

NEW BERN



NORTH CAROLINA

Everything comes together here

2017-2022

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan



~ Proudly Serving Since 1845 ~

Robert Boyd Fire Chief

City of New Bern

2/9/2017

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	<u>3</u>
Organizational Background.....	<u>4</u>
Organizational Structure.....	<u>7</u>
Definition of a Community-Driven Strategic Plan.....	<u>8</u>
Summary of Findings.....	<u>10</u>
Mission/Values/Vision.....	<u>11</u>
Programs and Services.....	<u>12</u>
Critical Issues and Service Gaps.....	<u>13</u>
Strategic Initiatives.....	<u>14</u>
Goals and Objectives/Performance Measurements.....	<u>15</u>
Appendix A: Process and Acknowledgement.....	<u>23</u>
Appendix B: Performance Measurement.....	<u>26</u>
Appendix C: Business/Community Leaders Findings.....	<u>28</u>
Appendix D: Citizens Survey Findings.....	<u>31</u>
Appendix E: Internal S.W.O.T. Analysis Findings.....	<u>33</u>
Appendix F: Works Cited.....	<u>38</u>

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of New Bern has an extremely rich fire service history of service and dedication. That tradition is being upheld today by the men and women of the department who desire to provide an exceptional level of service to the people that they protect.

In 2016, the New Bern Fire-Rescue Department embarked on a journey to assess the department from the inside out, engaging citizens, community leaders, department personnel, city leaders, and peers from across the state. When combined with past lessons learned, anticipation of future needs, and acknowledgement of today's successes and challenges, these assessments and feedback are the foundation for this strategic plan. [\(See Appendix "A" for more details\).](#)

Citizens and community leaders have expressed their desire for the fire department to be professional, provide excellent response times, provide exceptional medical care, and be well trained and ready for the crises to which they are called to respond. They want their firefighters to be firm, fair and consistent, and be involved in the community as well as be recognized as the premier fire department in Eastern North Carolina.

The firefighters within the fire department positively recognize that their main strength is their people. They identify high ability, great talents, and diverse skills as cornerstones of their strengths. They also identify with a culture that embraces being adaptive to the needs at hand by being innovative and consistently going above and beyond what is expected.

While this situational responsiveness has served the city in the past, there is a need for a better-defined pathway that is solidly anchored in the core services of the department and builds upon those core services to deliver an equitable level of fire and emergency services citywide.

It takes a progressive city and a progressive fire department to step forward and proactively invite a third party review of their organization for the purposes of continuous improvement. The leadership at the City Manager level and the embracement at the Fire Chief level of this process has been remarkable. **This process is all about continuous improvement.** Change is often challenging and difficult; however, change is necessary for progress to occur. With the world around us changing so quickly, so must the fire service change to be able to meet the needs of the people being served and that need to be protected. Plotting a successful course forward is difficult unless you know your destination. This initiative is to help the New Bern Fire-Rescue Department set a course for the coming years.

During this process, no critical voids in service delivery were identified. However, the need for additional attention to standard of coverage was determined to be the highest priority recommendation in constructing the department's strategic plan. Aligning resources with outcome based goals in a more measured way will enable the Fire Chief and City Manager to better understand what level of service they are capable of on a day-to-day basis, and how changes in inputs such as personnel, equipment, and processes will result in changes to the outcomes. Furthermore, elected officials and citizens will benefit from a better understanding what level of service the department is providing citywide, and what geographical areas of the city have greater inherent risks.

A critical piece of strategy that needed review is in the area of emergency medical services. The business of emergency services revolves around quick response because lives can literally depend upon that quick response. North Carolina statutes define primary responsibility for patient treatment and transport to counties, and

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

secondary or support responsibilities at the municipal level. However, a more strategic and/or sophisticated level of involvement and engagement from the fire department with the emergency medical service delivery system could ultimately result with improved service delivery for the people of New Bern. The department is at an important decision point regarding what role they will play within the emergency medical response system within Craven County. This decision point will need to be made following joint city and county staff discussion and potential discussion among elected officials.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

The history of the City of New Bern Fire-Rescue, *as it is known today*, is both rich and unique. Originally, the services were provided by three companies: 1) the Atlantic Fire & Hook & Ladder Company, 2) the New Bern Steam Fire Engine Company No. 1, and 3) the New Bern Fire Company No. 1. The first chartered fire-fighting organization was the Atlantic Fire & Hook & Ladder Company formed on May 14, 1845; however, this company became inactive due to the members volunteering for military service at the break of the War Between the States.

During the Civil War occupation of New Bern, the New Bern Fire and Steam Engine Company, No. 1 was organized on January 1, 1865 by Union soldiers, many of whom remained after the war. During this time, the Union troops received a hand pump from the North. This contraption reached its maximum output when eight men exerted their weight on each end of the pump's crossbeam lever. A 16-man crew pulled the vehicle to the scene of the blaze. The pump drew water from one of New Bern's strategically located wells at Middle and Pollock Streets, Broad and Middle Streets, South Front Street, Bern Street (in Five Points), and North Craven Street at Pelletier's Knitting Mill. If the fire was near the Neuse or Trent Rivers, water was pumped from these. After pulling and pumping the Yankee apparatus for about three years, firemen persuaded the Town Council to purchase a steam fire engine. When the new steam fire engine arrived in 1868, it too, had to be pulled by hand, but was later converted for horse pulling.

In 1879, the Atlantic Fire & Hook & Ladder Company received a new Silsby steam fire engine, and in 1884, the city traded the New Bern Steam Fire Engine Company, No. 1's steam fire engine for a new "Button Steam Fire Engine." Shortly thereafter, the nickname "Button Company" came to be. Rivalry between the two companies played an important part in their advancements, and with the arrival of this new steam fire engine, the competition gained momentum. Which fire company reached the blaze first became more important to New Bernians than the damage done or whose house was on fire. The rivalry continued until 1927, when the city housed both companies in a central fire station on Broad Street. Even then, however, the two companies still held separate meetings.

Although these fire companies were the "leaders," they were not the only firefighting organizations. There were several others, both white and black, in addition to a junior fire company. The junior fire company was made up of young men between the ages of 16 and 18, and was called the "Excelsior Bucket and Axe Company." Upon reaching manhood, these junior firefighters were "absorbed" by the Atlantic and Button Companies. Other fire companies that came about were: the Mechanics, the Fourth Ward, the Riverdale, the Holden Company (named for Governor Holden), the Axe, the Rough and Ready Fire Company, and the Independent Colored Fire Company.

The New Bern Fire Department kept abreast of the city's growth. With the arrival of the steam fire engines, the city's streets were paved with oyster shells. The driver's seat of the engines was equipped with leather straps to keep the driver from being thrown off when an engine struck a hole in the street. Later plans included paving the streets with bricks; however, this was delayed until a water system could be installed. The project was finally completed just prior to 1900. Because of these improvements, the fire departments were in a better position to fight several destructive fires that came a few years later.

