

Strategic Operations Plan



2018

Elizabethtown Fire Department



Roy N. West
Fire Chief

1/24/2018

Making an I.M.P.A.C.T. on our community



Roy N. West

Fire Chief

Fire Department Strategic Operations Plan

*Town of Elizabethtown
North Carolina*

January, 2018



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Letter from the Fire Chief

Dear Community Member,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in the Elizabethtown Fire Department. The proceeding documents outline our vision of what you can expect from the members and leadership of our organization. This Strategic Operations Plan outlines the many challenges necessary to build an organization that provides a highly effective level of service our citizens expect and deserve. Effective staffing, leadership, planning and training elements are all critical for our organization to succeed at its mission of providing safe, effective and efficient services.

Every successful organization should have a plan in place that provides a path to departmental growth and performance improvements. This plan maintains a forward looking direction regarding the department's future needs and identifies its strengths and weaknesses that will serve the community well as it operates in the current economic climate. This is done by analyzing our department data, implementing effective policies and procedures, utilizing technology and developing new ways for exceptional service levels. Good management processes will also result in cost efficiency and an increased level of service. As the department's Chief Officer, I have implemented changes to improve firefighter safety and performance and will utilize a proactive approach to developing and understanding the department's strengths and weaknesses. This is necessary to create and implement a realistic Strategic Operations Plan that will prepare and position the Fire Department for future success and survival.

Utilizing this Strategic Organizational Development Plan will help the department to meet the expectations of our community leaders and citizens. It will also allow for the Fire Chief to outline the present and future needs of the department to the Town leadership. This plan will also signify to our community leaders the vision and expectations we have established for the department going forward. Our Strategic Operational Plan outlines how we will lead and develop the Elizabethtown Fire Department into a class leading organization.

The fire service is much more complex than in years past. Today's fire department leaders are required to keep up with new standards and technology, while dealing with a constantly changing environment and reduced volunteer availability. The past public image of the fire service is one of firefighters responding to calls for service and extinguishing fires. Now, the firefighter is also a business professional managing the day to day operations while



continually assuring the safety of the public and members of the department. Firefighting has now evolved into scientific studies of fire behavior through such organizations as the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), International Association Fire of Chiefs (IAFC), and the International Society of Fire Service Instructors (ISFSI). It is essential that the firefighters understand the science behind new fire tactics and modern fire dynamics to be successful at protecting the community. Having a vision of where our fire department will be in the years ahead is extremely critical to its success. We also need to capitalize on available State and Federal grant funding. Our vision is not easy to achieve and requires the combined efforts of the fire department and community leadership.

If the fire department does not adapt to the ever changing fire service environment and implement procedures to produce a quality service, the consequences will be felt in heavy losses to the community. Our Department has dedicated members and a network of professional resources from around the region to help us achieve our mission. We are committed to providing honest, ethical leadership, in order to gain the trust and respect of our community members. Our fire department leaders strive to inspire our personnel to achieve higher results and deliver the required answers and recommendations to the community leaders so they can make educated decisions about the department's future development and services provided.

It is our goal to continually adapt to the community's needs, reduce risks associated with fire, improve our response performance, take care of the department's members, and be a financially stable organization providing superior customer care.

Respectfully,

Roy N. West

Fire Chief, Elizabethtown Fire Department

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Doing what's best for our community in THEIR time of need.





Foreword

President John F. Kennedy once said, ***“For time and the world do not stand still, change is the law of life and those who look only to the past and present are certain to miss the future”***. The fire service has also not stood still and change is unavoidable in today’s society. We must take control of those changes or have the changes control us. Positive change may be as simple as a new policy or procedure, increased staffing levels, new technology systems or new job responsibilities. As managers, community leaders and business professionals, we must understand and anticipate how effective change and growth is important to an organization and how positive change will affect the community and its customers.

Over time, organizational changes are necessary and unavoidable to maintain an effective response force and to keep up with an ever changing fire service environment. How we ***minimize*** the impact of change and ***maximize*** the performance of the department is up to our team of professionals. The implementation of effective plans and advanced computer technologies have allowed us to manage our resources and performance more effectively as the work environment becomes more complex from increased responsibilities. Based on the community needs and national fire service standards, these tools make our work more efficient and provide better results in less time.

