



MONROE FIRE DEPARTMENT

2019-2024 *Strategic Plan*



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Introduction

The Monroe Fire Department (MFD) provides an all-hazards approach in the protection of the lives and property of the residents, businesses, and visitors of Monroe, North Carolina. MFD is consistently working to achieve and/or maintain the highest level of professionalism and efficiency on behalf of those it serves, and thus, contracted with the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) to facilitate a method to document the department's path into the future via a "Community-Driven Strategic Plan." The following strategic plan was written in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Commission on Fire Accreditation (CFAI) *Fire & Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual 9th Ed.* and is intended to guide the organization within established parameters set forth by the authority having jurisdiction.

The CPSE utilized the community-driven strategic planning process to go beyond just the development of a document. It challenged the department's members to critically examine paradigms, values, philosophies, beliefs and desires, and challenged individuals to work in the best interest of the "team." It further provided the department with an opportunity to participate in the development of their organization's long-term direction and focus. Members of the organization's community and department stakeholders' groups demonstrated commitment to this important project and remain committed to the document's completion and future plan execution.

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Organizational Background

In 1842, Union County was created by an act of the North Carolina Assembly. By virtue of this, the county seat was formed and named after President James Monroe. Ultimately, the Town of Monroe was incorporated in 1844 and has evolved into the City of Monroe, North Carolina.

Today, Monroe is a thriving and growing community of approximately 35,000 who live,

work, and play within its 30.23 square miles. Supported in part by internal business and industry, the city remains progressive in ensuring a way of life that is demanded by its communities, providing quality services in support of those who live, work, and play in Monroe.



The Monroe Fire Department's genesis dates to 1872. Starting as a volunteer department, the city's growth created a demand for more personnel and equipment resources and finally, greater leadership. Around 1914, paid personnel were hired to staff more of the equipment and apparatus of that time. With mutual aid being a vital part of the fire service industry, it can be found dating back to the 1920s and



1930s where aid was received for larger fires within Monroe. The department has continued to keep pace with the industry, as demands changed within the city and as further service offerings were made available for the community.

Today the department provides its services from five fire stations, located strategically throughout the city. The department and its members remain personally committed to

protecting life and property in the community through the various services and programs provided to the residents, businesses, and visitors to the city. The Monroe Fire Department continues to remain mission-focused as evidenced by its international accredited status and its quality ISO rating. The department embraces excellence in all that it does and continues to be dedicated to those it serves.



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Community-Driven Strategic Planning

For many successful organizations, the voice of the community drives their operations and charts the course for their future. A community-driven emergency service organization is one that seeks to gather and utilize the needs and expectations of its community in the development and/or improvement of the services provided. To ensure that the community remains a focus of an organization's direction, a community-driven strategic planning process was used to develop this strategic plan.

A strategic plan is a living management tool that provides short-term direction, builds a shared vision, documents goals and objectives, and optimizes use of resources. The process of strategic planning can be defined as “a deliberative, disciplined approach to producing fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization (or other entity) is, what it does, and why.”¹

Effective strategic planning benefits from a consistent and cohesively structured process employed across all levels of the organization. Planning is a continuous process, one with no clear beginning and no defined end. While plans can be developed on a regular basis, it is the process of planning that is important, not the publication of the plan itself. Most importantly, strategic planning can be an opportunity to unify the management, employees, and stakeholders through a common understanding of where the organization is going, how everyone involved can work to that common purpose, and how progression and success will be measured.



Community Stakeholders Work Session

¹ See Definition, Purpose, and Benefits of Strategic Planning (Bryson 8)





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The Community–Driven Strategic Planning Process Outline

1. Define the programs provided to the community.
2. Establish the community’s service program priorities and expectations of the organization.
3. Identify any concerns the community may have about the organization, along with aspects of the organization that the community views positively.
4. Revisit the mission statement, giving careful attention to the services and programs currently provided, and which logically can be provided in the future.
5. Revisit the values of the organization’s membership.
6. Identify the internal strengths and weaknesses of the organization.
7. Identify areas of opportunity or potential threats to the organization.
8. Identify the organization’s critical issues and service gaps.
9. Determine strategic initiatives for organizational improvement.
10. Establish a realistic goal and objectives for each initiative.
11. Identify implementation tasks for the accomplishment of each objective.
12. Determine the vision of the future.
13. Develop organizational and community commitment to accomplishing the plan.

Process and Acknowledgements

The Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) acknowledges and thanks the community and department stakeholders for their participation and input into this community–driven strategic planning process. The CPSE also recognizes Fire Chief Ron Fowler and the team of professionals that participated for their leadership and commitment to this process.

Development of this strategic plan took place in January 2019, beginning with meetings hosted by a representative from the CPSE for members of the community (as named in the following table). The department identified community stakeholders to ensure broad representation. The community stakeholders were comprised of some who reside or work within the Monroe Fire Department’s coverage area, and some who were recipients of MFD’s service(s).



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Monroe Fire Department's Community Stakeholders

Coy Blackmon	Kathy Bragg	Tom Brown	Vicki Callicutt
Sheila Crunkleton	Bob Curry	Bryan Edwards	Johnathan Edwards
Patti Edwards	Todd Elmore	Andrew Friend	Susan Furr
Reverend Osco Gardin, Jr.	Dean Glenn	Kenneth Graham	Rick Greene
Bobby Griffin	Bill Hall	Phil Handsel	Archie Hansley
Bill Harris	Gene Herrell	Russell Isom	Jennifer Kappas
David Kesiah	Ron Mahle	George Massey	Robert Miller
Don Moye	Jeff Peterson	Todd Price	Kevin Rigoli
J. R. Rowell	George Sarno	Ryan Teal	Connie Todd
Emily Walmsley	Kim Wolfe		



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Community Group Findings

A key element of the Monroe Fire Department's organizational philosophy is having a high level of commitment to the community, as well as recognizing the importance of community satisfaction. Thus, the department invited community representatives to provide feedback on services provided by the department. Respondents were asked to provide a prioritized perspective of the programs and services provided by the department. Additionally, input was gathered during the meeting that revolved around community expectations and concerns (prioritized), as well as positive and other comments about the organization. Specific findings of the community stakeholders are provided in the appendix of this document. The department stakeholders utilized the full feedback from the community stakeholders in understanding the current challenges encountered within the organization. Additionally, the community stakeholders' feedback provided a process to ensure alignment with the work completed on the organizational mission, values, vision, and goals for improvement.



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Community Priorities

To best dedicate time, energy, and resources to services most desired by its community, the Monroe Fire Department needs to understand what the customers consider to be their priorities. With that, the community stakeholders were asked to prioritize the programs offered by the department through a process of direct comparison. The results were as follows:

Programs	Ranking	Score
Fire Suppression	1	200
Technical Rescue	2	178
Emergency Medical Services	3	160
Hazardous Materials Mitigation	4	133
Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Services	5	103
Community Risk Reduction	6	96
Fire Investigation	7	86
Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response	7	86
Public Fire and Life Safety Education	9	74

See [Appendix 1](#) for a complete list of the community findings including expectations, areas of concern, positive feedback, and other thoughts and comments.



