



The Municipal Corporation of the Town of Fort Erie

By-law No. 107-2020

Being a By-law to Adopt the Fort Erie Fire & Emergency Services 2021-2030 Strategic Plan and to Repeal By-law No. 72-96

Whereas Section 2(1) of the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997* as amended requires each municipality to establish a program which must include public education with respect to fire safety and certain components of fire prevention; and, to provide such other fire and protection services as it determines may be necessary; and

Whereas Section 5 of the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997* as amended provides that the council of a municipality may establish, maintain and operate a fire department for all or any part of the municipality; and

Whereas By-law No. 141-2015 of the Municipal Council of the Town of Fort Erie provides for the continuation and regulation of the Fort Erie Fire Department; and

Whereas Report No. FES-05-2020 was considered and approved at the Council-in-Committee Meeting on October 13, 2020, to adopt the Fort Erie Fire & Emergency Services 2021-2030 Strategic Plan, in the form of Schedule "A" attached to this by-law;

Now therefore the Municipal Council of The Corporation of the Town of Fort Erie enacts as follows:

1. **That** the Fort Erie Fire & Emergency Services 2021-2030 Strategic Plan attached as Schedule "A" to and forming part of this by-law is approved and adopted.
2. **That** By-law No. 72-1996 is repealed.
3. **That** the Clerk of the Town is authorized to effect any minor modifications, corrections or omissions, solely of an administrative, numerical, grammatical, semantical or descriptive nature to this by-law or its schedules after the passage of this by-law.

Read a first, second and third time and finally passed this 19th day of October, 2020.

Mayor

Clerk

I, Carol Schofield, the Clerk, of The Corporation of the Town of Fort Erie certifies the foregoing to be a true copy of By-law No. 107-2020 of the said Town. Given under my hand and the seal of the said Corporation, this _____ day of _____, 2020.





FORT ERIE FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2030

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MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

As our community grows, and changes, the fire service too must evolve to provide the quality services our customers expect. So, it is with great pride, and enthusiasm that I share the Fort Erie Fire Department's Strategic Plan. This document is one of the most important documents produced by the Fire Department because it will serve as a foundation to meet our future goals both in a forthcoming master plan, and annual operational plans. The strategic plan



was developed by an internal, and external stakeholders committee with the best interests of our municipality at the forefront of our thoughts, and minds. All of the developed goals were intended to accomplish the organization's mission, and vision while aspiring to meet or exceed provincial benchmarks for public safety excellence. As you read through our organizational strategy, you will find progressive objectives such as reaching agency accreditation, recruiting that reflects our diverse population, and the strengthening of our community relationships. We also have many challenges that extend beyond front-line emergency response. Maintaining training, and education levels for our teams in a world of legislative dictation, increasing public expectations, and legal requirements is a significant challenge.

Public education in a municipality as diverse as Fort Erie requires innovation, and creativity. Ensuring code compliance, and building safety in one of Niagara Region's fastest growing communities increases demands on FEFD resources every year. Smartly engaging technology, ensuring effective emergency communications, and maintaining a well-positioned fleet are other examples of the range of challenges we need to address. These goals are intended to be flexible with a vow to reevaluate our position, and the importance of these objectives every year; prioritizing public needs, and the best allocation of our resources, and efforts. As good stewards of public funding, we shall always be fiscally responsible, and transparent in our efforts to provide exceptional service using a volunteer model supported by a strong administrative staff. This plan

MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF CONT'D

represents a collaborative effort that foresees developmental changes in the Town; balancing recommendations for cost performance, and investments on tangible substance, and data.

I believe that our personnel are our most valued asset; a professional team of selfless individuals that strive to continuously improve our organization, and rise to the challenges placed before them. I sincerely believe that our collective efforts will achieve the vision described within the plan; distinguishing the Town of Fort Erie Fire Department as a leader in Ontario's Fire Service community.



Ed Melanson

Fire Chief / Community Emergency Management Coordinator
Fort Erie Fire & Emergency Services

A BRIEF HISTORY

The history of our local firefighting began in 1862. The current fire services evolved from various separate fire departments servicing separate communities into a single fire department with six stations, and finally into the five districts we have today. The six companies were: Fort Erie Fire Company No. 1, Bridgeburg Company No. 2, East Bertie Company No. 3, Ridgeway Company No. 4, Stevensville Company No. 5, and Crystal Beach Company No. 6. The current 5 districts are: Station No. 2, Station No. 3, Station No. 4, Station No. 5, and Station No. 6, all protecting the residents, visitors, and businesses of the Town of Fort Erie.



2013 saw the amalgamation of Station No. 1, and Station No. 2 into the new Station 2, and in 2021 we will see the amalgamation of Station No. 4, and Station No. 6 into the new Station 4. This continued consolidation of districts will see a further reduction in required apparatus, SCBA, cylinders, and other equipment as well as a reduction in required firefighters from 125 to 100.

