

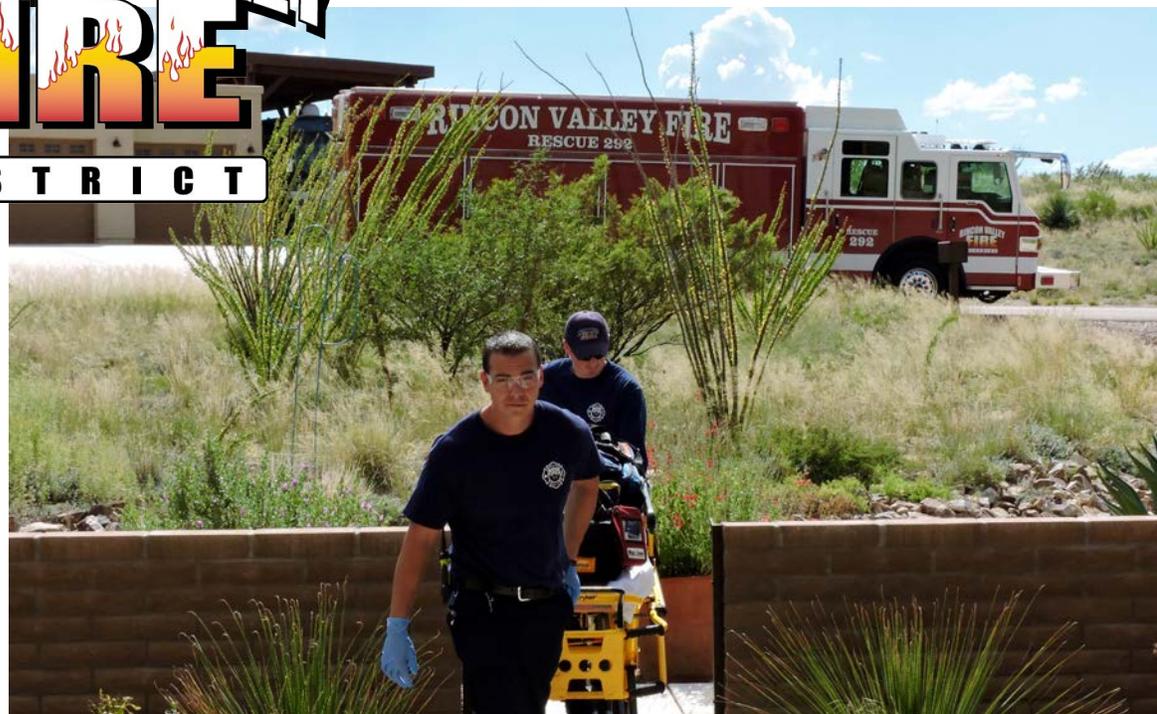
# Rincon Valley Fire District

Strategic Plan 2020 - 2024





# RINCON VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT



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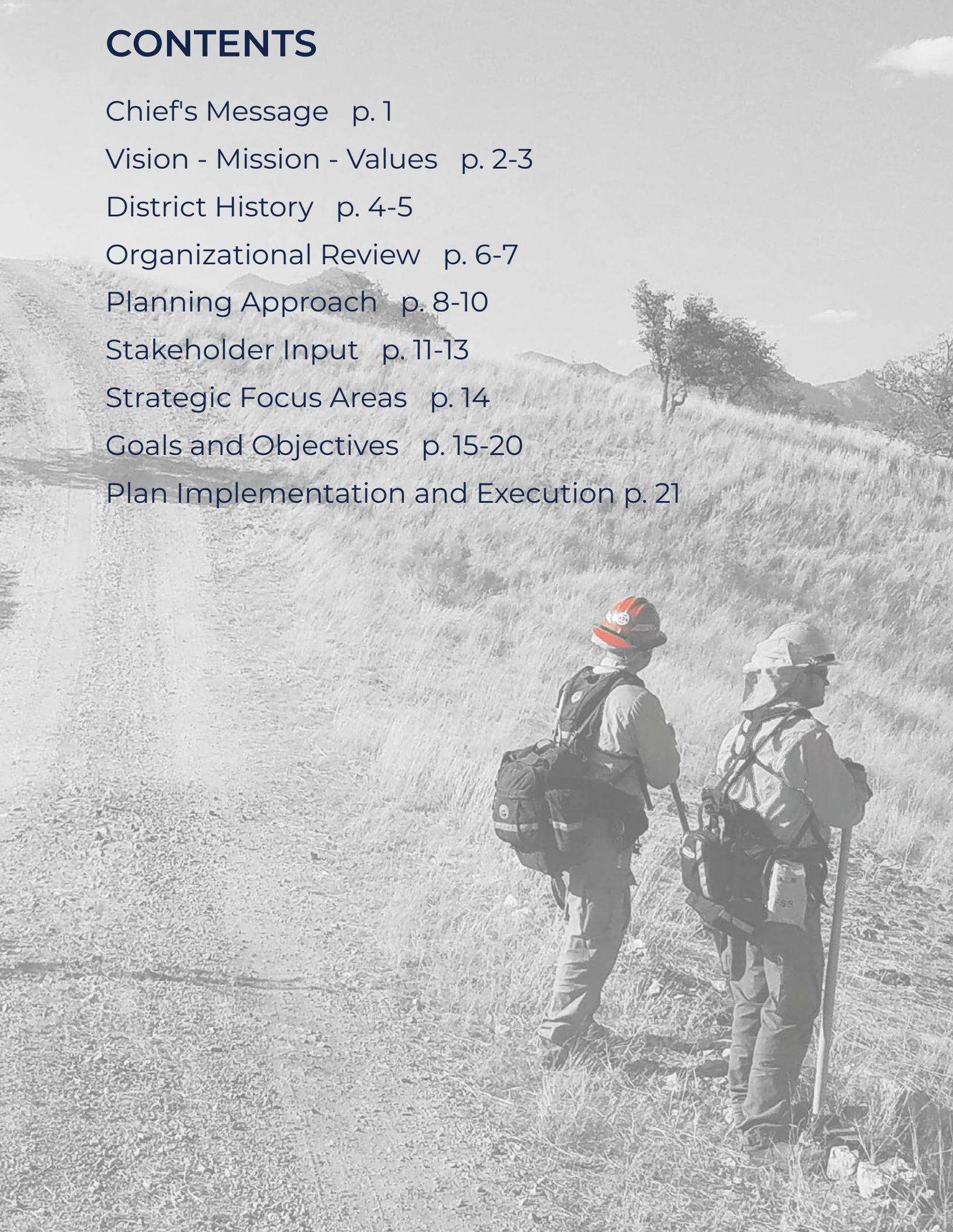
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# Acknowledgments

