

# VALLEY REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY

2025-2030

# STRATEGIC PLAN



Facilitated by



Center for  
Public Safety  
Excellence

The Center for Public Safety Excellence® (CPSE®) acknowledges and thanks the community and Valley Regional Fire Authority (VRFA) stakeholders for their participation and input into this community-driven strategic planning process. The CPSE also recognizes Fire Chief Brad Thompson and all VRFA members who participated for their commitment to this process.

This community-driven strategic plan was developed in June 2025, 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**

Arthur Anderson	Cooper Doxon	Brendan McCluskey	Brandon Skeen
Mike Bailey	Matt Gau	Rosella Mosby	Alan Spicciati
Kacie Bray	Jessica Griess	Pat Pawlak	Traci Stockwell
Helen Chatalas	Kent Hay	Derek Ronnfeldt	Ron Troyer
Debbie Christian	Dawn Judkins	Bill Sandlian	Carl de Simas
Kevin Crossen	Jason Krum	Calvin Schlegel	

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

### **Agency Stakeholders**

Jim Allenbaugh	Nicole Eby	Aaron Martin	Stephen Sparks
Lando Alvarado	Tyler Eliason	Scott McFeron	John Stivers
Scott Austin	Jeremy Elliott	Jesse Mitchell	Paul Strong
Andrew Bergford	Jordan Gustafson	Sara Morris	Joshua Swift
Sarah Borden	Stefanie Harper	Dylan Nystul	Carrie Talamaivao
Noah Chang	Jason Herman	Rick Olson	Benjamin Teske
Ryan Connell	Mike Homan	Dan Sequist	Brad Thompson
Tim Day	Mark Horaski	Guy Smith	Cory Wallace
Thomas Downs	Matt Kinnee	Jim Smith	Steve Zehnder

# Message from the Fire Chief

Welcome to the Valley Regional Fire Authority's 2025–2030 Strategic Plan.

We, at the VRFA, recognize that preparing for the future is one of our most important responsibilities. This strategic plan reflects the collective insights, values, and aspirations of the community we serve and the people who make up our organization. It is the result of thoughtful analysis, open dialogue, and a shared commitment to providing exceptional service, today and into the future.

As always, we are grateful for the community's trust and input. Our community members and partners were central to this process, providing meaningful feedback during the service evaluation phase. Their involvement reinforces what we already know to be true: the VRFA is not just an agency, it's a part of something bigger. We are partners in public safety, and this plan reflects that partnership.

Over the course of a three-day planning workshop, more than 40 VRFA members representing every shift, division, and workgroup came together to help shape this plan. Their diverse perspectives and deep understanding of our work were instrumental in identifying our strengths, recognizing our challenges, and setting a clear direction forward. Through a comprehensive analysis of existing resources and collaborative discussions, we developed strategic priorities that reflect both our internal readiness and the evolving needs of the community.

This document is more than a list of goals. It is a living guide to how we will grow, adapt, and lead. It will drive our decision-making, shape our investments, and ensure that we remain accountable to the people who rely on us. Our updated mission, vision, and values are the foundation of this plan, and they will continue to guide our actions as we carry it forward.

I want to thank everyone who contributed to this effort, especially the VRFA staff who leaned in with curiosity, honesty, and optimism. Your commitment is what makes this organization strong. Special thanks to Accreditation Manager Noah Chang and his team for their leadership and tenacity throughout this process.

I'm proud of what we've accomplished together—and even more excited for what's ahead.

