

STRATEGIC PLAN

Mi-Wuk Sugar Pine Fire Protection District



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In November 2016, the Mi-Wuk Sugar Pine Fire Protection District, recognizing the value of having a clear forward vision in these challenging times, embarked on a journey to develop a strategic plan. The process began with a public meeting to solicit board input from community leaders and representatives of public safety agencies in surrounding communities and concluded with adoption of this strategic plan by the Board of Directors in March 2017.

The planning group identified three (3) key strategic priorities for the future, as well as a goal and objectives to accompany each priority. The priorities and their goals are as follows:

1. Fiscal Planning
The fire district will develop and implement a process for long term fiscal planning looking forward 3-5 years. The process will assess future revenue and expense, using best available history and projections and allowing for unanticipated deviations. The process will be used to inform the budgeting and planning process for the current and future budget years.

2. Operational Integration
The fire district will explore options for functional and operational integration with other public agencies and move forward where indicated.

3. The Fleet
The Fire District will develop and implement a fleet plan that will provide for the maintenance and replacement of the fleet in a manner that meets the needs of the district and complies, to the extent possible, with external guidelines and requirements.

The plan includes goals and objectives for each of these strategic priorities, as well as a process for ongoing review and periodic adjustment of the priorities and the plan.

Details of the planning process and the specifics of the strategic goals and objectives can be found in the pages of this document.

INTRODUCTION

This strategic plan is a document intended to communicate with the Mi-Wuk Sugar Pine Fire Protection District (and its stakeholders) the organization's mission, vision, values, strategic priorities, goals, and the actions needed to achieve those goals. This plan document reports these elements of a plan, as well as an overview of pertinent organizational history and the process used to create the plan.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Mi-Wuk Sugar Pine Fire Protection District is to serve the residents of and visitors to the community and to partner with them to provide protection from fire, medical emergencies, and other dangerous conditions.

VISION STATEMENT

While carrying out the mission of the Mi-Wuk Sugar Pine Fire Protection District, we will seek to:

- Be there to help when asked, to enhance the quality of life for Mi-Wuk and Sugar Pine residents.
- Provide the highest level of service possible to optimize safety.
- Develop and maintain effective internal and external relationships in a transparent, responsible, and proactive manner.
- Promote an effective work environment through respect, honesty, and integrity.
- Set attainable goals that can be achieved through shared responsibility and accountability.

Our future depends on shared leadership, employee empowerment, and responsiveness to the community.

VALUES

Quality of Life

Service

Safety

Relationships

Transparency

Responsiveness

Proactive

Respect

Honesty

Integrity

Shared Responsibility

Accountability (internal and external)

Shared Leadership

Employee Empowerment

Responsiveness to the Community

GOALS

The heart and primary purpose of a strategic plan is to identify a set of goals and objectives for the organization going forward. These goals should be linked to the biggest or most significant issues/challenges facing the organization and should serve as guidance during the plan lifespan for budgeting and organizational priorities.

There are several principals that should guide the selection and development of organizational strategic goals:

- Strategic goals should be visionary and describe the desired state when the goal is accomplished
- Strategic goals should be quantifiable. That is, they can be measured. We will be able to know when progress is being made and when they are complete.
- Each goal should include a set of objectives that define the process/steps necessary to achieve the goal.
- There must be accountability in the plan, so that it is clear who (person or group of people) is responsible.
- There should be a timetable or benchmarks identified to assist in progress measurement and evaluation.
- A measurement metric should be identified. How will progress be measured and how will we know when it is complete?
- What are the costs (if known)?

Given the extensive issues facing the Mi-Wuk Sugar Pine Fire Protection District identified in an environmental assessment process, the planning group set out to identify the most significant issues facing the district. The following issues were identified as being of the highest organizational priority:

1. Fiscal Planning
2. Operational Integration with County/Neighboring Cooperators
3. The Fleet

Additional issues that were identified, but did not rise to the level of the top three were as follows. These issues may be utilized in the future and may be added to this plan as items in the top 3 are completed.

- Staffing
- Community Risk Reduction
- Facilities
- Enhance EMS Availability
- Enhance Ability to Participate in State Mutual Aid System

The remainder of this section of the plan will describe the goal statements and accompanying objectives for addressing each of the strategic priorities.

