

July 2022

Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services

**FIVE YEAR
STRATEGIC PLAN**

Contents

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Strategic Planning Process.....	3
COLUMBUS FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES	3
Vision Statement, Mission Statement, Statement of Value	3
Columbus Consolidated Government.....	4
Community Vision Statement.....	4
Type of Government.....	4
Department Background	6
Department Staffing Overview	7
Department Divisions.....	8
Community Risk Reduction.....	8
Operations	8
Resource Management.....	9
Training.....	9
Budget.....	9
Insurance Services Office	10
All Hazard All Emergencies Mutual Aid Agreement.....	11
External Agency Relationships	11
Historical Data 2017-2021.....	13
Strategic Planning Process	14
Process and Acknowledgements.....	15
Stakeholder Session Results.....	17
Department Stakeholder Session Results.....	18
Programs and Support Services.....	21
S.O.A.R. Analysis.....	22
Strengths.....	22
Opportunities.....	23
Aspirations.....	24
Results.....	24
CPSE 21st Century Critical Issues	
Strategic Initiatives / Goals and Objectives.....	26



Executive Summary

The Columbus Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (CFEMS) is an all-hazards response agency providing emergency and non-emergency services to the residents, businesses, visitors, and military community of Columbus and Muscogee County. Internationally accredited by the Center for Fire Accreditation International, the CFEMS is results oriented and performance driven. The department seeks to provide world class service to the community by investing in our members and exploring innovative solutions to emerging challenges in emergency services

The Columbus Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services' Strategic Plan provides a realistic approach that will effectively guide our department's pursuit of excellence for the next five years. The department's goal is to provide emergency and non-emergency services in an effective, fiscally responsible, and compassionate manner. The strategies to achieve our stated vision in the next five years are as follows:

- ***Utilize and Develop Our Members to Their Fullest Potential***
- ***Maximize Available Resources***
- ***Respond to the Growth of Our Community and the Changing Needs of Our Customers***
- ***Leverage Advanced Technology to Improve Safety and Efficiency***
- ***Encourage members to "Think Out of The Box" to Address Challenges***

The success of our strategic plan is contingent upon commitment from our elected officials, citizens (customers) and most importantly our personnel. To ensure an effective implementation of the strategic plan, the department will evaluate its progress on an annual basis. Focus on plan initiatives will reflect the current environment, and adaptations will be reflective of new and emerging opportunities and threats.

While our strategic plan is not based exclusively on funding, several of our goals will require resources from local funding, grants or other sources. We will strive to capitalize on the diverse talents of our personnel to accomplish the goals that do not require funding. It is the intent of the CFEMS to achieve our vision by embracing our values in the execution of our mission.

Salvatore J. Scarpa, Fire-EMS Chief
Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services

Strategic Planning Process

The strategic planning process is conducted annually and includes formalized input from both internal and external customers making the department strategic plan more community driven.

COLUMBUS FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Vision Statement

To be a model of excellence by developing innovative leaders to meet the evolving needs of the community, thereby setting the standard for other departments through professionalism and commitment to the department mission and core values.

Mission Statement

The Columbus Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services is dedicated to the protection of life, property, and the environment by providing professional and courteous service of exceptional quality through incident mitigation, education, and prevention as an all-hazards response agency.

Statement of Values

We, the members of the Columbus Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services are committed to the following values in our interactions with coworkers and customers:

- **P**rofessionalism – In application, appearance, and attitude
- **R**espect – For each other, our Department, the Columbus Consolidated Government, and our customers
- **I**ntegrity – Demonstrate honesty and fairness
- **D**iversity – Be open minded and responsive to the uniqueness of our community and department members without regard to race, age, gender, religion, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation
- **E**xcellence – Strive to provide the very best service possible

Columbus Consolidated Government

The community vision statement for Columbus originates from the City's 2028 Comprehensive Plan and echoes the community's will, expressed during the community involvement process. It is paramount to the strategies and policies outlined in this Plan. The day-to-day decisions of the city over the next 20 years should meet the core ideals of this statement.

Community Vision Statement

The City of Columbus will continue to be a unified city in which all members work together to achieve common goals; and in which individuality and diversity are embraced and respected. It will be a regional center of commerce and culture; a city in which the commitment to growth and economic development is matched by the commitment to the highest quality of life for all citizens.

Type of Government

Columbus, Georgia is a consolidated government, which establishes a single countywide government with powers and jurisdiction throughout the territorial limits of Muscogee County. The Charter of the Columbus Consolidated Government provides for a mayor-council-city manager form of government. The mayor is aided by a city manager that, in the performance of his duties, is responsible to the mayor. The elected mayor, who also serves as the City's Public Safety Director, is a full-time position. The Council consists of ten (10) elected councilor positions of which eight (8) members are elected from established council districts and two (2) are at large elected members.

The Consolidated Government provided by the Charter shall be known as the Mayor-Council-City Manager form of government. The Mayor shall be aided by City Officers, who, in the performance of their duties, shall be responsible and accountable to the Mayor except as otherwise provided in the Charter, by Georgia Law or by Rules of the State Bar of Georgia. Those persons who are deemed to be City Officers are set forth in sec. 4-300 of the Charter, as amended. Section 4-300 states the City Officers of Columbus, Georgia shall consist of the City Manager, the City Attorney, the Chief of the Columbus Police Department, the Chief of the Columbus Fire and EMS Department and the Warden of the Muscogee County Prison, all of whom shall be responsible to and accountable to the Mayor of Columbus, Georgia, except as otherwise provided in the Charter, by Georgia law or by Rules of the State Bar of Georgia.

COLUMBUS, GEORGIA Community Profile

Muscogee County 2020 Census Demographics	
Population	Total
Population estimates base, April 1, 2020, (V2021)	206,922
Population, 2010	191,122

Age and Sex	%
Persons under 5 years, percent	7.10%
Persons under 18 years, percent	24.70%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	13.70%
Female persons, percent	51.40%

Race and Hispanic Origin	%
White alone, percent	45.20%
Black or African American alone, percent(a)	48.00%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent(a)	0.50%
Asian alone, percent(a)	2.80%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent(a)	0.20%
Two or More Races, percent	3.20%
Hispanic or Latino, percent(b)	7.70%

Department Background

The Columbus, Georgia Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services is rich in tradition with 190 years of service to the citizens of Columbus, Georgia. With a staff of dedicated professionals, the Department provides high quality community risk reduction, fire suppression, emergency medical, hazardous materials response, and rescue services to the citizens and visitors of Columbus from fourteen (14) locations throughout the City.