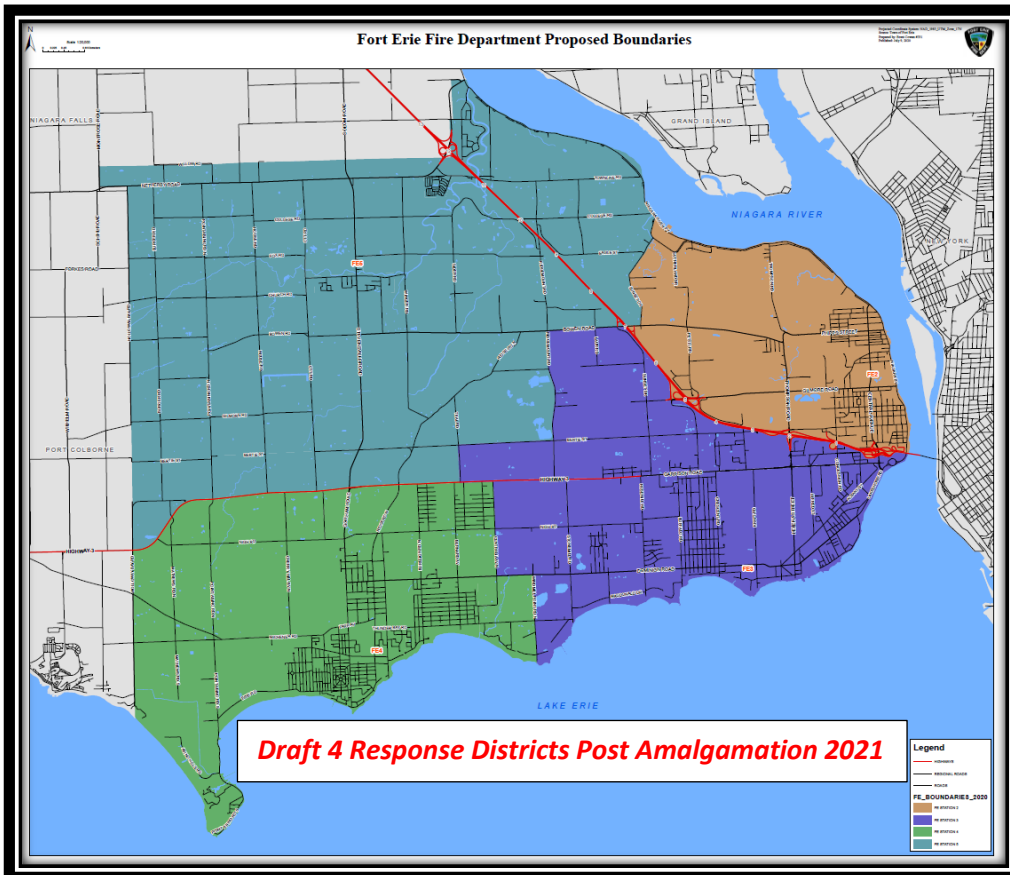
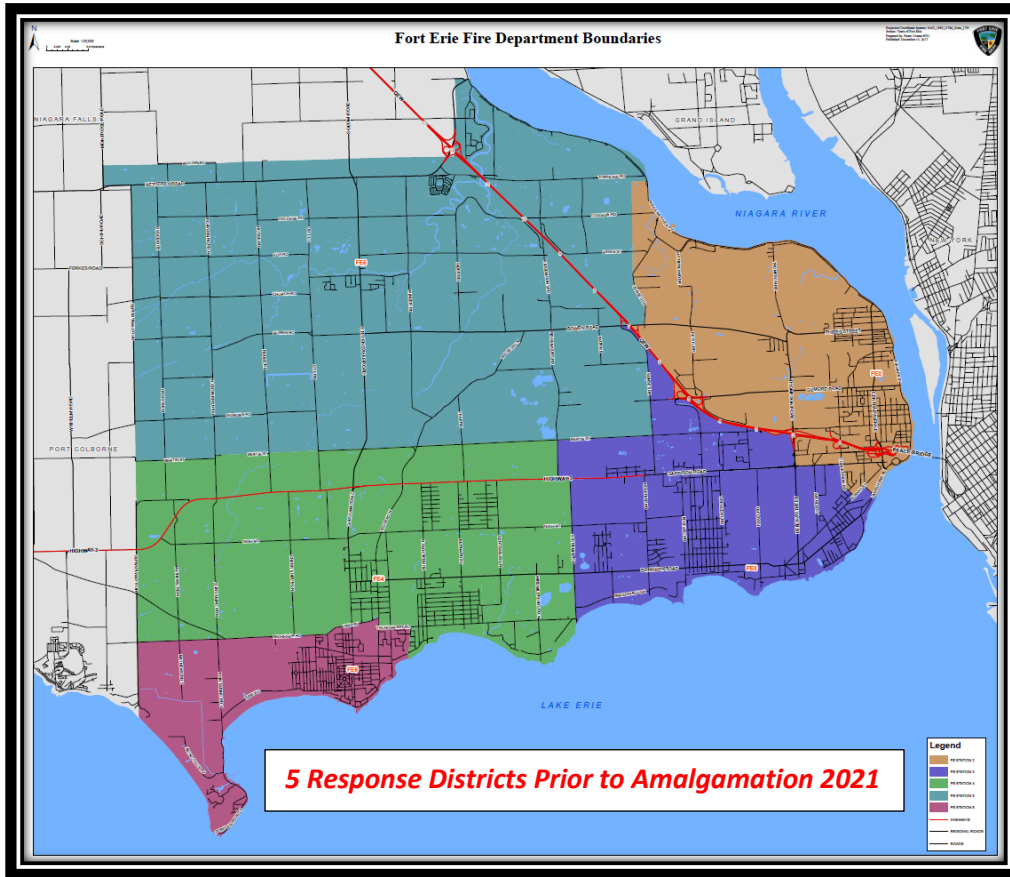