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Department Stakeholder Group Findings

The department stakeholder work sessions were conducted over the course of three days. These sessions served to discuss the organization’s approach to community-driven strategic planning, focusing on the department’s mission, values, core programs and support services. Additionally, focus was given to the organization’s perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The work sessions involved participation by a stakeholder group that represented a broad cross-section of the department, as named and pictured below.

Monroe Fire Department Stakeholders				
Andrew Ansley <i>Deputy Chief – Administration</i>	Steve Bird <i>Chaplain</i>	Robert Bolick <i>Division Chief – Fire Marshal</i>	Kevin Brittain <i>Firefighter</i>	Rodney Chaney <i>Battalion Chief</i>
Brandon Cleary <i>Firefighter</i>	Greg Collins <i>Division Chief – Training and Safety</i>	Sheila Couick <i>Administrative Assistant II</i>	Steven Craig <i>Firefighter</i>	Ron Fowler <i>Fire Chief</i>
Kyle Furr <i>Firefighter</i>	Chris Griffin <i>Deputy Chief – Operations</i>	Daniel Grigston <i>Captain</i>	Joshua Hawk <i>Firefighter</i>	Ben Hinson <i>Engineer</i>
Katie Hinson <i>Captain – Assistant Fire Marshal / Fire & Life Safety Educator</i>	Matt Hinson <i>Captain</i>	Lori Hyatt <i>Captain</i>	Bryan Kindley <i>Captain</i>	Charles Laton <i>Engineer</i>
James Massey <i>Firefighter</i>	John Massey <i>Engineer</i>	Graham McManus <i>Engineer</i>	Adam Moore <i>Engineer</i>	Kevin Philemon <i>Captain – Assistant Fire Marshal</i>
Carter Plyler <i>Captain – Assistant Fire Marshal</i>	Charlie Porter <i>Captain</i>	Chuck Porter <i>Captain</i>	Rodney Rogers <i>Captain</i>	Pat Schlappich <i>Engineer</i>
Nick Steffler <i>Captain</i>	Travis Stegall <i>Battalion Chief</i>	Jarrin Tucker <i>Firefighter</i>	Joseph Upchurch <i>Engineer</i>	Brandon Wallace <i>Captain</i>



Department Stakeholders



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Mission

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 created, discussed, and accepted by the entire group:

Monroe Fire Department's mission is to protect life and property in our community through a personal commitment in all services provided.



Department Stakeholders Work Session





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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 and proposed a revision that was discussed, enhanced further, and agreed upon by the entire group:

Safety

We will provide a safe environment for our members and community.

Integrity

We will uphold the beliefs of being moral, ethical, loyal, and honest.

Professionalism

We are dedicated and well-trained individuals, united to better our community.

Compassion

We deliver our services in a considerate, caring, and sympathetic way.

Teamwork

We are dedicated, committed, and accountable to each other and our community.

Respect

We hold others in high regard and are committed to being diverse, transparent, fair, and equal.

Customer Service

We strive to meet the expectations of our community by providing services in a professional manner.

Honor

We proudly serve our community moving forward, while honoring fire service tradition.

The mission and values are the foundation of this organization. Thus, every effort will be made to keep these current and meaningful so that the individuals who make up the Monroe Fire Department are guided by them in the accomplishment of the goals, objectives, and day-to-day tasks.



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Programs and Services

The department stakeholders identified the core programs provided to the community, as well as many of the services that enable the organization to deliver those programs. The department’s core programs are provided below, while supporting services are provided in [Appendix 2](#).

Core Programs of the Monroe Fire Department		
Fire Suppression	Technical Rescue	Emergency Medical Services
Hazardous Materials Mitigation	Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting	Community Risk Reduction
Fire Investigation	Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response	Public Fire and Life Safety Education



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SWOT Analysis

Through a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), an organization candidly identifies its positive and negative attributes. The SWOT analysis also provides an opportunity for an organization to evaluate its operating environment for areas in which it can capitalize, as well as those that pose a danger. Department stakeholders participated in this activity to record MFD’s strengths and weaknesses, as well as the possible opportunities and potential threats. Information gathered through this analysis provides guidance toward the larger issues and gaps that exist within the agency. The information gleaned will assist the agency in finding its broader critical issues and service gaps.

Appendix 3 consists of the SWOT data and analysis collected by the department stakeholders.





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Critical Issues and Service Gaps

Following the identification and review of the department’s SWOT, two separate groups of department stakeholders met to identify themes as primary critical issues and service gaps (found in [Appendix 4](#)). The critical issues and services gaps identified by the stakeholders provides further guidance toward identification of the strategic initiatives, which will ultimately lend direction for the development of goals, objectives, critical tasks, and timelines.

Strategic Initiatives

Based upon all previously captured information and the determination of critical issues and service gaps, the following strategic initiatives were identified as the foundation for the development of goals and objectives.

Monroe Fire Department’s Strategic Initiatives			
Succession Planning	Community Engagement	Facilities	
Workforce Planning	Training	Health and Wellness	Technology



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Goals and Objectives

To continuously achieve the mission of the Monroe Fire Department, realistic goals and objectives with timelines for completion must be established. These will serve to enhance strengths, address identified weaknesses, provide a clear direction, and address the concerns of the community. These should become a focus of the department’s efforts, as they will direct the organization to its desired future while reducing the obstacles and distractions along the way. Leadership-established work groups should meet and manage progress toward accomplishing these goals and objectives and adjust timelines as needs and the environment change. Regular reports of progress and changes should be shared with the MFD’s leadership.

Goal 1	Develop a succession planning process to ensure continuity of service delivery in the future.	
Objective 1A	Identify the succession planning needs of the department.	
Timeframe	1 year	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project the retirement dates of all employees. • Prioritize at five-year intervals to maintain staffing. • Evaluate comparable departments with established: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Succession planning programs ○ Recruitment and retention efforts ○ Professional development programs ○ Mentoring programs. • Create a report of findings and recommendations and submit it to the leadership team for further consideration and direction. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 1B	Evaluate the current recruitment and retention process to meet the needs within all divisions of the department.	
Timeframe	2 years	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the testing process, survey applicants to determine how they were recruited. • Survey new employees at the one-year mark to determine factors for retention. • Ensure all exit interviews are conducted, when appropriate. • Evaluate all information gathered internally and externally. • Develop a recruitment and retention plan. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:

