covering 361 square miles of sparsely populated areas. Due to the nature of rural areas, EMS may be required to travel farther or navigate difficult terrain when responding to a call. Adverse weather conditions, when coupled with longer distances and geographical obstacles, can significantly affect response times.

At the present time, ambulance service within the District is provided by American Medical Response (AMR), based in Canon City. Their response to calls in the District can take over an hour, depending on their availability and the response location within the District. Flight for Life Helicopter Ambulance Service is on call from Pueblo or Colorado Springs and REACH Air Medical Services is available and based in Salida; however, they are not called until first responders perform triage.

Given these challenges, the TFPD is approaching EMS in two parts. Part 1 is upgrading EMS within the Fire Department itself. Part 2 is developing a Community Medical Outreach Program. Our population is spread out over a large area. Many subdivisions are 30 minutes or more from the fire station. If residents have some medical training, they may provide a quicker response to help a neighbor before the Fire Department can arrive.

Both programs will be directed by a TFPD EMS Coordinator.

Part 1 - EMS Within the Fire Department

The goal for the Fire Department EMS is to have one or more trained, certified and equipped Emergency Medical Responder (EMR), Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or Paramedic to arrive at an incident before the ambulance arrives. It is critical for a good outcome in any emergency for there to be prompt medical treatment.

Medical training and supplies are expensive. Through a donation from one of our residents, the TFPD has a new rescue vehicle. This vehicle is the primary medical response vehicle and is designated Rescue 1 (R1). Funding for EMS equipment

and training listed below would be provided through budgeting current revenues, donations and grants.

2019 Goals:

- Recruit/Train to have at least one certified EMS person (EMR/EMT/ Paramedic) on duty to respond at all times.
- All medical personnel to have a valid State certification.
- Generate Standard Operating Procedures and Protocols for EMS personnel and provide training.
- Fully equip and staff R1. Ensure that R1 is always clean, equipped and ready to go.
- Purchase new or replacement EMS equipment.
- Prepare a plan for grant applications in 2020.

The 2019 Cost Estimate is \$20,000.

2019 Cost Detail:

1. New EMT/Student training (assume 1) = \$1,100
2. New EMR/Student training (assume 1) = \$1,500
3. Equipment Bags & contents @ \$2,500/bag (assume 2 bags) = \$5,000
4. Equip new R1=\$2,400
5. Purchase new EMS equipment, no grants in 2019 = \$5,000
6. Purchase replacement EMS equipment, no grants in 2019= \$5,000

Metric: TFPD patient care arrives in advance of, or at the same time as the ambulance 50% of the time. All EMS personnel are certified by the State. Plan for grant applications in 2020.

2020 Goals:

- Continue recruitment and retention of EMS personnel.
- All EMS personnel to obtain and/or retain State certification.
- Ensure EMS personnel attend Continuing Education (CE) Classes to maintain certifications.
- Purchase replacement and/or new EMS equipment as needed.
- Apply for EMS Grants.

2020 Cost Estimate is \$20,000.

Cost Detail:

1. CE Classes @ \$500/student (assume 4) = \$2,000
2. New EMT/EMR training @ \$1,500 each, (assume 2 EMRs) = \$3,000

3. Equipment Bags & contents @ \$2,500/bag (assume 2 bags) = \$5,000
4. Purchase new EMS equipment = \$5,000
5. Purchase replacement EMS equipment = \$5,000

Metric: TFPD patient care arrives in advance of, or at the same time as the ambulance 80% of the time. All EMS personnel are State certified. Fifty percent (50%) of grants applied for are successful.

2021 Goals:

- Re-evaluate current EMS staff and equipment needs and revise as needed.
- Continue recruitment and retention of EMS personnel.
- Additional training & CE Classes.
- Continue to purchase replacement and/or new EMS equipment as needed.
- Apply for EMS Grants.

2021 Cost Estimate is \$25,100.

Cost Detail:

1. CE Classes @ \$500/student (assume 5) = \$2,500
2. New EMT/Student training (assume 1) = \$1,100
3. New EMR/Student training (assume 1) = \$1,500
4. Equipment Bags & contents @ \$2,500/bag (assume 2 bags) = \$5,000
5. Purchase new EMS equipment = \$5,000
6. Purchase replacement EMS equipment = \$10,000

Metric: TFPD patient care arrives in advance of, or at the same time as the ambulance 100% of the time. Sixty percent (60%) of all grants applied for are successful.