Goal 1 – Fiscal Planning

The fire district will develop and implement a process for long term fiscal planning looking forward 3-5 years. The process will assess future revenue and expense, using best available history and projections and allowing for unanticipated deviations. The process will be used to inform the budgeting and planning process for the current and future budget years.

OBJECTIVES

1. Fire Chief Appoints Fiscal Planning Committee (within 1 month of Board approval of strategic plan)
2. Committee Reviews Goal and Objectives and Develops Workplan (including schedule)
 - Workplan is submitted to Fire Chief and Board for approval (within 2 months of committee appointment)
 - Upon approval of workplan, Committee proceeds with objectives
 - Approved workplan is incorporated into this Strategic Plan upon approval
3. Obtain and assemble recent financial history – both revenue and expense. (Schedule as identified in Board approved work plan)
4. Identify sources for projecting future revenue and expenses. (Schedule as identified in Board approved work plan)
5. Develop methods (charts, etc.) for projecting revenue and expenses (Schedule as identified in Board approved work plan)
6. Develop initial fiscal plan that reports on the next 3-5 years of revenue and expense and report to Board. (Schedule as identified in Board approved work plan)
7. Monitor projections and provide updates at least annually (coordinated with budget development process). (Schedule as identified in Board approved work plan)

Accountability:

Board of Directors:	Review and Approve Committee Workplan Review and Approve Fiscal Planning Process Developed by Committee Receive Projections as Developed Use Fiscal Planning Results to Guide Future Budgeting and Planning
Fire Chief:	Appoint Fiscal Planning Committee

Support Fiscal Planning Committee as per work plan

Committee Members: Develop proposed workplan and submit to Board for approval
Upon Board approval of workplan, implement the workplan per timetable
Once process is developed, monitor process, update projects, and provide periodic updates to the Fire Chief and Board of Directors, in support of the budgeting process.

Goal 2 – Operational Integration

The fire district will explore options for functional and operational integration with other public agencies in the region and move forward where indicated.

OBJECTIVES

1. Fire Chief Appoints Operational Integration Committee
(within 1 month of Strategic Plan approval by Board of Directors)
2. Committee Reviews Goal and Objectives and Develops Workplan (including schedule)
 - Workplan is submitted to Fire Chief and Board for Approval
(within 2 months of committee appointment)
 - Upon approval of workplan, Committee proceeds with objectives
 - Approved workplan is incorporated into this Strategic Plan upon approval
3. Research options, best practices, and lessons learned about functional and operational integration from the published literature and from actual practice by other comparable public safety agencies (Schedule as identified in Board approved work plan)
 - Identify those that are most applicable to the situation at MWSPFPD
 - Specifically explore:
 - Feasibility of service integration or share services with Twain Harte
 - Obtain proposal from CalFire for contract services
4. Explore degree of interest in functional/operational integration by potential partner agencies (Schedule as identified in Board approved work plan)
 - Typically starts with informal conversations
5. Develop recommendation to the Board of Directors on functional and operational integration (Schedule as identified in Board approved work plan)
 - Identify potential partner(s)
 - Identify specific potential functional or operational integration
 - Identify what is involved with getting there (costs, process, etc.)
6. Upon approval/direction of Board of Directors, implement the recommendations
(Schedule as identified in Board approved work plan)
7. Monitor opportunities for functional and operational integration on an ongoing basis
Update/revise recommendations to Board as needed. (Ongoing)
8. Periodically report to Fire Chief and Board of Directors as specified in workplan
(Ongoing)

Accountability:

Board of Directors: Review and Approve Committee Workplan
Receive and approve/provide guidance to Committee on Opportunities

Fire Chief: Appoint Committee
Assist Committee in Identification of Opportunities
Assist Committee with Obtaining Needed Information
Receive Periodic Updates from Committee – provide Guidance
Provide Periodic Reports to Board of Directors

Committee Members: Develop workplan for Board Approval
Implement workplan as approved by Board
Periodically review workplan and adjust as needed
Provide periodic reports to Board of Directors and Fire Chief

Goal 3 – The Fleet

The Fire District will develop and implement a fleet plan that will provide for the maintenance and replacement of the fleet in a manner that meets the needs of the district and complies, to the extent possible, with external guidelines and requirements.