## Rincon Valley Fire District Board

Michelle Harrington, Board Chair

Mark Tate, Board Clerk

Chris Klasen, Board Member

Jennifer Spears, Board Member

Kevin McKinley, Board Member

## Strategic Planning Committee

Engineer Andrew Lauber

Firefighter Chris Heady

IAFF Local 5100 Representative Michael Cassabaum

Firefighter Paramedic Chris Jaegers

Firefighter Richard Graham

Battalion Chief Allen Yalen

Admin Manager Laura Bucklin

Board Chair Michelle Harrington

## Community Representatives

Dorothy Porter, HCI Ambulance, Resident

Karen Lundberg, Retired Chief, Resident

Bill Gaddis, Vail Safeway

David Hook, Christ Lutheran Vail, Resident

Jerry Brown, Vail Unified School District

Jerry Wood, Vail Unified School District

Julie Daglio, Pima Community College

Peter Minot, Southwest Solutions

Ken Marcus, UA Tech Park

Julietta Scroggs, RN, Carondelet Health Network

Ryan Bennett, Bill's Home Service

Bill Yarnell, DBC Real Estate Group, Resident

Kevin Venos, HCI Ambulance, Resident

Kirsten Schlenker, RN, VA Health Care, Resident,  
Former District Board Member

JJ Lamb, Vail Preservation Society

Margaret Stevens, Del Lago Golf

Michelle Martin, Martin Insurance Consultants

Stuart Katz, Resident

Dugger Hughes, Resident, Former Board Member

Phillip Elliot, Arizona Department of Forestry  
and Fire Management

MaRico Tippett, Greater Vail Area Chamber of  
Commerce, Resident

Shane Clark, Pima County Department of  
Emergency Management

Joe Gulotta, Resident

Darcy Mentone, Vail Unified School District

Lucretia Free, Pima County District 4  
Representative

## Photography

Firefighter Chris Heady

Firefighter Audie Holbert

## Consultants

Gary West, Ironwood Strategic Solutions, LLC

Mindy West, Ironwood Strategic Solutions, LLC

Trina Motto, Northwest Healthcare

Jim Long, J & L Consulting

# Chief's Message

I am pleased to provide our community with this 2020/24 Strategic Plan. I want to thank all of the folks who contributed to this document. Rincon Valley Fire District's Mission is to prepare, prevent and protect our community from harm, and we take the words "our community" to heart.

Every member of RVFD feels ownership and pride in our community, and this document reflects our commitment to our community. We first sought input from our community. A wide diversity of organizations, residents and business members provided input on the District's strengths and weaknesses. We then combined that public input with our internal members' input to develop our strategic focus areas.

This plan will build upon RVFD's past successes from its first community focused 2014/19 Strategic Plan. The first plan identified three strategic issues, and those three issues revolved around increasing public education, developing improved operational readiness and improving our management practices. From those three issues came 33 strategic objectives of which 32 were successfully completed.

Driving our strategic planning efforts and evolutions are the growth and change of our community. Vail has become such a desirable place to live that our local Pima County supervisor often refers to Vail as the "jewel in the crown of Pima County." We have experienced a significant increase in population and the corresponding demands for service. Since 2014, we have had a 10% increase in residences and a 68% increase in call volume.

Vail is clearly transitioning from a rural community to a full-fledged suburb. Likewise, RVFD needs to evolve its service delivery from that of a rural fire department to that of an all-hazards suburban agency. This plan attempts to lead us through that evolutionary process so RVFD can continue to meet and exceed the needs of our community. However, our District and members can only achieve the goals and objectives of this plan with the help of our community.

Sincerely,



Jayme Kahle



*RVFD needs to evolve its service delivery from that of a rural fire department to that of an all-hazards suburban agency.*

# Vision

Rincon Valley Fire District will be  
a safe place.

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# Mission

Prepare, Prevent and Protect our  
Community from Harm.

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# Values

**RESPONSIBILITY - VERSATILITY - FAIRNESS - DEDICATION**

Our values define how we interact with each other. They influence how we conduct ourselves and conduct the business of the District each day. We strive to keep our values in mind with everything we do. These values shall be used to drive our policies, decisions and actions based on what is equitable for all of our stakeholders.

# Values Defined

## **Responsibility**

We hold ourselves and each other accountable. We seek self-improvement to better serve our customers. We care for people internally and externally to the best of our abilities and with professionalism. We conduct ourselves ethically with honor and pride.

## **Versatility**

We deliver the highest level of service by using our resources wisely. We adapt and overcome. We are resilient. We are dynamic to ensure we are prepared for the challenges of today and tomorrow.

## **Fairness**

Because people are our greatest resource, we create opportunities for all members to succeed. We develop healthy and productive work relationships to accomplish our mission. We respect the contribution of all members. We understand that we are better because of our diverse backgrounds.

## **Dedication**

We commit ourselves for the betterment of the District and our members. We will make sacrifices that provide for the health and safety of our community. We uphold our oath each day.

## **Risk Management Statement**

WE WILL BEGIN OUR RESPONSE ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT WE CAN PROTECT LIVES AND PROPERTY. WE MAY EXTEND SIGNIFICANT RISK TO PROTECT SAVABLE LIVES. WE MAY EXTEND MODERATE RISK TO PROTECT SAVABLE PROPERTY. WE WILL NOT EXTEND RISK TO SAVE WHAT IS ALREADY LOST.



