



HFD



Strategic Plan **Fiscal Years 2010-2014**

Annise Parker, Mayor
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HFD MISSION STATEMENT

The Houston Fire Department is a professional organization continually seeking opportunities to serve our community through fire prevention, emergency operations, patient care, and excellent customer service.

HFD VISION STATEMENT

We are committed to a superior emergency service organization, which continually improves the quality of service delivered to our customers, the citizens of Houston.

HFD SLOGAN

Courage, Commitment and Compassion

CORE VALUES OF THE DEPARTMENT

SAFETY

The preservation of life remains the number one goal of the HFD beginning with the Responder and extending to the public.

VALOR

Courageously encountering adversity, accepting responsibility for ones actions, and providing respectful and professional conduct due the public and our members.

INTEGRITY

Always doing what is right even when it's difficult or unpopular so that what we do individually and as an organization will stand up to public scrutiny.

EXCELLENCE

Striving for constant improvement to better serve the community and each other.

DEDICATION

Wholly committed to the mission and vision of our department. The faithful observance of duty beckons us to fulfill our obligations professionally and honestly.



HFD SCOPE OF SERVICE

The service provided by the Houston Fire Department has evolved over the years from a heavy emphasis on fighting structure fires to a more prominent role in providing pre-hospital care. In light of the events leading up to and including the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the HFD has expanded its role in responding to all types of emergencies, such as hazardous materials incidents, technical rescue events, transportation accidents, utility-related incidents and acts of terrorism. The public demands and expects a courteous and professional response to all types of emergencies and requests for service.

The Houston Fire Department responsibilities includes:

- **Fires – structural and non-structural**
Traditional structural firefighting, vehicle fires, wild land fires, and rescue related to these events.
- **Emergency Medical Services**
The bulk of the demand for services continues to increase in the area of pre-hospital care provided by the Houston Fire Department. The HFD now provides a complete package of Emergency Medical Services, mass casualty management, decontamination, and patient transport.
- **Terrorist Acts – Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosives**
Issues arising from the recent rise in global terrorism necessitates that HFD personnel have the ability to respond to, and mitigate all acts of terrorism, both domestic and international. The Houston Fire Department has increased its readiness through aggressive planning, training and equipment acquisition.
- **Hazardous Materials Response**
The City of Houston has long been recognized as the “Chemical Capital of the World.” Consequently, the HFD Hazardous Materials Response Team has become a model for fire services around the world. The department continues to expand the capabilities of the HMRT to meet the ever increasing demand for response to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosives events.
- **Technical Rescue**
The Technical Rescue Team provides emergency response to incidents such as structural collapse, swift and rapid-rising water, trench rescue, confined space rescue, high angle emergencies, and vehicle extrication.
- **Transportation Incidents – land, air, water, and rail**
The Houston Fire Department responds to emergencies involving all modes of transportation. It works closely with the Port Authority of Houston and the US Coast Guard to provide response to water related incidents. The HFD maintains and provides the Air Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) capability for both of Houston’s major airports – Bush Intercontinental and Hobby.
- **Catastrophic Weather Events – hurricanes, tornadoes, storms, floods and heat**



Hurricanes, thunderstorms and the associated flooding and tornadoes pose an immediate danger to the citizens of this community. The HFD plays a vital role in protecting life and property from the consequences of weather related emergencies.

- **Fire Prevention – inspection, education, enforcement, and code development**
Traditional fire prevention activities, such as inspection and enforcement continue to play a prominent role in protecting the community from fire related losses – life, property, and environment. A greater emphasis on public education and pro-active code development will be sought.
- **Fire Investigation – arson, cause/origin, intelligence, prosecution**
The HFD Arson Division has a long-standing reputation for its efficiency in fire cause and determination. Working jointly with other police agencies and the ATF to bring arsonists to conviction brings to bear an added element of fire prevention. Interaction with other enforcement agencies allows for collective intelligence sharing and enhances safety to our community.
- **Special Event and Dignitary Protection**
Houston is home to past President George H. Bush and more than 46 foreign consulates. The HFD provides planning and response to many special events and dignitary visits. With the added threat of terrorism, special event planning and response takes on a whole new dimension and are no longer routine.

**HFD KEY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The Houston Fire Department has identified eight key goal areas. The Strategic Plan includes specific objectives for achieving each of the stated goals. Each objective has a plan of action for completing that objective and ultimately the goal. Further, an annual operating report is completed each year of the strategic plan outlining specific steps to be taken to accomplish the plan of action for that year. The annual operating report will be revised each fiscal year to reflect the current fiscal budget. It is the intent of the Houston Fire Department to have all personnel, collectively and individually contribute to the accomplishment of these goals. Collectively, with a clear vision, we can improve and enhance the service we provide to both our members and the public we have sworn to protect.

GOAL 1.0

Enhance the health and safety of HFD members

GOAL 2.0

Improve fire prevention and public safety awareness

GOAL 3.0

Improve emergency response operations

GOAL 4.0

Strengthen management and leadership skills

GOAL 5.0

Embrace diversity

GOAL 6.0

Ensure funding for operations and acquisitions of capital assets fulfill the needs of the department's personnel and the customer served.

GOAL 7.0

Strengthen and reinforce a positive public perception of the department.

GOAL 8.0

Implement best business practices to increase organizational effectiveness, accountability and communications

**GOAL 1.0 ENHANCE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF HFD MEMBERS***Overview*

The preservation of life continues to be the highest priority among fire service providers. The Houston Fire Department recognizes that our ability to protect human lives is greatly impacted by the health and safety of our personnel and their ability to provide adequate services. The Department's highest goal is to provide a safe and healthy work environment for its members. The 2009 NFPA Firefighter Fatalities in the U.S. report indicated 39% of the firefighter fatalities were attributed to heart attacks. Of reported injuries in 2008, the NFPA estimates that 79,700 firefighter injuries occurred in the line of duty, an increase of 5.0% from 2004. Almost half (46.0%) of the all firefighter injuries occurred during fire ground operations. An estimated 14,250 occurring during other on duty activities, and 15,745 occurred at non-fire emergency incidents. These are clear indications that mandate a pro-active approach to firefighter fitness and safety. The department seeks to instill and model a common philosophy that promotes firefighter safety and health.

Objective 1.1 Improve overall safety of HFD members through department-wide training, incident briefings and debriefings, and post-incident critiques and analysis.