Part 2 - Community Medical Outreach Program

The goal is to train neighbors to help neighbors nearby until the Fire Department or ambulance can arrive. To gauge interest, the TFPD offered the first neighborhood training program in 2019 called Stop the Bleed. Stop the Bleed is a national awareness campaign and call-to-action. Stop the Bleed is intended to cultivate grassroots efforts that encourage bystanders to become trained, equipped, and empowered to help in a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives. For more information, go to <https://www.dhs.gov/stopthebleed>. Based on interest in this program, the TFPD may offer additional, free medical classes.

2019 Goal:

Hold at least one free Stop the Bleed course at Main Station and poll attendees regarding interest in additional training. Additional training may include CPR, First Aid or EMR classes.

2019 Cost Estimate for activities and equipment is \$2,000 (includes instructor, advertising, training equipment).

Metric: Train at least one resident in 10% of the District subdivisions (10% of 57 subdivisions = 6 people).

2020 Goals:

Hold two free EMS training events for the public. One will be CPR and First Aid. Other topics to be determined, based on interest.

2020 Cost Estimate for activities and equipment is \$4,000 (includes instructor, advertising, training equipment).

Cost Detail:

1. CPR/First Aid Class = \$2,000
2. Class #2 (subject to be determined based on interest) = \$2,000

Metric: Train at least one resident in 15% of the District subdivisions (15% of 57 subdivisions = 9 people).

2021 Goals:

Provide additional training events based on public interest.

2021 Cost Estimate for activities and equipment is \$4,000 (includes instructor, advertising, training equipment).

Cost Detail:

1. Two more public classes (subjects to be determined) @ \$2,000 each = \$4,000

Metric: Train at least one resident in 20% of the District subdivisions (20% of 57 subdivisions = 11 people).

OBJECTIVE 2 – EMPLOY A FULL-TIME CHIEF

With the growth of the District, the TFPD will need a full-time Fire Chief to manage increased demands on services, retention and recruitment, training, management of staff, liaison with other agencies, day-to-day administration and the duty to oversee accomplishment of the Strategic Plan.

Management of a highly performing Fire Department requires a full-time Fire Chief. At this time, the TFPD has not had the resources to pay for a full-time Fire Chief, but the need exists. This would be a jump in expenses compared to our current allotment for salary, so the timing will depend on funding. The TFPD Board of Directors (the Board) has developed a job announcement and discussed potential salary levels and benefits package. The discussion will continue with 2020 budgeting.

OBJECTIVE 3 – RESPONSE TIMES

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710 is a guiding document that sets standards for response times for fire and emergency medical systems. However, these guidelines are not practical for rural fire departments such as ours. Because our District is geographically large, response times depend on incident location, weather and terrain. These variables mean that setting strict response times that are uniform throughout the District is not possible. Instead, the Board will evaluate response times monthly to ensure that response times are not increasing. As always, the Board will support the Fire Chief in providing the quickest response time(s) possible.

Response times are published monthly in the Operations Report which is part of the regular Board Meeting Minutes. You can find these on the TFPD website at www.talxfire.com.

OBJECTIVE 4 – PUBLIC EDUCATION (Other than EMS)

Public Education is part of our mission statement: “The Tallahassee Fire Protection District works with citizens to deliver quality emergency response, resulting in a safer community through prevention, preparedness and public education.” To accomplish this mission, the TFPD has identified the following goals:

Goal #1 - To manage public expectations of the services that TFPD can provide.

- Provide a short history of the TFPD, what areas we cover, what we can/cannot do, how we are staffed, how we cover shifts, limitations, coordination with Canon City emergency (AMR), plans for the future.
 - We will provide slide shows/handouts for use at TFPD events and take to Homeowner and Property Owner Association (HOA/POA) meetings. We will post all or parts on the TFPD website -- monthly or quarterly.
- Provide maps of the TFPD, with distances and location of the main station and satellite garages to discuss reasonable expectations for response times. The maps will include information on factors the public controls, such as driveway identification, structures/landscaping impediments, gate codes/locks, and how to address these.
- Send a “Welcome Letter” to all new District residents, using quarterly information provided by the Fremont County GIS Authority.
- Establish new liaisons with HOAs/POAs for communities served. Use these individuals as information conduits and to help the TFPD learn more about each community’s unique circumstances, risks, limitations, etc. These individuals could be invited to attend Board Meetings or could hold separate liaison meetings quarterly (or after a Board Meeting quarterly).

Goal #2 - To provide fire mitigation inspections and recommendations to homeowners for fire prevention.

