



STRATEGIC PLAN

2021 – 2025



cobbcounty.org/public-safety/fire

Cobb County Fire & Emergency Services

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MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF



On behalf of the men and women of Cobb County Fire & Emergency Services (CCFES), I wish to thank you for viewing our five-year strategic plan. CCFES is a team of approximately 794 approved positions. Our department is accredited through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International and certified by the State of Georgia. We strive to provide superior fire, rescue, and emergency services to the citizens and visitors of Cobb County in a proficient, professional, and compassionate manner and we want to continuously promote life safety within the county by practicing prevention, planning, education, and training. As a result of our commitment to the community we serve; we recently obtained an ISO 1 rating.

We place tremendous value on the relationships our fire personnel build in the communities they serve. The success of the department is due to both the strong commitment of our employees and the support they receive from the entire community. We believe the hard work and professionalism of our firefighters, inspectors, investigators, educators, and civilian staff members contribute to the safe environment enjoyed by those who live, work, and visit our great county.

Please take a few minutes to learn more about CCFES at our website at www.cobbfire.org. You will find that our employees are dedicated, well-trained, and enthusiastic professionals who take pride in their work. They are ready to work with the community to make your home, your workplace, and your community an even better place to thrive.

Sincerely,

COBB COUNTY FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES

MISSION

"WE EXIST TO PROVIDE SUPERIOR FIRE, RESCUE, AND EMERGENCY SERVICES TO THE CITIZENS AND VISITORS OF COBB COUNTY IN A PROFICIENT, PROFESSIONAL, AND COMPASSIONATE MANNER. WE CONTINUOUSLY PROMOTE LIFE SAFETY WITHIN THE COUNTY BY PRACTICING PREVENTION, PLANNING, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING."

VISION

"TO BE A PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION LEADING THE WAY IN SETTING A STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE."



CULTURAL COMMITMENTS

FITNESS
UNITY THROUGH DIVERSITY
SAFETY
EDUCATION

VALUES

RESPECT
INTEGRITY
COMMITMENT
HONOR

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cobb County Fire and Emergency Services (herein also referred to as “CCFES” or “department”) provides fire suppression, emergency medical services, technical rescue, hazardous materials mitigation, fire prevention, and public education to those who live, work, and travel through approximately 345 square miles of unincorporated Cobb County, Georgia. CCFES is working with internal and external stakeholders to achieve and/or maintain the highest level of professionalism and efficiency on behalf of the community it serves, and thus seeks to maintain Accredited Agency Status with the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE).

This strategic plan was written in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the CFAI *Fire & Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual* 9th Ed. and is intended to guide the organization within established parameters set forth by the authority having jurisdiction.

The department’s new strategic planning process is driven by the plans established in the self-assessment, and is aligned with the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (S.W.O.T.) analysis of the department. Deficiencies identified in the self-assessment and S.W.O.T. analysis have been used to develop goals and objectives. This planning process will allow the department to move forward and fulfill its mission.

CCFES views the accreditation process as a performance appraisal for the department. Under new leadership, the department has revised the strategic planning process to identify the future needs of the community and provide direction for the department to meet these needs. CCFES will continue to exercise special emphasis on ensuring that progress is made toward the standards established in the department’s standard of cover and plans defined in the self-assessment manual.

Senior Command Staff will be working with Division Managers and the Planning Section to monitor, evaluate, and update the goals contained in the strategic plan. Meetings will be held on a quarterly basis to document the progress made toward completing the goals in place. The newly formatted strategic plan will assist the department to more effectively accomplish its goals and objectives. Additionally, a financial plan has been established to support the goals of the strategic plan.

The Public Safety Director, the County Manager, and the Board of Commissioners, have been instrumental in supporting the current Fire Chief in creating additional staff positions that will allow CCFES to utilize the strategic plan in a completely different manner. The new process will allow the Fire Chief to bridge the gap with regard to planning, hold divisions accountable to the plans in place, and tie in more closely to the department’s self-assessment.

2 INTRODUCTION

Fire and emergency services falls under the umbrella of the Department of Public Safety, governed by the Director of Public Safety. The Director oversees the Police Department, Animal Control, 911 Communications Bureau, and Fire and Emergency Services.

The Fire Chief, who reports directly to the Director of Public Safety, leads the department alongside three deputy chiefs who oversee daily operations, and a Chief of Staff who provides strategic counsel to the Fire Chief, and other Command Staff members, as well as performs oversight, project management, performance management, and policy direction in line with the department's strategic plan. The Fire Chief's oversight includes the areas of the Administrative Support, Department's Records Custodian, and Internal Affairs.

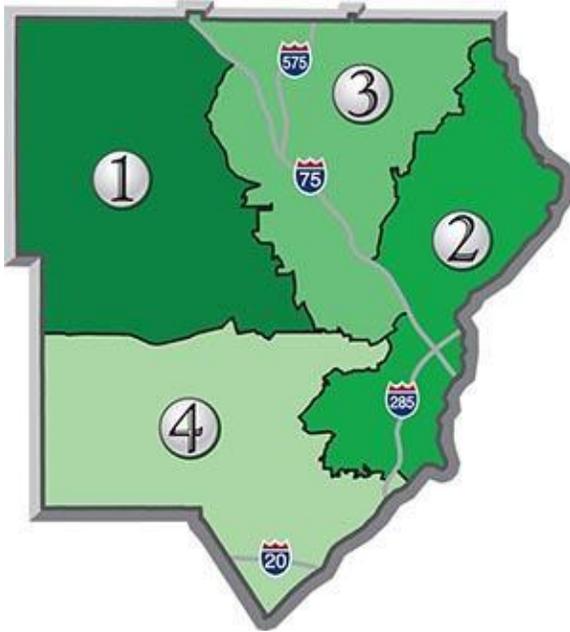
Daily operations consist of three divisions, Preparedness (vehicle maintenance, training, facility maintenance), Response (field operations), and Community Risk Reduction (Fire Investigations, FMO, public education, community risk). The Deputy Chief of Response supervises all emergency response operations for the department. Two District Chiefs report to the Deputy Chief of Response, managing the field operations of 15 Battalion Chief for 5 battalions. District Chief 1 manages administrative responsibilities for battalions 1, 4, 5, Hazmat, and ARFF. District Chief 2 manages administrative responsibilities for battalions 2, 3, and Technical Rescue. Each fire station has a lieutenant or captain assigned to oversee station operations and reports to a battalion chief. The Deputy Chief of Response is also responsible for overseeing EMS operations. The EMS division is supervised by the Division Chief of EMS who oversees one Captain, one Lieutenant, and three Firefighter III's.

