

# Sonoma County Fire District Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026

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*Mission: To compassionately care for the safety of our communities and our visitors through progressive professional emergency preparedness and response*



August 2023

## Table of Contents

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Fire Chief's Vision</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>SCFD Organization</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Services</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Divisions</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>EOA-1</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Standards of Cover</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Finances</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>The Strategic Planning Process</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Top Strengths, Problems, Opportunities, Threats (Top SPOT)</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Goals and Strategic Incentives</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Goal 1 -- Fiscal Responsibilities</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Goal 2 -- Infrastructure and Equipment</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Goal 3 -- Workforce</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Goal 4 -- Community Service</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Goal 5 -- Health and Safety</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Goal 6 -- Service Delivery Enhancements</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Appendix I -- Full Strengths, Problems, Opportunities, Threats (SPOT)</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Appendix II -- Brief History</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Appendix II - Glossary of Abbreviations, Acronyms and Terms</b>	<b>31</b>

## **Executive Summary**

Strategic Planning is defined as a “continuous and systematic process where the guiding members of an organization make decisions about its future, develop the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future, and determine how success is to be measured.” The Sonoma County Fire District (SCFD) set forth to develop a dynamic strategic plan in 2020 that would enable the department to accomplish its mission of protecting life and property and reflect the department’s vision of meeting customer expectations through quality service delivery. Back then, SCFD knew it needed to take bold steps to address many challenges it faced including building financial stability.

In 2023, the SCFD re-affirmed the department’s mission, vision, and core value statements which are the keystones of organizational purpose, direction, and character. A Strengths, Problems, Opportunities, and Threats (S.P.O.T.) analysis was done and identified key factors that affect organizational performance. When compared to core programs, the internal Divisions visions, this analysis identified critical issues facing the SCFD. The success of this plan will not be measured strictly by the implementation of goals and objectives; but rather from the realization of our vision, support received by SCFD elected officials, members of the department, and the community. This support will be realized by the plan adoption, commitment of resources, department accountability, and continued community involvement. This vested interest will ultimately enable the department to execute this plan as it strives for organizational excellence.

## Introduction

The Sonoma County Fire District (SCFD) is pleased to present its 2023 - 2026 Strategic Plan. Our Strategic plan defines our mission, vision for the future, our guiding principles, and strategic strategies that will guide our organization for the next three – to – five years.

SCFD is mission-driven and a customer-focused agency. Our community can depend on us to provide exceptional emergency medical, fire, and rescue services. The members of the SCFD serve our communities with pride, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. Our agency is an “all risk” fire district, meaning we will respond to the needs of the community regardless of the nature of the incident and begin the process of solving the problem to lead to a positive outcome. We are a combination agency (volunteer and full-time staff). As a newly formed agency, we have a rich history of great agencies with a new history in the making.

One of the strategies SCFD has incorporated into its long-term plans is to follow the process of fire service accreditation through the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE), Fire and Emergency Services Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM). The accreditation process for the fire service is similar to the accreditation process for hospitals, schools, and law enforcement agencies. Developing a strategic plan using those guidelines will position SCFD a step closer to accreditation.

This living document is a collaborative effort and developed to assist with guiding the Sonoma County Fire District into the future of our ever-changing community and industry. The identified goals and strategies as outlined in this Strategic Plan will guide the district into the future. However, we acknowledge there will be unforeseeable issues that will arise and impact how our Fire District operates and provides service to the community. These issues will offer both challenges and opportunities to our Board of Directors, Fire District administrators and personnel, who will need to review, assess and work together to identify options and find solutions. It is these opportunities for growth and development, guided by the structure provided in this Strategic Plan that will keep us united and fluid as an organization, constantly.



Strategic planning plays a vital role in the fire service by ensuring effective emergency response and overall operational success. By carefully assessing risks, resources, and community needs, strategic planning enables the Sonoma County Fire District to allocate resources efficiently, prioritize District needs, and develop long-term goals. It helps identify gaps in capabilities, plan for future growth, and enhance collaboration with other agencies. Moreover, strategic planning enables our Fire District to adapt to evolving challenges, such as the evolving threat of wildland fires and expanded services we provide.

*Arnie Tognozzi, SCFD Board of Directors President*



*I am pleased to present the 2023 -2026 Strategic Plan for your Sonoma County Fire District. This plan is the result of a collaborative effort to develop a roadmap for our department into the future. The implementation of the goals and strategies identified in the plan will help us fulfill our commitment to providing the district and its citizens with exceptional service before the time of need (fire prevention, disaster preparedness), and by providing efficient services during an emergency for the best outcome possible. As our industry standards, the economy, and the community change, so do the methods by which we provide our services. As such, this is a “living document” meaning we will update our plan periodically to keep it relevant and up to date.*

*Mark Heine, Fire Chief*



## Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles

Mission, vision, and guiding principal statements serve as the foundation for an organization's strategic plan. Mission, vision, and guiding principles convey the purpose, direction, and underlying values of the organization. When developed and implemented in a thoughtful and deliberate manner, these statements can serve as powerful tools that provide organizations with meaningful guidance, especially in times of rapid change. Consequently, taking the time to craft relevant mission, vision, and guiding principles statements, and moreover keep them relevant and fresh, has always been important to SCFD.

**Vision** -- The vision of an organization is what clearly defines and establishes what it is the organization intends to become. SCFD vision statement is:

*We will position the fire district to provide fiscal sustainability while providing excellent emergency response and community preparedness.*

**Mission** -- The mission statement what clearly defines the core services and agency provides. The mission statement identifies why the organization exists and it keeps department members focused on what is truly important. SCFD mission statement is:

*To compassionately care for the safety of our community and our visitors through progressive, professional emergency preparedness and response.*

**SCFD Guiding Principles** -- Guiding principles identify the fire department's culture and belief system; they guide the organization's internal conduct, as well as its relationships with the communities that it serves.

SCFD core principles are: Honesty, Respect, Integrity

- We believe in providing the highest level of professionalism to our communities; therefore, we will serve with honesty, respect, and integrity.
- We believe in a positive and professional work environment; therefore, we will treat everyone with respect and honesty.
- We believe in the importance of flexibility and adaptability; therefore, we will welcome growth and change.
- We believe that honesty is essential; therefore, we will be transparent in every aspect of service.
- We believe being compassionate is essential; therefore, we will treat everyone with kindness.



➤ We believe in investing in the wellness and development of our members; therefore, we prioritize their health and development.