The old Button and Atlantic fire engines were eventually replaced by motorized trucks. Purchased for \$1,500 (versus today's price of \$250,000) in 1914 and delivered in 1915, both trucks were American LaFrance. The Atlantic Company truck was white; the Button Company was red. The first motorized ladder truck was purchased in 1927 by Atlantic Company for \$27,000 (versus today's price of \$750,000).

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

Atlantic Company

- Organized May 14, 1845
- Incorporated January 5, 1847
- Oldest chartered fire department in North Carolina
- One of the oldest fire departments in the United States
- Fire Station was located behind the Chelsea Restaurant until 1910
- Held World Record - quick steam until Button Company took it
- First to use drop harnesses for horses
- Reel racing championship three times

Button Company

- Organized January 1, 1865
- Incorporated December 20, 1865
- Formed by Union troops who remained in New Bern after the Civil War
- First Steam Fire Engine was named "Amoskeag"
- Fire Station was the old City Hall building on Craven Street, across from Mitchell's Hardware
- Holds 3 world records in hose wagon competitions in early 1900's that remain unbroken today

New Bern Fire Department

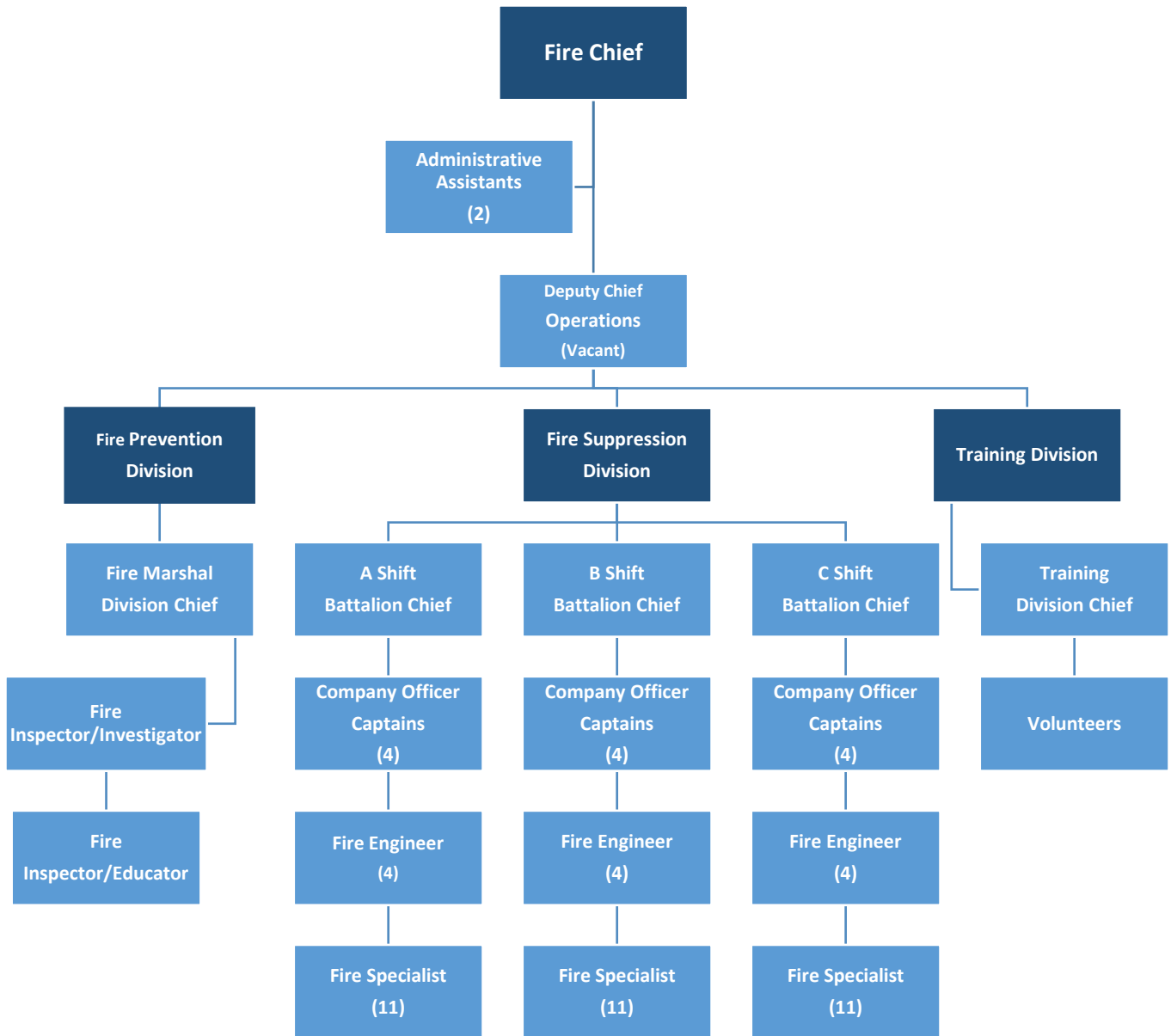
- Atlantic and Button Companies merged in 1927
- Both companies housed together into one central station on Broad Street in 1927
- Opened Station 3 located on National Avenue
- Opened Station 4 located on Elizabeth Avenue
- Moved into current Headquarters Station (Station 1) located on Neuse Boulevard in June, 2000
- Opened Station 2 located at West Thurman Road in 2003
- Closed Station 3 on National Avenue in 2003
- Combination department with 66 career personnel and 10 volunteers

New Bern Fire-Rescue

- Received Fire-Rescue recognition and officially became known as "New Bern Fire-Rescue" in 2004.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

DEFINITION OF A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN STRATEGIC PLAN

The fire service has entered into a critical competitive evolutionary cycle. Public demands and costs continue to increase, while dollars and other resources continue to shrink. These trends place increased pressure on the modern fire service manager, policy makers, and full-time and volunteer staff to develop ways to be more effective and efficient. In many cases, the public is demanding the accomplishment of specific goals, objectives, and services with few resources. To do a more efficient job with the available resources, organizations must set objectives based on constructive efforts while eliminating programs that do no serve the customer.

To ensure that customer needs were incorporated, a community-driven strategic planning process was used to develop the New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan. Businesses employ this type of process to identify market trends, allowing the service provider to focus efforts while reducing risk and wasted effort. This process was adapted to meet New Bern Fire-Rescue's specific needs.

This document is the result of several strategic planning sessions and includes valuable community input.

What is a Strategic Plan?

It is a living management tool that:

- Provides short-term direction
- Builds a shared vision
- Sets goals and objectives
- Optimizes use of resources

What we have to do today is to be ready for an uncertain tomorrow.

Peter F. Drucker,
Professor of Social Science
and Management

Effective strategic planning benefits from a consistent and cohesively structured process employed across all levels of the organizations. A sense of urgency pervades the customer-driven organization. Planning is a continuous process, one with no clear beginning and no clear end. New information from customers, like-providers, and life changes are to be factored into the planning process. ***The strategic plan should be an operationally useful document.***

Successful organizations, whether they are Fortune 500 companies, federal agencies, or state or municipal governments, have recognized that developing a customer focus is an absolute necessity. With this information, government agencies must strategically plan how they will deliver high quality products and services to the public and their other customers through better, faster, and less expensive programs.

