# NORTH MASON REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY

Strategic Plan 2022-2026

*We Safeguard North Mason Communities.*

## Strategic Planning Committee

Fire Chief Beau Bakken

Assistant Fire Chief Scott Cooper

Executive Assistant Renee Wassenaar

Administrative Assistant Sarah Morgan

Captain Ryan Cleveland

Captain Carl Ehresman

Captain Jordan Reese

Commissioner Brooke Quigley

Commissioner Dan Kewish

## Board of Fire Commissioners

Kelley McIntosh – Board Chair

Brooke Quigley

Dan Kewish

Paul Severson

Robert Miller

## Stakeholders

Members of the Fire Authority's A, B and C Shifts

Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Medical Technicians, Student Firefighters and Community Response Team

Fire Authority Administration and Management

North Mason Residents and Business Owners

# Letter from the Fire Chief

It is an honor to be able to present the North Mason Regional Fire Authority's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. This plan was reviewed with input from internal and external stakeholders who share in the desire for the Fire Authority to proactively address our community's continuously changing service needs. For nearly a year, the Fire Authority's Strategic Planning Steering Committee has worked to define the Authority's mission, vision and core values, and they have developed planning goals and objectives that prioritize community and responder safety and wellbeing.

North Mason has undergone considerable change in recent years, headlined by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Plans for future growth and change will continue to transform North Mason even more. The purpose of this plan is to focus on efforts that will enhance the level of the Fire Authority's public safety service that stands ready to protect North Mason. The plan is designed to ensure the future success of the organization by strategically plotting a roadmap that connects resource allocation with identifiable community and Fire Authority needs. The goal of the strategic plan is to provide a medium for the development and implementation of processes and programs that meet and exceed the expectations of our citizens and fulfill our mission to *Safeguard Our North Mason Communities*.

Just as our community continues to change and evolve, so must our plans. Therefore, this plan is a living document that will be continually reviewed, assessed for accuracy and relevance, and subsequently revised and adapted. As your Fire Chief, I am extremely proud of the effort, ideas and cooperation that went into the development of this plan, and I am excited to lead the charge in making the plan's goal and objectives a reality for our community.

Beau Bakken
Fire Chief

# Table of Contents

# Introduction: Past, Present and Future



**HISTORY:** North Mason Regional Fire Authority began operation on January 1, 2014, following the combination of resources of Mason County Fire Districts 2 and 8. Mason County Fire District 2, originally known as the Belfair Volunteer Fire Department, was created in 1946, when the citizens of Belfair recognized the need to provide fire and emergency protection for their neighbors. At the time of its formation, the Fire District served a community of approximately 400 citizens. The District was able to provide both fire and emergency medical services to the area for over 20 years, operated exclusively by volunteer firefighters.

**PRESENT:** Today, North Mason Regional Fire Authority spans 136 square miles, encompassing the majority of the northeast portion of Mason County and serving approximately 25,000 part and full-time residents in the communities of Belfair, Dewatto, Collins Lake, Trails End Lake, Tahuya, Maggie Lake and both the north and south shores of Hood Canal. The Fire Authority provides around the clock firefighter staffing at Collins Lake Fire Station 27 and Belfair Fire Station 21, as well as daytime weekday staffing at Tahuya Fire Station 81. There are an additional six volunteer fire stations located throughout the remainder of the Authority.

The Fire Authority includes both professional and volunteer firefighters, emergency medical technicians (EMT), paramedics and Community Response Team (CRT) members, and proudly serves the community as an all-hazards response agency, as it is responds to any type of emergency – fire, emergency medical and rescue operations. In 2020, the Fire Authority responded to over 2,400 calls for assistance. Of the 2,400 alarms answered annually, nearly 85 percent are emergency medical responses. Advanced Life Support (Paramedics) and Basic Life Support (Emergency Medical Technicians) are available to respond to emergency incidents 24 hours a day.

In addition to responding to emergencies, the Fire Authority is pleased to offer a variety of non-emergency services through the Emergency Prevention and

Community Outreach Programs. Some of the services offered include home safety inspections, free smoke detectors and address signs, first aid and CPR classes, disaster preparedness and fire extinguisher training.
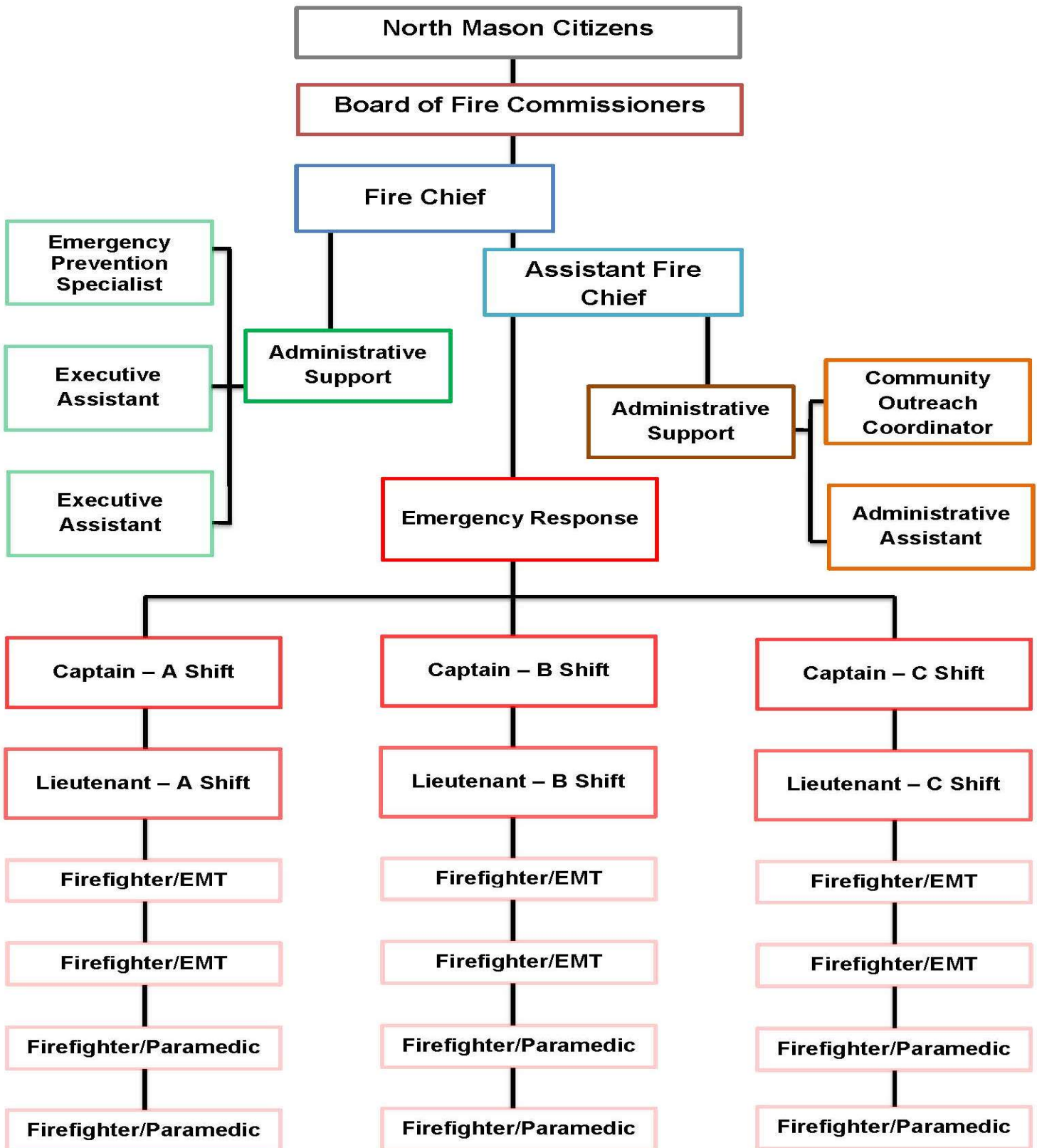
The North Mason Regional Fire Authority represents the very best efforts of community volunteers and dedicated career staff working together to protect life and property and ensure the well-being and safety of our citizens. We are proud to continue the tradition of "neighbors helping neighbors" and are fortunate to be able to **Safeguard North Mason Communities**!

It is pertinent to note that during the strategic planning process, the Fire Authority had been immersed in a worldwide pandemic resulting from the COVID-19 virus. At the time the plan was drafted, the pandemic had been ongoing for more than twelve months, with no anticipated end date. It is evident that the impact of the pandemic will permanently alter a number of Fire Authority functions and operations. Additionally, many of the long-term impacts are yet to be determined but are certain to affect the future strategic direction of the Fire Authority.

**FUTURE:** The future is very bright for the North Mason Regional Fire Authority. The North Mason community is expected to grow at an unprecedented rate, as local and regional projects impact the area. Notable community projects include multi-story, high-density residential complexes, housing subdivisions and additional commercial development. A freight-corridor through the East end of the Authority will bring additional commercial expansion in the near future. At the current growth rate, the Fire Authority's call volume is expected to increase by nearly 50 percent, as it is projected to respond to over 4,000 calls in 2028. It should also be noted that at the time of Strategic Plan draft, the Fire Authority has been constructing a state of the art 20,000 square foot headquarters fire station facility and is implementing a new four-shift work schedule.

# Organizational Structure

North Mason Citizens

Board of Fire Commissioners

Fire Chief

Assistant Fire Chief

Emergency Prevention Specialist

Executive Assistant

Executive Assistant

Administrative Support

Administrative Support

Community Outreach Coordinator

Administrative Assistant

Emergency Response

| Captain – A Shift | Captain – B Shift | Captain – C Shift |
|---|---|---|
| Lieutenant – A Shift | Lieutenant – B Shift | Lieutenant – C Shift |
| Firefighter/EMT | Firefighter/EMT | Firefighter/EMT |
| Firefighter/EMT | Firefighter/EMT | Firefighter/EMT |
| Firefighter/Paramedic | Firefighter/Paramedic | Firefighter/Paramedic |
| Firefighter/Paramedic | Firefighter/Paramedic | Firefighter/Paramedic |

# Strategic Planning Process

A Strategic Plan is a living management tool that provides the Fire Authority with short and long-term direction, builds a shared vision, documents goals and objectives and optimizes the use of resources. The strategic planning process involves developing an organization's purpose and goals beyond the immediate future, identifying actions necessary to achieve those goals and evaluating the results of plan execution.

The North Mason Regional Fire Authority's strategic planning process incorporated feedback from Fire Authority stakeholders including employees, volunteers and members of the Board of Fire Commissioners. The Fire Authority organized a series of internal meetings to identify planning goals and form a framework for the Strategic Plan. Major steps in the planning process included:

**Formation of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee:** The North Mason Regional Fire Authority's Board of Fire Commissioners authorized the formation of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. The Steering Committee was created to facilitate and guide the planning process, assuming the tasks of soliciting stakeholder input and using that input to establish draft goals and objectives for consideration of the Board of Fire Commissioners. Steering Committee membership included two Fire Authority Commissioners, Authority Chief Officers and Captains and members of the Authority's Administrative Staff. The Steering Committee met on a monthly basis, for a period of eleven (11) months throughout the plan development process.

**Stakeholder Group Sessions:** The Steering Committee organized work sessions for each of the three operating shifts, the Board of Fire Commissioners, Fire Authority volunteers and Community Response Team (CRT) members. These work sessions, facilitated by Fire Chief Beau Bakken, challenged individuals to evaluate the organization through multiple perspectives. Discussions focused on the Fire Authority's mission, vision, values and core services. During initial group sessions, a SCOT Analysis was performed to formally identify the organization's perceived **S**trengths, **C**hallenges, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats. The target of later sessions was goal and objective development, utilizing input obtained from the SCOT Analysis. These group sessions provided stakeholders with an opportunity to participate in

the development of the Fire Authority's long-term direction and focus. Members of the Fire Authority's stakeholder groups demonstrated commitment to this important project and remain committed to the document's completion. Furthermore, stakeholders are vital to the plan's execution.

**Themes Identification:** Following the evaluation of SCOT Analysis results, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee met to determine collective themes across the Fire Authority's stakeholder groups. These themes were used to provide further guidance toward identification of strategic initiatives and ultimately develop the Strategic Plan's goals, objectives and action strategies.

**Strategic Plan Draft:** The Strategic Planning Steering Committee utilized input received from the Fire Authority's stakeholder groups and the resulting themes to prepare a draft Strategic Plan in July 2021. This plan draft was delivered to the Board of Fire Commissioners for review and approval.

**Board of Fire Commissioners Review and Adoption:** The Fire Authority's Board of Fire Commissioners serve as the formal legislative body of the North Mason Regional Fire Authority. The Fire Authority's Board has the formally delegated responsibility of establishing policy for the Fire Authority. The Board was presented with a draft Strategic Plan by the Steering Committee, which was reviewed by the Board in August 2021. The final Strategic Plan was adopted by the North Mason Regional Fire Authority's Board of Fire Commissioners in September 2021, establishing its implementation as formal Authority policy.