Plan of Action

- VJTF will conduct a series of multiple company drill evolutions to establish departmental standards in fire ground operations and safety and review the results so as to identify company and/or individual deficiencies.
 - Year 1: Forty-one multiple company fire evolutions will be conducted focusing on advanced fire fighter safety and survival training, fire tactics for Apartment and High rise fires and Hazardous Materials incidents. Post-incident critiques will be performed by district chiefs and training academy staff
 - Years 2-5: Eighty-four multiple company fire evolutions will be conducted each fiscal year focusing on advanced fire tactics- Apartment Fires, High Rise Fires, and Hazardous Materials. Focus of training evolutions may change as needs arise.
- HMRT members will assist in delivering and attending outside HFD hazardous materials training courses.
 - Year 1: The complexity of Hazardous Materials/WMD response and ongoing concern for the safety and well being of responders creates a specific need for outside training. Twelve members attend and deliver training at the annual Hotzone Conference. Six member's participation in Channel Industries and Mutual Aid Training Symposium. Six members attend Office of Domestic Preparedness courses.
 - Years 2-5: Increase the number of members attending outside training by 5 % each year.



Objective 1.2 Conduct research and development of all safety related issues and continue to provide high quality personal protective equipment to our members.

Plan of Action

- Implement a Tuberculosis (TB) program that entails exposure research and reduction, training and education, and tuberculin screening tests of HFD members.
 - Year 1: Pending budget approval, create any positions along with job duties.
 - Years 2-5: Implementation of the Tuberculosis (TB) program. Annual Tuberculin screen testing, N95 mask fit-testing, and ongoing training of HFD personnel.
- Implement Mechanical Stretcher Replacement program.
 - Year 1: Add 18 more mechanical stretchers to the fleet. Ten stretchers to come from HFD budget. Four other stretchers coming from donation/foundations.
 - Years 2-5: Add 45 more mechanical stretchers to the fleet.
- Maintain an adequate level of turnout gear in Quartermaster so that all suppression personnel will have the same kind and style of gear throughout the department. Based on a 6-year life cycle, ensure adequate funding is available to replace 1/6 of all gear each year.
 - Year 1: Maintain inventory and purchase of turnout gear through the use of the SAP program. Purchase 1/6 of total amount in field to provide replacements for worn and contaminated gear. Maintain adequate reserve inventory of all items so that 25% of the members on one shift could be issued gear, in case of a large incident that damages or contaminates currently issued turnout gear.
 - Years 2-5: Evaluate SAP accuracy of inventory control system. Adjust and utilize alternative system if needed. Gear will be evaluated during semi-annual cleaning and repair program. Any gear that requires extensive repairs will be replaced with new gear. Evaluate reserve surplus inventory level maintained in year 1. Adjust as needed. Adjust replacement schedule so that 1/6 of all gear in the field is replace with new gear each year.
- Improve fire ground accountability by acquiring new technology that identifies a member's exact location three dimensionally.
 - Year 1: The current Grace Accountability System needs to be replaced with newer more exact technology to enable the precise location of firefighters in the hazard zone. Funding is not available in the current budget. Alternatively grant funding is being sought to finance this replacement program.
 - Years 2-5: Once the technology is acquired, department wide training will occur prior to full implementation. After implementation ongoing training will occur at the district level, as part of multi-company drills and as part of other training scenarios. Operations will be evaluated on a continuous basis to determine if the technology or the operating guidelines can be improved upon. Identified improvements to the operational guidelines will be implemented.
- Phase in the addition of Incident Command Technicians (ICT's) to enhance the safety of fire ground operations.



- Year 1: In July 2009, two additional ICT's were added for a total of thirteen out of 21 ICT's in the department. Two additional ICTs will be added in July 2010, as described in the Collective Bargaining Contract.
- Year 2: Continue to add two ICT's each fiscal year until the phase-in is complete with 21 ICT's total.
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Objective 1.3 Reduce the number of HFD vehicle accidents.

Plan of Action

- VJTF is offering a Driver Operator Pump (DOP) Program enabling training in situation awareness, risk analysis and decision making, emergency reaction and avoidance procedures, and conscientious equipment operation.
 - Year 1: Train and State Certify 125 individuals in Driver/Operator curriculum
 - Years 2-5: Train all newly hired Firefighters in Driver/Operator Curriculum (approx. 125 individuals)
- Acquire both heavy and light duty driving simulators. By giving members the opportunity to simulate emergency responses in various conditions and on various apparatus, it decreases the chances of a vehicle accident
 - Year 1: Research the availability of grant funds for this acquisition. Acquire one heavy duty driving simulators. Develop an emergency response training course for the simulator.
 - Years 2-5: Acquire one additional heavy duty simulator and two light duty driving simulators.

Objective 1.4 Implement the recommendations of the Fire Service Joint Labor Management Wellness-Fitness Initiatives as resources allow.

Plan of Action

- Educate members about health care provider benefits. Increase the number of HFD members that obtain a yearly well man/women exam. Goal is 80% by 2011.
 - Year 1: Continue to collaborate with city health care provider to promote the importance of preventative medical screening through education and electronic communication.
 - Years 2-5: Hire Civilian Wellness Coordinator for program development and continuation. Research grant funding for third party to conduct wellness fitness assessments of classified members.
- Enhance Wellness Guideline objectives
 - Year 1: Continue to accept Dietetic Interns to conduct educational presentations/classes to firefighters and cadets
 - Years 2-5: Educate members on Training Heart Rate at Multi-Company Drills and monitor Heart Rates during evolutions. Obtain baseline fitness data on trainees; conduct re-assessments prior to graduation.



- Institute formalized fitness equipment repair program.
 - Year 1: Research grant funds for new fitness equipment for uniformity in stations and replacement units. Acquire funding from Fire fighter Foundation for parts; utilize current staff to conduct repairs.
 - Years 2-5: Research and request funds for centralized department fitness facility. This Facility will be staffed by the civilian wellness coordinator who will conduct the responsibilities outlined in the Wellness Guideline.

Objective 1.5 Implement the 16 Life Safety Initiatives of the Everyone Goes Home program as resources allow.