Sincerely,

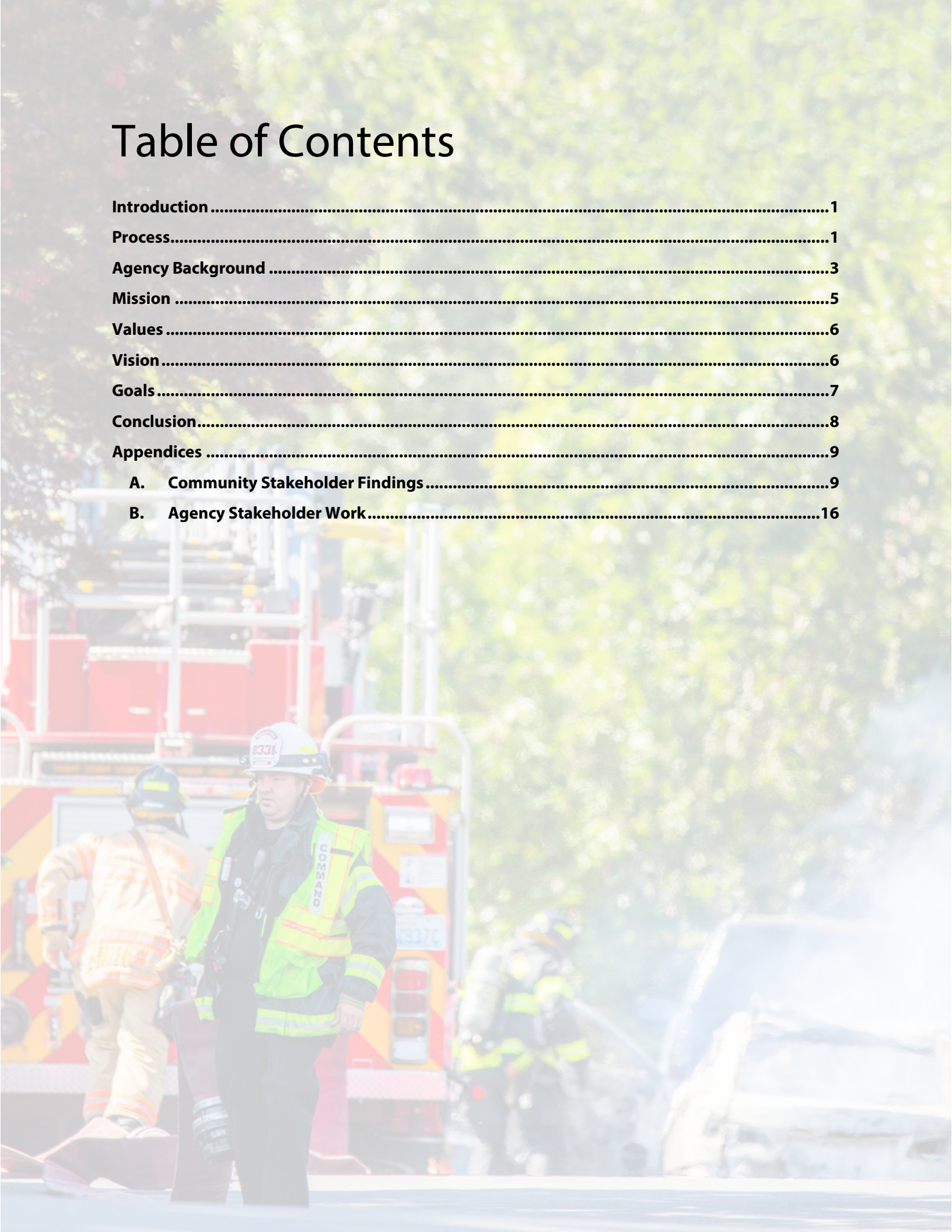
**Brad Thompson**

Fire Chief



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# Introduction

The community serviced by the Valley Regional Fire Authority (VRFA) receives high levels of professionalism and efficiency from the agency's proactive approach to risk reduction and emergency mitigation. As such, the VRFA 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® (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 VRFA 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 Valley Regional Fire Authority 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 Valley Regional Fire Authority'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 VRFA 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.



Community Stakeholder Work Session Participants

## Agency Stakeholder Work

- ✓ Identify the agency's strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results.
- ✓ Revisit the mission statement, paying careful attention to the services and programs currently provided and those that can be logically provided in the future.
- ✓ Revisit the values of the agency's membership.
- ✓ Revisit 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 Auburn Fire Department was established over a century ago in response to a devastating fire in August 1890. Initially named the Auburn Bucket Brigade, it consisted of volunteer firefighters and a hand-drawn hose cart. The department's name was changed to the Auburn Volunteer Fire Department in 1908.



In 1920, the city purchased its first fire truck, and 25 volunteer firefighters were on staff. The first paid firefighter was hired in 1926. The first fire station was built in 1959 and relocated to its current site in 1985, coinciding with the construction of the city's second fire station, Station 32. Station 33 was added in 1995. By 2006, the Auburn Fire Department employed 81 paid personnel, 69 in fire suppression and emergency medical services.

The Pacific City Council established the Pacific Fire Department in July 1932. That year, the city purchased a 1922 12-cylinder Packard Touring car and housed it in a nearby feed store.