Fire departments are required to document a wide range of information needed to provide services to the community. It is our goal to implement a Strategic Operational Plan along with new technology systems for documenting incident reports, tracking response times, GIS mapping, training records, staff activities, equipment maintenance, hydrant maintenance and pre-incident planning. These procedures in documentation help us to maintain and over time, will help us improve the department’s insurance rating keeping commercial and residential rates as low as possible. The insurance rating schedule for fire departments has evolved into a data driven system and is much more complex than in years past. Effective change in procedures, records management, personnel staffing, equipment, training and public education is all necessary to provide continuous quality improvement for future fire department operations. Effective change will also help to reduce response times, increase service performance while specifically enhancing safety for our responders and community citizens.



John Wooden, the former head basketball coach for the UCLA men's basketball team once said, ***"Success comes from knowing that you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming."*** Coach Wooden used his knowledge, skills, and abilities to teach his teams the importance of doing the very best for which they were capable of doing. As Fire Chief, I have shared this message with my team and inspired them to give their best effort to meet our community expectations. He also spoke about the importance of being true to yourself, help others in need, and make each day a masterpiece. Coach Wooden made a point to emphasize praying for guidance and giving thanks for our blessings every day. I have placed tremendous value in his teachings and have used them throughout my career in the fire service preparing to lead and coach my own team to success in championship form.

"Don't measure yourself by what you have accomplished, but by what you should have accomplished with your ability." -John Wooden

The major question to ask ourselves is this; "Are we going to continue to operate the same way we always have or are we going to make significant changes to improve our level of service?" Since coming to the Town of Elizabethtown, it has been my goal as Fire Chief to inspire and increase our level of enthusiasm while becoming community focused and committed to keeping change positive and effective. So when do we start preparing for the future? The answer is today. We start by not accepting anything less than our best efforts to build a better and safer organization for our community. The fire department should be marketed as a valued community service and we must be aggressive in promoting the value of the services we provide.

It is the combined efforts of our fire department personnel along with committed community leadership that make a winning team. We are humbled by the opportunity to lead and advance the Elizabethtown Fire Department into the future with a forward looking vision.

Respectfully,

Roy N. West

Chief, Elizabethtown Fire Department

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Fire Department Mission Statement

“Provide safe, efficient, and effective services by being value driven and community focused.



Fire Department Vision Statement

It is the Vision of the Elizabethtown Fire Department to be recognized by both those we serve and our members as:

- An organization that achieves a level of service that is viewed as premier throughout the region.
- An exceptional department dedicated to the education of the public in order to promote life safety.
- An organization that works hard to excel at performing its mission and develop personnel into future leaders.
- A department that is recognized for its pride and professionalism in providing quality services to the community with a professional image.
- A department that is accountable to those we serve, each other and our town leaders.
- A department that provides the best public service through innovative training, education, and equipment.



Fire Department Core Values

*Making an **I.M.P.A.C.T** on our community*

*“Begins with **Integrity** and ends with **Trust**”*

Integrity

Mastery

Professionalism

Accountability

Communication

Trust



Fire Chief Values

- **Provide the *Safest* work environment possible.**
- Be accountable and transparent.
- Inspire department members to excel and lead by *EXAMPLE*.
- Communicate Effectively.
- Maintain an environment of Trust, Honesty, and Family Values.
- Recognize future leaders in the department by *delegating responsibility* and giving them *incentive to perform*.
- Be a master of customer service through the department's mission.
- Empower department members to improve their performance through innovation.
- Develop a mentor system of leaders.
- Build and strengthen teamwork through praise, recognition, and training.



Fire Department Empowerment Rules

- Every member shall: Do their job **SAFELY**.
- Every member shall: Do the right thing for the **Customer**.
- Every member shall: Do the right thing for the **Department**.
- Every member shall: Treat everyone with **RESPECT**.
- Every member shall: Make an **I.M.P.A.C.T.** on the organization.
- Every member shall: **Communicate** information effectively.
- Every member shall: **Learn** organizational responsibilities.
- Every member shall: **Do their job to the best of their ability**



Fire Department Strategic Operational Goals

- Goal #1:** Implement Firefighter Safety Initiatives.
- Goal #2:** Develop Strategic Organizational Development Plans.
- Goal #3:** Evaluate and Upgrade Staffing and Service Delivery.
- Goal #4:** Recruitment and Retention of Trained Department Members.
- Goal #5:** Provide Exceptional Leadership.
- Goal #6:** Provide Effective Monthly In-Service Training.
- Goal #7:** Encourage Inter-Agency Cooperation and Training.
- Goal #8:** Provide Technology and Equipment Upgrades.
- Goal #9:** Provide Continuous Community Involvement.
- Goal #10:** Establish Fleet and Station Maintenance Plans.



