



Brazos County Emergency Services District No. 1

# OPERATIONS PLAN FY 2026-30



# OPERATIONS PLAN 2026-30

Brazos County Emergency Services District No. 1



## Acknowledgements

This Operations Plan would not have been possible without the guidance and assistance of the South Brazos County ESD 1 Board of Commissioners, the personnel of the South Brazos County ESD 1 Fire Department, and the volunteer members of the South Brazos County Fire Department. We wish to recognize those members for their commitment to the cost-effective delivery of fire-rescue and emergency medical services, and with the development and production of this Plan.

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Pct 2 Commissioner

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Fire Chief

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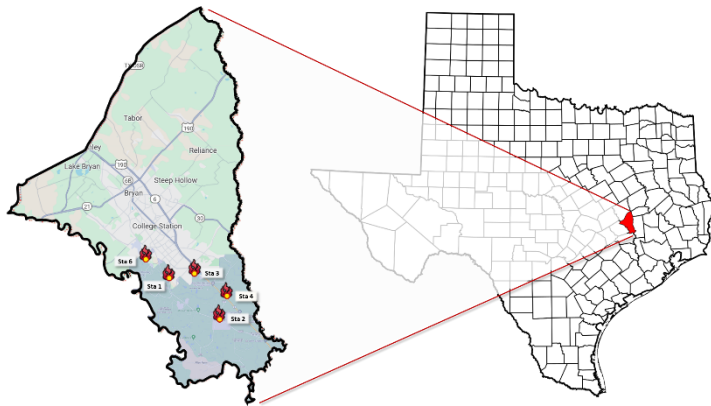
## Brazos County Emergency Services District No. 1



### Introduction

Brazos County Emergency Service District 1 (the “District”) is one of four ESDs in Brazos County, established by the Commissioners Court of Brazos County to provide fire and emergency medical care within the district’s service area. The resident population in the District’s 144-square mile service area is about 22,000, with a population density of about 153 two people per square mile.

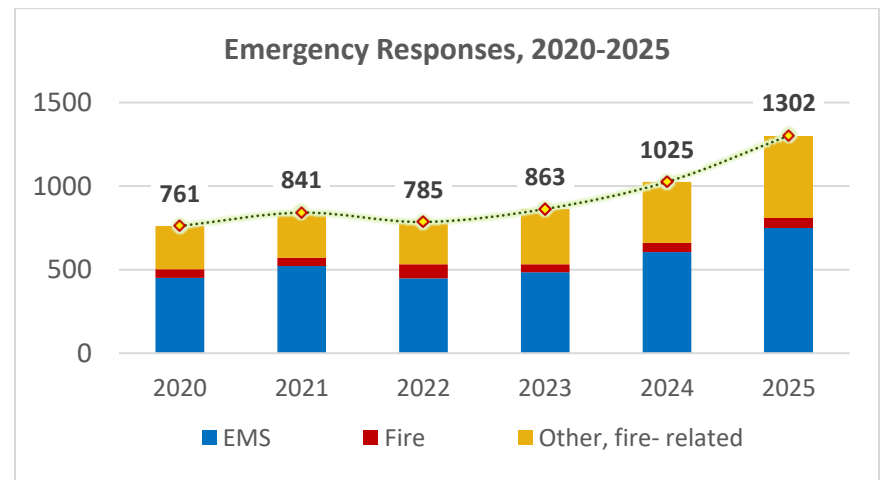
Figure 1. Brazos County ED 1 Service Area



The District contracts with the all-volunteer South Brazos County Fire Department (SBCFD) for emergency services within the district service area, collects ad valorem taxes and sales tax for the delivery of those services, and provides supplemental paid firefighter/EMTs. As such, the District operates as a combination department -- consisting of full-time, part-time firefighters, and volunteers -- from five stations strategically located throughout the District.