The Department is currently organized into four (4) divisions: Community Risk Reduction, Operations, Resource Management and Training. The Chief of Fire and Emergency Medical Services is the Chief Administrative Officer and is responsible for the overall operation of the Department. The Chief reports directly to the Mayor who serves as the Public Safety Director.

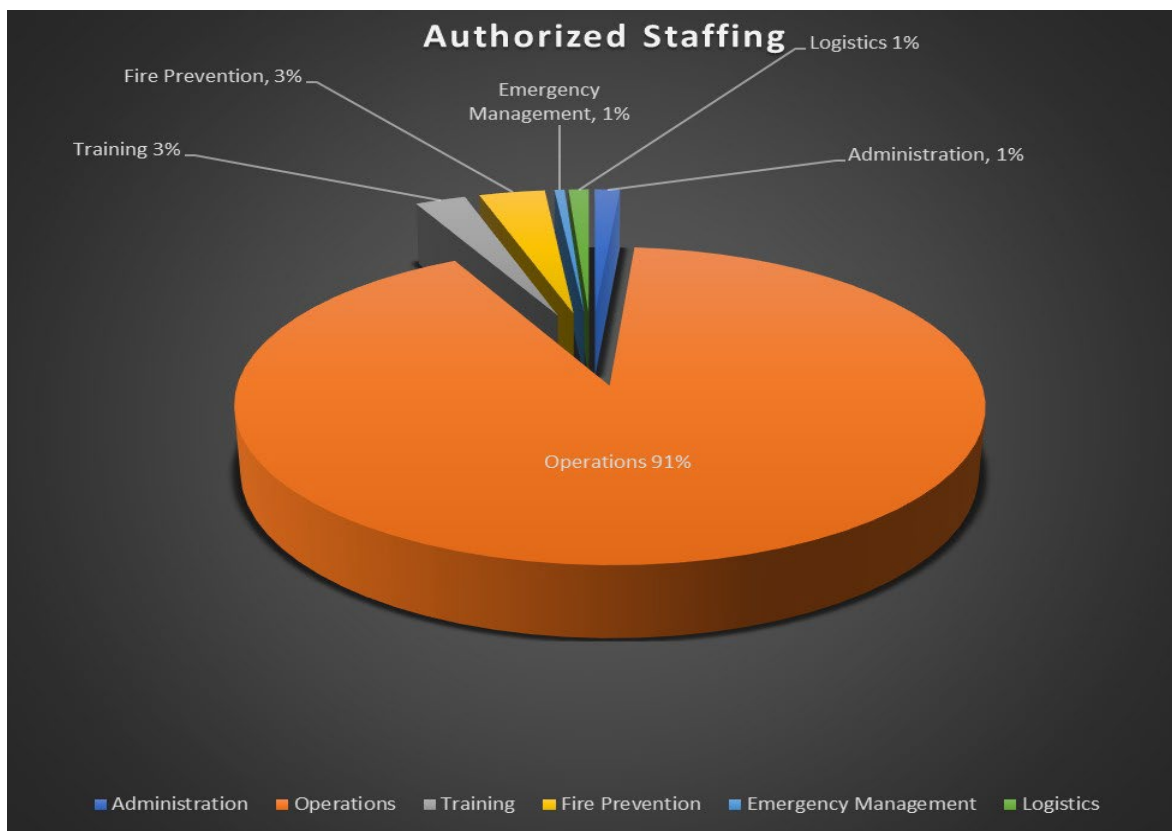
The City of Columbus has a Class 1-1x Public Protection Classification rating through the Insurance Services Office (ISO). The Department has achieved international accreditation through the Center for Fire Accreditation International. The Department currently operates a total of 31 units. Approximately 98% of personnel in the Operations Division trained in Advanced Life Support.

The department began providing paramedic training in 2006 to qualified personnel. In 2017, the CFEMS paramedic program achieved accredited status by the Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions. The department is striving to achieve a response model that includes - at its core - personnel certified to render the most advanced level of emergency service to the citizens and visitors of Columbus, Georgia.

As the City continues to grow there will be an increase in risks and demand for emergency services. This growth may require deployment of additional facilities, emergency equipment and staffing to effectively meet the community's need for emergency services. The CFEMS will also seek out innovative solutions and partnerships that can meet organizational needs. The Department will continue to work with elected officials, partners, and stakeholders to meet the needs of our community.

Department Staffing Overview

The Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services is authorized 381 total positions, 374 fulltime-sworn positions, 1 civilians, and 6 clerical positions. The Department maintains 14 stations and 4 support facilities located throughout the city. With a coverage area of approximately 220 square miles, the Department responded to 42,925 emergency alarms in 2021. This represents a 9% increase in call volume from 2018.



DEPARTMENT DIVISIONS

Community Risk Reduction

- Community Risk Reduction (CRR) is responsible for the enforcement of life safety codes, issuance of permits, and plan review for suppression/detection systems, flow tests, new hydrant placement, and conducts life safety inspections. CRR personnel are involved with numerous fire and life safety initiatives that improve the safety of our citizens. These programs include the following: free home safety survey, residential carbon monoxide checks, school fire safety education, juvenile fire setter program, free smoke alarm installation, and community improvement projects. The Division utilizes a mobile fire safety house trailer to enhance the public fire education program in schools.
- The division maintains a Georgia certified law enforcement agency. This division also investigates fires for origin and cause. The division is responsible for coordinating with the District Attorney's office for the prosecution of fire related criminal activity and responds to customer inquiries and complaints. The division is aided by an accelerant detection K-9.