GOAL #1

Implement Firefighter Safety Initiatives

In order to reduce the risks of death and injury to personnel associated with departmental tasks, the Fire Chief will create and maintain a plan for occupational safety standards. Also included will be a system to report and correct safety issues related to all emergency and non-emergency operations.

- **Ensure sufficient staffing levels and equipment are provided to protect personnel safety and complete the required operation tasks safely. Proper staffing levels and equipment are critical to ensure that all emergency and non-emergency operations are conducted in a manner to ensure responder safety and community protection.**
- Develop, implement, and enforce SOP's for Standard on the Organization Deployment and Staffing of Fire Department Operations in accordance to NFPA 1710.
- Develop, implement, and enforce SOP's in accordance to the fire department Vulnerability Assessment Survey.
- Develop, implement, and enforce SOP's for Occupational Safety and Health program in accordance to NFPA 1500: (Accountability, R.I.T., and Seat Belt usage.)
- Develop, implement, and enforce SOP's for Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management System and training in accordance to NFPA 1561.
- Develop, implement, and enforce SOP's for Standard on Fire Department Safety Officer and training in accordance to NFPA 1521.
- Develop, implement, and enforce SOP's for Standard on Health Related Fitness programs for firefighters in accordance to NFPA 1583. Require annual physicals, quarterly fitness testing, and exercise programs.
- Develop, implement, and enforce SOP's for Standard on Fire Department Infection Control and accordance to NFPA 1581.
- Develop, implement, and enforce SOP's for Standard on Fire Service Respiratory Protection Training in accordance to NFPA 1404.



GOAL #2

Develop Strategic Organizational Development Plans

To accomplish the Fire Departments mission, the Fire Chief will implement proactive decisions to create and maintain a plan for organization development following the department's core values and vision.

- Improve upon the current NCDOT fire class rating.
- Develop, implement, and enforce SOP's for Standard on Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications and driver testing in accordance to NFPA 1002.
- Develop, implement, and enforce SOP's for Standard on Firefighter Professional Qualifications in accordance to NFPA 1001.
- Develop, implement, and enforce SOP's for Standard on Firefighter Station/Work uniforms for fire and emergency services in accordance to NFPA 1001.
- Maintain a high level of communications within the organization so that every member knows and understands the department's mission, vision, core values, and goals.
- Team Building and Mentorship: Meet with the department members to discuss setting personal goals and expectations while learning their background, qualifications, and future employment needs.
- Develop effective apparatus hose and equipment layouts for emergency incident tasks. Ensure all apparatus are equipped with sufficient tools and attack lines to meet the firefighter's needs. Ensure sufficient supply hose is carried to account for hydrant spacing and needed fire flow.



GOAL #3

Evaluate and Upgrade Staffing and Service Delivery

The Town of Elizabethtown Fire Department shall develop Standard Operating Procedures for service levels and follow maintenance criteria for fire department equipment to ensure that resources are available to complete job requirements safely and effectively.

- Review the department's annual budget and make appropriate recommendations regarding revenue and expenditures.
- Develop a Standard of Response Coverage document for all emergency response criteria. Complete a thorough self-assessment and risk assessment evaluation of the department and response district.
- Complete a planning and implementation process for increasing pre-hospital patient care to a higher level of Emergency Medical Services and Technical Rescue incidents.
- Develop, implement, and enforce SOP's for fire hydrant servicing in accordance to NFPA 291. Continue hydrant servicing procedures to improve insurance rating and ensure an adequate and sustainable water supply is available for fire suppression incidents.
- Continue to replace fire apparatus that have reached the end of their service life expectancy with new NFPA approved emergency response vehicles.
- Implement Risk Assessment procedures to determine different levels of risk throughout the response district. Document high, moderate, and low risk responses for emergency operations.
- Develop a strategic plan for future growth and expansion of the department. Planning for future annexations and station locations. The Strategic Plan shall layout the department's goals and vision.
- Maintain Network Remote Staffing (I AM RESPONDING program) to improve response performance and planning.