### **Leaders Intent – The Fire Chief’s Vision**

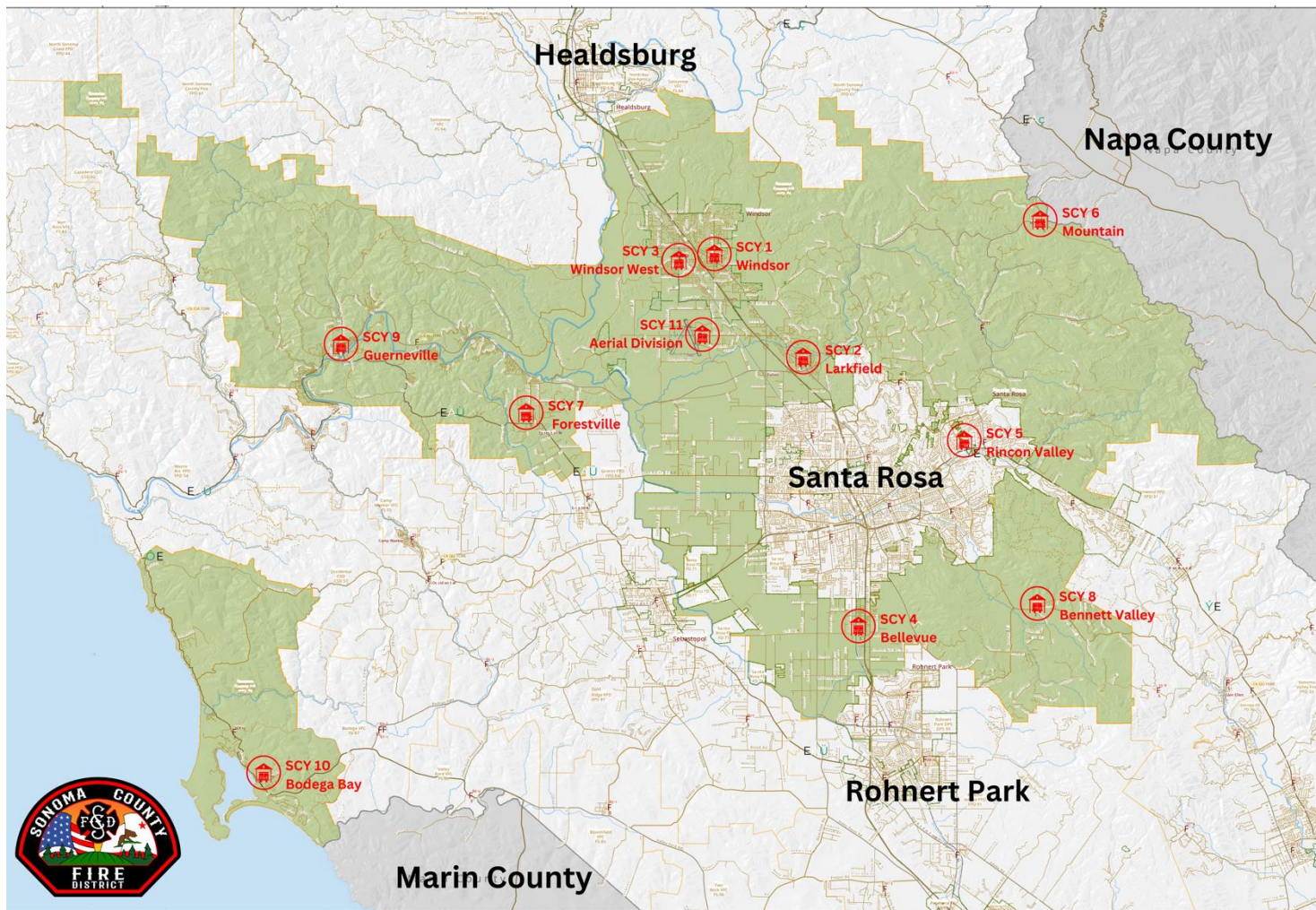
A Chief’s vision statement serves as a guide for continuous self-improvement and provides additional direction and focus for the department and community. The Fire Chief has three specific essentials: People sustainability; Money sustainability and; Service sustainability.

<b>People</b>	Physicals Good equipment and working conditions Compensated to the best of our abilities Health and Safety committee Strong training program Employee support systems
<b>Money</b>	Sound budget process Long range planning Reserve funds Fiscal policies Best practices
<b>Service</b>	Standards of Cover (SOC) Expand Advance Life Support (ALS) Helicopter Boat Water Rescue Russian River Flood Events

## SCFD Organization

Beginning several years ago, the district started the journey of annexation to merge several agencies into one, with the singular goal of maintaining and in some cases increasing overall services to our communities. In April 2019, Sonoma County Fire District (SCFD) was formed after the process of annexing the Rincon Valley Fire District (established 1945), the Bennett Valley Fire District (established 1948) the Windsor Fire District (established 1965), and the Mountain Volunteer Fire Department (established 1968). In July 2020, the Russian River Fire Protection District (established 1922 as the Guerneville Fire Protection District) annexed into SCFD. In 2021 and 2022, the Forestville (established 1938), and Bodega Bay (established 1984) Fire Protection Districts, respectively, were annexed into the district. All these Districts bring a very rich history, and their milestones are now integrated into the new organization to begin and create "new history" for SCFD.

Today, The Sonoma County Fire District is seen as a leader in the fire-EMS industry. SCFD serves the Town of Windsor, Larkfield, Wikiup, Mark West, Mountain Home area, Middle Rincon Valley, Bennett Valley, Bellevue, The Graton Casino, Fulton, Russian, River / Guerneville, Forestville, Bodega Bay, and the surrounding unincorporated areas. The district is 250 Square miles (436 square miles ambulance zone), with approximately 80,000 people. SCFD responded to 12,000 calls in 2022 out of 11 strategically placed fire stations. SCFD annual budget is \$32.5 million.





SCFD is a “special” district (defined by California Health & Safety Code 13800), independent of any town, city or county government, funded by a portion of the ad-valorem property tax and a special tax assessment on properties within its district. While fire districts generally provide service to rural and/or unincorporated areas SCFD serves the entire Town of Windsor and two large Federal Indian lands (one residential, and one casino, hotel, resort). SCFD is governed by a 7-member board of directors who are elected to serve by the people. Board members serve 4-year terms.

SCFD is seen as an industry leader. Customer care and community involvement is our culture. “We have it all” when it comes to diversity of response areas, including a municipal airport, commuter rail, large wineries, a large rural area, a variety of businesses both large and small, a large wildlife preserve, the Pacific Ocean, and one of the state’s largest casinos. The Russian River runs through the district, surrounded by large wineries, farmland, and open space. With that kind of variety, there are no “routine” calls for service in our district.

Today, by the numbers, SCFD has 84-line staff, 6 Apprentice Firefighters, and 49 Volunteers Firefighters. The administration includes a Fire Chief, three Deputy Chiefs, four Division Chiefs, four Battalion Chiefs (shift, Volunteer), a Deputy Fire Marshal, one Fire Inspector, one Public Outreach Officers, a Finance Officer, and administrative team supporting the divisions and providing human resources. As the district grows, it is discovering the need for increased staffing and infrastructure replacement.