Plan of Action

- NFFF Initiative # 11- National standards for emergency response policies and procedures should be developed and championed.
 - Year 1: Administration- Develop a Response to Roadway Emergencies guideline.
 - Years 2-5: Monitor effectiveness of new guideline relating to reduction of on-duty near-misses, injuries, and illnesses at roadway incidents

**GOAL 2.0 IMPROVE FIRE PREVENTION AND PUBLIC SAFETY AWARENESS***Overview*

The absolute best method of reducing fire fatalities and property loss is through fire prevention and public education initiatives. Code enforcement and fire investigation play a minor role in fire prevention when compared to the success of public fire safety education initiatives. Public fire safety education serves to extend fire prevention and life safety intervention through education by providing educational programs for schools, businesses and civic associations.

Aggressive development and enforcement of the fire codes and ordinances through fire investigative techniques will greatly reduce the number of accidental fire incidents. Fire and life safety inspections are required by law as a necessary and integral part of fire code enforcement within our business communities. The public expects enforcement of the fire codes to provide a safe environment in which to live their lives. Likewise, property must be protected from individuals that commit arson and the associated death, property loss, and fraud produced by this crime.

Objective 2.1 Enhance fire safety awareness through an aggressive public education campaign.*Plan of Action*

- HFD Public Affairs through education and public awareness aims to reduce the rate of fire deaths in the Houston area.
 - Year 1: Public Affairs will continue to canvass fire fatality areas within 48 hours of incident. Efforts include smoke detector install, battery replacement and fire safety literature. Will visit area church following a fatality to schedule a detector distribution day after services to congregation. Public Affairs will purchase and install/distribute smoke, carbon monoxide, and hearing impaired detectors as outlined above. Public Affairs Mass Install days and Fire Station Open House events (6 each) will increase number of installs and distributions by 50%
 - Years 2-5: Public Affairs will continue to conduct mass smoke detector campaigns targeting high risk, low income families in the Houston areas by utilizing all available resources to include media and interdepartmental and external partnerships.
- HFD Public Affairs through education and public awareness will partner with private industry (insurance industry, safe home product industry) to educate the public with the goal to reduce property loss as measured by dollar value per residential square footage in Houston.
 - Year 1: Public Affairs will continue to identify high risk areas and in the city and promote, produce and distribute fire prevention and fire safety materials, focusing on three major areas including: Multi-family dwellings, and youth and senior populations. Presentations will occur at schools, civic clubs, recreational facilities and the like. (FY10 goal: 250) Continue to hold seasonal and scheduled press conferences including annual events (Mass Install/Open House) focusing



on fire safety awareness and prevention. FY10 goal: 100 PSAs/press Conferences/Media Alerts/Press Releases and 100,000 website visits; 39% media and 68% visits

- Years 2-5: Will establish several PowerPoint presentations for topic specific and age specific groups. This will ensure all safety messages, tips and concerns are covered. These presentations will also be available to suppression personnel via HFD intranet. Public Affairs will include live visual demonstrations during press conferences to demonstrate various safety topics that highlight the major causes of fires (Cooking, Candles, Space Heaters, Smoking...) These safety messages and demonstration videos will also be available to view on HFD website.
- HFD aims to combat the number of fires started by children through the Juvenile Firestopper Program.
 - Year 1: The Firestoppers program will continue to serve juveniles with assessment and educational programs, follow up with participants for at least one year with documentation and increase outreach efforts to the Spanish speaking population. (FY10 goal is: 152 referrals from Arson, counselors and parents, 78 classes, 10 referrals for counseling; 14% referrals, 19% classes)
 - Years 2-5: Firestoppers will attempt to increase the number of referrals from counselors and parents by conducting educational presentations in high risk area schools to faculty and parents. These presentations will be available in Spanish and Vietnamese languages as well.

Objective 2.2 Set challenging targets for inspection cycles and ensure compliance of existing codes and ordinances.

Plan of Action

- All LSB inspection teams will meet the minimum standards for the frequency of inspections in all occupancies.
 - Year 1: With the assignment of new fire inspectors to existing teams, frequency of inspections are expected to be on task for FY09.
 - Years 2-5: Data collected through the ILMS will be analyzed weekly and monthly and as otherwise required by division administrators to insure all goals and objectives are met.

Objective 2.3 Completely implement the Integrated Land Management System (ILMS) database and information system. Acquire all equipment and personnel required to effectively and efficiently utilize the software program.

Plan of Action

- The LSB is striving to fully implement the Integrated Land Management System (ILMS) in conjunction with a program for tracking fire prevention permits and inspector’s daily activities. These software packages will be used to build a database of business inspection information that may be retrieved later for management review.
 - Year 1: enhance inspector and supervisor productivity through the implementation of a global inspections list broken out by team. This list will



steam line inspection assignments and monitor the time since the last general inspection for all buildings in our scope.

- Years 2-5: Work with the COH Planning Department's Enterprise Geographic Information System (EGIS) to add mapping, routing, and other location-based features to the current inspection process and daily work flow. Plans are being developed to interface inspection data with the dispatch system to provide additional information to Emergency Operations (Suppression) personnel responding to fire incidents.

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Objective 2.4 Completely implement the recommendations of the performance audits conducted by Mir, Fox and Rodriguez and by TriData in the Life Safety Bureau.

Plan of Action

- Effective measures have been taken by the LSB to implement all the recommendations. Additional funds are required to implement the remainder of the recommendations.
 - Year 1: Both the quality assurance program and customer satisfaction survey programs will be administered through another division with the Houston Fire Department to insure the integrity of the data collected. Feedback from the programs will be provided for review by LSB administrators.
 - Years 2-5: The programs effectiveness will be evaluated constantly by division administrators. Feedback will be examined and additional training will be provide and policies developed when necessary.

Objective 2.5 Improve and enhance the ability of the Arson division to collect, store and analyze case data and trends with regard to fire cause and determination.

Plan of Action

- The Arson division has implemented a new Information and Case Management System. System is more current, comprehensive and efficient.
 - Year 1: Move Blade server to central location in order to improve efficiency in handling evidence.
 - Year 2-5: Continue to monitor quality of photographs taken at fire scenes, and monitor the storage and retrieval of evidence using the bar code system. Request upgrades to software as need s are identified.
- The Arson division will properly staff the redeveloped Arson Lab.
 - Year 1: Hire and train one civilian lab technician. and
 - Years 2-5: create two investigator positions to serve as crime scene technicians



GOAL 3.0 IMPROVE EMERGENCY RESPONSE OPERATIONS

Overview

The core mission of the Houston Fire Department is to provide superior emergency services to the citizens of Houston. Often, the first interaction between the public and the Houston Fire Department occurs during a time of personal tragedy for the requestor. The public sector expects and should receive timely, efficient, and superior professional services from our employees. All opportunities to enhance and improve the services we provide should be explored and implemented. The introduction of new technologies coupled with aggressive training and comprehensive professional development of our employees will allow the Houston Fire Department to achieve this goal.

