



BLUFFTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT

2024-2029

STRATEGIC PLAN



Facilitated by



Center for
Public Safety
Excellence

The CPSE acknowledges and thanks the community and agency stakeholders for their participation and input into this community-driven strategic planning process. The CPSE also recognizes Fire Chief Paul Boulware and all who participated for their commitment to this process.

This community-driven strategic plan was developed in January 2024, beginning with a meeting facilitated by representatives from the CPSE for community members, as named below. The community stakeholders' feedback considered by agency stakeholders in developing this strategic plan can be found in [Appendix A](#).

Community Stakeholders

Paul Brennan	Justin Cunningham	Lou Poindexter	Anna Maria Tabernik
Paula Brown	Logan Cunningham	Paul Rasch	KaRon Webb
Candance Bruder	Ed Fiantaca	Mike Raymond	Jason Wells
Chris Chase	Matthew Hall	Bill Rickett	Dan Wood
Sam Chase	Elizabeth Kelley	Joseph Schetting	Adam Zsamar
Dr. Chad Cox	Dr. Celeste Lavan	John Sudol	

The agency stakeholder work sessions, conducted over three days, involved a group representing a broad cross-section of the BTFD, as named below.

Agency Stakeholders

Stephen Arnold	Allen Cramer	Jason Lee	Matthew Wallett
Jayme Beach	Marcos Farr	Eric Ligeikis	Tracy Walling
Paul Boulware	Doug Favors	Rhett Livingston	Tyler Williams
Travis Boulware	Paul Harrelson	Jered Pritchett	Daniel Wiltse
Derek Church	Brian Hart	Mike Rehill	Ryan Yakscoe
Stephen Combs	Matthew Henne	Alexander Sanchez	
Adam Corn	Jay Lawson	Terry Sheriff	

Message from the Fire Chief

Since the Bluffton Township Fire District's formal inception in 1978, our Department has been consistently growing every year to keep up with the demands placed upon us by the fast-paced growth in commercial and residential buildings. The Bluffton Township Fire District (BTFD) has been committed to providing the highest quality of service to its citizens, whom we serve in our 246-square-mile district.

This new strategic (2024-2029) plan updates and continues to build upon the successes gained by implementing the first Bluffton Township Fire District Strategic Plan published in July 2008. This plan provides a commonsense approach to providing fire and emergency services that address the needs of the district's citizens and sets a community-driven roadmap with input from internal and external stakeholders who share the desire for BTFD to address our residents' ever-increasing service demands proactively.

The Strategic Plan focuses on specific goals and objectives to ensure we are meeting or exceeding what is needed from us by our community over the next five years. Our priorities may broaden and adapt as an ever-changing environment of new types of emergencies places new demands on our services.

As the fire chief, I cannot thank our community, BTFD Command Staff, front-line personnel, and our Board of Commissioners enough for their support and commitment to excellence in developing our Strategic Plan. Ultimately, it is you, our community, that sustains our excellent Department, and it is for the community that we continue our efforts to evolve and improve to serve you better constantly.

Yours in service,



Paul Boulware
Fire Chief



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Introduction

The community serviced by the Bluffton Township Fire District (BTFD) receives high levels of professionalism and efficiency from the agency's proactive approach to risk reduction and emergency mitigation. As such, the BTFD contracted with the Center for Public Safety Excellence® (CPSE®) to facilitate a community-driven strategic plan. The process utilized by CPSE aligns with the Commission on Fire Accreditation International's (CFAI®) fire and emergency services accreditation model but also considers all parameters prescribed by the authority having jurisdiction.

CPSE's approach to community-driven strategic planning gathers feedback and input from community and agency stakeholders while focusing on future change beyond the status quo. Beliefs, concepts, current processes, and values were among the many pieces considered and questioned to bring this planning document to reality. The BTFD exhibited a commitment to the implementation and execution of this plan to become more efficient and effective in alignment with its community.

Process

Understanding what the customer desires is vital to the success of any organization. In this case, the customer is the community that the Bluffton Township Fire District serves. This applies even if the service organization is a governmental entity. Community-driven strategic planning ensures the community remains a focus of the organization's direction and community feedback is at the heart of all deliberations and development of this strategic plan.

The process of community-driven strategic planning and the plan itself represents the embrace of transition away from how an organization has always done things, seeking to find efficacies and outcomes based on change. The community-driven strategic plan provides a management roadmap built on a shared vision and structured for measurable results. With the involvement of a diverse group of agency stakeholders, the Bluffton Township Fire District's community-driven strategic plan encompasses various experiences, perceptions, and perspectives that can also work to build more internal organizational symbiosis. For the desired, measurable results to be realized, the process and the strategic plan must focus on substance, not form. Only then can the BTFD truly benefit from the process and realize its ultimate vision.

Community Stakeholder Findings

- ✓ Identify, from the community perspective, things the agency should and should not change.
- ✓ Identify the community's expectations for the agency, concerns about or for the agency, and aspects the community views as strengths or positives.
- ✓ Define the programs provided to the community.
- ✓ Establish the community's prioritized view of the programs and services provided by the agency.

