

STRATEGIC PLAN 2019



“Protecting life and property through the efficient delivery of quality community services”

Letter From The Chief

“A Leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way” – John C Maxwell

I am pleased to present the 2019 North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District Strategic Plan. This living document is a collaborative effort from the Fire District Staff and Local 2139 members to assist with guiding the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District into the future of our ever-changing community. I view our personnel as our most valuable asset, striving to continuously improve our organization while being responsible for delivering our mission statement, “To Protect Life and Property through efficient delivery of quality community services.”

The identified goals and objectives as outlined in this Strategic Plan will guide us into the future however, we acknowledge there will be unforeseeable issues that will arise and impact how our Fire District operates and provides service to the community. These issues will offer both challenge and opportunity to our Board of Directors, Fire District administrators and personnel, who will need to review, assess and work together to identify options and find solutions. It is these opportunities for growth and development, guided by the structure provided in this Strategic Plan that will keep us united and fluid as an organization, constantly growing and adapting alongside the community.

In closing, I would like to express my gratitude to the individuals who spent countless hours working together to create this important guiding document, as it represents our organization and our future.



Ryan E. Sommers

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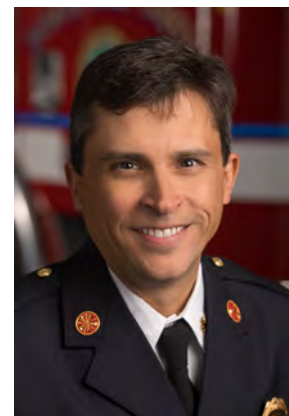
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Introduction

Since 1959, the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District (NLTFPD) has had the honor of protecting life and property in one of the most beautiful places on earth. The NLTFPD has established a reputation for excellence in the prevention of, preparation for and response to emergencies in the communities of Incline Village and Crystal Bay, Nevada. Additionally, the NLTFPD has maintained an active presence and strong reputation amongst our partner agencies in the Lake Tahoe Basin and surrounding jurisdictions. The NLTFPD would like to ensure that this exceptional quality of service is maintained in the future. The NLTFPD has developed this Strategic Plan to provide District managers with a framework for ongoing decision making and planning while allowing for flexibility as our community changes and new practices and technologies emerge.

The NLTFPD has earned an Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating of “1”, the highest rating achievable and the highest rating of any Fire District in the Lake Tahoe Basin. We are proud to maintain this rating by providing our community these “all risk” core services:

- Structure and Wildland Fire Response
- Back Country and Water Rescue
- High Angle and Confined Space Rescue
- Defensible Space Work
- Advanced Life Support Transport Emergency Medical Service
- Wildland Fuels Reduction
- Public Education

These core services will remain primarily the same in the coming years however, the details and applications must remain fluid. This fluidity will allow the NLTFPD to remain on the cutting edge of prevention, preparation and response and allow the District to offer high quality and up to date emergency services to our community. The first step in creating a Strategic Plan to facilitate this fluidity was to solicit input from employees across our organization. We identified areas representing the largest issues and challenges we will be facing in the next five years. These challenges are outlined in the following section.



The primary factors that will impact how our Fire District provides services to the community have been identified as:

- Increasing Calls for Service
- Technological Innovation
- Fiscal Challenges
- Organizational Culture and Successorship

These factors, which provide both opportunities and challenges, will continue to be the issues that our board members, Fire District leadership, and personnel will need to address for the foreseeable future. This plan acknowledges the significance of these factors and establishes a structure to frame them while providing direction, purpose, and priority.

“The best way to predict the future is to create it.” - Abraham Lincoln

Increasing Calls for Service

Incline Village/Crystal Bay is home to some of the best hiking, mountain biking, climbing, water sports, and skiing in North America. These attractions bring visitors to our region from all over the world, increasing and diversifying the challenges we face in meeting the needs of our District. Calls for service vary from structure/wildland fire protection to back country and water rescue. On any given day, the District could be asked to provide Advanced Life Support transport, technical rescue, vehicle extrication, confined space rescue, trench rescue, public education, defensible space evaluations and prevention services.

From 2012 to the present, we have seen an increase of 24% in calls for service. Additionally, we have recognized the need for our personnel to become more diversified in the qualifications they carry. This allows us to provide the wide variety of services we shoulder the responsibility for in our community. The reality of an increased call volume and increased need for competencies has and will continue to impact the way we equip and train our personnel. We take pride in the wide array of services we provide to our community and will continue to prioritize properly equipping and training our firefighters and prevention staff to provide cutting edge service.