Apparatus maintenance, budgets, supplies & uniforms, support services, and training report to the Deputy Chief of Preparedness. Apparatus maintenance operations has an apparatus maintenance manager who oversees all shop mechanics. Support Services is overseen by a Captain responsible for purchasing new apparatus, personal protective gear, and fire service equipment. The Support Services Captain oversees one lieutenant, three fire fighters, and two technicians. Supplies and uniforms consists of two technicians that are responsible for suppling station consumables and uniforms for personnel. Budgetary items are overseen by a fiscal officer who reports to the Deputy Chief of Preparedness. The Training Division consists one Division Chief who oversees two Captains, five Lieutenants, two Engineers, and one physical fitness trainer. Investigations has a Chief Investigator who over sees four investigators.

Identifying, prioritizing, and mitigating local risks through the strategic investment of resources to reduce the potential impact is the responsibility of the Deputy Chief of Community Risk Reduction. The Fire Marshal's Office (FMO), Fire Investigations, and Fire Education (Safety Village) report to the Deputy Chief of Community Risk Reduction. FMO has a Division Chief that oversees four captains, five plan reviewers, 14 inspectors, four public service technicians; Fire Investigations has one Captain who supervises four investigators; Fire Education has civilian Director who oversees the non-profit organization, and one lieutenant who oversees all public education instructors.

3 COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Cobb County operates under the commission-county manager form of government. This system combines the policy leadership of elected officials with the administrative abilities of a county manager.



3.1 MISSION

“To make Cobb County the best place to live and work through efficient, effective and responsive government that delivers quality services.”¹

3.2 COBB COUNTY MOTTO

“Expect the Best”

3.3 CHIEF’S MOTTO

“Work hard, do the right thing, and be nice”

¹ <https://www.cobbcounty.org/board/county-managers-office>

4 CCFES CULTURAL COMMITMENTS



Fitness

- Maintain physical and mental fitness.
- Focus on overall wellness.



Unity Through Diversity

- Respect our differences always and in all situations.
- Leverage our differences to drive new perspectives on problem solving, innovation, and leadership.
- Promote the benefits of having a diverse workforce.



Safety

- Continuous review and improvement on emergency scene strategies and practices in an effort to be better informed about potential hazards.
- Continue developing community risk reduction programs such as the Safety Blitzes, HOA Education programs, social media sites, etc.
- Train and utilize station crews in community risk reduction programs in the county.



Budget

- Do not be wasteful and manage budget items closely.
- Stay within allotted budget on all items unless approved by Command Staff personnel.
- Complete SPLOST purchases and repairs on time and within budget.
- Complete the hiring process and fill vacant positions listed in the current budget.
- Encourage and ensure proper care and maintenance of apparatus, facilities, and equipment. Complete maintenance projects as schedule and budget allows.



Continuing Education & Training

- Lead and manage your personnel. You are accountable for their actions while on duty.
- Provide satisfactory customer service, resulting in no “founded” complaints during the rating period.
- Effectively communicate all work-related concerns to the chain of command, up and down, as appropriate.
- Each person should complete an annual review of the CCFES Code of Conduct and the Cobb County Fire and Emergency Services Policy and Procedure Manual.
- Continue to work with the Career Development committee to update career path.
- Attempt to attend one class, assessment center, training exercise, training opportunity, etc. that is outside of Cobb County.
- Share information from classes or training sessions with others. Attempt to create a continuous learning environment in our department.
- Maintain training requirements as prescribed by ISO, SOEMS, and GFSTC.

CHIEF'S MOTTO "WORK HARD, DO THE RIGHT THING, AND BE NICE"

5 EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER INPUT

CCFES has solicited input from various external stakeholders for planning purposes. In 2012, the BOC appointed a citizen’s oversight committee to evaluate all branches of the County government. The BOC used their findings² as a working document from 2013-2014, making updates quarterly.

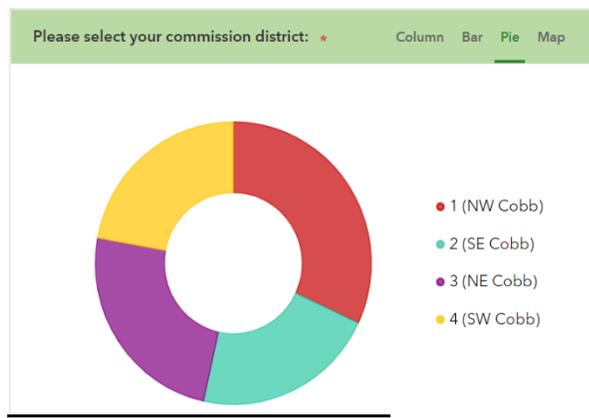
The committee was formed in 2012 to evaluate inefficiencies, redundancies, etc. Each commissioner nominated two citizens to sit on the committee. Each department head met with the committee to discuss the department and its roles, responsibilities, and objectives. The committee compiled their findings and reported them to the department head. The process identified operations that were effective, and recommendations were made by the committee to address areas of concern. Annually, the BOC sets strategic goals that are distributed to each department within the County. These goals are a reflection of the BOC expectations of the fire department.

The Special-purpose local-option sales tax (SPLOST) is a financing method for funding capital outlay projects in the state of Georgia. A SPLOST is an optional 1% sales tax levied by Cobb County for the purpose of funding the building of parks, schools, roads, and other public facilities. County and municipal governments may not use SPLOST proceeds for operating expenses or maintenance of a SPLOST project or any other county or municipal facility or service.

Before voting on the 2016 SPLOST, citizens throughout the county were provided an opportunity to attend public meetings to view projects, ask questions, and received clarification on the proposed items.

The 2016 SPLOST was approved by voters on November 4, 2014; the tax will be collected from Jan 1, 2016 to December 31, 2021. CCFES received funding from the 2016 SPLOST³ for: an improved training facility, a replacement command vehicle (900), two station re-builds, one new station, an update of the Station alerting software, and an Airport Rescue and Firefighting vehicle. As an indication of the communities’ support of CCFES, all requested items were voted on and approved.

In 2021, CCFES also solicited feedback through a community expectation survey developed in-house. The goal of the survey was to provide the department with insights to drive Strategic Planning, resulting in better allocation of resources for the services most desired by the community.

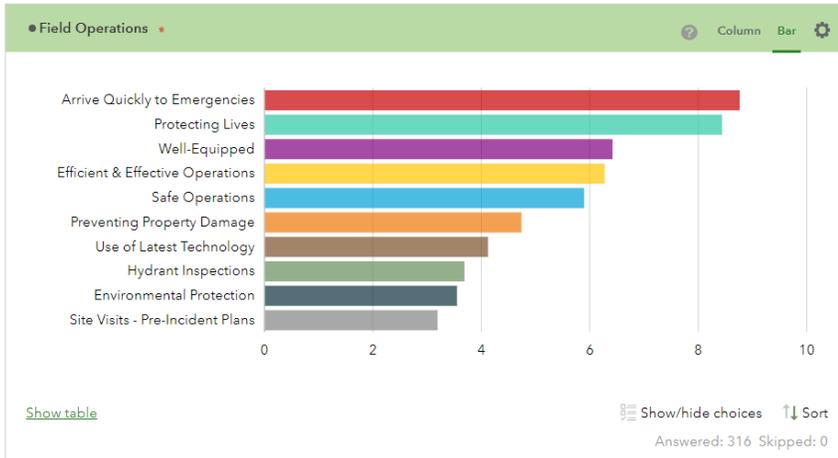


The survey elicited 316 total responses, evenly distributed across all regions of the county. Citizens were asked to prioritize department programs, rank aspects of field operations, assess importance of the department’s cultural commitments, and describe their expectations of response time performance.