1990

## District History

The Rincon Valley area experienced a number of serious medical calls involving children in which no one was able to respond from the City. As a result, a group of concerned citizens banded together to form a nonprofit volunteer department in 1983. Rincon evolved into a tax-based fire district by a local election in November 1984, and Rincon Valley Fire District (RVFD) was created on January 1, 1985. In its formation, the District deployed 12 volunteer responders. Apparatus were parked on the property of volunteers.

Ambulance service always has figured prominently in the District's service delivery plan. RVFD began providing advanced life support services during its second year of operation in 1986.

Also in 1986, the arrival of new residents increased the demand for service, and the District hired its first two career firefighters. During that same year, it also established a temporary fire station near the present-day Rincon Valley Farmers Market. In an effort to adequately house its growing apparatus and firefighters, the District moved two more times to temporary stations until 2001 when its

first permanent station was constructed. As the community continued to grow, the nature of the population and building types changed. Ranches and custom homes on large lots gave way to higher density suburban style housing. Antler Crest, built around 1999, was the first neighborhood with fire hydrants. It was the first example of the new tract home style of building in the area.

Rincon Valley Fire District adapted and expanded along with the community and as a result developed service delivery systems in additional disciplines. Because of the semi-rural nature of the community, the District began providing wildland firefighting in the 1990s. Education and prevention services, including CPR/first aid training and fire/injury prevention education, took on a more prominent role.

The community's population continued to grow, and relying on a combination workforce became impractical. The District transitioned to a career-only workforce in the late 1990s. As resources became available, RVFD began providing hazardous material and technical rescue response in the early 2000s.

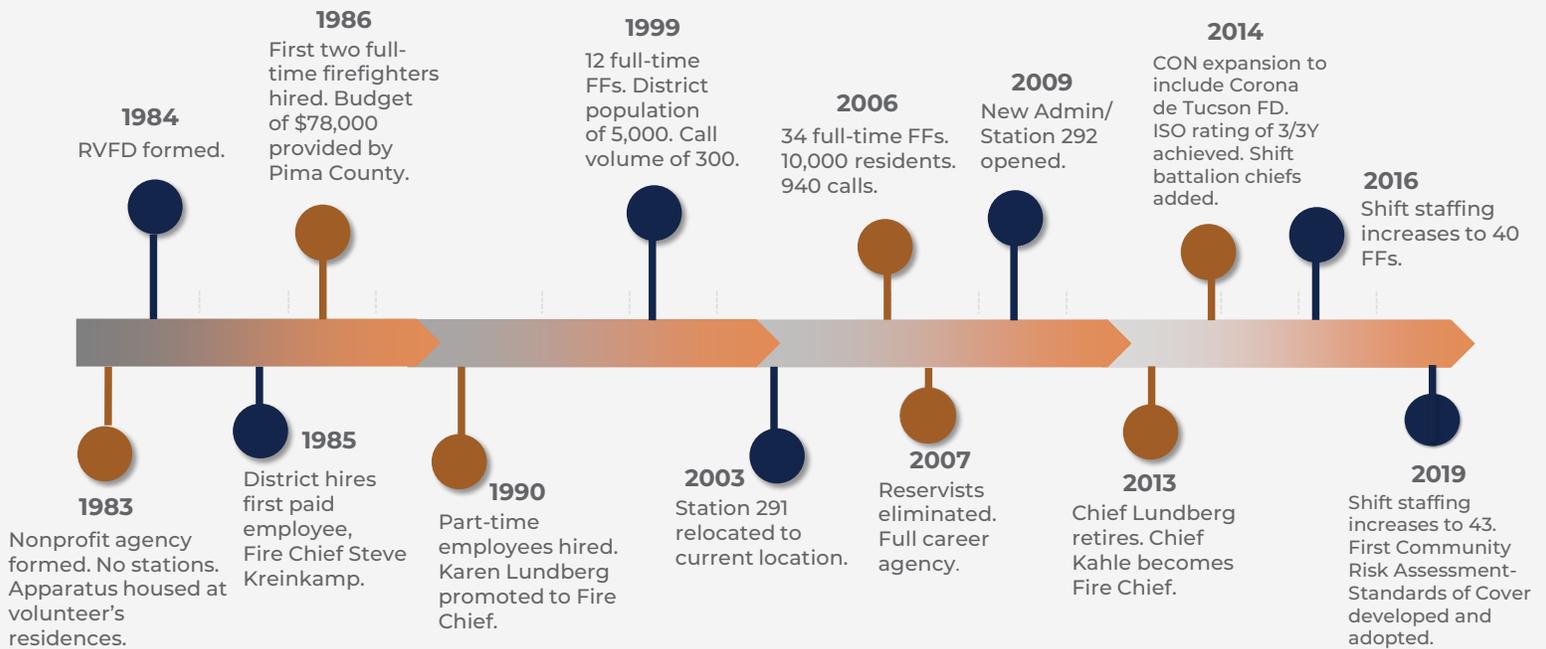
In 2005, the District expanded to the south, necessitating a second station. The new station housed additional companies that required additional firefighters. This led to the District's single largest hiring to date.

and three staff personnel. The population and associated community activity continue to grow at a rapid rate as demonstrated by the District's strong increase in call volume in recent years.