OBJECTIVES

1. Create a Fleet Committee - Appointed by the Fire Chief
(within 6 months of strategic plan approval)
2. Committee Reviews Goal and Objectives and Develops Workplan (including schedule)
 - Workplan is submitted to Fire Chief and Board for Approval
(within 2 months of committee appointment by Fire Chief)
 - Upon approval of workplan, Committee proceeds with objectives
 - Approved workplan is incorporated into this Strategic Plan upon approval
2. Conduct Fleet Inventory and Assessment
(Schedule as defined in Board-approved workplan)
 - Identify all vehicles in fleet
 - Assess current conditions (age, mileage, condition, maintenance history)
3. Research and Identify External Mandates Pertaining to Fleet Vehicles
(Schedule as defined in Board approved workplan)
4. Conduct Gap Analysis to Compare Fleet with Mandates
(Schedule as defined in Board approved workplan)
5. Draft Fleet Plan that identifies lifespan, retirement age, and cost of replacement for each vehicle in fleet
(Schedule as defined in Board approved workplan)
 - Considers external mandates and requirements
 - Identifies what happens to vehicle as it reaches benchmarks (surplus, move to reserve status, etc.)
 - Estimates replacement costs
 - Identifies future costs, by fiscal year, to implement the plan
6. Fleet Plan submitted to Fire Chief and Board of Directors for approval.
(Schedule as defined in Board approved workplan)
7. Plan Made Available to Fiscal Planning Process
(Schedule as defined in Board approved workplan)

8. Committee monitors plan status on an ongoing basis and adjusts as needed.
(Ongoing)
9. Periodically report to Fire Chief and Board of Directors on the status of the fleet.
(Schedule as defined in Board approved workplan)

Accountability:

- Board of Directors: Approves Workplan and Eventual Fleet Plan
- Fire Chief: Appoints Fleet Committee and Monitors Committee Performance
- Committee: Develops workplan and accomplishes objectives as defined. Periodically reports to Fire Chief and Board of Directors on Project.

STRATEGIC PLANNING BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

HISTORY

The Mi-Wuk Fire Protection District was originally formed in 1959. In 1974, the Mi-Wuk Fire Protection District consolidated with the Sugar Pine Fire Protection District to form the Mi-Wuk Sugar Pine Fire Protection District.

The Fire District serves approximately 1,500 residences within the communities of Mi-Wuk Village and Sugar Pine along the Highway 108 corridor, and provides additional fire protection and emergency services through its automatic and mutual aid agreements with the Tuolumne County Fire Department and other surrounding fire districts. The Fire District currently provides services using a combination of paid professional firefighters and officers, volunteer firefighters, interns, an active and engaged Auxiliary, and the Community Assistance Support Team (CAST). The Fire District is governed by a 5-member Board of Directors that are elected by residents of the community. The Board members serve 4-year terms.

The Fire District is a full-service fire department and maintains fire equipment for both structural and wildland firefighting. In addition to fire suppression and emergency medical response, the Fire District provides public education, fire prevention programs, and other community focused programs. The location and topography of the community presents a significant risk of wildland fire. The Fire District provides a proactive approach to wildland fire by performing residential defensible space inspections and responding to wildfires outside the community before they can impact the District.

STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVE

Recognizing the value of having a forward-looking plan that guides the organization into the future, while at the same time taking care of day-to-day business and operations, the Board of Directors and Fire Chief initiated a process in mid-2016 to develop a Strategic Plan for the Fire District. Bids were solicited and a consultant was selected to assist the Fire District with this endeavor. The process included the following major steps:

1. Review of pertinent history and related documents
2. Conduct a public outreach meeting to solicit input from community leadership
3. Conduct an initial planning meeting with the Board of Directors and staff of the District
4. Development of DRAFT Strategic Plan
5. Draft plan circulated for review and comments. Edits made as needed.
6. Public Board of Directors meeting to discuss and revise the draft as needed.
7. Final edits accomplished and final draft provided to the Board of Directors
8. Board of Directors Review, Discussion, and Approval/Adoption

