

# 2023- 2027 STRATEGIC PLAN



SANTA CLARA COUNTY  
FIRE DEPARTMENT







# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>4</b>	MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF
<b>5</b>	AGENCY MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES
<b>6</b>	DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW
<b>7</b>	DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION
<b>8</b>	JURISDICTION BOUNDARIES
<b>9</b>	DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
<b>10</b>	KEY ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS
<b>11</b>	STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS
<b>12</b>	STRATEGIC PLANNING STAKEHOLDERS
<b>14</b>	STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CHALLENGES
<b>18</b>	STRATEGIC PLAN STATUS UPDATE
<b>22</b>	STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

I am proud to present the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan for the Santa Clara County Fire Department (County Fire, the Department). This document represents a collaborative effort between our Department and community stakeholders to identify current and future community needs and determine how we can best provide the services necessary to meet those needs.



The past several years clearly demonstrate that life is full of challenges, and humankind is resilient. We have endured much, including a global pandemic, economic uncertainty, political divisiveness, civil unrest, violence, and many other difficulties. Despite these challenges, we have witnessed our community maintain hope and a positive outlook. We, too, have proven ourselves resilient. This past year, County Fire celebrated 75 years of service to our community. Our mission to protect our community members remains unchanged, and our firm resolve to do so only grows.

The Department is committed to providing exceptional and comprehensive regional emergency services to the community members of Santa Clara County. Maintaining organizational unity and clearly communicating our strategic goals, direction, and expected outcomes are critical to fulfilling that mission. The 2023-2027 Strategic Plan is our “roadmap” to achieving our goals, and we will continue to adjust course to respond to community needs and societal and economic changes, risks, and realities.

We thank our community stakeholders for their steadfast support as we continue collaborating to protect our resilient community from the challenges we face.

Sincerely,

*Suwanra L. Kerdkaew*

Suwanra L. Kerdkaew

Fire Chief



Included in this photograph are the Fire Chiefs who have provided leadership to Santa Clara County Fire Department over the past 41 years. From left to right: Douglas G. Sporleder (1982-2001), Benjamin F. Lopes III (2002-2006), Kenneth L. Waldvogel (2007-2010), Kenneth R. Kehring (2011-2018), Tony Bowden (2018-2022), Suwanra L. Kerdkaew (2022-present).



# AGENCY MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

## MISSION

The Santa Clara County Fire Department exists to protect lives, property, and the environment from fires, emergency incidents, and disasters through preparedness, prevention, education, and emergency response.

## VISION

We, the members of the Santa Clara County Fire Department, envision an agency that continues to be widely known as an internationally accredited department that reflects best practices in the delivery of services to our community.

Through the pursuit of our goals, we will demonstrate continuous improvement, guided by our values of trust, integrity, respect, and excellence. Through our workforce development and training initiatives, we will invest in our greatest organizational assets, our members, ensuring they are appropriately staffed and professionally developed and trained. Our enhanced internal communications processes will strengthen our unit integrity.

Our focus on our communities through greater preparedness and education systems, supported by quality external communications systems, will further prove our support for those we serve. Through our improved fire prevention program, our communities will thrive with a greater focus on safety.

We will foster continuous improvement through infrastructure solutions to further support our service delivery to the community. This will be accomplished while focusing on sustainability and responsibility.

We will realize individual and department excellence as we hold one another accountable for fulfilling our mission, living our values, accomplishing our goals, and ensuring this vision becomes reality.



## VALUES

### TRUST

Advocate for collaborative relationships.

Maintain community through reliable professional behaviors and open communication.

Foster effective team environments.

### INTEGRITY

Maintain the highest level of ethical standards.

Exhibit prudent use of public resources.

### RESPECT

Honor diversity in the workforce and the communities we serve.

Appreciate individual and inherent differences.

### EXCELLENCE

Provide outstanding customer service.

Execute timely service delivery.

Promote professional development and innovation.