Agency Stakeholder Work

- ✓ Identify the agency's strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results.
- ✓ Revisit the mission statement, giving careful attention to the services and programs currently provided and which logically can be provided in the future.
- ✓ Revisit the values of the agency's membership.
- ✓ Determine the agency's current vision considering the consensus built from the strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and desired results.
- ✓ Identify the agency's challenges, service gaps, and causal effects through a thematic sifting process.
- ✓ Determine, by consensus, strategic initiatives for outcome-based organizational improvement.
- ✓ Develop strategic goals, SMART objectives with relative timelines, and comprehensive critical task concepts focusing on outcomes.

Agency Background

The Bluffton Township Fire District was formally founded in 1978 as a special fire tax district by the Beaufort County Council to provide emergency services in the southern portion of the County and the Town of Bluffton. Initially, the district was made up of three independent volunteer fire departments – Chelsea, Pritchardville, and Bluffton.

These local departments were created by concerned citizens who saw a need for fire and medical services in the area prior to the county combining them into a single department in 1978. Over the years, the department evolved from a volunteer service and started hiring paid firefighters. In 2007, the district became an all-career department.



Bluffton Township Fire District personnel have been highly effective in providing services and community involvement and hold an Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating of 2/2X. In addition, the agency is an accredited fire department through the Center for Public Safety Excellence.

Bluffton Township Fire District serves an approximate population of 76,000 residents. In addition, the local area has thousands of visitors and many others employed within the community.

Growth and increase in population have and will provide for specific risks for which the Bluffton Township Fire District considers, prepares, and deploys its resources and personnel.

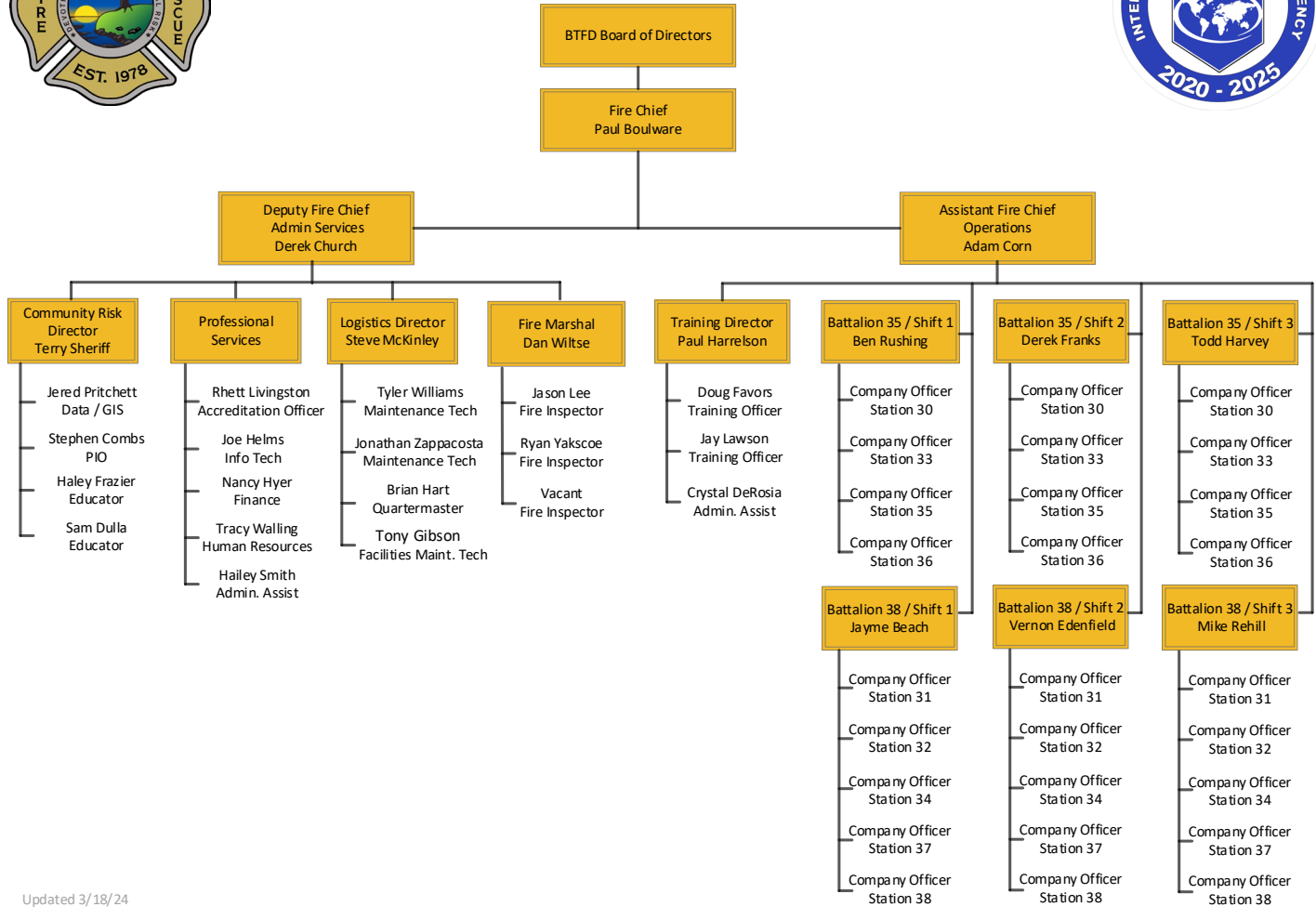
Today, BTFD reflects on its history and remains committed to providing all-hazards emergency services and education to its community, embracing excellence in all they do. The Bluffton Township Fire District continues to honor its community with the provision of quality services through its proactive focus on risks and deployment from nine stations that provide service to the 246 square miles of coverage area. Staffed to support the community, BTFD embraces its future vision and continued excellence in service delivery.