Figure 2. Emergency Responses, 2020-2025

Category	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
100: Fires	51	48	84	48	55	60
200: Overpressure	2	0	0	0	3	1
300: EMS/Rescue	451	522	448	484	605	752
400: Hazard	22	18	12	19	20	26
500: Service	52	59	54	74	77	210
600: Good Intent	160	158	158	201	201	194
700: False Alarm	21	36	28	34	62	57
800: Weather	2	0	0	2	1	2
900: Other	0	0	1	1	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>841</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>863</b>	<b>1025</b>	<b>1302</b>



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## Initial Strategic Plan

In 2021, the District completed a 5-year strategic plan. That plan provided the District with a systematic and comprehensive approach to (1) evaluate community needs and expectations, (2) identify strategic priorities, and (3) define a timeline for critical actions and resource needs. The key initiatives from that plan were:

### *Initiative 1—Improve Response Time*

- Hire Fire Chief FY 22
- Hire initial duty crew FY 23
- Hire second duty crew FY 27

### *Initiative 2—Ensure Equipment and Facilities are Safe and Reliable*

- Develop 10-year capital plan FY 24
- Fund the capital plan Ongoing
- Implement the capital plan Ongoing

### *Initiative 3—Improve Critical Infrastructure*

- Improve Roadway Conditions Long Term
- Improve mobile water supplies Long Term
- Improve centralized water supply Long Term

The Strategic Plan also included additional recommendations for optimizing cost-effective service delivery as identified in the District’s Long-Range Master Plan completed in 2019.

These recommendations included:

- Continue to explore best practices for delivery of fire and EMS while increasing financial and operational transparency.
- Continue to implement the recommendations suggested in previous plans and include a plan review as part of the annual budget process.
- Consider additional funding sources to support services that meet the needs and expectations of the community and people we serve.

Since that time, the District has modified and updated its plan as community and department needs and expectations have changed. However, this is the first formal update to the plan.

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## Planning Process

In July 2025, the District directed the Department’s senior leadership team (SLT) to prepare a comprehensive strategy to guide the organization’s activities over the next five-year strategic and operational planning period ( FY 2026–2030). There are four elements to the framework of the revised plan:

- 5-year Strategic Plan
- 5-Year Operations Plan ( This document )
- 10-year Capital Plan
- 5-year Financial Plan

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## Brazos County Emergency Services District No. 1



The intent of this Plan is to meet the needs and expectations of our community and the people we serve and to provide:

- (1) The District with annual updates to the multi-year plans for effective and cost-efficient delivery fire protection services and emergency medical services within the District;
- (2) Adequate funds to provide the resources necessary to deliver the desired level of fire protection services; and
- (3) Suggestions for continuous improvements in leadership, operational results, and financial stewardship.

## Operations Framework

### ABOUT THE FRAMEWORK

A well-designed operations framework can be a valuable planning tool for both internal and external audiences and stakeholders. Its structure captures plan content in an easy-to-understand format that can be summarized in an infographic or expanded to deliver detailed information about each action item.

The framework for the Operations Plan was developed around three basic goals:

- Identify community needs and expectations.
- Develop and implement transformational projects and initiatives.
- Ensure the long-term sustainability of strategic projects and initiatives.

These goals were then built out using a 5-by-4 framework for the Operations Plan, incorporating five perspectives, each with four action items.

In the Operations Plan, the guiding principles of mission, vision, values, expectations, and strategic priorities provides a foundation for each of the goals, perspectives, and action items in the plan. As such, it establishes priorities and ensures the most effective use of District resources.

Next, the operations plan incorporated the use of a “balanced scorecard” planning model to prioritize alignment with the organization's mission and public service goals. This approach helped define and track progress toward operational goals by balancing viewpoints -- or perspectives -- of community, financial, internal process, professional growth, and future sustainability.

In addition to creating an easily communicated structure, this approach resulted in a work plan that is achievable within the District’s current and planned resource and staffing levels. With this guide for future action in hand, the District will be able to address and overcome identified challenges in an effective and efficient manner.

The following figure describes the Operations Plan.

Details of the Operations Plan are presented in the section beginning on page 8.


Details about the Balanced Scorecard planning model are provided in Appendix A. Planning Context beginning on page 16.