GOAL #4

Community Risk Reduction Program

The Town of Elizabethtown Fire Department shall create and maintain a Community Risk reduction Program by working with citizens and establishing the fire station as a focal point while building on and maintaining the strong supportive feelings of the community.

- The Fire Station will remain the central point in the community for sharing information, creating community focus on the fire department, and assisting in meeting the community needs.
- Evaluate and create a community marketing plan for the fire department based on data analysis specific to local issues. This will ultimately enhance the fire service's positive public image.
- In addition to existing safety and survival programs, these programs will be developed that are appropriate for delivery in the fire station setting and also provide standard guideline delivery in public locations:
 - ❖ Fire Extinguisher Safety and Awareness
 - ❖ Smoke Detector Safety and Awareness
 - ❖ Citizen Ride Along Program
 - ❖ Fire Safety Home Inspections
 - ❖ Station and Operation Tours
 - ❖ Holiday Safety and Awareness
 - ❖ Community Emergency Preparedness Programs
- The department will implement a Community Risk Reduction program to develop positive community relationships and build upon existing ones to continually educate the public about the department's policies and procedures related to achieving its mission and vision.
- The department will provide the necessary technology necessary to assist personnel in providing the most efficient and effective services to the community.



GOAL #5

Recruitment and Retention of Department Members

The Elizabethtown Fire Department shall create and maintain a positive and well managed environment to attract and retain qualified members willing to support and meet the mission, vision, and core values as a combination organization.

- Utilizing the entire department, establish a plan for recruitment and retention of **qualified** applicants. This process should involve suggestions from members and receive a commitment from the department leadership.
- Determine the department's personnel needs such as number of firefighters needed, training requirements, and skill sets based on incident response requirements.
- Develop a list of incentives offered and time requirements for membership in the department.
- Develop the criteria and job description for the position of firefighter.
- Advertise locally and regionally through technology to attract a diverse group of candidates to enhance the make-up of the organization.
- Encourage existing members to recruit potential candidates to the organization and offer station tours and visits to sell the department and its family atmosphere.
- Review all applicants, conduct interviews, physical agility tests, and background checks.
- Develop recognition and retention programs complete with incentives to commit to the organization for years to come.



GOAL #6

Provide Effective Leadership

The Elizabethtown Fire Department shall encourage and support the exercise of leadership by all members. The leadership shall plan and determine the departments current challenges, opportunities, weaknesses, and strengths for effective growth and sustainability.

- Develop, implement, and enforce SOP's for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications in accordance to NFPA 1021.
- Create an environment where leaders are allowed flexibility in carrying out duties, yet are held accountable for leading and managing their personnel.
- The department shall train leaders to be more effective with emphasis on relationships and mentoring subordinates.
- The department shall assist personnel with career development skills by providing training on specific leadership skills as well as department policies and procedures.
- The department shall maintain a program where individuals are prepared to lead and establish succession plans that are used for personal and organizational development.
- The department shall maintain a program where supervisors prepare plans and set career goals for themselves and their subordinates.
- The department shall develop and maintain a career development program to assist department members with advancement opportunities



GOAL #7

Provide Monthly In-Service Training

The Elizabethtown Fire Department shall develop training SOP's and follow training criteria for Fire Department members to ensure that firefighters are trained sufficiently to complete the job requirements safely and effectively. All training criteria will reflect the message of safety.

- Establish a Training Officer responsible for the coordination and documentation of all training activities. Responsible for developing training classes, skills maintenance, practice sessions, testing, and implementing opportunities for regional training classes.
- Attending regional and national training classes enhances our performance by learning different methods and develops the skills necessary to provide higher service levels.

Monthly Training Requirements (CAREER)

Training Class

Hours

1.) Community Risk Reduction (Pre-Planning, Hydrants, Streets)	4	http://strategicfire.org/
2.) Firefighter	3	
3.) EMS	3	
4.) Community Outreach and Education (Home surveys, Smoke detectors)	2	
5.) Fire Evolution	2	
6.) Driver/Operator	2	
7.) Fire Officer Training	2	
8.) Safety	1	
9.) Policy and Procedures	1	

Monthly Total:

20 Hours

Annual Total:

240 Hours

Quarterly Inspections: January, April, July, October

- 1.) Driver's License (Class B Required)
- 2.) Personal Protective Equipment
- 3.) SCBA Equipment Evolution



GOAL #8

Encourage Inter-Agency Cooperation and Training

The Elizabethtown Fire Department shall develop emergency response SOP's and inter-agency agreements for automatic-aid responses with the County. This will ensure that fire department members responding to emergency incidents within the town's response district will have sufficient training and resources to complete assignments safely and effectively. All automatic-aid policies and procedures will reflect the message of safety.