Objective 3.1 Improve emergency response operations through comprehensive, in-depth training.

Plan of Action

- The VJTF will enhance and expand comprehensive yearly training schedules to meet the long-range objective of increasing preparedness through strategic and tactical level training.
 - Year 1: Train 96 District Chiefs, 150 Senior Captains and 42 Incident Command Technicians on ship board fire fighting and Multiple Casualty Incidents. Conduct 80 hour training for all newly promoted officer on leadership and basic fire tactics.
 - Years 2-5: Conduct Chief Officer Development courses focusing on advanced strategic level command techniques. Conduct training for all newly promoted officers on leadership and basic fire tactics.
- Encourage and support members that participate in incident management courses outside the HFD.
 - Year 1: Available training is published through Training Bulletins and departmental e-mail. Members will have the opportunity to enhance their skills, learn about other departments and be allowed time off from the station to attend classes. Encourage at least 15 members in FY10 to attend Incident Management Courses at the National Fire Academy in Maryland.
 - Years 2-5: Increase members going to NFA by 3% per year to attend advance courses.
- Provide training in shipboard fire fighting.
 - Year 1: Emergency Operations will develop HFD Guideline to establish direction for use on shipboard firefighting incidents
 - Years 2-5: Provide six hours of classroom instruction at VJTF for Districts 20, 26 and 45 to train 430 members. Provide an eight hour “hands on class” which includes burn evolutions at TEEEX for 430 members.



Objective 3.2 Evaluate and enhance the Emergency Medical Services delivery system to provide superior EMS service.

Plan of Action

- Enhance and expand of the Paramedic Officer Program (POP).
 - Year 1: Retain promoting Engineer/Operator Paramedics in paramedic program as credentialed Paramedic Captains.
 - Years 2-5: Retain number of POP officers (with resulting equipment needs) as paramedics continue to promote through the HFD system.

Objective 3.3 Enhance the capability of the HFD to prepare for and respond to Multiple Casualty Incidents (MCI's) and events of terrorism involving weapons of mass destruction, including chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive (CBRNE) devices.

Plan of Action

- Upgrade current radio system to 700 MHz
 - Year 1: Complete Fleet Mapping Project. (12 month duration)
 - Years 2-5: Installation and delivery of 700MHz consoles, mobile and portable radios Completion of construction and build-out of tower sites followed by Go-Live of system. Increase Communications Captains positions through Civil Service to properly monitor large events.
- Design and purchase Disaster/Bariatric Ambulances. These ambulances may be used as a multiple casualty incident (MCI) ambulance capable of transporting 5 supine (back-boarded) patients, in addition to 3 EMS personnel. This unit would double as a bariatric ambulance, pre-equipped with quick-connects to accept the bariatric stretcher, ramps, winch, and accessories to transport an excessively obese (bariatric) patient.
 - Year 1: Pending budget funding, purchase and placement of 3 Disaster/Bariatric ambulances.
 - Years 2-5: After implementation, evaluate program for effectiveness. Possible expansion of the program per results of evaluation.
- Purchase and install radiological detection equipment in EMS transport units.
 - Year 1: Install detection equipment on all active apparatus and calibrate annually. Pilot program complete.
 - Years 2-5: Make readout alerts instantaneously available to Office of Emergency Communications.
- Support implementation of technological advancements for the Hazardous Materials Response Team. Establish guidelines to ensure that benefits of technology apply to maintaining desired level of service.
 - Year 1: Create committee to research for new technologies introduced to the market. Monitor equipment as an integral part of site safety operations and risk assessment.
 - Year 2-5: Develop replacement schedule for outdated technology and equipment.



- Ensure adequate Hazardous Material/WMD protection to the citizens of Houston by addressing expansion of existing HMRT facilities.
 - Year 1: Acquisition of property located adjacent to HMRT facility, station 22.
 - Year 2-5: Expansion of a temporary parking area on acquired property. Design and acquire CIP funding for the expansion of the HMRT station.

- The complete elimination of terroristic violence (zero risk) is impossible, and efforts to approach zero risk impose enormous costs to an organization. A rational approach to risk policy recognizes that some level of risk will always accompany response activities
 - Year 1: Addition of senior captain position assigned to HMRT staff to coordinate the rail car project course and refresher training of operations trained responders in accordance with OSHA, EPA and TCFP.
 - Year 2-5: Add two additional senior captain positions to the HMRT. This will modify response procedures from an on call to an on duty senior captain. Filling these positions will meet four of the eight key goals listed in HFD’s Strategic Plan. These positions will enhance safety of both fire fighters and citizens, improve emergency response operations, and ensure accountability, organizational effectiveness and communications for the incident commander during a hazmat incident. This will also fulfill the NIMS management gap that was identified during the CIMA Zone II drill at Valero and the U.S. Coast Guard drill on the Trinity.

Objective 3.4 Explore and identify new technologies to increase efficiency and resource tracking.

Plan of Action

- Develop in-house capacity to utilize Geographic Information System (GIS) technology to provide geographic mapping of HFD data. GIS reporting is intended to relate RMS-type data to a map to provide a better view of resources. GIS Ops Assistance is geared toward providing incident commanders with more situational awareness on the fire ground.
 - GIS Reporting:
 - Year 1: Create GIS reports and dashboards within the WebFOCUS Business Intelligence system.
 - Years 2-5: Continue to refine reports based on business needs; provide training to end user to allow self-service report creation
 - GIS Operation Assistance:
 - Year 1: Provide situational awareness on the fireground through use of public and City GIS resources on DC laptops.
 - Years 2-5: Enhance systems with newer/more detailed imagery; create interfaces to external (state and regional) systems

- The Apparatus Design Committee will explore new concepts and designs in vehicles to create a modern fleet of response vehicles.



