

III. INTRODUCTION



Objectives of the Study

This study was undertaken to provide an objective and systematic evaluation and examination of the Louisville Fire Protection District (LFPD) policies, practices, and activities in the context of the District's population, jurisdictional area, and well-established national standards. Moreover, the intent of this process was to help develop policy direction and respond to the need for service levels in the future. Finally, the intent of this update was to evaluate the progress and completion of recommendations outlined in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan and develop a new corrective action plan based on current conditions and assumptions. It was not the intent of this plan to develop new study methodology but to build upon the existing 2005-2015 Comprehensive Plan.

Scope of the Study

The process of defining the scope and objectives of this Plan consisted of an initial meeting with the LFPD Board of Directors, members and employees, planning personnel, and a citizen "Blue Ribbon" task force. A dialog between the affected stakeholders resulted in a basic development model consistent with a customer-centered planning philosophy. The scope of this Plan addressed questions related to values & mission, goals/objectives, community risk, demand for service, organization & staffing, development & concentration of resources, and levels of service & standards for response coverage for the next 5-10 years.

Study Methodology

Comprehensive planning consists of the following steps:

- Review existing conditions
- Formulate and develop options & alternatives to control or contain the District's risk
- Formulate & implement decisions about the District's future conditions

The purpose of this Plan is to serve as a single source of results from a variety of planning and administrative processes. The basic elements of this Comprehensive Plan include:

- A description of the stated direction of the Department, as reflected in the mission statement

- A description of the current and projected hazards in the community
- A series of “blueprints” for action that may be part of the budgetary process
- A description of how the District should monitor progress to ensure effectiveness

This Plan will also serve the governing body with an analysis of current conditions but will focus on near 5 to 7 year term forecasting, as well as a 20-year projection. The model that the LFPD utilized for the development of this Plan has the following elements:

- Existing LFPD Fire Department
- Risk Assessment
- Goal Identification
- Response Capabilities
- Response Reliability
- Historical Performance
- Program Activity
- Needed Changes
- Evaluation
- Performance Standards
- Policy Choices
- Budget Formulation and Adoption

The Comprehensive Plan Development Team relied heavily on a wide variety of information sources to prepare the Plan. These sources included:

- Current LFPD policies, practices, and techniques
- County/State legislative & regulatory provisions that impact operations
- International District/County Management Association (ICMA), City of Louisville

- Insurance Services Office (ISO) report
- International City/County Management Association - Managing Fire & Rescue Services
- Commission of Fire Accreditation, International (CFAI)

Overall Planning Assumptions

All planning documents are based on a series of assumptions. This Comprehensive Plan has been based on several assumptions concerning growth and our ability to provide adequate services. These assumptions are highlighted where appropriate. In addition to the assumptions specific to a particular chapter, this Plan is developed under the following broad assumptions:

- At build-out the District population will be between 26,000 - 29,000 and the population will continue to increase in age.
- The Fire Department will continue to experience increases in calls beyond the build-out due to in-commuting, job growth, and increased citizen expectations. While the current economic downturn has slowed development, calls for service are expected to increase over the next 10 years.
- The number of EMS calls will increase at a greater rate than other call categories.
- The District is expected to stay a predominantly volunteer fire department for the next 5-10 years, however, there will be some increase in career staff to support a 24/7 baseline capability requirement.
- The District's funding source will remain somewhat unstable due to impacts of urban renewal authorities, lower assessed property values, and an increase in commercial/residential foreclosures. This is a significant change from the last evaluation. That said, the District expects an increase its assessed value due to the proposed construction of the new ConocoPhillips campus.
- Enforcement of District fire codes will continue to minimize fire risk in commercial and multi-family structures. Strong code enforcement and compliance will remain a District priority and the city government supports all of the provisions outlined in the newly adopted 2009 ICC Code.

Overall Project Goals

The overall goal of this Comprehensive Plan is to provide a quality community fire defense and emergency services system that:

- effectively utilizes resources to maintain a safe environment to protect life and property based upon contemporary standards;
- provides the community with an array of services that educate citizens and businesses on preventative measures, code enforcement, and personal & environmental safety in a community-oriented partnership;
- subscribes to the principles of engineering, education, enforcement, and extinguishment to mitigate existing and emerging fire problems;
- maintains a medical service program consistent with a high quality of life;
- meets the needs of a changing population, demographics, and economic factors through periodic internal and external assessments.

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