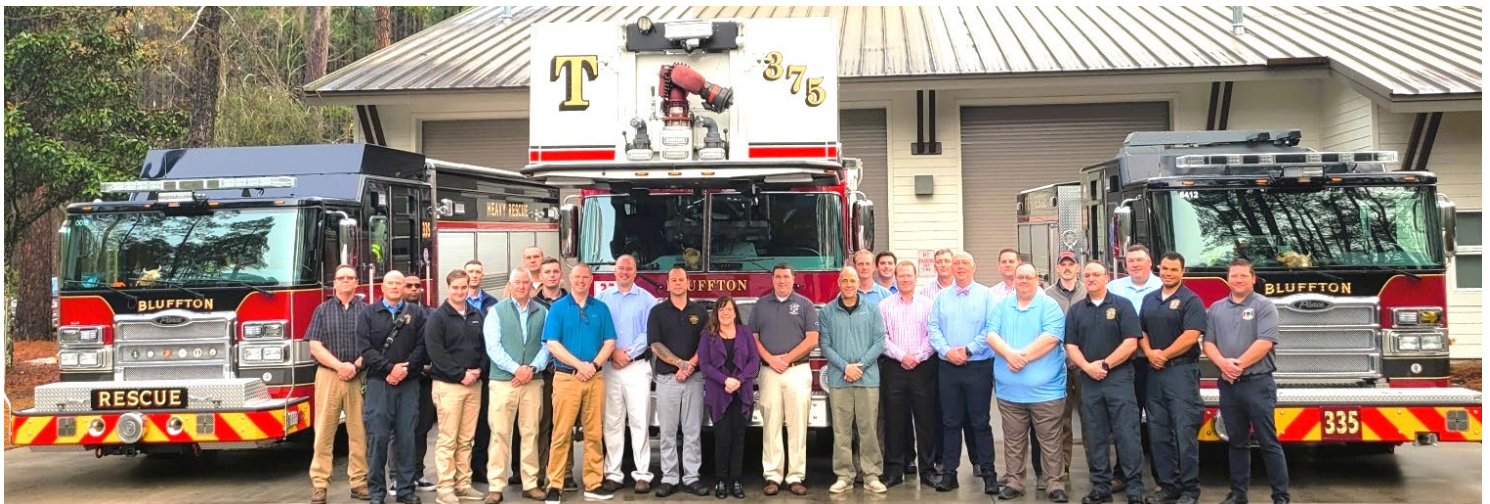
Organizational Chart

Bluffton Township Fire District

Organizational Structure 2024



Updated 3/18/24



Agency Stakeholder Work Session Participants

Mission

The mission provides an internal aspect of the existence of an organization and, to a degree, an empowering consideration for all BTFD members. The purpose of the mission is to answer the questions:

Who are we? Why do we exist? What do we do? Why do we do it? For whom?

A workgroup met to revisit the existing mission and after ensuring it answered the questions, the following mission statement was discussed and accepted by the entire group:

The Bluffton Township Fire District's mission is to efficiently protect the lives and property of our community in a kind and professional manner.

Values

Values embraced by all members of an organization are extremely important, as they recognize the features that make up the personality and culture of the organization. A workgroup met to revisit the existing values agreed upon by the entire group.

RESPECT: We respect all people in our community and within our agency through dignity and compassion.

ADVANCING: We actively seek and value input from our community members, prioritizing the ongoing professional development of our team and working towards reducing risks through data-driven decision-making.

LEADERSHIP: Through communication, we seek to serve and inspire people for proactive change maintained through a strong organizational foundation.

DEDICATION: To maintain professionalism and commitment beyond the expectations of our community.

TRUST: Establishing and maintaining integrity through professionalism, transparency, and fiscal responsibility.

The mission and values are the foundation of this agency. Thus, every effort will be made to keep these current and meaningful to guide the individuals who make up the Bluffton Township Fire District to accomplish their goals, objectives, and day-to-day tasks.

Vision

An organizational vision exists to keep all agency members focused on the successful futurity of the Bluffton Township Fire District and to guide quality change and improvement in alignment with the community. In support of the futurity created within the community-driven strategic planning process, CPSE facilitated the revision of the BTFD's vision for the future. The agency will support the reality of this vision through successful plan implementation and goal achievement.

The Bluffton Township Fire District will be the model accredited fire and life safety agency recognized by our effectiveness in community outreach, risk reduction, and all-hazard emergency response. We aspire to foster a culture of collaboration, excellence, and continuous improvement by setting the standard for fire departments nationwide. With a commitment to organizational and personal excellence, we will provide programs and services that benefit our residents and visitors in constant pursuit of the highest quality of life.