# Mission, Vision, Core Services and Core Values

## Mission

We Safeguard North Mason Communities

## Vision

We are an essential, trusted and valued community partner. We continuously improve and evolve with the communities we serve.

## Core Services

*Emergency Services:* Fire response, rescue and emergency medical services

*Non-Emergency Services*: Community risk reduction, public education and emergency management preparations

## Core Values

- Safety

- Professionalism and Excellence

- Operational Readiness

- Customer Service and Patient Care

- Trust and Integrity within Organization

- Fire Authority Membership

- Fire Authority Member Wellbeing

# Core Values

An organization's values appear as guiding principles, a code of conduct or a culture code that explain how the organization intends to operate in accordance with those values; our values make a promise. The following values describe who we are and how we operate:

➢ **Safety!** We place our top priority on the safety and wellbeing of our members and the public we serve.

➢ **Professionalism and Excellence:** We hold ourselves to extremely high standards and strive to be a well-managed, high performing organization. We are committed to continuous improvement, and we recognize that we are on an evolving path where expectations are high and excellence is the standard.

➢ **Operational Readiness:** We realize that we work in a profession that allows no room for error, as the slightest oversight can have devastating results. We are committed to being prepared for any situation we may encounter while in pursuit of our mission.

➢ **Customer Service and Patient Care:** We exist to serve the residents, businesses and visitors of North Mason County. We put their needs before our preferences, and we center every aspect of the organization around customer service, protection and patient care.

➢ **Trust and Integrity:** We value our role as public servants, and we value the requirement to be held to the highest of standards. Trust and integrity amongst Fire Authority staff and members and maintaining trust and integrity with the community are essential to our continued success.

➢ **Fire Authority Membership:** We place the highest value on the members that form the North Mason Regional Fire Authority. With pride, determination and professionalism, Authority membership carries out every aspect of the organization's mission. Fire Authority members are the very best of what the public safety profession has to offer.

➢ **Fire Authority Member Wellbeing:** We understand that the constant demands of our emergency service work take a tremendous toll on our members' physical and mental health. We will take all steps necessary to help our members prepare for and cope with these demands.

# **S**trengths

It is imperative that an organization take an introspective look to identify its organizational strengths. Organizational strengths are the cornerstones on which the Fire Authority's Strategic Plan is built. Our Strategic Plan ensures that our strengths are not taken for granted and that they are fully capitalized on in our planning process. Our organizational strengths are a direct reflection of our core values, and they are celebrated with tremendous pride by all members of the Fire Authority. The North Mason Regional Fire Authority has prioritized the following strengths as being paramount to our current and future success:

➢ **Professionalism:** We conduct ourselves as leaders in the community, and we constantly strive to be the very best.

➢ **Staff:** Our employees are our most valuable resource, and they are the essential core for carrying out our mission.

➢ **Leadership:** We have exceptional leadership throughout the organization that executes daily, while maintaining a constant vision towards the future.

➢ **Training and Dedication to Development:** Training and education are the foundation of a prepared and competent workforce. Training and personnel development receive top prioritization within the Fire Authority.

➢ **Community Relationship:** Our relationship with our North Mason community is outstanding and integral to our overall success.

➢ **Financial Stability and Financial Management:** We constantly promote and execute fiscal responsibility and accountability.

➢ **Customer Service:** We continually strive for performance that surpasses all expectations.

# **C**hallenges

All organizations face challenges. The highest performing organizations take the steps necessary to identify these challenges and devise the strategies necessary for meeting these challenges head-on. The Fire Authority's Strategic Plan goals and objectives are structured in a way that position us to overcome many of our challenges. Our organizational challenges will change over time and often at a rapid pace. This will require the need for organizational flexibility and adaptation. The Fire Authority has prioritized the following challenges to be addressed in its planning processes:

➢ **Diverse Community:** The Fire Authority is fortunate to be able to serve a very diverse community. This wide diversity challenges the Fire Authority's ability to communicate and engage with all stakeholders in a meaningful and effective way.

➢ **Growth Management:** Community growth in North Mason is a near certainty. This growth will increase the demand for the Fire Authority's services and challenge both financial and operational planning.

➢ **Staff Retention:** The Fire Authority is located in a region where there is high demand for highly qualified emergency response personnel. As larger surrounding agencies move to fill additional positions, we are challenged with retaining our personnel.

➢ **Communication:** There is a continuous need for improved communication amongst all members in the organization. Communication is one of the most challenging and complex elements in any organization.

➢ **Aging Equipment and Facilities:** The Fire Authority's equipment and facilities continue to age and will challenge capital investment and planning operations.

➢ **Training and Development:** The Fire Authority's training and development will be challenged to sustain constant evolution to properly prepare personnel for the ever-changing work environment they must operate in.

➢ **Personnel Physical and Mental Health:** Requirements of the job place constant demands on the physical and mental health of our personnel. These demands challenge our responders' ability to perform at the highest levels.

➢ **Staff Levels:** As the Fire Authority continues to grow, limited staffing levels challenge our ability to plan, direct and respond effectively.

➢ **Environmental Impact:** The need to mitigate environmental harm from escalating risks such as wildfire, chemical harm and energy use, will challenge the Fire Authority's operations and response capacity.

# Opportunities

High performing organizations take the time to identify and explore the opportunities that can propel them forward. Opportunity identification can focus on immediate service delivery, or it can help to position the organization for future success. Much like organizational challenges, organizational opportunities can present themselves and/or change in rapid fashion. It is essential that the Fire Authority constantly search for and explore opportunities, whether within or outside formal planning processes. The Fire Authority has prioritized the following opportunities that it wishes to take advantage of:

➢ **Grant Funding:** The Fire Authority has the opportunity to identify and capitalize on significant grant funding opportunities in many different areas (emergency and non-emergency) to help support the Authority's operations.

➢ **Neighboring Agency Resource Sharing and Relationship Building:** The Fire Authority has the opportunity to build and maintain relationships with other public safety partners and identify available resources for joint operations and innovative training.

➢ **Community Risk Reduction and Outreach to Diverse Communities:** The Fire Authority has the opportunity to reduce community risk and build collaborative partnerships for marketed outreach and engagement to minority communities.

➢ **Non-Emergency Medical Care and Prevention Programs:** The Fire Authority has the opportunity to target risk-reduction efforts with at-risk populations and increase community outreach and education. Develop and implement a community paramedicine program that can assist emergency work and position the Authority to meet increasing service demand.

➢ **Technology:** The Fire Authority has the opportunity to leverage technology and implement technology best practices to augment all aspects of Authority operations.

➢ **Increased Staffing and Staff Retention:** The Fire Authority has the opportunity to increase staffing in order to safely and effectively meet service demands and take the necessary steps to retain key personnel.

➢ **Communication:** The Fire Authority has the opportunity to improve organizational and public communication which includes the prioritized areas of operations, internal programming and training and development.

# Threats

Threats to an organization must be identified during the strategic planning process.  Organizational threats can significantly impact any and all aspects of an organization. By identifying potential threats, an organization can greatly reduce the potential for impact and/or loss. Fundamental to the success of any Strategic Plan is the understanding that threats are not in the direct control of the organization. The Fire Authority has prioritized the following potential threats:

➢ **Community Growth and Infrastructure:** Rapid community growth and changes in community infrastructure can threaten our ability to safely and effectively meet service demands.

➢ **Change in Community Demographics:** An inability to identify and respond to changes in community demographics can threaten our operations significantly by altering service and resource needs.

➢ **Staff Retention:** The potential loss of key personnel threatens our ability to operate in a safe and effective way.

➢ **Economic Climate:** Adverse changes in the local and national economic climate threatens Fire Authority funding and financial support.

➢ **Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing:** The increased potential for detrimental impact on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of our responders and the public threatens the Fire Authority's effectiveness and response capacity.

➢ **Community Support:** A loss of community support, for any reason, will significantly threaten our ability to carry out our mission.

➢ **Climate/Weather:** Short- and long-term changes in climate and weather threatens the Fire Authority's operations and capacity.

➢ **Pandemics:** Pandemics threaten the health and safety of our emergency responders and the public.

➢ **Lack of Volunteers:** A national trend in the declining number of fire and EMS volunteer personnel threatens the Fire Authority's human resource capacity to handle both emergency and non-emergency service needs.

➢ **Aging Fleet and Facilities:** The continued aging of Fire Authority equipment, apparatus and facilities, without proper attention and planning, threatens the Fire Authority's operations and capacity.

# Managing from this Plan

The objective of the Strategic Plan is to give direction to the organization in guiding its future path. As the community changes, the North Mason Regional Fire Authority must stay proactive in our approach to providing essential and effective non-emergency and emergency services. Being fiscally responsible is also essential to continually improving our service delivery. By developing and initiating this Strategic Plan, the Fire Authority can move forward and remain proactive.

This new, concise five-year Strategic Plan identifies Vision and Mission statements of the Fire Authority and defines leadership expectations and organizational core values. This plan also establishes five (5) long-term goals, with objectives and action strategies relative to each. It is a roadmap to goal attainment and allocation of resources and assets for goal achievement.

Every action and investment contained in this document is important to protecting the safety, well-being and prosperity of the communities we serve. The Fire Authority has the capacity to advance all the action items contained in the Strategic Plan, 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, once adopted, the Fire Authority's Strategic Plan will be in a constant state of both informal and formal evaluation. Fire Authority leadership will establish workgroups to meet regularly and manage progress toward accomplishing the goals and objectives. Timelines for completion of goals will be inserted as the organization begins implementation of the Strategic Plan and adjusted as needs and the environment change. Using the plan tracking matrix provided in Appendix A the Fire Authority will document responsibility assignments and target completion dates. The matrix will also be used to continually track progress and notate changes in planning or conditions.

The plan and the matrix will be evaluated by the Fire Authority's Board of Fire Commissioners on a semi-annual basis. Any changes to the planning document will be approved by the Board of Fire Commissioners during its regular review. As a result of incremental implementation, the Fire Authority should celebrate

successes and share progress reports throughout the organization. Post-implementation updates should also be shared with the community using the Fire Authority's website.

# Summary of Goals, Objectives and Implementation Steps

To achieve the North Mason Regional Fire Authority's mission to Safeguard North Mason Communities, realistic goals and objectives must be established. These will serve to enhance strengths, address identified challenges, provide clear direction and address the concerns of Fire Authority stakeholders and the community at-large. These should become the focus of the Fire Authority's efforts, as they will direct the organization to its desired future, while reducing obstacles along the way.

## 1 PROVIDE EXCEPTIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICE

1.1. Continue to provide a high level of service.
1.2. Make use of formal planning processes to address all potential risks to the community.
1.3. Continue to develop programs and strategies to mitigate an increase in non-emergency medical calls.
1.4. Ensure an optimal state of readiness with specific considerations for high-risk, low-frequency events.

## 2  INVEST IN OUR EMPLOYEES AND EXPERTISE

2.1.  Develop and implement an Authority-wide succession plan, through leadership training and development.

2.2.  Focus Authority training activities on core and emerging areas of need.

2.3.  Formally celebrate and recognize successes and achievements within the Authority.

2.4.  Improve the internal distribution of information to the Authority through a streamlined, efficient and timely line of communication.

2.5.  Develop and maintain a workforce that is psychologically equipped to provide services in a safe and effective manner.

2.6.  Place top-priority on employee retention to meet the long-term needs of the Authority.

## 3  MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE INFRASTRUCTURE

3.1.  Ensure that the Authority's capital facilities meet current and future Authority needs.

3.2.  Ensure all Authority apparatus and equipment are safe and operationally effective.

3.3.  Modernize Authority facilities, vehicles and equipment to provide efficiencies and improve services.

3.4.  Identify technology, systems and products to establish efficient service delivery and communication.

## 4     PLAN FOR AND PREPARE FOR FUTURE GROWTH

4.1.    Identify current and future operational practices to determine if service demands are being met and make adjustments based on analysis.

4.2.    Complete standards of cover deployment analysis to determine appropriate distribution of resources and ensure a safe and effective response force for fire suppression, EMS and specialty response situations.

4.3.    Maintain consistent funding and strong budgeting to proactively provide for the growing safety needs of the community.

## 5     ENHANCE EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND INCREASE COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

5.1.    Continue to develop and expand our comprehensive outreach program.

5.2.    Prioritize resources for prevention activities to reduce the frequency and severity of fires, disasters and medical emergencies in the communities we serve.

5.3.    Actively participate in and foster relationships with other public safety organizations throughout the region.

5.4.    Build the Fire Authority's multicultural connections and capabilities to target and communicate with groups facing the highest risks from fires, disasters and health emergencies.

# GOAL 1: PROVIDE EXCEPTIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICE

The Authority's primary focus is to protect life and property, whether from fire, natural or human-caused disasters or medical emergencies. We are recognized as a leader in the region because of our excellence in providing these services, and the residents of the communities we serve depend on our expertise and responsiveness. To maintain this high level of effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of emergency services, it is important first to prepare for and second to respond to, the full range of events that may occur. Through Goal 1, we will maintain a strong level of service delivery and strengthen our planning processes and procedures to ensure that the Authority and community at large are prepared for a variety of disasters, no matter how big or small.