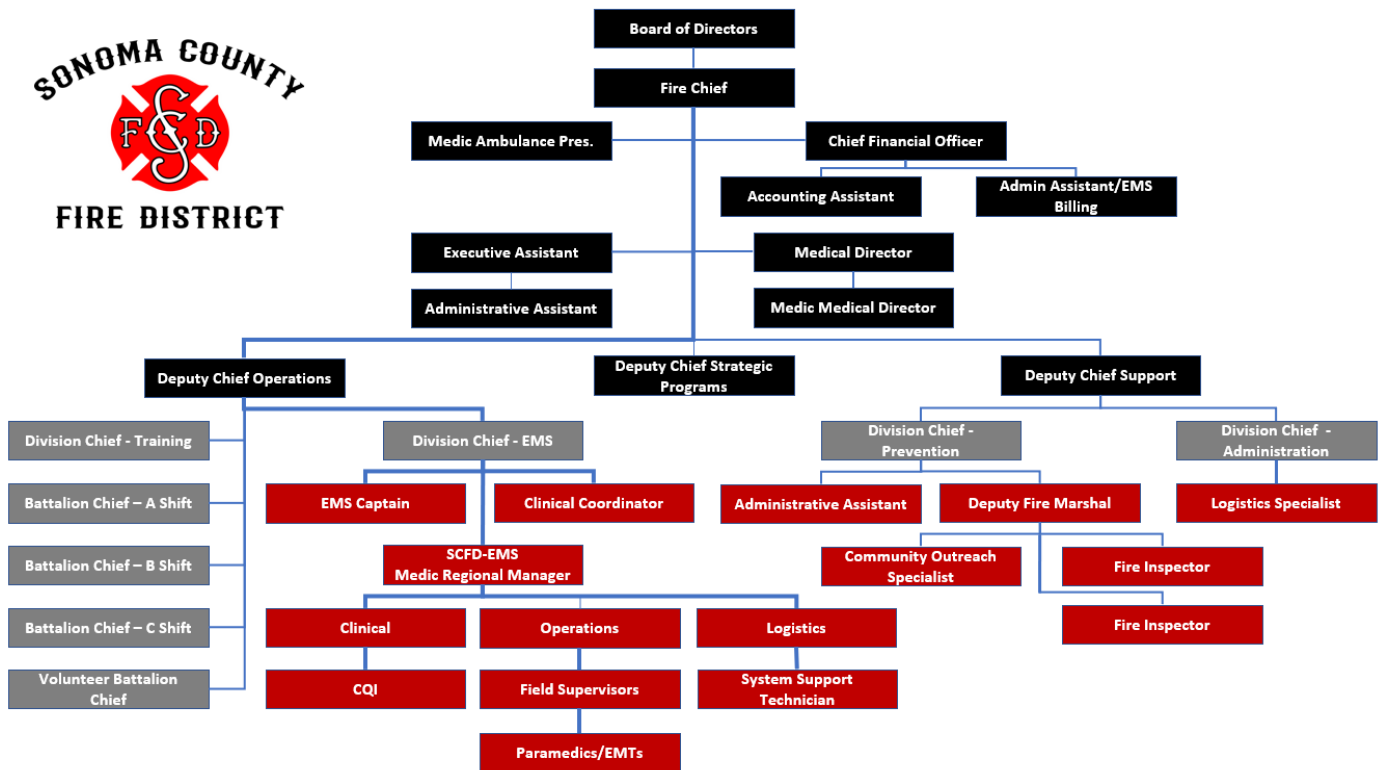
## **Services**

SCFD is an “all risk” (or “all hazard”) fire-rescue agency and responds to every level of a hazard response whether it is trench rescue, hazardous materials, confined space, building collapse, rope rescue, fire extinguishment (all fires), emergency medicals aids, dive rescue, swift water, and vehicle extraction.

## **Divisions**

SCFD is considered to be a progressive organization, paramilitary and hierarchical in that directives are issued at the top of the organization and travel down through divisions and an established chain of command.

SCFD has an executive branch (Fire Chief and two Deputy Chiefs supporting fire administration and operations), Division Chiefs (Administrative, EMS, Fire Marshal, Training). SCFD has a Human Resource Manager and a Finance Manager, and various support staff. SCFD has three full-time Battalion Chiefs (one each shift) who oversee day to day operations of 8 staffed fire stations. Shown below is the Fire District organizational chart.

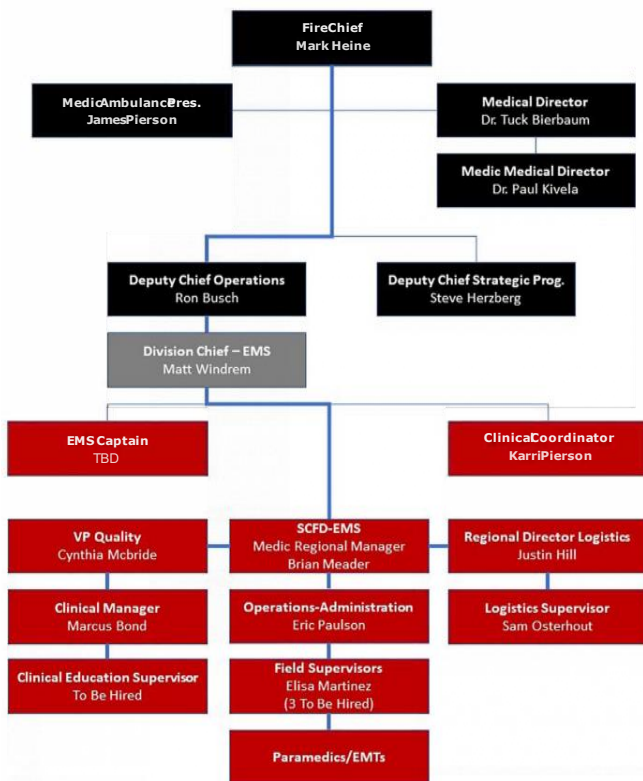


## EOA-1 Operations

In late 2021, the district entered into a contract with Medic Ambulance, Inc., to provide ground ambulance services to the District. In 2022, the District added additional single-role ambulances, staffed by Medic personnel to support District service territory. This contract and relationship allowed the District to bid on the Sonoma County RFP for Ground Ambulance Service in Exclusive Operating Area 1 (EOA-1). In early 2023, the district, with Medic as a subcontractor, submitted a bid to provide ground ambulance services to EOA-1. After scoring highest in the rating process, the district was awarded the contract to serve EOA-1 by the County of Sonoma in June 2023.

Through the rest of 2023 and into 2024, the district and Medic Ambulance will be expanding operations, hiring staff, training, and preparing for the implementation of service in EOA-1 on January 16, 2024. Most of the added staff members will be hired directly by Medic Ambulance. The District is adding an EMS Captain and an EMS Billing/Finance Analyst to support EOA-1 operations. The District has created an SCFD-EMS Enterprise Fund for the accounting associated with EOA-1 operations.