² 2013-2014 Citizen’s Oversight Committee Findings

³ 2016 SPLOST Book, pg. 28

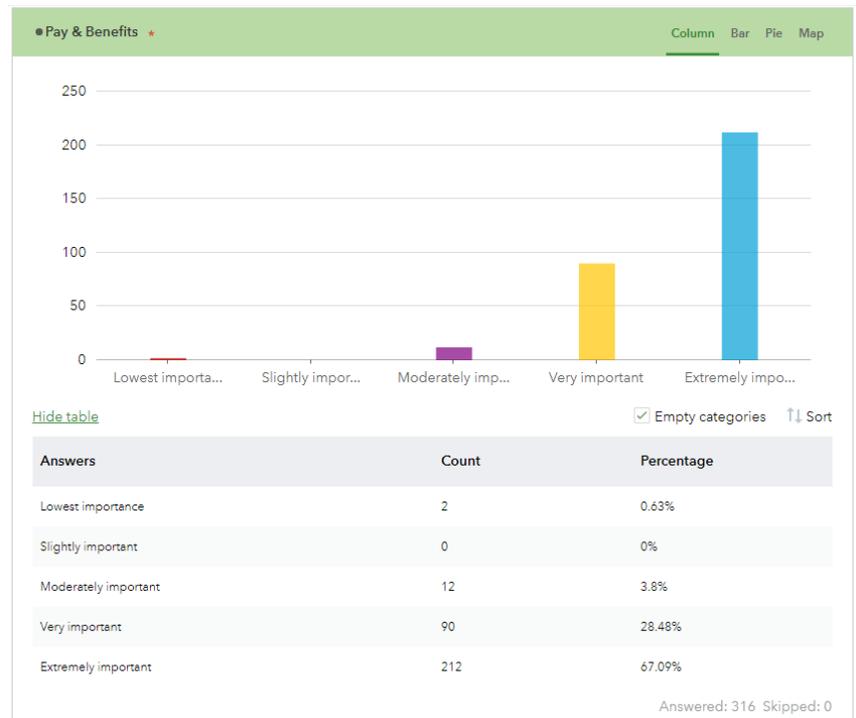
As expected, fire suppression and emergency medical services ranked as the top two most important programs; however, not in that order. Emergency medical services was ranked as most important 51% of the time, while fire suppression was ranked most important 40% of the time (there were seven programs asked to be ranked).



Field operation expectations were unsurprising, with most people ranking quick arrival as most important more often than any other option.

The survey also asked participants to assess ten cultural commitments of the department by identifying their importance on a 5-point scale labeled from “Lowest importance” to “Extremely important.” Right, is the response summary for “Pay & Benefits.” 75% percent of respondents assessed Staff Training and Education, Staff Retention, Kind/Caring/Courteous, Fitness, Transparency, Professional, and Pay/Benefits as either “Very Important” or “Extremely Important.”

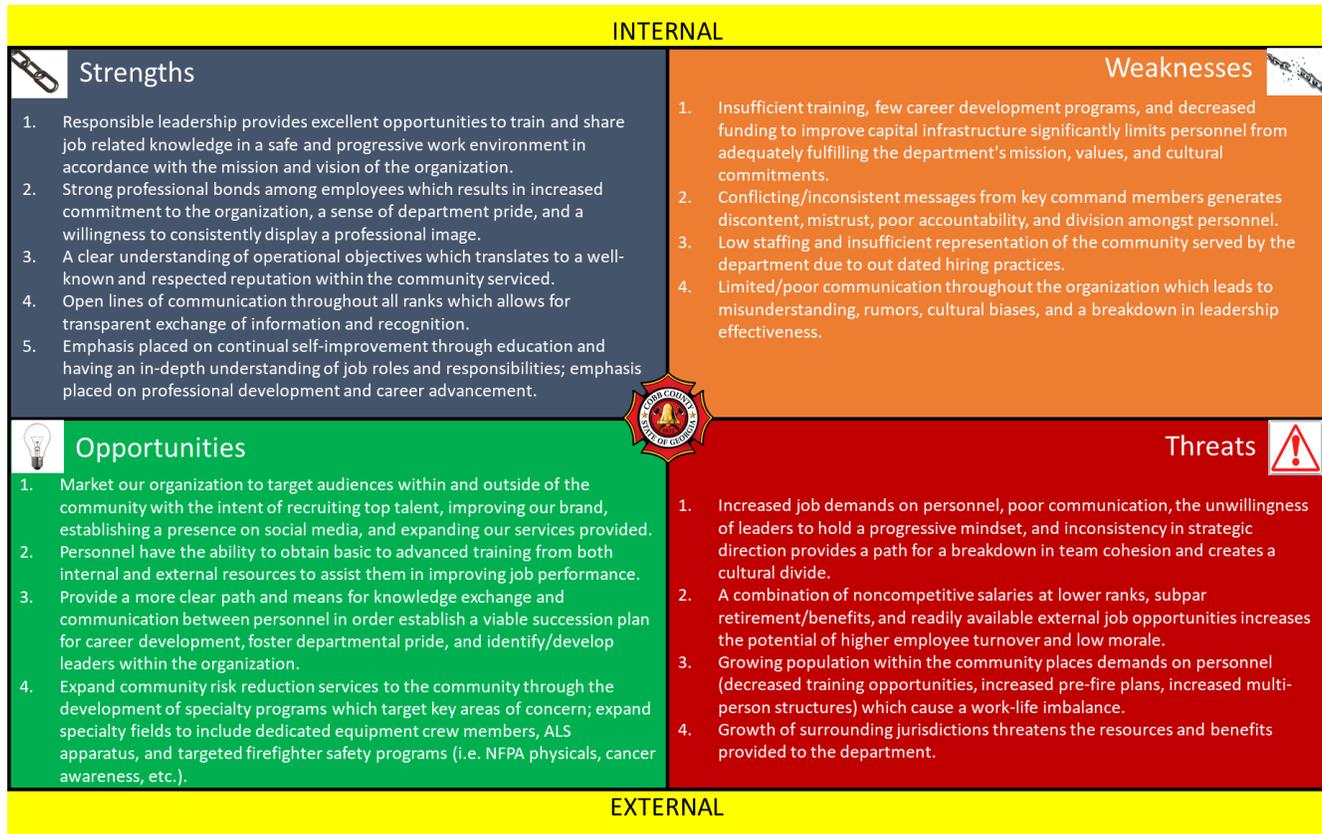
Other categories included: Community Engagement, Diversity, and Customer Service Oriented.