**1.1.** *__Continue to provide a high level of service.__*

1.1.1. Establish a systematic approach for the continuous review and revision of Authority policies and procedures.

- Develop and implement a comprehensive set of standardized emergency operating guidelines.

1.1.2. Develop and deliver a training methodology that standardizes the distribution of new and revised policies amongst all personnel.

**1.2.** *__Make use of formal planning processes to address all potential risks to the community.__*

1.2.1. Increase pre-planning efforts by reviewing historical data, including but not limited to clusters of calls and high call volume areas.

1.2.2. Partner with Mason County in using building codes and inspections to ensure that new and existing buildings in the area are minimized from the threat of fire and/or other emergencies.

1.2.3. Engage in public and private sector partnerships to augment Authority service-delivery. Service areas may include QRT, mental health, prevention, volunteers, etc.

1.2.4. The Authority will maintain a leadership role in proactively addressing substance abuse throughout Mason County.

**1.3.** *__Continue to develop programs and strategies to mitigate an increase in non-emergency medical calls.__*

1.3.1. Evaluate the feasibility of developing a community paramedicine program that will foster improved patient care while reducing the burden on the emergency response system.

- In collaboration with hospitals and other EMS systems, identify gaps in community healthcare;
- Establish priorities for Authority involvement in improving healthcare for area citizens.

1.3.2. Engage in efforts to reduce emergency service demand, specifically addressing low acuity medical calls, false alarms and service needs that can be better served by an outside agency.

1.3.3. Develop and implement a follow-up program for patients and families who suffer traumatic injuries, illnesses, aid calls and loss of life.

**1.4.** ***Ensure an optimal state of readiness with specific considerations for high-risk, low-frequency events.***

1.4.1.  Increase wildfire preparedness.

- Continue and expand research and predictive wildfire modeling;
- Determine how to enhance recruitment and protect firefighters who frequently deploy to wildfires;
- Evaluate the potential for additional resources for wildfire response;
- Develop a public educational outreach program for wildfire prevention and response.

1.4.2.  Develop and implement a procedure for conducting pre-incident plans of target hazards within the service area.

- Identify or re-affirm target hazards;
- Create a standard operating guideline that covers the process for pre-incident plans of target hazards;
- The Authority will conduct a target-hazard identification and mapping process.
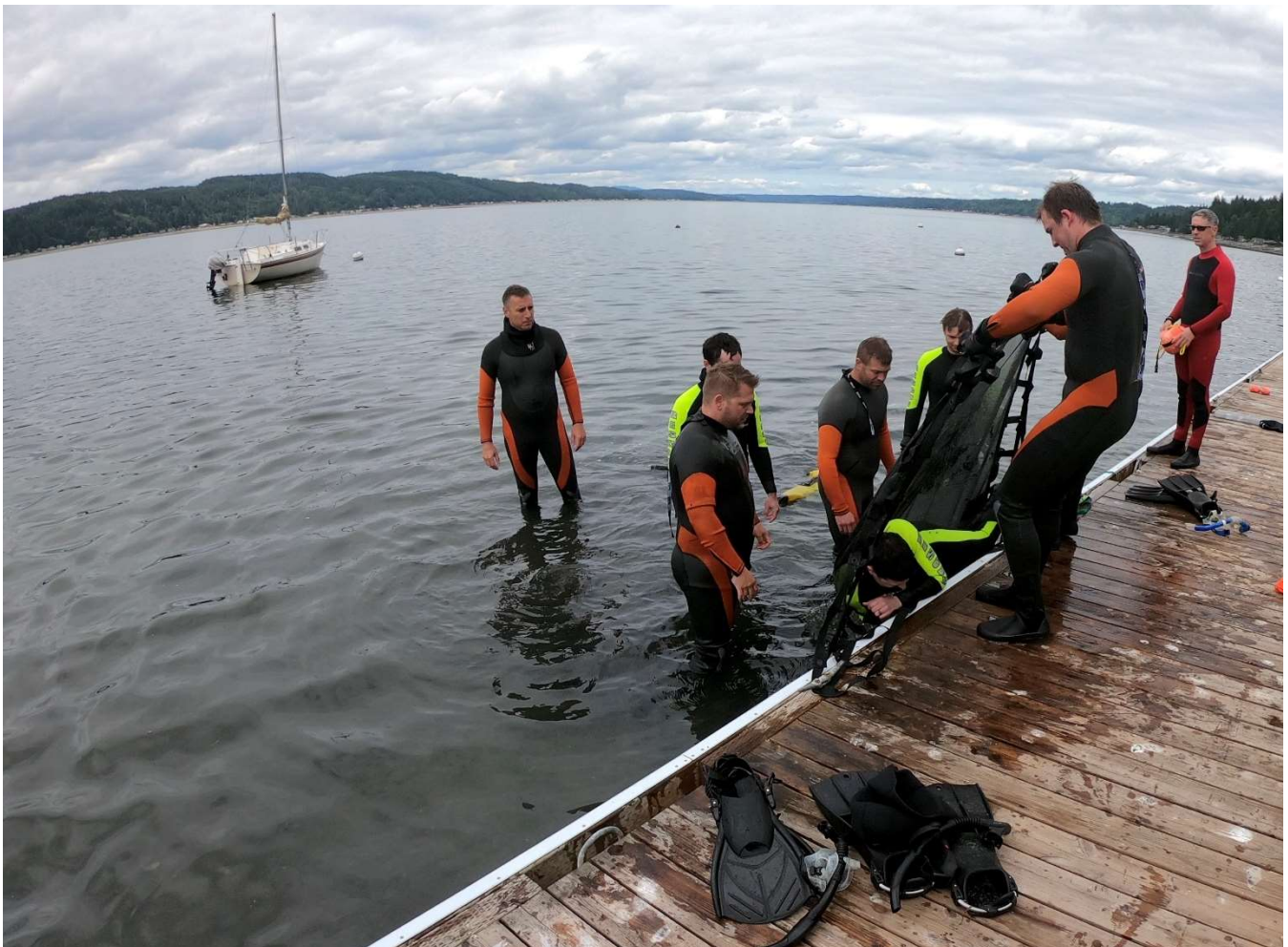
1.4.3.  Conduct Authority-wide training for identified high-risk incidents.

1.4.4.  Utilize available mobile data terminal (MDT) and record management system (RMS) technology for recording, sharing, accessing and distributing critical response information to Authority personnel.

## GOAL 2:    INVEST IN OUR EMPLOYEES AND EXPERTISE

As the communities we serve continue to change in demographic makeup and urban development occurs, we require a diverse workforce that is best able to meet today's challenges. To ensure firefighters and administrative staff are equipped for these challenges, it is critical that the Fire Authority cultivates the next generation of department leadership to lessen the impact of pending retirements of current leadership and focuses on hiring staff that reflects the changing communities that we serve. Additionally, to grow our organization and increase institutional knowledge, the Authority must focus on expanding professional development opportunities and providing clear paths for career advancement for interested staff members. Goal 2 affirms our commitment to our employees and prepares the Authority for the future.

**2.1.** _Develop and implement an Authority-wide succession plan, through leadership training and development._

2.1.1. Develop and implement a model for officer training and key position succession management.

- Identify and document key leadership positions that will need replacement due to potential retirement or promotion;
- Develop key leadership position succession manuals that contain job descriptions, position work assignments, responsibilities and current projects;
- Identify potential Authority leaders and support them in their personal and professional growth;
- Assist future leaders with the development and implementation of a mentoring program;
- Develop and implement a job shadowing program that prepares members entering a job vacancy.

2.1.2. Develop and implement leadership training that is essential for improving emergency services and individual career advancement.

- Create task books for Authority positions and program assignments that will aid in personnel development;
- Provide adequate training and testing opportunities for members to pursue higher level certifications;
- Provide pathways, assistance and incentives to firefighters to further their professional education as it relates to their position.

2.1.3. Develop and implement a comprehensive recruiting campaign to attract a candidate pool that is a reflection of the growing diversity of the region.

- Continue to recruit, engage and retain quality personnel;
- Develop an outreach program to recruit personnel of diverse backgrounds;
- Establish an applicant profile system that maintains a roster of applicants ready to fill potential vacancies.

2.1.4. Increase individual engagement of personnel with key organizational roles and responsibilities.

- Encourage individual participation in workgroups and committees.
- Assign line firefighters and paramedics with developing and implementing training programs for operational personnel.

**2.2.** _Focus Authority training activities on core and emerging areas of need._

2.2.1. Increase the efficiency and impact of training and training resources.

- Develop and implement key performance indicators that will be used to monitor training standards and goals;

- Utilize internal and external subject matter experts to provide the highest level of training;
- Develop and implement hands-on training opportunities that supplement the Authority's Ongoing Training and Evaluation Program (OTEP);
- Develop and implement hands-on and manipulative firefighter and rescue training that supplements the Authority's training program;
- Identify and implement specialized training opportunities that target high and low frequency hazards (wildland, water rescue, use of all-terrain vehicles).

2.2.2. Develop and implement a standardized Authority training plan.

- Develop and document a baseline training standard for all personnel;
- Develop and document minimum training requirements for new personnel;
- Develop and document ongoing training requirements for all personnel.

2.2.3. Develop and implement a plan for the use of a training facility and training equipment/props.

2.2.4. Identify and engage in regional training opportunities to improve interagency coordination, gain operational efficiencies and reduce unnecessary redundancies where appropriate.

**2.3. _Formally celebrate and recognize successes and achievements within the Authority._**

2.3.1. Develop and implement a plan to recognize Authority members with consistency.

- Utilize Commissioner meetings to celebrate awards;
- Use the Authority's Friday email updates to acknowledge individual and team accomplishments;
- Develop a communication methodology that informs Authority leadership about line-level accomplishments that deserve formal recognition;
- Use the Authority's annual dinner to acknowledge individual and team accomplishments;
- Schedule smaller dinner celebrations as a tool for the Authority to provide appropriate recognition.
- Utilize multiple outlets (i.e. social media, website, newspaper) to inform external parties of successes and achievements and ensure public recognition for Authority members;
- Develop and implement recognition activities and actions that all officers can take to recognize their career, volunteer and support staff throughout the year.

**2.4. _Improve the internal distribution of information to the Authority through a streamlined, efficient and timely line of communication._**

2.4.1. Develop and implement standardized methods to disseminate information to all members of the Authority.

- Identify and analyze the current communication procedures, applications and systems;
- Evaluate, update and prioritize all forms of internal communication used;
- Identify and implement technological solutions for improving communication within workgroups and/or different shifts;
- Eliminate ineffective forms of internal communication;
- Evaluate and revise as needed the Authority's communication policy.

2.4.2. Identify and implement methodologies that can increase communication between administration and line personnel.

- Conduct an Authority-wide meeting of personnel semi-annually;
- Provide training instruction and direction on communication within a Chain of Command structure.

## 2.5. *Develop and maintain a workforce that is psychologically equipped to provide services in a safe and effective manner.*

2.5.1. Develop and implement a comprehensive internal mental health program that will provide mental health care.

- Ensure Authority members are informed about the existing mental health services available within the department.

2.5.2. Confirm Authority policies and procedures relevant to mental health are designed to meet national standards.

2.5.3. Conduct continuous and ongoing evaluation to ensure the mental health of members is consistently addressed.

## 2.6. *Place top-priority on employee retention to meet the long-term needs of the Authority.*

2.6.1. Continue to develop a culture that fosters trust by building upon a safe, friendly and positive work environment.

2.6.2. Maintain competitive compensation and benefits for career members by evaluating surrounding departments regularly.

2.6.3. Evaluate, standardize and revise as needed the Authority's volunteer programs.

- Establish training requirements and standards for volunteer positions;
- Identify and implement incentives that can assist with the recruitment and retention of volunteer personnel;

- Evaluate and revise as needed incentives and requirements for the Authority's student volunteer firefighter program.

2.6.4. Standardize and document the Authority's onboarding process.

- Develop and implement an employee orientation program;
- Help employees understand and navigate the culture of the Authority;
- Provide new members with support mechanisms that can assist with integration into the organization.

2.6.5. Maintain the Authority's Retention Committee as a vehicle for communication and input.

2.6.6. Develop and implement a four-shift schedule to help recruit and retain Authority personnel.

# GOAL 3: MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Authority's facilities, apparatus and equipment are essential to our ability to perform our duties. Without proper, well-functioning equipment, staff members are unable perform their jobs at the high level expected of them. Maintaining appropriate infrastructure involves ensuring our facilities, such as fire stations, are ready and well-positioned to support timely responses to changing call patterns, as well as making sure that the apparatus used to respond to calls and the equipment needed to respond to medical emergencies, fight fires, perform rescues and other actions are in working order. Goal 3 serves to solidify planning efforts for new construction and purchases before there is a deficiency and to maintain existing structures and equipment to make them last for their full expected lifespan. Through Goal 3 we will also ensure department staff have effective technology and communication tools to allow them to act in a more coordinated and efficient way and achieve better results.