The District now has over 14,000 residents served by two stations with 43 uniformed



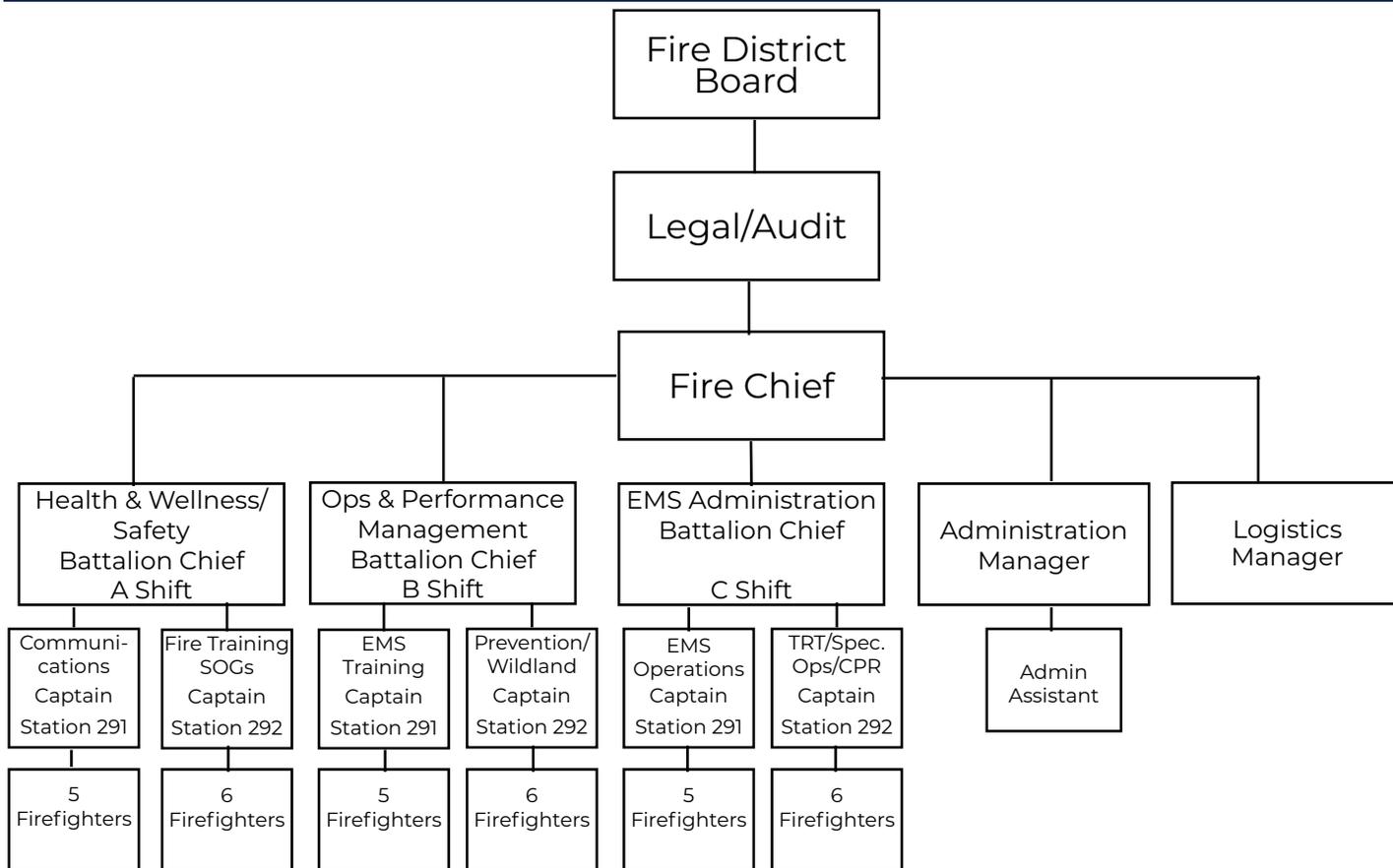
## RVFD Milestones



# Organizational Review

Rincon Valley Fire District (RVFD) was formed in 1984 by residents living in the southeast unincorporated Tucson area. The Pima County Board of Supervisors officially approved the formation of RVFD on October 31, 1984, under resolution 1984-274. The District operates under the requirements of Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) §48-803, §48-804 and §48-805.2. RVFD is administrated and directed by five elected board members who serve staggered four-year terms. The Governing Board reviews and approves an annual budget, policies and services provided by the District.

RVFD provides all-risk emergency and non-emergency services to approximately 14,000 residents within its district boundaries.



RVFD employs 43 uniformed personnel and three professional civilian staff. Emergency services are provided from two stations as illustrated on the adjacent page. Shift personnel work a “five-six” schedule, working every other day for five 24-hour shifts, followed by a six-day off period. This equates to ten 24-hour shifts per month.

## RVFD Services

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emergency Medical (EMS)</li> <li>Fire Suppression</li> <li>Hazardous Materials Response</li> <li>Technical Rescue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wildland Fire</li> <li>Community Education and Information</li> <li>Fire Prevention and Code Compliance</li> </ul>
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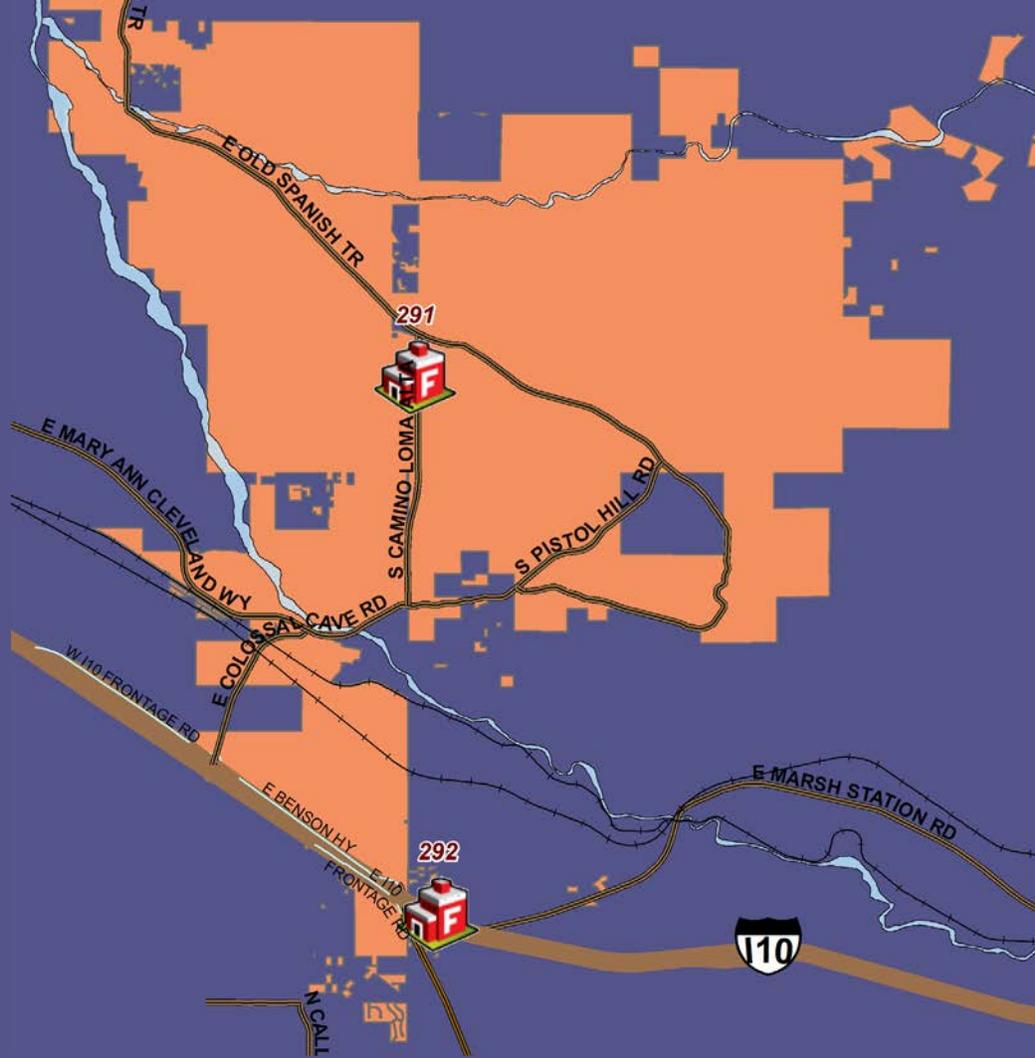
14,372  
RESIDENTS

43  
SQUARE MILES

334  
POPULATION  
DENSITY PER  
SQUARE MILE

\$130.9 MILLION IN  
ASSESSED VALUE

2,203  
CALLS FOR SERVICE  
IN 2018



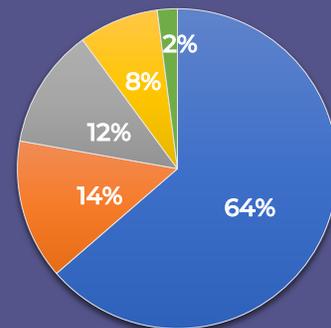
### APPARATUS AND PERSONNEL

UNIT	IN-SERVICE	MIN. STAFFING	UNIT	MIN. STAFFING
Engine	2	3	Tender	Cross-staffed
Ambulance	2	2	Heavy Rescue	Cross-staffed
Batt. Chief	1	1	Command Vehicle	-

### THREE-YEAR INCIDENT DATA

INCIDENT TYPE	2016	2017	2018	NET INCREASE 2016 - 2018
EMS	1324	1315	1418	7.10%
Fire	39	76	48	23.1%
Other	431	515	737	71.0%
Total	1794	1906	2203	22.8%

### REVENUE SOURCES



- Property Tax
- Ambulance Revenue
- Bond Debt
- FDAT
- Wildland

Current level of service has annual cost of  
\$342.21 per person

# Planning Approach

Strategic planning is a systematic, formal process that is used to set priorities, focus energy and resources to ensure that all organizational members are working toward common goals. It establishes agreement around intended outcomes/results and assesses and adjusts the organization's direction in response to a changing environment and the community's needs.

## WHEN DONE EFFECTIVELY, STRATEGIC PLANNING:

- Provides direction for where the District is going and how it will get there.
- Facilitates a process that results in the best allocation of resources that provides the most benefit for the District community.
- Provides an opportunity to question the status quo.
- Identifies the District's potential through identification of its strengths and weaknesses.
- Ensures accountability to the community and is based on credible data.
- Develops a coherent and defensible basis for decision making. Builds a shared vision for the District that is mission and values based.
- Creates a participatory process in which all District members take on shared ownership of the plan.
- Provides direction and prioritization for annual budget development and short-range operational plans.



# 2014-2019 Strategic Plan Successes

Strategic planning differs from operational planning in that operational planning is a process of converting strategic goals and objectives versus tactical goals and objectives.

This is the second strategic plan that RVFD has developed. The first strategic plan covered the period of 2014-2019. The plan proved very effective and functional. 32 out of 33 objectives have been accomplished. Listed below is a representative list of some of the major successes resulting from the first strategic plan.

ADAPTED A COMMUNITY RISK  
REDUCTION MODEL  
COMPLETED 2014

INSTITUTED AN ANNEXATION PLAN  
COMPLETED 2017

DEVELOPED AN INTERNAL EMPLOYEE  
RECOGNITION SYSTEM AND ANNUAL  
PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM  
COMPLETED 2013

IMPROVED MINIMUM STAFFING FROM 8  
TO 11 FIREFIGHTERS/DAY  
COMPLETED 2015

IMPROVED ISO RATING FROM A 5/8B TO  
A 3/3Y  
COMPLETED 2015

EXPANDED DISTRICT FROM 33 SQUARE  
MILES TO 42 SQUARE MILES  
COMPLETED 2019

ESTABLISHED AND FUNDED A CAPITAL  
REPLACEMENT PROGRAM  
COMPLETED 2015

DEVELOPED AND PUBLISHED A  
COMMUNITY RISK ASSESSMENT –  
STANDARDS OF COVER DOCUMENT  
COMPLETED 2019

## Elements of a Strategic Planning Process

- How do we start?
- Where are we?
- Where do we want to be?
- How do we get there?
- How will we know when we get there?

# Community-Based Systems Approach

RVFD has chosen to take a systems approach with the end in mind when developing this strategic plan. This systems approach incorporates strategic thinking, leading and leadership development, people, technology, processes, change management, effective communication, inclusion and transparency, internal and external stakeholder input and organization culture.

