# COLORADO SPRINGS FIRE DEPARTMENT
# STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2024

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December 11, 2019

Greetings,

The Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) is a professional all-hazards organization. A lot has changed in our 125-year history, but that is to be expected as our world has changed drastically over that same period of time. Once charged with protecting our community from the threat of fire, our mission is now far more encompassing. This document was developed by an involved and engaged group of employees who took a fresh look at our mission statement and adjusted it to more clearly tell the story of who we are and what we do. The new statement, "The mission of the Colorado Springs Fire Department is to provide fire, emergency, and prevention services with professionalism, compassion, and excellence," speaks to more than the work, but also the character of those who do the work.

I believe that this focus is necessary and, if I'm honest, overdue. Our employees, sworn and non-sworn alike, seek excellence in all that they do, but what we wish to acknowledge is that they provide that service professionally and with compassion; in other words, our employees care. They treat people well, they listen, and they show genuine concern. They want to make sure they are meeting the needs of those who call upon their services.

This document contains other changes that reach beyond the amended Mission Statement. To facilitate the creation of this document and to approach it from a fresh perspective, the CSFD engaged the assistance of a consultant. The diverse group of employees who worked on this Strategic Plan were guided to tell our story in a way that our community will understand what we currently do, as well as appreciate the challenges we face.

It is my hope that customers, both internal and external, will read this document and be able to see how the CSFD is currently operating and how we intend to address the future needs of our community. We are an organization that is driven by what is safe and what is best for the people we serve. We wish to listen, grow, and develop, never becoming stagnant or satisfied with how we perform our duties. There is an old saying, *"Only the mediocre are always at their best."* That said, we will never rest or be content, thinking we are at our best. We are always in pursuit of better ways to serve our citizens and those who visit Olympic City USA.

Sincerely,

Ted Collas

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Colorado Springs Fire Department Strategic Plan summarizes the department's key goals and objectives for the years 2020-2024. The goals and objectives contained in this plan will help guide the department over the next five years in continuing to satisfy the mission statement and providing core services to the community.

**The five major goals are:**

1. Pursue innovative methods of addressing emerging and on-going fiscal challenges.
2. Develop and support a diverse, inclusive, and well-trained workforce.
3. Reduce risk to our community through mitigation, education, and response.
4. Deliver appropriate resources based on a risk-based response model.
5. Create an enhanced listening and learning organization.

**Plan Development**

The team that developed the 2020-2024 strategic plan included the following: Fire Chief Ted Collas; Deputy Chief of Operations Randy Royal; Deputy Chief of Support Services Steve Dubay; Fire Marshal Brett Lacey; Finance, Planning, and Analysis Manager Beth Conklin; Human Resources Manager Angela Hines; Training Division Battalion Chief Tim De Leon; Medical Division Battalion Chief Jayme McConnellogue; Accreditation Manager Candy Fontecchio; Shift Commanders Mike Dalton, Gary Reading, and Derek Wheeler; Local 5 President Dave Noblitt, and Core Compliance Team members, Battalion Chief Kevin Bird, Lieutenant Grant Tinker, Firefighter Jesse Weddle, and Fire Code Inspector Jeff Hanenberg.

The team met over the course of a year to develop the goals and objectives contained in this plan that will guide us over the next five years. To ensure we are staying on track, this plan will be reviewed annually to document progress and discuss any needed change. A constantly changing economic and political climate may drive the need to change direction and adjust goals accordingly.

# DEPARTMENT PROFILE

The City of Colorado Springs marked its beginning on July 31, 1871, when the first stake was driven at what is now the southeast corner of Cascade and Pikes Peak Avenues. Fire prevention and protection activities began not long after with a fire volunteer department. On January 29, 1894, the city council held a special meeting and introduced an ordinance organizing a paid department and disbanding the volunteers. The Colorado Springs Fire Department went into service on February 12, 1894, with one fire station, a staff of six and a horse-drawn pumper.

Today, the department has 22 fire stations, over 500 full-time employees, and 33 front-line emergency apparatus. These apparatus include 22 engine companies, six truck companies, a technical rescue team, a hazardous materials response team, and three medical squads. Additionally, the department has 19 brush trucks for wildland firefighting, one air supply truck, one hazardous materials decontamination vehicle, and one hose wagon.

Fire stations are staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week with minimum daily staffing of 126 personnel. Major programs include Hazardous Materials Response, High Angle Rescue, Tactical EMS, Technical Rescue, and Wildfire Suppression with many other programs that support the department's mission. The Colorado Springs Fire Department is the first responder on all medical emergencies within the city and manages the ground emergency ambulance contract with a third party transporting agency. The department also provides all fire code enforcement activities and plan review services.

The department responded to 68,213 incidents in 2018 and approximately 62% of those were medical emergencies. The standard for delivery of service, as established by City Council Resolution, is for arrival of the first responding unit within eight minutes or less for 90% of all calls, and arrival of minimum effective firefighting force within 12 minutes or less for 90% of structure fire calls. The all funds total for the 2020 fire department budget is $80,385,250.