**3.1. _Ensure that the Authority's capital facilities meet current and future Authority needs._**

3.1.1.  Maintain and replace as needed capital facilities to ensure a safe and livable work environment.

- Provide an annual report on the status of the Authority's capital facilities;
- Develop, implement and annually review a preventative maintenance plan for all capital facilities;
- Develop and implement a major maintenance project schedule based on need, funding and staffing levels.

3.1.2.  Continually evaluate community service demands and ensure that Authority capital facilities can meet those demands.

- Develop and implement a methodology for evaluating service demand to include: location, number and type of calls for service and response times;
- Continually evaluate Mason County land use policies and projected development.

3.1.3.  Ensure all facilities are designed and equipped in a way that minimizes impacts on the environment and surrounding neighborhoods.

- Determine and implement, in each station, the best ways to conserve energy, reduce waste and institute environmentally safe and sustainable practices and products.

**3.2. _Ensure all Authority apparatus and equipment are safe and operationally effective._**

3.2.1.  Continue to inspect and evaluate apparatus and equipment annually.

- Develop a method for maintaining service records for all Authority apparatus;
- Develop and implement a maintenance schedule to ensure that all apparatus and equipment continue to be inspected annually;
- Involve internal and external specialists in the annual evaluation of apparatus and equipment to determine additional maintenance needs and assist with apparatus replacement scheduling;
- Establish an effective method to report apparatus and equipment needs and requests.

3.2.2.  Develop and implement a formal apparatus and equipment evaluation plan.

- Analyze the current Authority apparatus and equipment data to ensure response sustainability (i.e. forecasting);
- Annually review the Authority's Apparatus Replacement Plan and provide an annual report to the Board of Commissioners;
- Continuously evaluate the potential need for specialty apparatus and equipment.

3.2.3.  Optimize personal protective equipment (PPE) acquisition and distribution.

**3.3.  _Modernize Authority facilities, vehicles and equipment to provide efficiencies and improve services._**

3.3.1.  Identify and complete construction and remodeling projects that update Authority facilities.

- Invest in capital projects that minimize future facility repairs and operating costs;
- Invest in capital projects that are environmentally sustainable.

3.3.2.  Standardize systems and equipment of staffed facilities for efficiency.

- Consider where renewable energy resources and hybrid technology can be relevant and useful when purchasing or replacing equipment;
-
- Utilize internal and external specialists to evaluate apparatus for potential improvements that will increase patient comfort.

**3.4.  _Identify technology, systems and products to establish efficient service delivery and communication._**

3.4.1.  Establish an information and technology workgroup to identify, review and analyze current technology systems.

- Develop and implement a software solution for remote patient care reporting;
- Develop and implement the use of mobile data terminal (MDT) technology.

# GOAL 4:   PLAN FOR AND PREPARE FOR FUTURE GROWTH

The proper deployment of resources is essential to providing efficient and effective emergency services. The outcome of responses that we make is dependent on response time of apparatus, the equipment available for the incident and the proper number of personnel arriving on the scene. The deployment of resources is determined by identifying the risk that our community is exposed to and matching the correct resources to mitigate the risk. This results in developing an effective response force to be deployed based on the critical task needing to be accomplished. This process moves further to establish a standards of cover, which is the distribution and concentration of resources to meet the risk of the community. Goal 4 identifies the steps necessary to ensure our community is properly protected through the appropriate distribution of Authority resources. This Goal also addresses the importance of leveraging regional partnerships and constant innovation to be as effective and efficient as possible.

**4.1. *Identify current and future operational practices to determine if service demands are being met and make adjustments based on analysis.***

4.1.1. Identify, develop and implement an operating schedule that maximizes the operational efficiency and safety of emergency response personnel.

4.1.2. Develop and implement key performance indicators that ensure Authority staffing meets current and future operating demands.

4.1.3. Evaluate day-to-day workload and capacity.

- Evaluate the use of additional assistance positions for non-emergency work.

**4.2. *Complete standards of cover deployment analysis to determine appropriate distribution of resources and ensure a safe and effective response force for fire suppression, EMS and specialty response situations.***

4.2.1. Develop and implement standard deployment practices that improve service delivery and maximize a safe operating environment for emergency responders.

4.2.2. Evaluate and revise as needed the use of volunteer, CRT and student firefighters in providing emergency and non-emergency service delivery.

4.2.3. Continue to examine opportunities to combine resources and training with outside agencies to minimize costs and improve service delivery.

- Explore outside agency collaboration for optimization of the following: regional training, regional purchasing, regional provision of specialized equipment and teams and fire services;
- Continuously evaluate and capitalize on regional partnerships for ways to improve operating efficiency and service delivery.

4.2.4. Communicate response standards and expectations with the community based on existing staffing models, addressing any potential barriers to hiring additional staff.

**4.3. *Maintain consistent funding and strong budgeting to proactively provide for the growing safety needs of the community.***

4.3.1. Develop and implement a strong financial check and balance system that oversees the budgeting process.

4.3.2. Continuously monitor and forecast short, medium and long-term Authority financial needs.

4.3.3. Provide the Board of Commissioners and leadership personnel with training on Authority budgeting and financial processes.

4.3.4. Continue to seek out and utilize multiple sources of funding beyond taxpayer dollars to enhance service delivery.

# GOAL 5: ENHANCE EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND INCREASE COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

Public engagement is critical to prevention and preparedness, as well as to effective responses during a fire, medical emergency or disaster. As our population continues to expand, we are challenged to meet increasing demands by the public for outreach activities, including safety events, visits to schools, public presentations and CPR training. As the communities we serve grow more diverse, we recognize the need to better convey our messages to individuals from different backgrounds, including an increasing number of non-native English speakers. Goal 5 prioritizes the need to increase the effectiveness of the tools and techniques we use to engage with and to protect the public.

**_5.1._**    **_Continue to develop and expand our comprehensive outreach program._**

5.1.1.  Maintain a proactive and highly visible presence in the community.

- Develop and implement a formal media use strategy for the Authority (utilization of the website, social media, reader boards, handouts, etc.);
- Expand the components of our core community outreach programming;
- Use the Authority's strategic planning process to publicly communicate department goals, objectives and achievements;
- Develop and implement communication strategies that facilitate public feedback and input concerning organizational goals, objectives and potential projects to be considered.

5.1.2.  Develop, implement and monitor key performance indicators that evaluate the effectiveness of the Authority's outreach efforts.

5.1.3.  Develop and implement strategies for issuing alerts and notifications as well as distributing information to all populations during a disaster.

- Identify and document methods to push Authority messaging;
- Annually review and update the list of tools and technology used to communicate with the public.

5.1.4.  Develop and foster community relationships to increase visibility and capacity to inform and serve the public.

5.1.5.  Develop and implement strategies to engage typically underserved populations in addressing emergency and non-emergency service needs.

**_5.2._**    **_Prioritize resources for prevention activities to reduce the frequency and severity of fires, disasters and medical emergencies in the communities we serve._**

5.2.1.  Expand the reach of the Authority's public education programs to incorporate all populations.

- Expand outreach of all Authority's public education and safety programs (CPR, first aid, wellness, fire prevention and safety, bike helmets, life jackets);
- Annually evaluate community outreach programs, such as Safety Days, for effectiveness and delivery optimization.

5.2.2.  Increase targeted outreach to high-risk and vulnerable populations through formal Community Risk Reduction activities.

5.2.3. Explore opportunities to leverage community volunteers, local partnerships and grant funding to enhance planning capabilities and public outreach opportunities.

**5.3.** _**Actively participate in and foster relationships with other public safety organizations throughout the region.**_

5.3.1. Increase communication capabilities and information sharing between agencies throughout Mason County.

- Explore the potential to install more radio repeaters throughout Mason County;
- Advocate for the introduction of a comprehensive record management and dispatching system in Mason County;
- Implement the use of mobile data terminals (MDTs) in all front-line apparatus;
- Use MDTs for the sharing of information amongst partnering agencies.

5.3.2. Appoint an Authority liaison to maintain engagement with local agencies including Mason County, Mason County Sheriff's Office and Washington State Patrol.

- Identify opportunities to improve radio coverage and communication throughout Mason County.

**5.4.** _**Build the Fire Authority's multicultural connections and capabilities to target and communicate with groups facing the highest risks from fires, disasters and health emergencies.**_

5.4.1. Engage community member participation in Authority prevention outreach planning efforts to define community concerns, increase the effectiveness of our efforts, and grow trust between the Authority and the diverse communities that we serve.

- Improve access to public safety information through partnerships with community-specific media;
- Support and engage in external public safety programs that provide outreach to vulnerable populations including the elderly, disabled and isolated communities;
- Review and evaluate Authority materials and outreach events to ensure that they are culturally appropriate and engaging with the Authority's target audiences.

5.4.2. Identify and engage with trusted community leaders who can help the Authority communicate effectively with underserved populations.

5.4.3. Establish a list of all languages being spoken within the community and identify Authority personnel and/or community partners who are available to translate as needed.

5.4.4. Increase the cultural competency of all staff through specialized training in multicultural connections and capabilities.

5.4.5. Leverage technology to improve communication with diverse communities when unable to deploy specialized personnel with relevant expertise.

# Appendix A - Strategic Plan Tracking Matrix

## GOAL 1: Provide Exceptional Public Safety and Emergency Service

### OBJECTIVE 1.1: Continue to provide a high level of service.

| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1.1. | Establish a systematic approach for the continuous review and revision of Authority policies and procedures. | | | | | |
| 1.1.2. | Develop and deliver a training methodology that standardizes the distribution of new and revised policies amongst all personnel. | | | | | |

### OBJECTIVE 1.2: Make use of formal planning processes to address all potential risks to the community.

| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.2.1. | Increase pre-planning efforts by reviewing historical data, including but not limited to clusters of calls and high call volume areas. | | | | | |
| 1.2.2. | Partner with Mason County in using building codes and inspections to ensure that new and existing buildings in the area are minimized from the threat of fire and/or other emergencies. | | | | | |
| 1.2.3. | Engage in public and private sector partnerships to augment Authority service-delivery. Service areas may include QRT, mental health, prevention, volunteers, etc. | | | | | |
| 1.2.4. | The Authority will maintain a leadership role in proactively addressing substance abuse throughout Mason County. | | | | | |

### OBJECTIVE 1.3: Continue to develop programs and strategies to mitigate an increase in non-emergency medical calls.

| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.3.1. | Evaluate the feasibility of developing a community paramedicine program that will foster improved patient care while reducing the burden on the emergency response system. | | | | | |
| 1.3.2. | Engage in efforts to reduce emergency service demand, specifically addressing low acuity medical calls, false alarms and service needs that can be better served by an outside agency. | | | | | |
| 1.3.3. | Develop and implement a follow-up program for patients and families who suffer traumatic injuries, illnesses, aid calls and loss of life. | | | | | |

### OBJECTIVE 1.4: Ensure an optimal state of readiness with specific considerations for high-risk, low-frequency events.

| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.4.1. | Increase wildfire preparedness. | | | | | |

| | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.4.2. | Develop and implement a procedure for conducting pre-incident plans of target hazards within the service area. | | | | | |
| 1.4.3. | Conduct Authority-wide training for identified high-risk incidents. | | | | | |
| 1.4.4. | Utilize available mobile data terminal (MDT) and record management system (RMS) technology for recording, sharing, accessing and distributing critical response information to Authority personnel. | | | | | |

| GOAL 2: Invest in Our Employees and Expertise | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **OBJECTIVE 2.1: Develop and implement an Authority-wide succession plan, through leadership training and development.** | | | | | | |
| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
| 2.1.1. | Develop and implement a model for officer training and key position succession management. | | | | | |
| 2.1.2. | Develop and implement leadership training that is essential for improving emergency services and individual career advancement. | | | | | |
| 2.1.3. | Develop and implement a comprehensive recruiting campaign to attract a candidate pool that is a reflection of the growing diversity of the region. | | | | | |
| 2.1.4. | Increase individual engagement of personnel with key organizational roles and responsibilities. | | | | | |
| **OBJECTIVE 2.2: Focus Authority training activities on core and emerging areas of need.** | | | | | | |
| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
| 2.2.1. | Increase the efficiency and impact of training and training resources. | | | | | |
| 2.2.2. | Develop and implement a standardized Authority training plan. | | | | | |
| 2.2.3. | Develop and implement a plan for the use of a training facility and training equipment/props. | | | | | |
| 2.2.4. | Identify and engage in regional training opportunities to improve interagency coordination, gain operational efficiencies and reduce unnecessary redundancies where appropriate. | | | | | |
| **OBJECTIVE 2.3: Formally celebrate and recognize successes and achievements within the Authority.** | | | | | | |
| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
| 2.3.1. | Develop and implement a plan to recognize Authority members with consistency. | | | | | |
| **OBJECTIVE 2.4: Improve the internal distribution of information to the Authority through a streamlined, efficient and timely line of communication.** | | | | | | |
| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |

| | Implementation Steps | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.4.1. | Develop and implement standardized methods to disseminate information to all members of the Authority. | | | | | |
| 2.4.2. | Identify and implement methodologies that can increase communication between administration and line personnel. | | | | | |