Once their strategic goals are established, agency leaders must establish performance measures, for which they are fully accountable, to assess and ensure that their departments and agencies are indeed delivering on the promises made in their strategic plans. Most importantly, strategic planning can be an opportunity to unify the management, employees, stakeholders and customers through a common understanding of where the organization is going, how everyone involved can work to that common purpose, and how progress and levels will measure success.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

Where Does the Community Fit into the Strategic Planning Process?

For many successful organizations, the voice of the community drives their operations and charts the course for their future. Companies, as well as state and city governments, have begun focusing on their community of customers as one of the key motivators in planning for the future.

Performance Assessment

Implied within every stage of the planning process is the ability to determine progress made toward the goals or targets set. This assessment ability is a monitoring function that simply tracks activities. It may be as simple as a “To Do List” or as complicated as a plan of action with milestones and performance measures. Also implied within the planning process is the ability to measure effectiveness of the actions taken in the conduct of the organization’s business. [Information on performance measurement can be found in Appendix “B.”](#)

A “community-driven organization” is defined as one that “maintains a focus on the needs and expectations, both spoken and unspoken, of customers, both present and future, in the creation and/or improvement of the product or service provided.”

The specific steps of the process are as follows:

1. Define the services provided to the community.
2. Establish the community’s service priorities.
3. Establish the community’s expectations of the organization.
4. Identify any concerns the community may have about the organization and its services.
5. Identify those aspects of the organization and its services the community views positively.
6. Develop the Mission Statement, giving careful attention to the services currently provided and which logically can be provided in the future.
7. Establish the values of the organization’s membership.
8. Identify the strengths of the organization.
9. Identify any weaknesses of the organization
10. Identify areas of opportunity for the organization.
11. Identify potential threats to the organization.
12. Establish realistic goals and objectives for the future.
13. Identify implementation tasks for each objective.
14. Develop a vision of the future.
15. Develop organizational and community commitment to the plan.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The process of developing a strategic plan for New Bern Fire-Rescue Department began in April of 2016. The project's foundation was derived from three (3) key areas that included business leaders and community surveys, an internal **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (S.W.O.T.)** Analysis, and a peer review from fire chiefs across the state.



Business Leaders

Based on their feedback we learned that business and community leaders ([see Appendix "C"](#)) and citizens ([see Appendix "D"](#)) have a desire to see the fire department to be professional, provide excellent response times, be well trained and ready for the crisis to which they are called to respond. They want firefighters to be firm, fair and consistent and be involved in the community as well as recognized as the premier fire department in Eastern North Carolina. Survey results determined rescue, EMS and fire suppression as priorities of services being offered by NBFD.

Firefighters participating in the S.W.O.T. analysis positively recognized their strength is within their people. Firefighters identified high quality personnel, customer focus, adaptability, and progressiveness as strengths. Weaknesses include emergency communication, system delivery gaps, EMS structure, and not having clearly identified roles/responsibilities. Participants identified clarification of EMS response, communication enhancements, standard of coverage, diversity, and moving forward with new fire stations and personnel as opportunities. Threats identified during the process included leadership transition, sustainable funding, pay compression, balancing community service and emergency services, and not having staffing levels to support safe fire ground operations. Participants identified with a culture that embraces adaptability to the needs at hand by being innovative and consistently going above and beyond what is expected.

The peer review panel did not find any critical voids in service delivery. However, the need for additional attention to standard of coverage was determined to be of the highest priority. The panel made several other recommendations for improvement that included an evaluation of emergency communications, emergency medical response, fire response, staffing, structure, and core services. [More detailed results of the S.W.O.T. Analysis can be found in Appendix "E."](#)



Peer Review Session

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

MISSION/VALUES/VISION

Mission Statement

The City of New Bern Fire-Rescue Department is committed to providing continual protection from the devastation of fire and life threatening emergencies. We are steadfast in providing quality risk awareness programs, training, and other related services to the citizens we protect.

Value Statement

The employees of the City of New Bern Fire-Rescue Department believe in and promote personal and professional growth through honesty, professionalism, loyalty, and dedication.

- **Honesty:** Through fairness and sincerity in all efforts.
- **Professionalism:** Through making a conscious effort to protect those whom entrust their lives and property to our service.
- **Loyalty:** Through allegiance to the department's vision.
- **Dedication:** Through our passion and commitment to serve the public and fellow employee.

Vision Statement

The City of New Bern Fire-Rescue Department will be the premier fire department in our region as a result of our commitment to community risk reduction.

- **Vision Goals**
 - Organize a collaborative effort for reducing risk that represents our community's demographics.
 - Identify potential stakeholders for developing a community partnership.
 - Utilize collaborative planning to develop, implement, and evaluate prevention programs.
 - Analyze and identify pertinent information about our city's demographics, leading causes of community risk, and high-risk populations.
 - Evaluate the significance of prevention programs through community synergy in determining the program activities, efficiency, and effectiveness.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The agency's internal stakeholders identified the following core programs provided to the community, as well as the services that enabled the organization to deliver those programs.

Table 1
Core Programs of New Bern Fire-Rescue Department

- ❖ Fire Suppression
- ❖ Rescue
- ❖ Fire Prevention
- ❖ Disaster Preparedness
- ❖ Emergency Medical Services
- ❖ Public Safety Education
- ❖ Fire Investigation
- ❖ Hazardous Materials Operation

Table 2
Supporting Services of New Bern Fire-Rescue Department

- ❖ Communications Center
- ❖ Law Enforcement
- ❖ Human Resources
- ❖ Finance
- ❖ Training
- ❖ Red Cross
- ❖ NC Task Force 10 Team
- ❖ Medical Direction
- ❖ Auto/Mutual Aid
- ❖ Facility Maintenance
- ❖ Emergency Management
- ❖ Hospital
- ❖ Craven Community College
- ❖ Salvation Army
- ❖ Information Technology

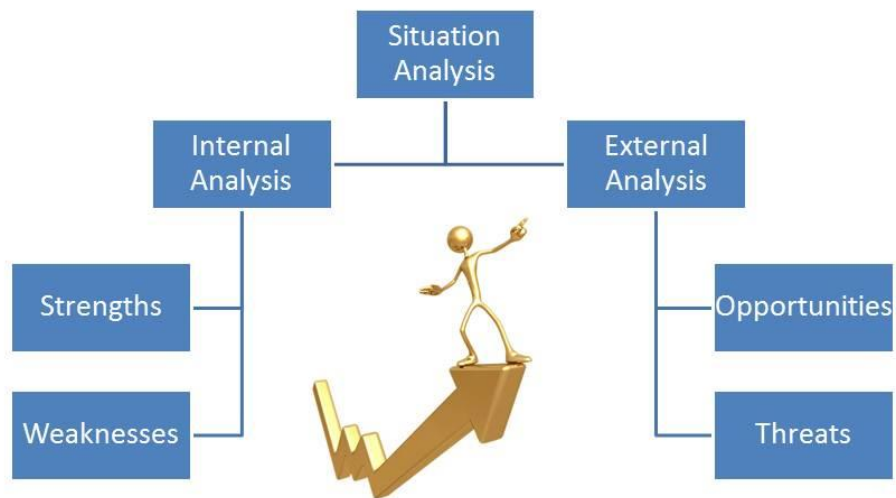
New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

CRITICAL ISSUES AND SERVICE GAPS

Review of New Bern Fire-Rescue's core programs and support services identified internal strengths and weaknesses along with external opportunities and threats. The internal stakeholders recognized their primary critical issues and service gaps as the foundation for the development of goals and objectives in order to meet their future vision.