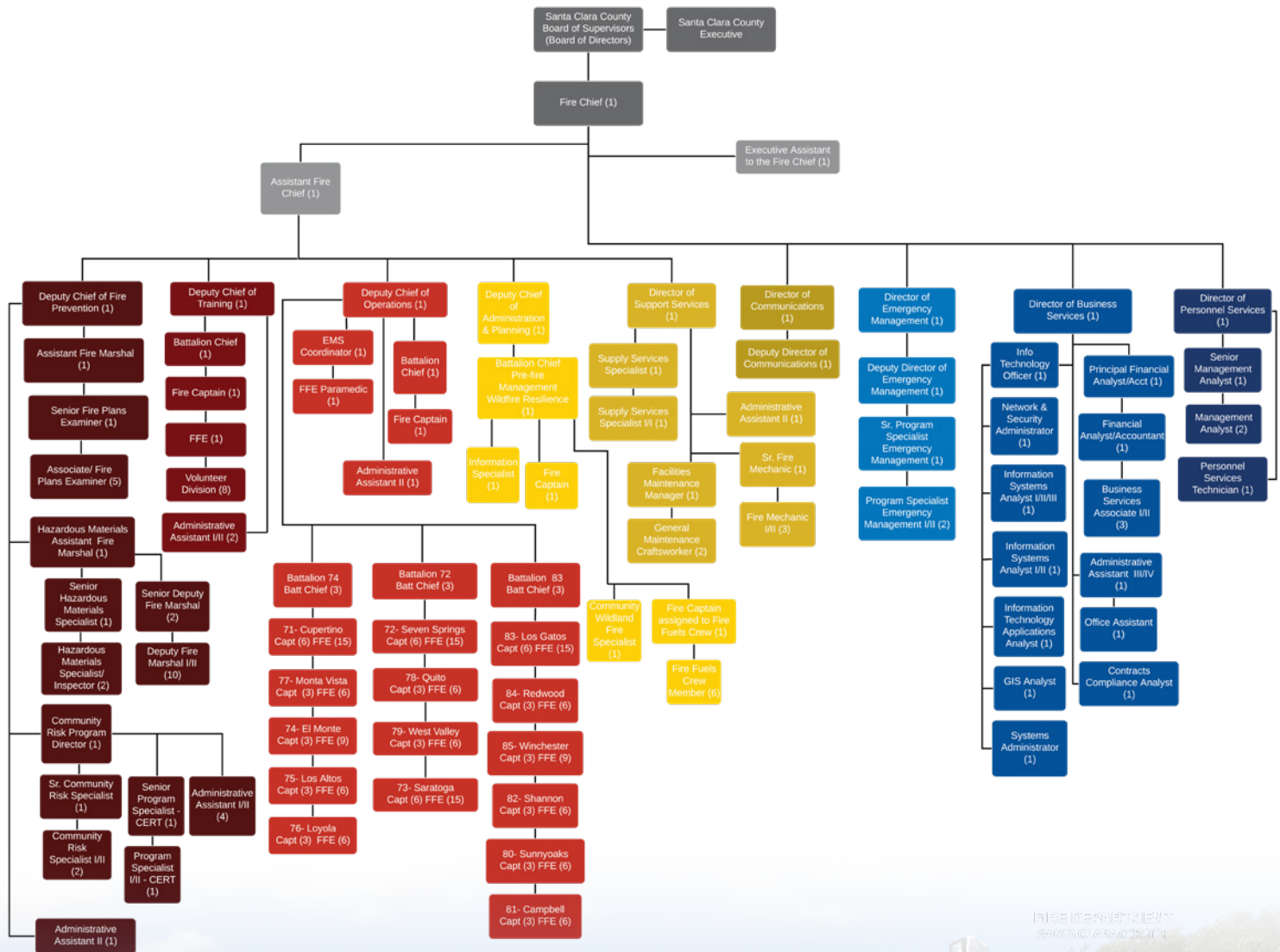


# DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Established in 1947, County Fire is an internationally accredited Fire Protection District that serves the largest county in Northern California. We provide emergency response services to over 225,000 residents in the communities of Campbell, Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Redwood Estates, Saratoga, and adjacent unincorporated areas, covering a service area of over 132 square miles (267 square kilometers). Daily 24-hour emergency response staffing is comprised of 66 firefighters and officers operating out of 15 fire stations, with 31 front-line fire apparatus and three command vehicles. Governed by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, the Fire Chief serves as County Fire Marshal and provides management oversight of the County's Office of Emergency Management and the Santa Clara County 9-1-1 Communications Center. The Department employs over 330 fire prevention, suppression, investigation, administration, and maintenance personnel.