**OBJECTIVE 2.5: Develop and maintain a workforce that is psychologically equipped to provide services in a safe and effective manner.**

| | Implementation Steps | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.5.1. | Develop and implement a comprehensive internal mental health program that will provide mental health care. | | | | | |
| 2.5.2. | Confirm Authority policies and procedures relevant to mental health are designed to meet national standards. | | | | | |
| 2.5.3. | Conduct continuous and ongoing evaluation to ensure the mental health of members is consistently addressed. | | | | | |

**OBJECTIVE 2.6: Place top-priority on employee retention to meet the long-term needs of the Authority.**

| | Implementation Steps | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.6.1. | Continue to develop a culture that fosters trust by building upon a safe, friendly and positive work environment. | | | | | |
| 2.6.2 | Maintain competitive compensation and benefits for career members by evaluating surrounding departments regularly. | | | | | |
| 2.6.3. | Evaluate standardize and revise as needed the Authority's volunteer programs. | | | | | |
| 2.6.4. | Standardize and document the Authority's onboarding process. | | | | | |
| 2.6.5. | Maintain the Authority's Retention Committee as a vehicle for communication and input. | | | | | |
| 2.6.6. | Develop and implement a four-shift schedule to help recruit and retain Authority | | | | | |

**GOAL 3: Maintain Appropriate Infrastructure**

**OBJECTIVE 3.1: Ensure that the Authority's capital facilities meet current and future Authority needs.**

| | Implementation Steps | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.1.1. | Maintain and replace as needed capital facilities to ensure a safe and livable work environment. | | | | | |
| 3.1.2. | Continually evaluate community service demands and ensure that Authority capital facilities can meet those demands. | | | | | |
| 3.1.3. | Ensure all facilities are designed and equipped in a way that minimizes impacts on the environment and surrounding neighborhoods. | | | | | |

**OBJECTIVE 3.2: Ensure all Authority apparatus and equipment are safe and operationally effective.**

| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.2.1. | Continue to inspect and evaluate apparatus and equipment annually. | | | | | |
| 3.2.2. | Develop and implement a formal apparatus and equipment evaluation plan. | | | | | |
| 3.2.3. | Optimize personal protective equipment (PPE) acquisition and distribution. | | | | | |
| **OBJECTIVE 3.3: Modernize Authority facilities, vehicles and equipment to provide efficiencies and improve services.** | | | | | | |
| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
| 3.3.1. | Identify and complete construction and remodeling projects that update Authority facilities. | | | | | |
| 3.3.2. | Standardize systems and equipment of staffed facilities for efficiency. | | | | | |
| **OBJECTIVE 3.4: Identify technology, systems and products to establish efficient service delivery and communication.** | | | | | | |
| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
| 3.4.1. | Establish an information and technology workgroup to identify, review and analyze current technology systems. | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| **GOAL 4: Plan For and Prepare For Future Growth** | | | | | | |
| **OBJECTIVE 4.1: Identify current and future operational practices to determine if service demands are being met and make adjustments based on analysis.** | | | | | | |
| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
| 4.1.1. | Identify, develop and implement an operating schedule that maximizes the operational efficiency and safety of emergency response personnel. | | | | | |
| 4.1.2. | Develop and implement key performance indicators that ensure Authority staffing meets current and future operating demands. | | | | | |
| 4.1.3. | Evaluate day-to-day workload and capacity. | | | | | |
| **OBJECTIVE 4.2: Complete standards of cover deployment analysis to determine appropriate distribution of resources and ensure a safe and effective response force for fire suppression, EMS and specialty response situations.** | | | | | | |
| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
| 4.2.1. | Develop and implement standard deployment practices that improve service delivery and maximize a safe operating environment for emergency responders. | | | | | |
| 4.2.2. | Evaluate and revise as needed the use of volunteer, CRT and student firefighters in providing emergency and non-emergency service delivery. | | | | | |
| 4.2.3. | Continue to examine opportunities to combine resources and training with outside agencies to minimize costs and improve service delivery. | | | | | |
| 4.2.4. | Communicate response standards and expectations with the community based on | | | | | |
| **OBJECTIVE 4.3: Maintain consistent funding and strong budgeting to proactively provide for the growing safety needs of the community.** | | | | | | |
| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |

| | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4.3.1. | Develop and implement a strong financial check and balance system that oversees the budgeting process. | | | | | |
| 4.3.2. | Continuously monitor and forecast short, medium and long-term Authority financial needs. | | | | | |
| 4.3.3. | Provide the Board of Commissioners and leadership personnel with training on Authority budgeting and financial processes. | | | | | |
| 4.3.4. | Continue to seek out and utilize multiple sources of funding beyond taxpayer dollars to enhance service delivery. | | | | | |

## GOAL 5: Enhance External Communication and Increase Community Resiliency

**OBJECTIVE 5.1: Continue to develop and expand our comprehensive outreach program.**

| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.1.1. | Maintain a proactive and highly visible presence in the community. | | | | | |
| 5.1.2. | Develop implement and monitor key performance indicators that evaluate the effectiveness of the Authority's outreach efforts. | | | | | |
| 5.1.3. | Develop and implement strategies for issuing alerts and notifications as well as distributing information to all populations during a disaster. | | | | | |
| 5.1.4. | Develop and foster community relationships to increase visibility and capacity to | | | | | |
| 5.1.5. | Develop and implement strategies to engage typically underserved populations in addressing emergency and non-emergency service needs. | | | | | |

**OBJECTIVE 5.2: Prioritize resources for prevention activities to reduce the frequency and severity of fires, disasters and medical emergencies in the communities we serve.**

| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.2.1. | Expand the reach of the Authority's public education programs to incorporate all | | | | | |
| 5.2.2. | Increase targeted outreach to high-risk and vulnerable populations through formal Community Risk Reduction activities. | | | | | |
| 5.2.3. | Explore opportunities to leverage community volunteers, local partnerships and grant funding to enhance planning capabilities and public outreach opportunities. | | | | | |

**OBJECTIVE 5.3: Actively participate in and foster relationships with other public safety organizations throughout the region.**

| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.3.1. | Increase communication capabilities and information sharing between agencies throughout Mason County. | | | | | |

| | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.3.2. | Appoint an Authority liaison to maintain engagement with local agencies including Mason County, Mason County Sheriff's Office and Washington State Patrol. | | | | | |
| **OBJECTIVE 5.4: Build the Fire Authority's multicultural connections and capabilities to target and communicate with groups facing the highest risks from fires, disasters and health emergencies.** | | | | | | |
| Implementation Steps | | Responsibility | Target Date | Status | Date | Notes |
| 5.4.1. | Engage community member participation in Authority prevention outreach planning efforts to define community concerns, increase the effectiveness of our efforts, and grow trust between the Authority and the diverse communities that we serve. | | | | | |
| 5.4.2. | Identify and engage with trusted community leaders who can help the Authority communicate effectively with underserved populations. | | | | | |
| 5.4.3. | Establish a list of all languages being spoken within the community and identify Authority personnel and/or community partners who are available to translate as needed. | | | | | |
| 5.4.4. | Increase the cultural competency of all staff through specialized training in multicultural connections and capabilities. | | | | | |
| 5.4.5. | Leverage technology to improve communication with diverse communities when unable to deploy specialized personnel with relevant expertise. | | | | | |

# Appendix B – Stakeholder Input

## VALUES/SCOT ANALYSIS

### Core Values

Safety
Employee well-being
Trust and communication
Feeling valued as a team member and employee
Tools to do job
Dedication to the community trust in my brothers and sisters
Selfless service to the community
Love in the duties we perform
I value doing God's work by helping people in the community that may be having the worst moment and making it better
Professional
Great conversation with crew members
Making the station look better than how I started shift
Training becoming a better firefighter
EMS experience
Teamwork
Relevancy
Individual growth into a team function
Skill mastery
I value that everyone is treated equal regardless of rank, time or experience
Value fairness and willingness
Compassion and understanding
Teamwork! Alone we are average, together we are a force!
Professionalism
Work hard/get better
Provide the best service we can
Have fun, make every day a great day!
Make a positive impact
Honesty
Respect
Trust
Community

Integrity #1
Professional appearance
Crew cohesion
Every 48 – I leave the community better than I found it; my crew is better for me having been on duty; I am better after my 48
Emergency mitigation, community service, training, etc.
Solid rig checks
Ready to work attitude
Patient care
Positive contact with the community
Being on time
Physical fitness
Having each other's backs
Being prepared for any situation
Student involvement with the service and not having to sit back and watch
No dumb questions
Learn something new every day
Safety
Wellness and preparation of the team and myself
Professional mindset, demeanor, behavior and aesthetic
Clear expectations of the mission/job and latitude to accomplish that mission how I/we need to
Open and transport communication with everyone (internal and external)
Efficiency
Eagerness to learn and ask questions
Accountability
Adaptability to certain situations
Being self-sufficient
Preparedness
Health – mental/physical wellness

Operational readiness/training
Shift cohesion
Professionalism
Provide excellent patient care
Safety – everyone goes home
Leadership – be example, people depend on me
Accountability – pressure is a privilege
Courage – through faith I will boldly move forward
Learning – train every day, seek knowledge to gain wisdom over time
A sense of commitment to the RFA and to the community
An interest in fairness and in helping others
A willingness to strive for excellence
A curiosity about the fire service
A willingness to learn
Decades of successful Leadership experience
As a strong advocate of Equal Opportunity coupled with Accountability and Transparency, I do value and depend on the public's trust extended to us as stewards of public resources. It is paramount that we maintain and communicate transparently about the choices and investments we make as we engage community stakeholders in determining how best to deliver services. (Includes internal as well as external stakeholders)
I know the community
Some firefighting experience as a volunteer
I believe solidly in doing what is best for our community
I've been involved with the Fire Authority for a few years and further, through years in Tahuya too
I like to see the successful challenges and feel I'm not a lot of help (very smart people) but I always support positive growth
Professional standard
Honesty and respect for open communication and transparency
Happily support the goals and vision of NMRFA

Enthusiasm and willingness to learn new skills that support and enhance the agency
Caring and compassionate; stemming from 30+ years supporting patients and families facing life limiting illness, death, grief and bereavement
Strong commitment to health and safety of personnel through enhanced Rehabilitation Program as found in the CERT and NFPA Rehabilitation courses
Knowledge of the geographic and demography of the area I live in
Realistic understanding of my capabilities and limitations in emergency situations
Positive acceptance of neighbors of diverse backgrounds; I try to get along with people
Integrity
Commitment to improving my skills for emergency situations
Positive attitude
Optimism
Enthusiasm
Gratitude and sincere appreciation that compels generosity/sharing
Honesty/Integrity
Some humility, but working on more
Persistence and confidence – knowing that giving up is not an option and the power of belief can accomplish amazing goals
I care about our community
I do what I say I'm going to do
Can be trusted and I care
Will do what it takes when needed
Longtime resident in the community I know it well and many of its citizens
Willing to learn
The value of assessing and mitigation of risks
The value of volunteer service for something I love deeply – the fire service
The honor to be involved as a senior citizen and contribute what I can
The joy of involving others in serving, as I did at SKFR years ago, until my folks required my 24/7 as a caregiver
Using all that experience to the good of NMRFA

Serving God by helping others however I can
Contributing to the good of the order
As a CRT member the values that I personally bring are values instilled in me as a youth and still guide me as an adult. These values are expressed in the Scout Law: Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, Reverent

## Strengths

Adaptability
Current plan continues to be relevant in terms of strengths
Resilience
Great EMS customer service
Strong focus on training
Incredible volunteer/resident program (provides extra staffing)
Great at accomplishing tasks, sometimes with minimal staffing
Great leadership
Strong focus on fire prevention
Good community outreach
Able to maximize on limited financing (equipment/grants)
Good focus on planning
Provide experience for residents
Respond to 911 calls in a timely fashion
Provide opportunities for volunteers
Elevate volunteers with no fire experience into professional firefighters
Staff is generous and professional
Great relationship with the public
Great leadership
Family-like atmosphere
Constant drive to grow as an Authority
Flexibility for volunteers to have other jobs and time for family
Training (especially for the first few years of employment)
Limit bureaucracy in most decision-making
Stable finances
Community support
Capital purchases and facilities (compared to similar sized/funded)
Beginning to incorporate emerging technologies into day-to-day operations
Empowerment/free range to explore new opportunities