Table 3
Critical Issues and Service Gap Issues Identified

- ❖ Budget Restraints
- ❖ Emergency Medical System Structure (role clarity)
- ❖ Structure Definition
- ❖ Staffing
- ❖ Emergency Communications service delivery gaps
- ❖ Improved procedures and standards of consistency
- ❖ Roles, responsibilities, and accountability
- ❖ Succession
- ❖ Public perception relevant to department's services



New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Table 4
Strategic Initiatives of the New Bern Fire-Rescue Department

- ❖ Standard of Coverage
- ❖ Emergency Communications
- ❖ Core Services
- ❖ EMS
- ❖ Staffing/Structure
- ❖ Evaluation of Services



New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES/PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

The community-driven strategic planning process to this point has dealt with establishing the mission, values, S.W.O.T., critical issues and service gaps, and strategic initiatives of the New Bern Fire-Rescue Department (NBFD). In order to achieve the mission of the NBFD, realistic goals and objectives with timelines for completion must be established to enhance strengths, address weaknesses, provide members with clear direction, and address the concerns of the community. The internal stakeholders met to complete this phase of the planning process.

Leadership of the NBFD will establish work groups to meet periodically to review progress toward these goals and objectives and adjust timelines as needs and the environment change. As goals and objectives are management tools, they should be updated on an on-going basis to identify what has been accomplished and to note changes within the organization and the community. The attainment of a performance target should be recognized and celebrated to provide a sense of organizational accomplishment.

The goals and objectives will now become a focus of efforts of the agency. By following these goals and objectives carefully, the agency will be directed into its desired future while having reduced the obstacles and distractions along the way.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #1: STANDARD OF COVERAGE

Meet or exceed community expectations in program and service delivery.

Objective 1A

Perform a Hazard Risk Analysis.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Define community risk by making specific observations about the scope and complexity of risk factors facing NBFD.
- Identify physical risk factors (i.e. characteristics of service area, topography, transportation network, climate impact, disaster exposé, etc.)
- Identify physical assets protected (i.e. listing of properties throughout jurisdiction and specific hazards of it).
- Use historical data to identify past deployment and population growth.
- Identify service demand and establish fire demand planning zones.
- Identify and map all high hazard occupancies.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

Objective 1B

Establish Outcome Based Performance Goals.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Establish critical task analysis for fire services.
- Establish critical task analysis for medical services.
- Identify processes and resources required to confine a fire to room of origin for moderate risk residential house fires.
- Establish a citywide goal of confining the fire to the room of origin for moderate risk residential house fires.
- Determine program needs through an evaluation of annual program reports.
- Determine external customer satisfaction utilizing survey tools.
- Develop and implement an “after action critique” process to improve department performance.
- Review and amend policies and procedures to support program needs.

Objective 1C

Define Citywide Level of Service Delivery Standards that Meet Customer Expectations.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Establish a Program Review Committee to evaluate service delivery standards.
- Establish a level of service for first unit response as well as full complement response for fire responses.
- Establish a level of service for first unit response as well as full complement response for responses to non-fire emergencies.
- Analyze program performance for each response district with each of the following criteria:
 - Baseline and benchmark response time
 - Staffing objectives based upon type and magnitude of event
 - Community risk assessment factors (frequency, probability of occurrence, structures, water supply/alternative water supply requirements, special hazards, etc.)
 - Areas not meeting program performance objectives
- Determine program needs through an evaluation of annual program reports.
- Determine external customer satisfaction utilizing survey tools.
- Develop and implement an “after action critique” process to improve department performance.
- Review and amend policies and procedures to support program needs.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #2: EMERGENCY MEDICAL SYSTEM DELIVERY
Meet or exceed community expectations in program and service delivery.

Objective 2A

Analyze Need and Obtain Citywide Consensus that Providing Joint EMS is an Improvement to Service Delivery to the Citizens of New Bern.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Conduct meetings with stakeholders from the community.
- Develop a proposal for combined fire/police/hospital services that quantifies costs.
- Present proposal to interested parties (fire/police/hospital) for refinement and buy-in.
- Present proposal to city administration and Board of Aldermen for approval.

Objective 2B

Evaluate Emergency Medical System Delivery.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Identify service demand.
- Evaluate the use of Emergency Medical Dispatch.
- Clearly define the level of medical response services offered by New Bern Fire-Rescue Department.
- Identify what level of First Responder the fire department needs to better serve the community (i.e. Medical Responder, Emergency Medical Technician).
- Identify a department representative as the department's medical officer.

Objective 2C

Evaluate the EMS Program for Service Delivery and Customer Expectations.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Establish an EMS Program Review Committee to evaluate program performance.
- Evaluate program performance through established objectives and performance measurements.
- Analyze program performance for each response district with each of the following criteria:
 - Baseline and benchmark response time
 - Staffing objectives based upon type and magnitude of event
 - Areas not meeting program performance objectives
- Determine program needs through an evaluation of annual program reports.
- Determine external customer satisfaction utilizing survey tools.
- Develop and implement an "after action critique" to improve department performance.
- Review and amend policies and procedures to support program needs.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #3: EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Continue to enhance the emergency communication process to meet or
Exceed community expectations.

Objective 3A

Develop a Positive Partnership with Communications Center.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Implement a ride-along program with personnel in communications center.
- Implement procedures where command staff participate with personnel in communications center while dispatching fire incidents.
- Crosstrain fire personnel and telecommunicators on dispatch procedures.

Objective 3B

Examine the Potential for Improvement of Emergency Communication Dispatch.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Evaluate process components of 9-1-1 emergency communications dispatch systems.
- Conduct a flow analysis of 9-1-1 calls, with a goal of shaving time off the alarm-processing component of total response time.
- Confer with 9-1-1 telecommunicators as to what processes can be changed or initiated that would expedite fire and medical emergency calls to the NBFD.
- Determine whether there is a need for additional telecommunicators.
- Evaluate current training practices for telecommunicators.
- Initiate the use of mobile applications; thereby immediately/automatically notifying NBFD firefighters of call dispatches.
- Install call monitors in all fire stations.
- Investigate the use of traffic signal pre-emption devices on major corridors.
- Research priority dispatch for EMS and fire calls.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #4: STAFFING/STRUCTURE

Provide quality services by establishing adequate staffing, training, personnel management, organizational development, and fire department structure.

Objective 4A

Improve the Efficiency and Quality of Staff Credentials.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Evaluate the effectiveness of internal training programs.
- Identify training gaps and/or improvements.
- Identify external training opportunities.
- Solicit input from Training Division and Command Staff in the development of training programs and training schedules.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of scenario based training evolutions.