- Offer to visit homeowner properties to provide mitigation suggestions on a personal basis.
- Provide handouts explaining both HOW to do mitigation and WHY to do it.
- Explain what fire bans are, who determines and controls them, what activities are restricted, how to know what to do/not to do.

Goal #3 - To provide emergency preparedness information and general information on fire prevention.

- Link with local/state/federal agencies to provide literature, guidelines, and informal presentations for wildfire mitigation, burning guidelines, evacuation planning and response, etc. This information will be available to the public at stations, by email, and at events.
 - (See <https://csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation/protect-your-home-property-forest-from-wildfire/>.)
- Invite knowledgeable resources to participate in talks at the Open House, Town Hall, or other TFPD-sponsored public activities/meetings. Practice scenarios will be discussed, such as “*What would you do if...?*”
- Make sample “bug-out” bags to use in demonstrations and giveaways at TFPD events. These bags would be used for evacuations.
- Continue to sell reflective address signs but add services to help homeowners install where necessary (labor, posts, etc.).

Goal #4 - To encourage volunteering.

- Publish testimonials on the website from current Firefighters/Auxiliary telling why they volunteered and what they have achieved or what they get from their participation.
- Have a short list of “responsibilities” for each category of volunteer -- how they get qualified (training/background needed, if any), the kinds of things they are responsible for, how often, etc. Post on the TFPD website periodically with a call for volunteers.
- Invite the public to observe a Firefighter training day, in which some particularly interesting activity is going to be practiced.
- Encourage and recruit residents to fill Board and support positions.

Goal #5 - To provide transparency in operations and spending.

- Have a meeting annually (like the Town Hall) to explain, “Where does the money go?” (or “Where DID it go?”). Explain basic budget categories, major projects planned or underway, etc.

- Post the Strategic Plan on the TFPD website, encourage questions, provide more in-depth explanations of some areas that the public might not fully understand.
- Provide series of “Did you know...?” mailings (postcards or emails) or on the TFPD website, with quick highlights of TFPD recent actions, accomplishments, other key information.
- Provide information on deployments -- what they are, why we do them, what is needed (where some of our major spending focus goes for equipment), how they build morale and reputation for the department and how that benefits all.

2019 Goals:

- Begin sending “Welcome Letter” to all new District residents by August 1, 2019. Continue throughout the next three years.
- Purchase a brochure rack for the Main Station and stock it with brochures/free information by June 1, 2019.
- Post short history of TFPD on the TFPD website, including a timeline of important historical milestones by September 1, 2019.
- Issue fire ban information at the Open House, August 24, 2019.
- Assemble sample “bug-out” or evacuation bags in time for the Open House.

2020 - 2021 Goals:

- Most suggestions are ongoing without a specific beginning/end, other than financial reports which should be done at least annually.
- Articles/Information can be provided on a monthly or quarterly basis, or in conjunction with TFPD scheduled events/activities. A schedule of what/who/when will be put together for six months at a time.

Estimated Costs:

- Postage for Welcome Letter mailings and other mailing/printing costs: \$500/year.
- Giveaways, such as “bug-out bags” and other support materials: \$300/year.
- Brochure rack for Main Station: \$80.
- Volunteer time to identify resources and coordinate meetings, homeowner visits, etc.: No cost.

OBJECTIVE 5 – WILDLAND FIRE RESPONSE (In-District)

The TFPD is a highly respected combination department (volunteer and salaried) and has fought complex fires in our District and in support of our neighbors across the western United States. We are proud of our reputation and intend to do everything we can to continue and enhance our performance. To this end, the TFPD has executed mutual aid agreements with neighboring districts and is registered with the State of Colorado to deploy to fires as needed.

Our resources are limited, and we cover approximately 361 square miles of rural land. This presents an enormous challenge in providing services. It takes constant evaluation of our capabilities to continue providing these services. Our goal is to improve coverage and operational efficiency and effectiveness within the budgetary constraints of the District. To this end, we must ensure we have the personnel and appropriate apparatus and equipment to respond safely to wildfire incidents.

Goal #1 - To be Completed by End of 2019

Ensure that all apparatus are properly equipped and subjected to regular inspections and maintenance.

- Generate the minimum list of required equipment from the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) and ensure that each type of engine is properly equipped with the minimum required equipment.
- Determine a regular inspection schedule is in place to ensure that regular inspections are completed so that the apparatus is in good running order and that all necessary equipment is regularly maintained, repaired or replaced.
- Ensure that primary apparatus mechanical issues and deferred maintenance issues are repaired and brought into manufacturer specifications.