Great relationship with community
Stay on top of up-to-date training – both fire and medical
Eager to get personnel to training
Keep personnel informed
Amazing staff
Relationships with community (interaction)
Able to adapt on any call
Training opportunities
Good communication within department
Handle call volume appropriately
Stay professional
Financial security/lack of debt (and fiscal management)
Community trust/community support
Risk reduction programs
Equipment
Trained/educated crews
Experienced crews – competent, tribal knowledge, ownership
Overall leadership and organized focus on "doing the right thing"
Customer service is balanced between internal and external
Patient contact/care
Versatility
Training sessions
Relationships with hospital, M51, A31
Relationship with community
Trust in students
Treating staff with kindness and consideration
Patience with one another
Having each other's backs/comradery
Strong community support
Strong leadership
Desire to improve
Community support/involvement
Financial stability

Commitment to training/development
Commitment to logistical support of operations
Successful resident program
Adaptability
Community involvement
Professional career staff
Solid leadership at all levels
Good community relationship
Great ability to adapt in tough situations
Giving opportunity for students to learn/get hands-on experience
Good community relations and trust
Ability to recruit/hire good quality people
Good/stable finances and financial management
High quality and quantity of training
Dedication to development of personnel – personal development and professional development
Progressive thinking and actions
    Strategic thinking/planning
    Modern practices utilized
    In-tune with available technologies
The RFA's greatest strength is its crew members, administration and staff who maintain its commitment to high quality patient care and professionalism;
An earned, trusted relationship with the larger community;
The RFA's focus on service to the community is supported through its focus on education, training and preparedness of employees and on the health and wellbeing of all members;
A major strength is strong leadership at all levels;
The ability of members to come together to make bold plans;
A BOC that is able to openly discuss critical matters.
The high caliber staffers that serve the Regional Fire Authority and its community
Great people
Helping in times of need
Equipment

Highly trained crews
Very intelligent people
Community involvement and awareness (letting people know what's happening)
NMRFA Leadership Team
Respectful and supportive relationship with the community
Professional, caring, compassionate and extremely competent career and volunteer staff
Ability to identify and attract young potential team members
Strong emphasis on education and personal growth
Ability to identify individual strengths and aptitudes and encourage them
Overall caring attitude of staff
Community outreach, including CRT and special programs
High level of professional skills and training of paramedics, EMT/firefighters
Frequent communication with North Mason residents
Acknowledging the accomplishments of NMRFA permanent and volunteer staff
Providing training to all NMRFA personnel
Always soliciting ideas for improvement
Consistent professional, reliable, efficient, and timely 911 response service. The skill level of NMRFA personnel responding to 911 service calls is very unique in the sense that unlike a major metropolitan area, authority responders are very well cross trained to handle both in town and extremely remote location calls. This wide variety of call territory requires extra planning skills for insuring both qualified talent and apparatus arrive timely on scene.
Reduced 911 call volume allows for higher quality of service for each incident. In other words, I feel NMRFA personnel are able to spend more time with each service call, rather than being rushed and exhausted – which often reduces the quality and care as well as increases the risk of making mistakes and failing.

The ability to keep and hold the communities trust, respect and support consistently

The quality of leadership, ongoing training, and advancement opportunities

Transparency

Fiscal responsibility; ability to take advantage of grants that come up

Always looking at what future needs may be

Great personnel development and outstanding communications with the public

Training – continuous in nature to its staff; opportunities at the National Fire Academy in Emmittsburg, Maryland are a crucial part of the N. Mason RFA

The Authority has a unified approach to calls because of its ability to retain those in Leadership positions

Another strength would be flexibility it has demonstrated for college completion for its staff

Fast response

Good personnel

Good leadership and communication

CRT Program

Community Outreach – CPR instruction

Positive, caring people

The greatest strength is positive attitude displayed by members. Citizens can depend on them to provide immediate response and competent care.

### Challenges

Ability to respond to multiple calls

Staff retention

Communication

Managing change (moving stations & hwy 3 bypass)

Aging fleet in outlying stations

Staffing levels

Dealing with internal mental health

Retention & succession planning

Aging apparatus/equipment

Internal communication within department staff

Lack of staffing with increased call volume

Increased call volume with growing community

Planning for possible growth of urban communities

A standard on giving resident badge after graduating academy

Maintenance on transporting rigs for the comfort of patients

Lack of diversity

Giving experienced residents opportunities to work other shifts

Reimbursement for testing isn't enough

COVID-19 precaution not taken serious in the summer

Individualism/personal pride within leadership positions

Retention, succession planning

Individual development, strength exploitation

Communication – specifically intent, reasons, justifications

"The way we've always done it" mentality

"That's above your pay grade" or "that's why I have the bars/bugles" mentality

Lack of shared experiences (i.e. "27 is a vacation" vs. "27 is the BLS car responding to Twanoh at 3:00 a.m.")

Blurred lines between friends and supervisor/subordinate when discipline is necessary

Technology – limited radios, reporting program, MDT

Equipment, PPE – difficult acquiring everything needed

Clear communication forums on day-to-day training, station evens

Organizational infrastructure – aging equipment

Need for improvement in communication (pretty darn good though)

Maintain career personnel

Increase staffing for each shift

Continue to provide training opportunities

Train residents the same on all shifts

Provide more department training as a whole

Organizational discourse – differing views on organizational culture

Leadership roles need to be better defined

Organizational efficiency – do we have more than one person working on a single-person project; conversely, do we have only one person working on a project that should have several. Should we consider having a full time maintenance person?

As the community grows in diversity, can we communicate (translate?)

Need technological updating for communications and logistical improvement

  MDTs taking on comms function instead of just (over-burdened) radios

  More radio repeater sites to enhance coverage

  INTRA-net at NMRFA to communicate up/down/lateral in COC

Define our mission more proactively

  EMS vs Fire vs tech rescue, etc.

Staffing – we need more people on the line

  We need a dedicated training officers on days

Short-staffed on career positions

Outlying stations outdated/old

Available training classes for residents

CRT response

Retaining a well-trained and professional workforce

Achieving adequate staffing levels to facilitate the growing call volume

Dealing with the changing landscape due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Staying up to date with changing technology

Keeping training fresh and relevant

Finding new ways to integrate a volunteer force that compliments and supports operations

Continue to support mental and physical wellness

Being able to respond to more frequent, more intense wildfires and other events related to climate;

Being able to respond to population growth in the district and region;

Being able to respond to new health challenges. i.e. the pandemic, opioid crisis;

Determining how to be involved in non-emergency care;

Reaching out to diverse members of the community and to the homeless;

Maintaining strong communication internally and externally;

Recruiting and maintaining volunteers;

Maintaining a strong financial profile;

Creating and updating policies that reflect professionalism and support expert delivery of services

Retaining Experienced Staff

Resistance to positive change

Following our own policies: e.g., Annual Commissioner Board elections etc.

Maintaining transparency between the Board and the NMRFA

Growth

COVID

Drug users

Mental Health

Retention of outstanding and highly trained personnel.

Rapid growth resulting in "being spread too thin"

Continue to strengthen and enhance the "Rehabilitation Program" - emphasis on the health and safety of our firefighters and being proactive with preventative procedures

Continued laser focus on fiscal responsibility

Need to maintain and improve spirit of community involvement

Retaining responders

Increased staffing stations 27/81

Increasing higher levels of training and involvement of volunteers and CRT

Maintaining adequate budget to support outreach programs, personnel training, adequate staffing, facility upgrades and equipment repair/replacement
Locating and retaining good personnel
Managing best use of $
Communication and consumer data management
Retention
Keeping up with ever changing regulations and training and certification requirements
Predicting what kind of growth North Mason may experience in the next few years
More and more expectations of what the organization should provide and not provide
Being prepared for major disasters
All response during this pandemic
Expansion of service in outer areas of North Mason County

Its biggest challenge is the geographical broadness of the fire district's boundaries
Needing four-wheel and all-wheel drive vehicles to access some of the more remote areas, including the Department of Natural Resources lands
If the nature of calls are water related, lack of access via watercraft is a factor; will the rescue swimmers eventually age out of the profession
Managing and serve an increasing population, widely spread out, remote areas
Language barriers
Large amount of low income people in Mason County – second poorest population in WA state, next to Grays Harbor per NM Resources
A big challenge is a small number of first responders compare to the population spread out in a large area

**Opportunities**

Still relevant from 15-20 plan
Emphasis on partnerships (training, county-wide EMS)
Improve response model (standardize A, B, C)
Staffing, ability to respond/manage multiple calls
Improving officer relationships/communication up and down the chain
Retention of employees/creating positive culture
Special ops (wildland, water rescue – increase participation; EOGs; create special programs for employee participation and engagement)
Water rescue – department boat (more emphasis on training)
Continue to strengthen relationships with neighboring agencies
More emphasis on wildland training/deployment opportunities
Possible merger of North and Central Mason
More public education at schools/local businesses

More fundraising events with community (like pancake breakfast at Taste of Hood Canal)
Non-emergency care delivery
Add another shift
Program for volunteer to obtain paramedic license
Training with other agencies
Unique staffing (volunteer or part time paid BLS car, etc.)
Resource sharing – partial responsibility toward response of high risk-low frequency incidents (SORT)
Mergers/ILA
Regional cooperation – joint Kitsap/Mason programs
Stay ahead of felt equipment obsoleteness
Build and solidify an organizational identity/pride
Community education (CPR classes; stop the bleed)
Community paramedicine – community health check clinics
Joint training (District 3, Central)

Monthly district training – every month volunteers, CRT and career train together for one day every month

Figure out how to handle frequent fliers appropriately

Continue building relationships with neighboring communities/departments

Increase resident program to three years with last year going to medic school for those wanting to

Explore increasing staffing

Aid unit staffing during day

Wildland

Continued work on internal customer service

Staffing

Trust

Communication of vision from top down

Looking at other Districts (6, Central) to combine resources and work together

Work/influence dispatch

Leveraging grant opportunities for staffing and program expansion

Reach out to and engage the Guatemalan/Latin American community in our district

Capitalize on a growing community to increase staffing levels

Continue to develop relationships with mutual aid partners to enhance operational capabilities

Continue to promote and build our CRT and volunteer participation

Technology upgrades such as MDTs for responding apparatus

Partner with the Hispanic and Guatemalan population

More public involved events to promote safety and proper 911 use

Events like Safety Days for schools (more often?)

More public interaction

Partnering and combining with neighboring agencies to increase efficiency, service levels and reduce redundancy

Incorporate more technological upgrades to increase capabilities

Fire inspections and pre-plan availability

MDTs for dispatch info

Rig check software and an overall INTRA-net for in-house communications

Creating additional formal and informal agreements and relationships with neighboring fire districts, other community organizations, and regional organizations;

Enhancing our relationship with non-native English speakers and liaisons;

Maintain our outreach to high school students and other young people;

Enhancing our cooperation with law enforcement, where appropriate, by sharing a campus;

Increasing our knowledge of sustainable practices;

Establishing more partnerships for non-emergency care;

Exploring partnerships with Guatemalan religious and service organizations;

Explore how the CAC might reach more people;

Explore more ways to reach low tech households

Partnerships with other agencies

Strengthened diversity and inclusion

Depends in President and economy

Growth

New fire department (blessings)

Maybe more water rescue preparedness – Hood Canal and lakes

Taking advantage of responsible growth opportunities for NMRFA

Innovative "thinking outside the box"

Never give up on a worthy goal, try another approach

Gathering new ideas and programs from all over the country and embrace those that fit with our agency - why reinvent the wheel?

Hispanic community involvement

Use community "pride and positivity" over new station to be (81) in Tahuya to increase

interaction and support between community and NMRFA

Research and apply for state/federal grants to improve operational methods, personnel training, and equipment

Team/personnel recruiting of <u>lifetime</u> employment/service. Given the current employment marketplace, it appears a shift in lifestyle attitudes and habits will provide NMRFA with an employment advantage that most EMS/Fire Districts will not be able to provide due to geographic locations.

The ability to expand in a positive way with the new facilities

Grant applications for federal assistance

An advantage of the department should be the planned new department building, with a presence of county emergency management division and the sheriff's division all on the same property

Please consider the Tahuya Fire Station 81 old station remodel, phase II, as soon as possible so as to foster good and better relations with Tahuya residents

More grant applications as available

Continue to attract and recruit good people; volunteers too

Education of adults and children on emergencies and prevention

### Threats

COVID

Economy

By-pass

Aging population

Anti-tax groups

Continuation of uncertainty with urban growth trends

Unpredictable weather patterns due to climate change

Continuation of keeping on community's good side to ensure levies and other community support

Terrorism – bio/chemical (lack of hazmat in local area)

Precaution for COVID

Growth within the community

Growing operational costs, limited revenue increases

Reduction in volunteer involvement/overall benefit

Growing anti-tax movement

Potential community cultural shift

Predicting/staying ahead of type and value of service requests/calls

Rapid growth of North Mason

Increased weather patterns and ability to handle with current resources

Possible growth within community

Preparing for weather disasters (wind storms, snow storms, etc.)

Central Mason continues to be the gigantic roadblock in the center of the County

Mental health is underfunded and swept under the carpet – until they call 911

Potential for explosive growth – we may get behind the eight ball

People losing faith in the fire department, similar to law enforcement. Something in a different county affecting us.