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Figure 3. FY 2026-30 Operations Plan



**SOUTH BRAZOS COUNTY ESD 1**  
**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

OPERATIONS PLAN **2026-30**

<b>Vision</b>	To make a difference in our community through the highest level of care, education, and emergency response.			
<b>Mission</b>	To safely deliver the highest quality of emergency services through operational excellence, competence, and care with integrity, compassion, and dedication.			
<b>Values</b>	Honesty, Integrity, and Character • Competence, Quality, and Service Accountability, Reliance, and Responsibility			
<b>Expectation</b>	To meet the needs and expectations of our community and our response partners. <i>Every Day • Every Way • Everyone</i>			
<b>Strategic Priorities</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Desired Level of Emergency Services</b></p> <p>Provide the 1st unit on scene in 10 minutes or less, 90% of the time, except in remote areas / mutual aid responses.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Facilities</b></p> <p>Provide the facilities needed for prompt emergency response and a safe, professional work environment.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Staffing</b></p> <p>Provide the staffing levels necessary to meet or exceed community needs and expectations.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Stewardship</b></p> <p>Provide strong financial expectations, structure, and processes which increase transparency and accountability.</p>
<b>Strategic Goals</b>				
<i>Our Community</i>	Provide competent, timely response	Reduce Community Risk	Improve community relations	Provide 24/7 paid staffing at selected stations
<i>Our People</i>	Recruit and retain the best available	Build expectations of excellence	Provide competitive pay and benefits	Provide professional development for members
<i>Our Processes</i>	Emphasize safety	Build leadership at all levels	Optimize procurement processes	Ensure regulatory compliance
<i>Our Finances</i>	Adopt balanced budgets	Improve financial transparency	Control and monitor spending and inventory	Sustain emergency reserve cash balance
<i>Our Future</i>	Create a positive work culture	Deliver positive results	Create strategic and succession plans	Remove barriers to success

You can count on us

Nov 2025 update

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## Operations Plan

After gathering the analyses included in each plan, the leadership team produced this Operations Plan, which includes operational recommendations to guide the District over the next five years. If conscientiously implemented, these actions will drive the District forward and transform it to sustainable success.

### Guiding Principles

#### *Mission*

To safely deliver the highest quality of emergency services through operational excellence, competence, and care with integrity, compassion, and dedication.

#### *Vision*

To make a difference in our community through the highest level of care, education, and emergency response.

#### *Values*

- Honesty, Integrity, and Character
- Competence, Quality, and Service
- Accountability, Reliance, and Responsibility

#### *Expectations*

To meet the needs and expectations of our community and our response partners.

*Every Day • Every Way • Everyone*

### *Operational Philosophy*

- Mission First. People Always.
- You Can Count On Us.

### Operational Priorities, Goals and Perspectives

The operational initiatives for the District support the philosophy of “Mission First, People Always” and are supported by the FY 26 Budget.

- **Mission.** Preserve lives and protect property through effective fire/rescue and emergency medical services.
- **Community needs and expectations.** Reduce community risk through effective emergency response, fire prevention, and public education.
- **Financial stewardship.** Sustain excellent customer service through financial stewardship, fund management, and effective cost controls.
- **Internal work processes.** Improve communications, including the use and accessibility of District’s records management system, website, and community newsletter.
- **Professional development.** Establish the District as a “destination department” through positive and effective leadership, culture, working conditions, compensation and benefits, branding, and professional development opportunities for all personnel, volunteer or paid.

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The operational planning framework used by the District utilizes five perspectives to evaluate organizational performance:

- Our Community
- Our People
- Our Processes
- Our Finances
- Our Future

These perspectives are interconnected and work together with the District's Guiding Principles to produce a holistic view of the District's direction and performance.

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### Our Community

This perspective examines how the District is perceived by the public. It focuses on metrics like service delivery, public awareness, and public satisfaction, to understand how well the District meets customer needs and expectations.

1. **Increase staffing to meet response goals.** YEAR 1
  - a. Desired outcome is to reduce response time of the first-arriving unit from 20 minutes to 10 minutes, 90 % of the time, except in remote areas of the District.
  - b. Add 2nd paid crew on north side in 2026.
  - c. Add crews and chief officers at identified trigger points.
2. **Reduce Community Risk** YEAR 2-3
  - a. Desired outcome is to provide a systematic, proactive, and integrated approach to identify and prioritize risks within our community, then implement strategies to prevent or lessen their impact.

- b. Leverage various methods like education, engineering, and enforcement.
- c. Pre-plan commercial and public buildings
- d. Conduct community risk assessments.
- e. Support county fire code initiatives.

### 3. **Improve community relations.**

CRITICAL TASK

- a. Desired outcome is to build and maintain positive relationships between the District and the community it serves.
- b. Identify and implement opportunities to foster goodwill, demonstrate social responsibility, and actively engage with community stakeholders to create mutually beneficial outcomes.
- c. Develop and implement opportunities to better understand community needs and expectations, communicate effectively, and participate in local initiatives.
- d. Attend community meetings – town hall, HOA.
- e. Host FD open house get-togethers.
- f. Increase social media postings and presence.