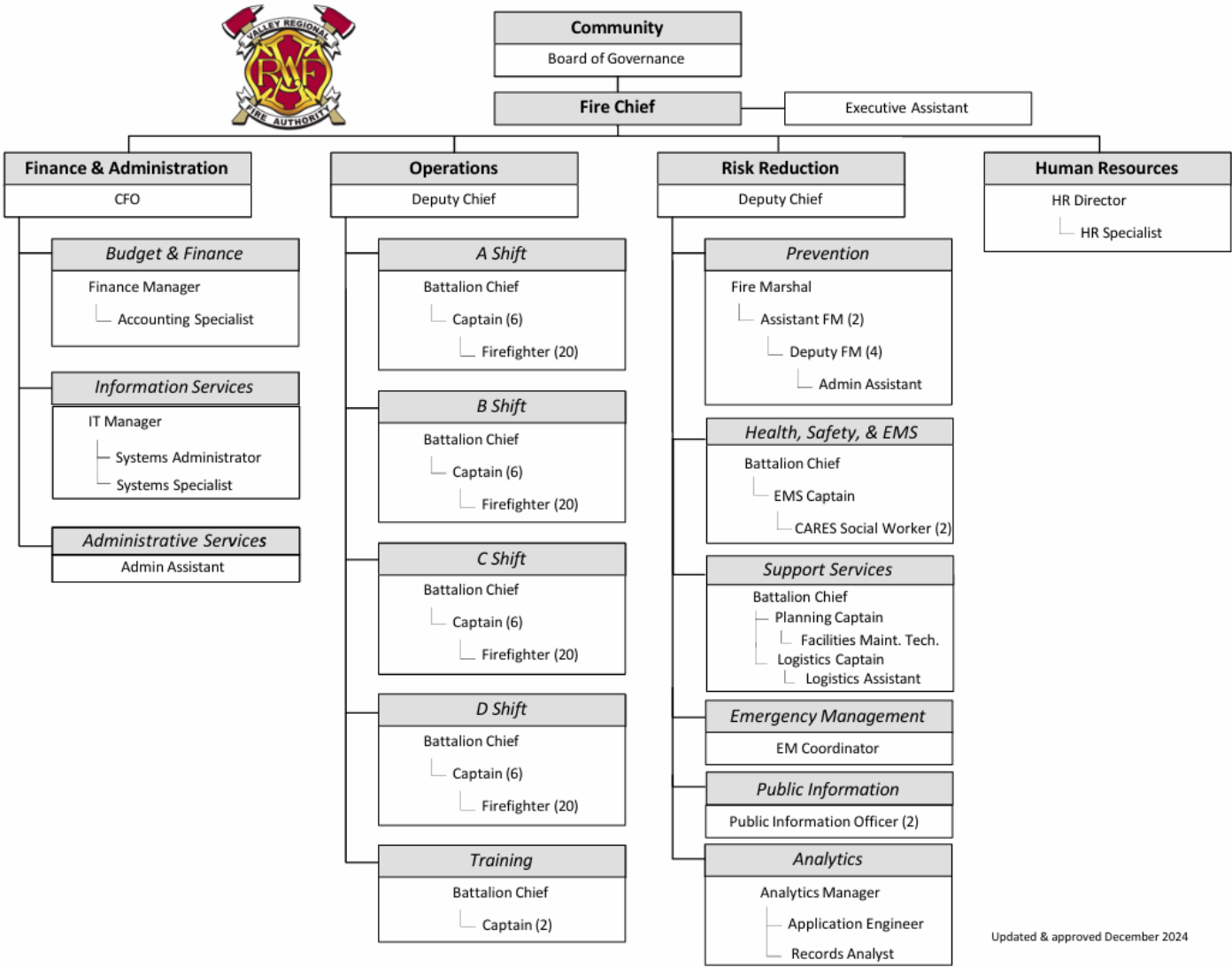
In 1979, the Public Safety building for Pacific Police and Fire was dedicated at 133 3rd Ave SE. For years, volunteer firefighters exclusively staffed the building

until 1994, when the city hired its first full-time fire chief. The department's first paid career firefighter was hired in 1997. In May 2002, after hiring three additional career firefighters, the City of Pacific Fire Department was recognized and chartered under the IAFF Local 4276.

On January 1, 2007, it was voted that the Auburn Fire Department, the Pacific Fire Department, and the City of Algona would combine to form the Valley Regional Fire Authority, providing fire and emergency medical services to all three cities.



Today, the Valley Regional Fire Authority (VRFA) provides critical fire and life safety services to approximately 99,000 citizens residing in the 34 square miles of Algona, Auburn, and Pacific. Oversight of the VRFA is provided by a nine-member Governance Board consisting of the mayor and two council members from each participating city. The Valley Regional Fire Authority is an internationally accredited fire department through the Commission on Fire Accreditation International.



Updated & approved December 2024



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 VRFA 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:

**We serve the whole community.**

**The VRFA saves lives and protects property through reliable emergency services, preparedness, and prevention.**



Agency Stakeholder Work Session Participants

# 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.

## **Selfless Service, Integrity, Grit.**

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 Valley Regional Fire Authority to accomplish their goals, objectives, and day-to-day tasks.

# Vision

An organizational vision exists to keep all agency members focused on the success of the Valley Regional Fire Authority and to guide quality change and improvement in alignment with the community. In support of the future created within the community-driven strategic planning process, the VRFA's vision was revisited and revised. The agency will support the reality of this vision through successful plan implementation and goal achievement.

## **Working together to build a safe and healthy community.**

# 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 VRFA 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 the separate Management and Implementation Guide.



**Review and refine internal business practices to ensure the efficient use of resources and maximize value to our community.**



**Establish a structured career development program that provides clear advancement pathways, training opportunities, and mentorship to support employee growth and organizational leadership succession.**



**Continue to enhance the quality of service delivery to citizens through diversified external communication and establish consistent and transparent internal communications.**



**Improve service delivery programs and resources across the organization to better serve our community, enhance customer satisfaction, reduce response times, and increase operational readiness.**



**Improve community risk reduction by intentionally focusing on data, education, and activities to lower identified risks within the Valley Regional Fire Authority communities.**



# 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 Valley Regional Fire Authority's vision remain congruent. The accompanying Management and Implementation Guide will assist the VRFA in the mechanics of implementation. The guide is not intended to be all-inclusive; rather, it provides flexibility to ensure future success.

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 Valley Regional Fire Authority navigate that change. 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.



“...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.”