No pre-plan/inspection info available to response crews

Better but still fragile radio communications during responses

Budget changes or shortfalls in the community relative to COVID-19

Aging fleet of response rigs (engines and tenders)

Lack of volunteer spirit/ability within the community – creating a gap in our volunteer/CRT program ability and functions

Belfair bypass, unknown when it will be finished

Unknown how population growth will continue

Paramedic staffing – 2nd PM unit

Being unprepared for a high risk, low frequency even such as an earthquake

Loss of community trust and support

Physical and mental health associated with an aging workforce

Lack of depth in succession planning

Future pandemics or a sustained fall out from COVID-19

Increasing wildfire events/climate change

Population growth

Area infrastructure needs or changes

Aging population

Reduction in volunteers

Misinformation sources

Novel diseases

Unpredictable North Mason growth trends create uncertainty in operational and financial planning especially during the COVID19 Pandemic

Disease - COVID

Drugs

Fire – possible wildland fires in our community

Floods

Tornadoes?

Economy collapse

Losing highly trained personnel to other agencies

Overwhelming leadership with increasing agency responsibility and community involvement

Gridlock on Highway 3 through Belfair, with the increased development that some want accompanied by lack of bypass

Lack of planning on Highway 300/Union River bridge replacement before an unexpected failure of bridge

"Poaching" of key personnel by other fire/emergency organizations

Increasing population of both permanent residents and transient/homeless people who require more engagement of NMRFA services/equipment

Internal discourse is always the biggest threat for any team or family. No matter how selective the leadership is in recruitment, they must always be alert to even the slightest signs of selfishness and be ready to take corrective action. The team chemistry is everything when it comes to implementing plans and achieving the NMRFA goals.

Possible political/ideology differences that could cause the team to become fractured

Too much growth to fast is always a challenge to any organization. Trying to keep all the great personal qualities a small organization has is delicate at best.

Public mental health factors

COVID-19

A hypothetical threat would be a shortage of trained responders

# THEMES: VALUES/SCOT ANALYSIS

## Core Values

Safety
Professionalism
Community Interaction
Learning (ongoing)
Customer Service/Patient Care
Operational Readiness
Training/Performance
Accountability

Adaptability
Teamwork
Trust/Integrity within Organization
Employee Well-Being
Work Ethic
Personal Character
Communication
Value NMRFA Members (staff/volunteers)

## Strengths

Professionalism
Staff
Leadership
Adaptability
Training/Dedication to Development
Internal Programs

Community Relationship/Community Support
Volunteer/Resident Programs
Financial Stability/Financial Management
Customer Service
Fire Prevention/Community Outreach
Good Work Environment

## Challenges

Demand vs. Supply
Diverse Community
Aging Population
Growth Management
Staff Retention
Communication
Aging Equipment/Facilities
Fleet Maintenance

Training/Development
Technology/Supplies
Physical/Mental Health
Mentality/Perspective of Staff and Leadership
Staff Diversity
Staff Levels

## Opportunities

Grant Funding
Training
Training with Mutual Aid/Other Partners
Resource Sharing/Building Relationships with Other Agencies
Special Operations (water rescue, wildland)
Technology
Public Education/Outreach to Diverse Communities

Non-Emergency Care/Paramedicine
Increased Staffing/Retention
Public Interaction (community functions/fundraisers)
Frequent Flyer Education/Mitigation
Resident Paramedic School
Communication (top down)
CRT/Volunteer Programs
Tahuya Community Relationship

## Threats

Community Growth/Infrastructure

Aging Community
Staff Retention
Economy/Finances/Anti-Tax
Health/Mental Health (community and staff)
Community Support
Climate/Weather
Service Preparedness
COVID-19
Lack of Volunteers
Aging Fleet/Facilities
Homelessness/Addiction

# MISSION, GOALS, STEPS

**The North Mason Regional Fire Authority's mission statement is "To Safeguard our North Mason Communities". Does this statement still adequately capture the Authority's mission?**

Yes

To me, it seems incomplete; not as comprehensive as we are, yet I have an appreciation for being concise. My thoughts: To Safeguard the Health, Safety and Well Being of our North Mason Communities.

Absolutely brilliant right to the point spot on!

Yes, but maybe add the word "Efficiently" or "Responsibly".

Yes

Yes

I am extremely impressed with the short mission statement that covers all contingencies and is a go to guide when making decisions on what to do

Yes

While adapting to the growth of our community

The mission statement is still relevant and appropriate


**To continue the Authority's organizational success what should the Authority work to accomplish over the next five years?**

Ensure the ability to communicate with all North Mason residents at all times

Continue to identify future agency leaders and support them in their personal and professional growth

Continue to acknowledge excellence and achievement in and out of the agency

Successful completion of construction/remodeling/beautification and updating of current NMRFA properties.

Plan for growth

Better retention if possible

Keep working on improving outlying stations, equipment and personnel

Keep training for leadership within the organization

Continual recruitment of like-minded "lifers" to the RFA; this is the most important task I see to maintaining success

Management of $

Transparency of agency goals and spending to accomplish said goals

Outreach program to involve consumers in identifying and prioritizing goals, as well as being critical/auditing the NMRFA performance

The path is clear; we have a full plate of identified tasks

Accomplish prominence in the North Mason community for education and emergency response

Please continue the website updates and the social media, e.g. Facebook posts. There are many people who follow these posts

Recently there have been news "pieces" in the Mason County Journal

Consider more prevention involvement in community. Lacey does a great job. At SKFR, we installed smoke alarms in homes, not just handed them out to sit on shelf possibly.

Continue to build trust and credibility with staff, commissioners and the public

Overcome resistance to change

Increase wildfire preparedness

Increase environmental sustainability practices
Maintain a leadership role in addressing substance abuse
Develop a community medicine program
Build a South Shore Apparatus bay or Station

**For each accomplishment listed, what actions steps must be completed in order to achieve each desired accomplishment?**

If not already existing, establish a list of all languages being spoken in North Mason with an "on-call list" of NMFRA (or other) personnel who can speak that language and be available on a "24/7" basis.

Event Team: Group specifically tasked with planning community events each year and putting in place a team of volunteers for each and does a written evaluation of the event for future years.

Community Safety team: Perhaps a group of retired builders or handy people who would provide a battery replacement service for smoke alarms. Senior citizens should not be climbing on ladders to do this task. Our Green Valley, AZ team works by appointment, has a pickup truck and ladders, charges $20 for the service and provides the batteries. That could also be a donation program.

I continue to support the idea of a Nurse Practitioner who works with the agency and also can see people who need follow up, have limited mobility, at home as a service to the community. May be a good use of tele-medicine.  We also offer that service in Green Valley, and I can do the research on how it works if interested.

I would love to see our "emergency address sign" program blanket the community, so we don't lose time trying to locate emergency aid calls. This might be a good team project for the "handy persons." I could see advertising for retired people who would like to serve their community.

Finally, I wonder if there is some way, within HIPPA guidelines, that we could have a follow up program for people with traumatic injuries, illnesses, aid calls and families of a death in the community. Could be done by phone, handwritten note or an in-person visit. You may already do something like this, and I am not aware of it. Just seems like a nice caring touch for the community.

Keep close tabs on upcoming housing developments coming to our area.
> Keep track of new business that are moving into the area and nearby.
> Speak with community leaders and economists about predicted growth.

Recognition for time served
> In-house promotion potential
> Leadership training
> Good quarters and working conditions.
> Pride in community
> I'm sure doing all of these and more

Keep up and inspect on a regular rotation
> Keep fiscally strong to take care of things as needed
> Always looking for grants
> Again, all things you already do

Continue to look for new opportunities to teach leadership skills
> Willingness to pay for high quality leadership training at all levels.

Continue to lead by example

Create and maintain a talent profile rating system that objectively assist in recruiting like-minded personnel.

Create and maintain an applicant profile system that continually provides AAA+ applicants ready to fill any vacancies. This includes all positions including the Chiefs. A good team will always have personnel – including CEO's, on the "practice squad" just in case the need arises.

Regarding $, the department needs to continue to budget as well as identify and forecast future financial needs. These budgets and forecast must continue to be transparent and when possible, advertised to the consumer for input.

Regarding agency goals and spending to accomplish said goals… It might make sense for the agency website to maintain a graph that depicts spending and the timelines as goals are progressively accomplished.

Finally, and this may be happening already, regarding an outreach program to involve the consumers in the identifying/prioritizing goals phase of planning, I think using the agency website and public meetings, it might make sense to have a section on the website – as well as during public meetings, for consumers to write and voice goals, objectives, projects to be considered by the agency. The website could also allow the agency to assign an approximate cost to the projects and rate them in the agencies priority system. The website and public meeting  could also invite both phrase and criticism as well.

> On this same issue, I would recommend an annual audit to see how well the agency did at accomplishing it's goals. This internal audit then could be placed on the website and talked about during the annual public meeting. I currently use this process every year in two independent annual corporate meetings. During each annual corporate meeting, we review the ending years goals for accomplishment and use the information for establishing the next years goals. The meeting minutes kept, reflect our discussion and offer a satisfying document of accomplishments and future plans.

Press on with all personnel involved

Teach citizens on a regular basis in CPR, first aid, wellness, fire prevention, and safety.  Train NMRFA members continually to be prepared for emergency response.

First aid/CPR training

Emergency (fire, flood, earthquake, windstorm) planning for home and interaction in NMRFA and MCSO and PUD3

Health, nutrition and exercise classes

Safety Days, picnics, potlucks, Tahuya Days, BBQ, open houses

Safety seminars on hazards on homefront

Outreach and involvement of Trails End, Maggie Lake, Haven/Wooten Lakes, Tiger and Panther Lakes, Dewatto, Belfair View communities

Continue providing bike helmets, life vests, smoke detectors, 911 signs

Consider a group to train, lead and send out to offer free home safety inspections and install free smoke alarms as needed

Consider procurement of strobe smoke alarms for hearing impaired residents (they used to cost around $100 each early in this century; was a grant item possibly at SKFR), we installed a few of those

Transparency is essential to achieve all desired accomplishments.

The Fire District has successfully transitioned to a Regional Fire Authority. With that said, it's obvious that there are increased duties, responsibilities and accountability that should be reflected in relevant job descriptions coupled with annual performance evaluations.

Increase wildfire preparedness
> Continue and expand research and predictive modeling for our state
> Identify most likely ways to increase preparedness
> Partner with existing and new entities to enhance response
> Determine how to enhance recruitment and protect firefighters who frequently fight wildfires
> Earmark additional resources for wildfire response
> Increase education to the public on wildfire prevention and response

Increase environmental sustainability practices
> Define greater sustainability as a goal for the RFA to achieve and track progress toward achievement
> Identify current practices that now support sustainability
> Identify new efforts that can be made, i.e. use of energy saving practices and technology where feasible in construction and operations
> Share with the public the efforts the RFA is making and the progress made

Maintain a leadership role in addressing substance abuse
> Continue to play a role is bringing Mason County partners to the table to meet, share information and cooperate; others partners can sometimes convene the bi-monthly meeting
> Continue to bring new partners to the table
> Continue and enhance prevention efforts with the community using in-person and online formats

Develop a community medicine program
> Continue tracking and documenting the need for community medicine
> Develop goals for such a program
> Identify how a small version of a program could be implemented should grants or resources become available
> Determine what patient support for such a program would be
> Be prepared should appropriate health care partners emerge for such a program

Build a South Shore Apparatus bay or Station
> Research the need and benefit of such a station
> Identify possible partners in the effort
> Assess community interest and willingness to support

# OBJECTIVES: ACTION STEPS

**The NMRFA has set an objective to improve succession planning at all levels and for all functions in the organization. Succession planning would include identifying, preparing and developing personnel for their next "roles", whether it be program/project management or taking on a formal leadership role. What specific action steps can the NMRFA take to improve succession planning?**

Identify people who are interested in the various roles/positions that need someone to take over

The development of task books has been beneficial in the development of personnel; continue building upon this work and create books for career personnel based on paths they may want to take (medic school, officer, wildland, special operations, etc.)

Delegating more training to firefighters and paramedics, give them an opportunity to teach more classes, create training and provide training to the different shifts

Encourage committee participation at the firefighter and paramedic level

Create the same basic on-boarding process for each member career/student/CRT; new members especially, students seem to fall through the cracks with IT systems (PSTrax, Samepage, ERS etc.)

**The NMRFA is seeking to improve its formal recognition programming for its membership and take more of a formal opportunity to celebrate the organization's formal accomplishments and achievements. What specific action steps can the NMRFA take to improve its formal recognition and organizational success celebration programming?**

Continue yearly department dinner

Publish individual milestones publicly i.e. Facebook/insta, newspaper

Timing – not all recognition needs to be held for the department dinner, example: life-saving award could be given at a Commissioners meeting, recognition could be disseminated through Friday email updates, Samepage or other platforms; department dinner could be saved for bigger achievements like firefighter of the year

Line officers should take a more active role in recognizing their career, volunteer and support staff throughout the year

**The NMRFA wants to make sure that all its personnel are properly trained and prepared for accomplishing the NMRFA's mission? What specific action steps can the NMRFA take to improve it readiness training and development?**

Create a list of standard classes that everyone takes – common baseline training

Standard first weeks – week/two weeks of days.