Operations

- The Operations Division is responsible for delivering fire suppression, emergency medical services, and specialized rescue services to include hazardous materials emergency response, high angle rescue, confined space rescue, trench rescue, and water rescue/recovery to the community. The division has a total staff of 348 sworn personnel. The city is divided into three battalions with a minimum of 95 personnel on duty per shift. Personnel work a 24/48- hour work schedule. The Division responds multiple units to the majority of approximately 57,000 emergency responses annually. The division operates from fourteen stations which, house a total of thirteen engine companies six ladder companies, three command vehicles, two squad companies, one Georgia Search and Rescue (GSAR) heavy rescue unit, and twelve advanced life support ambulances (six of which are operated by private ambulance services). The Operations Division is managed by one Deputy Chief that oversees the day-to-day operations and one Rescue Captain/coordinator that manages all special operations' resources (including training and equipment) and assists in Special Operations incidents.

The division has infrared imaging systems on every engine, ladder and squad throughout the department. Each apparatus is equipped with an automatic external defibrillator (AED) and a full complement of medical first responder equipment. Extrication equipment is placed strategically throughout the city for accessibility and is located on every ladder company, both squad companies, and Engine 15.

Ambulances are supplied with the required Georgia Department of Health equipment.

Resource Management

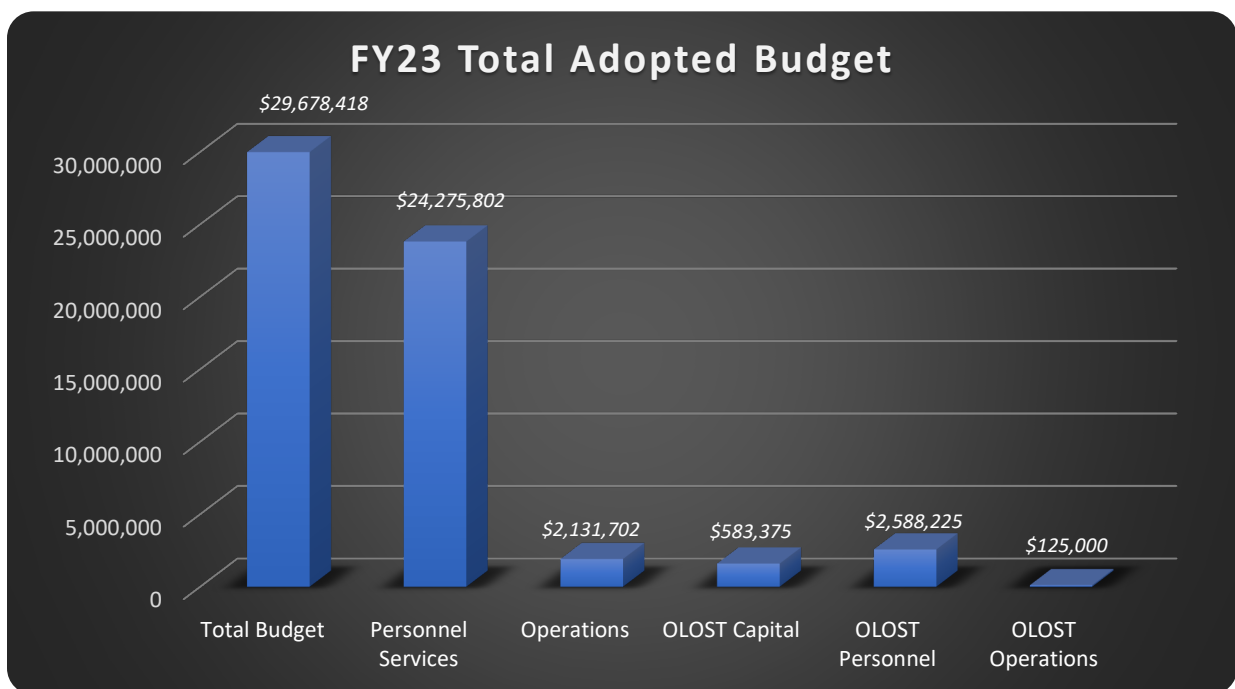
- The Resource Management Division is responsible for the budget process to include research/development, procurement, bid specifications, and ensuring the efficient repair/replacement of all emergency equipment assigned to the department. The division works closely with other city departments to ensure the efficient repair of the department's facilities and vehicles. The division supplies fourteen stations and four support facilities with emergency and non-emergency equipment and is responsible for all records pertaining to the repair/replacement of all personal protective equipment. This includes the required testing, repair, and replacement of self-contained breathing apparatus. The division provides rehabilitation services at emergency incidents and is responsible for issuing uniforms and personal protective equipment to all sworn personnel.

Training

- The Training Division conducts and coordinates all department training activities including but not limited to recruit training, fire suppression, emergency medical, rescue, officer development and other training programs as necessary to meet established state and federal mandates each year. The division is responsible for ensuring that all department members meet the requirements as set forth by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Insurance Services Office (ISO), Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training, Columbus Consolidated Government, Georgia Department of Health, and the internal requirements of the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services.

Budget

The Department is funded through the Columbus Consolidated Government's General Fund Budget. The Department's fiscal year 2022 approved budget including OLOST is \$29,678,418



Insurance Services Office

The City (Fire/EMS, 911 Dispatch and Columbus Water Works) were re-evaluated by the Insurance Services Office (ISO) in March of 2017 and are due for a visit in 2022. The new public protection classification of 1- 1x became effective September 1, 2017.

Planning:

- Any proposed additional stations and unit assignments will be determined annually based on statistical data from the population densities, heat maps and the department's benchmark and baseline standards.

Current Station and Emergency Vehicle Locations (Macon)

2022

Station Locations	Units Assigned
Station One – 10 th Street	B1, E1, L1, M1, R-1, R-2
Station Two – 33 rd Street	E2, M2, RE-2, RE-9, M-22
Station Three- American Way	E3, M3
Station Four – North Oakley Drive	E4, L4, M4
Station Five – Lynch Road	E5, M5, RE5
Station Six – Brown Avenue	E6, L6, M6, S6, D6
Station Seven – Buena Vista Road	E7, M7
Station Eight – Whitesville Road	E8, L8, M8, B2
Station Nine – Macon Road	E9, M9, GSAR
Station Ten – Benning Drive	E10, L10, M10, M16
Station Eleven – Warm Springs Road	E11, S11, M11
Station Twelve- Cargo Drive	L12, B3
Station Fourteen – Old River Road	E14, Command Bus
Station Fifteen – McKee Road	E15, RL15
Logistic Support – 3 rd Ave	RM-1, RM-2, RM-3, RM-4

All Hazard All Emergencies Mutual Aid Agreement

The Emergency Management Office maintains all hazard/all emergencies mutual aid agreements with local, state and federal agencies to provide for additional assistance and resources to this jurisdiction in the event of a disaster. These agreements are reciprocal in scope and clearly define the Department's responsibilities, limitations and liabilities in the event these agreements become activated. The Department is also a member agency of the Georgia Mutual Aid Group and is designated as Georgia Search and Rescue (GSAR) Task Force 9. These agreements have been adopted by the governing authority and signed by the Mayor.