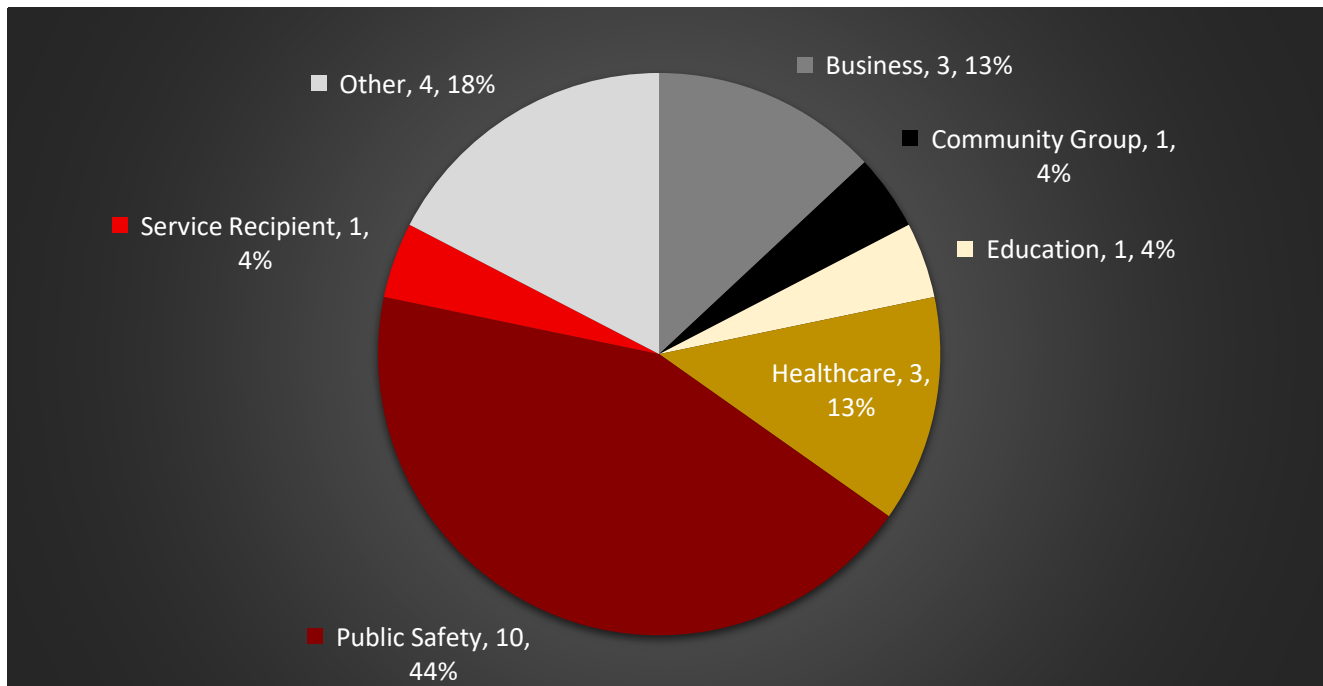
Vince Lombardi

# Appendices

## A. Community Stakeholder Findings

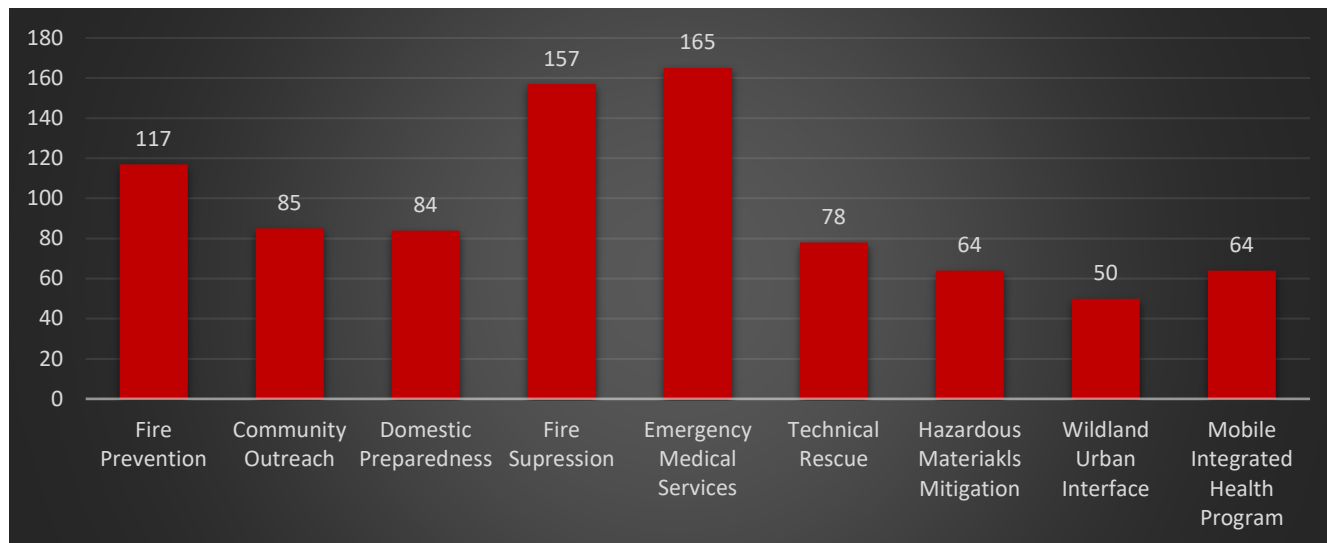
The Valley Regional Fire Authority demonstrates a commitment to its community via a focus on community input and satisfaction. A community stakeholder session was held to gather feedback from the respondents on the agency and its various services delivered. The information gathered from the community 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:



## Community-Prioritized Programs

Understanding how the community prioritizes the agency's programs and services allows the Valley Regional Fire Authority 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 VRFA. The results were as follows:



Respondents were asked to list, in priority order, up to three subjects relative to expectations, concerns, and strengths or positives for the VRFA. 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 Valley Regional Fire Authority (in priority order)

1. Expertise when on a call for fire or medical aid. Proactively help provide guidance and educate shareholders during a call so that we are better equipped for the next incident. Highly trained and skilled employees, firefighters, and emergency medical technicians. They are knowledgeable and show great skill. Participation in regional efforts (fire zones, wildfire, preparedness, building collapse training, RFT training, etc.) Continued efforts toward accreditation and fire officer training, such as programs like EFO at the National Fire Academy. Train a lot. Knowledge of duty. Reliable, professional staff well-trained to serve at all levels with expertise, compassion, and empathy. Competent and happy firefighters. Prepared. Current training and techniques. Safety-focused. Proper training and equipment to help save property quickly. Timeliness. Preparedness. (56)
2. Timely, reasonable response time. Resources are readily available for staff, citizens, etc. That they respond when called upon. Quick response times. Respond to emergent calls when needed. Responsive. Fast response to medical



- and fire emergencies. Respond fast. Responsiveness. Safety of individuals in the community and timely services to fire and medical calls. (50)
3. Continuity of services. Reliable emergency services. They are role models to the community and other professionals they work with. Compassionate service. Handle calls with citizens with confidentiality. Be an all-hazards fire department focusing on emergency response, prevention, and community education. Customer service and professionalism. Be respectful and attentive. Patience. Trusted in the community. Saving and protecting life. De-escalation of events and issues in real-time. (40)
  4. Community presence with events and an open door for walk-ins, etc. Enmeshed with the community, so aware of emerging needs. Community engagement through education, prevention, risk analysis, and transparency. Safe and informed community. Follow-up. Work closer with city partners. Community engagement. Community education. (14)
  5. Adequate staff and vehicles to handle the mission, change with the community's needs, and adapt. Efficient use of resources: How are we measuring success? Proper level of staffing. Investment in new technology. (12)
  6. Communication. Follow up and advise if required. Increased communication. (11)
  7. Sound financial oversight. Be good stewards of the public's funds. Walk the talk, property taxes, and money value. A balanced budget. Good stewards of finances (taxpayer dollars). (11)
  8. Dedicated liaison for emergency management-related issues (EOC activations, wildfire preparedness, community outreach). (6)
  9. Support community risk reduction. Public education and prevention. Emphasis on fire prevention. (5)
  10. Solid employee support systems. Support your people. Take care of the staff. Health and safety of employees. (4)
  11. Open-mindedness. (1)

## **Areas of Community Concern about the Valley Regional Fire Authority** (verbatim, in priority order)

1. Efficiency and costs are always increasing. Funding, including the ability to access grants, such as the SAFER grant. Ongoing and sustainable financial support from communities and the council. Financial planning for the future includes unexpected revenue changes. Impacts of cities and governments that permit tax deferrals to developers. Are big engines responding to EMT calls cost-efficient? Are we getting enough funding from local government? We need support from the local, state, and federal governments. (29)
2. Better public service approaches for the public. Changing demands from the public for the means of communication they receive. Missing city department partnerships. Work closely with the city outreach department. More collaboration. Business and community engagement, concern that there is enough time for this to continue and increase. Communication from front-line staff to other EMS providers. Ongoing education for community partners and staff. (22)
3. Losing senior people. Not having enough mentors for the new folks. Infrastructure and staff resilience (eliminate single points of failure in the system). Succession planning. Adequate staffing and resources in all areas of the department. Enough resources to do their job without being burnt out. (22)

4. Better access and responsiveness when we reach out. Long response times. The fire department is becoming more and more an EMS department, using the right resources for the need. Emergency response communication can be inconsistent at times. Timeliness is a priority, but it is not always their fault due to traffic or other emergencies. (19)
5. Unequipped for major calls and events. Wildfire readiness for local deployment and regional/statewide. Coordinate with the local jurisdiction on the Wildland Urban Interface Code. Wildland threats and how to prepare properly (education) to prevent the spread and property loss. Department's role in multi-agency disaster response, assessing evolving risks. (17)
6. Meeting growing service needs. Looking at the increasing costs of services. Meeting the needs of the changing workforce and community. Adaptability: how do they respond to the growing needs of the community as they are today (examples are mental health and substance abuse)? Traffic getting to Emerald Downs. (17)
7. Better understanding of knowing where to go on service calls. Understaffed and under-trained. Training and willingness to respond to active threats of violence in warm zones. Are we properly equipped and trained for hiring issues in today's world? (12)
8. Impacts of planning and building codes. Burdensome license checks when conducting annual fire inspections. (8)
9. Lacking facilities, see the projects through. Resources. (8)
10. Is there a commitment to hiring personnel that reflects the racial, cultural, and ethnic makeup of the communities it serves (equity)? Recruitment and retention. (6)
11. Engagement of leadership: Until recently, there was no one at the helm of the agency guiding it. (3)
12. Care for their clients, some of whom are unlovely to handle, requiring patience and empathy. (3)
13. Identify service gaps. Are there underserved areas or populations? (3)
14. Safety and proper equipment to keep firefighters safe and healthy long term. (3)