Lastly, the survey asked about response time expectations. Findings from the respondents include: 50.95% believe 911 should take one minute or less to process calls; 51.27% believe the first unit should arrive in four to six minutes; and 32.91% believe an ambulance should arrive in four to six minutes.

6 CRITICAL ISSUES AND SERVICE GAPS

The following pages outline the department's SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat) assessment.



The goal of conducting a SWOT Analysis on our department was to:

1. Identify unknown aspects (both internally and externally);
2. Improve our focus in an effort to get everyone working toward the same goals, and;
3. Achieve strategic alignment by having everyone working from the same game plan.

Each section of the SWOT assesses our department to make sure we are effectively utilizing our resources to achieve our mission. The feedback provided by our personnel through a survey and one-on-one feedback with senior staff was the foundational data which served to identify our department's top Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. This information was then placed in the SWOT diagram above.

The SWOT analysis and diagram did not complete the SWOT exercise. The information obtained was used to outline actionable strategies for our 5-year Strategic Plan. A detailed description of the actionable strategies can be reviewed in the Critical Tasks section of the Strategic Plan. Additional information about how the SWOT analysis data was used to discover the overarching themes driving the actionable strategies is available by request.

7 POSITION SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Firefighter

- Officer of the Day - Quarterly
 - Staffing and records management updates
 - Size Up
 - QC of reports

Engineer

- Officer of the Month
 - Kronos
 - Training (Develop-Execute-Document)
 - Preplanning

Lieutenant

- BC of the day (two times during this rating period)
 - Staffing/scheduling
 - 911 Center tour for familiarization (one time during this rating period)
 - Simulate Managing a Mayday

Captain

- SIP Operations
- Exposure report procedures
- Station Move Ups/Status Board
- Shadow day
 - 4 hrs. with Deputy Chief of Response
 - 4 hrs. with Deputy Chief of Preparation
 - 4 hrs. w/ with 1 Division Chief (FMO, Special Operations or Training)

Battalion Chiefs

- 8 hrs. shadow Fire Chief (experience legal procedures, agenda prep and budget prep)
- Schedule Lieutenant or Battalion Chief ride-a-long

Division Chief

- Ride with Battalion Chief – 8 hours

8 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Assessment and planning are defined as the processes used to identify the community’s fire protection and other emergency service needs to identify potential goals and objectives. The following sections have an associated department goal followed by the SMART objectives. After each SMART Objectives, a chart is provided to track progress on each of the SMART objectives.

Goal #1

Maintain and refine CCFES organizational and operational structure to ensure the preservation of high-quality emergency service including protection from homeland security threats and protection of life, property, and the environment⁴.

Goal #1 – Objective Tracking							
		O- Scheduled	X – Completed				
PI	Description	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
1A.3	The Fire Chief’s Office or designee will review and update the Strategic Plan by December 31 of each year to ensure that it accurately reflects the status of the agency’s mission. The Strategic Plan will also be implemented each year on October 1 st which is the beginning of the fiscal year.	X	X	O	O	O	O
1B.3	The fiscal officer will update the organization charts by December 31 of each year to reflect the agency’s structure.	X	X	O	O	O	O
1B.3	The Fire Chief’s Office will define the function, roles, and responsibilities for all support personnel by December 31, 2022 to accurately represent the employee’s function and the needs of the agency.			O			
2A.2	In January of each year, review service responsibility areas and associated response agreements with each involved agency.	X	X	O	O	O	O
2A.2 2C.2 2C.6	By September 30, 2025 (end of fiscal year 2024), the EMS Operations Division Chief, along with the Planning Division, will seek to replace the pseudo CAD to CAD link currently in place with the ambulance zone providers with a true CAD to CAD link.						O
2A.3	The Planning Division will add 1 Fire Data Tech during FY22 and FY24.				O		O
2A.5	The Planning Division will improve the internal methodology to determine incident loss & save estimations by September 30, 2022. This will likely include the purchase and training on Xactimate software to be						

⁴ Goal #1Cobb County 2020-2021 Biennial Budget Book Fire Department Information pg.

	used by the Investigations unit to more accurately determine loss & save data.						
2A.7	The Planning Division will purchase MySidewalk CRAig 1300 Plus software by October 1, 2021. This software will be used to analyze and report on community characteristics to update the CRA and community profile.	X	X				
2C.5	The Planning Division in cooperation with the Deputy Chief of Response, will develop a Memorandum of Understanding with the Cobb 911 Center to better determine call processing time standards by September 30, 2022. The MOU will identify performance standards as well as actions if the standards are not met.			O			
2D.10	The Planning Division, in cooperation with the Fire Chief's Office, will solicit input from external stakeholders in the form of a community expectation survey and in-person feedback session.			O			

Goal #2

Effectively communicate the Department’s strategic plan to employees, partners, and stakeholders.

Goal #2 – Objective Tracking							
		O- Scheduled		X – Completed			
PI	Description	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
3A.2	The Fire Chief will review and present the contents of the Community Risk Analysis / Standards of Cover and Strategic Plan to the Director of Public Safety and County Manager by October 1 of each year.		X	O	O	O	O
3B.4	The Fire Chief’s Office will synchronize the Strategic Plan with funding as approved by the Board of Commissioners.	X	X	O	O	O	O
3C.2	Program managers will be responsible to ensure the Strategic Plan goals and objectives are communicated to all subordinates by December 31 st of each year.	X	X	O	O	O	O
3C.2	Each program manager will review the Strategic Plan goals and objectives and report progress quarterly to the Fire Chief’s Office.	X	X	O	O	O	O

Goal #3

Provide community risk reduction services and programs to the community in order to promote awareness and prevention and help ensure the highest quality of life within Cobb County⁵.

Goal #3 – Objective Tracking							
		O- Scheduled		X – Completed			
PI	Description	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
5A.1	The Fire Marshal will review IFC and Cobb County Code Chapter 54 by December 31 of each year to determine if new editions of the IFC or amendments are needed to local fire prevention issues.	O	X	X	X	X	X
5A.3	The Fire Marshal’s Office will add 2 new part time Fire Inspectors by October 1, 2021.		X				
5A.3	The Fire Marshal’s Office will add one Public Service Technician III position by September 30, 2023. This position will assist with administrative duties associated with the Fire Marshal’s Office.			O			
5A.3	The Fire Marshal’s Office will add one Fire Protection Engineer position during FY22 and FY24. These positions will assist in improving Plan Review performance of the Fire Marshal’s Office.			O		O	
5A.3	The Fire Marshal’s Office will add one Fire Inspector position each year starting in FY23 for a total of 4 positions. These positions will assist in improving the inspection performance of the Fire Marshal’s Office.			O	O	O	O
5A.8	The Fire Marshal’s Office will add one Captain - Deputy Fire Marshal position by September 30, 2023. This position will be responsible for Storage/Industrial Task Force & Training.			O			
5B.2	The Safety Village Public Education Lieutenant will add one part time Fire and Life Safety Educator position during FY23 and FY25				O		O
5B.5	The Safety Village Public Education Director and Lieutenant will add 3 schools to the UL Xplorlabs program by September 30, 2023.			O	O	O	O
5C.7	The Chief Fire Investigator will add 1 Admin Specialist II position during FY22. This position will retrieve, maintain, and update data relative to loss estimation and the corresponding Title 25 insurance claim data. Additionally, the Admin Specialist I will provide routine clerical support, assist with scheduling, case management, budgeting, in addition to other duties as assigned.			O			
5C.8	The Chief Fire Investigator will purchase outer carrier vest designed ballistic armor for each investigator during FY20.	X					