Fort Erie is a “Community of Communities”, and these districts serve them all, including areas with names currently relevant, and areas with names of historical relevance: Amigari, Bay Beach, Bertie Township, Black Creek / Douglastown, Bridgeburg / Victoria / International Bridge, Buffalo Heights, Cozy Dell, Crescent Park, Crystal Beach, Erie Beach/Waverly Beach, Fort Erie/Fort Erie Rapids / Fort Erie Mills / Waterloo, Hard Scrabble, Maplewood / Ridgewood, Mulgrave, Oakhill Forest, Point Abino / Abino Hills, Ridgeway, Rosehill, Shipyards, Snyder / New Germany, Stevensville, Thunder Bay, and Windmill Point / Stone Quarry.

Source: Many Voices II A Collection of History of Greater Fort Erie ~Fort Erie Historical Museum Jane Davies Curator

DISTRICT BOUNDARIES PRESENT AND FUTURE

DISRICTS

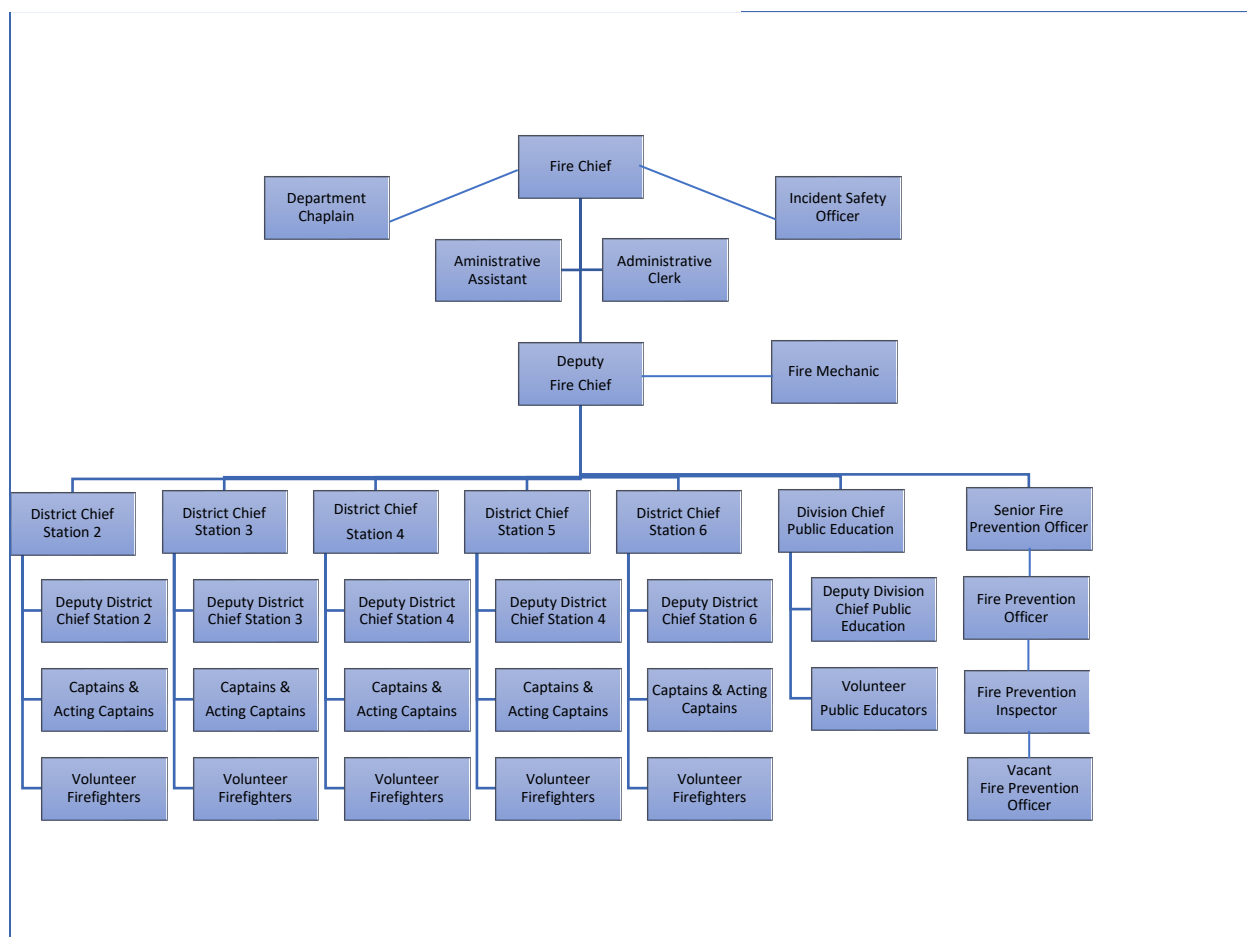


DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Town of Fort Erie proudly serves over 30,000 permanent, and 10,000 seasonal residents. It is the fastest growing urban centre in the Niagara Region. The Town encompasses an area of roughly 169 square kilometres, and is comprised of a number of communities, each with a unique character, and history. Ridgeway, Crystal Beach, Fort Erie proper, and Stevensville are connected by a network of rural farmland, and urban settlements.

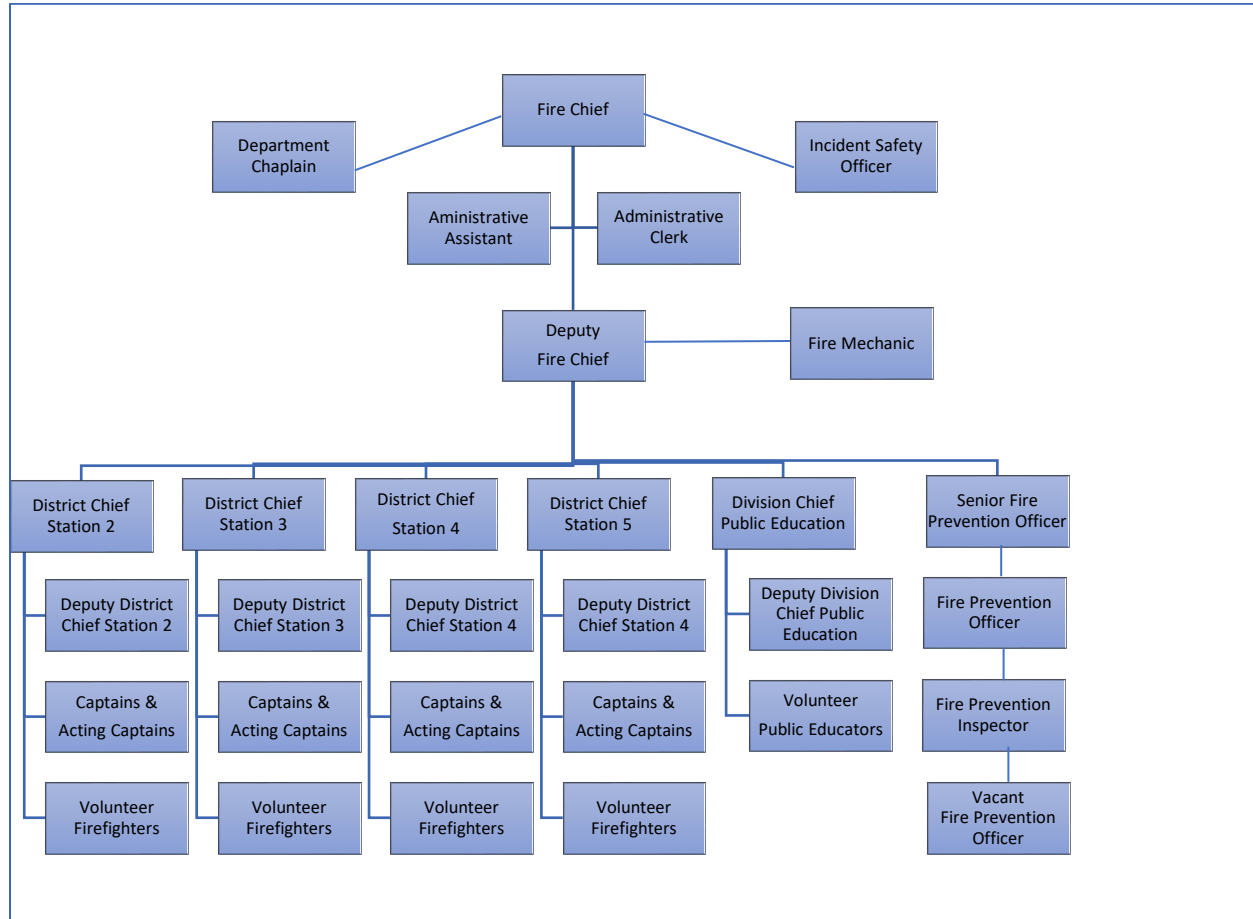
Services are provided by a fire department consisting of 8 full-time staff: Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief, Senior Fire Prevention Officer, Fire Prevention Officer, Fire Prevention Inspector, Administrative Assistant, Administrative Clerk, and a Fire Mechanic. They are also serviced by 124 volunteers, including a Department Chaplain, an Incident Safety Officer, 14 Public Educators, and 108 firefighters.