Agency Stakeholder Work Session

Goals

Community feedback and the SOAR process led to the determination of strategic initiatives representing the high-level issues the agency stakeholders developed into goals. The BTFD must now make these goals a focus of efforts that will direct the agency to its desired future. Goals with complete objectives, tasks, timelines, and assignments are included in a separate **Management and Implementation Guide**.



Develop a positive and consistent workforce management model to aid in retention, recruitment, and professional development.



Improve capital assets while also planning for future expansion to deliver effective services for the community.



Improve patient outcomes by optimizing the delivery of emergency medical services to the community.



Improve internal communications to enhance efficiency and transparency.



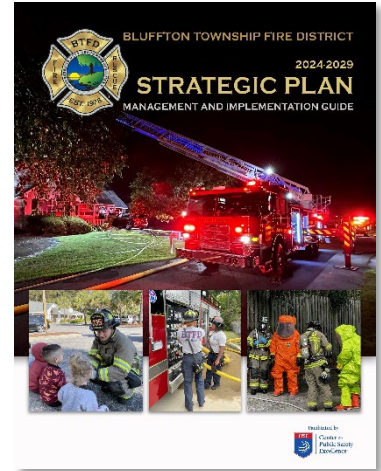
Improve the district's capabilities to provide timely, valuable information to community members and partner organizations, resulting in greater awareness of programs, services, and resources available through the organization.



Develop and promote health and wellness initiatives that focus on personal and organizational concerns.

Conclusion

Working with community and department members from all levels, this strategic plan was developed...but the work is truly just beginning. Agency stakeholders must now execute and institutionalize the plan to ensure the community’s expectations and the Bluffton Township Fire District’s vision remain congruent. The accompanying **Management and Implementation Guide** will assist the BTFD in the mechanics of implementation. The guide is not intended to be all-inclusive; rather, it provides flexibility to ensure future success.



“...we will chase perfection, and we will chase it relentlessly, knowing all the while we can never attain it. But along the way, we shall catch excellence.”
Vince Lombardi

It must be remembered that during this journey of regeneration through change and improvement, recalculation may need to occur to find the success desired. This strategic plan is a roadmap to help the Bluffton Township Fire District navigate that change and futurity. The ability to pivot to meet the current environment as institutionalization and implementation occur provides a greater likelihood that the desired outcomes and efficacies will be realized as envisioned.

