



NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT

2024-2029

STRATEGIC PLAN

MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE



Facilitated by



Center for
Public Safety
Excellence

Foreword

As part of the community-driven strategic planning process, this management and implementation guide was developed to assist the Northern Sonoma County Fire District (NSCFD) in managing its future success through institutionalization, implementation, monitoring of progress, and results feedback. The NSCFD must remember that a plan without managed implementation will never result in change and greater success. This is a living document that the agency should use throughout the duration of its community-driven strategic plan. It provides for further revision, accountability, ways to measure and celebrate success, and desired outcomes. Additionally, information is provided to ensure alignment with the strategic vision of the authority having jurisdiction or other sources as determined by the NSCFD.

The Success of the Strategic Plan

The Northern Sonoma County Fire District approached its desire for organizational change and continuous improvement by developing a community-driven strategic plan focused on input and participation from the community and agency stakeholders. The success of this community-driven strategic plan will be rooted in a quality implementation and institutionalization plan, and support from all who hold a stake in the NSCFD.

Without a true focus on implementing and institutionalizing this plan, the NSCFD may fall short of the change it desires. The CPSE recognizes the agency's commitment to its community and supports the continuous improvement identified in this community-driven strategic plan.

Communication

Developing communication processes to disseminate the strategic plan's goals, objectives, and tasking concepts will be key to the agency's success in institutionalizing strategic planning processes. Even the best strategic plans are undermined by the inability to effectively communicate plan goals and objectives that align member actions, and that is a central reason agencies lose control during the implementation. Creating a comprehensive communication plan with clear accountability, ensuring the information needs of various stakeholders are met, and allowing relevant information to go to the right person at the right time to avoid information overload and confusion, will support implementation efforts.

There are various ways an agency may utilize its current communication systems to distribute the plan's elements and agency successes as implementation activities progress. Recognition of the importance of reporting progress to all levels of the agency and its stakeholders will assist in determining which of those systems should be included in disseminated information.

Institutionalization and Implementation

A contributing factor to the success of the community-driven strategic plan is its institutionalization across all levels of the organization. Without it, the plan will remain siloed, and implementation may be hindered. Institutionalization provides an excellent opportunity to communicate to all stakeholders about the intended changes, applicable outcomes, and the direction the department is heading.

Tips for Institutionalization

- 1. Communicate to all levels, even during onboarding.**
- 2. Get all levels involved in the implementation and tap their creativity.**
- 3. Empower all leaders and let them go.**
- 4. Maintain accountability.**
- 5. Report progress regularly for all to see.**

Many avenues of institutionalization and implementation are used by agencies that sincerely understand the power of the community-driven strategic plan. Just as the plan’s development included agency stakeholders representing a broad spectrum internally, the implementation phase must also ensure that the same representation model is utilized. All agency stakeholders who contributed to the plan’s development should be empowered to ensure that members throughout the organization can be part of the implementation phase. This will further institutionalize the plan processes and add value toward implementation successes.

Whether or not they participated in the development of the community-driven strategic plan, all agency stakeholders must recognize that this plan is for the entire agency and is not just representative of the NSCFD’s leadership. Perceived and actual ownership across the NSCFD increases the probability of success and the realization of the desired outcomes.

For further information on implementation and institutionalization, the NSCFD may distribute this article as provided by the CPSE: [Strategic Planning + Institutionalization = Implementation Success](#).

Performance Measurement

By incorporating performance measures into this community-driven strategic plan, the NSCFD has ensured greater success through implementation and institutionalization. However, the agency must continue to measure its successes and challenges during plan execution to stay on course for positive change and delivery to its community. Greater focus should remain on the plan’s intended outcomes, not just agency inputs and outputs. Outcomes are those results that genuinely deliver for all stakeholders.

Goals, Objectives, Tasks, and Measures



GOAL 1: Foster a workplace that will attract and retain the most qualified individuals.

OBJECTIVE 1.1

Revise and improve the recruitment process.