⁵ Cobb County 2020-2021 Biennial Budget Book Fire Department Information pg. 18

5C.10	The Chief Fire Investigator will purchase a body worn camera (BWC) for each investigator during FY21		O				
5C.12	The Chief Fire Investigator will ensure each investigator has obtained Certified Fire Investigator (CFI) from the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI) during FY22.				O		
5C.3	The Chief Fire Investigator will add 1 part time Police Officer during FY25. This position will be responsible for CO and burn violation enforcement.						O

Goal #4

Provide superior Fire and Emergency Service safety services and program to the community in order to mitigate incidents and help ensure the highest quality of life within Cobb County⁶.

Goal #4 – Objective Tracking							
PI	Description	O- Scheduled		X – Completed			
		FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
5E.2	Deputy Chief of Response will ensure that all recently promoted Lieutenants to attend ICS 300 and 400 by December 31st every year.	x	O	O	O	O	O
5E.2	Training Chief will require all fire recruits to complete NIMS 100, 200, 700, and 800 by December 31st every year.	x	O	O	O	O	O
5F.1	EMS Operations Division Chief will evaluate the need for additional paramedic incentive pay positions by September 31st each year.	X	O	O	O	O	O
5F.5	EMS Division Chief will ensure that training on HIPPA or protection of patient records is conducted during the 2022 calendar year.			O			
5F.6	EMS Operations Division Chief will implement the EMS Compass Initiative during the 2022 calendar year.			O			
6F.3	EMS Operations Division Chief will purchase replacement ballistic gear for Med Ops personnel by September 31st, 2022			O			
6E.2	EMS Operations Division Chief will research and purchase replacement front line cardiac monitors by September 31st, 2024.				O		
5G.2	TRT District Chief will send six Tier III personnel to the Alabama Fire College to obtain the NPQ swift water Technician certification by September 30 th of each year.	O	O	O	O	O	O
6E.1	The TRT District Chief will research and purchase a set of battery powered extrication equipment by September 30 of each year.	X	X	O	O	O	O
6E.2	The TRT District Chief will purchase two replacement sets of Holmatro extrication equipment by September 30, 2023.			O		O	
6E.2	The TRT District Chief will purchase two replacement sets of Holmatro extrication equipment by September 30, 2025.		X		O		
6E.2	The TRT District Chief will purchase a replacement TRT rescue boat - Oceanid RDC Inflatable Boat during FY21 and FY23.		X		O		

⁶ Cobb County 2020-2021 Biennial Budget Book Fire Department Information page.

6E.2	The TRT District Chief will purchase a replacement TRT rescue boat - SJX Rescue Boat during FY24.					O	
5H.1	The Hazmat District Chief will oversee the construction of Fire Station 31 at Cobb County International Airport by September 30, 2024. This site will offer a possible location for the relocation of the North HMRT.				O	O	
5H.4a	The Hazmat District Chief will annually budget and oversee the use a designated vendor clinic to perform annual OSHA mandated hazmat physicals and exit physicals for all hazmat personnel by September 30 th of each year.	X	X	O	O	O	O
6E.2	The Hazmat District Chief will purchase Area Rae Pro Monitor by September 30, 2023				X		

Goal #5

Maintain a safe, efficient and effective work environment for all public safety personnel.

Goal #5 – Objective Tracking							
PI	Description	O- Scheduled		X – Completed			
		FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
6B.3	The Deputy Chief of Preparedness will start and oversee the construction of station 17 by September 30, 2021.		X				
6B.3	The Deputy Chief of Preparedness will start and oversee the construction of station 7 by September 30, 2021.		X				
6B.3	The Deputy Chief of Preparedness will start and oversee the construction of station 29 by September 30, 2023.			O			
6B.3	The Deputy Chief of Preparedness will start and oversee the construction of station 12 by September 30, 2023.			O			
6B.3	The Deputy Chief of Preparedness will start and oversee the construction of station 2 by September 30, 2024.				O		
6B.3	The Deputy Chief of Preparedness will start and oversee the construction of station 20 by September 30, 2025.					O	
6B.3	The Deputy Chief of Preparedness will start and oversee the construction of station 31 by September 30, 2026.						O
5E.1, 5F.1	The Fire Support Services Captain will purchase a new air & light apparatus during FY23.				O		
5E.1, 5F.1	The Fire Support Services Captain will purchase during each fiscal year the following apparatus: 5 admin vehicles, 2 Batt Chief vehicles, 3 Engines, 1 Rescue	X	X	O	O	O	O
5E.1, 5F.1	The Fire Support Services Captain will purchase apparatus for station 29. This will include 1 engine and 1 Rescue/Med Unit by September 30, 2024.				O		
5E.1e, 5F.1d, 6B.1e	The Fire Chief's Office will add personnel for new station 31 during FY23.				O		
5E.1f, 5F.1e, 6B.1f	The Deputy Chief of Preparedness will research and purchase property for Station 32 during FY23.				O		
5E.1g, 6B.1g	The Deputy Chief of Preparedness will start and oversee the construction of station 32 during FY23-24.				O	O	

5E.1h, 5F.1f, 6B.1h	The Fire Chief's Office will add personnel for new station 32 during FY24.						O	
6D.1	The Apparatus Manager will send each apparatus repair technician through 2 EVT certification programs or other similar training class (Pierce / Sutphen) during FY 22 and FY 24.				O		O	
6D.3	The Apparatus Manager will add one new Apparatus Maintenance Tech III during FY22.				O			
6D.3	The Apparatus Manager will add one new workstation with computer during FY22.				O			
6D.2	The Apparatus Manager will purchase 1 new laptop to operate software for Detroit Diesel and Pierce during FY22.				O			
6D.2	The Apparatus Manager will purchase 12 replacement lifts for Fire Vehicle Maintenance during FY23.					O		
6F.3	The Fire Support Services Captain will replace Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) - tanks, masks and equipment during FY21.		X					
6F.3	The Fire Support Services Captain will replace all Thermal Imaging Cameras during FY21.		X					
6F.4	The Fire Support Services Captain will add an additional firefighter position to the Air lab during FY23.					O		
9B.6	The Fire Support Services Captain will ensure that radio preventive maintenance is performed twice a year on mobile and portable radios, and mobile data computers.	X	X	O	O	O	O	O
6E.2	The Fire Support Services Captain will purchase additional portable radios for special teams during FY23 and FY25.					X		X
7G.1, 7G.5	The Deputy Chief of Preparedness will budget and ensure that NFPA physicals are offered and performed annually for all employees.	X	X	O	O	O	O	O
8A.2	The Training Division Chief will add 1 Lieutenant position to the Training Division during FY22.				X			
8A.5	The Training Division Chief will budget and sponsor 2 Chief Officer credentialing processes annually via Blue Card.	X	X	O	O	O	O	O
8C.1	The Training Division Chief in cooperation with the Deputy of Preparedness will complete the new Training Facility by December 2023; renovations and improvements ongoing with 2016 SPLOST funds and plans for 2023 SPLOST funds.					O		