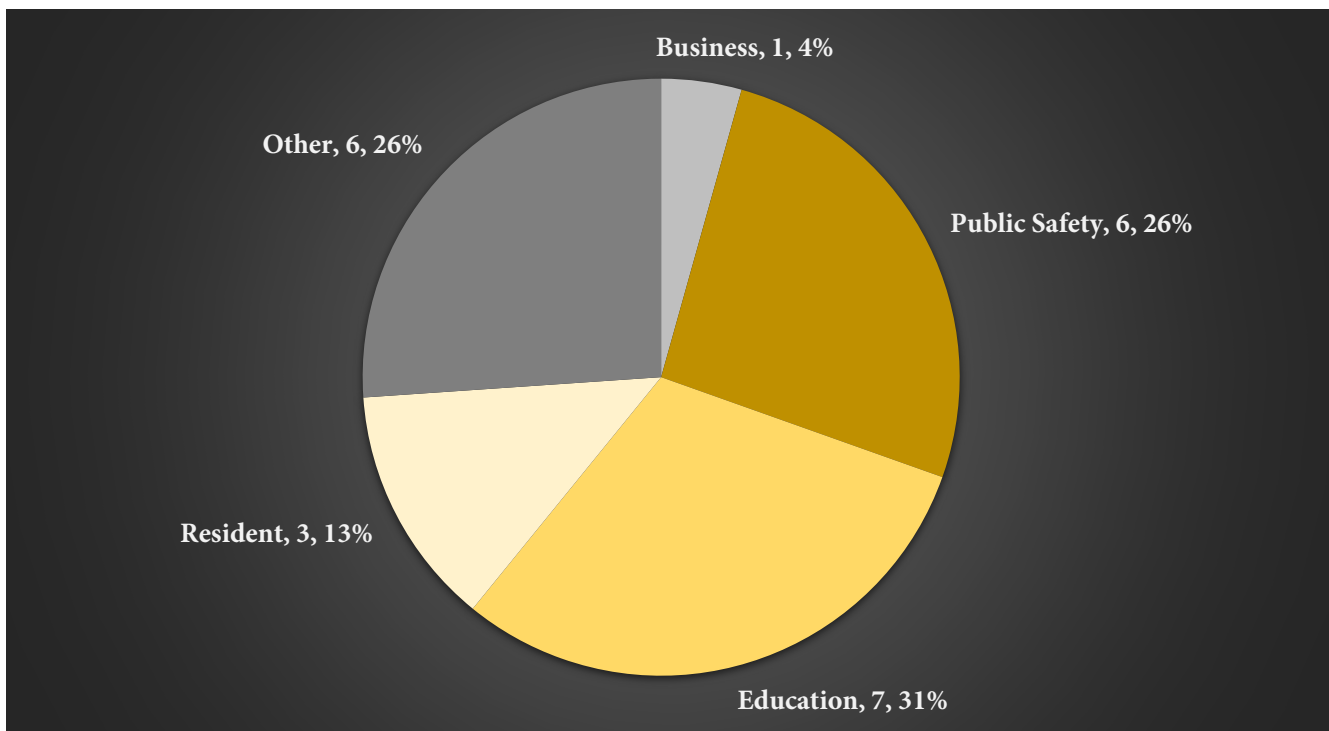


Appendices

A. Community Stakeholder Findings

The Bluffton Township Fire District demonstrates a commitment to its community via a focus on community input and satisfaction. A community stakeholder session was held to gather feedback from the respondents on the agency and its various services delivered. The information gathered from the community stakeholder feedback provided understanding to the agency stakeholders of any misalignment with its organizational foundation and performance or values-based expectations or concerns from which new improvement strategies and processes may be created.

Community stakeholders were identified by the agency to ensure broad representation. The breakdown of groups represented is presented here:



Respondents were asked to list, in priority order, up to three subjects relative to expectations, concerns, and strengths or positives for the BTFD. Expectations and concerns were then analyzed for themes and weighted. The numbers in the parentheses are the cumulative weighted value that correlate with the themes identified. While the themes are listed in prioritized, weighted order, all responses were important in the planning process. Strengths or positives are listed verbatim and may be repeated based on different respondents.

The specific data and findings from the community stakeholder respondents are provided to follow.

Community Expectations of the Bluffton Township Fire District (in priority order)

1. Response Times: Timely response to emergencies. Constantly evaluate service response time and make necessary adjustments. Speedy response. Timeliness of responses (firehouses being built as the community grows). Immediate response to community emergency needs. Prompt, professional response to emergencies. Response to calls for service (CFS) in a timely manner. (91)
2. Training: Ability to take care of emergencies, know-how. Have well-trained personnel on duty at all times. Proper training for firefighters. Knowledgeable team members. A well-trained team who understands their priorities and roles in a crisis situation. Have the appropriate training /skills to handle CFS. (43)
3. Keep community updated through social media. To provide and communicate to their patrons in the fire district information and direction for maintaining safe conditions in their homes and places of businesses. Community does not fully appreciate/understand all the fire district does beyond just addressing fires. (9)
4. Professionalism of staff. Professional, competent, and progressive members to respond to calls for service. (8)
5. Integrated community relations with stakeholders. Community involvement. Prioritize safety in the community while establishing positive relationships among community members. Community partner. Community-driven and focused service. (7)
6. Adequate staffing. (5)
7. Response to 911 calls - home fires. (5)
8. Working collaboratively with Beaufort County School District and local schools regarding safety and training protocols. (5)
9. Be current and up-to-date on safety regulations, strategies, and protocols. Provide a safe environment for their employees. Safety first. (5)
10. Ensuring and fostering safety. (5)
11. Be good stewards of taxpayer money, buying and replacing what is necessary, reducing waste and excess. Fiscal responsibility. (4)
12. Safety education. Education for community, particularly fire prevention. (3)
13. Response to auto accidents. (3)
14. Relay accurate information. (3)
15. Effective communication by employees. (3)
16. Appropriate equipment (i.e., engines, ladders, special response vehicles). More stations. (2)
17. Response to home calls that are not fire-related. (1)
18. Promptly clear unnecessary lane blockage. (1)
19. Policies and procedures. (1)
20. Constantly evaluate and improve their service delivery, programs, personnel, and look towards the future of Bluffton. (1)
21. Public outreach and interface. (1)

Areas of Community Concern about the Bluffton Township Fire District (verbatim, in priority order)

1. Recruitment/Retention: Is starting salary sufficient to attract and retain new personnel? Ability to recruit diminishes: dumbing down requirements because applicant pool is too small. Ability to recruit new firefighters. Attracting qualified persons. Are there career paths/partnerships between the local school district or college? Are there target recruitment efforts to diversify the fire department in terms of ethnicity, race, and gender? Salaries to stay competitive for new hires. (28)
2. Growth: Increased response times due to rapid growth of the community. Did BTFD grow and expand too fast? Population growth exceeds operational capability. Ability to keep pace with rapid local growth. Their ability to keep up with the growth within the community. Population growth/area served. (24)
3. Funding: Funding and vision to provide superior response to community needs that keeps up with the rapid growth in our community, including technology and infrastructure. Are there financial constraints that may impact service or training? District will price itself above value: increasing taxes beyond reasonable. Budget constraints. Appropriate money to continue services, including prevention, training, and community outreach. (23)
4. Unintentionally destroying crash evidence. Secondary crashes occurring as a result of lane blockage. Traffic involvement – Bluffton Municipal Police to impede traffic as little as possible. (11)
5. Officers (sic: firefighters) will not provide communities with any information that could assist in helping residents, such as hospital taken, if home is secure, or if anyone remains in the residence. Important information like ETOH, for example, not being relayed. (8)
6. I feel we have a remarkable number of officers (sic: firefighters) for a relatively small township. Not sure if more officers are stationed at busier departments than others. Are we overstaffed or understaffed? (6)
7. Do we replace equipment on a regular basis? (5)
8. Protocols for clearing buildings during alarm events. (5)
9. Dismissive attitude/lack of willingness to work with private security during response into gated communities. (5)
10. Do you work hand in hand with Jasper County? (5)
11. 24/48 vs. 48/72. (5)
12. Expand to have paramedic response on apparatus. Lack of EMS transport. Reliance on Beaufort County EMS, which is not reliable, timely, or adequately staffed. (4)
13. Lack of motivation for advancement. (3)
14. All aspects of safety for local firefighters - do they have top-rated personal and team equipment to do their job safely? (3)
15. Does the district focus align with community needs? (3)
16. Media likes to highlight negative news, but the fire district has positive/inspirational stories to share. (3)
17. Enough stations? (3)
18. Insufficient understanding from the community about how department operates, for example, combined fire and EMTs. (3)
19. Affordable housing. (2)
20. Ability to handle electric car fires which cannot be extinguished with water. (1)
21. Seems like an abundance of people show up to emergencies. (1)