Objective 4B

Implement a Training/Mutual Aid Program Involving Craven County Volunteer Fire Departments.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Meet with the Craven County Volunteer Fire Chiefs, local Emergency Manager, and Craven Community College Fire Coordinator identifying specific training needs.
- Work closely with local mutual aid departments to bring consistency of operations.
- Develop training plans and assign department instructors.
- Coordinate a training schedule involving NBFD and Craven County Fire Departments.
- Design and implement mutual aid program.

Objective 4C

Implement a Training Program Involving New Bern Fire-Rescue Department and Craven County Industries.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Meet with local industry representatives identifying specific training needs for all entities.
- Identify legal/liability issues and develop MOU's.
- Develop training plans and assign department instructors.
- Coordinate a training schedule involving NBFD and industry representatives.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

Objective 4D

Improve Service Delivery by Determining the Strategic Location and Design of Fire Service Facilities.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Perform an objective analysis of current fire stations to determine current and future gaps in coverage.
- Determine need and establish priorities for new fire stations.
- Identify sites and develop preliminary plans for new fire stations.
- Identify cost estimates for all proposed plans.
- Explore savings/cost sharing options with co-locating with other city departments (i.e. police/EMS/Information Technology).
- Explore state/federal grants for shovel ready projects.

Objective 4E

Maintain an Adequate Staffing Structure for Emergency Operations and Support Staff for Non-Emergency Programs Including Prevention, Training, and Administration.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Determine the best staffing structure that mirrors other growing fire departments.
- Discuss with command staff potential streamlining and task prioritization.
- Investigate efficiencies through interdepartmental operations.
- Fill the Deputy Fire Chief's position as soon as conditions allow.
- Determine minimum daily staffing in accordance with NFPA 1710.
- Explore grant options for filling needed firefighter positions (i.e. SAFER).
- Begin budgeting for firefighters each year in preparation for new standard requirements, new fire stations, training, and inspections.

Objective 4F

Conduct an Analysis and Evaluation to Determine Firefighting Apparatus and Equipment Needs.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Organize a committee to evaluate and determine all apparatus and firefighting needs.
- Prioritize apparatus and firefighting equipment needs based on need, quantity, and cost.
- Identify opportunities for improved strategic sourcing of firefighting apparatus and equipment, if any.
- Evaluate alternative response vehicles for more efficient service delivery.
- Prepare an apparatus and firefighting equipment report documenting assessments.
- Prepare replacement plan from assessment findings.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE #5: CORE SERVICES

Align recruitment and retention practices to support department programs and services.

Objective 5A

Develop a Recruitment Strategy to Create a Broader, More Diverse Candidate Hiring Pool.

Timeframe: 9 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Research recruitment strategies used by other departments.
- Produce a video that highlights the department and emphasizes career opportunities at New Bern Fire-Rescue Department.
- Implement a mentoring program with high school fire curriculum classes.
- Develop and implement social media initiatives.
- Align recruitment strategies with department needs.

Objective 5B

Enhance our Current Volunteer Firefighter Program.

Timeframe: 6 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Develop and implement training standards for volunteer firefighter certification.
- Recruit volunteer candidates.
- Train candidates to achieve volunteer firefighter certification.
- Allow volunteers to staff department requirements during city events.
- Enhance shift operation levels by allowing volunteers to assist in staffing stations and apparatus.
- Evaluate program annually to ensure program is successful.

Objective 5C

Develop a Retention Strategy to Prevent Loss of Experienced Personnel.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Identify reasons for loss of personnel (volunteer/career) due to departmental issues.
- Identify reasons for loss of personnel (volunteer/career) due to external issues.
- Develop a process to address identified issues with appropriate city leaders.
- Perform annual feedback evaluation for all positions.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

Objective 5D

Develop a Career Path for Department Personnel Utilizing Competency-Based Developmental Programs.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Continue efforts to improve and update our Engineer Development Program.
- Continue efforts to improve and update our Company Officer Development Program.
- Develop and implement a Chief Fire Officer Development Program.
- Update Career Development/Promotional Plan to meet new requirements.
- Perform annual evaluation of plan.

Objective 5E

Determine the Level of Training Proficiency of Department Personnel as Individuals, Companies, and Response Forces.

Timeframe: 12 months and continuing

Critical Tasks

- Set objective standards for individuals, companies, and response forces.
- Develop quarterly testing programs for individuals, companies, and response forces.
- Identify courses needed by personnel.
- Identify all current and potential instructors.
- Complete a gap analysis.
- Utilize information gained from gap analysis to identify resources needed to deliver necessary training programs.
- Periodically reevaluate training programs through quarterly testing, annual 360-degree evaluations, and a training resource gap analysis.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

APPENDIX “A” PROCESS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Initial request from City Manager Stephens on April 14, 2016. Response from OSFM on May 25, 2016 and subsequently updated on July 6, 2016.

Request to focus work to evaluate five (5) core areas:

1. Standard of Coverage
2. Evaluation of Services
3. Community Risk Assessment
4. Resource Deployment
5. Staffing Levels

Cornerstones of the project (in no particular order):

- Strategic Planning (Standard of Coverage, Resource Deployment, Community Risk, Hazard Analysis)
- Pre-Planning
- Staffing
- Effects on the Public Protection Classification
- Assist in Developing Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) for More Detailed Work

Table 5
Peer Review Team

Scott Burnette	Fire Chief, City of Asheville
Daniel Curia	Fire Chief, City of Durham
Keith McGee	Fire Chief, Town of Apex
Duffy Dayo	Battalion Chief, City of Raleigh
Alan Cain	Fire Chief, Town of Cary
Donnie Hall	Fire Chief, New Hanover County
Ed Brinson	Assistant Director, NCSFA (Retired Fire Chief)
Dana Outlaw	Mayor, City of New Bern
Jeffrey Odham	Alderman, City of New Bern
Kristen Culler	Assistant City Manager, City of New Bern
Dennis Tyndall	Captain, City of New Bern Fire Department

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

Table 6
Materials Reviewed by Peer Review Team

- ❖ Organizational charts and operating guidelines
- ❖ Maps of fire station locations
- ❖ Dispatch guidelines for various incident types
- ❖ Commercial building summary information via pre-plans or Fire Marshal
- ❖ Descriptions of current levels of service as compared to North Carolina adjusted national standards for first unit arrival as well as full complement arrival
- ❖ Fire loss data on trends and NFIRS data reports, along with RMS response data
- ❖ Previous ISO rating evaluation data points when Class 4 was earned
- ❖ Local insurance agent comparative information on rate impacts
- ❖ Past three years of approved budgets
- ❖ Apparatus and other response capabilities
- ❖ Some level of hazard risk analysis
- ❖ Planned capital improvements such as apparatus and fire stations
- ❖ Planning data on trends on population, demographics, growth, etc.
- ❖ Automatic and mutual aid agreements and/or policies
- ❖ Recent ISO reviews within Craven County which use the same communications center
- ❖ Other materials as deemed necessary

Business and Community Leaders Feedback Session

A public feedback session was held July 27, 2016 at 11:30 AM with business and community leaders across the City of New Bern to gain a better understanding of their acknowledged expectations; 49 business and community leaders in attendance.