As identified in Step 2 above, the District convened a public outreach meeting on November 9, 2016 from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM to solicit input and comments from members of the community and surrounding public safety agencies. Attendees at the public outreach meeting are listed in Appendix A of this document. The public outreach meeting agenda was as follows:

- Introductions
- Review of Purpose of the Meeting
- What is Strategic Planning?
- Value and Importance of Community Input
- Fire Department Overview (Status and future concerns)
- Community Input Session
 - What do participants see as the major issues facing the community now?
 - What do participants see as the major issues facing the community in the future?
 - What do participants believe are the current issues facing the Fire District?
 - What do participants believe will be the significant issues facing the Fire District in the future?
- Overview of the process from this point forward

The output of the community outreach session is included in this document in the Environment Assessment section of this document.

On November 10, 2016 from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, members of the Board of Directors, the Fire Chief, members of the MWSPFPD, and other key individuals met to discuss and provide input into the strategic planning process. Attendees at this strategic planning meeting are listed in Appendix B of this document. The agenda for the strategic planning meeting was as follows:

- Introduction
- What Is Strategic Planning?
- Process Overview
- Environmental Assessment
- Assessment of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT Analysis)
- Mission Statement
- Vision Statement
- Values
- Development of Goals and Objectives
- Discussion of Wicked Problems Facing the Fire District
- Methodology for Review and Update of the Plan
- Plan Implementation

The output of the strategic planning meeting is found in the following portions of this document.

PRINCIPALS OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

As defined by the Balanced Scorecard Institute (<http://balancedscorecard.org>), Strategic Planning is an organizational management activity that is used to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working toward common goals, establish agreement around intended outcomes/results, and assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment. It is a disciplined effort that produces fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, who it serves, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future. Effective strategic planning articulates not only where an organization is going and the actions needed to make progress, but also how it will know if it is successful.

A Strategic Plan is a document used to communicate with the organization (and its stakeholders) the organization's goals, the actions needed to achieve those goals and all other critical elements developed during the planning process.

While engaged in Strategic Planning, it is important for participants to be mindful of the following best practices related to strategic planning:

As the planning participants worked through the meeting agenda and the task of creating a strategic plan, they were guided by the following principals of effective strategic planning:

FOCUS: The key to a successful strategic plan is FOCUS. Every organization, regardless of size, has limited resources and strategy is all about effectively deploying an organization's resources where they will have the most positive impact on the community.

LEARN TO SAY NO: One of the most important things a great strategic thinker does is figure out what to say "NO" to. What products or services should we not offer? What current activities should we abandon?

LIMIT THE NUMBER OF GOALS: If you have 10 strategic goals, you do not have a strategy. The most successful organizations focus in on 3-5 major strategic initiatives. Anything more than that causes a lack of focus and ultimately a lack of success.

STRATEGIC PLANNING IS EDUCATED GUESSING: No matter how hard you try, it is difficult or impossible to predict the future with 100% accuracy. Strategic planning, by its nature, is a process that assembles a wide set of data and engages knowledgeable individuals in a process of collectively identifying and planning for a future. But never forget that it is not a certainty – it is an educated guess that can and should be adjusted as needed going forward.

ALIGNMENT: Alignment is a word used to describe the condition when the leadership of an organization is in agreement. As it relates to strategic planning, if the senior team (Board, officers, and members) is not 100% on board and committed to the strategic direction of the organization, the plan will fail. For this reason, it is essential that these leaders be involved and engaged in the process and 'own' the resulting document as their own.

MEASUREMENT and ACCOUNTABILITY: What gets measured gets done. A major reason that many strategies are not effectively executed is because there is no way to determine what the expectations are and how they will be achieved and measured. Ambiguity breeds mediocrity.

The following sections of this document describe the future world that the District faces, as best can be determined, and identifies the issues, challenges, and problems that were considered as the participants in the planning process selected the District's strategic priorities.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Organizations do not exist in a vacuum. Instead, they live in an ongoing relationship with the environment that surrounds them. For a fire district, this environment includes the community (geography, demographics, economy, risk profile); other public safety neighbors/partners; and a host of other factors.