Positive Community Comments about the Bluffton Township Fire District (verbatim, in no order)

- Immediate response and support to community involvement requests.
- Strong leadership.
- Employees fully dedicated to our community and their jobs.
- Visibility in the community.
- The members of the fire department engage in professional and positive relationships with the community.
- Professional.
- BFD works well with law enforcement.
- Great community outreach.
- EMT/fire personnel all seem to be personable, caring, and well-trained when responding to calls.
- Very professional.
- Very responsive.
- Attitude and professionalism are excellent.
- Equipment is well maintained.
- Ongoing training.
- Speed of response.
- Standard of training.
- Quality of equipment.
- Public engagement.
- Community outreach.
- Fostered a positive relationship with the school district.
- Firefighters are there for individuals in need on their worst day. People can count on them when they need someone the most.
- Great role models for the students.
- Appears to be relatively responsive.
- Any interactions I have had with the staff has been very professional.
- EMT training.
- Knowledgeable and friendly.
- Always volunteering to help, the community.
- They appear to engage the community.
- Update technology with the times.
- Their fire trucks are cool looking.
- Positive image of organization exists in the community.
- Training seems superb.
- Morale and culture are great.
- Well trained.

- Looking to improve.
- Engaging and friendly.
- Response times, in most instances.
- Professionalism of staff.
- Communication.
- EMT response is great.
- Community involvement.
- Professionalism.
- They are very proactive in fire prevention and CPR.
- I feel they are a professional fire department in promoting EMT-Advanced medics on medical responses, obtaining CPSE accreditation, and overall professionalism.
- Average response time from alarm to on-scene is very low, eight minutes or less.

Other Community Comments about the Bluffton Township Fire District

(verbatim, in no particular order)

- The public needs more education about department procedures (example, when an ambulance takes a person who needs medical attention) and info on mutual aid policy to neighboring entities.
- County should seriously reassess the overall emergency organization...fire vs. EMS vs. rescue vs disaster...unified command.
- I am very thankful for all the Bluffton FD does.
- Most homes in the area are relatively new construction, which is a positive, but there are new threats that I think need additional education; examples are electric bikes, electric cars, batteries, etc.
- Thank you for engaging the community.

Things the Community Feels the Bluffton Township Fire District Should Change

(verbatim, in priority order)

1. Convince Beaufort County officials that the fire service should manage/run EMS and the ambulances. Consider one management system for fire and EMS. Providing ALS/EMS transport to Bluffton. (3)
2. Provide additional opportunities for education. More classes on CPR and AED use. (2)
3. Explore smaller fire trucks such as in Europe and other locations.
4. Attitude towards gated community's security.
5. More personnel.
6. I don't understand why a fire truck has to respond to a basic EMS call, why not have a smaller vehicle dispatched?

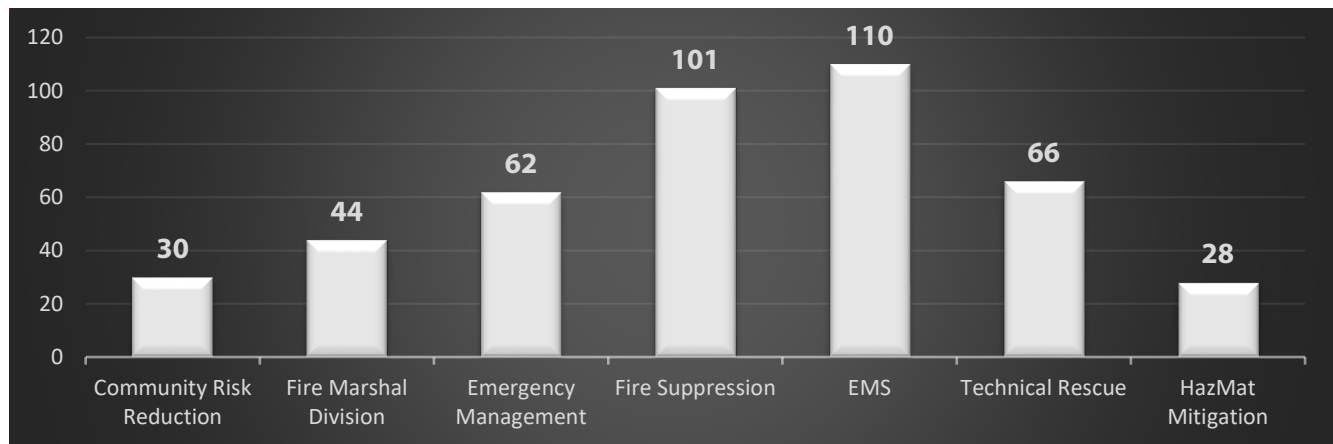
Things the Community Feels the Bluffton Township Fire District Should NOT Change