### 4. **Provide 24/7 paid staffing at selected stations.**

YEAR 4-5

- a. Desired outcome is to provide around-the-clock paid staffing at selected fire stations, and rely on volunteers to supplement staffing, especially during off-peak hours or when additional resources are needed.
- b. Add crews and chief officers at identified trigger points.
- c. Establish and maintain an adequate number of trained volunteers.

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### Our People

This perspective focuses on the organization's ability to innovate, learn, and adapt for future success. It assesses metrics related to employee training, skill development, and technological infrastructure. The aim is to ensure the organization has the capabilities and resources to sustain long-term growth and innovation.

- 1. Recruit and retain the best available.** ONGOING
  - a. Desired outcome is to attract, select, and hire qualified individuals, while keeping those employees engaged and motivated, thus minimizing turnover.
  - b. Build a strong brand identity, culture, and sense of belonging to attract the best-qualified people.
  - c. Create a positive, supportive work environment.
  - d. Define clear job descriptions and requirements.
  - e. Utilize diverse recruitment channels such as job boards, social media, and peer-to-peer referrals.
  - f. Conduct thorough interviews and assessments.
  - g. Offer opportunities for professional growth and development.
  - h. Recognize and reward employee contributions.
- 2. Build expectations of excellence** ONGOING
  - a. Desired outcome is to establish a culture of high standards for quality, performance, and continuous improvement, focusing on the process of growth rather than unattainable perfection.
  - b. Set clear goals and foster a commitment to learning and feedback.
  - c. Cultivate habits like a strong work ethic, adaptability, and accountability to achieve outstanding outcomes.

- 3. Provide competitive pay and benefits.** ONGOING
  - a. Desired outcome is to establish and sustain competitive compensation and benefits plans.
  - b. Conduct annual salary and benefits surveys.
  - c. Identify opportunities for improved and optional benefits such as additional insurance, deferred compensation, and retirement contributions and employer match.
  - d. Update the compensation plan as part of the annual budget process.
- 4. Provide professional development opportunities for all members.** YEAR 2-3
  - a. Desired outcome is to provide effective professional development for all members, with a diverse range of opportunities, both formal and informal methods, from structured training to peer-led learning.
  - b. Assess needs and develop personalized development plans.
  - c. Offer transparent, clearly defined career pathways for advancement.
  - d. Leverage internal expertise and resources, including mentorship program, based on the participants' needs, job shadowing, and member-led learning.
  - e. Fund external opportunities to include tuition reimbursement, professional development stipend, and conference registration and travel.
  - f. Offer flexibility such as online learning, microlearning, and flex schedules for classes.
  - g. Cultivate a culture of continuous learning by linking professional development to performance review goals and reward participation.

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### Our Processes

This perspective looks at the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization's internal operations. It evaluates metrics related to product quality, innovation, cycle time, and operational costs. The goal is to identify and improve processes that contribute to customer satisfaction and financial success.

#### 1. Emphasize safety.

CRITICAL TASK

ONGOING

- a. Desired outcome is to reduce accidents and injuries to a zero rate.
- b. Foster a culture of safety built on a shared commitment from members and leadership; following safety protocols; encourage reporting hazards, near-misses, and stopping unsafe work without fear of reprisal.
- c. Conduct ongoing training and education to include new member orientation; frequent, mandatory training; and updated training materials.
- d. Implement a proactive risk management process to identify hazards, evaluate and prioritize risks, develop and plan risk responses, implement controls, and implement the use of safety aids, messages, and protective equipment.
- e. Use clear communication and feedback, hold regular safety meetings, use visual reminders, and analyze and review incidents to find the root cause, share the lessons learned with the entire team, and adjust procedures accordingly.
- f. Recognize and reward safe behavior.