Through these agreements, the Department has immediate access to additional equipment and staffing to respond to and mitigate major emergency situations in the most cost efficient manner possible. The agreements are mutually beneficial to Columbus and the surrounding communities.

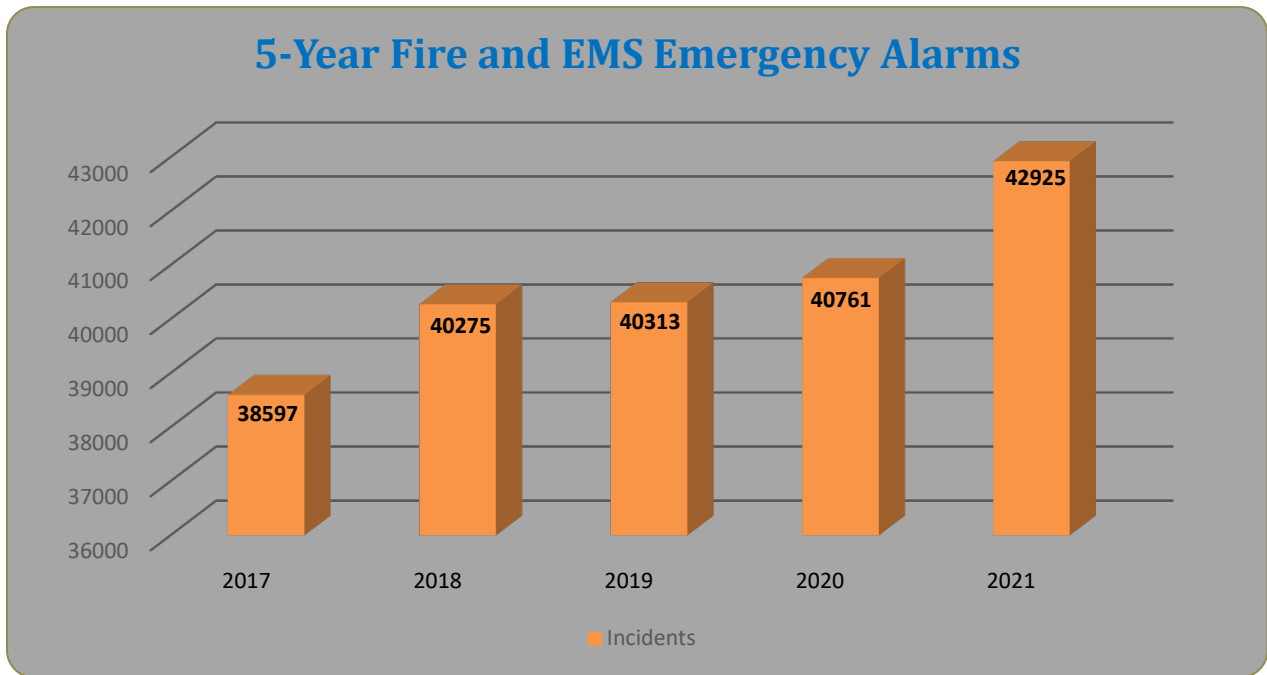
The Department does not maintain an automatic aid agreement with any agency. This is due primarily to the fact that the surrounding departments are either not strategically located or staffed to respond within our jurisdiction in a timely manner.

External Agency Relationships

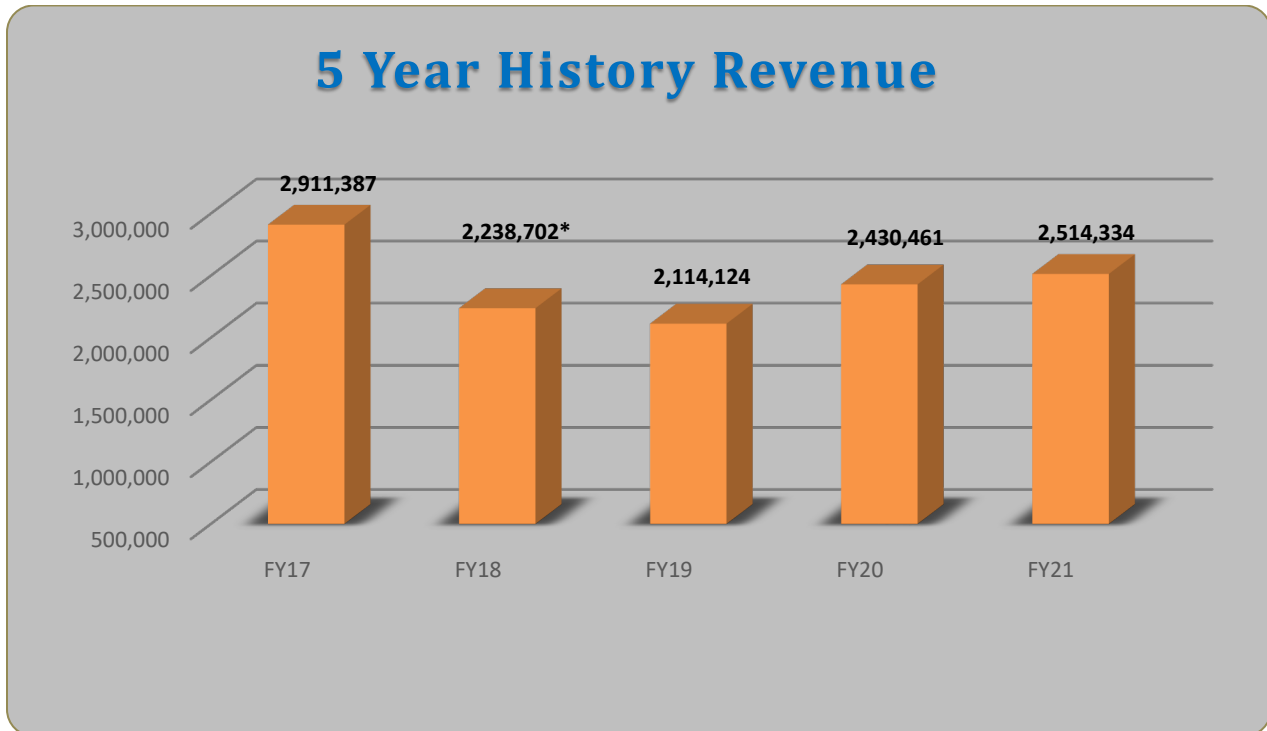
An integral part of the Department's success in meeting the needs of our citizens is our relationship with external support agencies. These agencies function as partners in our effort to provide quality emergency service to the community. These partners include but are not limited to the American Red Cross and Salvation Army.