(verbatim, in priority order)

1. Concern for citizens' safety and education. Community involvement. Assist senior citizens with smoke detectors. (3)
2. How they respond to accidents. Response time is remarkable. (2)
3. Their commitment to seeking and hiring well-trained staff dedicated to our community.
4. High level of training.
5. Current leadership (command staff).
6. Professionalism.
7. Striving for improvement.
8. Strong support for schools.

Community-Prioritized Programs

Understanding how the community prioritizes the agency's programs and services allows the Bluffton Township Fire District to ensure its focus on resource allocation aligns. With that, prioritization feedback was garnered with an instrument that compared the prioritization of the programs and services offered by the BTFD. The results were as follows:



Community Stakeholders Work Session

B. Agency Stakeholder Work

A group of agency stakeholders representing the various segments of the BTFD attended a three-day work session to review the community feedback, develop or revise the agency’s mission and values, and establish a quality focus on the way forward in developing this community-driven strategic plan. Additionally, the process included an environmental scan in the form of a strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results (SOAR) analysis to better understand the current situational aspects impacting the agency.

SOAR

The agency’s internal stakeholders utilized a strategic environmental analytic method known as SOAR: where members consider the organization’s current strengths, opportunities, future aspirations, and strategic results to formulate a path for continuous improvement. The SOAR process was conducted for reflection, focus, and alignment with the organization’s set of values, its vision, and its mission. This appreciative inquiry process provided environmental scanning for strategic direction, associated plans through the application of innovative ideas, and a positive strategic framework that brings clarity to the agency’s vision for leadership in day-to-day functions.

Strengths

Adequate response times.	Strong community involvement and public trust.
A quality in-house maintenance division, including large vehicles.	Constant self-assessment through internal and external transparency.
Offering constant opportunities for public involvement and education.	Desire to provide quality training equipment and benefits to the employees.
Providing in-house data analysis services.	Ability to meet growth in the community.
Provide progressive basic and advanced EMS service.	Adaptability of physical resources.
Dedication, motivation, and willingness of employees to adapt.	Ability to provide public service with integrity and empathy with a desire to go above and beyond.
Adequate staffing to meet minimum staffing levels (line/ops) for ERF.	Quality training facility that is used by multiple departments.
District employees are family-oriented.	Ability to obtain higher level of certifications and/or education.
Constantly challenging the status quo.	
Ability to recruit capable candidates.	Operates well within budget parameters.
Special training/ops teams’ availability.	Positive public image with other responding agencies.
Highly skilled and trained personnel.	Community relations are good.

Opportunities

Educate the community on the growth of population and calls vs. the growth of the fire department.	Fire department to be more involved in county-level planning.
Utilizing homeowners' associations and property owners' associations to educate the gated communities about the services we provide.	To aid in recruitment and retention, have human resources provide a monetary value to all department-provided benefits.
Stress the importance of overall response times internally.	Educate the community on all services provided.
Explore "marketing" to better represent what services are provided/covered.	Improve/expand interagency cooperation through training and pre-established protocols.
Develop a succession plan.	Opportunity to grow the EMS system.
Evaluation of equipment infrastructure to ensure it is meeting the needs of the services we provide.	Expand the explorer program at the high school/technical college levels to aid in recruitment and retention.
Use current and emerging social media platforms to distribute critical fire and life safety implementation.	Using non-emergency calls to educate and prevent injury. Ex. Recommending handrails on lift assist calls.
Expand programs to include Firewise, fire-adapted communities, and ready-set-go.	Re-evaluate the department structure to enhance the department's scope of services.
Accountability to meet departmental standards.	Outreach in the community for employment.
Evaluate district call data to develop appropriate programs.	

Aspirations

Increase the number of people with EMT-A and paramedic per shift.	Strengthen communication horizontally and vertically, internal and external.
Being proficient at all hazards.	Better cooperation with Beaufort County EMS.
Make BTFD the standard in Beaufort County.	To be able to fund 8 am to 5 pm training truck.
Provide a community paramedicine program to enhance the well-being of our citizens.	Work with the county council to ensure adequate funding to meet our future needs.
Implement a regional hiring pool and testing process.	Establish an in-house EMT-A/P program.
Explore and expand the training division to become a regional training center.	Expand the maintenance division to service all county vehicles.
Provide appropriate staffing levels throughout the department.	County-wide medical direction to standardize supplies, protocols, and response guidelines.
Further develop SOPs/SOGs to ensure clear direction for fire department personnel.	Expand the quick response vehicle (QRV) program to extend the life cycle of front-line apparatus.
Be recognized as a leading fire department in the region/state/US.	Develop a relationship with the Beaufort County School District for the Explorer program.
Being proactive in preventing 911 calls in the first place.	Constant technical training among the three shifts.
Explore fire-based EMS service.	Better coordination of safety planning with schools.