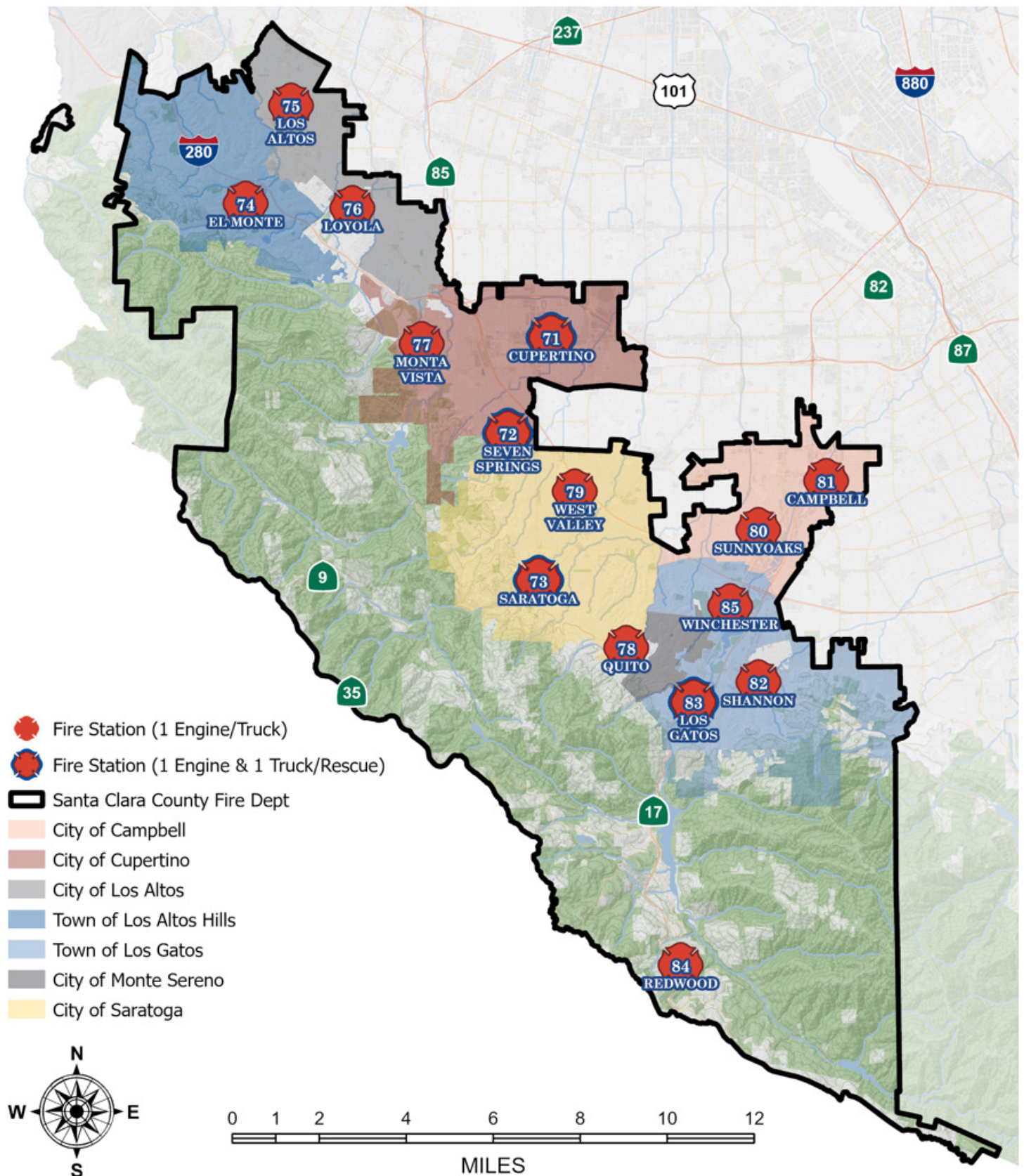


# DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION





# JURISDICTION BOUNDARIES







# DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The Department is an all-hazard organization that provides the following services:



**FIRE SUPPRESSION**



**TECHNICAL RESCUE**



**DOMESTIC PREPAREDNESS**



**EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**



**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**



**FIRE PREVENTION**



**WILDLAND FIRE SUPPRESSION**



**WILDLAND FIRE MITIGATION**



**COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND RISK REDUCTION SERVICES**



**FIRE INVESTIGATION**

## DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

To learn more about County Fire, we invite you to visit our website:

**[WWW.SCCFD.ORG](http://WWW.SCCFD.ORG)**

For in-depth information on our history, organization, services, community risks, and performance measures, see our Community Risk Assessment - Standards of Cover document.





# KEY ORGANIZATIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Department achieved several goals during the 2020-2022 strategic planning period. Two notable occurrences are detailed here.



## SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED CFAI REACCREDITATION

The Department has always recognized the need to continuously improve. In 2004, County Fire adopted the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) accreditation model to remain community-focused, data-driven, outcome-focused, strategic-minded, well organized, properly equipped, and properly staffed and trained. In 2005, the Department achieved its initial accreditation, after which it was reaccredited in 2010, 2015, and 2020. Accreditation requires a tremendous organizational investment to achieve the industry's best practice goals. We see the positive changes that result from our efforts, and we hope that you do, too.

## RENEWED ISO PUBLIC PROTECTION CLASSIFICATION

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) collects and evaluates information from communities in the United States on their structure fire suppression capabilities. The data is analyzed using its Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS), and then a Public Protection Classification (PPC) grade is assigned to the community. Since County Fire's last PPC survey, ISO has revised its PPC program. The Department was surveyed in September 2021 and maintained its PPC of 2/2Y, which is the second-highest possible rating for fire protection services.







# STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Strategic planning involves building systems and processes that pursue outcomes. It focuses on short-term (i.e., three- to five-year in duration) challenges and gaps that impede service. This information is supplemented by input from internal and external stakeholders, who provide valuable insight to the agency. As performance gaps are identified, the organization works to determine the desired outcomes, supporting objectives, and critical tasks necessary to close or eliminate the gaps. The strategic plan then provides a comprehensive, living, and active management tool that helps focus organizational resources on achieving those short-term, measurable outcomes. This process serves to maximize departmental efficiency and effectiveness through the development of a shared vision and clearly identified goals.

The Department contracted with FireStats, LLC to provide a facilitated strategic planning process in the fall of 2022. The process took place between September 30 and October 4, and involved three days of on-site meetings that included the fire chief, various Department staff representing all divisions, partner agencies, and community stakeholders. As part of the process, the agency hosted a one-day “town hall” style meeting on October 1, at which a group of over 50 internal and external stakeholders completed a strategic visioning process. The process included a discussion of the value of strategic planning; a review of the community stakeholders’ perceptions of the quality, reliability, and value of fire district services and performance before and after the facilitated process; an analysis of the agency’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges; an introduction to the CFAI accreditation process; and a review of the agency’s desired strategic planning statements for final inclusion into a strategic plan.

After the planning process, and with the valuable input of our stakeholders, the Department identified three key themes to address:

1. How do we continue to improve our service of protecting lives, property, and the environment before and during emergency events?
2. How do we meet the increases in service demands over the coming years?
3. How do we better explain our services and demonstrate our value to the communities we serve?





# STRATEGIC PLANNING STAKEHOLDERS

From these key themes, members of the Department's command, line, and administrative staff developed three key strategic goals. For each goal, they identified associated strategic objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs) that position the Department to meet the needs and expectations of the community, as well as to communicate progress and KPIs in ways that can be easily understood. We thank each of the following participants for their time and efforts to help County Fire continuously improve its service delivery to you, our community.