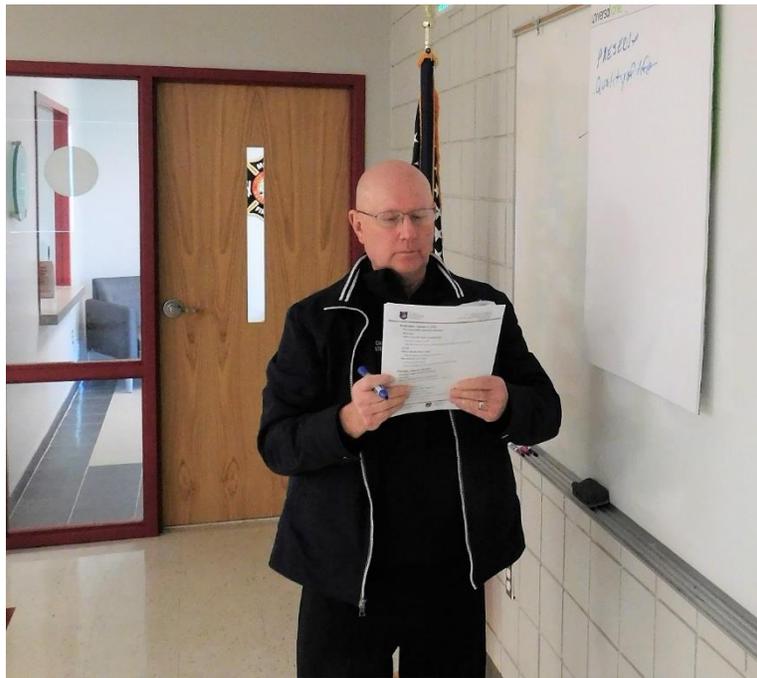




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Objective 1C	Expand the professional development process to meet the needs within all divisions of the department.	
Timeframe	2 years	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate each position to ensure it is properly addressed in the professional development plan. • Develop a career path for positions not currently identified in policy. • Develop applicable job descriptions. • Develop position requirements for each new level. • Update the professional development policy to reflect new career paths. • Implement the updated program. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 1D	Develop a mentoring process to help ensure continuity of responsibilities across the department.	
Timeframe	1 year	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify prerequisite skills needed for promotion. • Identify cross-training opportunities for special programs. • Develop a plan for providing needed skills for advancement. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:



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Goal 2	Enhance community engagement through risk reduction, program outreach, and transparency to deliver the mission of the department.	
Objective 2A	Evaluate the current programs to see if they are effective in meeting the community's needs.	
Timeframe	3 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a list of current programs. • Ensure the current programs are modern and up-to-date. • Evaluate the frequency of the programs. • Analyze the outcomes of current programs. • Remove ineffective/overlapping programs. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 2B	Identify the needs of new programs based on trending data in the community.	
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze data based on call response, inspection violations, and community requests. • Explore current and potential partnerships. • Research new programs to fit community needs. • Create a report of findings and recommendations, then submit it to the leadership team for further consideration and direction. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 2C	Enhance social media to effectively communicate information to the community.	
Timeframe	1 year	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore all social media platforms and avenues. • Evaluate internal administrators of social media. • Provide training to internal administrators. • Compare social media use and process with other comparable departments. • Determine the qualifying elements of the messaging to be delivered. • Create a report of findings and recommendations, then submit it to the leadership team for further consideration and direction. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:





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Objective 2D Provide training to efficiently deliver all programs.

Timeframe 2 years **Assigned to:**

- Evaluate annual FLSE training.
- Determine the need for certified educators.
- Develop internal curricula to align with FLSE training.
- Provide internal FLSE training.

Critical Tasks

Funding Estimate Capital Costs: Consumable Costs:
Personnel Costs: Contract Services Costs:

Objective 2E Develop an evaluation process and improve the engagement service delivery to the community.

Timeframe 1 year **Assigned to:**

- Compare evaluated processes utilized by other comparable departments.
- Analyze the current evaluation process.
- Explore internal/external options for service delivery feedback.
- Create a report of findings and recommendations, then submit it to the leadership team for further consideration and direction.

Critical Tasks

Funding Estimate Capital Costs: Consumable Costs:
Personnel Costs: Contract Services Costs:



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Goal 3	Provide modernized, sustainable, and efficient infrastructure for the dynamic needs of the community and the department.	
Objective 3A	Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the current departmental facilities.	
Timeframe	2 years	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a facilities committee. • Partner with the city’s appointed person who directs facilities to determine the current RFP policy. • Establish parameters for analyses and studies of the current departmental facilities based on, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cancer considerations ○ Response times ○ Privacy ○ Current and future space needs. • Develop all study protocols. • Solicit approval to conduct the study. • Conduct the study internally. • Evaluate the results in comparison to external sources, including consulting with a third-party, as directed. • Evaluate the budget process in comparison to needs found in the study results. • Create a report of findings and recommendations, then submit it to the leadership team for further consideration and direction. • Report quarterly during the ongoing strategic planning process meetings. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:





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Objective 3B Conduct a needs assessment for future departmental facilities.

Timeframe 2 years **Assigned to:**

- Establish a facilities committee.
- Partner with the city’s appointed person who directs facilities to determine the current RFP policy.
- Establish parameters for analyses and studies of the current departmental facilities based on but, not limited to:
 - Cancer considerations
 - Response times
 - Privacy
 - Current and future space needs
 - Projected growth within the city
 - Projected revenue coming into the city
 - Demographic shifts
 - Changes in deployment models and baseline performance.
- Develop all study protocols.
- Solicit approval to conduct the study.
- Conduct the study internally.
- Evaluate the results in comparison to external sources, including consulting with a third-party, as directed.
- Evaluate the budget process in comparison to needs found in the study results.
- Create a report of findings and recommendations, then submit it to the leadership team for further consideration and direction.
- Report quarterly during the ongoing strategic planning process meetings.

Critical Tasks

Funding	Capital Costs:	Consumable Costs:
Estimate	Personnel Costs:	Contract Services Costs:



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Objective 3C	Develop a plan for enhancement of existing departmental structures.	
Timeframe	1 year	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the information from all conducted studies. • Conduct a needs assessment from all studies. • Prioritize the needs based on the study. • Conduct a cost analysis and provide an estimate of any and all costs. • Request funding through the budgeting process and provide support for the request based on findings. • Conduct required plans review on any enhancements. • Create a report of findings and recommendations, then submit it to the leadership team for further consideration and direction. • Proceed with enhancements as funded and approved. • Report quarterly during the ongoing strategic planning process meetings. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 3D	Develop a plan for any future facility needs and construction as approved.	
Timeframe	1 year, ongoing	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a review of needs at each quarterly strategic planning meetings. • Prioritize the needs. • Create a report of findings and recommendations, then submit it to the leadership team for further consideration and direction. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:





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Goal 4	Provide a workforce capable of meeting current and future needs of our community.	
Objective 4A	Obtain staffing levels along with knowledge, skills, and abilities to verify current status.	
Timeframe	3 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain the current department roster from the administration. • Obtain individual certifications and training records of all members from the training division. • Create a report of information gathered to compare with identifying services provided in future objectives. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 4B	Identify services provided with the current workforce.	
Timeframe	3 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review core and supporting services provided by the department (example: fire suppression, CRA-SOC). • Review SOPs to establish effective workforce response for services provided. • Review roles and responsibilities at each position of the department. • Create a report of information gathered to compare with skill level and knowledge in future objectives. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 4C	Identify any shortfalls in the department's workforce through services provided.	
Timeframe	3 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare the results from Objectives 4A and 4B. • Build a list of shortfalls identified. • Create a report of information gathered to identify shortfalls in the department's workforce. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:



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Objective 4D	Identify and plan future community service needs that may increase the workforce.	
Timeframe	3 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify future community services through various planning boards and local supporting organizations (planning and development, CRA-SOC). • Review the current strategic plan in relation to community stakeholders' expectations of the department. • Benchmark other departments to identify additional services to benefit the community. • Establish a list of potential future services that may impact the workforce. • Create a report of information gathered for future direction and approval. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 4E	Develop a plan to address, prioritize, and correct any shortfalls.	
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and analyze all information gathered through previous objectives. • Prioritize the current needs of the department by creating a comprehensive report. • Prioritize any identified future needs of the department by creating a comprehensive report. • Correct any current identified findings through additional personnel, training, or other resources. • Complete a cost analysis and report the findings to the administration for budget considerations. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 4F	With approval, activate the developed plan to meet the identified needs.	
Timeframe	1 year	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire appropriate personnel. • Purchase the needed equipment for services and/or personnel. • Train all personnel in all areas identified. • Create or update SOPs to accompany the service, as necessary. • Make personnel assignments appropriately. • Evaluate the workforce performance against services provided to ensure new implementations are meeting the plan's needs. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:





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Goal 5	Enhance the performance of training within our department to improve emergency mitigation.	
Objective 5A	Evaluate the department’s current training program in emergency mitigation to identify strengths and weaknesses.	
Timeframe	9 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather data of past training hours based on each discipline. • Identify the department’s operational strengths and weaknesses based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ After action reports ○ Performance measures ○ Training committee feedback. • Review and decide if the current program forms meet the department’s needs. • Complete a program appraisal report using the compiled data and present to department leadership for further consideration and action. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 5B	Develop a new training matrix that supports company-specific training.	
Timeframe	12 – 16 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify service-specific responsibilities by company. • Amend the current training matrix that supports departmental training objectives, while enhancing the department’s specialty areas through company-specific hours. • Amend the current training policies to support the new training matrix. • Present any proposed revisions to the department’s leadership for further consideration and action. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:



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Objective 5C	Implement a new training program based on the matrix to improve company-specific training.	
Timeframe	16-24 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a training component for those who will deliver the training. • Create a schedule and deliver to operations. • Identify and prioritize equipment needs based on, and created by, the new training program. • Deliver the new program to the operations division. • Present the draft to the department’s leadership for further consideration and action. • Implement the program based on approval. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 5D	Evaluate the new training program to enhance company-specific training.	
Timeframe	3 years	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile data on the previous delivery of training to the new company-specific delivery. • Compare the department’s operational strengths and weaknesses based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ After action reports ○ Performance measures ○ Training committee feedback. • Monitor, evaluate, and report the program’s status, effectiveness, and needs to the department’s leadership for further consideration and action. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:



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Goal 6	Promote a healthy workplace atmosphere through physical and emotional well-being.	
Objective 6A	Evaluate current, available health and wellness programs being utilized in the fire service.	
Timeframe	3 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate current programs offered by the city and the department. • Conduct a health and wellness survey. • Evaluate the current facilities and equipment, relevant to health and wellness. • Create a report of findings and recommendations, then submit it to the leadership team for further consideration and direction. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 6B	Evaluate the department’s baseline health and well-being.	
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate NFPA 1582. • Design a stress test program. • Review the health and wellness survey. • Conduct a cost analysis for all programs. • Complete a program appraisal. • Create a report of findings and recommendations, then submit it to the leadership team for further consideration and direction. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 6C	Improve the physical health of all members by developing a wellness and prevention program.	
Timeframe	1 year	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the department’s current cancer screening programs. • Develop a fire department-focused nutritional-support program. • Revise performance evaluations to reflect the intent of the program throughout all positions. • Identify program expectations and certify personnel to deliver the physical fitness program. • Develop a physical assessment component. • Conduct a cost analysis. • Complete a program appraisal and report the findings. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:



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Objective 6D	Develop a program for emotional well-being.	
Timeframe	18 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the chaplaincy program. • Evaluate the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) program. • Identify any training potentials in order to train staff for peer support. • Identify potential stress factors within the membership. • Conduct a cost analysis for feasibility. • Develop the program based on all feedback. • Create a report of findings and recommendations, then submit it to the leadership team for further consideration and direction. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 6E	Implement the physical and emotional well-being programs and policies for the well-being of the department's members.	
Timeframe	3 years	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use results from the process to identify and implement needed programs or enhance current programs. • Utilize the budget process to allocate needed funding. • Create or revise the needed policies. • Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:





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Goal 7	Maintain modern technology to provide efficient services to our community.	
Objective 7A	Identify the department's current technology capabilities and how the current systems are being utilized.	
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formally assess the current hardware and software applications being utilized in the department. Consult with IT on the current capabilities of the systems being utilized. Categorize and prioritize the use based on the gathered information. Create a report of findings and recommendations, then submit it to the leadership team and IT for further consideration and direction. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 7B	Identify all new technology available that is not being utilized but could benefit the operations of the department and the community.	
Timeframe	8 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey other comparable departments to identify new or different technology being successfully utilized. Attend conferences and other venues to gather information on newer technology. Create a report of findings and recommendations, then submit it to the leadership team for further consideration and direction. With approval, form an internal departmental group focused on new technology. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:
Objective 7C	Create a plan that includes costs, maintenance, and support for new technology.	
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to:
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forecast and develop a replacement plan for new technology and include in the budget process. Determine the maintenance and support needs for current and new technology. Conduct a cost analysis for maintenance, support, and replacement. Create a report of findings and recommendations, then submit it to the leadership team for further consideration and direction. 	
Funding Estimate	Capital Costs: Personnel Costs:	Consumable Costs: Contract Services Costs:



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Vision

On the final day of the process, the CPSE presented a strategic plan vision of where the organization will be in the future if the strategic plan is accomplished. This is not to override the department's global vision but rather to confirm the futurity of the work that was designed by the department stakeholders. This vision is intended as a target of excellence to strive toward and provides a basis for its goals and objectives.

“Vision is knowing who you are, where you’re going, and what will guide your journey”

Ken Blanchard

Monroe Fire Department’s 2024 Vision

is to continue to fulfill our personal and organizational commitment to protect life and property in the City of Monroe, while living our core values in all that we do. This vision will only become reality by dedicating ourselves to service, embracing history, living for our future, and pursuing excellence in all that we do.