#### 2. Build leadership at all levels

YEAR 1

- a. Desired outcome is to foster and encourage leadership qualities and behaviors throughout the entire organization; for all members regardless of position or rank, to take initiative, solve problems, and inspire others; and cultivate a culture of shared responsibility, innovation, and continuous improvement.
- b. Develop leadership skills by providing training, mentorship, and opportunities for growth and development.
- c. Demonstrate leadership through actions, problem-solving, and ability to influence others through informal, shared, or formal leadership.
- d. Encourage leadership development by establishing clear goals, open communication, positive feedback, and opportunities for independent decision-making.
- e. Focus on growth and development by fostering and encouraging a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

#### 3. Optimize procurement processes.

CRITICAL TASK

- a. Desired outcome is to optimize routine procurement tasks, standardize processes, and leverage analytics for operational insights into spending and supplier performance.
- b. Invest in staff training and adopt continuous improvement methodologies to eliminate waste and ensure ongoing refinement of procurement operations.
- c. Automate processes and use e-procurement software to streamline requisitions, approvals, purchase orders, and payments, reducing manual effort and potential errors.
- d. Standardize processes and establish clear, consistent procedures for all procurement activities across the organization to improve efficiency and prevent issues.

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- e. Centralize data by digitizing information and storing it in a central location to improve visibility, enable data-driven decision-making, transform procurement from reactive to proactive, and facilitate better stakeholder access and transparency.
- f. Implement operational sourcing by developing a strategic approach to acquiring goods and services.
- g. Focus on total cost of ownership (TCO) and analyze the full cost of a purchase, including maintenance, operations, and depreciation, not just initial price, to understand true value.
- h. Build strong, collaborative relationships with key suppliers to foster trust, improve communication, and achieve aligned goals.

#### 4. Ensure regulatory compliance.

ONGOING

- a. Desired outcome is to ensure regulatory compliance by adhering to all relevant laws, regulations, and standards that apply to the District.
- b. Identify applicable rules/regulations; understand the specific requirements for compliance.
- c. Develop clear, written policies and procedures that outline how the District will comply with the identified regulations.
- d. Maintain thorough documentation of compliance efforts, including policies, procedures, training materials, and audit results.
- e. Provide regular training to educate members about relevant regulations, their responsibilities, and the District's compliance policies.
- f. Regularly update training materials to reflect changes in regulations or internal procedures.
- g. Implement systems and processes and conduct regular internal audits to assess District compliance with regulations and to identify any gaps or potential issues.

- h. Regularly review and update your compliance policies and procedures to reflect changes in regulations or District operations.
- i. Solicit feedback from members and other interested stakeholders to identify areas for improvement in the District compliance program.

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## Our Finances

This perspective focuses on how the organization appears to its shareholders and investors. It assesses financial performance metrics like profitability, revenue growth, and return on investment. The goal is to ensure the organization is creating value and meeting its financial objectives.

#### 1. Adopt balanced budgets.

ONGOING

- a. Desired outcome is to create a financial plan where total planned revenues equal total planned expenditures to ensure long-term sustainability.
- b. Understand structural balance and recognize the difference between a statutory balanced budget and a truly sustainable one.
- c. Differentiate revenue and expenses by identifying recurring and non-recurring revenues and expenditures, ensuring that recurring revenues are at least equal to or greater than recurring expenditures, and not using one-time funds to pay for ongoing costs.

#### 2. Improve financial transparency.

ONGOING

- a. Desired outcome is to promote and establish a culture of systematic, proactive, and integrated approach to financial transparency.

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- b. Adopt recognized accounting principles and a consistent framework to ensure reports are comparable over time and across organizations.
- c. Provide regular, detailed reports such as balance sheets, plus income and cash flow statements.
- d. Enhance accessibility and communication by publishing reports in a dedicated online section for financial documents on the District website, social media, and media releases to share financial updates and engage with stakeholders.
- e. Use plain language and present information in a straightforward, understandable way.
- f. Encourage stakeholders to ask questions and seek clarification on financial matters to promote trust and understanding.
- g. Promote a transparent financial culture by establishing clear financial policies; involving stakeholders in financial decisions; and emphasizing honesty, ethical stewardship of resources, and accountability in financial decision-making.
- h. Conduct independent audits to verify financial accuracy and build confidence among stakeholders.

### 3. Control and monitor spending and inventory

CRITICAL TASK

ONGOING

- a. Desired outcome is to control and monitor spending and inventory with accounting software and inventory management systems to track finances and stock levels, respectively.
- b. Create a budget with specific spending limits for different categories to guide spending.
- c. Use Financial Tools to automate tracking, categorize spending, generate reports that highlight variances between budgeted and actual amounts; and to review and adjust the budget or spending habits as needed.