Goal#2 – Firefighter Training

- Ensure that we have Firefighters trained to appropriate NWCG Firefighter Levels to respond to in-district wildland incidents.
 - Currently, the required minimum training for all new and current TFPD Firefighters includes all courses for NWCG Firefighter Level 2 (basic Firefighter) which is the entry/minimum level of a wildland Firefighter.

Goal#3 - Apparatus

- Ensure TFPD has adequate apparatus and equipment for responding to wildfires. Currently, it has too many Type 1 engines for the volume of structure fires within our district. More deployable engines are needed.

OBJECTIVE 6 – DEPLOYMENT PROGRAM (Out-of-District)

The TFPD deploys firefighting crews outside of the District if called on to assist other departments fighting large fires and need additional resources. If deploying, the TFPD first ensures that our District is covered. That is our primary mission.

Deployments outside of our District provide two advantages: (1) it provides our firefighters experience that they cannot get locally and (2) the TFPD earns money from the deployments. The money earned is an important source of revenue that enables the TFPD to provide the services to our community described in this Strategic Plan. The property tax mill levy is not enough to support District activities.

Annual Goals:

- The Goal for 2019 is to have crews and apparatus to ensure we have an engine listed with the State 50% of the year (26 weeks).
- The Goal for 2020 is to have crews and apparatus to ensure we have an engine listed 75% of the year (39 weeks).
- The Goal for 2021, is to have crews and apparatus to ensure we have an engine listed 90% of the year (47 weeks).

These goals can also be achieved by listing multiple engines; that is, two engines listed for 13 weeks would satisfy the goal for 2019.

The following are steps to achieve these goals.

Deployable Firefighter Requirements

We plan to deploy four crew members per Type 3 Engine and three (two are required) per Type 6 Engine. To ensure we can cover required downtime, vacations, holidays and sickness, we will have extra/backup deployable crew members.

Deployable Fleet Requirements:

We need to have enough engines to deploy while accounting for downtimes for maintenance and repair, as well as covering local incidents:

- Three Deployable Wildland Engines by end of 2019
- Four Deployable Wildland Engines by end of 2020
- Five Deployable Wildland Engines by end of 2021

Ways to achieve Fleet goals:

- Bring more of our Type 6 Engines into NWCG specifications.

- Obtain a Type 3 Engine.
- Request a Type 4 or Type 6 FEPP Engine to cover the district and offset deployed engines.
- Obtain another engine. Type 3 engine; the approximate cost is \$200,000-250,000 for a used Type 3 Engine. This purchase would be financed through a grant.

OBJECTIVE 7 – FULL-SHIFT COVERAGE

The TFPD is comprised of an outstanding group of dedicated volunteers who are the District's most valuable resource. In order to ensure the future of our organization, the continued recruitment and retention of volunteer Firefighters and EMTs is crucial. We must also support the continued training and certification of our personnel in order to deliver professional, cost-effective services to the community.

The TFPD is a combination department, utilizing a system of a salaried Fire Chief and volunteers (not salaried). This system has been working well, and we plan to continue this system for the next three years. However, we have had a decline in our in-District call personnel. With an increased demand for our services, the TFPD has found it difficult to meet the demands of the community at current staff levels.

Ideally, we should have enough staff to cover all shifts and for staff able to be at the main station or equipment storage garage within 15 minutes to pick up response vehicles and proceed to an incident. The current requirement is that all Firefighters cover six shifts per month. Although we are covering all shifts most of the time, this is being accomplished by some Firefighters covering more than six shifts per month and some Firefighters covering shifts but are located more than 15 minutes from the fire station.

Goals for 2019

Quarter 1 (January – March) - Start tracking how many Firefighters are actually covering shifts and how many shifts they are covering. Also track how many shifts have more than one Firefighter to determine which days have the best coverage. Track response times.

Quarter 2 (April – June) - Analyze the shift coverage demographic and response times. Based on the data, determine if we have a participation problem or not enough volunteers based on six shifts per member per month. This analysis will be discussed among the Department Officers.

The Chief will continue to track coverage and response metrics every quarter and report his findings to the Board.

This analysis will help the Chief determine if he needs to recruit more Firefighters or have discussions with the current firefighters about participation. If the current firefighters are participating at their capacity, then recruiting new members might be the only way to improve shift coverage and response times.

Goal for 2020

Continue to analyze the data to determine if recruiting is necessary.

Goal for 2021

Continue to analyze the data to determine if recruiting is necessary.