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

The City of Colorado Springs is located in south-central Colorado between the foothills of the Rocky Mountains and the eastern plains of Colorado. The city is 195 square miles and the elevation is 6,035 feet with an estimated 2020 population of 489,683. Colorado Springs is the state's largest city in terms of area and second only to Denver in population. The city lies in a semi-arid climate with an average precipitation of 15.95 inches annually.

There are five major military installations in and around Colorado Springs: Fort Carson Army Base, Schriever Air Force Base, Peterson Air Force Base, Cheyenne Mountain Air Station, and the United States Air Force Academy. These bases are a significant factor in the local economy, constituting over 20% of all employment. Other major industries include defense contracting, healthcare, software development, semiconductor manufacturing, telecommunications, data centers, religious and nonprofit organizations, and tourism.

Some of the major attractions in Colorado Springs include Pikes Peak-America's Mountain, the Garden of the Gods, the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, the Broadmoor Hotel, the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame, the United States Olympic Training Center, and the United States Air Force Academy.

The city is serviced by the Colorado Springs Airport, where more than 1.8 million passengers pass through annually. The airport accommodates both commercial and military air service, as its runways are shared with neighboring Peterson Air Force Base. Colorado Springs is bisected by Interstate 25, a north-south highway that carries an average of 100,000 vehicles daily through the city.

Colorado Springs is a home-rule city governed by a Council-Mayor form of government, which includes a nine-member Council (three members elected at-large and six elected by district) and a popularly elected mayor.

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Colorado Springs Fire Department is to provide fire, emergency and prevention services with professionalism, compassion and excellence.

## VISION STATEMENT

The vision of the Colorado Springs Fire Department is to be internationally recognized as an industry leader that sets the highest standards in safeguarding our community.

## CORE VALUES

- Accountability – The Colorado Springs Fire Department remains accountable to our employees and the community through responsible stewardship of our resources and ownership of our actions.
- Courage – The Colorado Springs Fire Department demonstrates physical courage when taking calculated risks during the mitigation of emergencies and shows moral courage by doing what is right for the protection of our coworkers and our community.
- Honor – The Colorado Springs Fire Department stands united in promoting excellence of character and integrity while adhering to what is right and ethical.
- Professionalism – The Colorado Springs Fire Department exhibits professionalism through pride, passion, and dedication with intense preparation toward mastery over all with which we have been entrusted.
- Service – The Colorado Springs Fire Department strives to positively impact our community and employees of our organization by placing the needs of others before self, without judgement or thought of reward.

# LEADER'S INTENT, FIRE CHIEF TED COLLAS

As leaders of the Colorado Springs Fire Department, we will not tolerate anything short of the fair, respectful, and lawful treatment of every employee of our fire department.
Since 1894, firefighters and support staff from various diverse backgrounds have added value to our workforce and contributed to every aspect of the service we deliver.
All employees, regardless of their background or protected class status, can expect a workplace that is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.

# S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

| Strengths (Internal) | Weaknesses (Internal) |
|---|---|
| • Customer service excellence<br>• Talented and capable employees<br>• Highly efficient<br>• Clearly defined mission, vision & values statements<br>• Community support<br>• Positive reputation<br>• Flexible/adaptable/agile<br>• Partnerships<br>• Innovative<br>• Accreditation<br>• Fire service leader<br>• Highly progressive<br>• Community Advancing Public Safety/volunteerism<br>• Foster environment of safety<br>• Committee engagement<br>• Availability of information | • Information technology solutions<br>• Diversity/Recruitment<br>• Capability of meeting growing service demand<br>• Succession planning<br>• Attracting sworn personnel to staff positions<br>• Communication – how information is received<br>• Leveraging talent<br>• Lack of recognition of support staff<br>• Lack of depth in civilian ranks, flat organization<br>• Mission creep and sustainability of programs |
| **Opportunities (External)** | **Threats (External)** |
| • Review service delivery<br>• Collaboration/increased partnerships<br>• Diversity – promoting recruitment<br>• Community awareness of services & needs<br>• Succession planning/mentoring<br>• Employee development<br>• Encourage culture of leveraging talents<br>• Program appraisals for accreditation | • Sustainable funding<br>• Adequate staffing<br>• Community growth<br>• Aging community<br>• Information technology support<br>• Complexity of civilian compensation philosophy causes confusion<br>• Subjectivity of movement between band & zone for civilian employees<br>• Limited promotional opportunities for civilians<br>• Funding restrictions<br>• External recruitment |

# STRATEGIC GOALS

**Goal #1: Pursue innovative methods of addressing emerging and on-going fiscal challenges**

**Objective 1.01 – Develop and evaluate a replacement plan for program specific equipment needs beginning in 2020**

1.01.01 Review annual program appraisals to determine priorities for budgetary needs and viability of sustaining program(s)
1.01.02 Provide training on proper documentation of needs for program appraisal
1.01.03 Review annual program budget submittals to identify items that can/should be on a replacement plan

**Objective 1.02 – Research other mechanisms to augment regular fire department funding, including but not limited to grants, private foundations, and government purchasing organizations (GPO).**