Community Stakeholder Work Session Participants

**Positive Community Comments about the Valley Regional Fire Authority** (verbatim, in no order)

- Enjoy working with Brad.
- VRFA has a strong reputation in our community.
- Response times to schools are good.
- People are pretty friendly.
- Responsiveness.
- Collaborative.
- Respectful.
- Compassionate.
- Availability of staff for direction.
- Patience of staff during system repairs and deficiencies.
- Enjoy, for the most part, they let me know when they are on property.
- Always have had very positive interactions with the fire department on and off duty.
- Thank you!
- Trusted and valued.
- Core team.
- Response times.
- Very communicative.
- Friendly.
- Willingness to try new things.
- An attitude of service.
- Visible in the community.
- Engaging in this process (strategic planning) to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.
- Leadership.
- Care for our community.
- Job knowledge and capabilities.
- Collaboration and willingness to discuss issues.
- Willingness to help, even when it is outside of their scope (honor guard for deceased firefighter, equipment issues, etc.).
- Jumping into action, helping our staff when needed.
- Response to “Wesley Homes” is 4-5 minutes or less.
- Aware of building layout, sprinkler systems, etc.
- All positives.
- Fire administration staff are very dedicated and hardworking.
- The VRFA is committed to its regional partners.
- VRFA response personnel are committed to helping people.
- The vast majority of VRFA are very public service-oriented.
- Expertise in handling service calls, fire/medical aid.



- Accessible, someone answers the phone in all departments without hoops to jump through.
- Communication: provide weekly updates on calls, events, etc.
- Excellent current leadership.
- Nice job with accreditation.
- Providing great emergency service.
- Is a solid zone partner.
- Great people, providing great service.
- They are always professional.
- They are readily capable.
- They are forward-thinking.
- Including professional allies and community members in strategic planning efforts.
- Accreditation.
- Most employees seem polite and professional when I interact with them.
- Leadership.
- Great members to work with. Partnerships and collaboration.
- Regional leaders in respect to forward thinking and training.
- Inclusion of community partners for process needs and wants.
- Great community outreach.
- Excellent level of service.
- Visionary planning for capital needs.
- Good mix of senior folks and new hires.
- Homan listens to the troops.
- Support for mental health.
- Quick response time.
- Knowledge of duty.
- Willingness to help meet our goals.

## **Other Community Comments about the Valley Regional Fire Authority** (verbatim, in no order)

- Thank you for including others in this process.
- I do not readily see any apparent deficiencies with VRFA as it is today. This process should allow this to be the case in the future.
- What does it mean to grow and change with our diverse community while keeping the quality of fire and EMS response constant?
- I appreciate that VRFA is putting time and effort into developing an updated strategic plan and is forward-thinking. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.
- I never hear negative comments, and it's amazing to see the whole department come together, work together, seemingly have the same attitude towards their work.

## Things the Community Feels the Valley Regional Fire Authority Should Change

(verbatim, in priority order)

1. I've had great interactions, all positive.
2. Real-time escalation of events/issues.
3. Providing more resources for extreme heat for children, the elderly, and the unhoused.
4. Consider taking a lead role in district-wide disaster preparedness.
5. Fire code training for new staff.
6. More city department partnerships.
7. Changes to accommodate growth in call volume.
8. Continue to improve external communications.
9. Not necessarily change, however, stay updated and relevant.
10. Incorporate advanced life support into fire crews (not Medic 1).
11. More available EMTs.
12. More emergency medical services training.
13. Service delivery model.
14. Be more visible in your community risk reduction.
15. More positive interactions with stakeholders.

## Things the Community Feels the Valley Regional Fire Authority Should NOT Change

(verbatim, in priority order)

1. Great response time.
2. Commitment to excellence.
3. Professionalism and knowledge while on a call.
4. Communication efforts.
5. Being an active partner in the zone.
6. Commitment to fire safety.
7. Keep current staffing (heavy).
8. Commitment to the needs of the community.
9. Response time.
10. Level of collaboration with leadership.
11. Community engagement.
12. Excellence in communication.
13. Keeping the open flow of communication.
14. Collaborative spirit and partnership with community organizations.
15. Guiding values.
16. Response times.
17. Excellent level of service.
18. Purpose, reason, and mission/community-based.
19. Service-oriented.