“Service is not doing what is required of us, service is doing more than what’s required of us.” - Simon Sinek

Technological Innovation

Fire, rescue and prevention services continue to be transformed by ongoing changes in technology. New information technologies and advances in tools and equipment allow us to work more efficiently than ever before. In addition to technological innovations in our apparatus and equipment, changes in communication technologies have reshaped how we communicate both internally, and with the public. New opportunities to share databases with surrounding agencies have allowed the sharing of maps, resources, pre-fire plans, hydrants, and water sources. These databases allow us to seamlessly assist each other with regard to the borders of surrounding jurisdictions and communications. This fosters a more efficient and effective approach in protecting the Lake Tahoe Basin as a whole.

Although technology improves our ability to provide service, it also creates a challenge in remaining current. The need for continued investment in training and equipment must be clearly defined and balanced by our fiscal outlook.

Fiscal Challenges

The NLTFPD has largely recovered from the 2008-2010 recession during which we suffered the twofold setback of the economic downturn and the property tax refund. Although the number of line personnel remains below pre-recession levels, we continue to progress towards full staffing. The recent improvements in billing efficiency for off-site fire assignments and an adjustment to our fee schedule for permitting have helped to offset the rising costs of operation.

The biggest challenges governing our fiscal outlook is the continued legal action being taken against the County of Washoe and the unknown impact it will have on the future revenue we receive from the county. A speedy resolution to the issue would provide clarity to our budgeting process but unfortunately our role is to “wait and see” as we have no ability to play a direct role in resolving this issue.

“On the evening of Oct 26th, you arrived at Mt. Shadows and did a phenomenal job of transporting me to Tahoe Forest Hospital. Your gentle caring and comprehensive care was over the top! As an RN I was so appreciative of your knowledge and approach to my situation. You are the best!” - Patient

Organizational Culture and Successorship

The NLTFPD realizes that our personnel represent the strength and foundation of our organization. Our team members perform the core responsibilities of their positions with excellence and possess skillsets and talents that can be utilized to further strengthen our District. We have worked hard to change our traditional “top down” management model to an approach that values and encourages contributions from all levels of the organization regardless of rank or position.

We continue to look for ways to encourage those in positions of “formal leadership” as well as elicit input and participation from all. We are committed to consistently utilizing an approach that results in “buy in” from all areas of our Fire District.

More than 36% of our line staff will be eligible to retire in the next five years and we have an essential need for successorship planning. This planning develops and supports our future leaders through mentorship while providing incentive for our workforce to grow themselves into the leaders of tomorrow.



This Strategic Plan has been structured and organized into six distinct categories. Each of these categories was specifically identified by the Strategic Planning Committee with the intent of addressing the areas of the organization that are instrumental in accomplishing our mission efficiently and effectively. The following pages will take an in-depth look at each category and identify specific objectives for each area.



- Planning Committee Members**
- Jill Andersen (FFPM)
 - Todd Bassett (ENG)
 - Zach Bray (FUELS/PREV)
 - Jeff Byrne (FFPM)
 - Bryan Calder (AC)
 - David Melkonian (ENG)
 - Tia Rancourt (PIO)
 - Erick Rodriguez (COMPLIANCE OFCR)
 - Casey Quinlan (FFPM)
 - Monte Santos (CAPT)



Governing Documents

The NLTFPD’s mission is governed by documents that are designed to guide all major decisions, actions and activities that take place within the boundaries set by them. These documents are organized into three separate but interwoven groups: Policies and Procedures (P&P’s), Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG’s) and the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

These documents clarify expectations for personnel regarding job performance as well as dictate operational procedures. These documents inherently need to change as our District grows and strives to improve its service delivery. The objectives below will insure these documents meet their intended purpose.

Objectives:

1. A comprehensive revision of the P&P’s will occur to ensure that they accurately outline the expected guidelines for day to day operations of the Fire District
2. A comprehensive revision of SOG’s will occur to ensure that they accurately outline expectations for day to day operations as well as the on-scene operations of emergency responders
3. An ongoing and systematic review of both P&P’s and SOG’s will occur every two years, or as needed, to reflect changes in workplace expectations
4. The P&P’s and the SOG’s will be revised to reflect actual practices and industry standards
5. The CBA shall continue to take precedence over P&P’s as well as SOG’s. The NLTFPD shall create, organize and implement documents that are consolidated, cooperative and congruent
6. The P&P’s, SOG’s and CBA shall be referenced during all After Action Reviews (AAR’s) of on scene operations
7. The P&P’s, SOG’s and CBA will be accessible to all personnel for review, implementation and educational purposes



In today's world, technology has become essential to the operational efficiency of the business world and emergency response. Emerging technologies can and will continue to change the way we deliver services and it is essential that the NLTFPD remain in step with these technologies in order to deliver efficient quality service. Changes in technology improve our ability to efficiently accomplish District goals and as well as streamline our service delivery. Below are the areas of technological adaptation that have been identified by the planning committee as those that will drive the NLTFPD into a successful future.