- d. Control and monitor inventory with an automated Inventory Management System, minimum stock levels, demand/use forecasts, and regular, periodic inventory audits.

### 4. Sustain reserve cash balance.

ONGOING

- a. Desired outcome is to create and sustain a reserve cash balance that is appropriately sized, protected, and easily accessible.
- b. Develop a formal reserve policy to provide structure and funding goals, promote long-term thinking, and protect the reserve cash balance.
- c. Implement strong financial management practices and hold emergency reserves in a separate, dedicated account to prevent unintentional use for day-to-day operations.
- d. Protect and invest reserve funds wisely to remain accessible and liquid, and to be strategically invested to grow over time and retain buying power.
- e. Ensure accountability and transparency, document all transactions, track specific funds, and report clearly to ensure fund utilization is distinctively recorded and reported in financial statements to establish and maintain public trust and financial stewardship.

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## Our Future

This perspective focuses on how the Sustaining our future requires a holistic perspective that balances environmental protection, economic growth, and social equity. This involves making conscious choices today to ensure future generations can meet their needs without compromising the planet's resources and well-being.

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It necessitates a shift towards sustainable practices across all aspects of life, from consumption and production to energy use and waste management.

1. **Create and sustain a positive work culture.** ONGOING
  - a. Desired outcome is to create and sustain a positive work culture, strengthen communication, empower members, and promote a healthy work-life balance.
  - b. Actively create and sustain a culture where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to succeed.
  - c. Foster and encourage open communication and transparency; establish clear expectations and goals; ensure members understand their role and responsibilities; encourage two-way feedback; and practice transparency to build trust and prevent rumors and confusion.
  - d. Empower and value employees; recognize and reward achievements; support professional development; promote autonomy, well-being, and a positive work-life balance; create a comfortable and supporting workspace; and foster strong co-worker relationships.
2. **Deliver positive results.** ONGOING
  - a. Desired outcome is to deliver positive results by consistently meeting or exceeding goals to achieve favorable outcomes.
  - b. Set clear, actionable, SMART goals -- specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound.
  - c. Focus on process over outcomes to create a template for future, consistent achievements.
  - d. Work smart to maximize effectiveness; prioritize tasks; plan time and resources; avoid multi-tasking; and establish a system for organizing tasks, emails, and files.

- e. Encourage a positive attitude by practicing gratitude and focusing on learning.
- f. Improve communication, coordination, and collaboration by focusing feedback on specific behaviors; encourage crews to share ideas and celebrate successes as a team to build morale and reinforce superior performance.
- g. Take calculated risks and innovate by being proactive and embracing continuous learning.

### 3. **Create a strategic plan**

CRITICAL TASK

- a. Desired outcome is to create a strategic plan ONGOING that is a comprehensive roadmap that defines the District's long-term vision, priorities, and actions.
- b. Define or confirm guiding principles -- mission, vision, values, and expectations.
- c. Conduct a situational analysis to include current conditions, both internal analysis (SWOT-C) and external analysis (PESTLE).
- d. Set SMART goals and objectives -- specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound.
- e. Formulate strategic initiatives and action plans by defining major initiatives, specific actions, timeline, and the key metrics for success.
- f. Implement, monitor, and adapt; track performance by using key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure progress; hold regular reviews to assess progress and make adjustments; and build adaptability to prepare for and respond to unforeseen changes.

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### 4. Succession Plan

CRITICAL TASK

ONGOING

- a. Desired outcome is to create a succession plan that identifies and develops members to fill critical roles when they become vacant due to promotion, retirement, or unexpected departure.
- a. Align succession planning with business strategy by defining the District's strategic roadmap; Identifying organizational goals: understanding long-term talent objectives; and forecasting future roles.
- b. Identify critical roles by determining the positions that are most vital to success and would cause significant disruption if left vacant.
- c. Define the competencies for each critical position by creating "success profiles" outlining the skills and attributes needed for each key role.
- d. Assess and evaluate talent to identify high-potential candidates who could fill future roles.
- e. Develop potential successors through on-the-job and formal training, and mentorship and coaching.
- f. Document the strategy/plan to ensure a clear and structured process, and to engage stakeholders.
- g. Review the plan and update it regularly.