## B. Agency Stakeholder Work

A group of agency stakeholders representing the various segments of the VRFA 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

Training- JATC robust cadre of passionate people, TRT, social work (training the future through internships).	Adaptable to the community needs, Wildland Urban Interface, warming shelters, and mobile integrated health.
Fiscal responsibility is shown through audits passed, staffing levels, recruitment and retention, apparatuses, and wages and benefits remaining competitive.	Support staff- timely, responsive, knowledgeable, and effective. Administration and IT, FMW is readily available and supportive.
Community support- establishment of the fire authority, continued success in FBC bonds.	Program appraisals demonstrate that we are a data-driven organization that is not winging it.
Dedication. Passionate staff who consistently seek to improve knowledge, skills, and abilities.	Positive labor management relationships are achieved through open channels of communication and mutual goals.
Approachability is achieved top-down through inclusive collaboration across departments, both internal and external. Gig Harbor solicited input, and mobile integrated health assisted regional agencies in establishing programs.	Engagement through opportunities, promotions, community involvement, committees (apparatus specification and station design), health and wellness, JATC, and the strategic planning committee.
A culture of gritty, hardworking staff.	The Board of Governance supports organizational goals.
Specialty training- P10, MPS, TRT, hazmat, truck, response.	Openness to input from all levels of the organization.
Diversified job opportunities.	Great financial practices and finance audits.
Subject matter experts in multiple disciplines.	Regional, statewide mobilization.
Well-established public education programs.	Accredited agency.
Joint recruitment and staffing.	Health and wellness across the organization.
The Pirsch.	Willingness to support efficiencies (facilities).
Professional emergency response.	Fighting fire aggressively.
Culture.	Successful recruitment and hiring.
Protect property, save lives, and save money.	Moral retention, family.



## Opportunities

Operational staffing- Is our organizational chart meeting program needs?	Identify the span of control as it relates to operations and program management.
Communication through external community education.	Develop succession planning and a career progression plan.
Specialty program- location and deployment.	Collaboration with regional partners.
Mentorship- Ok book and formalize VRFA Ok book.	Targeted data-driven (community risk reduction).
Coordination with Valley Com, King County, and other community partners.	Long-term planning and budgeting for capital improvement programs (vehicles and IT).
Organizational decision-making should be timely, and program management should have direction.	Retain institutional knowledge. Define supervisor roles and responsibilities, always being updated.
VRFA vendor contracts.	Impact fees.
Apparatus replacement and fleet management.	Dedicated training ground.
Non-work social events for the organization, involving administration and union representatives.	Streamlining processes and integration of technology. Questions RE burn bans, "other" queries, inefficient routing.
External stakeholders' input, with more frequent feedback from a larger sample size, and solutions for real-time problems.	Mobile integrated health- firefighter opportunities and involvement, identify potential need for callouts, on scene MIH presence, add MIH to low acuity calls.
Expand interdepartmental knowledge in the organization.	Grant opportunities for funding across all levels of the organization.
Language barriers and cultural differences- An influx of non-English proficient communities. Enhance engagement by offering additional languages in department publications.	Prevention- annual inspections lack emphasis. Outsource plan review, increase staffing levels of FMO, reorganize responsibilities, and support outside training.



## Aspirations

Be an innovative organization.	Continue building trust with the community.
Be leaders in the community and improve community health.	Better-defined business practices for career development.
Stronger relationships with partner city organizations.	Internal communications between divisions.
Leverage what we already have (technology).	Continue to invest in employee health and resilience.
Increase suppression capabilities, including a fully staffed engine at Station 31.	Capitalize on grants and funding opportunities, including a grant writing position.
Increase the mobile integrated health response capabilities, fall team, substance abuse team, and mental health team.	Find solutions to keep the apparatus in service (ALS/BLS, turnout times, response times, CARES, and low acuity calls for service).
Reevaluate how the fire marshal's office operates (24-hour, FMO car).	Integrate with the cities to evaluate future growth and station locations.
Joint training facility with regional partners.	A 24-hour CARES unit with firefighters.
Enhance internal training programs to increase individual knowledge, skills, and abilities.	Become a comprehensive, all-hazards response agency. Expand operations scope to include technical rescue, squad, rescue, and hazmat unit, and invest in specialty training and equipment.
Strengthen internal and external cooperation with emergency management (identify all the players).	
An apparatus replacement schedule.	Two additional aid cars in service.
Credentialing personnel across the organization.	Free transport (billing) for VRFA residents.