Feedback loops are incorporated to promote continuous improvement and learning, and a periodic cycle (annually) is established to refresh the system. This approach can be demonstrated using the Lead-Think-Plan-Act (LTPA) rubric.<sup>1</sup>



The LTPA approach model:

- Promotes a strategic culture that results in continuous improvement
- Reinforces the District mission
- Promotes communication throughout the organization
- Integrates risk management throughout the process

The systems approach of gaining input from external stakeholders ensures that the plan is community based. The value of this methodology is derived from the engagement, buy-in and ownership by the community. Community-based strategic planning creates an environment where residents and businesses come together to determine service level expectations that guide the future of their Fire District.

*Community-based strategic planning is more than a technique to establish a strategic plan. It is a strategy for engaging residents and creating Community.*

- Julia Novak, "Dreams that Make a Difference, the Value of Community-Based Strategic Planning".

# External Stakeholder Input Process

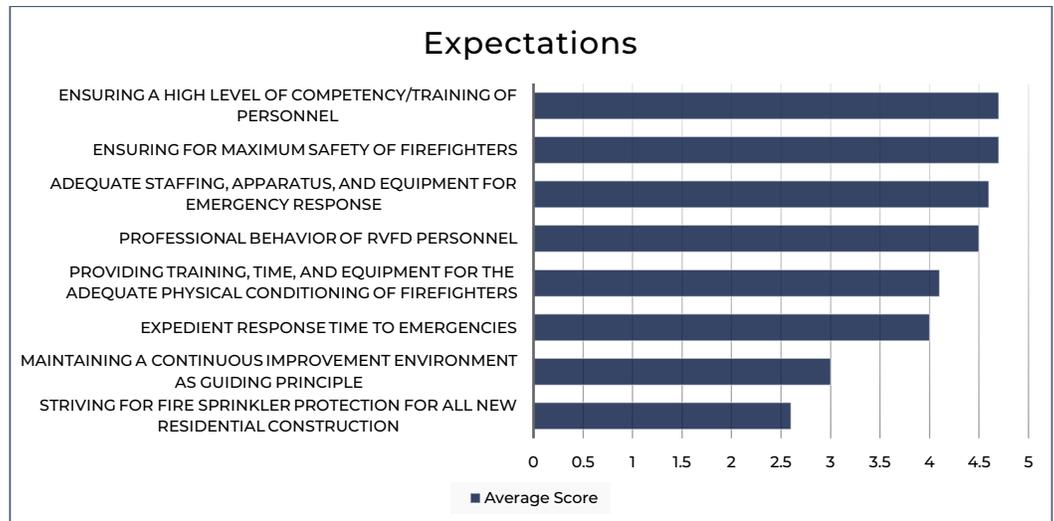
Key to the community-based approach is understanding the needs and expectations of the community; the external stakeholders. In order to gain this information, in May of 2019 RVFD facilitated two external stakeholder workshops that included attendees representing a cross section of the community. A complete list of the participants is located in the Acknowledgments Section at the beginning of this document. An information overview was presented to the attendees that included:

- Review of emergency and non-emergency services provided
- Funding sources for the District
- Call type, volume and response time information
- Expected growth in District population and call volume in the next five years
- Question and answer session

Following the information overview presentation, attendees were given a survey to gain their input regarding expectations of their District and to measure their priorities of services (programs) currently provided. The following tables represent the results of the surveys.

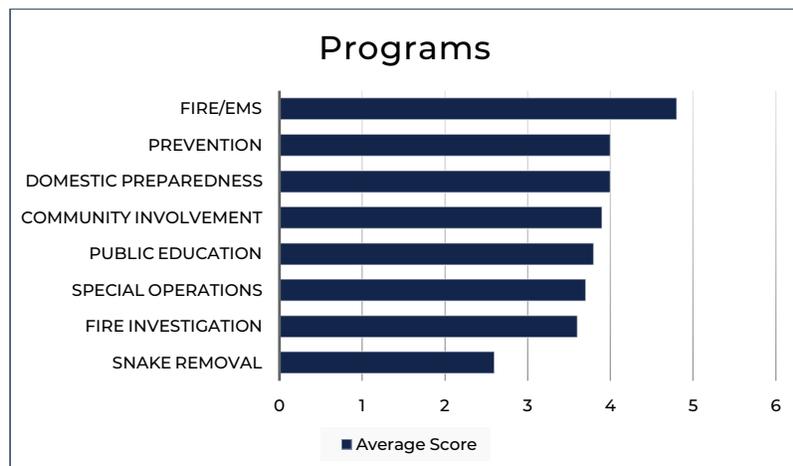
A list of expectations was provided to attendees to rank in order of importance. Survey results were averaged for each expectation and program. The results are presented in the adjacent chart.

- 5 - Essential expectation
- 4 - High expectation
- 3 - Medium expectation
- 2 - Low expectation
- 1 - Not an expectation



A list of programs was provided to attendees to rank in order of importance. Survey results were averaged for each expectation and program. The results are presented in the adjacent chart.

- 5 – Essential
- 4 – Very important value
- 3 – Important value
- 2 – Some value
- 1 – No value



# Internal Stakeholders

Just as important as gaining input from the community is gaining input from those responsible for supporting and delivering the services the community wants and expects. To accomplish this, a Strategic Planning Team was formed that represented all aspects of RVFD. Members of the team are listed in the Acknowledgments Section. The team met five times over the period of six months to help develop the direction of the District over the next five years. Team members were responsible for gaining input for the plan from their co-workers and subordinates and bringing the input to the team meetings.

As the team progressed through the development process, a set of guiding principles emerged to help direct the identification of key focus areas and the subsequent associated goals and objectives.



The team used an approach that included seven different components to help identify key issues (strategic focus areas) facing the District over the next five years. These components included:

- Political
- Economic
- Social
- Technology
- Legal
- Environmental
- Demographics

# SWOT Analysis

As part of the plan development process, the Strategic Plan Team conducted a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis. The strengths and weaknesses were considered from an internal aspect, the opportunities and threats from an external aspect. A SWOT analysis offers the opportunity for an organization to holistically and realistically appraise its current status and provides a mechanism for identifying strategic focus areas from which goals and objectives can be developed.