SCFD - EMS Organization Chart

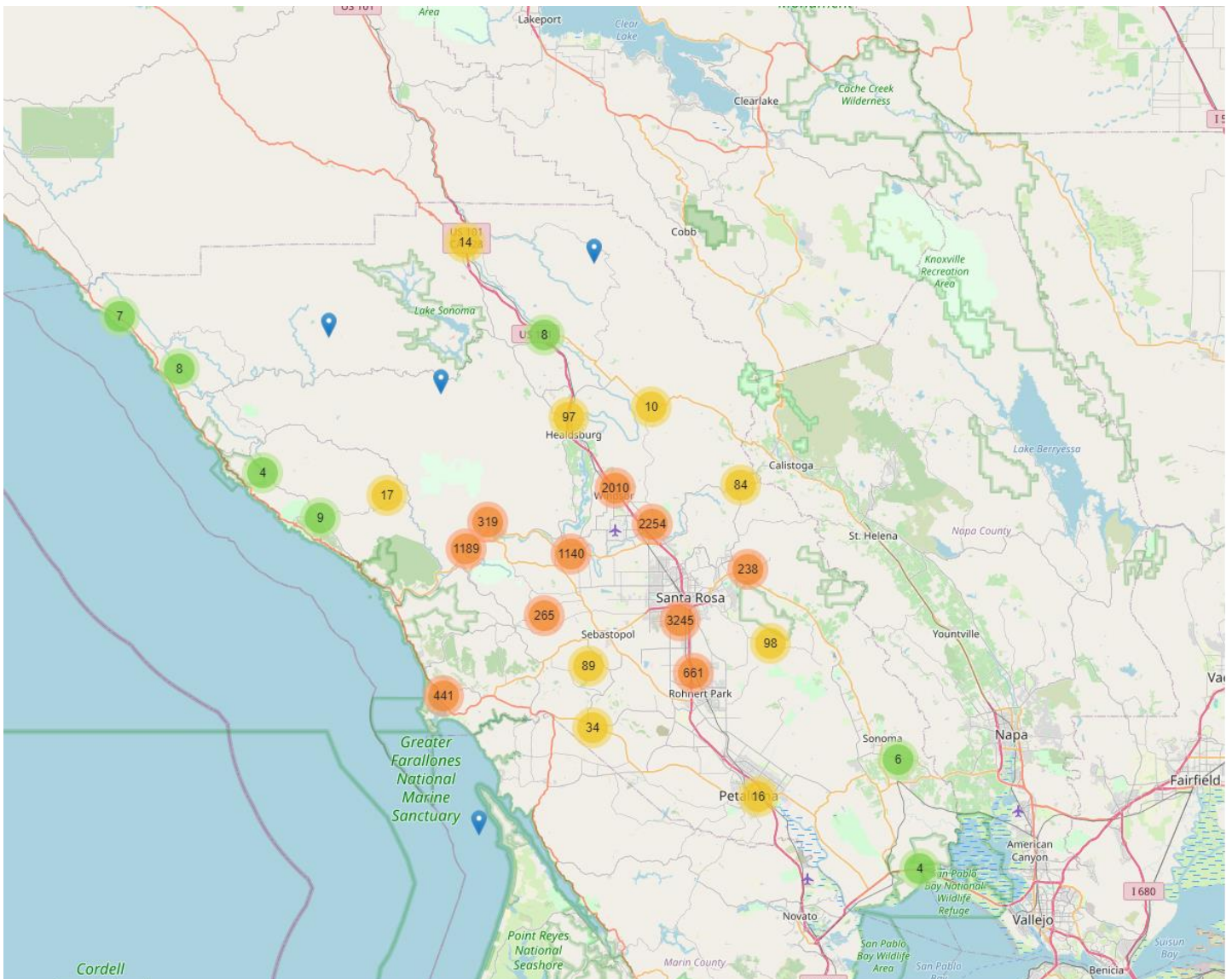


<b>Division</b>	<b>Vision</b>
Administrative Support	<i>Ensuring our members health and safety are the top priority while being innovative to put our department on the cutting edge of progress.</i>
Emergency Medical Services	<i>Bring compassionate and professional medical care to the residents and visitors of Sonoma County in their time of need.</i>
Finance	<i>To create a fiscal culture within the fire district that sets the district up to achieve short-term &amp; long-term goals for desired staffing levels, equipment, apparatus, and facilities and build accounting, contract and procurement systems that are transparent, fiscally responsible and follow best governmental practices.</i>
Fire Prevention	<i>To continue to build a customer focused, accessible team that is engaged to support each of our individual communities &amp; visitors through exceptional community risk reduction and progressive fire prevention programs &amp; investigations.</i>
Human Resources	<i>Invest in programs that will enrich the wellness of our employees, by empowering them to engage in their benefits.</i>
Operations	<i>Ensure we are prepared for all risk incidents while maintaining the health of the organization and increasing service levels to the communities we serve.</i>
Training and Safety	<i>Maintain proficiency in all skills, while keeping pace with technology &amp; changes to our world that will drive our culture to have a rising standard over time. We will not let complacency, budgetary constraints, or poor attitude deter us from our pursuit of excellence in everything we do.</i>



## Standards of Cover

Standards of Cover (SOC) is defined in *Community Risk Assessment* and written policies and procedures that establish the distribution and concentration of fixed and mobile resources of an organization. These policies are relative to risk classification (Fire, emergency medical services, technical rescue, hazardous materials) and category (low, moderate, high, maximum). The purpose for completing this document is to assist the SCFD in ensuring a safe and effective response force for fire suppression, emergency medical services, and specialty response situations in addition to homeland security issues. Creating an Integrated Risk Management Plan – Standards of Cover requires that a number of areas be researched, studied, and evaluated. SCFD completed a SOC in 2022. The following shows the number of calls in each area of the county where our units responded to.



## Finances

SCFD's budget is one of the most important policy and directive documents the district produces. It provides a financial plan and a framework for the entire district's operations. Developing and managing a budget is how we successfully allocate, track, and plan fiscal spending and long-term financial forecasting. SCFD budgeting process is driven by its mission; *We will position the fire district to provide fiscal sustainability while providing excellence in emergency response and community preparedness.*



### Sonoma County Fire District Current 5 Year Financial Projections

	2023-2024	2024-2025 Projection*	2025-2026 Projection*	2026-2027 Projection*	2027-2028 Projection*
Total 10 · Taxes	\$20,019,746	\$21,020,733	\$21,861,563	\$22,736,025	\$23,645,466
Total 17 · Use of Money/Property	\$95,573	\$95,573	\$95,573	\$95,573	\$95,573
Total 20 · Intergovernmental Revenues	\$5,523,626	\$5,689,335	\$5,860,015	\$6,035,816	\$6,216,890
Total 30 · Charges for Services	\$4,547,950	\$4,684,389	\$4,824,920	\$4,969,668	\$5,118,758
Total 40 · Miscellaneous Revenues	\$1,807,316	\$1,807,316	\$1,807,316	\$1,807,316	\$1,807,316
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$31,994,211</b>	<b>\$33,297,346</b>	<b>\$34,449,387</b>	<b>\$35,644,397</b>	<b>\$36,884,003</b>
Total 50 · Salaries/Benefits	\$23,244,593	\$24,406,823	\$25,139,027	\$25,893,198	\$26,669,994
Total 60 · Services/Supplies	\$7,073,321	\$7,285,521	\$7,504,086	\$7,729,209	\$7,961,085
Total 75 · Long Term Debt	\$1,571,097	\$1,474,154	\$1,295,838	\$1,158,539	\$1,158,539
Total 85 · Capital Assets	\$665,700				
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$32,554,711</b>	<b>\$33,166,497</b>	<b>\$33,938,952</b>	<b>\$34,780,946</b>	<b>\$35,789,618</b>
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>-\$560,500</b>	<b>\$130,849</b>	<b>\$510,435</b>	<b>\$863,451</b>	<b>\$1,094,385</b>

\*FY 23/24 Includes significant Capital Improvements totaling \$560,500. of which \$560,500. funded from designated reserves

\*Assumes 4% Growth on Property Taxes for FY23/24, FY24/25, FY25/26, FY26/27 & FY27/28

Assumes 5% increase on Salaries and Benefits for FY 24/25 and 3% growth for FY25/26, 26/27 & 27/28

Assumes 3% Cost Inflation on Service and Supplies for FY23/24, FY 24/25, FY25/26 & FY 26/27

Long Term Debt Payoff of Ambulance Loan in March 2024, Multi Apparatus Loan in FY25/26

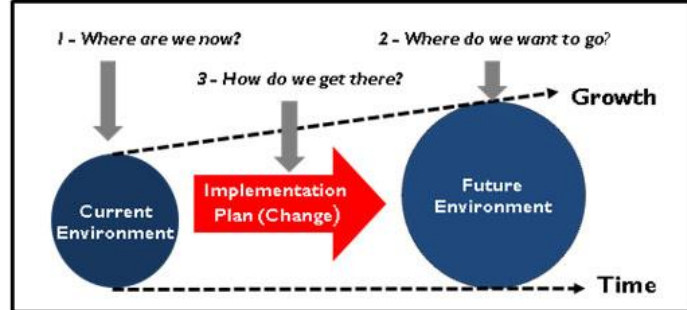
Does not include full cost dispatch charges, which may begin in FY 24/25