Community Input

As the first step in the planning process, the MWSPFPD convened a public meeting to solicit input from a broad range of community members and representatives of key area agencies. Nearly 40 invitations were sent and 26 individuals attended the meeting held on November 9, 2016 in the Community Room at the MWSPFPD headquarters fire station. A complete list of those in attendance and their organizational affiliation (if any) can be found in Appendix A of this document.

After introductions by Fire Chief Larry Crabtree and a brief overview of the planning process, attendees were asked for their thoughts on the most significant issues facing the communities of Mi-Wuk Village and Sugar Pine. A summary of their responses is as follows:

Tree Mortality

- An ongoing problem due to a combination of drought and bug infestation
- Contractors are currently working in the communities to remove dead trees
- Thousands of dead trees in surrounding forests
 - Significant increase in community wildfire risk
 - Impact on property values
 - Impact on availability and cost of homeowner's insurance
 - Impact on life safety for residents and visitors
 - Unknown duration

Aging Population

- Demographics of the community are changing
- Majority in attendance felt that population is aging
- Lots of retirees (limited/fixed income)
 - Older population results in higher need for service (especially EMS)

Wildfire Risk

Road Conditions

- Poor road conditions (maintenance)
- Increasing traffic (seasonal)
- Road design often inadequate for today's traffic demand

Seasonal Population Variation

Summer versus winter versus shoulder seasons
Results in variable demand for services

Surrounded by Federal (US Forest Service) Land

Limits future community growth opportunities
Contributes to wildland fire risk

Ambulance Response Time

Some in attendance felt that response times were inadequate (too long)
County EMS representative in attendance clarified that response time standard for the community is 20 minutes and the current system is meeting that goal (average 19-20 minutes)

Water Availability

Multiple water purveyors in communities
Two primary sources: wells and above-ground flume

- Infrastructure is vulnerable to disruption
- Supply is impacted by ongoing drought

Economy

Tax base is flat
Not much new construction, but there is an uptick in remodel/renovation projects
Local jobs are hard to find – many residents are commuters or retirees or seasonal
Local income for full-time residents tends to be low

Impact of Non-Residents

Communities see a lot of through-traffic, passing through on Hwy 108 enroute to recreational areas
Many seasonal visitors are not residents or property owners – they need services but do not contribute to the cost

Local Control

Strong desire to have local control
Resistance to depending on other communities for services
Pride in ownership for the community and its institutions (fire district)

Public meeting attendees were then asked to consider the future and identify those significant issues they see on the horizon in the 3-5 year time frame:

Cost of Living

The overall cost of living (in general and the cost to live in the community) will continue to increase.

Property Value

Modest increase in property values (leading to a modest increase in property tax revenue)

Driven by remodels/renovations, not so much new construction

Uncertain Impact of New Laws/Regulations

Some discussion of the impact that the recent change in minimum wage will have on businesses and government agencies (like the fire district)

Unknown what other new laws or regulations may be implemented in the future that will be a challenge

Impact of Legalization of Marijuana

Marijuana agriculture is currently present in the surrounding areas and is part of the local economy

Now that recreational use of marijuana has been approved by referendum, unknown impact that this may have on local growers and the communities they are in

Impact of Gaming Facilities

There are no casinos located in the community, but there are two in the area:

- Black Oak
- Chicken Ranch

Because they are located 'down the hill', little direct impact on MWSP community
Casinos are good community neighbors and support area communities financially

Following the general discussion about broad issues facing the communities, attendees at the public meeting were asked to focus on the fire district and what they know or believe to be the issues it is presently facing:

Fiscal Pressure

Attendees were generally aware that the fire district is facing increased costs (fleet, facilities, cost of service delivery, salaries) without corresponding increases in revenue

Recruitment and Retention of Personnel

Given limited revenue, it is difficult to offer competitive wages and benefits to attract and retain long-term employees

Requests/Demands for Service Outside District Boundaries

Due to geography and road systems, the fire district is the closest and most reasonable provider of emergency services for a significant area outside the district boundary.

66% of the fire district's responses are outside its boundaries

Meeting Industry Standards

- Training Requirements
- Fleet Maintenance and Age
- Personal Protective Equipment

Unfunded External Mandates That Increase Costs

Vulnerable Infrastructure

- Water availability and reliability

Reliance on Grants

- The district is successful in obtaining grants, but it is a two-edged sword
 - Allows district to make purchases it could not otherwise afford
 - Requires staff time and effort to apply and implement

- Examples of grants obtained:

- Personal protective equipment
- EMS equipment
- Apparatus
- Wildland fuel reduction
- Recruitment/retention

Efficiency/Optimization of Services

- Are limited resources being used most effectively to meet service needs?