9 FINANCIAL PLAN

Cobb County’s Financial Plan and budget can be found at the following address:

<https://www.cobbcounty.org/finance/budget>

Cobb County fire protection had been divided into local fire districts and city departments prior to January 24, 1971. On this date, the Cobb County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution to form a consolidated, all-paid, career county fire department. The department covers 305 square miles of the unincorporated areas of Cobb as well as three of the six incorporated cities within Cobb: Kennesaw, Acworth, and Powder Springs. The cities of Marietta, Smyrna, and Austell provide their own fire protection. CCFES has evolved into a 794-authorized member, full-service agency operating out of 29 stations. Cobb Fire personnel are trained to respond skillfully to fire, medical, and disaster emergencies. We provide a highly proficient, comprehensive level of service incorporating the following divisions: Preparedness (Training, Support Services, Facility Maintenance and Vehicle Maintenance); Response, (Fire Suppression; Emergency Medical Services (EMS); Field Operations, Hazardous Materials, Technical Rescue, Medical Operations and Airport Rescue Firefighting (ARFF)), Community Risk Reduction (Plan Review, Inspections, Fire Investigations, Fire Marshal’s Office, Public Fire & Life Safety Education and Community Risk). The department serves approximately 700,000 citizens and daily visitors of the community.

Cobb County Fire & Emergency Services received Accredited Agency status for the third time in March of 2017 with the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). This was the second (CCFES) milestone reached in the last 2 years. In August, 2016 Cobb Fire’s Insurance Service Rating (ISO) changed to a Class 1, which is the highest rating possible.

CCFES successfully met the criteria established through the CFAI’s voluntary self-assessment and accreditation program. CCFES is one of more than 200 agencies to achieve Internationally Accredited Agency status with the CFAI and the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc. (CPSE).

Performance Measures	FY19 Actual	FY20 Target	FY21 Target	FY22Target
RESPONSE - Percent of fires contained to the object or the room of origin	79.6%	80.0%	80.4%	80.8%
RESPONSE - FIRE SUPPRESSION - Residential Structure Fires – First Unit Total Response	10.17 minutes	9.29 minutes	9.09 minutes	8.49 minutes

Performance Measures	FY19 Actual	FY20 Target	FY21 Target	FY22 Target
RESPONSE – Alarm Handling 911 Calls	2:33 minutes	2:20 minutes	2:10 minutes	2:00 minutes
RESPONSE – Crew Turnout	1:35 minutes	1:30 minutes	1:25 minutes	1:20 minutes
RESPONSE EMS - EMS Incidents – First Unit Arrival	10:17 minutes	9:57 minutes	9:47 minutes	9:37 minutes
RESPONSE TECHNICAL RESCUE - Technical Rescue Incidents – First TRT Unit Arrival	11:35 minutes	11:25 minutes	11:15 minutes	11:05 minutes
RESPONSE – HAZMAT Hazmat Incidents – First Hazmat Unit Arrival	13:19 minutes	13:09 minutes	12:59 minutes	12:49 minutes
PREPAREDNESS – TRAINING – Percentage of personnel completing quarterly EMS training (CBTs)	58.0%	65.0%	75.0%	85.0%
PREPAREDNESS – TRAINING – Percentage of personnel completing quarterly Fire training (CBTs)	74.0%	80.0%	85.0%	90.0%
PREPAREDNESS – TRAINING – Percentage of personnel successfully completing CBT modules – 1st attempt	86.5%	88.0%	92.0%	96.0%
COMM. RISK REDUCTION – PUBLIC FIRE & LIFE SAFETY EDUCATION – Total number of students taught K, 2, 4	22,883	12,644	23,270	23,063
COMM. RISK REDUCTION– PUBLIC FIRE & LIFE SAFETY EDUCATION - % of students K, 2, 4 in Cobb Marietta City schools that have gone through the Fire Safety program	100%	52%	100%	100%

Performance Measures	FY19 Actual	FY20 Target	FY21 Target	FY22 Target
COMM. RISK REDUCTION (FMO) – Existing Units to Inspect	5,354	2,677	5,254	5,500
COMM. RISK REDUCTION (FMO) – Existing Units Inspected	5,354	2,677	5,354	5,500
COMM. RISK REDUCTION (FMO) – INSPECTIONS – Percent of Commercial Units Inspected Annually (Existing)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
COMM. RISK REDUCTION (FMO) – Inspections per Inspector positions	764	382	764	785
COMM. RISK REDUCTION – INVESTIGATIONS - Percent of cases with cause determination	82.3%	85%	90%	92%

MANDATES

The Fire Marshal’s Office enforces the “Rules and Regulations for the State Minimum Fire Safety Standards” as adopted by the State Fire Commissioner pursuant to Title 25, Chapter 2, O.C.G.A. Based on Title 25, Chapter 2, O.C.G.A. the FMO has three major responsibilities:

1. Conduct fire & life safety inspections of existing buildings and structures.
2. Review plans and specifications for proposed buildings and structures, issue joint building permits with the Building Departments when plans are approved, and conduct fire & life safety inspections of such buildings and structures.
3. Issue joint Certificates of Occupancy with the Building Departments of Cobb County, Acworth, Kennesaw, and Powder Springs, when all appropriate inspections have been approved.

CCFES continues to listen to and respond to the needs of its members. In 2017, the department implemented Cancer Preventive Guidelines and Recommendations. These guidelines were designed to address the increasing number of occurrences of cancer in firefighters. Also, the State of Georgia passed HB146, which requires all fire departments within the State of Georgia to provide cancer insurance for each Georgia Certified Firefighter.

FY19/20 CHALLENGES and or ACHIEVEMENTS

In March, 2017, Cobb County Fire & Emergency Services (CCFES) received accredited status for the third time. This accreditation status is good for a 5-year period which includes an annual compliance review process. As of March 2020, CCFES has completed the Commission on Fire Accreditation International Annual Compliance Review and was approved to continue as an accredited agency. Through the accreditation process, CCFES has made several improvements to the strategic plan but this will continue 225 to need refinement. The strategic plan was written in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) Fire & Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual 9 th Edition, and it is intended to guide the organization within established parameters set forth by the authority having jurisdiction.

In 2019 the CFAI updated their Fire & Emergency Services Self-Assessment Manual to the 10th edition. This will require CCFES to update its accreditation processes and documentation to include the Strategic Plan, Self-Assessment Manual, Standard of Cover, and Community Risk Assessment before October 2021. The 10th Edition Self-Assessment Manual has added several new categories and critical performance measures which will require CCFES to incorporate this into the continuous improvement model.

To maintain our nationally accredited status and current ISO 1 rating, the department has three major areas of concern that must be addressed over the next five years: (1) Facilities, (2) Personnel Needs, and 3) Apparatus and Vehicles.

Facilities

CCFES is currently operating out of 29 Fire stations and six of those stations were built prior to 1970. Since 2017, two fire stations have been replaced (Station 1 and Station 18). Over the next two years, three additional stations will be replaced (Stations 7, 12, and 17). Additionally, due to the increased demands for service (volume of calls, traffic conditions, etc.), CCFES plans to add two stations to its total Stations 29 and 31).

Station Rebuilds:

Station 1 - 5656 Mableton Pkwy Built 1968 Completed 2019

Station 18 - 1660 Mars Hill Road Built 1970 Completed 2018

Station 7 - 810 Hurt Road Built 1962 Under construction

Station 12 - 810 Brackett Road Built 1964 Rebuild 2022

Station 17 - 3361 Barrett Parkway Built 1968 Under construction

Additional Fire Stations:

Station 29 Location TBD (Akers Mill Area) Build 2021 (SPLOST)

Station 31 Cobb County International Airport Build 2022

New Physical Abilities Test Facility:

In 2020, CCFES proudly completed construction and the third-party validation process of an indoor Physical Abilities Test (PAT) facility. This new indoor facility is one of a handful of such dedicated PAT facilities in the country which can conduct year-round PAT's for both pre-hire applicants and incumbent firefighters in a climate-controlled environment. Additional to the benefits of being in a climate-controlled facility, we can utilize clean equipment, free of potential carcinogens which can adhere to primary equipment found in the field.

Personnel Needs

The biggest challenge of the department is the hiring of sworn positions due to the low number of applications received. To overcome these hiring challenges, two new Fire Recruiter positions were created. The focus of the Fire Recruiters is to regularly interact with the public to provide information 226 about the fire service, increase interest in joining our department, and guide applicants through the hiring process. The hiring process has been revamped to include a new online pre-hire written exam which measures an individual's academic aptitude in relation to our Fire and AEMT recruit academy academic requirements. Working closely with Fire Internal Affairs and Human Resources, the hiring process can now be performed up to four times per year depending on departmental needs. Additionally, other factors (Physical Abilities Test scores, already held fire department experience/certifications, already held NREMT certification, regionally accredited academic degrees, honorable military experience, and CCFES Explorer program graduates) potentially associated with the pre-hire candidates are used to determine eligibility and build a candidate pool.

The current vacancies are not creating a significant challenge for response capabilities as these positions will be used to staff stations and apparatus that will be placed in service later in FY 2021/2022.

Apparatus and Vehicles

For many years, CCFES has utilized a capital replacement schedule to maintain a reliable fleet of apparatus. This practice will continue throughout the duration of our five-year plan and beyond. In addition to the replacement schedule, we will add apparatus and vehicles to our fleet as new stations are built and as service demands change, for example:

- Tiller Trucks
- Quick Response Vehicles (QRV)
- Vehicles for Support Staff
- ARFF Vehicles

Other Challenges

Due to budgetary constraints, it has recently become necessary to finance vehicle purchases and some facility construction rather than paying cash. In addition, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic is causing response pressures and adding financial concerns driven by increased overtime and ensuring adequate PPE gear for our firefighters and EMS staff.

Also, the possible negative impact on the fire fund's future revenues due to the COVID-19 pandemic combined with the funding requirements for firefighter step in grade promotions, is causing concern over the future ability to fund necessary capital replacements and desired capital improvements.

Future Outlook

CCFES has worked hard to successfully analyze the 911 Center's call processing times. Call processing represents the time taken by dispatchers on 911 calls to answer, collect, and dispatch units to an emergency. Analysis of this data is important since this can have a significant impact on the time taken to get resources to an emergency. Over the past year or so, CCFES, Cobb 911, and Cobb IS have worked to improve 911 call processing. Additional efforts will need to be made to ensure 911 call processing is analyzed regularly to improve overall response times.

The department will continue those practices implemented in the past year. While we have made great strides towards completing many of the goals and objectives outlined in our 5-year Strategic plan, there is still work to be done.

We adopted a voluntary NFPA physical program in conjunction with a newly revised Physical Readiness Policy. This newly combined program will be implemented this year.

Fire Recruiters will continue to work with internal and external agencies to enhance our efforts to attract a diverse group of applicants.

Emergency vehicles operating in traffic congested areas are more likely to experience extended response times, crashes, and unpredictable delays in reaching emergencies. The installation of some type of traffic light preemption system can be used to offset the effects of traffic congestion and prioritize traffic flow in favor of emergency vehicles. This technology provides a green light interval to the approaching emergency vehicle while limiting other directions of travel. Traffic light preemption can be accomplished by a variety of technologies. These technologies can involve lower tech to very high tech and expensive mobile solutions. In October 2019, Cobb County Fire & Emergency Services begin using existing Department of Transportation (DOT) software and infrastructure to implement an inexpensive and low-tech solution to traffic light preemption. This solution consisted of installing directional traffic light preemption buttons inside the fire station. As emergency vehicles responded from the station, the corresponding direction of travel button could be activated to start the traffic light preemption. This button controls a series of traffic lights that would be timed to turn green in the direction of travel for the emergency vehicle. This in essence creates a "flush plan" to move existing traffic out of the path of the responding emergency vehicle. An initial analysis was completed on response data focusing on performance before and after the preemption project. Results of our analysis showed a significant reduction in response times for every category examined. In some cases, a 9% reduction in the total response times was recorded using traffic light preemption. The limitation to this type of traffic light preemption system is that it impacts only a limited number of intersections. Additionally, emergency vehicles must be responding from the station to take advantage of the system. To address these limitations, mobile technologies that can be used to communicate with all traffic light intersections is preferred. We are working to identify grants / other funding to use for traffic light preemption mobile technologies across the county to improve the safety and speed of emergency vehicle responses.