The Red Cross and Salvation Army work closely with the Department in meeting the critical needs of families who have lost their home due to fire or other emergencies. The Red Cross provides temporary shelter and other resources for families during crisis situations. The Salvation Army is available on long term operations to respond and provide emergency responders support by providing meals and drinks.

Historical Data 2017-2021



***The alarm history is determined by the last incident number of each year.**



*** The drop in revenue in FY 18 was due to adding two additional private ambulances.**

Strategic Planning Process

A key element of the CFEMS's organizational philosophy is having a high level of commitment to the community, as well as recognizing the importance of community. The community-driven strategic planning process seeks input from the community, internal and external stakeholders, and department members. The process helps the department figure out where we are going, how all participating parties can work together for the better service delivery, and how progress toward goals that can be measured.

The Community-Driven Strategic Planning Process

1. Define the programs provided to the community.
2. What are the community's service program priorities and expectations of the organization?
3. What are the community's concerns about the organization, as well as positive feedback and strengths of the organization?
4. Department stakeholder sessions to revisit the mission statement, values statement, and vision statement of the organization.
5. Identify the internal Strengths and Opportunities of the organization.
6. Identify organization Aspirations and Results.
7. Identify the organization's critical issues and service gaps.
8. Determine strategic initiatives for organizational improvement.
9. Establish a realistic goal and objectives for each initiative.
10. Identify implementation tasks for the accomplishment of each objective.
11. Develop organizational and community commitment to accomplishing the plan.

Process and Acknowledgements

The Department of Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services wants to acknowledge and thank the community, our internal and external stakeholders, and department members for their invaluable participation in the strategic planning process. Beginning in March 2022, meetings were held with community stakeholders to include a diverse group of citizens who live or work within the department's response area. A subsequent internal stakeholder meeting was held for government officials and city department representatives. An external stakeholder session was then held for CFEMS partners to include hospitals, educational partners, media, mutual aid, etc. A CFEMS members session compiled the results of these meetings to create our current plan.

Community Stakeholders		
Scott Ressmeyer	Cassie Higgins	James Hillenbrand
Butch Jordan	John Anker	Ron Jones
Laura Lowe	Mak Son	Greg Lang
Elaine Gillespie	Valerie Ward	Kevin Loncher



External Stakeholders		
Chris Peltier	Jason Ritter	Tim Seigal
Joe Robinson	Kenny Harrison	Dr. Jeffrey Bohler
Scott Hill	Andrea Owen	Dr. Ben Kamau
Jeremy Bolen	Melody Trimble	Andre Parker
Dr. Kermelle Hensley	Pam Fair	Kevin Clarke

Internal Stakeholders		
Skip Henderson	Curtis Lockett	Jeremy Cummings
Isaiah Hugley	Drale Short	Darrell Enfinger
Bruce Huff	Andrea Owen	Reather Hollowell
Judy Thomas	Angelica Alexander	Skip Hansberger
Freddie Blackmon	Kevin White	John Broom
Jeremy Miles	Holi Browder	Donna Newman
	Aveana Jackson	



Stakeholder Session Results

Community satisfaction is paramount to a successful community-driven strategic plan. The department conducted three feedback sessions that included community stakeholders, internal stakeholders (government officials and city department representatives), and external stakeholders (wide variety of department community partners) to provide feedback in the areas of prioritization of services, expectations, concerns, and positive feedback/strengths of the organization. Results from the community, internal, and external stakeholder sessions allowed the department to garner a better understanding of identified gaps in current delivery of services.

Stakeholder Groups Priority of Services Provided

To ensure the department focuses time, effort, and resources to services our stakeholders determined to be of highest priority, the department asked the stakeholders to prioritize services offered by the department through a process of direct comparison. Results are listed below:

Community Stakeholders

Program	Ranking	Score
Emergency Medical Services	1	77
Fire Suppression	2	65
Technical Rescue	3	60
Tactical Medic	4	45
Hazardous Materials Mitigation	5	36
Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response	6	33
Public Fire and Life Safety Education	7	31
Community Risk Reduction	8	26
Fire Investigations, Cause and Origin	9	19

Internal Stakeholders

Program	Rank	Total
Emergency Medical Services	1	95
Fire Suppression	2	91
Technical Rescue	3	86
Hazardous Materials Mitigation	4	63
Tactical Medic	5	56
Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response	6	29
Community Risk Reduction	7	28
Fire Investigations, Cause and Origin	8	28
Public Fire and Life Safety Education	9	19

External Stakeholders

Program	Rank	Total
Emergency Medical Services	1	102
Hazardous Materials Mitigation	2	93
Fire Suppression	3	88
Technical Rescue	4	86
Tactical Medic	5	73
Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response	6	55
Fire Investigations, Cause and Origin	7	46
Public Fire and Life Safety Education	8	39
Community Risk Reduction	9	29

Stakeholder Expectations

Insight into what stakeholders expect from the organization is critical in the development of a comprehensive strategic plan. Topping all prioritization of services lists were the emergency services the department provides to the citizens of Columbus. The top expectation was a quick response to community calls for assistance. Other top expectations were community safety and education, well trained personnel, and community involvement. The department will focus on all critical areas of operations. Changes to the current delivery model are being explored to provide the highest level of medical certification to the scene in a timelier manner. All prioritized stakeholder expectations can be viewed in Appendix A.