Cost of Doing Business

- Costs continue to increase at a level greater than revenue increases

Interagency Coordination

- Local fire agencies have excellent history of cooperation and coordination
- County discussing a fire study which could lead to system changes

Attendees were then asked to focus their attention on issues they believe the fire district needs to be concerned about looking forward 3-5 years:

Fleet Maintenance/Replacement

Supporting Organizations

- Historically, the fire district has received a great deal of support (both in volunteer labor and in financial resources) from its Auxiliary. The average age of the Auxiliary members is getting higher (matching the aging of the community) and there was some question/concern

about whether the Auxiliary would be able to continue providing the degree of support it has in the past.

Likewise, the Community Assistance Support Team (CAST) provides several volunteer services to the fire district and concern was expressed about its ability to continue.

Recruitment/Retention of Workforce

Succession Planning for Future District Leadership

Impact of New Minimum Wage Law on District Costs

Maintaining (or enhancing) Level of Services Provided Given Financial Pressures

May need to drive consideration for expansion or consolidation

Advanced Life Support (ALS) Availability in Community

Fire district currently provides basic life support first response to medical emergencies
Long ambulance response times (20 minutes) may indicate that some sort of ALS service may be needed in the community

Mutual Aid Agreements

Local and regional agreements may need to be negotiated/renegotiated

Monitor and Proactively Participate in County Efforts to Study Fire Service

Investigate Alternative Revenue Options

Financial sustainability needs to be the long-term goal
Consider fees for external services (outside the district boundaries)

Internal (Fire District) Environmental Assessment

The Fire District Board of Directors, chief officers, and staff convened on November 10, 2016 to continue the process begun in the public meeting. As a first order of business, the group reviewed the environmental assessment conducted at the public meeting and was asked if anything significant was missed or if there were crucial issues not mentioned.

In general, it was felt that the public meeting had identified the major issues facing the community and the fire district both currently and over the next 3-5 years. The planning group did, however, feel that the issues could be consolidated into several large 'bundles' to simplify discussions going forward:

Financial

Increasing expenses

Flat or limited revenue opportunities

A critical component in dealing with almost every other issue facing the district

Staffing

Fire departments deliver service and service delivery requires people

Options for staffing the district are limited

Highly dependent on availability of funding

Need to recruit and retain capable and qualified personnel

Tools to Do the Job

Fleet

Equipment

Personal Protective Gear

Community Demographics

Changing community

- While public meeting attendees felt that community is aging, there was some disagreement in the fire district planning group where there was some though that it is changing, but not necessarily to get older. Older residents are being replaced by younger property owners.

Changing support organizations

- Aging and future viability of Auxiliary and CAST

Community Risk

Wildfire

Severe Weather

Infrastructure Vulnerability

Tree Mortality

Geography

Resource Availability

ASSESSMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS

After the Environmental Assessment discussion, the planning group turned its attention to an assessment of the district's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for dealing with the issues and challenges before it.

STRENGTHS

When thinking about the issues facing the district, what are the internal strengths that the district can bring out to respond and deal with the challenges?

Significant Community Support

Experienced Leadership

Dedication, Commitment, and Positive Attitude of the Staff

Facilities (Fire Station and Administrative Space) are Good

Auxiliary (tremendous support, both logistically and financially)

Ability to Get Grants/Alternative Funding

Adaptability and Can-Do Attitude

Excellent Response Times Inside the District (5 minutes or less)

Excellent Relationships with Cooperators (neighboring public safety agencies)

Dedicated Funding Source (Benefit Assessment, separate from Property Tax)

Excellent EMS Relationships

Very Good at Doing a Lot with a Little

Engaged and Involved Board of Directors

Excellent Relationships Between Board and Staff

Excellent Administrative Support

WEAKNESSES

When considering the issues and challenges facing the district now and going forward, what internal skills or abilities is the district lacking or what needs to be shored up as it moves forward?