DRAFT prepared by T. Bolduc  
6/22/2023

SCFD's annual budget is crafted following standards created by the Government Account Standards Board (GASB). GASB is an independent, non-political organization founded to promote clear, consistent, transparent, and comparable financial reporting for state and local governments. The GASB's mission is achieved through an open and independent process that encourages broad participation from all stakeholders and objectively considers and analyzes all their views. The SCFD preliminary budget is adopted prior to July 1<sup>st</sup> each year and provides control of revenues and expenses including appropriations (budgeted expenses) on a line-item basis and the means of financing those items (budgeted revenues). Monthly reports are generated on expense activity that assist district managers to monitor activities and programs. These financial reports are also reviewed by the Board of Directors at their monthly meeting to ensure budgetary compliance. The budget is posted on the district website as it is a public document. On a quarterly basis, the budget committee (appointed by the Board of Directors) reviews the budget progress. SCFD is audited annually by an outside accounting firm for proper fiscal practices and procedures. As a recipient of federal, state, and county financial funding, the SCFD ensures adequate control structures are in place which comply with applicable laws and regulations related to those programs. The budget supports the operations of 10 fire stations (8 staffed full time), initial attack engines, a ladder truck, advanced life support ambulances, command chief officers, rescue, and other support staff and equipment.

## The Strategic Planning Process

For any organization, public or private, to reach its full potential, it must have a strategic plan. Strategic planning is an organization's process of defining its strategy, or direction, and making decisions on how to set priorities to pursue this strategy. In the simplest terms, the strategic planning process is the method that organizations use to develop plans to achieve overall, short, and long-term goals.



SCFD strategic planning process accomplishes more than just the development of this document; it challenges the members of the SCFD to look critically at paradigms, values, philosophies, beliefs, and desires. The strategic plan challenges individuals to work in the best interest of the "team." In addition, the plan provides the members of the district with the opportunity to participate in the development of their organization's long-term direction and focus. The SCFD planning efforts include:

### Where are we now?

- An evaluation of the organization's mission, vision, guiding principles, goals, and strategic initiatives checking for currency and relevancy.
- Reviewed the past three year's achievements, checking to be sure the agency is on track.
- Perform a diagnosis of the environment, industry trends, current and predictable environment (Strengths, Problems, Opportunities, Threats).

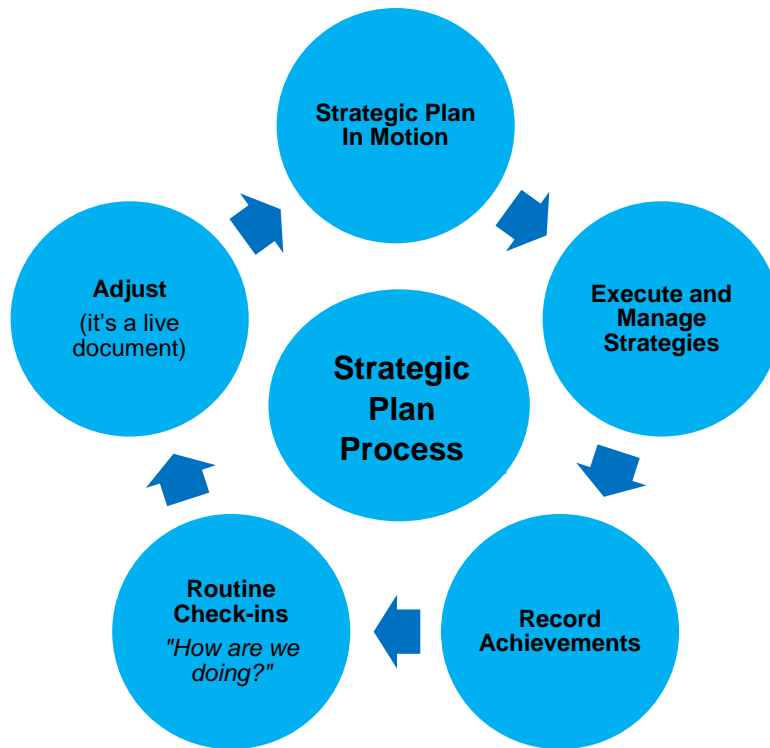
### Where do we want to go?

- SCFD wants to be the leaders in fire and EMS services, providing fiscal sustainable emergency and fire prevention services.
- We want to be poised and ready or even ahead of what might come our way specific to our industry, but also local, state-wide, and international events.
- We are positioning SCFD to increase its services to district-wide advanced life support.

### How will we get there?

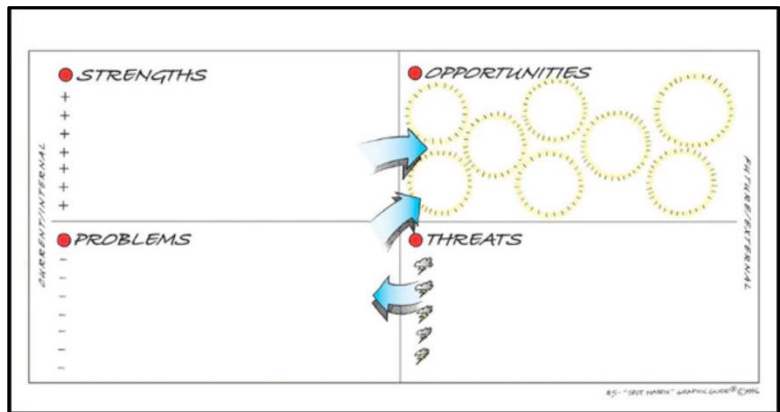
- Create a customer service centric strategic plan.
- Execute and manage strategies.
- Record (and celebrate) achievements.
- Perform routine check in's (Quarterly progress, how are we doing)?
- Adjust the plan as needed (this is very much a live and continuous document)





### Strengths, Problems, Opportunities, Threats (SPOT)

SPOT is an acronym for Strengths, Problems, Opportunities and Threats. SPOT analysis guides the district to identify its strengths and problems (S-P), as well as broader opportunities and threats (O-T). A SPOT Analysis is the most renowned tool for auditing and analysis of the overall strategic position of the district and its environment. Its key purpose is to identify the strategies that will create a firm specific business model that will best align the district resources and capabilities to the requirements of the environment in which it operates. It views all positive and negative factors inside and outside the agency that affect the success. A consistent study of the environment in which the district operates helps in forecasting/predicting the changing trends and helps in including them in the decision-making process of the organization.



S.P.O.T

Strengths	Strengths describe where an organization excels. The identification of organizational strengths is the first step in an environmental scan. An organization’s strengths identify its capability to provide the services requested by its customers.
Problems	Problems are also an important environmental scan element. To move forward, the organization must take a candid look at the issues that have created barriers to its success – internally and externally.
Opportunities	Opportunities refer to favorable factors that the organization has or can explore. Opportunities are focused on existing services and on expanding and developing new possibilities inside and beyond the traditional service area. Many opportunities exist for the department.
Threats (challenges)	Threats (challenges) refer to factors that have the potential to harm or distract an organization. There are conditions that are often not under the organization’s control. The identification of these conditions allows the organization to develop plans to mitigate or respond when a challenge becomes an obstacle. By recognizing these challenges, the organization can greatly reduce the potential for loss, delay, or distraction.