Community Concerns

Stakeholders were asked to list in priority order their concerns about the organization. The top three concerns across all stakeholder groups were adequate trucks and equipment, staffing, and personnel health and safety. The concerns have been recognized and addressed through identified strategic initiatives. Stakeholder concerns are listed in Appendix B.

Positive Feedback/Strengths

Stakeholder positive feedback assured the department that members are well respected by the community and city leaders. Feedback on the professionalism, leadership, community engagement, and well-trained personnel topped the list of strengths. The department will continue to engage stakeholders through communications and community outreach to improve service delivery efforts.

Department Stakeholder Session Results

The department stakeholder sessions were conducted over two days. The sessions focused on revisiting the department mission statement, values, vision, core programs, support services, as well as performing a Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (SOAR) analysis. For most activities, personnel were divided into three separate groups for more controlled discussion. Diverse representation from all levels of the organization participated to ensure the best possible feedback.

Department Stakeholders		
Sal Scarpa <i>Chief</i>	Tim Smith <i>Assistant Chief</i>	Daniel Hord <i>Deputy Chief</i>
Brian Nobles <i>Deputy Chief</i>	Jay Hazen <i>Division Chief</i>	John Shull <i>Fire Marshal</i>
Ronald Jones <i>Battalion Chief</i>	Lance Smith <i>Captain</i>	Ed Whitaker <i>Captain</i>
Clayton Moore <i>Captain</i>	Keila Stewart <i>Lieutenant</i>	Jimmy Bloodworth <i>Lieutenant</i>
Daniel Holland <i>Lieutenant</i>	James Brown <i>Lieutenant</i>	Jennifer Smith <i>Sergeant</i>
Tim Farley <i>Sergeant</i>	Justin Reynolds <i>Firemedic</i>	Randee May <i>Firemedic</i>
	Courtney Brown <i>Firefighter</i>	



Mission

The purpose of a mission statement is to answer the following questions:

- Who are we?
- Why do we exist?
- What do we do?
- Why do we do it?
- For whom?

The group revisited the department's current mission statement to ensure all above questions were answered. Following group discussions, the decision was made to change our mission statement to better reflect the modern role of our agency.

**The Columbus Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services
is dedicated to the protection of life, property, and the environment by providing
professional and courteous service of exceptional quality through incident mitigation,
education, and prevention as an all-hazards response agency.**

Values

Values represent the expected behavior of members in the execution of our mission. Through the brainstorming session, a consensus decision was made to modify our core values to better reflect our organizational expectations.

Professionalism:	In application, appearance, and attitude
Respect:	For each other, our Department, the Columbus Consolidated Government and our customers
Integrity:	Demonstrate honesty and fairness
Diversity:	Be open minded and responsive to the uniqueness of our community and department members without regard to race, age, gender, religion, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation
Excellence:	Strive to provide the very best service possible

Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services personnel are held to the highest of standards and guided in their action by the department's mission statement and values. The mission statement and values will be evaluated on an annual basis to ensure they remain relevant.

Programs and Support Services

Core Programs of Columbus Fire and EMS		
Fire Suppression	Emergency Medical Services	Fire Investigation, Cause and Origin
Technical Rescue	Community Risk Reduction	Tactical Medic
Public Fire and Life Safety Education	Hazardous Materials Mitigation	Disaster Preparedness Planning and Response

Supporting Services of Columbus Fire and EMS	
Local Hospitals	Law Enforcement
Fleet Maintenance	Air Transport
Parks and Recreation	Wrecker Service
American Heart Association	Public Works
American Red Cross	Poison Control
Water Works	Utilities
Local Churches	Regional Health
Center for Disease Control	City Council
National Response Center	Local Businesses
State Fire Marshal Office	Muscogee County School District
International Fire Code	Coroner's Office
National Weather Service	Forestry (State)
Housing Authority	National Registry
University Systems	City Finance Dept.
Georgia Department of Public Health	City Purchasing Dept.
Georgia Bureau of Investigations	Mutual Aid
State Representatives	EMS Care/Community Ambulance
Fort Benning Military Reservation	Public Health
Georgia Mutual Aid Group	United Way
Chemical Transportation Emergency Center (CHEMTREC)	Georgia Firefighter Standard Training Council
Area Transportation Services	Dispatch (911)
Federal Emergency Management Agency	City Attorney
Environmental Protection Agency	Judicial System
Georgia Emergency Management Agency	Local Restaurants
Department of Natural Resources	Drug Enforcement Agency
Georgia National Guard	Georgia Public Safety Training Facility
Mayor's Office	Local Media
Pastoral Institute/New Horizons	Chamber of Commerce/Uptown
NFPA/IAFC/CPSE	Ronald McDonald House
Trade Center/Civic Center	State Farm
Visitors Bureau	Local NGO's (Safehouse, Hope Harbor)

S.O.A.R. Analysis

A SOAR analysis template is structured as a simple 2 x 2 matrix, resulting in four quadrants highlighting **S**trengths, **O**pportunities, **A**spirations, and **R**esults. This is a simple but effective strategic planning tool that identifies the strengths of our organization and how these can be leveraged against existing opportunities. We are able to define our aspirations, what we hope to achieve in the future and what results we want to measure. The SOAR analysis template allowed our personnel to brainstorm independently and collaboratively, prioritize our most important aspects, and provided us with a formative process from ideation to execution. Any perceived department weaknesses were reframed as opportunities for improvement.

Strengths

Identifying organizational strengths is essential to ensuring the ability to meet the expectations of our community. Department stakeholders were asked to identify what the department does well, key assets, resources, capabilities, and accomplishments when brainstorming organizational strengths. The following questions were posed to help generate ideas:

- What do we excel at?
- What are our greatest accomplishments?
- What are we most proud of?
- What makes us unique?
- What strengths are most valuable in the Fire/EMS service today?

Strengths of Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services	
Our Personnel	Leadership
In-House Accredited Paramedic Program	Technical Resources/Teams
Acceptance of Diversity	Adapting to Change
Mentorship Program	Community Education
Community Outreach	Training Facility
Service Delivery	All-Hazards Agency
Strong Public Image	Morale/Employee Buy-In
Communications	Transparency at All Levels
Accreditation	ISO Rating
Doing More with Less	Progressive Momentum
Citizen Fire Academy	Fire Recruit Training
Acquiring New Apparatus	Hydrant Coverage
Customer Service	Chaplaincy Program
State-of-the Art EOC	Internal and External Partnerships
Professionalism	Support of County Officials

Opportunities

Opportunities are circumstances that we can leverage for success (e.g. to improve service delivery, improve member safety, improve training opportunities, etc.). The following questions were posed to the group to elicit the best possible opportunities.