Organizational Chart Prior to Amalgamation 2021



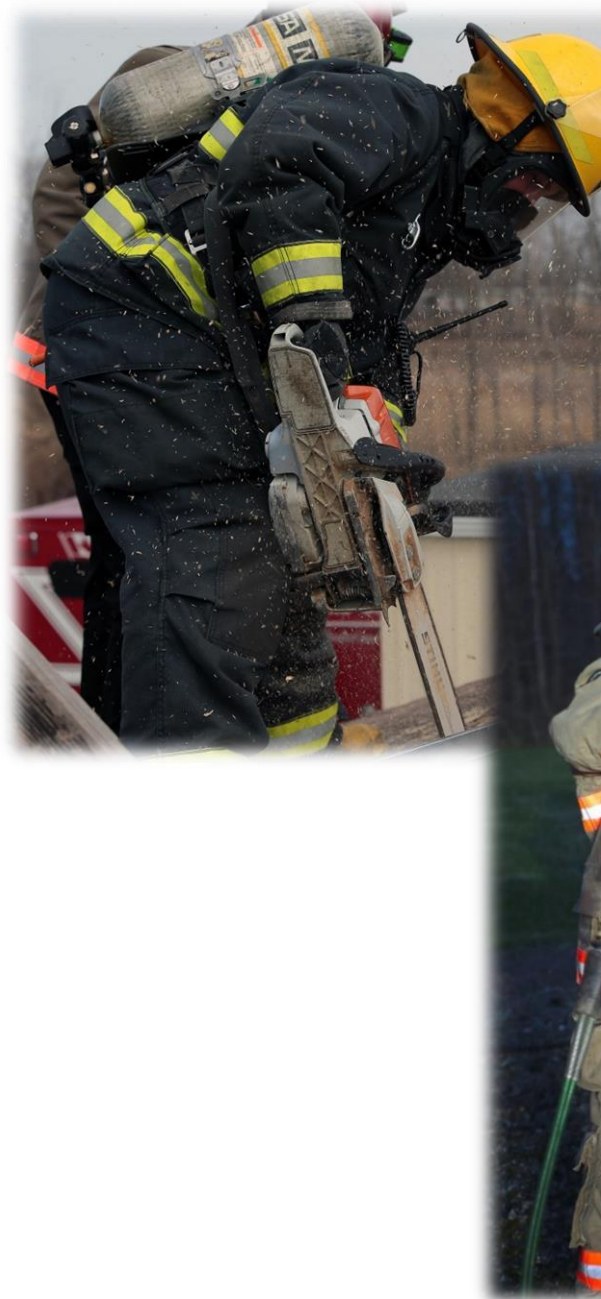
DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW CONT'D

Organizational Chart Post Amalgamation 2021



Officer Compliment March 2020





STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

In order for any organization, public or private, to reach its full potential, it must have a plan. An organization that knows where it is going, understands the environment in which it must operate, and identifies how to get there, will have the best chance of meeting the needs of the community, and achieving its goals.

In 2019 the Fire Chief identified the need to update, and implement a new ten-year Strategic Plan to guide its operations. Integral to the development process was community consultation with key stakeholder groups to determine public expectations regarding services delivered. Insights were leveraged from the planning committee which was made up of retired firefighters, community members, current firefighters, fire administration staff, and Town internal staff who met over several months. The committee consisted of the following members:

Ed Melanson, Fire Chief
 Jeremy Inglis, Former Deputy Fire Chief
 Robert Kirk, Senior Fire Prevention Officer
 Jessica Goodings, Fire Prevention Officer
 Kevin Hesse, Fire Prevention Inspector
 Colleen Bandy, Administrative Assistant
 Rachal Earle-Kirk, Administrative Clerk
 Tom Kuchyt, Chief Administrative Officer
 Jennifer Pennell-Ajie, Executive Assistant Infrastructure Services
 Chris Knutt, Former TOFE Councillor
 Karen Marazzo, Community Member
 Cal Millar, Community Member
 George Orr, Community Member
 Glenn Teal, Retired District Chief
 Jim Douglas, Retired Fire Chief
 Howard Climenhaga, Retired Fire Chief Station No. 6
 Mike Renshaw, Retired District Chief
 Winston Woehl, Retired District Chief
 Scott Collison, Retired Firefighter
 Mark Schmitt, Former District Chief / Current Deputy Chief
 Dan Harkins, Firefighter
 Rob Puttick, Deputy District Chief
 Michael Reinhardt, Captain

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Strategic planning is a process used by an organization to align its everyday operation



Source: <http://fasterthan20.com/toolkit/strategy-culture-bicycle/>

to its mission statement. The Plan is used as a tool by management, and staff to guide the organization through current, and future challenges from within, and outside of the organization while accomplishing defined goals. The process includes the organization asking itself the following questions: **1) Where are we today?**

2) Where do we want to be in ten years? and 3) How can we get there?