Firefighter S.W.O.T.

Group feedback session with emphasis on a) internal strengths, b) internal weaknesses, c) internal opportunities/perceived external opportunities, and d) perceived external threats. This session was conducted with ten (10) New Bern firefighters representing a cross section of rank, experience, and demographics at the NCDOT office in New Bern on July 28, 2016 at 9:00 AM.

Table 7
Fire Department stakeholders participating in S.W.O.T.

Thomas Williams	Fire Engineer
Robert (Bob) Bordeaux	Fire Engineer
Doug Soltow	Fire Engineer
Gareth McDaniel	Fire Specialist
Joey Mares	Fire Engineer
Nic Fortier	Fire Specialist
Glenn Kiely	Fire Engineer
Johnathon Gaskins	Fire Specialist
Jeremy Blalock	Fire Inspector
Daniel Jackson	Fire Captain

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

General Public Feedback

The City of New Bern Public Information Officer collected data through Facebook, Twitter, and social media sites and received well over 200 responses. Of those responses, 99 responses registered from accounts in New Bern and the immediate adjoining area; 60 responses were from other areas of North Carolina. An additional 72 responses were from other areas of the United States or were not specified.

Peer Review On-Site Session

A full day interactive session with the Peer Review Team, along with the Fire Chief, was held at the New Bern Fire-Rescue Department on August 5, 2016 from 09:00 AM – 4:00 PM.



Peer Review Team

Report Compilation and Review with Team Members

Conducted in September, 2016

Report presented to the New Bern City Manager and New Bern Fire Chief

September 30, 2016

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

APPENDIX “B” PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

“Managing for Results”

As output measurement can be challenging, the organization must focus on the assessment of progress toward achieving improved output. According to Collins (2009), what matters is not finding the perfect indicator, but settling upon a *consistent and intelligent* method of assessing your output results, and then tracking your trajectory with rigor. They must further be prepared to revisit and revise their goals, objectives, and performance measures to keep up with accomplishments and environmental changes. It has been stated that:

Successful strategic planning requires continuing review of actual accomplishments in comparison with the plan...periodic or continuous environmental scanning to assure that unforeseen developments do not sabotage the adopted plan or that emerging opportunities are not overlooked (Sorkin, Ferris and Hudak [1984]).

Why Measure Performance?

In order to establish that the New Bern Fire-Rescue Department’s Strategic Plan is achieving results, performance measurement data will be implemented and integrated as part of the plan. An integrated process known as “Managing for Results” will be utilized, which is based upon the following:

- The identification of strategic goals and objectives;
- The determination of resources necessary to achieve them;
- The analyzing and evaluation of performance data; and
- The use of that data to drive continuous improvement in the organization.

A “family of measures” that is typically utilized to indicate and measure performance includes the following:

- **Inputs:** Value of resource used to produce an output.
- **Outputs:** Quantity or number of units produced which are activity-oriented and measurable.
- **Efficiency:** Inputs used per output (or outputs per input).
- **Service Quality:** The degree to which customers are satisfied with a program, or how accurately or timely a service is provided.
- **Outcome:** Qualitative consequences associated with a program/service; i.e., the ultimate benefit to the customer. Outcome focuses on the ultimate “why” of providing a service.

The Success of the Strategic Plan

The New Bern Fire-Rescue Department (NBFD) has approached its desire to develop and implement a Strategic Plan by asking for and receiving input from the community and members of the agency during the development stage of the planning process. The agency utilized professional guidance from the Office of State Fire Marshal and the community-driven strategic planning process to compile this document. The success of the NBFD’s Strategic Plan will not depend upon implementation of the goals and their related objectives, but from support received from the authority having jurisdiction, membership of the agency, and the community at large.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

A community-driven strategic planning process supported by effective leadership and active participation will provide considerable opportunity to unify internal and external stakeholders. Through a jointly developed understanding of organizational direction; how all a vested parties will work to achieve the mission, goals and vision; and how the organization will be measured and held accountable for its progress and/or success provides the dynamics of this planning process.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

APPENDIX "C" BUSINESS/COMMUNITY LEADERS FINDINGS

On Wednesday, July 27, 2016, the City of New Bern invited key members of the business community and community leaders to a forum designed to provide some education about the department and to solicit feedback from these community leaders about their perceptions about the New Bern Fire Department. The peer review process was explained and Chief Boyd provided an approximately 20 minute presentation on the New Bern Fire Department's services and operations. Attendees were asked to complete a written response form rating the services provided by the department, expectations of the department, positive strengths of the department, concerns and general comments.

Overall, responses from this leadership group were VERY positive about the department and the services provided. Detailed comment summaries are listed below:

Rankings - 39 respondents

TOP RANKINGS = Rescue, Fire Suppression, EMS

LOWEST RANKINGS = Fire Investigation, Domestic Preparedness, Hazardous Materials

Table 8
Business/Community Leaders Ranking Percentages and Service Priorities

SERVICE	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Rescue (Basic & Technical)	88%	10%	2%
Fire Suppression	85%	15%	
EMS	82%	13%	5%
Public Fire Education	80%	18%	2%
Fire Prevention	72%	26%	2%
Domestic Preparedness	59%	39%	2%
Hazardous Materials	46%	49%	5%
Fire Investigation	41%	54%	5%

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

Table 9

Business/Community Leaders Expectations of New Bern Fire-Rescue Department

- ❖ Response times at or better than our peers
- ❖ When there is a vehicle collision, get there quickly
- ❖ Coordinate well between other fire departments
- ❖ Readiness for natural disasters-hurricane, tornado, etc.
- ❖ Solid fire prevention efforts
- ❖ Be accessible to the community
- ❖ Community involvement
- ❖ Professionalism in all actions
- ❖ When there is a fire; get there quickly
- ❖ Embrace new advances in equipment and technology
- ❖ Well trained staff
- ❖ Fire education for our children
- ❖ Involvement and engagement in community events
- ❖ Firm, fair, and consistent
- ❖ Improve the ISO rating to Class 2
- ❖ Be the premier fire department in Eastern North Carolina
- ❖ Follow up after an incident occurs

Table 10

Business/Community Leaders Positive Feedback about New Bern Fire-Rescue Department

- ❖ Great job in schools
- ❖ This process - getting our feedback
- ❖ Pride in performance
- ❖ Professionalism
- ❖ Knowledge of community
- ❖ Inspectors are informative and not adversarial
- ❖ Child Safety Seat Program
- ❖ Proactive relationships with citizens
- ❖ Positive and friendly people
- ❖ Involvement in community events
- ❖ Dedication
- ❖ Good response times
- ❖ Well trained
- ❖ Team work
- ❖ Thorough in their work
- ❖ Cooperative and approachable

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

Table 11

Business/Community Leaders Concerns about New Bern Fire-Rescue Department

- ❖ That funding cuts do not affect the valuable services provided
- ❖ Emergency access in subdivisions with one-way in and one-way out
- ❖ Coverage in Fairfield Harbor area
- ❖ Partnering with other fire departments
- ❖ Is pay competitive?
- ❖ Need for diversity in the fire department - few African Americans
- ❖ Fires in unoccupied buildings
- ❖ Engagement in all areas of the community including 5-Points/Duffyfield area
- ❖ Adequate funding for fire personnel
- ❖ Water safety education for the public
- ❖ Do we have enough resources to handle what our risks are in New Bern?
- ❖ Funding may be inadequate for training
- ❖ Keeping up with city's growth and demands
- ❖ Adequate number of fire stations
- ❖ Level of interaction with the local media; need for PIO
- ❖ Do we need a fourth fire station?
- ❖ Concerned about the firefighting staffing coverage in Taberna/Carolina Colours area
- ❖ Being able to reach the ISO Class 1 rating
- ❖ Involvement with community watch members
- ❖ Is fire department prepared since funding has been cut to Pedro?
- ❖ Coordinate with the city for street design standards
- ❖ Teaching the elderly

Table 12

Other Comments from Business/Community Leaders

- ❖ New Bern Fire Department is a wonderful community partner
- ❖ Excellent process of hearing our input
- ❖ These guys need to be supported and have what they need to do their job
- ❖ Continued support by the city and taxpayers
- ❖ Keep working to improve "our" numbers
- ❖ After today, the New Bern Fire Department is doing even better than I thought before
- ❖ This self-assessment process with the State Fire Marshal is awesome - thanks for being proactive
- ❖ Appreciation of the services delivered and professionalism of the fire department
- ❖ Pay these folks adequately
- ❖ Continue to a great job
- ❖ Are there standards for response and how do we compare?
- ❖ Need WMD – Weapons of Mass Destruction training

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

APPENDIX “D” CITIZENS SURVEY FINDINGS

Within the total responses received through the public internet gateway provided by the City of New Bern, approximately 88 responses registered back geographically from New Bern. This summary focuses primarily on those responses illustrative of the overall responses received from the internet feedback summary.

Table 13
General Public Ranking Percentages and Service Priorities

Emergency Medical Services	91%
Fire Suppression	90%
Rescue (Basic Entrapment)	83%
Hazardous Materials	82%
Fire Prevention	73%
Fire Investigation	72%
Domestic Preparedness	63%
Fire and Life Safety Education	57%

Table 14
General Public Expectations of New Bern Fire-Rescue Department

- ❖ Save my life. Save my community. Save structures.
- ❖ Respond quickly to any emergency call.
- ❖ Adequate number of individuals and equipment needed to respond immediately within the areas demographics.
- ❖ Benchmark training in line with current issues of community safety.
- ❖ Community education efforts to reach multiple and diversified groups.
- ❖ Keep insurance rates low.
- ❖ Fast response to fires and EMS.
- ❖ Trained firefighters and EMS, the right equipment.
- ❖ Make sure buildings are up to code.
- ❖ Professional customer service, well-trained, sound equipment, good response.
- ❖ Professional, well-trained, well-equipped, good staffing levels.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

Table 15

General Public Response for Strengths of New Bern Fire-Rescue Department

- ❖ When visiting a NBFR station, we were treated with respect and as a valued guest.
- ❖ I find the force to be well trained and responsive.
- ❖ Fire people have always been courteous.
- ❖ Interactions with Fire-Rescue have been courteous and helpful.
- ❖ The fact that this survey is being administered on Facebook for the City of New Bern is helpful for information gathering. It shows an effort to gather relevant feedback from citizens.
- ❖ Very professional and respectful.
- ❖ I think asking the community for our input shows how efficiently this branch of local government is being managed.
- ❖ All encounters have been positive.
- ❖ Appreciate the up-to-date preparedness of the department and positive attitudes.
- ❖ Response is very rapid-fast, helpful, and effective

Table 16

General Public Concerns of New Bern Fire-Rescue Department

- ❖ Are we prepared for an active shooter/intentional mass casualty incident?
- ❖ Coverage of the city in a timely manner.
- ❖ Not enough personnel of stations for proper coverage.
- ❖ Distance between stations in New Bern, number of firefighters available, response of EMS.
- ❖ Equipment that has to come from downtown to Carolina Colours and Taberna.
- ❖ Maintaining a highly trained and effective team.
- ❖ Having the necessary resources and financial backing to meet the community need.
- ❖ Whether there are enough personnel to cover such a large area and the arrival time to those distant areas.
- ❖ Adequate staffing and training.

Table 17

General Public Comments about New Bern Fire-Rescue Department

- ❖ We are counting on you and appreciate the risks you take on our behalf.
- ❖ Would like to see more partnerships.
- ❖ Would like to see more personnel and fire stations to ensure response times are meeting expectations.
- ❖ Very dedicated to help citizens of New Bern in any way they can.
- ❖ You are on the right track. Thanks for your work.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

APPENDIX “E” INTERNAL S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS FINDINGS

Facilitated by: NC OFFICE OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Component

As a part of a department peer review to enable the New Bern Fire-Rescue Department to construct a viable strategic plan, the NC Office of State Fire Marshal was asked to facilitate a feedback session with employees of the New Bern Fire-Rescue Department (NBFD) focused on organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, or S.W.O.T. analysis. Ten (10) members of the NBFD were selected by the Fire Chief to be the voice of all of the members of the department with representation from shifts, ranks, and stations.

Members of this group were contacted beforehand to let them know what to expect during the feedback session and to solicit feedback from their colleagues. This session was held without department administration present and was conducted in an informal environment at the North Carolina Department of Insurance Regional Office in New Bern. This session lasted for approximately two and one half hours. Group members were offered the opportunity to provide additional feedback electronically afterwards.

Overall Observations

The NBFD members participating in this feedback session were very positive, engaged, and invested in the betterment of their fire department. Rather than use this format as an opportunity to voice negativity, the group harnessed the opportunity to make proactive suggestions for enhancement. The group very much grasped why they were employed - to serve people. There was solid support for the Fire Chief. Overwhelmingly, the group was very focused on delivering a high quality of service. The key issues that they brought forward were all focused on providing better deliverables or outcomes to citizens that they serve and protect.

From this session, several resounding issues emerged as needing immediate attention and review including the Emergency Communications Center, the EMS services and delivery system, the Battalion Chief roles and responsibilities, and the need for this strategic plan.

There was very good camaraderie among the group and behavior evidenced a good working relationship between the firefighters present. The NBFD members' strong desire to provide excellent service to New Bern residents was the foundation for the discussion. The overall tone and feel from the group was very encouraging about the bright future of the City of New Bern and the New Bern Fire Department.

Below are the general feedback points from the participants as well as a brief summary of responses under each category.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

Strengths

In order to move forward with improved or requested services from the city's citizens and business/community leaders, New Bern Fire-Rescue Department must first identify their current strengths to ensure capability of requested services. These strengths must also prove consistent with current issues facing the organization. Through this planning process, the following strengths were identified for the fire department:

Table 18
Strengths of New Bern Fire-Rescue Department

- ❖ Solid Class 3 insurance rating
- ❖ Our people – high ability and great talents with diverse skills
- ❖ High quality of career personnel
- ❖ Certification achievements of our personnel
- ❖ Strong commitment – remaining steadfast in our desire to serve and protect
- ❖ Strong prevention program that grew from our people desiring to improve safety to our citizens
- ❖ Political arena
- ❖ New leadership program initiative to prepare for the future
- ❖ Entry level pay is competitive
- ❖ Professionalism - delivering service above and beyond what is expected
- ❖ Wide variety of background and experience
- ❖ Providing above and beyond services and thinking outside the box
- ❖ Being very adaptive to the needs at hand by our people being innovative
- ❖ New Fire Chief and the opportunity to grow with his vision
- ❖ Providing multiple service disciplines – wide spectrum
- ❖ Strong mutual aid agreements with our neighbors, with recent significant improvements
- ❖ Our people are very passionate about what they do

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

Weaknesses

As with strengths, in order for an organization to move forward, it must acknowledge its weaknesses. Areas of weaknesses should not be misconstrued as threats (which will be later identified), but rather looked upon as areas of concern which could prohibit our current processes/operations. An organization's performance and/or lack of performance relies heavily not only on identifying their weaknesses, but effectively addressing them on their own. The following weaknesses of the fire department were identified:

Table 19
Weaknesses of New Bern Fire-Rescue Department

- ❖ Fire Prevention could be more proactive than reactive
- ❖ Need for the fourth station
- ❖ City and department are reactive too often – jumping in without a strategic plan
- ❖ Battalion Chiefs need more clearly defined roles and responsibilities to include being the department's champion within the community increasing outreach
- ❖ Need for a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the department's fire apparatus to ensure replacement
- ❖ Much improvement needed at the communications center – with the department needing to specify service levels and expectations, not vice-versa
- ❖ Due to communication center gaps, NBFD sometimes have to pick up calls by listening to a scanner
- ❖ Significant concern was expressed about the 9-1-1 call center demonstrated performance related to call processing times. Delays at this point of the emergency response cascade result in additional loss as well as more dangerous conditions for firefighters
- ❖ Need for increased consistency among the three operating shifts
- ❖ Need for more departmental recognition and sincere appreciation, such as awards and promotional ceremony, and allowing personnel to keep gear issued to them under their previous rank
- ❖ More face-to-face communication would enhance operations
- ❖ Department preparation of leadership
- ❖ Pay compression
- ❖ Need for more use of technology and training on using that technology
- ❖ Staffing is minimal in satellite areas or territories
- ❖ High need to educate the public about the department and services, such as with civic groups
- ❖ Growing generational gap within the department
- ❖ No clear EMS program or plan – need to revisit charter to ensure EMS is included as a core function
- ❖ Need to educate the communications center staff on fire department operations and needs
- ❖ Need to redefine structure fire for the communications center – need for education
- ❖ In non-emergency situations, too much emphasis is placed on chain-of-command communications resulting in less than efficient operations, especially across shifts
- ❖ Need to revisit and review the department standard operating procedures
- ❖ Much dependence is on email for communications; however, many people are expected to use one computer at a station
- ❖ Need to revisit automatic fire alarm responses and roles on those responses to ensure an adequate and safe number of firefighters are going into structures for investigation to include response by Battalion Chiefs so that Captains can stay with their crew
- ❖ Need for establishing minimal physical fitness standards for the department

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

Opportunities

Upon identification of strengths and weaknesses, only then can you assess your organization's program enhancement capabilities and/or restrictions. The focus of opportunities should not be exclusively on existing programs and services, but expounding upon and development of new prospects within the fire service industry. Many opportunities exist for New Bern Fire-Rescue Department as identified during this strategic planning process.

Table 20
Opportunities of New Bern Fire-Rescue Department

- ❖ Establish solid EMS protocols to solidify the department service level – MFR vs. EMT
- ❖ Continue to build on the already strong relationship with Hospital EMS, who praises NBFD
- ❖ Improvements at the Communications Center
- ❖ Additional marketing
- ❖ Strengthen public education and overall service delivery with a dedicated fire and life safety educator/public information officer
- ❖ Growing and developing of NBFD personnel, especially with leadership
- ❖ Use of qualified retirees as part-time non benefitted employees to assist in non-emergency response functions
- ❖ Strengthening of staff in the Training Division to bring enhancements to all three shifts
- ❖ Need for a fourth station
- ❖ Increase service to the people we protect – primarily by immediate dispatch on medical emergencies
- ❖ Consistency with EMS delivery
- ❖ City/FD services to match the “retirement community” marketing of New Bern – being more responsive to aging medical needs
- ❖ Strengthen public education and overall service delivery with a dedicated fire and life safety educator/public information officer
- ❖ Specialized team use
- ❖ Diversity of workforce through enhanced recruitment efforts
- ❖ Review of the organizational structure and roles, particularly with the Battalion Chief rank
- ❖ Harnessing technology to improve work outcomes
- ❖ Need for identifying and utilizing diverse career paths, such as operations, prevention, etc.

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

Threats

Another aspect of strategic planning is the peril of threats and/or potential threats to the organization. Implementation of new programs/processes oftentimes meets with new challenges or oppositions. The success with any strategic plan is the understanding that threats are not completely and/or directly controlled by the organization. Some current and potential threats are identified below:

Table 21
Threats of New Bern Fire-Rescue Department

- ❖ Transition occurring at the senior ranks
- ❖ Lack of necessary funding to support the department
- ❖ Political Arena
- ❖ Compensation – especially with pay compression
- ❖ Concern with the department sometimes being spread too thin – too many projects
- ❖ Need to be exceptionally good at what we do – core services
- ❖ Balancing the needs between adding a new station/company and staffing current companies
- ❖ Safety for personnel – primarily with daily minimum staffing
- ❖ Rank disparity – “us and them” approach
- ❖ Public Support
- ❖ Typical small town issues
- ❖ Fragile economy strong enough to sustain the city and department
- ❖ Need to say “no” sometimes to non-emergency activities to preserve core functions
- ❖ Emergency Preparedness Program not as evolved as needed
- ❖ Need to identify and more clearly define personnel involved in special operations to increase effectiveness and provide for proper training.
- ❖ Employee sensitivity

New Bern Fire-Rescue Strategic Plan

APPENDIX “F” WORKS CITED

Collins, J. (2009). *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*. Boulder: Jim Collins. Commission on Fire Accreditation International. (2009). *Fire & Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual*. (8th Ed.)

Federal Benchmarking Consortium. (1997, February). *Serving the American Public: Best Practices in Customer-Driven Strategic Planning*. Retrieved April 25, 2009, from GovInfo: <http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/npr/library/papers/benchmark/customer.html>

Sorkin, Ferris, & Hudak. (1984). *Strategies for Cities and Counties*. Public Technology.
Wheeland, C. M. (2004). *Empowering the Vision – Community-Wide Strategic Planning in Rock Hill, South Carolina*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.