Have a plan for members off probation (years 2 and 3)

Post-probation binder (five-year plan)

Create a plan for and fund a training ground plan/facility

Training props

Training facility

With our new station bring more outside training to NMRFA

Define what specialty training is beneficial to the Authority based on the potential for realistic hazards we face and mitigate on our own; example: water rescue, wildland, low angle rescue, vehicle extrication, ATV's – develop experts in these areas, define required training for the

experts and allow those employees to develop basic training levels, EOGs and annual training requirements for all employees, vetted through training committee

Create task book for after probation on recommended training for employees' year 1-3

OTEP is once a month but is more of a do-it-yourself system with short one-on-one practical; expand on that more and provide additional realistic training for crews (example traction splints, using specialized equipment, epi for anaphylaxis, CPAP, etc.)

**Internal communication is constantly being worked on at the NMRFA. Specifically, we are working on how we communicate messaging throughout the Authority (up and down the chain of command), how we provide members with feedback and how input is received from members of the organization and then properly shared. What are some specific action steps that the NMRFA can take to improve internal organization communication?**

Do not over app; too many apps/computer programs to communicate on/with

Guidance/training on what is ok communication with open door/chain of command

Through work completed in the last 5 years we developed a lot of systems through trial and error, some worked some have not. Here is a brief list of things we tried to improve communication:

> Friday breakfast
> Weekly video update
> Samepage
> Email updates
> Friday meetings
> Restructuring leadership groups
> Communication training
> Policy updates

Through this work we are constantly changing and improving the way we communicate. The systems we currently have in place seem to be working and should continue: Friday officer updates, Renee weekly updates, Capt/LT meeting, quarterly officer meeting, annual organizational meetings, Samepage has stuck but we should review and work to create more organizational buy-in, additionally, we should look at our communication policy and review and revise to best-practices.

**The NMRFA has worked hard over the past five years to retain its personnel (volunteers and career staff), however there is still more work to do in this area. What specific action steps can the NMRFA take to improve member retention?**

Increased incentive for volunteering i.e. stipend, per transport.

Volunteer training program/requirements/standards; enforce for volunteers that do not meet the standards/training

Increased resident stipend per transport; clearer expectations of the resident program how many days required; dedicated live-in resident station (81 or a new 23?)

Maintain competitive compensation for career members

Having on-boarding system dialed in i.e. new people have everything before they start

Communicate to staff and public what the triggers are and the cost of hiring one more career staff member per shift

Are ops bonds an option?

With the strategic plan especially with the goal in mind of retaining employees we should regularly revisit and communicate changes we make to specifically decrease attrition; for

example, if we recreated a communication policy, we could survey crews based on the specific topic (in this case the policy) to seek more clarification if the system/policy we created is working

One thing we discussed several years ago was creating "The North Mason Way" this was taken from Phoenix Fire, it is a document that describes the positive aspects of the organization the union and volunteers and the work we do; it incudes organizational expectations, the labor management relationship; it briefly describes what we take pride in, why we take pride in it and how we communicate with each other and solve problems.

Develop a safe way for employees to communicate suggestions. Could an anonymous email account be created? Suggestions that don't want to be shared openly could be moved up or down the chain privately. We recommend the information gets shared with the captain which then could be discussed and addressed up or down the chain based on the suggestion

Build upon a safe, positive and friendly work environment. Create a culture where trust can continue to be fostered and enhanced. We believe we have improved on this, but we still have a lot of work to do.

Create a "be nice" culture

On-boarding starts with students our future career members; bring them into a positive culture train them well, treat them well

**The NMRFA has been working for some time to do a thorough analysis and subsequent planning for its capital facilities (fire stations, training grounds, etc.). Are there any specific action steps that the NMRFA can take to help its capital facilities planning and analysis work?**

Put in trigger point (call volume/time management/new station) where NMRFA hires ground/facilities person part of full time (bring Lamb back)

Population triggers for new stations

Modernization plan of new station and other stations (when is it time to remodel)

When considering upgrades and new facilities the community's needs will be number one. We should also consider how capital improvements such as training grounds and props can have an equal or potentially greater impact when it comes to community needs.

With the purchase of the Trails property could we look to develop a facility that can meet the demands of multiple agencies such as: fire districts, law, PUD etc?

Some processes that get developed can be piecemealed in a way that creates frustration for the developers or the committee members. This could be due to communication, lack of buy-in, unclear expectations, etc. Can a process, template or policy can be developed that outlines the way capital projects are developed?

**The NMRFA has been working for some time to do a thorough analysis and subsequent planning for its vehicles and "significant" equipment. Are there any specific action steps that the NMRFA can take to help its vehicle and equipment planning and analysis work?**

Start buying two ambo at a time (one for 21 one for 27)

Start forecasting the need for specially equipment (air truck, ladder, boat rescue)

Review equipment needs, create fire engine equipment standards WRSB compliant for volunteer engines then the same for 21, 27, 81 and 21-2 all standard and make engine swaps easier.

Factors out of our control create apparatus issues. We buy an ambulance but are delayed by 6 months because it takes 1 year to receive the vehicle. Can we better forecast or plan for this?

**The NMRFA has been taking steps to modernize, improve, maintain and upgrade our facilities, vehicles and equipment. Are there specific action steps that the NMRFA can take in continuing this work?**

Seek ways to improve inputs. Create a standard that could be used for all new equipment (EMS, Fire equipment and apparatus) take advantage of survey monkey.

**Are there specific action steps that the NMRFA can take to improve is implementation and use of technology for Authority operations and functions? Are there specific action steps that NMRFA can take to implement technology to improve communication inside and outside the organization?**

Go digital – make a decision on ProPhoenix (let's go to ESO), no more paper reports, no more ERS

We need to improve the technology we carry on apparatus. Tough books on all apparatus (medic, aid engine 21, 27 and 81) crews are too busy to come back to the station and complete reports. A paperless template (off-line) system that can be used while on scene, transporting and returning to the station would be greatly appreciated. The current ERS system is very arduous for crews using both paper and computer. The data that ERS provides is good but there are better systems out there. We highly recommend looking at ESO which has really streamlined reports for CMFR. We understand this conflict with the potential of PRO Phoenix, but crews really desire a change to be more efficient.

**The NMRFA needs to conduct a comprehensive staffing analysis and then use that analysis to drive staffing planning. Are there specific action steps that the NMRFA can take to assist with staffing planning and analysis?**

Communicate to staff and public what the triggers are and the cost of hiring one more career staff member per shift

Communicate the barriers to hiring more people

There are several standards that exist through NFPA that show standards for response time and number of people required for specific calls. In order to meet those standards, the cost to the community is much higher than what they are accustomed too. Ideas for improvement:

> Engage community on standards and what they can currently expect from our staffing and what they could expect with an alternative model
>
> Analyze health and safety concerns for workers based on the expectations placed on them. Does staffing effect this?
>
> Tie staffing to budget increases to create a trigger mechanism (what is our current budget ratio to staffing? Is that normal? Once a budget/staffing ratio is established work to maintain it
>
> Analyze if the established ratio needs adjusting based on changes in call volume or other needs
>
> Analyze shift work/schedules to optimize worker health and reduce burnout and improve customer interaction and outcomes
>
> Analyze the best use of volunteer, CRT and student firefighters. Input versus output, cost efficiencies. How can we improve upon this? How can we best capitalize off the work provided by our volunteer staff.
>
> Mutual aid partners

Specialty positions can enhance our operations and ease workload on our operation staff, and this is appreciated. However, the operational work of fighting fire, training to fight fire, lifting people, transporting people etc. is manpower intensive. We can be proud of the work we do, efficient and lean but there is a toll this takes on the crews performing the work. A robust analysis of this work should be performed, and we should work to conform with the standards.

**The NMRFA needs to conduct a 'standards-of-cover' analysis and develop a desired 'standards-of-cover' objective to which it will work towards going forward. Are there specific action steps that can assist the Authority with conducting a 'standards-of-cover' analysis and determining a future 'standard-of-cover' towards which the NMRFA will work to achieve?**

Communicate run card – educate crews/officers on run cards; review run cards yearly to ensure accurate and up-to-date with staffing/department resources

Look at ways we can most effectively deploy resources that improves overall coverage, creates efficiencies, and reduces burnout. Can each station have an officer and a paramedic? They can cross-staff engine and medic and prevent swap outs or the 27 drivers from also being the m21 driver. This improves our ability to cover the authority and improves efficiency.

Can we look to always have a minimum of 5 on duty and leave an officer in District to make critical decisions without being consistently tied to a medic unit? This helps support both 21 and 27 during multiple calls. 6 on duty creates a third unit or an engine company. We are consistently relying on mutual aid for a medic unit or District 3 for an aid card. Those are not always guaranteed resources plus they have lengthy responses.

Look at future staffing and partnerships to increase staffing to the south shore.

**As the community and Authority evolves it seeks to take an "all-risks" approach to protecting the community. Essentially with "all-risk" the Authority can plan, prepare and adequately respond to any request for service. What are some specific action steps that the Authority can take to help it obtain an "all-risk" service delivery approach?**

Look at the past to predict the future: clusters of calls, high call volume areas, learning from past calls that did not go very well and how to improve/implement new training

Engage code enforcement for hazard houses/areas

Take the training recommendations previously highlighted under goal 1 question 3

Analyze staffing recommendations highlighted in goal 3 questions 1 and 2

Analyze and invest in what could happen versus what has already happened

How do we work with public and private sector partners to fill gaps in service the fire department can't deliver; QRT, mental health, prevention, etc.

Use of automatic callback for confirmed structure fires

Engage volunteers to assist after the emergency in returning apparatus back to service

**What are some specific action steps that the Authority can take to improve its work to address metal health and wellness for its emergency responders (volunteer and career)?**

Continue what we are doing and do not stall or lose site of objective

Steps are in progress to address mental health amongst providers

Organizationally continue to commit to this process

Seek out the workplace issues that add to workers burn-out and mental health

We think the recommendations we provided throughout this document helps in building up our employee base, reducing burnout and improving mental health

**The Authority has been investigating the implementation of a community paramedicine/crisis response program in North Mason/Mason County. What specific action steps can the Authority take to help implement this program?**

Focus on social work before community base paramedics

Look at PA/ARNP/RN based system

Ensure this is the right time to implement a new program versus focusing on current needs described in the staffing recommendations. Community paramedicine can work to positively impact the community and reduce workload but can it work in conjunction with current staffing needs?

What programs exist

Can this be self-funding?

Can we create a program where current members interested in PA or RN school can choose community medicine as a path?


**What specific action steps can the Authority take to increases its operational readiness and preparedness for 'high risk-low frequency' emergency incidents?**

Annual training/review for high-risk incidents/areas

Identifying our high-risk events that need training

Reference equipment, apparatus, training and staffing recommendations

Can the fire inspector be used for pre-planning?

Pre-plans on E21 haven't been updated in years, there is a large gap in knowledge for new responders.

What pre-plan programs exist?

Officers should have easy access to hydrant location, knox, access issues, storage hazmat, building/construction types etc.


**What specific action steps can the Authority take to standardize its service delivery provision, (so that it's done the same way each time)?**

Too many captain's not enough sailors (standardized training/evaluation from shift to shift)

Consistent staffing models without needing to cross staff with different stations, keeping EOG's and SOP's updated, Uniformed shift to shift training and communication.


**What specific actions steps can the NMRFA take to improve is communication and marketing in the North Mason community?**

Engage typically underserved populations

Encourage/allow shifts to go out to dinner

Stay in tuned to new and changing social media platforms

Keep messaging funneled through a limited number of personnel

Reader boards

Regular Articles

Flyers


**What are some targeted and specific community risk reduction activities/campaigns that the NMRFA should engage in?**

Spring clean to clean your yard/house (a free load of trash for residents)

Continued community CPR
School level education
Engage in community events (smoke detector and address sign give away)
Life jacket program
We do a good job at this continued stay in tuned to trends

**What specific action steps can the Authority take to improve external agency (fire, law, county, DEM, etc.) collaboration and relationships?**
Invite MCSO/WSP to dinners/brunch
Scheduled joint trainings with other fire and law agencies
Dedicated liaison versus side-bar conversations
Public safety campus will help
Once public safety campus is in place maybe conduct occasion administrative meetings or trainings for the crews

**What specific action steps can the Authority take to fully understand the diversity and demographics of the community and what steps can it take to positively engage all sectors of the community?**
Send representatives to community meeting/ethnic and religious meetings
Lean on fire prevention
Engage through different community events
Attend community meetings
Envolve groups to be part of CAC
Encourage the youth to participate in our organization
Work to understand how the cultural differences work against us when attempting to recruit
Our current process for recruitment and retention of volunteers and career members creates an advantage for white males over female and other ethnic groups.