Fleet

- The fleet is aging
- Cost of maintenance is increasing and consuming more budgetary resources

Limited Revenue and Limited Options for Enhancing Revenue

External Political Relationships

Staffing

- On duty staffing numbers
- Skill set
- Ability to recruit and retain staff
- Ability to offer competitive compensation and benefits

Fiscal Planning

- Ability to look beyond the current budget

Ability to Participate in the State Mutual Aid System

Facility

- Although current facility is good, it requires maintenance
- Deferred maintenance is accumulating

Disaster Preparedness

OPPORTUNITIES

When considering the issues and challenges facing the district now and going forward, what opportunities exist, externally, that may assist in meeting them?

Pending Fire Service Study by the County

Pending Municipal Service Review (MSR) by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)

- Potential for changing district sphere of influence or boundaries

Demand for External Mutual Aid Responses (State mutual aid system – reimbursable)

Need for and Demand for Community Disaster Preparedness

Opportunities for Shared Services Arrangements with Other Agencies

Alternative Funding/Financing Options for Capital Purchases

Paying cash may not be the best method

Enhancement of Relationship with Red Cross

THREATS

When considering the issues and challenges facing the district, what external factors exist that could threaten the district or its ability to meet the challenges?

County's Consolidation Agenda

Does not appear to include small districts

Does not provide a seat at the table for small districts in the process

Previous County Studies and Grand Jury Report

Recommend one county fire department

Pending County Fire Services Study

Increasing Demand/Expectations for Service Delivery Outside District Boundaries

State Laws/Regulations/Unfunded Mandates

Minimum Wage Laws

Changing Industry Standards

Continuing Problem with Tree Mortality in the Forest and in the Community

Lack of Community Disaster Preparedness

Water Supply Vulnerability

WICKED PROBLEMS

‘Wicked Problems’ is a term borrowed from social sciences that describes problems, issues, or challenges that are large, complex, and beyond the control of any one entity. They usually have multiple diverse stakeholders and each of those stakeholders likely has different interests, a different perspective on the issues, and a different proposed solution. Solving ‘wicked problems’ often creates a whole new set of issues that must be faced.

Because of the complexities of wicked problems, they are often ignored in strategic planning processes because they can’t be easily defined, quantified, or measured. However, they are still there and often consume a significant amount of organizational time and energy. For this reason, the MWSPFPD planning group discussed the wicked problems facing the district and identifies the most significant ones below. Although they are not included in the set of organizational goals identified in this plan, they are still very real and must be kept in mind by the MWSPFPD Board of Directors and leadership going forward. The fire district may not own the issues and may not be able to solve them, but it will need to be actively engaged in monitoring and engaging on these issues as appropriate.

Tree Mortality

This regional issue will continue into the foreseeable future and certainly for the lifetime of this plan. Its causes are beyond the control of the fire district, but the district must deal with the consequences.

Changing Community Demographics

In the same way that ‘form follows function’, a fire department needs to adapt to the community it serves. The drivers and the results of the demographic changes occurring in the Mi-Wuk Sugar Pine Community are beyond the control of the fire district, but the district must closely monitor the changes in the community it serves to adapt and remain relevant in the future.

Unfunded Mandates

Unfunded mandates are external requirements that drive internal changes for the district – most often in the form of increased costs – without accompanying revenue. They may arise from new laws/regulations (minimum wage) or from changing industry standards (NFPA standards for vehicle or PPE replacement). While the district has little ability to directly impact the implementation of these mandates, it must closely monitor their development and build mechanisms into its plans and budgets to address them as they arise.

County Fire Services Study and Consolidation Agenda

Tuolumne County has a long history of studying how fire service is delivered in the County. All previous studies have ended with the same result, a recommendation for a single,

county-wide department. The county Grand Jury has also weighed in with a similar recommendation. Currently, the County is preparing to embark on another study and there is little reason to suspect a different outcome. This is a bigger issue than just the MWSPFPD, but it is one that could have positive or negative impacts on the district and the communities it serves. The district needs to be engaged and actively participate, as opportunities present themselves.