- What partnerships would lead to greater success towards accomplishing future goals?
- What changes and trends in the fire service align with department strengths?
- What weaknesses or threats do we see that we could frame as opportunities?
- What external and internal stakeholder needs and wants are we currently not fulfilling?
- What are gaps within the department that need to be filled?

Opportunities for Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services	
Community Involvement	Community Partnerships
Shortage of Paramedics	Hiring Quality Personnel
Mental Health Education and Resource Availability	Increased Call Volume - QRV's, Community Paramedicine
Pension/Retirement Changes	Pay Compression Gap
Communications - continue bridging gap - field/command	Sufficient Apparatus - standardization of equipment
Cross Training	Innovative Decision Making
Updating Technology	Continue to Improve Morale
Fleet Maintenance/RFP	Officer led in-house hands-on training
Marketing Department Success	Staffing Issues
Station Repairs	Mentorship/Leadership Training
Clinical Hrs. - Mental Health	Revisit Territory Boundaries
Dispatch Center	Annual Mental Health Screenings
Life Coaching for New Hires	Regional Swift Water Training
Grants - Equipment/Health	Social Media Outlets
Certification Pay	Restructuring Response

Aspirations

Aspirations are an expression of what you want the department to be and achieve in the future. A vision to build on current strengths, provide inspiration, and challenge what we do currently. The following questions were posed to department stakeholders:

- What do we want to achieve in the future?
- What should our future department look like?
- How can we make more of a difference in the delivery of services to the community?
- What are we passionate about?
- What strategies and actions support our perfect future department?

Aspiration of Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services	
Officer Development	Health and Safety of Personnel
Staffing - Recruitment/Retention	Continue with Innovative Leadership
Continue with Upward Morale	Diversity at All Ranks
QRV's, Community Paramedicine	EMT Dispatchers
Improve Response Efforts	Accountability
Expand Public Education	Incentive Pay/Benefits
Healthy Fleet /Fleet Maintenance Program	Enhance Community Relations/Outreach
Connect with Community Resources	Increase Personnel Involvement in Decision Making Process.
Self Sufficient	In-House Data Analyst

Results

Results are tangible outcomes and measures that demonstrate the department has achieved its goals and aspirations. Results are documented through the departments strategic initiatives, goals, and objectives.









Vision

After completing the SOAR analysis, the group was asked to review the current vision statement. Following the group brainstorming session and collective discussion, the group decided to enhance the department vision statement:

To be a model of excellence by developing innovative leaders to meet the evolving needs of the community, thereby setting the standard for other departments through professionalism and commitment to the department mission and core values.

CPSE 21st Century White Paper

Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services (CFEMS) referenced the 21st Century Fire and Emergency Services White Paper when developing department strategic initiatives. The White Paper is a collaborative initiative by the Center for Public Safety Excellence and the International City Managers Association. It identified eight critical issues facing fire and emergency services in the next 30 years. Below is a list of the eight critical issues. The CFEMS Strategic Plan references these critical issues with each strategic initiative.

CPSE 21st Century White Paper Critical Issues		
Critical Issue A	RE-IDENTIFICATION	
Critical Issue B	CULTURE	
Critical Issue C	ROBUST USE OF DATA	
Critical Issue D	HEALTH AND WELLNESS	
Critical Issue E	PARTNERSHIPS	
Critical Issue F	SUSTAINABILITY	
Critical Issue G	TECHNOLOGY	
Critical Issue H	INCLUSIVENESS	




Strategic Initiatives




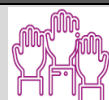
Considering all stakeholder feedback, the following critical issues and gaps were identified as the basis for the development of department goals and objectives.






Critical Issues/Gaps of Columbus Fire and Emergency Medical Services	
Fleet Maintenance	Delivery of Services
Professional Development	Technology
Community Risk Reduction Efforts	Health, Wellness, and Safety of Personnel





Goals and Objectives





To address the identified critical issues and gaps, CFEMS has established SMART goals and objectives that will allow for a focused effort that gives clear guidance for goal completion. Regular meetings will be held to assess progress and adjust timelines if needed. Results will be shared through the department quarterly report.






Goal 1	Maintain a sustainable fleet to ensure the needs of the community are being met.
CPSE 21 st Century White Paper Critical Issues	  
Objective 1A	Identify current fleet maintenance needs and overall status of apparatus.
Timeframe	12 months/ongoing Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Resource Management
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a condition assessment twice a year • Complete the RFP process for vehicle maintenance and repair mechanics
Objective 1B	Review current policies and develop new policies.
Timeframe	12 months Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Resource Management
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current fleet policies to ensure they are still relevant and make any necessary changes • Develop a fleet maintenance SOG • Create an in-house maintenance tracking program
Objective 1C	Find solutions to improve the life of apparatus.
Timeframe	12 months Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Resource Management
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement an apparatus rotation schedule • Standardize equipment throughout fleet

Goal 2	Create a professional development process that establishes pathways for recruitment and advancement of highly trained and effective personnel.			
CPSE 21 st Century White Paper Critical Issues				
Objective 2A	Create a succession plan for all ranks/divisions.			
Timeframe	12 months/ongoing	Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Training		
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review all divisions within the department to identify skillsets• Create pathways for career tracks• Create a succession planning /professional development SOG			
Objective 2B	Enhance the Mentorship program			
Timeframe	12 months	Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Training		
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify highly motivated personnel to become mentors• Develop a mentorship guideline•			
Objective 2C	Improve processes created for recruitment to ensure selection of most qualified individuals.			
Timeframe	24 months	Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Resource Management		
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain and enhance partnership with the Muscogee County School District, Columbus Tech, and Ft. Benning in the recruitment process.• Maintain and enhance the departments Citizen Fire Academy• Recruit to become more reflective of the community served.			
Objective 2D	Assess and identify trends related to retention and inclusiveness of department members.			
Timeframe	36 months	Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Resource Management		
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop an exit interview SOG• Collect data for analysis.• Develop a plan to improve retention based on data collected.• Work to create a more inclusive workplace to ensure all members feel welcome and appreciated.			