## INTERNAL

### Strengths

- People – talented, committed and passionate
- Provide a high level of service
- Strong, positive reputation in the community
- Modern, well equipped and maintained facilities and apparatus
- Strong scene safety culture
- Robust systems processes in place
- Willingness to expose weaknesses for the intent of improvement
- Financial stability
- Strong economic growth within and adjacent to the District
- Functional Capital Improvement Plan in place
- Effective grant procurement program in place
- A diverse workforce in terms of demographics, experience and specialization
- ISO Class 3 agency
- “Family” culture

### Weaknesses

- Safety culture in non-emergent environment
- No District training facility
- Limited opportunity for on-duty training
- Self-imposed “Ownership” of no-service areas outside the District
- Administrative workload exceeds current capacity
- In development stages of labor/management relations
- Pay plan underdeveloped and potentially underfunded

## EXTERNAL

### Opportunities

- Annexations
- Infill growth
- Volunteer staff program development
- Vail Community
- City of Tucson mutual aid agreement
- Private sector partnerships

### Threats

- State legislation of various types
- Aging demographics, equating more service demand.
- High hazmat risk (I-10 Corridor, El Paso Gas pipeline)
- Growth
- Climate change
- City of Tucson annexations

# Strategic Focus Areas

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When developing Strategic Focus Areas, the Strategic Planning Team took into consideration:

- > External stakeholder input
- > Results from the SWOT analysis process
- > Key findings and recommendations from the Community Risk Assessment/ Standards of Cover document (rinconvalleyfd.org)
- > Discussion at Team meetings



Following the development of the five strategic focus areas, the team developed goals and objectives for each of the SFAs. Goals and objectives are defined in the following way:

## Goal

A goal addresses a strategic focus area and significantly contributes to the District mission. It is an outcome statement that describes a desired result and is typically broad and long-term.

## Objective

An objective is more detailed than a goal and is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART). Each objective has an action plan developed by the objective leader that outlines in detail how the objective will be achieved. For the purpose of keeping this document concise, action plans are not included.

# GOALS & OBJECTIVES

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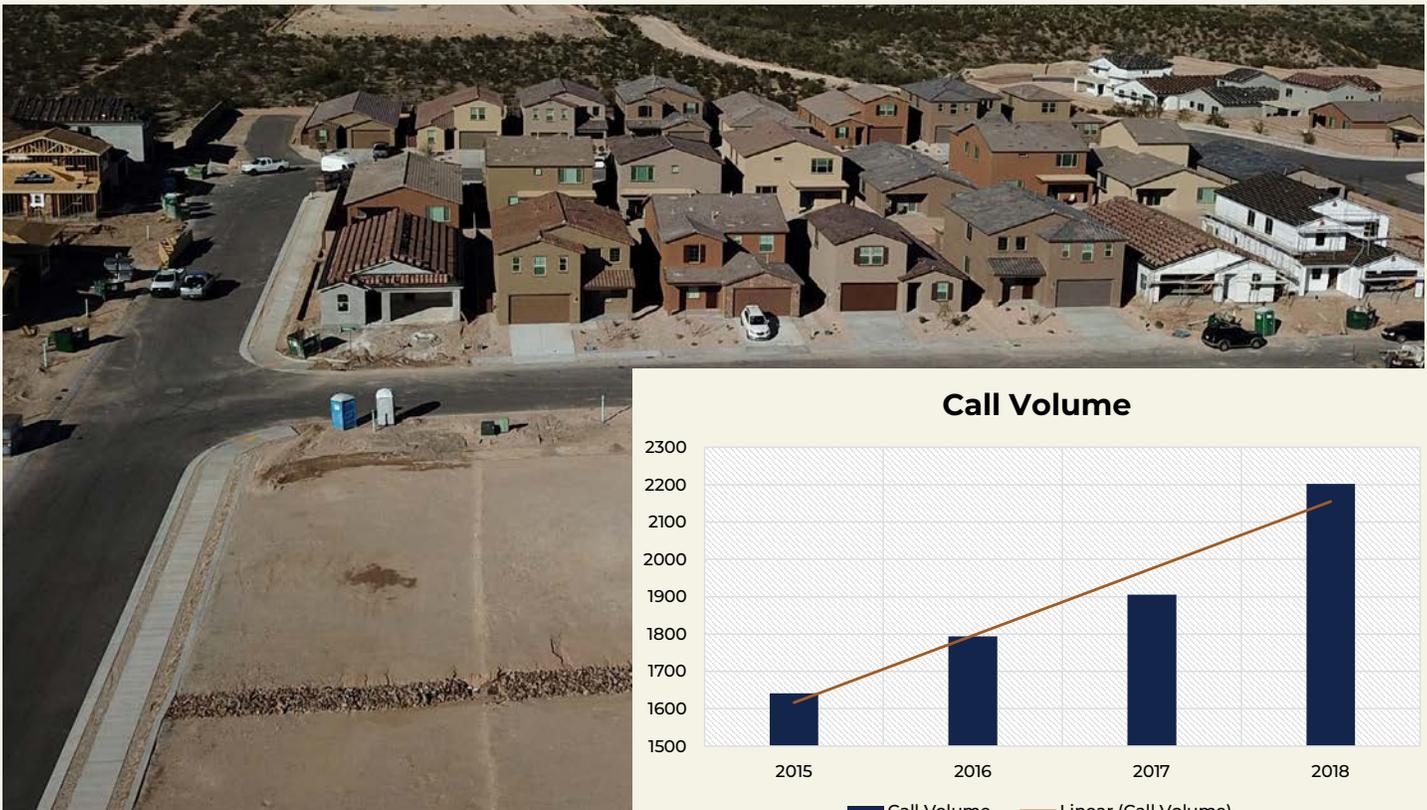
ENGINE

RINCON VALLEY  
**FIRE**  
DISTRICT

# Strategic Focus Area #1 - Growth

Goal - Prepare and position RVFD for anticipated/expected jurisdictional growth.