Water Availability/Vulnerability

Water is, obviously, a significant firefighting resource. But it is also a much bigger public issue. There was much discussion during this planning process about the age and vulnerability of the water supply in the area. There are other agencies, that are responsible for water delivery and it's not the fire districts job to fix the issues. But it is the fire districts responsibility to monitor water availability for firefighting purposes and do all that it can to assure that an adequate supply exists.

PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATE PROCESS

For a strategic plan to accomplish its intended purpose, it must be a living document that is reviewed periodically, adjusted and updated when needed, and generally kept alive and up to date. To accomplish this task, the following review and update processes will be followed:

1. All Strategic Plan Committees will report to the Fire Chief when any objective or another similar benchmark is accomplished. In December of each year, each committee will prepare a summary report of their activities for the previous 12 months, include their progress to date, and make any suggestions/recommendations concerning adjustment or modification of their goal or objectives.
2. The Fire Chief will provide a brief report to the Board of Directors at every monthly meeting on any Strategic Plan-related activities that have been accomplished since the previous Board meeting. This should include, as a minimum, any specific objectives or benchmarks that have been achieved by any of the individual Strategic Plan Committees.
3. Annually, at the January Board of Directors meeting, the Fire Chief and Strategic Planning Committees shall present an update to the Board of Directors. This update should include a status report from each committee and any recommendations for adjustment and modifications to the strategic goals and objectives.
4. No later than 5 years from approval/adoption of this strategic plan, the Board shall initiate a discussion about the value and feasibility of a complete plan update.

APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANTS IN PUBLIC MEETING NOVEMBER 9, 2016 MWSPFPD COMMUNITY ROOM

Priscilla Baxter	MWSPFPD
Dan Blake	MWSPFPD Auxiliary
Sherry Blake	MWSPFPD Auxiliary
Linda Clark	MWSPFPD Auxiliary
Drew Collier	Captain, MWSPFPD
Larry Crabtree	Fire Chief, MWSPFPD
Sue Crabtree	MWSPFPD Auxiliary
Nickie Doss	MWSPFPD Auxiliary
Ron Doss	Member, MWSPFPD Board of Directors
James Gibson	Mi-Wuk Village Resident
Eric Hall	Tuolumne Utility District (Water)
John Johnson	Member, MWSPFPD Board of Directors
Richard Knudson	Twain Harte Community Services District
Todd McNeal	Fire Chief, Twain Harte Fire Department
Tim Miller	Sonora Area Resident
Brian Robison	
Miki Rucker	Vice President, MWSPFPD Board of Directors
Bill Schneiderman	Sugar Pine Resident
Gary Sipperley	Twain Harte Community Services District
Clarence Teem	Tuolumne County Emergency Medical Services Agency
Tom Trott	Twain Harte community Services District
Kirk M. Wallace	Community Member
Laurie Wallace	MWSPFPD Auxiliary and C.A.S.T. Member
Tim Wallace	MWSPFPD and C.A.S.T.
Joan Walton	MWSPFPD Auxiliary
Josh White	Unit Chief, CalFire & Fire Chief, Tuolumne County Fire Department

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANTS IN STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING
NOVEMBER 10, 2016
MWSPFPD COMMUNITY ROOM

James Ballowe	Volunteer Firefighter, MWSPFPD
Chris Bandle	Relief Captain, MWSPFPD
Drew Collier	Captain, MWSPFPD
Larry Crabtree	Fire Chief, MWSPFPD
Bonnie Dahlin	Secretary, MWSPFPD
Ryan Delgado	Captain, MWSPFPD
Diane Egan-Dies	Defensible Space Program, MWSPFPD
Ron Doss	Member, MWSPFPD Board of Directors
Bernard Garcia	Intern, MWSPFPD
Thomas Garcia	Reserve, MWSPFPD
John Johnson	Member, MWSPFPD Board of Directors
Mike Konklin	Battalion Chief, MWSPFPD
Jim Krussow	MWSPFPD
Evan Royce	Tuolumne County
Miki Rucker	Vice President, MWSPFPD Board of Directors
Laurie Wallace	MWSPFPD Auxiliary and C.A.S.T Member
Tim Wallace	MWSPFPD C.A.S.T. Team
Jan Walton	MWSPFPD Auxiliary
Mike Welch	President, MWSPFPD Board of Directors