## Results

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Job fulfillment, competence, and effective service delivery resulting in a high level of care.</li> <li>- Happy and empowered employees who feel supported.</li> <li>- Data-driven outcomes, specific and measurable.</li> <li>- Addressing the ever-changing needs of the community.</li> <li>- Ability to provide service to the public.</li> <li>- A competent and effective workforce.</li> <li>- WSRB, accreditation, reviews, and JATC step exams.</li> <li>- An educated and involved community, CPR classes, school programs, building permits, and community events.</li> <li>- Better collective bargaining agreements, fewer grievances, and lower turnover.</li> <li>- Continue to pass audits.</li> <li>- Continued support.</li> <li>- Heavy involvement from the workgroup.</li> <li>- Increased level of service provided.</li> <li>- Preparedness for major incidents, natural disasters, and community risk reduction.</li> <li>- Rescues maintain USAR positions.</li> <li>- Less resistance on other Zone 3 resources.</li> <li>- Equal distribution of resources within Zone 3.</li> <li>- Less financial impact on residents.</li> <li>- Improved retention and better training.</li> <li>- Improved physical training confidence.</li> <li>- Firefighters buy-in and improved mental health.</li> <li>- Improved physical training outcomes.</li> <li>- Reduced time to close questions and queries.</li> <li>- More specific reporting and capturing trends.</li> <li>- The organization is informed about the community's needs.</li> <li>- Whole committee approach, diverse.</li> <li>- Increased productivity.</li> <li>- Improved knowledge, skills, and abilities/subject matter experts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved program management.</li> <li>- Improved training.</li> <li>- The operations battalion chief can focus on operations.</li> <li>- Reduce out-of-service time with a dedicated training ground.</li> <li>- Smoother transition for promotions and specialties.</li> <li>- Improved WSRB rating.</li> <li>- The response model will be more efficient and effective.</li> <li>- Improved response, service, and continuity.</li> <li>- Stewards of resources.</li> <li>- The community receives appropriate resources.</li> <li>- Improved internal effectiveness.</li> <li>- Reduce redundancy and improve service.</li> <li>- More predictability and continuity in program management.</li> <li>- Synergy across all departments.</li> <li>- Reduced cost and better service.</li> <li>- Better outcomes for patients.</li> <li>- Continuity between line firefighters and social workers.</li> <li>- Better-trained firefighters.</li> <li>- More efficient use of crews' time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain accreditation status.</li> <li>- High voter approval and turnout.</li> <li>- Reduction of 911 calls, and reduced healthcare premiums and overall costs.</li> <li>- Additional basic life support transport units.</li> <li>- Defined succession and mentorship plans (i.e., improved school request process).</li> <li>- Additional staffing in administration and operations.</li> <li>- Increased internal flow and collaboration.</li> <li>- Less SL utilization, better mental health.</li> <li>- More credentialed personnel.</li> <li>- More qualified workforce.</li> <li>- Continuous improvement.</li> <li>- Improved voter turnout and community support.</li> <li>- Safer communities.</li> <li>- Consistent staffing levels and improved retention.</li> <li>- Time and cost savings, pride in ownership, and retaining historical knowledge.</li> <li>- Continuing to meet evolving response standards.</li> <li>- Fleeced less often.</li> <li>- Reduction in cost and increased vendor accountability.</li> <li>- Increased funding for capital projects.</li> <li>- Safe and reliable fleet.</li> <li>- More money.</li> <li>- Improved camaraderie and morale.</li> </ul>



## Programs and Services

It is imperative that agency stakeholders distinguish between the core deliverables (programs and services) provided by the Valley Regional Fire Authority 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 was 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 Valley Regional Fire Authority. 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
<b>Business Practices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Communication</li> <li>○ Program management</li> <li>○ Funding sources</li> <li>○ Decision-making for program management</li> <li>○ Long-term budgeting for improvement programs</li> <li>○ Workflow audit</li> </ul>	<b>Business Practices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Internal stakeholders</li> <li>○ External stakeholders</li> <li>○ Program management</li> <li>○ Long-term and short-term planning and budgeting for capital assets (vehicles, etc.)</li> <li>○ Technology and computer issues (ESO overall)</li> </ul>	<b><i>Business Practices</i></b>
<b>Training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Succession planning</li> <li>○ Curriculum mapping and knowledge transfer</li> <li>○ Dedicated training facility</li> <li>○ Job shadowing</li> <li>○ Credentialing personnel</li> </ul>	<b>Professional Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Training</li> <li>○ Career progression (specialties, lateral movement, promotions, etc.)</li> <li>○ Credentialing</li> <li>○ Education</li> <li>○ Succession planning</li> </ul>	<b><i>Professional Development</i></b>
<b>Communication</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Leverage technology</li> <li>○ External stakeholder engagement</li> <li>○ Language barriers (accessibility)</li> <li>○ Internal communication between divisions</li> <li>○ Process for communication with Valley Communications, King County, and other community partners</li> </ul>	N/A	<b><i>Communication</i></b>

Group 1	Group 2	Initiative Link
<b>Service Delivery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Specialty program development and deployment</li> <li>○ Expand mobile integrated health resources</li> <li>○ Fleet management</li> <li>○ Safety officer</li> <li>○ Technical rescue team</li> </ul>	<b>Service Delivery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Response and deployment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fire and emergency medical services</li> <li>- Mobile integrated health</li> <li>- Investigations (FMO)</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Emergency management</li> <li>○ Mobile integrated health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Program analysis (response versus referral)</li> <li>- Staffing model (firefighter involvement, nurse, state workers)</li> <li>- Community partnerships</li> <li>- Team integration</li> <li>- Workflow management</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Service Delivery</b>
<b>Community Risk Reduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Expand knowledge base among internal stakeholders</li> <li>○ Expand knowledge base among external partners</li> <li>○ Marketing for mobile integrated health</li> <li>○ Incentivized internal staff in community risk reduction</li> <li>○ Targeted data</li> </ul>	<b>Community Risk Reduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PIO and education</li> <li>○ Prevention</li> <li>○ Operations</li> <li>○ Mobile integrated health</li> <li>○ Community engagement and partnerships</li> </ul>	<b>Community Risk Reduction</b>

## 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.

**Business Practices**

**Professional Development**

**Communication**

**Service Delivery**

**Community Risk Reduction**

Final goals with complete objectives, tasks, timelines, and assignments are included in the separate **Management and Implementation Guide**.

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## **2025-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN**