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Fire Chief



Maitland Fire Rescue

2008-2013 Strategic Plan



Updated March 2008

Maitland Fire Rescue Department Strategic Plan

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Acknowledgements

This document is an update and a reaffirmation of the 2005 strategic plan. Significant individual as well as organizational accomplishments have been made utilizing the earlier plan as a “roadmap” to goal attainment. Creation of this planning document is a result of substantial effort by the members of the Maitland Fire Rescue Department. It was critical to the success of this plan to have members from all levels of the organization involved with its creation and to that end, new firefighters as well as chief officers assisted with its formation. This plan, and future accreditation processes, will be used to guide the Department’s operations on a continual basis as we adjust to new trends in providing excellent emergency services.

Sincere gratitude is extended to all the firefighters who proudly and heroically serve the residents, guests and businesses of Maitland. This document is dedicated to helping all of us achieve the best we can be by doing “*whatever it takes*” for those we serve. We would also like to recognize and thank Maitland’s elected leadership, our Mayor and Council, for supporting the fire department as we strive to be the best provider of emergency services in the State of Florida. We would also like to thank City Manager Dean Sprague for the wisdom and insight he has shared with our department over the years.

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Message from the Chief



Since the beginning, our Department has had a proud tradition of providing the best possible fire protection and emergency medical services to the citizens and guests of the City of Maitland. Our mission is to provide superior quality customer service and our values guide us safely and effectively in achieving that mission.

Organizations such as ours must mature over time and appropriately respond to internal and external pressures and opportunities. In our continuing efforts to be proactive and a viable agency within the community, modification to existing processes is critical for success. It is through the involvement and planning by all members that productive changes can be implemented for our advancement.

The first strategic plan created in 2005 was a milestone for the City of Maitland Fire Rescue Department. It was the first time that short and long term plans, combined with goal setting, was documented for the use and benefit of the Department, our customers and the community. With this 2008 update to the plan we have had an opportunity to address our accomplishments, adjust for new goals and objectives and reaffirm our commitment to the future of the organization. Significant time and effort has been expended by Department members to produce a plan for the future and to produce a plan that is reflective of their expertise and foresight. I am extremely proud of all who contributed and wish to thank each one for their commitment to the organization.

It is important that all members of the Department understand the strategic plan and be aware of the role that each plays in the accomplishment of the goals and objectives. Working as a team with the strategic plan and being committed to the accreditation process by way of self-assessment, we move into the future knowing that our efforts make us a leader within the State of Florida and the Nation.

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Mission Statement

“The Mission of the Maitland Fire Rescue Department is to provide superior quality emergency and non-emergency customer service to the residents of Maitland, visitors and neighboring communities. We are committed to serve with the highest standard of integrity in a courteous manner to protect life, property and the environment.”

Departmental Slogan

“Our family helping yours -- whatever it takes”

Commitment to Values Statement

The Maitland Fire and Rescue Department is committed to accomplishing our mission. All initiatives are directed towards this goal while making efficient use of all available resources including education and training and the use of identified values.

Pride, honor and integrity guide each member of the Department in their personal and professional lives and are the foundation of the organization. To be considered a professional, actions and conduct must reflect this ideal. These values should be present in each member’s daily actions to grow professionally.

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Departmental Values

1. **Pride** – The members are our most valued resource and constitute our organizational strength. Each member is proud to be a part of the Maitland Fire Rescue Department and takes pride in all actions on behalf of the department.

Fundamental to maintaining pride in the organization is having a sense of loyalty to the organization and maintaining a positive attitude as we go about our daily responsibilities. The saying that one's attitude determines one's behavior is an important reason to have a positive attitude.

A component that generates pride in the organization is a team oriented approach to daily activities. This bond is inherently developed from working together towards common goals.

2. **Honor** – The fire service has long been described as an “honorable” profession because of the very nature of the services that we provide to the community. Interacting with each other, the community and our peers in an honest, truthful manner helps build credibility in the department and each member.

A sense of honor, whether it is developed externally or internally, is a result of an ongoing commitment to excellence in the delivery of services to the community. To attain excellence in service delivery the commitment to knowledge, education and training is required.

3. **Integrity** – Defined as a “firm adherence to a code or standard of values” integrity in this Department means that individuals collectively view the policies, directives and standards to be important to the operations of the Department and strive consistently to comply and promote them.

In order to have individual and organizational integrity, firefighters agree that respect for the community, fellow employees and members of other departments is essential.

Compassion for those we serve, accountability for our actions and taking appropriate responsibility when things go wrong are all key character traits of a person having integrity.

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SWOT ANALYSIS

(Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats)

STRENGTHS:

The members unanimously feel their Emergency Medical Services (EMS) delivery system is their greatest strength. A major component that has allowed the department to excel in this area is the excellent medical direction and quality assurance programs under the leadership of Dr. Todd Husty.

Access to modern firefighting devices, emergency medical equipment and response apparatus is identified as an internal strength.

The leadership team of the department is progressive and encourages participatory management.

The fair treatment of employees is seen as an important and positive attribute of the department.

The family atmosphere and team orientation are considered to be existing elements of the Department's success.

The positive relationship with adjoining cities and their fire service agencies is seen as an important strength.

The presence of a Maitland on-duty Incident Commander to provide scene command, control and daily support is seen as a strength.

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WEAKNESSES:

Retention of quality employees is seen as a Department challenge with compensation being identified as a factor.

With the explosive growth throughout the Central Florida area and employee turnover and shortages of certified firefighter/paramedics in the workforce, hiring efforts have resulted in employment of young, inexperienced personnel needing a significant amount of training.

An inherent situation for smaller agencies, such as ours, is the quantity of projects and duties necessary to meet Department objectives and the limited amount of staff hours available to commit to each project or duty.

The partial reliance on other agencies for fire and rescue assistance and the department's dependency for "special team" emergency responses is a concern of the membership.

Although the Department has a training plan in place, a methodical, detailed review is necessary to provide a comprehensive model arranged to encourage development of all members, both current and future.

Periodic fire and life safety inspections are being accomplished but a reduction in the frequency of these inspections along with the elimination of occupational licensing inspections is necessary due to vacancy restrictions in the Life Safety Services section.

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OPPORTUNITIES:

The membership feels that the availability of training programs through the local community colleges and the Central Florida Fire Academy (CFFA) presents a unique and beneficial opportunity for member development.

The ability to enhance existing interactions with the medical director in a positive environment is viewed as an important opportunity.

The relative youthfulness of the workforce presents an opportunity to develop individuals to become great fire and rescue personnel.

There is a perceived opportunity to develop a better working relationship with adjoining counties and communities.

With turnover comes the opportunity to evaluate new methods to encourage employee recruitment and retention.

The size and age of the organization lends itself to a management style that allows all members to have continuing input in the decision making process.

The number of employees in leadership positions nearing eligibility for retirement is seen as an opportunity for younger members to advance through the ranks.

There is an opportunity to continue fostering pride in the organization and promote a strong work ethic.

The attainment of international accreditation is viewed as an opportunity to enhance service through a critical self assessment and to implement operational efficiencies within the department.

The availability of state and federal competitive grant funds is viewed as an opportunity to alternatively fund items in the Department's capital improvement initiatives.

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THREATS:

The lack of available and experienced firefighter/paramedics is a cause of concern in attracting the best personnel for employment. Without a broad recruiting base, the selection of the best candidates is often left to other fire-rescue agencies, presumably due to wage scales and incentives. Therefore, it is presumed to be a threat to the organization's mission.

The existence of national standards that endorse increases in personnel and equipment as well as reductions in response times to emergencies can cause significant operational and financial impacts.

The potential for community growth at a rate that outpaces the Department's ability to adapt operationally or obtain budgetary funding necessary to adjust its infrastructure to meet demands.

The potential for adjacent government agencies or private enterprise to attempt consolidation efforts that would reduce the present levels of service to the Maitland community is viewed as a threat.

Natural and man made disasters that adversely impact both fire-rescue personnel and the resources needed when responding to these events is viewed as a threat.

The changing political climate of the City is viewed as a potential threat to current projects, capital funding and operational planning.

The perceived lack of public understanding of full fire and rescue services is viewed as a relative threat as well as an opportunity.

Individuals with a propensity to focus on the negative are viewed as a threat to productivity and moral.

Revisions to contractual obligations with Eatonville could have an adverse impact on the services provided to the City of Maitland if external influences were to make it necessary to provide hospital transports, fire prevention/inspection services or disaster related services.

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GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- 1 *Work towards National accreditation through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) as a mark of excellence.***
 - a Perform an exhaustive review of existing practices, policies and processes against the high standards of the CFAI and revise where necessary.
Responsibility – Deputy Chief & Division Chief (Training)
Target Completion – 7/08
 - b Considering the anticipated risks and hazards to be encountered, develop a standard of response document.
Responsibility – Battalion Chief Phelps
Target Completion – 7/08
 - c Develop a self-assessment manual for submittal to the CFAI to become an accreditation candidate.
Responsibility – Battalion Chief Phelps with assistance from Deputy Chief
Target Completion – 8/08
 - d Host an on-site peer review team for department assessment.
Responsibility – Division Chief (Training) & Battalion Chief Phelps
Target Completion – 9/08

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2 Sustain and nurture a comprehensive operations program in fire, rescue, and emergency services designed to ensure a high level of readiness while providing services in a cost conscious manner.

- a Formalize a progressive training and education program that encourages skill retention, and prepares members for leadership positions within the department. Ensure training provided is uniform, consistent and tailored to the risks and hazards that may be encountered locally.

Responsibility – Division Chief (Training)
Target Completion – 4/10

Proactively seek to increase levels of service to meet the high standards of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

Responsibility – Deputy Chief
Target Completion – Annually

- b Review department's staffing, response times and capabilities against these standards.
Responsibility – Deputy Chief
Target Completion – Annually
- c Implement additional customer service quality enhancement initiatives similar to the existing patient transport follow-up program.
Responsibility – Deputy Chief & Battalion Chiefs
Target Completion – 4/11
- d Identify opportunities to educate the public on services provided as a preventative measure to reduce the number of false alarms and/or unwarranted responses.
Responsibility – Deputy Chief, Division Chief (Training) & Fire Marshal
Target Completion – 4/10
- e Monitor the ever-changing EMS environment to ensure a dynamic quality improvement program that enables members to provide the highest level of EMS to the community with the latest tools of the trade. Annually prepare a summary report to the Fire Chief to coincide with budgetary submittals.
Responsibility – Battalion Chiefs
Target Completion – Annually (05-09)
- f Review current inter-local agreements for service and identify opportunities to generate revenue to reduce the overall cost burden of providing fire, rescue, life safety and other emergency services.
Responsibility – Fire Chief & Deputy Chief
Target Completion – 3/09

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3 Create an environment that leads to and encourages the recruitment and retention of high quality personnel.

- a Internally and externally promote the intangible benefits of working for the Maitland Fire Rescue Department. Provide opportunities for members to recognize the rewards of going “above and beyond” as analyzed on an annual basis.
Responsibility – Fire Chief & Deputy Chief
Target Completion – Annually

- b Perform a critical review of existing job descriptions and requirements prior to any comprehensive salary and benefits survey conducted by the City to ensure a supportive and productive work environment.
Responsibility – Deputy Chief
Target Completion – Periodically

- c Conduct an analysis to determine if a reserve/explorer program would generate positive recruitment opportunities.
Responsibility – Deputy Chief & Division Chief (Training)
Target Completion – 7/10

- d Assist Human Resources/Personnel with compensation and comprehensive benefit analysis to identify possibilities to promote member longevity.
Responsibility – Deputy Chief with Personnel Manager assistance
Target Completion – 6/09

- e Improve departmental health and fitness by developing and implementing a structured wellness and fitness program.
Responsibility – Deputy Chief & Division Chief (Training)
Target Completion – 9/09

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4 Encourage an on-going commitment to improve upon fire prevention and life safety programs and practices.

- a Conduct an annual review to determine the department's ability to increase the frequency of life safety inspections for existing commercial occupancies from once every six years to a shorter timeframe.

Responsibility – Fire Marshal & Deputy Chief

Target Completion – Annually

- b Analyze the revenue generation possibilities associated with inspection programs and other life safety evaluations.

Responsibility – Deputy Chief & Fire Marshal

Target Completion – 1/10

- c Conduct a full pre-fire plan revision/update for all commercial structures greater than 3,000 sq/ft and any commercial structure greater than a single story in height. Once the full revision is complete, have an associated process/program whereby the individual pre-fire plans are reviewed and updated every two (2) years or sooner as needed.

Responsibility – Division Chief, Battalion Chiefs & Shift Lieutenants

Target Completion – 4/10

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5 Utilizing an all-hazards approach, continually develop a citywide comprehensive emergency management preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation program.