### 5. Remove barriers to success.

YEAR 1

- a. Desired outcome is to identify and overcome internal and external obstacles such as lack of resources; social barriers; poor communication; poor leadership; and economic uncertainty.
  - b. Establish an approach that involves a mix of mindset shifts and actionable steps -- Embracing a growth mindset; establishing goals, training, and development; improving communication; soliciting feedback; providing flexible work policies; and enhancing member engagement.
-



## Appendix A. Planning Context

Qualitative and quantitative input from the planning process provided critical insights into the District that uncovered insights and helped to shape the recommendations. This section presents highlights from the analysis itself, including a summary of the balanced scorecard planning model, initial SWOT-C analysis, and the initial marketing analysis.

### The Planning Process

In a recent post, Forbes described the seven steps for the successful development of a strategic plan:

- Conduct an internal/external assessment.
- Conducting a SWOT analysis
- Review organization’s Mission, Vision, and Values
- Determine organizational initiatives.
- Define functional goals and objectives.
- Determine staffing, budgets, and financing needs.
- Develop metrics to measure success.

For this project, the District used a multi-phase approach that integrated these seven steps into a well-proven process that has been used in the development of successful strategic plans for public safety and emergency management organizations across the country.

This process helps to answer four basic questions that can be used to determine “next steps” in terms of priority, need, resource requirements, and timing.

Figure 4. Primary Questions to be Addressed



- **Where are we today?** The strategic planning process begins with an assessment of the current situation and a review of organizational purpose, community needs, and an analysis of organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and critical issues.
- **Where do we need to be?** This step defines and describes the desired future state of the organization and includes the development of guiding principles — mission, vision, values, and expectations — and desired service levels for primary programs and/or services.
- **How will we get there?** This step includes the creation and development of the strategic plan, complete with initiatives, goals, objectives, action plans, and performance measures.
- **How will we sustain it?** The final step is the actual execution of the plan and achieving results as a function of capacity, availability of funding and other required resources, and the leadership required for successful change.

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### The Balanced Scorecard

The balanced scorecard (BSC) is a strategic planning tool used by government and non-profit organizations to define and align activities and provide a framework to track progress toward strategic goals by balancing community, financial, customer, internal processes, and professional development growth perspectives.

Figure 5. The Public Sector Balanced Scorecard



### Key Elements in a Public Sector Application

A public sector BSC contains the same perspectives as a for-profit BSC -- customer, financial, internal work processes, and professional growth, but differs in some ways. These differences are:

**Mission Alignment:** A public sector BSC prioritizes alignment with the organization's mission and public service goals, rather than focusing on financial profit.

**Budget Alignment:** A public sector BSC considers budget constraints and resource allocation, rather than financial profit, in relation to strategic objectives.

**Community Perspective:** A public sector BSC replaces the "customer" perspective with a "community" or "citizen" perspective that focuses on citizen satisfaction, engagement, and trust.

**Financial Perspective:** A public sector BSC focuses on financial stewardship – the efficient use of taxpayer dollars and financial transparency, with a focus on achieving social and public value, not profit.

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## *How the Balanced Scorecard Works in Government*

**Strategic Planning:** Defines the organization's vision, mission, and strategic objectives.

**Perspective-Based Framework:** Organizes strategic objectives into four perspectives – Community, Financial, Internal Processes, and Professional Development and Growth.

**Action Planning and Implementation:** Develops action plans to address performance gaps and improve results.

**Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** Identifies specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound – **SMART**-- KPIs for each perspective.

**Performance Measurement:** Regularly track and analyze performance against established KPIs.

**Continuous Improvement:** Use performance data to make informed decisions, refine strategies, and drive continuous improvement.

## *Benefits of Using a Balanced Scorecard in Government*

**Improved Strategy Execution:** Helps translate strategic plans into actionable steps and ensures alignment across the organization.

**Enhanced Performance Measurement:** Provides a holistic view of performance, going beyond financial metrics to include citizen satisfaction and other key outcomes.

**Increased Accountability and Transparency:** Promotes accountability by linking performance to specific goals and objectives, making it easier to track progress and identify areas for improvement.

**Improved Decision-Making:** Provides data-driven insights to inform decision-making and resource allocation.

**Enhanced Citizen Engagement:** By focusing on citizen needs and priorities, the BSC can improve citizen satisfaction and trust in government.

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