Performance Measurement

To assess and ensure that an organization is delivering on the promises made in their strategic plan, the organization’s leaders must determine performance measures for which they are fully accountable. As output measurement can be challenging, the organization must focus on the assessment of progress toward achieving improved output. Jim Collins states, “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.”² Organizations must further be prepared to revisit and revise their goals, objectives, and performance measures to keep up with accomplishments and environmental changes.

- If you don’t measure the results of your plan, you can’t tell success from failure.
- If you can’t see success, you can’t reward it.
- If you can’t reward success, you’re probably rewarding failure.
- If you can’t see success, you can’t learn from it.
- If you can’t recognize failure, you can’t correct it.
- If you can demonstrate results, you can win public support.

Reinventing Government

David Osborn and Ted Gaebler

² Collins Good to Great and the Social Sectors. Boulder, 2009





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To establish that the 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 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" typically utilized to indicate and measure performance includes:

- **Inputs** - Value of resource used to produce an output.
- **Outputs** - Quantifiable 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. Focused on the "why" of providing a service.

The Success of the Strategic Plan

The department has approached its desire to develop and implement a strategic plan by asking for and receiving input from the community and members of the organization during the development stage of the planning process. To assist in the development of this

"No matter how much you have achieved, you will always be merely good relative to what you can become. Greatness is an inherently dynamic process, not an end point."

Good to Great and the Social Sectors
Jim Collins

plan, the department used professional guidance to conduct a community-driven strategic planning process. The success of this strategic plan will not depend upon implementation of the goals and their related objectives, but from support received from the authority having jurisdiction, the members of the organization, and the community-at-large.

A dynamic community-driven strategic planning process, supported by effective leadership and active participation, is a considerable opportunity to unify department and community stakeholders. This can be accomplished through a jointly developed understanding of organizational direction, focusing on all vested parties working to achieve the mission, goals, and vision. Further consideration must be made on how the organization will measure and be accountable for its progress and successes.³

³ Matthews (2005). *Strategic Planning and Management for Library Managers*



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Glossary of Terms, Acronyms, and Initialisms

Accreditation	A process by which an association or agency evaluates and recognizes a program of study or an institution as meeting certain predetermined standards or qualifications. It applies only to institutions or agencies and their programs of study or their services. Accreditation ensures a basic level of quality in the services received from an agency.
CFAI	Commission on Fire Accreditation International
CISM	Critical Incident Stress Management
CPSE	Center for Public Safety Excellence
CRA-SOC	Community Risk Assessment – Standards of Cover
CRR	Community Risk Reduction
Customer(s)	The person or group who establishes the requirement of a process and receives or uses the outputs of that process; or the person or entity directly served by the department or agency.
Efficiency	A performance indication where inputs are measured per unit of output (or vice versa).
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
Environment	Circumstances and conditions that interact with and affect an organization. These can include economic, political, cultural, and physical conditions inside or outside the boundaries of the organization.
ERF	Effective Response Force
FD	Fire Department
FLSE	Fire and Life Safety Education
GIS	Geographic Information System
HazMat	Hazardous Materials
Input	A performance indication where the value of resources is used to produce an output.
ISO	Insurance Services Office
IT	Information Technology
LEPC	Local Emergency Planning Committees
MDA	Muscular Dystrophy Association
MDT	Mobile Data Terminal
MFD	Monroe Fire Department





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Mission	An enduring statement of purpose; the organization's reason for existence. Describes what the organization does, for whom it does it, and how it does it.
NCDOT	North Carolina Department of Transportation
NFA	National Fire Academy
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
OSHA	Occupational Health and Safety Administration
Outcome	A performance indication where qualitative consequences are associated with a program/service; i.e., the ultimate benefit to the customer.
Output	A performance indication where a quality or number of units produced is identified.
PR	Public Relations
RNC	Republican National Convention
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPCC	South Piedmont Community College
Stakeholder	Any person, group, or organization that can place a claim on, or influence the organization's resources or outputs, is affected by those outputs, or has an interest in or expectation of the organization.
Strategic Goal	A broad target that defines how the agency will carry out its mission over a specific period of time. An aim. The final result of an action. Something to accomplish in assisting the agency to move forward.
Strategic Objective	A specific, measurable accomplishment required to realize the successful completion of a strategic goal.
Strategic Plan	A long-range planning document that defines the mission of the agency and broadly identifies how it will be accomplished, and that provides the framework for more detailed annual and operational plans.
Strategic Planning	The continuous and systematic process whereby guiding members of an organization make decisions about its future, develop procedures and operations to achieve that future, and determine how success is to be measured.
Strategy	A description of how a strategic objective will be achieved. A possibility. A plan or methodology for achieving a goal.
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
UASI	Urban Areas Security Initiative
Vision	An idealized view of a desirable and potentially achievable future state - where or what an organization would like to be in the future.



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Appendix 1

Community Expectations

Understanding what the community expects of its fire service organization is critically important to developing a long-range perspective. With this knowledge, internal emphasis may need to be changed or bolstered to fulfill the community needs.

Respondents were asked to list, in priority order, up to five subjects relative to the expectations they have for the Monroe Fire Department. Responses were then analyzed for themes and weighted. The weighting of the prioritized responses was as follows: if it was the respondent's first entry, then it received five weighted points. Weighting gradually decreased so that if it was the respondent's fifth entry, then it received one weighted point. The weighted themes were then sorted from the highest cumulative weight to the lowest cumulative weight and listed below. The numbers in the parentheses are the cumulative weighted value that correlated with the theme identified. While the themes are listed in prioritized, weighted order, all responses were important in the planning process. The following are the expectation responses of the community stakeholders:

Community Expectations of the Monroe Fire Department (in priority order)

1. Ability to promptly respond to my fire emergency. Reasonable response time. Response. Quick response times. To protect people and property in a timely fashion. (99)
2. To have the necessary training for each individual. Top training for employees. To make sure all firefighters have been properly trained to handle all crises. Well-trained personnel. (64)
3. Protect life and property. Intelligent emergency response. Minimize property damage from fire. Successful suppression (containment to room of origin). (48)
4. Community involvement. Community involvement leading to community openness to further education. To be active in city and county activities. Interaction with public. Greater communication with community. (45)
5. To better inform the general public with fire prevention. First aid public education. Safety training. Fire prevention in the form of community education. (37)
6. Capacity to obtain the proper equipment. To have the proper equipment to handle whatever issues there are. (32)