The district identified the following at Top SPOT topics (the full list SPOT listed in Appendix III) The district completed a SPOT Analysis ahead of strategy / objectives setting.

	<b>S</b> trength	<b>O</b> pportunities
<b>P</b> <b>O</b> <b>S</b> <b>I</b> <b>T</b> <b>I</b> <b>V</b> <b>E</b>	Loyalty to the brand Visionaries RFP / Ambulance  Internet	[More opportunity to] celebrate successes Diversity / inclusion / “all” RFP/ Ambulance Community support / community connections  Internet
	<b>P</b> roblems (or challenges)	<b>T</b> hreats
<b>N</b> <b>E</b> <b>G</b> <b>A</b> <b>T</b> <b>I</b> <b>V</b> <b>E</b>	Infrastructure needs are extensive (Stuck in some) traditions Pipeline of new employees  Internet	Needs vs. money Staff burning out Culture shifts (SCFD is not prepared)  Internet

## Goals and Strategic Initiative

In an ever-changing world, it's imperative to have strategic goals and a plan to guide organizational efforts. Strategic initiatives are action-oriented and measurable goals that translate our organization's focus areas into specific outcomes. They're concise with clear deadlines and owner(s). SCFD goals are, Workforce, Infrastructure and Equipment, Fiscal Responsibilities, Health and Safety, Service Enhancements, and community Service.



**GOAL 1  
Fiscal Responsibilities**

Sustain and improve our services by planning for funding challenges and opportunities.

**Strategic Initiatives:**

Explore fiscal opportunities that will bring new funding mechanisms to the district.

Utilizing team concepts to secure grant opportunities and securing subject matter experts to support the grant team. Identify and utilize traditional and non-traditional funding opportunities.

Continue to analyze economic challenges/landscape to make sure planning is consistent with what is going on around us.

	<b>Strategic Action Items</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Priority</b>
1.1	6 month and 1-year financial analysis of EOA-1		Bolduc	6-month mark and 1 year mark	
1.2	Explore funding opportunities with outside partner agencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veg. management program</li> <li>• Cost share opportunities</li> </ul>		Bolduc/Division Managers	Ongoing over next 12 months.	
1.3	Evaluate enterprise fund relationship with the general fund for fire district.		Bolduc	Prior to January 2024	
1.4	Explore opportunities for outside vendors to support grant team.		Chief Grinnell	Review every 6 months	
1.5	Update of general fee schedules.		Chief Heine	October 2023	
1.6	Explore division specific revenue opportunities.		Division Managers		
1.7	Prepare district finances for recession.		Chief Heine/Bolduc		
1.8	Perform annual budget workshops		Bolduc		



**GOAL 2**  
**Infrastructure and Equipment**

Strengthen capabilities by enhancing fleet and facilities designed to better serve the communities.

**Strategic initiative:**

Explore all opportunities to modernize infrastructure.

Research sale of unused properties.

Start the process for replacement of aging facilities.

Plan for capital equipment needs.

	<b>Strategic Action Items</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Priority</b>
2.1	Evaluate use of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rio Nido</li> <li>• Administration</li> <li>• Alpine</li> <li>• CalTrans yard</li> </ul>		Chief Johnson		
2.2	Explore opportunities related to Station 5		Chief Johnson		
2.3	Building committee shall identify locations for replacement of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STN 9</li> <li>• STN 4</li> <li>• STN 2</li> <li>• Administration</li> </ul>		Chief Johnson		
2.4	Align apparatus and equipment purchases with current and anticipated service demands: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for purchase of 100'+ ladder truck.</li> <li>• Plan for unanticipated needs.</li> <li>• Adhere to apparatus replacement schedule.</li> <li>• Develop equipment replacement plan.</li> </ul>		Chief Estes		

2.5	Identify annual contributions to fund facilities, apparatus, and equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facility replacement schedule</li> <li>• Equipment replacement schedule</li> <li>• Apparatus replacement schedule</li> </ul>		Chief Busch/Estes/Bolduc		
2.6	Implement a district wide facility security plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage consultant to develop analysis and plan.</li> <li>• Identify immediate security measures for facilities.</li> <li>• Review and update policies.</li> </ul>		Chief Bisordi		
2.7	Transition remaining apparatus to Tablet Command		Chief Johnson		

**GOAL 3  
Workforce**

Cultivate a healthy, safe, productive work environment and focus on retention and recruitment.

**Strategic initiative:**

Invest in our own members. (Career development, health/longevity).

Create a road map for full time employment and advancement.

Recruit and hire a diverse workforce.

Establish a plan to secure skilled staff by revamping hiring policy.

	<b>Strategic Action Items</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Priority</b>
3.1	Establish career development plan that addresses all levels of organization		Chief Johnson/Chief Grinnell/Rutkowski	1 year	
3.2	Develop employee recognition program		Washington	3 months	
3.3	Identify scholarships and funding opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal</li> <li>• External</li> <li>• Foundation funded</li> </ul>		Chief Grinnell		
3.4	Schedule workshop focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholarships</li> <li>• Career ladder</li> </ul>		Chief Johnson		
3.5	Develop a recruitment team. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Ride-a-long</li> <li>• Station visits</li> <li>• Career fairs</li> <li>• Accelerate hiring process</li> </ul>		Washington/Hancock/Flowers		
3.6	Develop a contemporary hiring process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hiring bonus</li> <li>• On the job training</li> </ul>		Chief Busch		
3.7	Identify opportunities at St. 5 and 6		Chief Busch / Johnson		

**GOAL 4**  
**Community Service**

Provide high-level quality emergency and non-emergency services.

**Strategic initiative:**

Review volunteer program looking for best practices, effective use of volunteers.

Identify key events for each community.

Prioritize events and attend only within district. Condense smaller events into larger ones.

Evaluate partnership opportunities.

	<b>Strategic Action Items</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Priority</b>
4.1	Evaluate structure of volunteer program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rank</li> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Safety/Non-safety</li> <li>• Compensation</li> <li>• Intern (suppression/non-suppression)</li> </ul>		Chief Grinnell		
4.2	Develop matrix/best practices on event attendance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and prioritize the events the district will attend.</li> <li>• Messaging</li> </ul>		Chief Foreman /Hancock/Rathbun		
4.3	Convert remaining staffed engine companies from BLS to ALS		Chief Busch		

**GOAL 5**  
**Health and Safety**

Invest in programs that will enrich the wellness of our employees.

**Strategic initiative:**

Break down any health and safety barriers.

Offer several resiliencies courses each year. Continue to support and provide Peer support training.

Explore options for employees to seek health and safety assistance.

	<b>Strategic Action Items</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Priority</b>
5.1	Educate staff about how to utilize services/programs currently in place. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intranet or app</li> </ul>		Washington/Flowers		
5.2	Support PEER support training. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore funding opportunities.</li> </ul>		Chief Johnson		
5.3	Education on workers comp. and explore on how to reduce claims.		Washington		
5.4	Review safety program/IIPP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve communications</li> </ul>		Chief Johnson		

**GOAL 6**  
**Service Delivery Enhancements**

Continue to build a customer focused, accessible team that is engaged to support each of our individual communities & visitors.

**Strategic initiatives:**

Evaluate staffing needs based on call volume/emergency response.

Review District operational deployment needs.

Create a service model to address Fire Prevention and community risk reduction needs.