TASKS	TIMEFRAME	ASSIGNMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate the current recruitment process to identify strengths and weaknesses.	3 months	Fire Captains and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Survey current and prospective employees to determine reasons for wanting to work here.	3 months	Administrative Staff or Outside Entity
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop and implement a recruitment process that includes necessary training.	9 months	Fire Captains and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Seek funding for necessary training.	1 year	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Review the effectiveness of the plan and revise it as necessary.	Annually	Fire Captains and Fire Chief

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- Development of recruitment process for permanent and volunteer positions.
- Secure funding for necessary training.
- Multiple applicants for open positions.

OBJECTIVE 1.2

Maintain a workplace that creates a positive work environment, promotes retention, and enhances services.

TASKS	TIMEFRAME	ASSIGNMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate workplace retention initiatives.	3 months	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Survey current employees to identify trends and workplace culture.	3 months	Administrative Staff or Outside Entity
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop and implement a retention strategy to improve workplace culture.	1 year	Fire Captains and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Seek approval for funding the retention plan.	1 year	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Review retention efficacy annually and revise as necessary.	Annually	Fire Chief

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- Employees remain District employees for more than two years.
- Measure increased efficiency where applicable, such as the number of fire inspections and vegetation management treated areas.



GOAL 2: Create and implement a sustainable funding model to ensure financial viability, maintaining the highest level of service.

OBJECTIVE 2.1

Refine the funding model to sustain current and future service needs.

TASKS	TIMEFRAME	ASSIGNMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate current funding sources.	3 months	Board Treasurer and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate expected funding sources.	1 year	Board Treasurer and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure the current level of service is financially viable.	3 months	Board Treasurer and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Research and determine the feasibility of additional revenue sources	1 year	Board and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Implement an increased level of service based on current and expected funding.	Annually	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Review the funding model.	Annually	Board Treasurer and Fire Chief

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- The current level of service is maintained and/or improved.
- Plans are developed for the increased level of service.

OBJECTIVE 2.2

Evaluate and implement programs and emergency response plans to ensure the highest level of service.

TASKS	TIMEFRAME	ASSIGNMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate current programs and response plans.	9 months	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct community risk assessment (CRA).	18 months	Board
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop community programs and modify, if necessary, emergency response plans for a prepared community based on CRA.	6 months years	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Seek funding for community programs and response plans.	2 years	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Implement community programs and modify, if needed, emergency response plans.	9 months and then ongoing	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Review the success of community programs and plans and revise as necessary.	Annually	Fire Chief

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- Reduced response time to emergencies.
- Increased availability of advanced life support/paramedic emergency response.
- Completed community risk assessment.

OBJECTIVE 2.3

Maintain the highest level of service.

TASKS	TIMEFRAME	ASSIGNMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> Research and determine the feasibility of additional revenue sources.	9 months	Board and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Analyze the feasibility of implementing or securing additional revenue.	1 year	Board and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Seek board approval to secure funding sources.	18 months	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Secure and allocate funds.	2 years	Board and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Revise funding sources as part of the annual budget process.	Annually	Board Treasurer and Fire Chief

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- A list of funding sources is developed and analyzed to determine implementation.
- Additional funding sources are secured.



GOAL 3: Enhance existing and develop new physical assets to improve service delivery to our community.

OBJECTIVE 3.1

Add a second staffed fire station, decreasing response times and enhancing emergency service delivery that addresses community expectations.

TASKS	TIMEFRAME	ASSIGNMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify and select a location for a new fire station	6 months	Board and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Design fire station.	12 months	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Seek board approval for design, project manager, and solicit bids for construction.	2 months	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Select and sign a contract with a contractor to construct a fire station.	2 months	Board and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Construct fire station	2 years	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop staffing and apparatus assignment	6 months	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Occupy fire station.	2 months	Fire Chief

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- Firefighter staffing is hired and assigned to Geyserville Fire Station.
- The fire station location and design is completed in 18 months.
- Fire station construction begins within two years.

OBJECTIVE 3.2

Establish a vegetation management facility to accommodate staff and equipment, and improve efficiency.