- Develop, implement, and enforce policies and procedures to promote and encourage inter-agency cooperation and training.
- Establish good working relationships with Town Departments: Police, Public Works, Planning, and Finance.
- Promote and develop good working relationships with County Emergency Management and outside fire departments to improve automatic-aid responses to emergency incidents and natural disasters.
- Develop training and evolution criteria with outside agencies to improve performance and safety on emergency incidents.
- Develop training criteria with other departments within the Town and County governments to improve performance and safety on emergency incidents.
- Develop, implement, and enforce policies and procedures to promote the Incident Command System (ICS) at all emergency incidents.
- Every agency that responds to the Town of Elizabethtown must understand and be proficient with the Incident Command System as well as the department's policies and procedures for automatic-aid response.
- Develop and enforce annual service contracts with outside agencies to ensure sufficient staffing and equipment will be available during automatic-aid responses.



GOAL #9

Provide Technology and Equipment Upgrades

The Elizabethtown Fire Department shall utilize advanced technology and programs to enhance performance, records management, and information networking while establishing the fire department as a community information access point.

- Develop independent fire department web-site and social media sites to inform and educate the community regarding department related activities and services. The web-site and social media sites will be a focal point for educating the community members and reducing risks associated with fire and natural disasters.
- **Information on the web-site will include:**
 - Fire Department Administration and staff.
 - Message from the Chief.
 - Mission, Vision, and CORE Values statements.
 - Fire and Rescue Operations Policies and Procedure.
 - Emergency Management Information.
 - News and Department Events.
 - Training Schedules.
 - Station and Apparatus.
 - History of the Department.
 - Meetings and Public notices.
 - Annual Response Reports.
 - Community Involvement Projects.
 - Fire and Life Safety Information and Videos.
 - Town of Elizabethtown Information and Links.
 - Frequently Asked Questions Page.
- Develop the Department records management system into a total records management database for secure and accurate records management. Complete accurate documentation for incident reports, training records, pre-incident plans, equipment maintenance, inventory management, hydrant maintenance, station activities, staffing records, annual and monthly performance reports.
- Develop a G.I.S. system to map incident responses and measure response performance, hydrant locations, Risk Assessments, and all fire department related data. Utilize MCT's and Ipads for incident response data, inspections, and pre-planning.



GOAL #10

Equipment and Station Maintenance Plans

The Elizabethtown Fire Department shall develop and follow daily and monthly routine maintenance plans for first line and reserve apparatus, equipment, and station facilities to ensure the safe operation, readiness, and reliability of response equipment.

- Develop, implement, and enforce policies and procedures for annual service tests of fire pump systems in accordance to NFPA 1911 and 1914.
- Develop, implement, and enforce policies and procedures for a fire apparatus preventive maintenance and repair program in accordance to NFPA 1915.
- Develop, implement, and enforce policies and procedures for standards on use, maintenance, and service testing of fire ground ladders in accordance to NFPA 1915.
- Develop, implement, and enforce policies and procedures for Standards on Inspection, Care, Testing, and use of Fire Hose in accordance to NFPA 1962.
- Develop, implement, and enforce policies and procedures for the apparatus monthly maintenance procedures.
- Develop, implement, and enforce policies and procedures for the apparatus weekly maintenance procedures.
- Develop, implement, and enforce policies and procedures for the apparatus daily inspection and equipment check off procedures.
- Develop, implement, and enforce policies and procedures for the station and grounds weekly maintenance procedures.
- The department shall develop and maintain a plan for fleet replacement. This plan will focus on maintaining an adequate fleet of apparatus to reflect the future response needs and requirements of the department.



Minimum Daily Staffing Level

Minimum Daily Staffing: (4)

Chief Officer: 1 Shift Personnel: 3



Staffing:

(11) Full Time

(25) Volunteer Firefighters