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7. Continue to be a force multiplier for county fire departments for emergency fire suppression, rescue and hazmat incidents. Maintain a close working relationship with other allied public safety entities. (31)
8. Efficient operations. Excellent customer service to citizens and colleagues. Adequate staffing levels for responses. Adequate staff. (31)
9. To be role models in our community. I expect them to conduct themselves professionally. Courteous service. Professional appearance. Positive image. (25)
10. To share with companies information on how it can prevent fire emergencies. Inspections/investigations. Fire safety inspections. (23)
11. Continuous report to the public - emergency response. Transparency. Ensure information travels effectively in both directions. Clarity of standards/expectations/regulations. (12)
12. Good hiring practices. Equal employment opportunities. (10)
13. Mapping out for the public each plan or responsibilities each station is responsible for. Provide equal service delivery levels for all citizens especially in the Poplin Road, Secret Short Cut areas. (8)
14. Availability. I expect them to be approachable. Availability within the community. (7)
15. Change methods/services to keep up with technologies we have today. Be innovative with new products. (6)
16. Well-prepared both physically and mentally to perform their jobs. (4)
17. Treat all citizens equally in response. (3)
18. Educate youth how to become employed by the fire department. (3)
19. Work with city council to meet needs of citizens. Council support. (3)
20. Competitive pay with other departments. (2)
21. Hazardous materials handling. (2)
22. Remain open minded about change associated with emergency scenes. (2)
23. Ensure fiscal responsibility, especially regarding appropriations for equipment and staffing. (2)
24. Maintain ISO rating (citizens remained pleased). (1)
25. Continue to remain accredited the process has elevated service delivery. (1)
26. Up-to-date facilities. (1)





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Areas of Community Concern

The planning process would be incomplete without an expression from the community stakeholders regarding concerns about the organization. Some areas of concern may in fact be a weakness within the delivery system, while some weaknesses may also be misperceptions based upon a lack of information, understanding, or incorrect information.

Respondents were asked to list, in priority order, up to five concerns they have about or for the department. Responses were then analyzed for themes and weighted. The weighting of the prioritized concerns were as follows: if it was the respondent's first entry, then it received five weighted points. Weighting gradually decreased so that if it was the respondent's fifth entry, then it received one weighted point. The weighted themes were then sorted from the highest cumulative weight to the lowest cumulative weight and listed below. The numbers in the parentheses are the cumulative weighted value that correlated with the theme identified. While the themes are listed in prioritized, weighted order, all responses were important in the planning process. The following are the concerns of the community stakeholders prioritized and weighted accordingly:

Areas of Community Concern about the Monroe Fire Department (verbatim, in priority order)

1. Sufficient number of personnel and stations. Adequate staffing and resources to maintain and improve the department to meet growing demand. Maintaining staffing. Keeping up with growth. (53)
2. Potential for budgetary shortfalls in future from changes in economy. Adequate operating budget. Elected officials should know that financing public safety is priority. Funding. (40)
3. Training. Proper training. Continued training. Physical training. (29)
4. Modern equipment always. Proper equipment. Equipment updated. (22)
5. Turnover from retirements. Retention of staff, there does not appear to be any succession planning for the replacement of key staff. (21)
6. Sufficient pay grade recognition. Salary budgets. Wages and benefits at the level needed to recruit and retain employees. Competitive pay to attract best candidates. (20)
7. Safety. I am concerned that the employees are adequately protected from the hazard of the job. (17)
8. Efficient operations in the community - in my neighborhood both the city and the volunteer fire department responds. Some areas have longer than desired response times. Difficulty to fulfill certain needs due to county fire chief's inability to agree on the same items. (16)
9. Response times. Response times to certain areas of the city. (14)



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10. Physical connectivity between stations to facilitate IT needs, information sharing. (12)
11. Makeup of department to reflect community makeup. Minorities in department. Communication barrier with demographics in Monroe. (11)
12. Commitment from outside entities to work with MFD in planning and execution at various situations. Ensure plans are in place and communicated to stakeholders. (9)
13. Continued leadership from city. (9)
14. Specialized units are not permanent, taking away from routine operations - robbing Peter to pay Paul. (7)
15. Call volume from growth. Population impact on resources to handle the increasing population. (6)
16. Missed opportunities. (5)
17. Ability of the fire department to receive proper information from dispatch and in a timely manner. (5)
18. Website is confusing. Sometimes it was hard to find something being that the website is housed under City of Monroe. (5)
19. Hazardous materials being transported through Monroe. (5)
20. Piecemeal review of buildings (new and existing) codes and lack of cooperative planning that cost businesses. (5)
21. System to allow for promotions that is understood by all personnel. (4)
22. Education programs for community. Inform the public about types of training for their safety. (4)
23. Concern for the lack of respect these individuals currently receive for what they do. I am concerned that the fire department is underappreciated. (4)
24. Neighborhood needs. (2)
25. Ability to respond during high traffic time periods. (2)
26. Aircraft crashes. (2)
27. Stronger policies to govern work hours and off work activities. (2)
28. New special operations programs. (1)
29. Fire inspections for companies. (1)
30. Fire based EMS - time to look at it. (1)





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Positive Community Feedback

The CPSE promotes the belief that, for a strategic plan to be valid, the community's view on the organization's strengths must be established. Needless efforts are often put forth in over-developing areas that are already successful. However, proper utilization and promotion of the strengths may often help the organization overcome or offset some of the identified weaknesses.

Positive Community Comments about the Monroe Fire Department (verbatim, in no particular order)

- Leadership is very open to discussion and very knowledgeable.
- Leadership is knowledgeable, accessible, and genuinely cares in matters concerning citizens and community partners.
- Once a relationship is formed with the fire department staff, communication flows faster/easier, which leads to better results for the community.
- Number of stations in the community builds confidence with property owners that quick response are the norm. Appear to have good/ample resources to do the job.
- Fantastic community partner – always willing to help.
- Professional and intelligent leadership. Competent, effective, and adaptable.
- Monroe Fire Department is the gold standards for fire service delivery within Union County. Keep up the good work.
- 100% support of communications – always available.
- Always positive interactions with all administrative staff/always willing to be a part of communications new hire training.
- Excellent communication regarding any issues that arise.
- Allows buy-in from emergency services.
- MFD is willing to do whatever is necessary to aid the community!
- Staff is professional at all times.
- Adequate training is provided for personnel to be effective.
- Where we live, we've always had quick response.
- The responders all seem to be well-trained/very efficient.
- Great response times.
- Well-trained and well-equipped.



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- Strong, seasoned leadership.
- Trained personnel – knowledgeable.
- Courteous service.
- Team-oriented – work well with other city departments.
- Good community presence.
- Response times.
- Community involvement.
- Teamwork.
- Training
- Assistance to other city departments and other fire departments.
- They are very professional.
- Well-trained.
- Department takes pride in their facilities.
- Equipment always clean and ready.
- Department is responsive to all types of calls.
- Department maintains constant training.
- Department personnel are always professional and courteous.
- Meeting the community.
- Day-to-day training.
- Annual inspections.
- Updated trucks.
- Training and equipment – excellent.
- Utilization of facilities.
- Senior leadership in all areas.
- Community – input from all areas.
- Great leadership.
- Commodity.
- Respectful.