	<b>Strategic Action Items</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Priority</b>
6.1	Identify service gaps in all districts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heat map of call volume.</li> <li>• Identify BC coverage/supervisory oversight.</li> <li>• Evaluate service provided by adjoining forces</li> <li>• Work on method to deploy an additional Battalion Chief.</li> </ul>		Chief Busch/R. Lantz/Flowers/Hancock		
6.2	Continuing to improve ALS service delivery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dual vs. single role</li> <li>• ALS engine companies</li> </ul>		Chief Windrem		
6.3	Review existing fire prevention model and create future prevention models/zones/staffing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business inspections</li> <li>• Investigations</li> <li>• Contract inspectors</li> <li>• Community Outreach</li> </ul>		Chief Foreman/Piloni		



**Appendix I  
SCFD Strengths, Problems, Opportunities, Threats  
(Full analysis)**

SCFD Board Perspective of Strengths, Opportunities, Problems, Threats (SPOT)

	<b>S</b> trengths	<b>O</b> pportunities
<b>P</b> <b>O</b> <b>S</b> <b>I</b> <b>T</b> <b>I</b> <b>V</b> <b>E</b>	<p>We challenge the paradigm Our people / workforce Political connections strong Labor/management strong Fleet is modern, safe Live within our means – never provide an over budget Culture Have not gone to taxpayers for increase In the lead Leaders Vision, mission, and guiding principles Building diversity Partnerships Problem solvers Accept and often create change (“we’ve always done it that way” is not in our vocabulary) Adaptability (even with disasters) Good at reimbursements Good at achieving grants</p>	<p>Ambulance contract To do more outreach Airport Staff Station 5 Tribal Government relations</p>
	<b>P</b> roblems (or challenges)	<b>T</b> hreats
<b>N</b> <b>E</b> <b>G</b> <b>A</b> <b>T</b> <b>I</b> <b>V</b> <b>E</b>	<p>Ambulance contract, lots of work Administration office -- out of space Infrastructure Unforeseen disasters Housing staff in expensive area Workload Pace of organization Updates to the Brown Act Funding capital needs Chief span of control Keeping pace with technology External communications – reaching the other 80%</p>	<p>Recruitment Career succession looming Economic conditions (6% inflation) Energy – electric vehicles Political issues SR Annexations (Santa Rosa Ave) Revenues keeping pace Keeping pace with community expectations Managing and ambulance contract % Of salary / benefits reaching 80%</p>

SCFD Staff Perspective -- Strengths, Opportunities, Problems, Threats (SPOT)

	<b>S</b> trengths	<b>O</b> pportunities
<b>P</b> <b>O</b> <b>S</b> <b>I</b> <b>T</b> <b>I</b> <b>V</b> <b>E</b>	<p>Social Media Staff is engaged – mission driven Loyalty to the brand Not much turn over, people staying (We provide) great service Recognize problem right away Vision Flexible Fearless RFP / Ambulance (We are) doing a great job Cost effective In the high schools (recruiting) (We are) nice You are all good people</p>	<p>Social Media (More opportunity to) celebrate successes Reimagining Hiring challenges More investment in Hispanic hiring Diversity / enclosing / “all” To listen more Reimagining volunteer program To create jobs that people want (and therefore, will stay) To do more group teambuilding Community support / community connections Use of experts to help with communications More effective communications</p>
	<b>P</b> roblems (or challenges)	<b>T</b> hreats
<b>N</b> <b>E</b> <b>G</b> <b>A</b> <b>T</b> <b>I</b> <b>V</b> <b>E</b>	<p>Social Media Infrastructure (stuck in some) traditions A lot is forced on us Pipeline of new employees Career successions Growing our own (is it working?) Need more inclusion (Having a) voice Reaching our rural areas Hiring challenges Process for our volunteers to do things One size fit all for volunteers (out of date?) Volunteer input</p>	<p>Social Media Increasing costs of just about everything District can no way keep pace with costs Needs vs. money Unknown costs (unpredictable, too hard to plan) All the available OT vs. want OT Staff burning out Demands on staff Demand on the fire service community Disasters Operational readiness Airport (LF / HR) Inflation Culture shifts (SCFD is not prepared) Events -- we can't get to them all) Infrastructure is very poor 9 of 11 fire stations in need up upgrade Station 1 is too small Per SOC, stations in good spot, but hard to get to Generation appears not to “care” about the same things the last generation did Being off duty (home) vs. on duty (work)</p>

## Appendix II SCFD History

1980	In the early 1980s, discussions between Rincon Valley and Windsor Fire Protection District began on how the two agencies could better work together. The two agencies began sharing resources (from mutual aid to automatic aid) and worked on several projects together.
2005	Rincon Valley Fire Protection District Administrative Staff (Chief, Assistant Chief, Executive Assistant) move their offices to Windsor Fire Protection District Fire Station 1. Both agencies shared infrastructure costs including utilities, shared computer services, and were able to collaborate overall more effectively.
2006	Battalion 7 was created using a combination of one battalion chief and one assistant chief from Rincon Valley FPD, and one battalion chief/fire marshal from Windsor FPD providing battalion coverage 24/7 to both districts. Each district used its own command vehicle with its own branding. Only a magnetic "BC7" was added to the vehicle.
2011	After several planning meetings, Central Fire Authority of Sonoma County (CFA) – a more formal administrative division of both Windsor and Rincon Valley -- was created. CFA provided joint administrative services to both agencies, but both agencies retained their autonomy (two board of directors, two operations, etc.), and shared a fire chief and fire marshal.
2017	CFA was disbanded and both agencies were managed by one contractual fire chief.
2017	The Tubbs fire aggressively ran through the district. At the time, the Tubbs fire was one of the worse fires in California history, burning 36,807 acres, destroying 5,643 structures, killing 22 people, and burning 40% of the Rincon Valley FPD. The destruction and impacts of the Tubbs Fire profoundly impacted Rincon Valley FPD, Windsor FPD, and other fire agencies throughout Sonoma County.
2018	LAFCO <sup>1</sup> provides studies indicating annexation recommendations.  Crews from Rincon Valley and Windsor Fire Protection Districts along with Bennett Valley Fire District and the Mountain Volunteer Fire Department met at the Holiday Inn Ballroom (Windsor) to figure out how the agencies could collaborate. Using the incident management system, the crews developed a 1-year plan to merge the agencies, created a values statement and guiding principles.
2019 (April)	Windsor Fire Protection District (established 1965), Rincon Valley Fire District (established 1945), the Bennett Valley Fire District (established 1948) and the Mountain Volunteer Fire Department (established 1968) all consolidated and created the Sonoma County Fire District (SCFD).
2019	First mission, values, and vision statements and Guiding Principles were created > We believe in providing the highest level of professionalism to our communities; therefore, we will remain committed to honesty and integrity. > We believe in a positive and professional work environment; therefore, we will

<sup>1</sup> Local Agency Formation Commission (<https://sonomalafco.org>)

	<p>treat everyone with respect and honesty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ We believe in the importance of flexibility and adaptability; therefore, we will welcome growth and change.</li> <li>➤ We believe that honesty is essential; therefore, we will be transparent in every aspect of service.</li> <li>➤ We believe being compassionate is essential; therefore, we will treat everyone with kindness.</li> </ul>
2020	Russian River Fire Protection District (established 1922 as the Guerneville Fire Protection District) joined the Sonoma County Fire District.
2021	Forestville Fire Protection District (established 1938 and became a District in 1958) joined the SCFD.
2022	Bodega Bay Fire Protection District (established 1984) joined the Sonoma County Fire District. Partnership with Medic Ambulance
2023	SCFD awarded the ambulance contract.

