

# CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION FORM

**FROM:** Chuck Cerasoli, Fire Chief  
**THROUGH:** Gary Suiter, City Manager  
**DATE:** July 13, 2021  
**ITEM:** 2021 Fire Department Strategic Plan

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DIRECTION  
 INFORMATION  
 ORDINANCE  
 MOTION  
 RESOLUTION  
 PROCLAMATION

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## **I. REQUEST/ISSUE & BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

This item is an introduction to and summary of the 2021 Fire Department Strategic Plan. The department strategic plan was first present to council around 2013 and has been presented annually since then. The strategic plan is a living document that is updated and adjusted as needed through collaboration from council members, the city manager, and members of the Steamboat Springs Area Fire Protection District (SSAFPD) board. The last plan was presented to council in 2019.

With the retirement of Fire Chief Mel Stewart in the fall of 2020 a new approach to the plan was developed and implemented. As noted in the plan, the long-term goal of the fire department is to partake in the nationally recognized accreditation process and therefore we expect the plan to look different, primarily in format as the department moves forward with that process. The plan presented here utilized previous strategic plans as a starting point. After a brief summary of the organization and how we operate, a review of 2020, and a synopsis of all that is going well, the plan strives to look at specific critical needs and service gaps within our department. These are areas that we feel have room for improvement and development in years to come. Some of these gaps are addressed in identified goals within the plan while others may have goals that fall out of the five years scope of this plan.

The accreditation process itself is a somewhat monumental task that the department is planning to undertake over the next 3-5 years. The end result of this process is to deploy a system in which the department continues to identify areas strengths and areas of improvement through regular assessment, data gathering, goal setting, and community input. More information on accreditation can be found as an attachment.

This plan introduces an idea that the department has been working on and developing of the last few years, a Wildfire Program. The Wildfire program would focus on two areas of concern for our area, wildfire mitigation and wildfire response capabilities. The department is looking to hire seasonal wildfire specific personnel that can be used for mitigation work early in the season, and for deployment and response as the wildfire season progresses. The department is looking to purchase a new Type III wildfire engine that would be used for the above stated purpose. When deployed the crew and apparatus would be reimbursed for all costs, including revenue for use of the apparatus on the fire. We are discussing options with the finance director on how this program could potentially utilized revenue from deployments to sustain and expand itself over the years. This deployment and revenue model is utilized by other departments around the state and has shown to be successful.

Provided within the plan are a couple of matrices that summarize the goals identified in the next five years. These matrices do not incorporate programmatic goals instead focus on personnel, apparatus, and stations. Also provided in the packet is a summary of recommendations from a consulting report completed in 2019.

The department continues to provide excellent service to our residents. We also feel it is important to embark on a process of continuous self-assessment which will regularly identify what we are doing well and where we can continue to improve our service levels. With consistent high marks through the community survey and the passage of a property tax dedicated to Fire and EMS services we feel this approach is support by the community.

## **II. SUMMARY AND ALTERNATIVES:**

After questions and discussion, staff provides council with two questions:  
Does Council support the 2021 Fire Department Strategic Plan?  
Does council have any recommended changes to the plan?

## **III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Adoption of the 2021 Fire Department Strategic Plan.

**IV. FISCAL IMPACT:**

As a guiding document, the strategic plan itself does not have any fiscal impacts. The Fire Chief in coordination with department staff, the city manager, finance director, and oversight committee will refer to the plan as a template for operational budgeting, personnel requests, and CIP proposals all of which have varying fiscal impacts. All funding requests will continue to utilize the standard budget process.

**V. LEGAL ISSUES:**

No identified legal issues.

**VI. CONFLICTS OR ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES:**

No environmental issues.

**VII. CONSISTENCY WITH COUNCIL GOALS AND POLICIES:**

The strategic plan is consistent with the City Council mission to plan, partner, and provide superior services and a safe environment in our thriving, authentic community.

This plan also addresses City Councils goal on Fire Stations, to select a downtown site; develop financing options; research Mountain Station expansion.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1: 2021 Fire Department Strategic Plan

Attachment 2: 7-13-21 Strategic Plan Presentation

Attachment 3: Strategic Plan Summary Matrix

Attachment 4: Personnel Projections- phased 2021 to 2026

Attachment 5: Accreditation Overview

Attachment 6: Matrix Report Summary of Recommendations