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- The safety training classes are fantastic! I have utilized the MFD trainers for three years and highly appreciate their willingness to educate the employees of my facility.
- We have had two situations whereby the MFD had to come to our facility. The response time was almost immediate. I fully trust MFD.
- Excellent response.
- Inspections.
- Public service.
- Training/education.
- Willingness and friendly attitude of the chief and department personnel to involve the community in various activities.
- Stations strategically located throughout the city.
- Minimum response time.
- Knowledge of job function and duties.
- Every person I have dealings with was professional.
- Response times to our facility is always prompt.
- Personable, easy to work with.
- Very knowledgeable team.
- Collaborates with multiple partners – locally, regionally, and beyond.
- Quick to respond in times of emergency or need.
- Very aware of the community they serve – provide for those within the community.
- Employees! The interaction with the fire personnel is always professional and courteous.
- Equipment – well-maintained.
- Administration is always willing to go the extra mile to ensure employees' and the public's needs are met.
- Response to calls are very timely and the crews help in every way possible.
- Employees seem to value working at Monroe Fire Department!
- Professional organization that is able to provide many different facets of service.
- Open means of communication with their other community partners.
- Willingness to open their education, skills, and experiences with other public safety partners.



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- Forward-leaning organization that is open to improvement and bettering themselves.
- Safety conscious and minded.
- Community involvement – I appreciate all MFD does for the community, including educational events for all age groups.
- Every member of the fire department I have encountered has been very professional and helpful. “Customer service” is absolutely phenomenal.
- Sheila is really an asset and has always helped regardless of whether something falls under her job duties or not!
- Initiative taken by Katie Hinson to educate the community has been extraordinary! She has always taken the initiative to consider all residents and their needs when planning outreach programs.
- Great communication!!!
- Ensuring that correct information is being presented with follow up for clarification.
- Willingness to support the community efforts.
- While not expected, staff educate themselves on other regulations outside fire safety that might conflict with fire safety standards, in order to better clarify standards.
- Command staff is very responsive to any and all needs or concerns as they are raised.
- Fire department staff – all – is courteous to anyone they encounter.
- Command staff is open to and encourages training and education above and beyond the normal “expectations.”
- Current fleet is much improved from past experiences.
- Great leadership.
- Prompt response – based on personal experience.
- Knowledgeable – personnel and based on personal experience.
- Well-groomed/dressed personnel.
- Clean vehicles/equipment.
- Good interaction with law enforcement.
- Excellent leadership.
- Community engagement/presence.
- The desire for diverse recruitment.





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- Dedication to the job.
- Willingness to improve.
- Best fire department of the four cities I have lived in.
- Good facilities.
- Continued training.
- Good equipment.
- Has good leadership.
- Has good personnel.
- We have one of the best fire departments in the state.
- Response from both personnel and time have been excellent.
- Work very well with industry.
- Participates with industry in Hazmat drills.
- They seem to be well-trained and willing to do what needs to be done.
- Seen as very respected in the community.
- Good with what they have.
- Work well with other departments in the city.
- Good administration
- Work well with volunteer departments.
- Professionalism/department.
- Connected to their customers (community).
- Always seeking continuous education and advancement regarding technology and educating staff.
- Excellent leadership.
- Community involvement.
- Forward-thinking command staff.
- Innovative plans for the future.
- Good leadership.
- Fire department leadership is fantastic at advocating for its men and women.
- Fast to the fire.



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- Training for fire control.
- Health of firefighters.
- Equipment in good order.
- Innovation of fire equipment.
- Always prepared to handle emergency situations – impressed by their training.
- Extremely knowledgeable in their duties.
- Eager to assist the community in any way! Even if it is not part of their job description.
- Their presence in the community- events/educating others, etc.
- They are always open to partnering with other organizations to help prepare children/seniors on fire safety.
- Always open to working together to install smoke alarms to help save lives.
- Great communications when fires happen to bring in agencies to support those families.
- Very quick response times.
- Caring people helping others and very professional.





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Other Thoughts and Comments

The community was asked to share any other comments they had about the department or its services. The following written comments were received:

Other Community Comments about the Monroe Fire Department (verbatim, in no particular order)

- We have a great fire department, which enhances the quality of life in Monroe.
- Keep up the good work.
- The department has excelled at doing more with less.
- They do a great job!
- They are respected men and women in the community.
- Willing to work with communities.
- Department is well organized and trained.
- There are not enough words to describe how wonderful the whole department is. Whatever your need, they are always there to help with a solution and a smile.
- I feel blessed to be in a partnership with MFD. I entrust them with my safety, as well as with the safety of my employees.
- Excellent bunch of guys.
- Thank you all for the invaluable service you provide. The working relationship exceeds expectations!
- If the staff and personnel of the fire department are a reflection of how the department is doing, I would say keep up the good work! Everyone I have worked with has gone above and beyond to help our residents in Monroe and the entire county. Thank you!
- I enjoy working with the fire marshal's office on ensuring that the clients that I work with are knowledgeable on regulations as it pertains to fire safety.
- Do we have enough stations strategically located and sufficient personnel?
- Keep up the good work!
- I am proud to live in a city, which believes in great public services.
- Monroe has some of the best equipment available.
- I have interacted with the department for over 20 years in my role. While overall rating during that window rates high, the past 5 – 10 years has been excellent. Thank you, MFD.
- Need of new station/and headquarters.



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- Well-oiled machine.
- Does a lot with grants and getting free money.
- It is okay to brag on yourself – paper, etc.
- Social media? It is 2019.
- Could use additional space and staffing for the department.
- Monroe Fire is the leader in the fire service for Monroe/Union County.
- Water supply.
- Navigation.
- Training of new personnel.
- Traffic control – driver training.
- Value in having them at events – being ready to assist or preventing potential accidents or problems. This is work they perform that the community takes for granted or doesn't stop to realize how invaluable the presence is for potential situations!
- I am proud of our partnership with Monroe Fire. They are very professional and always open to ideas on how we can make our community safer.
- Would like to see employees (MFD) sit in at communications (new hires).



Community Stakeholders Work Session





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Appendix 2

Supporting Services of the Monroe Fire Department

911 – Emergency Communications	Chamber of Commerce	Chaplain
City Council	Civic Groups	Community Organizations
County Emergency Management	County Fire Marshal	CPSE/CFAI
CSX Railroad	EMS Transport Services	Honor Guard
Hospitals	Law Enforcement	LEPC
Local Faith-Based Organizations	Local Industry	Mutual/Automatic Aid
NCDOT	Office of the State Fire Marshal	Other City Departments
Professional Associations	Public Safety Committee	Public Works
Red Cross	SPCC	State CERT
State Emergency Management	Training	UASI Region
Vendors	Volunteer Fire Departments	Water Resources Department



Department Stakeholders Work Session



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Appendix 3

Strengths

It is important for any organization to identify its strengths to ensure that it can provide the services requested by the community, and that strengths are consistent with the issues facing the organization. Often, identification of organizational strengths leads to the channeling of efforts toward primary community needs that match those strengths. Programs that do not match organizational strengths, or the primary function of the organization, should be seriously reviewed to evaluate the rate of return on staff time and allocated funds.