These questions are answered through an assessment of current, and potential internal, and external factors that affect the everyday operations of the organization. Once identified, these factors are categorized into overarching issues to address in the next ten years.

The Fort Erie Fire Department has developed this strategic plan to help direct our efforts, and decisions of our personnel to reflect our mission, vision, and core values providing the best service possible to our community.

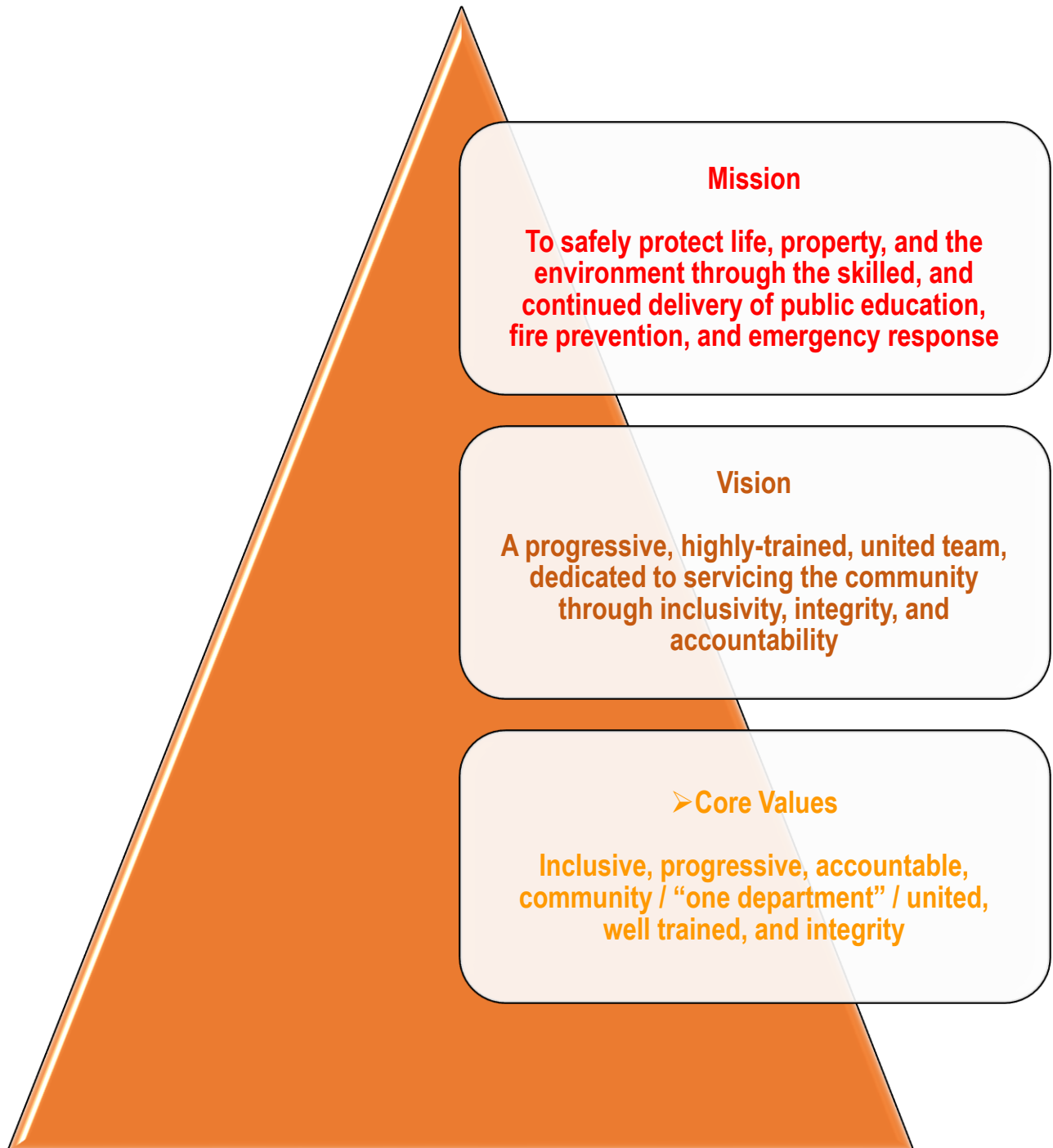
The planning team examined both the current state, and desired future state for the Fort Erie Fire Department. Great emphasis was placed on building all the while critically examining opportunities for improvement. The team also considered future challenges that the department, and community would likely experience, in order to develop the most effective response.

This document is intended to provide strategic direction to the department with a ten-

year perspective, and hence does not provide detail regarding either tactical components or operational service delivery components. The Fort Erie Fire Department's upcoming Master Plan will provide a detailed blueprint of the planned initiatives which support strategic objectives.

MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

The Fort Erie Fire Department's **Mission, Vision, and Core Values**, provide the foundation for the Department to engage in the strategic planning process, and plan how to best achieve the ideals set forth in its mission.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, AND OBJECTIVES

PRIORITIES & OBJECTIVES

The following is a list of strategic priorities, and objectives based on core values:

Strategic Priority

1

Fostering a culture grounded in diversity, and inclusiveness

Strategic Objective: Promoting a diverse, and inclusive department that delivers excellent service to its residents, enabling all employees to reach their full potential

Strategic Priority

2

Leveraging research, and technology to improve service delivery

Strategic Objective: Maintain an innovative work place focused on service excellence

Strategic Priority

3

Promoting accountability to those we serve

Strategic Objective: Promote a culture of respect, accountability, and professional behaviour within the department

Strategic Priority

4

Optimizing Cohesiveness to increase team effectiveness, and performance

Strategic Objective: Achieving one common interest, and direction by aligning all districts/divisions in serving our community as one fire department

Strategic Priority

5

Maintaining a highly skilled workforce

Strategic Objective: Ensuring a highly skilled workforce to manage risk to our firefighters, and the town

Strategic Priority

6

Sustaining community and government trust

Strategic Objective: Committed to moral, and ethical behaviour both on and off duty as we have been entrusted to protect and serve our community

Each of the above 6 strategic priorities/objectives is accompanied by 4 corresponding department led actions which will be used as a guide, and measured outcome for each area, as outlined on the Strategic Plan Table on the next page.



Mission
To safely protect life, property and the environment through the skilled and continued delivery of Public Education, Fire Prevention, and Emergency Response.



Core Values
Inclusive, Progressive, Accountable, Community/ "One Department" / United Well Trained and Integrity



Vision
A progressive, highly trained, united team dedicated to servicing the community through Inclusivity, Integrity and Accountability.



FORT ERIE FIRE DEPARTMENT'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2030

Strategic Priority 1: Fostering a culture grounded in diversity, and inclusiveness	Strategic Priority 2: Leveraging research, and technology to improve service delivery	Strategic Priority 3: Promoting accountability to those we serve	Strategic Priority 4: Optimizing cohesiveness to increase team effectiveness, and performance	Strategic Priority 5: Maintaining a highly-skilled workforce	Strategic Priority 6: Sustaining community, and government trust
Strategic Objective: Promoting a diverse, and inclusive department that delivers excellent service to its residents enabling all employees to reach their full potential	Strategic Objective: Maintain an innovative work place focused on service excellence	Strategic Objective: Promote a culture of respect, accountability, and professional behaviour within the department	Strategic Objective: Achieving one common interest, and direction by aligning all districts/divisions in serving our community as one fire department	Strategic Objective: Ensuring a highly-skilled workforce to manage risk to our firefighters, and the town	Strategic Objective: Committed to moral, and ethical behaviour both on, and off duty as we have been entrusted to protect and serve our community
Strategic Action 1.1: Embed inclusion into all policies, programs, and services	Strategic Action 2.1: Maintain a Volunteer Fire Department Model through investment, and engagement	Strategic Action 3.1: Reinforce positive behaviour, and celebrate our successes through tangible acknowledgements	Strategic Action 4.1: Build cohesion, and camaraderie between all districts/divisions	Strategic Action 5.1: Development a comprehensive employee development program	Strategic Action 6.1: Implement a framework for ethical decision making in our department
Strategic Action 1.2: Build an accessible, and healthy workplace free from harassment, and discrimination	Strategic Action 2.2: Implement an accepted fire specific quality system to allow continuity, and efficiencies for future needs	Strategic Action 3.2: Set realistic standards for staff, and hold them accountable, promoting the corporate conduct policy	Strategic Action 4.2: Develop standard lesson plans for all skill sets to be utilized by all personnel	Strategic Action 5.2: Develop targeted training to meet emerging needs	Strategic Action 6.2: Hiring ethical employees who value the department's culture, making them trustworthy to co-workers, customers, and stakeholders
Strategic Action 1.3: Reflect the public we serve at all levels of the organization	Strategic Action 2.3: Identify, and plan for required technology enhancements to increase efficiency	Strategic Action 3.3: Build a culture of self respect within the ranks, and with top down support for officers with appreciation, and understanding for the roles of each division	Strategic Action 4.3: Increase employee investment in organizational goals	Strategic Action 5.3: Ensure ongoing leadership development	Strategic Action 6.3: Review, and measure levels of service to confirm that we say what we do, do what we say, and prove it
Strategic Action 1.4: Leverage the diversity of all staff, and respond to the needs of a diverse population	Strategic Action 2.4: Develop, and align services to meet evolving needs	Strategic Action 3.4: Establish tangible reminders of the FEFD values	Strategic Action 4.4: Prepare community to be resilient	Strategic Action 5.4: Promote, and enhance work place safety	Strategic Action 6.4: Develop a respectful workplace for internal, and external customers