Objectives in order of priority	Leader	Completion Year
1.A - Further analyze the call types in the four out-of-district geographical planning zones to determine if there are opportunities to reduce the associated call volume.	Tucker	FY 19-20
1.B - Commit resources to accomplish an aggressive, comprehensive annexation plan.	Bucklin	FY 19-20
1.C - Explore and determine physical and human resources necessary to obtain and manage data to the detail RVFD needs to maintain and improve its service delivery programs.	Tucker	FY 19-20
1.D - Develop a formal community risk reduction program.	Yalen	FY 21-22
1.E - Explore potential consolidation/contract options as well as other partnerships.	Kahle	FY 22-23
1.F - Develop trigger points for the addition of services such as units and stations.	Yalen	FY 22-23
1.G - Identify future capital needs.	Yalen	FY 21-22



## Strategic Focus Area #2 - Staffing

Goal - Ensure a growth-based workforce.

Objectives in order of priority	Leader	Completion Year
2.A - Perform an organization-wide job task analysis based on current and five-year needs.	Cornejo	FY 20-21
2.B - Create a communication plan to continue to improve labor/management relations.	Kahle	FY 20-21
2.C - Ensure the workforce has a comprehensive understanding of their roles/responsibilities and accountability for their position.	Cornejo	FY 21-22
2.D - Develop a pay plan that is competitive with metro Tucson fire agencies.	Cornejo	FY 22-23
2.E - Based on the results of Objective 2A, create a five-year staffing plan.	Cornejo	FY 22-23



# Strategic Focus Area #3 - Community Outreach

Goal - Enhance outreach and visibility in the community to extend RVFD's reputation for excellence.

Objectives in order of priority	Leader	Completion Year
3.A - Begin tracking saves as well as losses to better communicate the value of RVFD to the community.	Bucklin	FY 22-23
3.B - Identify and evaluate the effectiveness of all current methods of communicating with the public.	Kahle	FY 19-20
3.C - Identify enhancements to current external communication methods and implement any additional methods.	Community Relations Manager TBD	FY 20-21
3.D - Fund and create a formal community relations program.	Community Relations Manager TBD	FY 20-21
3.E - Evaluate possible District name change to better reflect the community it serves.	Community Relations Manager TBD	FY 22-23



## Strategic Focus Area #4 - Training

Goal - Improve the Rincon Valley Fire District's training program to deliver exceptional services to the community while maximizing health, wellness and safety to its members.

Objectives in order of priority	Leader	Completion Year
4.A - Perform a training needs analysis for all District positions.	Assistant Chief TBD	FY 21-22
4.B - Perform a training facility needs analysis to determine necessary facilities to support a comprehensive training program.	Assistant Chief TBD	FY 21-22
4.C - Based on the results of 4A and 4B, develop a master training program.	Assistant Chief TBD	FY 21-22
4.D - Evaluate the current status of members health/safety priorities.	Assistant Chief TBD	FY 21-22
4.E - Based upon results of Objective 4D, create a plan for updating the health/safety program.	Assistant Chief TBD	FY 21-22



# Strategic Focus Area #5 - Emergency Service Delivery Performance

Goal - Deliver emergency services at a level that meets community expectations

Objectives in order of priority	Leader	Completion Year
5.A - Improve call processing times as outlined in the CRA-SOC.	Tucker	FY 20-21
5.B - Improve turnout times as outlined in the CRA-SOC.	Tucker	FY 20-21
5.C - Evaluate the merit of automatic aid with Tucson Fire Department.	Kahle	FY 23-24
5.D - Explore opportunities for a more efficient and effective BLS transport system in the future.	Yalen	FY 23-24



# Plan Implementation and Execution

This strategic plan is the result of many hours of work by members of the Rincon Valley Fire District. Key to the success of this effort is having an effective system in place to ensure the strategic plan is implemented and progress is measured. The Fire Chief is responsible for the oversight of the Strategic Plan and will act as the leader for each of the five goals. The associated objectives have been assigned to staff who will work together as a team to balance resources as the District moves forward with the plan. Progress will be reviewed by the Strategic Plan Team at quarterly meetings. These meetings will cover each of the goals and provide a forum to recognize progress and determine if timelines for any objectives need to be adjusted.

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed and updated by the team on an annual basis. This annual review also will include external stakeholders involved in the original development of the plan. The review will include an assessment of the goals that may be reprioritized if necessary due to budget concerns and other significant factors that may require an adjustment to the plan. The review will be a tool for the Fire Chief in creating an annual operational plan that follows the Strategic Plan priorities. This process ensures the Strategic Plan will be used as the foundation for annual operating budget development, Capital Improvement Project (CIP) development and equipment and personnel planning.



While this implementation and measurement plan is sound in theory, key to the success of the Strategic Plan will be support received from the Fire Board, members of the District, and the community-at-large. If this support is in place for the plan, the result in five years will be an organization that has reached a significantly higher level of service to the community while at the same time ensuring its sustainability.

# Community Forum Comments from the Strategic Planning Process

“What an incredible job you have done for our community to maximize resources and safety.”

“Have better public relations. Let people know about all your great work and prevention.”

“Response times need to improve”

Looks like you might consider a community relations position. It would help with annexation, coupled with the smoke detector program.

“Seek automatic aid with Tucson Fire Department.”

“Plan for increasing EMS requirements.”



HAVE AN IDEA HOW WE MAY BETTER SERVE OUR COMMUNITY?  
Please contact us at [myfd@rinconvalleyfd.org](mailto:myfd@rinconvalleyfd.org)



# RINCON VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT

14550 E. Sands Ranch Road  
Vail, Arizona 85641  
520-647-3760

[rinconvalleyfd.org](http://rinconvalleyfd.org)



Strategic planning  
process facilitated by  
**IRONWOOD**  
strategic solutions llc