**Gary Agbin**

County Fire - Operations Division

**Arn Andrews**

Town of Los Gatos

**Nick Baham**

Santa Clara County 9-1-1  
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**Michael Beam**

County Fire - Fire Prevention Division

**Gerilyn Botting**

County Fire - Business Services Office

**Colin Braslin**

County Fire - Personnel Services Unit

**Jason Brown**

SCCSO - West Valley Division

**Erin Buchanan**

County Fire - Operations Division

**Myles Caldwell**

County Fire - Operations Division

**Gina Cali**

County Fire - Community Education  
Risk Reduction Services

**Jeff Cameron**

County Fire - Operations Division

**Thomas Chin**

City of Cupertino

**Jim Clark**

City of Los Altos (Community  
Emergency Response Team  
[CERT] member)

**Bill Cooper**

Vintner Cooper-Garrod  
Estate Vineyards

**Jenifer Davis**

County Fire - Fire Prevention Division

**Micheal Despain**

FireStats, LLC

**Jason Falarski**

County Fire - Operations Division

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County Fire - Fire Prevention Division

**Jose Garcia**

County Fire - Fire Prevention Division

**Brian Glass**

County Fire - Assistant Fire Chief

**Alex Gogolitsyn**

County Fire - Information Technology

**Harry Guy**

Los Altos CERT member

**Karen Heaton**

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International Association of  
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County Fire - Operations Division

**Matt James**

County Fire - Operations Division

**Suwanna L. Kerdkaew**

County Fire - Fire Chief

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County Fire - Information Technology

**Brad Rice**

Campbell Police Department

**Bryan Ronalter**

County Fire - Operations Division

**Seth Schalet**

Santa Clara County FireSafe Council

**Mark Shumate**

County Fire - Training Division

**Dede Smullen**

Santa Clara County FireSafe Council

**Roger Spreen**

Los Altos Hills County Fire District

**Annette Stelk**

County Fire - Administration and  
Planning Division

**Justin Stockman**

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**Gary Stoddard**

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**Jeff Walker**

Santa Clara County Office  
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**Anne Weber**

County Fire - Operations Division

**Jim Wollbrinck**

Santa Clara County FireSafe Council

**Matt Yost**

County Fire - Operations Division





# STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CHALLENGES

Stakeholders conducted a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (SWOC) analysis to help the Department assess its current state of effectiveness, future competitors, anticipated changes, and survival trajectories. The result was an outline of the organization's key strengths and weaknesses, aligned with the strategic themes identified above and detailed in the following pages.



# **THEME 1:** HOW DO WE CONTINUE TO IMPROVE OUR SERVICE OF PROTECTING LIVES, PROPERTY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT BEFORE AND DURING EMERGENCY EVENTS?

## **STRENGTHS**

- Good teamwork and support among staff
- Good fire and EMS equipment
- Good relationships with surrounding fire and other emergency service agencies

## **WEAKNESSES**

- Fire station facilities need updating to meet industry standards.
- The training facility needs to be updated.
- The Post-Incident Analysis program needs to be revised.
- A “close call” reporting system needs to be developed to enhance firefighter safety and situational awareness.
- The live-fire training program needs to be expanded for continuing education.
- The Department needs to employ a closest-unit response concept internally and with our operational area automatic and mutual aid partners.

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Launch new computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system
- Improve cardiac survival percentage
- Update policies and training for fire suppression techniques to better meet industry best practices
- Improve the internal suggestion process and review
- Explore decentralizing some of the lower-level administrative programs to field-level personnel for enhanced professional development
- Explore adding a formal mentoring program

## **CHALLENGES**

- The district is a net contributor of automatic and mutual aid versus aid received.
- There is an expanding threat and higher cost of wildland fires in the district.
- Diminishing service levels from the private ambulance service provider cause service-level issues in the district.
- The current paramedic shortage, of statewide concern, has resulted in increased commitment times for our operational resources, resulting in an overall increase in unit utilization
- We must maintain the experience levels of operational staff.



# THEME 2: HOW DO WE MEET THE INCREASES IN SERVICE DEMANDS OVER THE COMING YEARS?

## STRENGTHS

- Maintaining a 10-15 percent target for fund reserves
- Better capacity to conduct long-term planning and evaluation, such as capital improvement projects
- Targeted recruiting for specialized skills
- Strong facilities maintenance team

## WEAKNESSES

- Some staff members are inexperienced due to recent rapid turnover.
- The Department needs to enhance the use of technology and move away from paper-based systems.
- District revenue is not sufficient to meet increases in service demands.
- Outdated policies and procedures exist.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Enhance and centralize communication among all divisions
- Facilitate more coordinated training between the Operations Division and other divisions
- Ensure cross-training and backup support across all divisions
- Expand the employee satisfaction and feedback survey process
- Continually improve the agency's diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals
- Expand the Department's environmental sustainability program
- Expand the information technology systems and programs

## CHALLENGES

- We must maintain service levels over time, especially with higher density, mixed-use, vertical development.
- There is increased 9-1-1 system use from skilled nursing and ancillary care facilities, primarily for occupant-supportive care.
- We must achieve adequate levels of funding for increased service provision.
- Unfunded mandates and liabilities exist.
- We need to improve our targeted recruitment of paramedic and fire prevention staff, both quantity and quality.
- The cost of living affects recruitment.
- Recruitment challenges arising from a candidate pool seeking remote work in an in-person workplace.

# THEME 3: HOW DO WE BETTER EXPLAIN OUR SERVICES AND DEMONSTRATE OUR VALUE TO THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE?

## STRENGTHS

- Good customer service
- Good community relations and community outreach
- Great staff members who are invested in the community
- Positive results from the past few years of implementing aspects of the previous strategic plan and accreditation process
- Measurable improvement on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals
- Moving forward with organizational environmental, social, and governance (ESG) initiatives

## WEAKNESSES

- We need to enhance the use of technology and move away from paper-based systems.
- We need to improve professional development and succession planning processes.
- We need to expand public outreach and code enforcement for wildland fire areas.

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Continue to evaluate, achieve, and improve agency DEI goals
- Develop and expand the Department's environmental sustainability program
- Expand our information technology systems and programs
- Explore additional revenue sources and opportunities to enhance efficiency
- Expand the public education program
- Enhance and centralize communication among all divisions

## CHALLENGES

- We currently provide hybrid public education programs and desire to reach a greater population of the community.
- We must find effective methods to communicate service-level impacts to the community.
- We must respond to the economic downturn.
- It is critical to maintain the experience level of operational staff.
- We must educate internal staff on ESG goals and achieve these goals over time.
- It is important to provide and maintain training levels for internal staff on new and expanding technologies.
- We must respond to the organizational effects of external service audits and reviews.



# STRATEGIC PLAN STATUS UPDATE

Like many other organizations, the Department was significantly affected by the pandemic. Many of the strategic goals and objectives identified in the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan assumed a pandemic focus. The strategic goals established therein are still relevant today, although they have been updated to reflect post-pandemic realities. The organization did not remain idle. Despite significant resources invested toward pandemic operations, we made progress on our strategic goals.



## **GOAL 1: IMPROVE SURVIVABILITY FOR VICTIMS OF FIRE, HAZARDOUS MATERIALS RELEASE, ENTRAPMENT, AND OTHER CRISIS INCIDENTS.**

Although there was a decrease in fire-related activity during the pandemic, the Department experienced an increase in call volume related to the pandemic. In 2020, the Santa Clara County 9-1-1 Communications Center implemented Fire Priority Dispatching, which standardizes the triage of fire-related incidents and sends the most appropriate resources to the incident. County Fire staff continues to work with Communications Center staff to hone response plans to ensure dispatch of the appropriate resources to each type of incident. This approach maximizes unit utilization and reduces the overcommitment of resources.

The Department experienced no fire-related fatalities during the 2020-2022 period. In addition, the Fire Prevention Division worked with our jurisdictions during the fire code adoption cycle to better align fire codes. This is an ongoing project that we are confident will result in increased safety and reduced fires in our communities.

## **GOAL 2: IMPROVE THE SURVIVABILITY OF PATIENTS WHO EXPERIENCE ACUTE MEDICAL EMERGENCIES.**

The EMS Unit procured and deployed new defibrillator units to the field, providing improved monitoring and reporting capabilities for cardiac arrest incidents. In addition, the EMS Unit worked to implement COVID-19 personal protective equipment (PPE) and precautions in line with statutes and regulations that kept our personnel safe and able to respond. Although pandemic protocols resulted in a slight increase in our response times, the time our personnel took to don the proper PPE and ensure proper precautions were taken before and during incidents resulted in a low exposure rate for our response personnel.



## **GOAL 3: IMPROVE FIREFIGHTER SAFETY AND SURVIVAL.**

The Department continued replacing medical and firefighting PPE with equipment that reduces firefighter exposure to and absorption of air- and blood-borne pathogens and of toxic carcinogens, such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).



#### **GOAL 4: IMPROVE AGENCY RESILIENCY DURING CRISIS-LEVEL EVENTS.**

The Department provided personnel to help manage a county-operated vaccination clinic at the height of the pandemic. Department personnel also staffed multiple operational positions at the Santa Clara County Emergency Operations Center to support the pandemic response. Numerous personnel serve on regional, state, and federal incident management teams. These experiences helped the organization plan and prepare for extended and higher acuity incidents in the future. The agency experienced a delay in recruiting and filling multiple open positions during the pandemic. However, all divisions worked together to recruit, hire, onboard, and deploy new personnel to fill those positions.

#### **GOAL 5: REDUCE FINANCIAL AND LEGAL RISK AND LIABILITY TO COUNTY FIRE.**

The Department contracted with the Campbell Police Department for investigation services to support our Fire Investigation program. The community experienced a slight decrease in incendiary fires and an increase in the arrest rate during the 2020-2022 period, making the partnership a benefit and success for the community.

#### **GOAL 6: IMPROVE EFFICIENCY WITHIN THE CURRENT BUDGETING SYSTEM.**

The Department evaluated critical infrastructure and fleet replacement plans and executed several projects that would have the greatest impact, be fiscally prudent, and have the simplest path to implementation. One fire station is in the finishing stages of construction, and several fire apparatus projects were completed.

#### **GOAL 7: PREPARE THE AGENCY FOR THE NEXT ECONOMIC DOWNTURN.**

The Department maintained an average 24 percent<sup>1</sup> undesignated reserve fund balance during the 2020-2022 period and successfully negotiated a four-year Memorandum of Agreement with our employee labor organizations.

#### **GOAL 8: PREPARE FOR RAPID POPULATION GROWTH.**

The Department continued to work with local planning departments to prepare for new development within the cities and towns we serve.



<sup>1</sup> The organization maintained a fund reserve higher than its target goal due to in-progress capital improvement projects and their associated expenses.