- a Re-evaluate critical facility capabilities and identify priority initiatives for inclusion in the Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS).
 - Responsibility – Deputy Chief
 - Target Completion – Annually in February

- b Explore grant funding opportunities to implement disaster mitigation efforts.
 - Responsibility – Fire Chief & Deputy Chief
 - Target Completion – Annually

- c Coordinate an annual citywide review and revision (where needed) of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) to include department, division and individual specific duties and responsibilities.
 - Responsibility – Deputy Chief
 - Target Completion – Annually

- d Implement a public outreach program designed to educate the commercial and residential community on the City's CEMP and the importance of having a business or personal disaster plan.
 - Responsibility – Division Chief (Training)
 - Target Completion – 9/10

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6 Establish occupational and leadership development processes for those within the Department

- a Develop and implement officer training programs that reinforce the Department's expectation where officers, acting as leaders, serve as role models for appropriate, professional and courteous behavior.
Responsibility – Deputy Chief, Division Chief (Training)
Target Completion – 3/09

- b Develop programs that assist members in the use of effective interpersonal skills designed to reinforce our Department's high standard of performance.
Responsibility – Deputy Chief & Division Chief (Training)
Target Completion – 1/10

- c Continue to develop and implement ways to recognize and reward our members for their dedication to duty and service above self.
Responsibility – Fire Chief & Deputy Chief
Target Completion - Annually

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7 Focus on facilities, apparatus and equipment to insure proper replacements and enhancements are completed when needed.

- a Provide input to the architectural firm designing the new East Side fire station to insure all operational needs are addressed.
Responsibility - Fire Chief & Deputy Chief
Target Completion – 10/08

- b Facilitate the move of Administrative and Operational personnel upon completion of the new fire complex.
Responsibility – Fire Chief
Target Completion – 12/09 (approximate)

- c Establish a Vehicle Purchasing Committee (VPC) in FY08 to define the specifications for the planned replacement of one (1) existing rescue vehicle. Conduct a review of various new rescue/transport vehicles available to the City based upon defined criteria. The committee will then make a purchase recommendation to the Fire Chief.
Responsibility – Deputy Chief
Target Completion – 1/09

- d Establish a Vehicle Purchasing Committee (VPC) in FY11 to define the specifications for the planned replacement of one (1) existing fire engine/CAF. The committee will then make a purchase recommendation to the Fire Chief.
Responsibility – Deputy Chief
Target Completion – 1/12

- e Establish a Vehicle Purchasing Committee (VPC) in FY09 to define the specifications for the planned replacement of one (1) existing Battalion Vehicle. Conduct a review of various new vehicles available to the City based upon defined criteria. The committee will then make a purchase recommendation to the Fire Chief.
Responsibility – Deputy Chief
Target Completion – 1/10

- f Annually review all fire department vehicle performance parameters and repair records to insure that life expectancy projections continue to be accurate.
Responsibility – Battalion Chiefs & Fire Lieutenants with Fleet Maintenance Manager assistance
Target Completion – Annually

- g Review the performance and condition of fire and emergency medical services (EMS) equipment to establish updated replacement schedules.
Responsibility – Deputy Chief & Battalion Chiefs
Target Completion – Annually

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- h Utilizing portable computers where practicable, implement technology initiatives to streamline practices and processes such as EMS patient care reporting, pre-fire plan updates, mapping, incident accountability, emergency communications, and fire inspection report access.

Responsibility – Deputy Chief & Division Chief (Training) with IT Manager assistance

Target Completion – 3/11

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8. *Develop Department succession planning process and policies to insure the adequacy of replacement personnel for all levels of supervision when positions become available.*

- a. Develop a succession planning policy that guides personnel in preparing for advancement.

Responsibility – Fire Chief & Deputy Chief

Target Completion - 10/08

- b. Institute opportunities for “job shadowing” and one-on-one training sessions to better guide those who are considering advancement to supervisory positions within the organization.

Responsibility – Division Chief (Training)

Target Completion – 4/09

- c. Promote college level education and degree attainment department wide.

Responsibility – Division Chief (Training)

Target Completion - Ongoing

- d. Develop a list of recommended qualifications/accomplishments that should be achieved for a member in their current position to be considered eligible to attend specialized training, and conference opportunities relative to an aspired position.

Responsibility – Deputy Chief & Division Chief (Training)

Target Completion - 8/09

- e. Institute a plan whereby supervisors regularly meet with subordinates to discuss career development goals and accomplishments to assist members with their aspirations.

Responsibility – Deputy Chief

Target Completion – 10/08