- Year 1: Review apparatus specifications at least annually to ensure NFPA compliance and record end user performance reviews. The replacement program will continue on the same priority system that is currently utilized, dependent on adequate funding.
- Years 2-5: Continue to ensure a fiscal responsibility to the city when selecting apparatus for purchase. Follow revised five and ten year replacement schedule for apparatus.
- Improve incident management efficiency
 - Year 1: Research available technology to identify and acquire tools that will enable the Incident Commander to more effectively track committed and available resources; access reports, TEAPS, high rise surveys, apartment surveys, etc. on the fire ground
 - Years 2-5: As new informational tools are acquired, the department will insure that members are trained, both initially and annually. Phase-in will depend on the overall cost of technology and the availability of funding. However, it is not the most effective approach for the organization to implement new programs. Consistency in operations is lost using this approach.

Objective 3.5 Reduce HFD response times.

Plan of Action

- Continue to review response times and educate those areas that consistently do not meet HFD response time goals as to the importance of rapid but safe response.
 - Year 1: This will be done through the use of Special Bulletins and informal meetings conducted by the Shift Commanders.
 - Years 2-5: Monitoring for improvement and notification will continue in the subsequent years.
- Emergency Operations will work with EMS and OEC to reduce the response to various incidents, thereby making more apparatus available for subsequent calls for assistance.
 - Year 1: EMS will evaluate statistics and make recommendations for any changes to the response protocols. Emergency Operations, in conjunction with the OEC, will determine if changes can be made to the response protocols.
 - Years 2-5: This will be an on-going evaluation that will build on changes, if any, which are made in previous years.

**GOAL 4.0 STRENGTHEN MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS*****Overview***

There is a distinct difference between management and leadership. Both are vital to the success of any organization, and because they are, it is critical to understand the difference. Leadership is defined as having the ability or capacity to lead. It focuses on doing the right things. Management focuses on doing things right. In order to secure success in the efforts of the Houston Fire Department's mission, we must cultivate and educate leaders from within our organization. It is important to mention that leadership is not rank, title, privileges, or money. It is responsibility. All members of this organization should be encouraged to embrace their responsibilities to the City, this department, its members and the citizens we serve.

Effective management, doing things right, will only come through comprehensive training and education of our employees. All members of the Houston Fire Department must accept responsibility for the development of this organization and be encouraged to "do the right things right".

Objective 4.1 Improve personal accountability for member's actions.***Plan of Action***

- HFD will ensure that enough members are certified as mediators to operate the HFD Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program.
 - Year 1: Staff Services will certify five members as mediators.
 - Years 2-5: Will certify five members per year until objective is achieved.
- Staff Services will evaluate the efficacy of the ADR process on every complaint and/or grievance and will submit the issue(s) to the ADR process when applicable.
 - Year 1: Will evaluate the outcomes of complaints and grievances submitted to the ADR process.
 - Years 2-5: Reevaluate the outcomes of complaints and grievances submitted to the ADR process. Make adjustments and submit future grievances and complaints to the ADR process based on these positive evaluations.

Objective 4.2 Provide leadership and management training to all members***Plan of Action***

- VJTF will implement initiatives to make high quality training and education accessible to all members through advanced degree and training programs. The VJTF will enhance and expand comprehensive yearly strategic and tactical training schedules to increasing preparedness.
 - Year 1: Establish quarterly educational seminars with colleges and universities hosted at the Val Jahnke training facility. Continue to provide strategic and tactical training to newly promoted officers through HFD desktop and online training modules.



- Years 2-5: Establish online information system for any members needing college course information. Continue to train newly promoted officers through strategic level training program.
- The Life Safety Bureau will implement a Professional Development Program to enrich and enhance management and supervisory skills.
 - Year 1: The LSB will continue to seek qualified resources to provide professional devolvement instruction for LSB supervisory staff. Funding requested again FY10.
 - Years 2-5: If necessary, the LSB will develop its own program for professional development that is adapted to the job descriptions and duties of classified LSB personnel.
- Establish a mentoring program for newly promoted officers
 - Year 1: Research a four week newly promoted officer program to include mentoring.
 - Years 2-5: FY11- develop course for Captains; FY12- implement the Captain program and develop the Sr. Captain program; FY13- implement the Senior Captains program and develop the Chief Officer program; FY14- implement the District Chief program and develop the Engineer/operator program; FY15- implement the Engineer/operator program
- Ensure adequate training for all HMRT members.
 - Year 1: Train all current HMRT staff members to the NFPA 472 Competencies for Incident Commanders. Staff members obtain Texas Commission on Fire Protection certification as Hazardous materials Incident Commanders.
 - Year 2-5: Train HMRT Captains and E/Os trained to the NFPA 472
- Fleet Management will implement individual and section level training programs for assigned personnel.
 - Year 1: Shop Managers will perform training needs assessment for personnel assigned to their section. Shop Managers will locate and coordinate with appropriate vendor or agency that will conduct the training. Shop Managers will submit training request (with costs) to Fleet Director and/or Division Manager for approval and resourcing.
 - Years 2-5: Conduct assessments and revise as necessary.

Objective 4.3 Establish management benchmarks and select measures of performance

- Establish benchmarks for selected maintenance operations within Fleet Management.
 - Year 1: Shop Managers will define the Top Three jobs in their respective areas and collect data via the M5 Fleet Management System. The primary measurement used will be man-hours. The Top Three jobs will be identified and analyzed by the Shop Managers no later than April 1, 2010. Data collection will begin in M5 at that time. After six months of collecting data, benchmarks for each Top Three jobs will be established no later than October 1, 2010.
 - Years 2-5: Conduct assessments and revise as necessary.



- Select measures of performance for selected maintenance operations within Fleet Management. These measures of performance can be developed by adopting or modifying established benchmarks.
 - Year 1: Using benchmarks that are established in October 2010, Shop Managers will evaluate the data and make their recommendations for Measures of Performance for each of their Top Three jobs. Data will be collected for another three months. The measure of performance will then assessed by the Fleet chain of command no later than April 1, 2010.
 - Years 2-5: Conduct assessments and revise as necessary

**GOAL 5.0 EMBRACE DIVERSITY***Overview*

The management and members of the Houston Fire Department are keenly aware of the importance of creating a winning, balanced workplace in which people of all cultures and backgrounds have an opportunity to succeed. We recognize that diversity creates many opportunities and benefits because it includes all ethnicities, cultures, genders, religious beliefs, lifestyles, and physical challenges. The Houston Fire Department will continue to work toward encouraging all members to embrace and accept the differences within the department, as well as those within the community we serve.