Objectives:

1. Maintain and advance progressive software systems for Emergency Medical Services (EMS), administrative record keeping, communications and fire suppression operations
2. Create and maintain a system for efficient and progressive fleet management
3. Pursue and advance suppression technologies that provide for improvements in service delivery, safety and job performance
4. Maintain and enhance EMS technologies that ensure top quality patient care
5. Maintain and develop systems that improve operational training objectives

“Civilization advances by extending the number of important operations which we can perform without thinking of them.” – Alfred North Whitehead



The equipment that we use in daily operations will continue to be an integral part of how we complete objectives and serve our community. This equipment will inherently degrade over time and how we address its replacement and enhancement must be balanced with our budgeting process and overall operational objectives. We will continue to evaluate the most efficient and cost-effective approach to keeping our equipment up to date and at the peak of its performance to maximize service delivery.

Objectives:

1. Develop a schedule for planned replacement of apparatus and equipment
2. Develop an ongoing facilities maintenance schedule
3. Ongoing evaluation of fire and rescue equipment to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our community, personnel and stakeholders
4. Ensure the annual budgeting process includes a balanced allocation of funds to equipment needs
5. Ensure that equipment meets or exceeds industry standards and enhances safety for personnel and the public



Organizational culture encompasses the values, beliefs and principles of an organization's members and is expressed in how the members of the organization interact with each other, the public and other stakeholders. Most importantly, organizational culture affects how employees identify with the organization and the employee's ability to reach their full potential.

The NLTFPD strives to foster a collaborative organizational culture that values participation from all employees of the Fire District. Our goal is to conduct ourselves with integrity at all times while adapting to the changing needs of the community we serve.

Objectives:

1. Plan for succession by providing guidance and feedback throughout the stages of career development
2. Develop a Career Progression Guide to outline the steps for career advancement
3. Utilize and enhance Position Task Books to provide a framework for mentoring in support of career progression
4. Encourage an atmosphere of unity by inviting participation in the development of programs and training from all employees
5. Enhance the overall district atmosphere by instilling effective communication and integrity among all employees
6. Ensure successful employee recruitment by supporting a healthy organizational culture at all levels of the organization



Community Programs/Services and Outreach

The NLTFPD has become well known for providing a vast array of community outreach services. Years of diligence and stewardship have made our community one of the safest and most healthy in the region and we aim to continue to be a model for fire districts nationwide. Our public outreach and education is dynamic and reflects the needs of our community while supporting the mission and vision of the District.

Objectives:

1. Monitor, assess and reflect community support programs via surveys and outreach events
2. Continue to establish collaboration-based education programs in schools
3. Establish and expand community health services to include a Community Paramedic Program
4. Continue to provide and improve community programs that inform residents of local incidents, events and educational programs
5. Foster a shared vision by keeping educational and outreach programs in alignment with community needs
6. Focus on public satisfaction encouraging feedback from the public on District programs and services



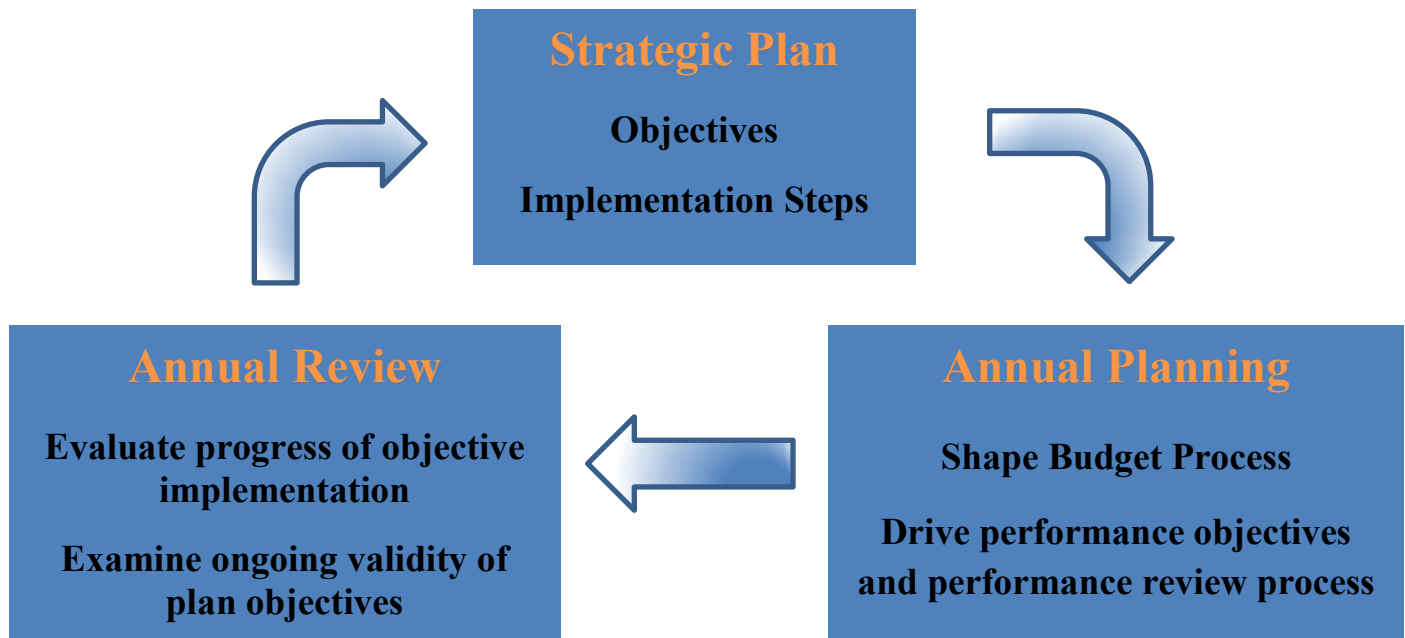
Achieving and maintaining institutional financial sustainability is a goal that all organizations strive for. This financial sustainability enables us to cover administrative costs, operational costs and prioritize our activities to accomplish the District’s mission. Economic change is a constant variable that we must recognize and plan for while we work toward strengthening our Department. We are committed to financial management practices that promote consistent outcomes and sustain the financial health of the District.