## **GOAL 9: PROMOTE A POSITIVE AGENCY REPUTATION WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.**

The Department completed the hiring process for a grant-funded Community Wildfire Specialist. This position increases interactions with our community members and local government stakeholders in wildfire-prone areas of the fire district and works to identify and schedule fuel-mitigation projects for the Hazardous Fuels Mitigation crew.

## **GOAL 10: MITIGATE FIRE-RELATED DAMAGE TO ALLOW OCCUPANTS TO REMAIN IN IMPACTED STRUCTURES AFTER SUPPRESSION OPERATIONS.**

According to the United States Fire Administration's (USFA's) Residential Building Fires (2017-2019) report, the average fire extended beyond the room of origin in 50 percent of nonconfined residential building fires. The Department confined an average of 61 percent of its building fires to the object or room of origin during the 2020-2022 period.

## **GOAL 11: EDUCATE, PREPARE, AND PROTECT THE COMMUNITIES SERVED IN RESPONSE AND PRIOR TO LOCAL AND STATE LIFE HAZARD RISK TRENDS.**

Community Education and Risk Reduction Services pivoted during the pandemic to provide video-based webinars and virtual education sessions to our communities, with increases in target languages based on census and demographic data collected for the communities we serve.

## **GOAL 12: PROVIDE VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY BEYOND THE 9-1-1 RESPONSE.**

The Department developed a preventive-wildfire management program to address the ever-increasing wildfire risk. In 2022, County Fire successfully deployed our newly developed Hazardous Fuels Mitigation crew to remove hazardous vegetation along escape routes, fuel breaks, and other high- and very-high-severity zones.









# STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



## DEFINITIONS:

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

A statement that supports creation of an overall vision and set of goals that will help the organization focus its efforts and achieve desired outcomes.

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI)

The critical (key) quantifiable indicators of progress toward an intended result. KPIs are typically one of the most important measures for evaluating agency effectiveness.

### SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES

Incremental steps required to accomplish higher-level desired outcomes.



# STRATEGIC

## GOAL 1: CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE OUR MISSION EXECUTION.

The Department's mission is to protect lives, property, and the environment from fires, emergency incidents, and disasters through preparedness, prevention, education, and emergency response. We are continuously improving our mission execution, which results in reduced community risk. Improving our ability to measure progress using integrated technologies and quantitative evaluation helps us validate the feedback we receive from our community.

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.1: IMPROVE PRE-INCIDENT PREPAREDNESS THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY RISK ASSESSMENT, COMMUNITY EDUCATION, AND AGGRESSIVE HAZARD MITIGATION.**

#### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Inspect all state-mandated occupancies annually.
- Inspect at least 95 percent of high-risk occupancies annually.
- Complete 100 percent of assigned wildland urban interface (WUI) inspections in the designated year.<sup>2</sup>

#### **SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES**

- Improve community interaction, all-hazard evacuation planning, incident detection, and incident prevention.
- Expand the size and capabilities of the Hazardous Fuels Mitigation crew.
- Utilize community risk assessments to improve community-centric program development and presentation.
- Improve organizational benchmarking, documentation, reporting, and visualization capabilities.
- Advocate for the standardization of local fire and safety codes in our communities.

#### **DIVISIONS RESPONSIBLE**

- Administration and Planning, Fire Prevention

<sup>2</sup> Fire Prevention assigns WUI inspections on a triennial cycle, completing each one-third of the overall number annually.



## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.2: REDUCE THE COMMUNITY IMPACT FROM EMERGENCY INCIDENTS AND NATURAL AND HUMAN-MADE DISASTERS.**

### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Experience zero civilian deaths due to fire.<sup>3</sup>
- Ensure emergency (9-1-1) calls for service are processed within 60 seconds for 90 percent of incidents.<sup>4</sup>
- Ensure dispatched units respond to emergencies within 1 minute 50 seconds for 90 percent of incidents.<sup>5</sup>
- The first suppression unit arrives at structure fires, hazardous material releases, and other urgent incidents requiring the use of PPE within 7 minutes and 50 seconds (urban) or 11 minutes and 50 seconds (rural) for 90 percent of incidents.<sup>6</sup>
- Contain structure fires to the room of origin at or above the current USFA-published national average.
- Contain vegetation fires to 3 acres or less for 90 percent of incidents.

### **SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES**

- Implement “closest unit response” capabilities in the CAD system to reduce travel time.
- Update traffic preemption solutions (hardware and software) in cooperation with jurisdictional and countywide partners in support of community traffic management plans.
- Update field-level preplan and inspection programs.
- Evaluate the station alerting system for software improvements, updates, and upgrades.

### **DIVISIONS RESPONSIBLE**

- Operations, Support Services, Business Services

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.3: IMPROVE THE SURVIVABILITY OF PATIENTS WHO EXPERIENCE ACUTE MEDICAL EMERGENCIES.**

### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Provide Advanced Life Support-level care on emergency medical calls within 8 minutes (urban) or 10 minutes (rural) for 90 percent of incidents.<sup>7</sup>
- Rescue victims of entrapment within 10 minutes of victim contact for 90 percent of incidents.<sup>8</sup>
- Recognize and transport medical alerts (ST elevation myocardial infarction [STEMI], stroke, trauma) within 10 minutes for 90 percent of incidents.<sup>9</sup>
- Improve the field-level return of spontaneous circulation (ROSC) percentage rate for cardiac arrest at or above the national average (Cardiac Arrest Registry to Enhance Survival [CARES]).