Strategic Priority 1: Fostering a culture grounded in diversity, and inclusiveness

Strategic Objective: An inclusive department that delivers excellent service to its residents, and enables all employees to reach their full potential

Strategic Actions

Fire Department-Led Actions	Success Measured by
1.1 Embed inclusion into all policies, programs, and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attract competitive candidates• Policies, programs, and service align with objectives.
1.2 Build an accessible, and healthy workplace free from harassment, and discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased productivity• Reduced absenteeism• Absence of complaints
1.3 Reflect the public we serve at all levels of the organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop communication methods to meet the needs of our diverse population
1.4 Leverage the diversity of all staff, and respond to the needs of a diverse population	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased communication capabilities with diverse public• Increased participation reflecting our communities diverse makeup

Strategic Priority 2: Leveraging research, and technology to improve service delivery

Strategic Objective: Maintain an innovative work place focused on service excellence

Strategic Actions

Fire Department-Led Actions		Success Measured by
2.1	Maintain a Volunteer Fire Department Model through investment, and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Retention of members in the department• No shortfalls in staffing levels
2.2	Implement an accepted fire specific quality system to allow continuity, and efficiencies for future needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Successful CFAI accreditation
2.3	Identify, and plan for required technology enhancements to increase efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved response times through benchmarking• Ability to take on more projects/programs/responsibilities while maintaining current budgetary levels• Increased investment in hardware, and software solutions
2.4	Develop, and align services to meet evolving needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased internal, and external customer satisfaction

Strategic Priority 3: Promoting accountability to those we serve

Strategic Objective: Promote a culture of respect, accountability and professional behaviour within the department

Strategic Actions

Fire Department-Led Actions	Success Measured by
3.1 Reinforce positive behaviour, and celebrate our successes through tangible acknowledgements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of award system to promote accountability in all divisions• Increased participation in certification courses• Reduced personality conflicts within the department
3.2 Set realistic standards for staff, and hold them accountable, and promote the corporate conduct policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scheduled annual reviews of all policies, guidelines, and procedures• Increased access to fire department policies, guidelines, and procedures
3.3 Build a culture of self respect within the ranks, and with top down support for officers with appreciation, and understanding for the roles of each division	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members become more adept problem solvers, and team members• Continue to develop, and measure officer performance using comparative reviews
3.4 Establish tangible reminders of the FEFD values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a fire specific code of conduct

Strategic Priority 4: Optimizing cohesiveness to increase team effectiveness, and performance

Strategic Objective: Achieving one common interest, and direction by aligning all districts/divisions in serving our community as one fire department

Strategic Actions

Fire Department-Led Actions		Success Measured by
4.1	Build cohesion, and camaraderie between all districts/divisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer experience consistent in districts/divisions
4.2	Develop standard lesson plans for all skillsets to be utilized by all personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standard training methodologies across districts/divisions• All apparatus, and stations set up in a similar fashion
4.3	Increase employee investment in organizational goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased participation on committees
4.4	Prepare community to be resilient	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased community investment in events• Reduced 911 calls during town emergencies

Strategic Priority 5: Maintaining a highly skilled workforce

Strategic Objective: Ensuring a highly skilled workforce to manage risk to our firefighters and the town

Strategic Actions

Fire Department-Led Actions	Success Measured by
5.1 Development a comprehensive employee development program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Filling positions internally with existing staff
5.2 Develop targeted training to meet emerging needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop, and implement processes identified as gaps in level of service, maintenance or proceduresReview, create, and maintain lesson plans to reflect emerging or changing methods
5.3 Ensure ongoing leadership development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Annual officer reviews improve each yearIncrease in courses specific to officer development, and employee health and safety
5.4 Promote, and enhance work place safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reduced claimsPromote continued improvement through the post incident analysis (PIA) process, and near miss reports

Strategic Priority 6: Sustaining community, and government trust

Strategic Objective: Committed to moral, and ethical behaviour both on, and off duty as we have been entrusted to protect and serve our community.

Strategic Actions

Fire Department-Led Actions	Success Measured by
6.1 Implement a framework for ethical decision making in our department	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lowered officer consultation in ethical decision making
6.2 Hiring ethical employees who value the department's culture, making them trustworthy to co-workers, customers, and stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A decrease in human resources related issues
6.3 Review, and measure levels of service to confirm we say what we do, do what we say, and prove it	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Annual audits of divisions to confirm adherences to policies, procedures, and measures
6.4 Develop a respectful workplace for internal, and external customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased retention of staffReduced complaints as a result of increased satisfaction

SUCCESS OF INITIATIVES

The success of these initiatives will not only depend upon the implementation of the current (6) initiatives, and their related (24) objectives, it will also depend upon our assessment of where the Department stands today as we dedicate ourselves to these shared objectives.

A more detailed approach to the Strategic Plan will be addressed in the Fire Department 10-Year Master Plan.

SUCCESS