**Appendix III**  
**Glossary of Abbreviations, Acronyms and Terms**

All Risk	An “all risk” (or “all hazard”) fire department represents every level of a hazard response whether it is trench rescue, hazardous materials, confined space, building collapse, rope rescue, fire extinguishment, EMS, dive rescue, swift water, and vehicle extraction.
All Hazard	An “all hazard” (or “all risk”) fire department represents every level of a hazard response whether it is trench rescue, hazardous materials, confined space, building collapse, rope rescue, fire extinguishment, EMS, dive rescue, swift water, and vehicle extraction.
Accreditation	A process by which an association or agency evaluates and recognizes a program of study or an institution as meeting certain predetermined standards or qualifications. It applies only to institutions or agencies and their programs of study or their services.
Accredited	The act of accrediting or the state of being accredited, especially the granting of approval to an institution or agency by an official review board or organization that has established nationally accepted standards.
ALS	Advance Life Support (Paramedics)
Automatic Aid	Automatic aid is an agreement among emergency responders to lend assistance across jurisdictional boundaries automatically.
Battalion Chief	Typically, 3 <sup>rd</sup> in command – oversees daily operations of the 9 stations
BLS	Basic Life Support (EMT)
BOD	Board of Directors
BOS	Board of Supervisor
CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch
CAL-JAC	California Joint Apprentice Commission
CalPERS	California Public Employees' Retirement System
CCTV	Close Circuit Television (security system)
CERT	Community Emergency Response Team program educates volunteers about disasters and form teams on how to mitigate impacts of disasters
CFAI	The Commission on Fire Accreditation International
CFC	California Fire Code
COPE	Citizens Organized to Prepare for Emergencies program organizes blocks or other groups of people to prepare for disasters
CPP	COVID-19 Prevention Program
CPSE	The Center for Public Safety Excellence, Inc. (CPSE), a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) corporation, establishes and promotes recognized professional standards to help fire agencies move beyond tactical deployment to continuous strategic improvement.
CQI	Continuous Quality Improvement

Customer	A customer is a person or group of people who establish the requirement of a process and receives or uses the outputs of that process; or the person or entity directly served by the department or agency. A stakeholder is any person, group, or organization that can place a claim on, or influence, the organization's resources or outputs, is affected by those outputs, or has an interest in or expectation of the organization.
Deputy Chief	Typically, 2 <sup>nd</sup> in command – oversees overall district operations
Division Chief	Typical 3 <sup>rd</sup> in command – oversees a division such as EMS, Fire Prevention (Fire Marshal) and Training)
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EMT	Emergency Medical Technician
EOA	Exclusive Operating Area (applied to EMS/ALS provider coverage area
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
F-42	Office of emergency services day-to-day record for const reimbursements
FDAC	Fire Districts Association of California. FDAC is a non-profit organization, whose primary function is to provide its members with representation and advocacy in California's legislature. FDAC provides programs, health and life insurance, and other services and classes to help the districts they serve and their personnel and representatives become more successful and effective.
FEMA	The Federal Emergency Management Agency is a function of the United States Department of Homeland Security. The agency's primary purpose is to coordinate the response to a disaster that has occurred in the United States and that overwhelms the resources of local and state authorities.
FEMA	The Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, is an agency of the United States Department of Homeland Security.
FEMA Task Force 4	Task Force 4 is the California Urban Search and Rescue Team out of Oakland CA. We provide a rescue K9 and other technically trained USAR personnel
Fire Chief	Typically, the Fire Chief is the CEO and CFO of a fire district
FMAG	Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) program provides a 75 percent Federal cost share and the State pays the remaining 25 percent for actual cost of a disaster
FP	Fire Prevention
GASB	Government Account Standards Board (GASB)
GIS	Geospatial or Geographic Information System
ICS	Incident Command System / Emergency Management Command and Control Process
ICS	Incident Command System
IFC	International Fire Code
Impact Fees	A fee applied to developers for development within the district



LAFCO	The Local Agency Formation Commission is an independent agency established by State law. The commission is responsible for reviewing, approving, or disapproving changes in organization to cities and special districts including annexations, detachments, new formations, and incorporations.
Mission	A mission is an enduring statement of purpose, the organization's reason for existence. Describes what the organization does, for whom it does it, and how it does it.
Mutual Aid	Mutual aid is an agreement among emergency responders to lend assistance across jurisdictional boundaries. This may occur due to an emergency response that exceeds local resources, such as a disaster or a multiple alarm fire.
Nixle	Nixle is a company that offers notification services for local police departments, county emergency management offices, municipal governments, and their agencies. The Nixle service allows government agencies to send messages to residents via phone, email, and web. Information is delivered almost instantly.
OES	Office of Emergency Service
OES Engine	Office of Emergency Service Engine assigned to the district
OES WT	Office of Emergency Service Water Tender assigned to the district
Paramedic (PM)	A paramedic is a certified medical professional, usually a member of the emergency medical services, who primarily provides pre-hospital advanced medical and trauma care. A paramedic is charged with providing emergency on-scene treatment, crisis intervention, life-saving stabilization, and transport of ill or injured patients to definitive emergency medical and surgical treatment facilities, such as hospitals and trauma centers.
Performance Indicator	Key performance indicators are measurable factors of extreme importance to the organization in achieving the strategic goals, objectives, vision, and values that if not implemented properly would likely result in significant decrease in customer satisfaction, employee morale, and financial management.
Performance Measure	A performance measure is a specific measurable result for each goal and/or program that indicates achievement.
SCFD	Sonoma County Fire District
SM	Social Media
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound goals
SOC	Standard of Cover – measuring call statistics and applied industry trends to plan for fire stations, staffing, and equipment
SOC	A Standards of Cover consists of decisions made regarding the placement of field resources (number, type, and location) in relation to the potential demand placed on them by the type of risk and historical need in the community. Furthermore, if

	Standards of Cover is to be meaningful to the community, the outcome must demonstrate that lives are saved and properties are protected. The variety of risks and levels of hazards that exist in each community mandate that each department conduct a self-assessment, and design and develop an “all hazards” response system that will meet the needs of the community in a safe, efficient, and effective manner. Fire service leaders much continue to strive for consensus on programs that create a standard for minimal level of response in all communities.
SPOT	An analyst exercise recognizing an organizations Strengths, Problems, Opportunities
Stakeholder	A stakeholder is any person, group, or organization that can place a claim on, or influence, the organization's resources or outputs, is affected by those outputs, or has an interest in or expectation of the organization.
Strategy	Strategic planning is the process of organizing, preparing, and aligning an organizations priorities and resources to achieve a specific outcome.
STS	Sonoma County Airport
TEAMS	TEAMs is the districts primary Video Conferencing Program
Type I Engine	Required to have not less than 300 gallons of water (our agency engines carry 500 gallons or more) and be able to pump 1500 gallons per minute.
Type III Engine	Required to have a minimum of 500 gallons of water and be able to pump 150 gallons per minute. Traditionally shorter and nimbler for off road operations. Typically built on a standard medium duty truck and chassis
Type VI Engine	Required to have a minimum of 150 gallons of water and be able to pump 50 gallons per minute although can be much larger. Typically built on a standard on a light duty truck and chassis.