Objective 5.1 Improve workforce diversity through strong recruiting initiatives.*Plan of Action*

- The HFD Recruiting Division will partner with labor groups to maximize minority recruiting.
 - Year 1: Institute two programs to encourage strong young women to consider fire service as a viable career option by eliminating stereotypes. Camp Houston Fire is a Community Outreach and Recruiting effort lead by the HFD Sirens partnered with the Houston Fire Department and Houston Independent School District. (2) Work with Female College and University Athletic Programs to promote careers in fire service.
 - Years 2-5: Continue use of Public Affairs - PIO and Classified Recruiting (CR) to maximize minority recruiting: Utilize Asian Radio Station by PIO and CR to inform the Asian Community about career opportunities with HFD; assign a Recruiter to visit local ROTC programs and assign a new AA/Black Female Recruiter to visit local high school and college athletic programs to inform female candidates.
- The HFD Recruiting Division will develop a written strategy to reach out and educate minority communities about career opportunities in fire and pre-hospital emergency services.
 - Year 1: Continue using the Talent Acquisition Strategy (TAS) Binders created in FY09 and further breakdown the Minority Binder into: Asian, African-American/Black and Female. This will be accomplished with recently added staff members of an Asian Male and an AA/Black Female Recruiter.
 - Years 2-5: The TAS Binders will serve as a blueprint for Classified Recruiting and Public Affairs - PIO to inform minority communities. They will be periodically updated to concentrate the recruiting efforts on the most successful types of events and advertising. The TAS Binders will be used at all community outings and educational opportunities.
- The HFD Recruiting Division will work closely with Public Affairs to develop a media strategy for recruiting minority applicants.



- Year 1: Continue development of New Website: www.HGFCareers.org. Continue workup of videos in progress. Recruiting brochures have been updated to emphasize that HFD Classified Personnel reflect the community that it serves.
- Years 2-5: Maintain current information on website. Videos will be added on the new website, and Brochures are continually revised to target changing segments of the community,

Objective 5.2 Create an atmosphere of respect for individual differences and promote the strengths associated within.

Plan of Action

- Promote sensitivity awareness among all classified officers and non-classified non-management employees.
 - Year 1: Schedule contractor-provided, four-hour Sensitivity Training Classes contingent upon budget approval for training 300 personnel: Six classes for 180 classified and four classes non-classified members: 118 district chiefs from suppression and equivalent ranks, 62 senior captains from suppression and equivalent ranks, 120 Non-classified, non-supervisory personnel
 - Years 2-5: FY10, ten captain classes (suppression personnel), FY11, seven captain classes (suppression personnel), FY12, two classes, anyone unavailable for other classes



GOAL 6.0 ENSURE FUNDING FOR OPERATIONS AND ACQUISITION OF CAPITAL ASSETS FULFILL THE NEEDS OF THE DEPARTMENT’S PERSONNEL AND THE CUSTOMER SERVED.

Overview

It is vital to the success of the Houston Fire Department to provide adequate funding to support the mission. We must create a budget plan that reflects the vision of the department and supports the activities necessary to achieve its mission and goals. Not only is it important to create an adequate budget process, it is vital to create systems to address preventative maintenance of assets and ensure sufficient operating supplies. All employees must utilize department assets efficiently and effectively while avoiding unnecessary financial impacts.

Objective 6.1 Implement the Mayor’s Vision of Financial Management and Accountability.

Plan of Action

- Prepare an annual budget by line item by month.
 - Year 1: Investigate processes to link individual budget items, projects, etc. with identified actual spending in SAP. Work with Finance Department to limit spending between cost centers in SAP.
 - Years 2-5: Monitor trends and adjust, as required. Improve month-end closing process with information distribution.

- Prepare an annual forecast which is the same as the budget at the beginning of the fiscal year and which is re-forecast at least quarterly.
 - Year 1: Review estimation processes, identify the appropriate cost drivers in the areas of significant risk.
 - Years 2-5: Develop schedule to reforecast quarterly after the annual operating budget is adopted.

- Prepare a Five-Year Forecast that accurately reflects the department’s funding requirements.
 - Year 1: Continue to work with Finance Department to identify areas of potential cost savings in the areas of supplies and other services.
 - Years 2-5: Investigate best practices and recommend continuous improvement.

- Prepare a monthly reconciliation for the operating budget expenditures to actual operating results. Analyze the variances between the operating budget expenditures and the most recent forecast
 - Year 1: Review reconciliation format and recommend improvements to make these documents more user friendly. Require the financial analysts to identify appropriate cost drivers from which to better develop strategies to control costs.
 - Years 2-5: Continue a month-end financial reporting package, distribution list and month-end schedule that coincides with the COH schedule.

Objective 6.2 Provide appropriate supplies, equipment, service contracts and capital improvement funding.

*Plan of Action*

- Ensure Supply and Quartermaster warehouses have sufficient inventory levels to support ongoing operations, plus a reserve supply to cover emergency needs.
 - Year 1: Enhance the custom reports that detail annual usage and stock levels for each warehouse. Work in partnership with HFD Procurement to ensure “best practices” when purchasing emergency stock. In the budget review process, solicit input from end users to project changes in requirements or needs.
 - Years 2-5: Develop an effective and efficient user friendly cycle count program in partnership with the ERP group. Continue to monitor stock outs and adjust stocking levels to reduce stock outs by 10% each year. Provide status report of inventory levels to upper management.

- Ensure adequate fire and EMS protection to the citizens of Houston by addressing the expansion of the city through the addition of new fire stations and improving existing facilities.
 - Year 1: Fire Station 90 is scheduled for completion in February 2010. The design of Fire Station 84 has tentatively been scheduled to begin in February 2010. The design and construction of Fire Station 95 is currently under review and is the City’s five year Capital Improvement Plan..
 - Years 2-5: Review schedule of fire station construction, property acquisition, station renovation, and expansion of existing facilities and revise as needed. Develop a plan that addresses the expansion or construct of administrative facilities or support areas. Ensure that all plans remain fiscally responsible to the City of Houston. Ensure that all expenditures can be justified in the CIP budget. Seek alternative sources of funding for facility construction or renovation. Develop a program to ensure contractors uphold and service warranty issues related to construction of facilities.