<sup>3</sup> For structure fires/accidental/unintentional

<sup>4</sup> For emergency incidents, incident location verified to unit alert

<sup>5</sup> For emergency calls, unit alert to wheels rolling

<sup>6</sup> Emergency response, incident location verified to first unit arrival on scene

<sup>7</sup> Priority EMS calls, call location verified to ALS unit arrival

<sup>8</sup> Entrapment calls, patient contact to extricated—in collaboration with local hospital trauma unit accreditation standard

<sup>9</sup> From patient contact to patient transport

## **SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES**

- Update the records management system to classify rescue incidents more accurately.
- Develop a CAD timestamp that captures the rescue of victims of entrapment.
- Improve the Department's ability to provide first aid or higher-level service at all levels of the organization.
- Explore strategies for measuring and improving definitive patient care.
- Explore becoming a local CARES<sup>10</sup> site.
- Improve data sharing among the Department, the local Emergency Medical Services Agency, and local receiving hospitals for improved patient outcome analysis and quality improvement.
- Improve community outreach and messaging to increase bystander CPR.
- Conduct annual CPR, first aid, and STOP THE BLEED® training for all support staff.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

- Operations, Training Division, Administration and Planning, Fire Prevention

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.4: IMPROVE FIREFIGHTER SAFETY AND SURVIVAL.**

### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Experience zero fire service fatalities.
- Reduce the annual employee injury rate to below 20 percent of total allocated staffing.

## **SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES**

- Enhance behavioral health and employee assistance program resources tailored to the needs of first responders.
- Develop employee wellness and fitness objectives based on historical injury and illness data.
- Evaluate the capital improvement plan for opportunities to update and modernize the Department's training facilities.
- Champion leadership and mentorship to enable the success of new and promoted employees.
- Restore post-incident analysis process for significant incidents.
- Develop an internal "near miss" reporting system that aligns with the post-incident analysis program.
- Revise the organizational training plan to address training mandates and organization-specific training needs, such as live-fire training.
- Update the field training, onboarding, and mentoring processes.

## **DIVISIONS RESPONSIBLE**

- Operations, Training, Personnel Services, Support Services

<sup>10</sup> Cardiac Arrest Registry to Enhance Survival



## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1.5: IMPROVE THE AGENCY'S FLEXIBILITY AND ADAPTABILITY TO SIGNIFICANT EVENTS.**

### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Maintain the annual unit hour utilization percentage below 30 percent for all units.

### **SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES**

- Work toward having 10 percent of uniformed executive and management staff trained and certified for industry best practices.<sup>11</sup>
- Maintain the Department's incident management capabilities for extended duration and significant incidents.
- Develop a succession plan for maintaining incident management qualifications.
- Establish a priority trainee process and develop corresponding documentation.
- Identify response reliability measurements for all response zones.
- Identify department operations center (DOC) positions and responsibilities and provide training.
- Revise the significant and prolonged incident operational plans.
- Develop a response zone<sup>12</sup> reliability scoring matrix.

### **DIVISIONS RESPONSIBLE**

- Training, Operations, Fire Prevention, Support Services

<sup>11</sup> Credentialed by the Center for Public Safety Excellence, the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire or Managing Fire Officer programs, or California State Fire Training's Executive Chief Fire Officer certification.

<sup>12</sup> A response zone is a fire station's first-due response area







## STRATEGIC GOAL 2: ANTICIPATE AND MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF INCREASED SERVICE DEMANDS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY WHILE NAVIGATING ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY UNCERTAINTY

Our communities have experienced a steady rise in the demand for emergency services. The emergence of deadly opioids and their related emergencies have also increased. In addition, we have witnessed a sharp increase in the unhoused population. With the COVID-19 pandemic, the resulting economic downturn, the inflated cost of living in the Bay Area, and the overall increase in population and aging of our population, emergency services have been stressed. As we have seen with the COVID-19 pandemic and the SCU Lightning Complex Fire, the economic impact of one significant event can severely affect the ability of even the largest, well-funded organizations to provide these increased services for the community. Continuously forecasting and planning for unexpected events will ensure our ability to provide uninterrupted, high-quality services to the communities we serve.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.1: REDUCE FINANCIAL AND LEGAL RISK AND LIABILITY TO THE FIRE DISTRICT.

#### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Limit the number of cases requiring formal disciplinary action (i.e., action above a written reprimand) to 5 percent or less of the workforce.
- Provide annual liability reduction and harassment prevention training to all employees.
- Complete a minimum of two major facilities (capital) improvement projects to ensure Department facilities are situated in optimal locations and meet modern construction, sustainability, accessibility, and operational requirements.



## **SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES**

- Annually review strategic progress and update stakeholders via the Department's Annual Report.
- Plan and execute public works projects that support the Department's capital improvement needs.
- Perform the necessary budgeting, procurement, and contracting to support the expansion of traffic preemption technology near Department facilities and on Department equipment.
- Improve communication methods and frequency among divisions.
- Develop a suggestion and improvement proposal tracking process.
- Fill allocated positions and evaluate growth opportunities to support meeting organizational goals.
- Update succession planning and professional development policies.
- Enhance and test information systems to ensure they remain resilient against cyberattacks and software and hardware failure.
- Deploy information technology platforms that improve efficiency, effectiveness, and security for the fire district.
- Improve the efficiency of the workers' compensation treatment program.