REVENUE & EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

REVENUE SOURCES

SOURCES	FY19 Actual	FY20 Adopted	FY21 Adopted	FY22 Proposed
Taxes	\$ 94,480,588	\$ 98,407,501	\$ 95,329,830	\$ 99,539,111
Penalties and Interest	\$ 228,280	\$ 180,000	\$ 182,000	\$ 182,000
Other Taxes	\$ 699,867	\$ 625,000	\$ 629,391	\$ 629,391
Licenses and Permits	\$ 4,200	\$ 2,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
Intergovernmental Revenues	\$ 6,539	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Charges for Services	\$ 2,165,108	\$ 1,770,100	\$ 1,770,100	\$ 1,770,100
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$ 69,816	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Other Financing Sources	\$ 280,423	\$ 128,000	\$ 148,000	\$ 148,000
Transfers	\$ 975,181	\$ -	\$ 4,350,000	\$ 4,350,000
Total Fire	\$ 98,910,003	\$ 101,113,601	\$ 102,414,321	\$ 106,623,602

EXPENDITURE BY CLASSIFICATION

CLASSIFICATION	FY19 Actual	FY20 Adopted	FY21 Adopted	FY22 Proposed
Personnel Services	\$ 76,873,554	\$ 78,988,351	\$ 87,092,428	\$ 89,400,204
Operating	\$ 12,382,880	\$ 14,675,779	\$ 12,792,779	\$ 14,693,384
Capital	\$ 8,201,750	\$ 1,324,001	\$ -	\$ -
Debt Service	\$ 364,912	\$ 1,832,728	\$ 1,867,305	\$ 1,867,305
Transfers Out	\$ 891,924	\$ 666,205	\$ 661,809	\$ 662,709
Contingency	\$ -	\$ 3,626,537	\$ -	\$ -
Total Fire	\$ 98,715,020	\$ 101,113,601	\$ 102,414,321	\$ 106,623,602

10 THE HISTORY OF THE PROCESS

Until 2010, the strategic planning process was completed each year the department budget was developed.

The County's formal Biennial Budget process is structured to ensure that the goals and objectives that implement agency programs and services are consistent with the agency's mission. The FY 2009/2010 Guide to the Biennial Budget Process states: "The goals and objectives together lay out both the general direction and the specific steps required to achieve the department's mission."

The Department's Divisions are guided by the mission statement and by goals and objectives that are developed every two years as part of the Biennial Budget process using the Department's strategic planning document as a starting point. The Department's mission statement has evolved over the years to accurately reflect its historical and legal mission. This is very important since the Department's goals and objectives must be in direct support of the stated mission.

Every two (2) years during the first phase of the County's Biennial Budget process, each County department is required to submit a Management Plan, which includes the following components: mission statement, department description, goals and objectives, and key performance measures. Until a Management Plan is submitted to the County Budget Office, a department cannot begin its Financial and Capital Plans. This insures that agency programs, services, and their goals and objectives are reviewed annually, and ensures the departments meets the standards established in the Standards of Coverage (SOC) document. The goal-setting process starts with a review and update of the Department's strategic planning worksheets, followed by a request for additional input from Battalion Chiefs, Division Chiefs, Deputy Chiefs, and their subordinates.

Goals and objectives are incorporated into all of the department's programs by having members representing those programs provide input into the strategic plan, which in turn influences the goals and objectives that are developed as part of the biennial budget process. Each of the Deputy Chiefs, Division Chiefs, and Battalion Chiefs that have operational responsibility for a department program provides suggestions for improvements, not only at budget time, but also throughout the year, using the standards established in the CRA/SOC as a guide.

The strategic planning process include input from Field Operations (which includes Fire Operations, EMS, and Special Operations), Fire Safety Education, EMS and Special Operations Support, the Fire Marshal's Office, Fire Investigations, Apparatus Maintenance, Facility Maintenance, Planning Division, and Information Services. These programs are described in the Department's mission statement and department description.

Throughout the budget process, the county budget staff works primarily with the Fire Chief and his immediate staff. The three Deputy Chiefs are tasked with getting timely input from appropriate persons or groups in their chain of command.

All agency goals and objectives that are depended upon funding have several levels of approval. The first is the department level when the various Divisions within the department present their goals and objectives to the Fire Chief and the three Deputy Chiefs (senior staff) during the management plan phase of the biennial budget process. The senior staff then refines and prioritizes the goals and objectives. The Fire Chief gives his approval, and the goals and objectives are then sent to the Director of Public Safety for approval. The Director then sends the goals and objectives on to the Budget Office where they are reviewed and prepared for incorporation into the draft proposed budget.

The next step occurs when the Budget Office presents the proposed budget to the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners and the County Manager. During a scheduled County Commission meeting, the Chairman presents the proposed budget to the Board of Commissioners for review. After the proposed budget is advertised in the county's legal organ (the Marietta Daily Journal) for three days, a public hearing is held to give citizens an opportunity to comment. The final step occurs during a September Board of Commissioners' meeting when the annual budget is adopted by the Board. After

the Board of Commissioners approves the new budget, the goals and objectives become action plans to be accomplished by the time stated in the objective.

The management process of implementing the Department's goals and objectives involves the same people who initially developed them. After the Annual Budget is adopted by the Board of Commissioners, the Fire Chief returns the goals and objectives to the appropriate Deputy Chiefs, Division Chiefs, and Battalion Chiefs to be used as action plans for implementation. The Fire Chief monitors the implementation of the Goals and Objectives through the Deputy Chiefs, and the Deputy Chiefs monitor progress through their Division and Battalion Chiefs to ensure that the standards established in the SORC are met, and that completion deadlines are accomplished. The Department's Budget Analyst at the County Budget Office works with the Department of Public Safety and to aid with budgetary problems associated with implementation of the goals and objectives.

Assessing the achievement of each goal and objective is accomplished throughout the year. After the Board of Commissioners adopts the new annual budget, the goals and objectives become action plans to be accomplished according to the stipulations in the objective. Where possible, implementation of the action plans/objectives will involve the same people who formulated the goals and objectives. Each Deputy Chief, Division Chief, and Battalion Chief reviews the progress of the action plans and reports the status during battalion chiefs' meetings and management staff meetings.

As with any strategic plan, the process should be analytical, involve multiple entities, be within budget, remain a living document, and subject to change. Fire services "best practices" and "lessons learned" should be incorporated as budgetary and political constraints will permit. All personnel should be aware of the agency's core values, department mission, and expectations needed to accomplish the lawful objectives of the agency and keep meeting service demands.

As a dynamic and fluid process, strategic planning should examine successes and failures of the Department as well as those experienced by other agencies. External stakeholders should be periodically included in the process.

The first step taken in the revision of the Strategic Plan was to revise the Mission Statement, establish clear Core Values, Cultural Commitments, and Vision. This is an ongoing mission of our Fire Chief and the senior command staff supporting him.

As it was in the initial development of the Strategic Plan, members continue to perform an in-depth review of department's Performance Measurements, relying upon input from internal stakeholders (input solicited from all personnel) within the Department. This input was gathered through a SWOT (**S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats) analysis, reviewed, analyzed, and discussed by the senior Command Staff and PMAC. The result was the creation of a comprehensive list of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.