Objectives:

1. Improve business development practices that promote financial solvency
2. Utilize progressive systems that improve cost capturing and tracking methods
3. Pursue innovative funding opportunities such as grants, investments and collaborative partnerships
4. Continue establishing an annual budget that provides an appropriate distribution of funding for all district departments
5. Establish and maintain a revitalized budget committee to ensure continuity of all district program

“Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.” – Warren Buffett

Plan Management



This plan identifies the most significant challenges and opportunities facing the NLTFPD and establishes the foundation for the District’s response to these opportunities. The implementation of the objectives contained in this document is directly related to our mission of improving efficiency in the services we provide for our community. The District has the capacity to advance all of the items contained in this plan by allocating existing resources when possible and requesting additional resources when necessary.

Given the fluid nature of our operating environment and the need to continue to be flexible and adaptive, adoption of this plan does not mark the end of a discussion. This document identifies decision points that will be evaluated when key indicators are seen or when our performance tracking indicates change is necessary. The ongoing process of monitoring the need for change and adapting when appropriate is illustrated above.

Plan Implementation

For the objectives in this plan to be actualized, the District commits to:

Keep the plan central

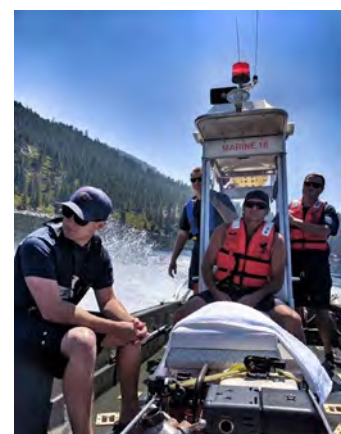
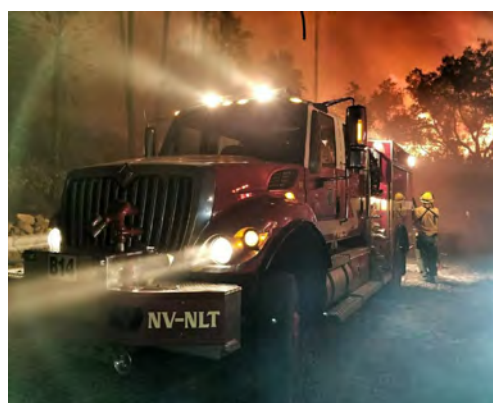
- Make the document central and public: Use it for day-to-day discussions as well as to support important reports and decisions
- Celebrate the accomplishments and successes of the plan
- Use the update as an opportunity to connect with staff about the plan and how we will use it moving forward
- Link people's jobs to items in the plan and use it in recruitment and performance evaluations at all levels
- Appropriately incorporate the plan into promotional tests

Link the plan to budgeting and work planning processes

- Use the plan to test and screen budget requests
- Set specific annual objectives and track performance measures for each objective
- Use the plan to set divisional or unit work plans

Stay focused on implementation

- Establish co-chairs for each objective that are empowered to keep moving the objectives forward
- Review progress of objectives at Executive Team meetings annually
- Review annual progress via Chief's message once a year





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