- Ensure adequate Hazardous Material/WMD protection to the citizens of Houston by addressing expansion of existing HMRT facilities.
 - Year 1: Acquisition of property located adjacent to HMRT facility, station 22.
 - Year 2-5: Expansion of a temporary parking area on acquired property. Design and acquire CIP funding for the expansion of the HMRT station.

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Objective 6.3 Maximize Cost Recovery Efforts and Increase Department Revenues*Plan of Action*

- VJTF will explore opportunities to augment funding of Professional Development training activities. Proposed programs/projects will be analyzed to assess the potential revenues from and impacts of alternative fee-for-service policies.
 - Year 1: Increase outside agency training by offering more courses solely, and through partnerships and alliances. Goal is to generate \$80,000.00 revenue
 - Years 2-5: Increase revenue by 5% per year



- The Arson division will be more aggressive in pursuing criminal assets identified during the arrest and prosecution of Arson cases, which can be used to fund the Arson equipment budget.
 - Year 1: Make sure all Investigators know the law governing Criminal Asset Forfeiture and the procedure for seizing such assets. Continue to aggressively identify and seize criminal assets through the forfeiture process.
 - Years 2-5: Constant monitoring of the procedure to ensure Investigators and supervisors are identifying assets that can be forfeited.

Objective 6.4 Maximize potential for external funding.

Plan of Action

- VJTF will actively participate in the grant research process, identifying and tracking needs to ensure adequate funding requests are submitted.
 - Year 1: Develop a plan to expand the infrastructure of the Val Jahnke Training Facility. Research funding for the construction.
 - Years 2-5: Continue to research alternative funding sources for all needs related to implementation of the VJTF regional training facility master plan.



GOAL 7.0 STRENGTHEN AND REINFORCE A POSITIVE PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF THE DEPARTMENT.

Overview

Perception is everything. If our members and external customers perceive that HFD is well managed and provides superior services, then that is true. An opposite perception of poor management and substandard service is also true. Perceptions are the precursors to attitudes. The Houston Fire Department must have a plan to develop positive perceptions from our members and the people we serve. HFD must pay special attention to our relationship with the media. The media can solidify our standing in the community or destroy the confidence of citizens in the department. There must be a comprehensive plan to maximize positive publicity and reduce negative stories. The primary means of accomplishing this goal is through service excellence. The department must pursue opportunities to showcase the achievements of the department to our members and the public. This not only provides morale enhancements, but it also details the value of an effective fire department pursuing excellence in public safety. The public will support a public sector agency if they believe that superior service is being provided with their tax contributions.

Objective 7.1 Promote international recognition of the HFD from our peers and the public through superior service and accreditation. Promote excellence within the Houston Fire Department and foster pride in our organization from the members, community leaders, and the citizens we serve.

Plan of Action

- HFD Public Affairs aims to improve upon HFD’s high confidence rating with the public through aggressive community partnerships and by chronicling our efforts in local and public safety industry publications.
 - Create a marketing plan for the Houston Fire Department which includes an annual survey tool.
 - Implement the marketing plan conducting the annual survey.
- VJTF will strengthen existing and build new relationships with public officials and agencies at all government levels by enhancing and expanding the Fire Ops 101 program.
 - Year 1: Provide first hand knowledge of HFD operations to public officials through the Fire Ops 101 Program. Will host one Fire Ops events in FY10.
 - Years 2-5: Expand and enhance Fire Ops 101 program to include community and business leaders. Continue to host three Fire Ops Events per fiscal year.
- The department will conduct an annual assessment in January of each year to maintain Commission on Fire Accreditation International accredited status through 2011.
 - Year 1: Complete fourth Annual Compliance Report in January 2010 to maintain accredited status. Begin Re-Accreditation process, including an update of the Standard of Cover manual, in March 2010.
 - Years 2-5: Submit documentation for consideration in September 2010. Site Visit expected in mid FY11. Beginning in January 2012, complete first Annual Compliance Report if accredited status is renewed.



- The Arson division will post initial certification training in skills such as Interview and Interrogation, evidence collection, and cause and origin, to increase Investigator credibility and professionalism.
 - Year 1: Complete certification of all current Investigators in January 2010.
 - Years 2-5: Have all newly promoted investigators attain International Association of Arson Investigator (I.A.A.I.) Certified Fire Investigator status. Lobby for certification pay incentive for attaining such certification.
- Promote HFD as a nationally recognized department through TV stations such as History channel and Discovery channel
 - Years 1: Will continue partnership with HTV to produce several PSA recordings of topic specific fire safety messages and division interviews to increase education and awareness to the general public. FY10 Goal is 6 a year
 - Years 2-5: Continue to gain partnerships with local and national media to promote marketing productions of HFD and establishing successful outcomes.
- Continue Hazardous Material Response Team participation in regional, state and national conferences and seminars dealing with hazardous material/WMD responses and environmental issues.
 - Year 1: Increase the number of members presenting programs as subject matter experts in these conferences and seminars.
 - Year 2-5: Continue building and sustaining HFD HMRT's reputation as an industry leader.

Objective 7.2 Maintain an ISO rating of One

Plan of Action

- The department will conduct a review of the ISO requirements in March of each year and implement necessary action plans to maintain an ISO rating of 1.
 - Year 1: ISO consultant will work with HFD in March 2010 to evaluate current practices and equipment to ensure continued compliance with ISO 1 rating criteria.
 - Years 2-5: Implement plan to correct deficiencies (if found) in order to maintain compliance. Continue to review ISO criteria to ensure HFD will maintain ISO 1 rating.

Objective 7.3 Implement a proactive public information system to provide timely, accurate, and positive information to the community.

Plan of Action

- Public Affairs will partner with Harris County to complete the development of Citizen Emergency Response Team (CERT)



- Year 1: Public Affairs will continue to promote CERT in the Spanish speaking, Vietnamese and African American communities by providing literature at Health Fairs, Career day and other speaking engagements. The FY10 goal is to conduct 48 classes.
- Years 2-5: will continue to partner with Harris County and COH Homeland Security expanding the classes to 50 per year and request HFD funds for instructors.
- HFD Management Analysts will implement best business practices to increase organizational effectiveness, accountability, and communications by creating an executive information system for the HFD Command Staff.
 - Year 1: Continue to produce monthly HFD Dashboard for Command Staff with pertinent statistical data. Will continue to work with HFD IT and Finance Command to research and refine HFD statistical reporting so that all data leaving HFD is presented in a consistent manner.
 - Year 2-5: Begin analysis of HFD data in earnest to look for performance trends once WebFocus online data program become fully operational. .Work closely with HFD commands to monitor performance and provide assistance in data analysis.