Goal 3	Expand employee health programs to include fitness and diet, mental health, and cancer prevention to improve employee overall health and create a culture of health.	
CPSE 21st Century White Paper Critical Issues	    	
Objective 3A	Implement a mandatory physical fitness program.	
Timeframe	24 months/ongoing	Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Health & Safety
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research industry standards when developing fitness program and establishing standards of measurement. • Maintain partnership with Columbus State University Exercise Science department to aid in program development and implementation. • Develop a fitness tracking program to aid in identifying individual fitness needs. • Increase the number of peer fitness trainers to aid in program development, implementation, and individual fitness plans. • Develop measurement standards for the Combat Challenge (department annual physical fitness testing). 	
Objective 3B	Reduce cardiovascular health risks	
Timeframe	12 months/ongoing	Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Health & Safety
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Health and Safety Committee to distribute educational information on employee nutrition and cardiovascular health. • Continue to provide incumbent and annual physicals for personnel. • Offer Low-Dose CT scans for personnel 40 years of age and older. 	
Objective 3C	Reduce employee risk of cancer.	
Timeframe	12 months/ongoing	Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Health & Safety
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer the newly approved OneTest blood test for cancer in annual blood testing. • Offer Low-Dose CT scans for personnel 40 years of age and older. • Hold personnel accountable to perform gross decontamination when exposed to products of combustion. • Hold personnel accountable for utilizing extractors to clean gear following exposure to products of combustion. 	
Objective 3D	Enhance mental health awareness and available resources.	
Timeframe	24 months/ongoing	Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Health & Safety
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research annual mental health screenings for firefighters and implement a program. • Offer personnel support incentives such as The BOX, FOR-U, and PACT. • Establish a process for Critical Incident Stress Debriefing. • Maintain the department Chaplaincy program by adding Peer Councilors 	

Goal 4	Improve hardware and software technology to improve delivery of services while streamlining data collection and distribution.
CPSE 21st Century White Paper Critical Issues	   
Objective 4A	Assess current equipment and technology to identify gaps and needs.
Timeframe	36 months/ongoing Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Resource Management
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine current equipment functionality. • Determine needs and gaps in technology to improve service delivery. • Work with City Information Technology department to determine if current hardware is sufficient for future technology needs. • Explore AVL capabilities with CAD developers to determine hardware and software needs for implementation.
Objective 4B	Assess software needs to streamline operations.
Timeframe	12 months/ongoing Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Resource Management
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research industry software options. • Identify software options that will allow for streamlining data collection and storage for more efficient data analysis and operational decision making. • Research software options to enhance employee performance evaluations and career development.
Objective 4C	Request through budget the addition of a data analyst to ensure the highest level of data management capabilities are being utilized to improve service delivery.
Timeframe	24 months Assigned to: Assistant Chief
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research other departments with data analyst to assist with creation of job description. • Request through the City budgetary process, the addition of a data analyst.

Goal 5	Enhance community engagement, partnerships, and public education opportunities to improve community safety.
CPSE 21st Century White Paper Critical Issues	   
Objective 5A	Enhance community engagement and educational opportunities.
Timeframe	1-5 years/ongoing Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Community Risk Reduction
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in City led event for department exposure to other city personnel as well as citizen interaction. • Roll out the 2.1.1 program to aid citizens in need of a multiple of provided support services. • Continue with Annual Community Open House event. • Increase number of department life safety educators.
Objective 5B	Reduce cooking fires in 1-2 family dwellings.
Timeframe	12 months/ongoing Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Community Risk Reduction
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage historical data to determine educational focus areas. • Enhance free smoke detector program in areas of focus. • Utilize social media outlets to distribute educational materials about reducing cooking fires. • Enhance free home inspections program to areas of focus.
Objective 5C	To eliminate the occurrence of accidental drowning events.
Timeframe	12 months/ongoing Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Community Risk Reduction
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase signage on the River Walk to increase awareness of dangers. • Utilize social media outlets to distribute educational materials. • Utilize rack cards at local hotels to educate on drowning dangers. • Increase enforcement of life jacket laws. • Continue to participate in Safe Kids Columbus' life jacket give away to engage with the community and educate kids and families on water safety.
Objective 5D	To reduce the occurrences of fall injuries by 10%.
Timeframe	12 months/ongoing Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Community Risk Reduction
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with nursing home associations to explore opportunities to educate elderly population on fall prevention. • Utilize social media outlets to distribute educational materials on fall prevention. • Utilize home safety inspections program and historical data to target vulnerable populations.

Goal 6	Enhance the delivery of services to the citizens of Columbus.	
CPSE 21st Century White Paper Critical Issues	    	
Objective 6A	Implement Columbus Correct Care.	
Timeframe	3-5 years	Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Community Risk Reduction
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research other department models for implementation ideas. • Meet with project stakeholders regularly to form the direction and capabilities of the program. • Engage with city officials for their understanding of the program and potential future support the department will need for implementation. • Identify gaps in current delivery system and how this program can be utilized to fill the gaps. 	
Objective 6B	Change current emergency service delivery model to improve delivery of ALS care to citizens in need.	
Timeframe	12 months/ongoing	Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Operations
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move firemedics and ALS equipment off ambulances to fire apparatus. • Staff ambulances with two EMT's. • Develop treatment protocols for EMT units. • Develop training objectives for all department EMT's. • Develop service delivery SOG for new model. 	
Objective 6C	Explore adding Community Paramedicine to the department delivery options.	
Timeframe	3 – 12 months	Assigned to: Division Chief/ EMS
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research industry best practices in the delivery of Community Paramedicine. • Determine necessary stakeholders to deliver identified services. • Identify the necessary equipment and personnel needed to deliver service. • Identify training needs for delivery of service. • Engage city officials during the process to inform them of department needs. 	
Objective 6D	Perform a territory boundaries assessment.	
Timeframe	24 months	Assigned to: Deputy Chief / Operations
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form a committee to perform a territory boundaries assessment. • Use historical data to determine deficient response areas. • Determine if changes need to be made to current station territories to meet response goals. 	