Results

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community will be better educated in what BTFD does and what it desires to do-increased funding as a result. - FD and County partnership leads to better working relationships and less duplication of efforts. - Better explorer program leads to a better pool of potential employees. - Total compensation knowledge leads to better retention. - Interagency cooperation would help with targeted response guidelines, sharing/purchasing supplies, and SOP/SOG that don't contradict between agencies. - EMT-A/P training program would supply the department with needed personnel to account for future growth. - Maintenance division expansion would add to FD readiness with costs supplemented by other agencies. - Increased interagency cooperation when training together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion of community outreach and educational programs through collaboration with HOA/POAs, community leaders, and local and state agencies. - Provide succession planning to ensure quality candidates that provide a smooth transition of power. - Provide quality training equipment that benefits employees and develops highly trained and skilled personnel who are dedicated, motivated, and willing to provide public service with integrity and empathy, and a desire to go above and beyond. - Constant self-assessment through internal and external transparency through in-house data analysis services. - QRV program would minimize waiting time for engines and free up apparatus for other calls. - County medical direction would consolidate response guidelines across agencies and rotate supplies to limit loss from expiration dates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ERF within the target timeframe leads to improved firefighter safety. - Better knowledge among staff - Progressive-not stuck in old habits. - Improved morale. - Shows fiscal accountability to the county with improved funding. - Proficient-increased training, funding, and equipment. - Better CRR involvement-lower call volume, increased QOL. - County standard-increased recruitment and morale. - Enhanced patient care/outcomes. - Better quality applicants. - Better efficiency in the department. - Constant application of department policies and procedures. - Improved all hazards preparation and prevention. - Employees from Skill Bridge and the military. - Minimal downtime for apparatus/equipment, especially larger vehicles. - Community trust leads to better support for future needs.

Programs and Services

It is imperative that agency stakeholders distinguish between the core deliverables (programs and services) provided by the Bluffton Township Fire District and those supporting services that help the agency provide the core programs and services. With this understanding, the agency stakeholders can further define where the issues and gaps exist within the organization and provide more basis for the environmental scan that is conducted. To bring this understanding to fruition, CPSE provided guidance and gained consensus understanding with the entire group so that the difference between the deliverables and the supporting functions were understood.

Challenges and Service Gaps

After sifting through data and feedback provided by the community stakeholders, and the internal environmental scan conducted, the agency stakeholders, by consensus and group effort, determined that the following challenges and service gaps exist within the Bluffton Township Fire District. Each challenge or gap listed is accompanied by the causal effects determined by the two groups. They are then linked to the strategic initiative identified by the agency stakeholders.

Group 1	Group 2	Initiative Link
<p>Workforce Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Retention ○ Recruitment ○ Professional development ○ Development of a succession plan ○ Scheduling ○ Staffing levels to meet current and future needs 	<p>Human Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promotional tracts ○ Compensation ○ Benefits and retirement ○ Morale ○ Retention ○ Succession planning ○ Training ○ Consistency ○ Support/admin staffing 	<p>Workforce Management</p>
<p>Capital Assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Current asset maintenance ○ Future asset needs to account for growth and hazards ○ I.T. upgrades ○ Facility and classroom upgrades ○ Budget growth to keep up with call volume, population, new hazards 	<p>Physical Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Apparatus and vehicle replacement ○ Facility expansion and remodel ○ Operational equipment ○ Concrete ○ Technology 	<p>Capital Resources</p>
<p>EMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Training certs, record keeping, insurance ○ Capital investments to increase service ○ Staffing increases ○ Billing, software, and personnel ○ Interagency cooperation and training ○ Central supply for county agencies 	<p>N/A</p>	<p>EMS</p>
<p>N/A</p>	<p>Internal Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Policies/SOG's ○ Chain of command-up and down ○ Communication medium ○ Delegation ○ Proper feedback and follow-up 	<p>Internal Communications</p>
<p>N/A</p>	<p>External Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Demographics-various types ○ Reaching non-English speaking ○ Disaster preparedness ○ Services/programs ○ Appropriate programs based on data ○ external partnerships 	<p>External Communications</p>

Group 1	Group 2	Initiative Link
N/A	Safety and Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cancer mitigation/awareness ○ Longevity ○ Accident prevention ○ Safety enforcement 	Safety and Health

Strategic Initiatives

Based on all previously captured information and determining critical issues and service gaps, the following strategic initiatives were identified as the foundation for developing goals and objectives.

Workforce Management

Capital Resources

EMS

Internal Communications

External Communications

Safety and Health



Agency Stakeholders Work Sessions





2024-2029 STRATEGIC PLAN