GOAL 8.0 IMPLEMENT BEST BUSINESS PRACTICES TO INCREASE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMMUNICATIONS

Overview

Best practices are management ideas, which assert that there is a technique, method, process, activity, incentive, or award that is more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other technique, method, process, etc. The idea is that with proper processes, checks and testing, a process can be rolled out and completed with fewer problems and unforeseen complications. The Houston Fire Department must have a plan to identify those areas of the Command where there are marginal business practices or processes. Once areas in need of improvement are identified, the Department will seek a solution from a number of relative best practices to be recommended to the fire chief. The Department will pursue business practices that will enhance organizational effectiveness, improve financial accountability and continue to open the communications between the various departments.

Objective 8.1 Promote the need for operational information and communications to accurately budget and forecast operating results of the Department.

Plan of Action

- Coordinate the Annual Operating and Capital Budget schedule to include compilation and review prior to presentation meetings with the fire chief.
 - Year 1: Distribute HFD budget schedule for the next FY, insure budget package is updated, and kick off meeting is scheduled.
 - Years 2-5: Same as Year 1. Schedule meetings with Command Staff to develop “Lessons Learned” from the previous year budgeting process to improve upon future years.

- Coordinate Quarterly Review meetings promptly after the City’s quarter end close is completed. Review variances from the operating budget to actual operating results with each executive assistant, assistant chiefs and necessary staff.
 - Year 1: Schedule regular review meetings at the end of each quarter. Develop financial framework to report significant budget variances and if necessary recommended corrective action.
 - Years 2-5: Review process, seek improvement input and feedback, and implement best practices.

- Develop a budget model with City Finance and Administration and HFD Operations to be used to reforecast the operating budget though out the fiscal year and to prepare a Five Year forecast for the City.
 - Year 1: Meet with Finance Department to resolve calculation issues and to better understand methods used by that Department.
 - Years 2-5: Prepare schedule to update and run the Five Year Forecast and be prepared to share the results with F & A. (Reverse the roles).

Objective 8.2 Implement FleetFocus M5 Fleet Inventory Management System

*Plan of Action*

- Fleet Management will participate in a COH-directed project that will replace G2K with FleetFocus M5 as the Fleet Management Information System.
 - Year 1: Implement system, conduct training, and “go live” as determined by the timeline established by the M5 Steering Committee.
 - Years 2-5: Conduct assessments and revise as necessary.
- Fleet Management will implement labor and equipment bar-coding using M5.
 - Year 1: As soon as possible after the M5 “go live” date, mechanics will record their labor in M5 under the supervision of their Shop Manager. The first sections to implement labor bar coding will be the Body/Fabrication Shop and the Westside Service Center, followed by Light Duty, Ambulance and Heavy Duty. The parts Room will print bar code labels for all stocked parts and label the bin locations no later than 180 days after the M5 “go live” date.
 - Years 2-5: Conduct assessments and revise as necessary.
- The Parts Room will establish re-ordering points and incorporate Non- Inventory stock (used parts) into inventory.
 - Year 1: The Parts Room will establish re-ordering points according to usage for all stocked parts in the inventory no later than 180 days after the M5 “go live” date. Non Inventory (used parts) will be incorporated into inventory and a process developed that establishes a cost for each used part no later than 90 days after the M5 “go live” date.
 - Years 2-5: Conduct assessments and revise as necessary.

Objective 8.3 Ensure all Standard Operating Guidelines are current*Plan of Action*

- Fleet Management will update their Standard Operating Guidelines. Each section has their own chapter and annex. Chapters are used to describe the organization of the section and document the duties and responsibilities of each position assigned to the section. Annexes are used to describe tasks and/or procedures that are unique to the section.
 - Year 1: Each section assigned to Fleet Management will identify those tasks and/or procedures unique to their section no later than 1 April 2010. Shop Managers will document those tasks and/or procedures in writing in their respective Annex and submit them to the Fleet Director no later than 30 June 2010 for approval. Once approved, annexes will be published as part of the SOG.
 - Years 2-5: Perform continuous assessment of Internal SOG and update/revise/print as necessary.



STRATEGIC PLAN MANAGEMENT

In November of 1999, the Houston Fire Department completed and published the first Strategic Plan. That plan was a culmination of efforts from all areas of the department. At every review cycle since that time, leaders from all commands have presented new goals, objectives, and/or plans of action to reflect the vision of the department and offer guidance into the future. In December 2005, the format of the HFD Strategic Plan changed drastically. Goals were simplified to reflect the vision of the entire department, rather than individual commands. Objectives became more detailed in nature. Plans of action provided measurable steps for every year of the Strategic Plan.

In December 2009, the most recent revision cycle began again. The 2009 revision cycle was delayed in order to receive and possibly implement any recommendations resulting from the independent audit of the fire department conducted by LeMond and LeMond. After many months of effort, the Houston Fire Department Strategic Plan for FY2010-2014 was ready for publication. The plan has been posted on the HFD website for all to share.

As with any plan, it is of little use unless periodically examined for its effectiveness. Each command will review the Strategic Plan for applicability of the objectives, progress on the plans of action, and needed revisions. Each command is responsible for developing its own method or procedure to monitor and measure its progress as compared to the Strategic Plan. These reviews should be conducted quarterly, with one of those reviews occurring in December, prior to the development of the next fiscal year's budget. It is imperative that strategic plan goals and objectives are considered and incorporated into funding requests of each year's budget, so that plans of action can be accomplished. The final review in September of each year, after the adoption of the annual budget, will serve as a platform for formal revision of the plan and will aid in future fiscal forecasting.

This Strategic Planning Process will allow the Houston Fire Department to safely, effectively, and efficiently progress into the future. It is the vision of the Houston Fire Department to provide a superior emergency service organization, which continually improves the quality of service delivered to our customers, the citizens of Houston.