## **DIVISIONS RESPONSIBLE**

- Offices of the Fire Chief and the Assistant Fire Chief, Personnel Services, Business Services, Support Services

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.2: IMPROVE ECONOMIC RESILIENCY.**

### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Maintain a 10-15 percent undesignated fund reserve balance.
- Maintain workers' compensation costs below 3.5 percent of the annual budget.

## **SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES**

- Maintain an efficient budgeting process.
- Maintain fiscal contingency planning.
- Reduce workers' compensation costs.
- Revise the district fee schedules.
- Fund annual deferred maintenance needs and consider executing capital improvement projects that result in lower operating costs and/or utility savings.
- Develop a long-term funding strategy to support hazard mitigation efforts.
- Improve the purchasing process for fire apparatus to comply with the apparatus replacement plan while reducing the impact of increased per-unit costs.
- Decentralize lower-level administrative programs to field-level personnel for professional development.
- Update procurement, billing, and permitting technologies while reducing the Department's overall dependency on paper-based systems.

## **DIVISIONS RESPONSIBLE**

- Offices of the Fire Chief and the Assistant Fire Chief, Personnel Services, Business Services, Support Services

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.3: PREPARE FOR JURISDICTIONAL POPULATION GROWTH.

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Maintain the annual growth rate of structure fires at or below the annual population growth rate.<sup>13</sup>
- Maintain the annual growth rate of EMS calls at or below the annual population growth rate.<sup>14</sup>

### SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES

- Develop a contingency plan for fire district growth.
- Develop a contingency plan for additional contracting jurisdictions.
- Plan for new facilities that align with projected staffing levels, as reflected in the five-year Capital Improvement Plan.
- Participate in updates to city and county General Plans.
- Update succession planning and professional development policies.
- Explore alternative deployment models for high call-volume times and locations.

### DIVISIONS RESPONSIBLE

- Office of the Assistant Fire Chief, Personnel Services, Operations, Fire Prevention, Support Services

<sup>13</sup> Percent of occurrences lower than percentage of population growth year over year

<sup>14</sup> Percent of occurrences lower than percentage of population growth year over year







## STRATEGIC GOAL 3:

### MODEL VALUE-ADDED GOVERNANCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Acknowledging the economic and cultural challenges present in any community, the Department's goal is to provide value to each citizen in a meaningful way. As reflected in Strategic Goal 2, a global pandemic or a single significant incident affects the community. County Fire is constantly innovating and endeavoring to provide relevant services that make the most significant, positive impact on the people we serve.

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.1: MODEL EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE.

##### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Maintain accredited status with CFAI.

##### SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES

- Exemplify responsible governance.
- Make environmentally sound decisions.
- Model sustainable behaviors.
- Prepare for accreditation peer review and site visit in 2025.
- Use high fuel efficiency and alternative fuels for new and replacement vehicle purchases.
- Advocate for organizational and community use of drought-resistant technologies.
- Explore the development of environmental sustainability/impact performance measurements.

##### DIVISIONS RESPONSIBLE

- Offices of the Fire Chief and the Assistant Fire Chief, Business Services, Personnel Services, Support Services, Administration and Planning, Fire Prevention

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.2: POSITION COUNTY FIRE AS A COMMUNITY FIRE DEPARTMENT.**

### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Improve workforce diversity and recruit from the local demographics.<sup>15</sup>
- Achieve an average score of 95 percent or higher on citizen satisfaction surveys.

### **SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES**

- Promote a positive agency reputation within the community.
- Explore developing IDEA<sup>16</sup> Committee benchmarks for community engagement.
- Implement a “community stakeholder academy” for community, local government, and media.
- Expand the use of nonemergency volunteers and replenish volunteer ranks.
- Explore the use of nonemergency volunteer programs to recruit new employees.
- Tailor community education campaigns to address local risk trends.

### **DIVISIONS RESPONSIBLE**

- Offices of the Fire Chief and the Assistant Fire Chief, Business Services, Personnel Services, Support Services, Administration and Planning, Fire Prevention

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.3: PROVIDE VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY BEYOND THE 9-1-1 RESPONSE.**

### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Provide fire safety education to all assigned local schools during the designated year.<sup>17</sup>
- Save at least 80 percent of the value of property and contents threatened by fire.<sup>18</sup>
- Maintain or improve upon the current Insurance Services Office (ISO) Class 2 rating.

### **SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES**

- Prepare for renewal of ISO rating in 2026.
- Continue to expand the Department’s wildland fire mitigation capabilities.
- Improve community wildfire and natural disaster preparedness outreach efforts.
- Enhance community outreach for self-sufficiency during and after disasters and other crisis-level events.
- Foster community stakeholder relationships and collaboration.
- Identify, track, and report successful activations of the fire protection system for community education (detection, alarm, suppression).
- Improve hybrid training opportunities for stakeholders.
- Develop a solution for consistently documenting structure value for inclusion in values lost versus values saved analysis and reporting.

### **DIVISIONS RESPONSIBLE**

- Offices of the Fire Chief and the Assistant Fire Chief, Administration and Planning, Operations, Fire Prevention

<sup>15</sup> Based on census block data

<sup>16</sup> Inclusion, diversity, equity, and accountability

<sup>17</sup> Community Education and Risk Reduction Services (CERRS) assigns school programs on a biennial cycle, providing fire safety education to one-half of the district’s schools annually

<sup>18</sup> Values saved versus values lost, including exposures





## SANTA CLARA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

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