TASKS	TIMEFRAME	ASSIGNMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify and select a location for a temporary vegetation management facility.	3 months	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Modify temporary vegetation management facility.	6 months	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify and select a location for a permanent vegetation management facility	1 year	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Design vegetation management facility.	6 months	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Seek Board approval for design, project manager, and solicit bids for construction.	2 months	Board and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Select and sign a contract with a contractor to construct a vegetation management facility.	2 months	Board and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Construct vegetation management facility.	2 years	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Occupy vegetation management facility.	2 months	Fire Chief

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- A temporary vegetation management facility is selected.
- The permanent vegetation management facility location and design is completed in 18 months.
- Permanent vegetation management facility construction begins within two years.

OBJECTIVE 3.3

Develop and implement an equipment and apparatus replacement plan to ensure effectiveness and safety.

TASKS	TIMEFRAME	ASSIGNMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop replacement criteria and needs assessment for equipment and apparatus.	6 months	Board and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Inventory and evaluate the condition of existing equipment and apparatus.	1 month	Fire Captains and Fuel Technician 5
<input type="checkbox"/> Establish and adopt equipment and apparatus replacement plans.	2 months	Board and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Implement equipment and apparatus replacement plan	1 month	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Review equipment and apparatus.	Annually	Board and Fire Chief

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- The equipment and apparatus replacement plan is adopted within one year.
- Necessary funding is allocated for the plan.
- Necessary purchases are initiated.

OBJECTIVE 3.4

Embrace emerging technology to improve community outreach and emergency response.

TASKS	TIMEFRAME	ASSIGNMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> Identify and evaluate emerging technology.	1 month and ongoing	Board and all employees
<input type="checkbox"/> Determine the feasibility of emerging technology and associated costs.	2 months	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt implementation of emergency technology and establish metrics to evaluate continued use.	2 months	Board and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Assess the continued use of implemented technology versus emerging technology.	Ongoing	Fire Chief

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- List of identified and evaluated emergency technology is maintained.
- Applicable emergency technology is implemented.
- Improved emergency response attributed to emerging technology is documented.



GOAL 4: Expand our community outreach program to ensure a well-informed and involved community.

OBJECTIVE 4.1

Enhance collaboration efforts with community partners to disseminate accurate and timely information.

TASKS	TIMEFRAME	ASSIGNMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> Maintain collaboration with existing community partners and support of Communities Organized to Prepare for Emergencies (COPE).	1 month and Ongoing	Board and All Employees
<input type="checkbox"/> Maintain collaboration with industry representatives.	1 month	Board and All Employees
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop criteria and methods for sharing various types of information (prevention, preparedness, press release, emergency response, etc.).	1 month	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Determine the need for a public information officer or other staff to support collaboration efforts and information dissemination.	6 months	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Review partnerships on an annual basis and revise as necessary.	Annually	Board and Fire Chief

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- Maintain partnerships with existing COPE Communities.
- Establish an opt-in mailing list for an electronic newsletter.
- Determine the need for a public information officer or staff to enhance collaboration efforts.

OBJECTIVE 4.2

Improve community preparedness, risk reduction, and fire prevention efforts.

TASKS	TIMEFRAME	ASSIGNMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop and implement a fire prevention program with staffing that encompasses community preparedness, risk reduction, and fire prevention efforts,	6 months	Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate and/or collaborate for events focusing on preparedness, risk reduction, and fire prevention.	3 months and ongoing	Fire Prevention Staff
<input type="checkbox"/> Review fire prevention program effectiveness.	Annually	Board and Fire Chief
<input type="checkbox"/> Maintain listing on the California Board of Forestry’s Fire Risk Reduction Community List.	Every two years	Fire Chief

MEASURED OUTCOMES

- All residents, businesses, and schools have the ability to collaborate to reduce the need for emergency response and losses from emergencies.
- Five hundred defensible space inspections are completed between April 1 and November 1 each year.
- Life safety inspections are completed.
- Increase the number of Firewise USA Communities and maintain existing communities.
- A minimum of two community preparedness events are held each year.
- Wildfire risk reduction programs/projects are developed.
- CPR and fire extinguisher classes are offered.
- Reduce the number of emergency responses to false fire alarms.
- NSCFD remains on the California Board of Forestry’s Fire Risk Reduction Community List.