Through a consensus process, the department stakeholders identified the department’s strengths as follows:

Strengths of the Monroe Fire Department	
Dependable/modern apparatus – equipment	Health and safety programs (NFPA 1582)
Training certifications – cross-trained staff, HazMat, rescue, etc.	Public fire safety program – PR events, smoke alarms, car seats
Professional development program	Increased certifications – Fire Marshal’s Division
Employee benefits	Accredited agency
Fire Explorer Program	Flexibility, adaptability
Efficiency – doing more with less	Water system
Working relations	Department members
Internal/external relationships – business and industry, other emergency services	Facilities – Station 4- individual bedrooms, training, community room, physical fitness equipment
Competitive pay	College relationships
ISO rating	Plan reviews in the FD – alarm, sprinklers, building
Shift inspectors/investigators	Pre-plan software – access program, on computers
New software programs – training, reporting	City council support – budget
External vendors	Public perception
Role model for county	Progressive – internal improvement
Chaplain	Educated
Remembering history/retirees	Diversified
City/Union County training grounds – gas prop, Conex burn prop	





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Weaknesses

For any organization to either begin or to continue to move progressively forward, it must not only be able to identify its strengths, but also those areas where it functions poorly or not at all. These areas of needed enhancements are not the same as threats to be identified later in this document, but rather those day-to-day issues and concerns that may slow or inhibit progress. The following items were identified by the department stakeholders as weaknesses:

Weaknesses of the Monroe Fire Department	
Staffing (4-person truck)	Staffing – Working at minimum staffing too frequently
Multiple tasks/duties – jack of all trades	Restrains of process
Medic truck program	Lack of funding (Station 6)
Physical/mental programs	Service gaps – long response times
Specialty training and funding	Facilities/remodeling/upgrades
Committees – effectiveness – quality of output, size, info sharing	Professional development – may limit candidate pool for promotion
Technology/integration/staffing	Physical fitness requirement
Stop being last minute	Degree compensation
Compression pay	Lack of succession planning
Ride up expectations – company training, driver training, battalion training	Split companies – L/R, two whole companies, crew continuity
Communications – quality, frequency	Recruit school – hiring process
Evaluation process/expectations	Diversity – hiring process challenges
Plan review – no dedicated staff position	Qualified instructors
Underutilizing direct delivery - training	Delegation/duties – spread wealth
Rate of completion of tasks/assignments	Scheduling events/meetings in advance
No part-time members – fewer personnel	Size of facility/administration/relocation
Additional Fire Marshal/life safety	30-mile radius for residency
Cannot excel because a part of everything	No logistics officer – dedicated



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Opportunities

The opportunities for an organization depend on the identification of strengths and weaknesses and how they can be enhanced. The focus of opportunities is not solely on existing service, but on expanding and developing new possibilities both inside and beyond the traditional service area. The department stakeholders identified the following potential opportunities:

Opportunities for the Monroe Fire Department	
Career development	Higher education – NFA, training programs
Grants – programs for fire safety, safety, personnel, equipment	Growth - budget, department personnel, apparatus, annexation
Community education – apparatus marketing, department processes	Positive role models for the youth within the community – permission and initiative
MFD hosted training – camps	MDA Fill-the-Boot
Multi-agency training	Scott Combat Challenge
Fire resource company for schools	Business connections/facility training
High school fire program – recruitment	Political partners – local and state level
Meeting ERFs with more use of mutual aid	Donations
Civilian employees	Plan review position
Athletic leagues - participation	Union – participation
Relationships – emergency services, industry, local municipalities, schools, citizens/community/diversity, small businesses, outreach programs deployments outside of the city/county, city departments	





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Threats

By recognizing possible threats, an organization can reduce the potential for loss. Fundamental to the success of any strategic plan is the understanding that threats are not completely and/or directly controlled by the organization. Some of the current and potential threats identified by the department stakeholders were as follows:

Potential Threats to the Monroe Fire Department	
Other general fund services vying for funding	Retention (other employment options)
Social media – misuse by members, false accusations	Population shift outside the city
Firefighter health – mental and physical	Road network
News media – TV, papers	Annexation growth
Misunderstandings – MFD procedures/policies	Lack of desired diversity in workforce
Loss of support of elected officials	Technology – need equipment – tablets, replace functions – job force reduction
Loss of public support/trust	Culture/language barriers
Generational cultures	Loss of personnel to other fire departments
Candidates for hiring pool	Public perception/education to public
Economy	Response to domestic threats
Private fire departments	Loss of property value
RNC – riots, protesting	Active shooter



Department Stakeholders Work Session



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Appendix 4

Critical and Service Gap Issues Identified by the Department Stakeholders	
Group 1	Group 2
<p>Succession Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Retirement ○ Turnover ○ Mentoring ○ Assessments ○ Professional development ○ Compensation 	<p>Succession Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recruitment ○ Retention ○ Retirement ○ Professional development ○ Promotional limitations ○ Cross-training
<p>Community Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Add programs – fire resource company ○ Enhance programs – CRR ○ Service delivery ○ Staffing ○ Opportunities ○ Social media technology ○ Scheduling ○ Training ○ Football standby 	<p>External Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Technology ○ Staffing ○ Opportunities ○ Perception ○ Time management ○ Substance – key points ○ Delivery – age group ○ Educations ○ Demographic limitations
<p>Facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Upgrades to stations/offices ○ New/replacements to facilities ○ Logistics – location/maintenance ○ Multi-story burn training facility ○ Additional annexation areas – station request 	<p>Facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Station 1 replacement ○ Stations 2, 3, and 5 – remodel/additions – physical training areas ○ New administration area ○ Station 6 ○ Logistics/truck storage ○ Training grounds ○ Airport
<p>Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Budget request ○ New station opening ○ Split companies ○ Hiring process ○ Full companies ○ Turnover/retention ○ New positions – operations and administration ○ Morale ○ Outside opportunities 	<p>Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ City growth – expansion ○ Fire Marshal’s Office – keeping up with life safety – plans, personnel, prevention ○ Personnel ○ Deployments ○ Requests – honor guard, assessment centers, etc.





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Critical and Service Gap Issues Identified by the Department Stakeholders (continued)	
Group 1	Group 2
Health and Wellness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stress/mental health ○ Peer fitness ○ Nutrition support ○ Incentives ○ Annual physical test ○ Cancer prevention ○ Critical incident stress management 	Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Under-utilization of direct delivery ○ Scheduling ○ Notifications ○ Company-specific specialties ○ Technology ○ Equipment needs
Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IT position ○ Hardware ○ Data analyst/GIS ○ Social media ○ Tracking/trends 	