1.02.01 Leverage funding mechanisms to supplement and enhance purchasing power
1.02.02 Engage with City grant writer to identify possible funding opportunities and sources
1.02.03 Engage with the Fire Foundation of Colorado Springs to leverage their ability to secure funding
1.02.04 Collaborate with the labor group to address funding opportunities

## Goal #2: Develop and support a diverse, inclusive, and well-trained workforce

### Objective 2.01 – Promote the cultural identity of the CSFD through multi-media by December 2020

2.01.01 Produce video vignettes, public information officer (PIO) announcements, social media posts, public service announcements, and/or other messages promoting the CSFD's organizational culture
2.01.02 Utilize outside groups to evaluate the effectiveness of our messaging
2.01.03 Update and redistribute messaging based on feedback

### Objective 2.02 – Participate in a minimum of four recruiting events per month for groups including but not limited to veterans, high school students, and women.

2.02.01 Identify opportunities and establish relationships for recruitment
2.02.02 Schedule and participate in recruitment opportunities
2.02.03 Collect and analyze recruitment data
2.02.04 Utilize feedback from participants and event leadership to improve recruitment program

### Objective 2.03 – Develop a women's firefighter orientation program by 2021

2.03.01 Conduct panel discussions using active women firefighters for women interested in the fire service as a career
2.03.02 Obtain and analyze participant feedback
2.03.03 Develop "hands-on" activities as a component of the orientation
2.03.04 Maintain contact with participants and encourage them to apply

### Objective 2.04 – Develop a comprehensive succession plan for all divisions and the department as a whole by the end of 2020

2.04.01 Meet with managers for succession discussions
2.04.02 Follow-up with managers regarding identified tasks
2.04.03 Publish succession plans from all divisions

### Objective 2.05 – Develop and deliver a department-wide diversity program that recognizes and utilizes our different backgrounds and skill sets by 2021

2.05.01 Write a diversity curriculum

2.05.02 Identify and train instructors
2.05.03 Identify an individual to coordinate course design and scheduling
2.05.04 Update the content of the curriculum based on participant feedback

**Objective 2.06 – Develop department specific orientation during onboarding – "Welcome to the Fire Department"**

2.06.01 Obtain feedback from newly hired employees regarding their on-boarding experience
2.06.02 Utilize relevant information to be included in on-boarding experiences
2.06.03 Deliver updated on-boarding process to new employees
2.06.04 Update on-boarding processes based on feedback

## Goal #3: Reduce risk to our community through mitigation, education, and response

### Objective 3.01 – Formally establish a Community Risk Assessment Team by July 31, 2020

3.01.01 Recruit and select division/section representative members from the following groups:

- Accreditation Manager
- Community Education and Outreach Section
- Technical Services Section
- Code Services Section
- Wildland Mitigation Section
- Medical Division
- Community Health Section
- Finance, Planning and Analysis Division
- Operations Division
- International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), Local 5

3.01.02 Gain approval from the Fire Chief on the proposed members of the team

### Objective 3.02 – Initiate a formal community risk assessment by January 1, 2021

3.02.01 Research and develop a process for conducting a community risk assessment

3.02.02 Identify necessary data sources and gather data

3.02.03 Develop and implement a stakeholder engagement process

3.02.04 Create a finalized community risk assessment document

### Objective 3.03 – Develop a community risk reduction plan by June 30, 2022

3.03.01 Analyze all data and input results from the community risk assessment

3.03.02 Prioritize identified risk targets from the community risk assessment

3.03.03 Develop a prioritized risk reduction plan for addressing all risk targets

3.03.04 Provide presentation to the Fire Chief and obtain approval to implement the plan

3.03.05 Seek approval and collaboration from all stakeholders

**Objective 3.04 – Implement the community risk reduction plan covering a minimum of one risk target for mitigation, education, and response, no later than January 1, 2023**

3.04.01 Implement the plan and evaluate every calendar year or as necessary until all risk targets identified are mitigated

## Goal #4: Deliver appropriate resources based on a risk-based response model

### Objective 4.01 – Implement a risk-based tiered medical response model by January 1st, 2021

4.01.01 Base response model on risk matrix as detailed in the Critical Task Analysis (Low/Moderate/High/Maximum)
4.01.02 Evaluate Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS) Codes to determine appropriate resource allocation
4.01.03 Update Tactical Operations Manual to reflect new response model
4.01.04 Identify performance based outcome benchmark measures
4.01.05 Update response time resolution with City Council
4.01.06 Update Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) programming to reflect changes to response model
4.01.07 Provide education and training for all affected personnel

### Objective 4.02 – Implement a risk-based non-medical response model by January 1st, 2021

4.02.01 Base response model on risk matrix as detailed in the Critical Task Analysis (Low/Moderate/High/Maximum)
4.02.02 Update Tactical Operations Manual to reflect new response model
4.02.03 Update response time resolution with City Council
4.02.04 Update Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) programming to reflect changes to response model
4.02.05 Provide education and training for all affected personnel

### Objective 4.03 – Develop and implement a system for continual review and assessment of resource deployment by January 1, 2022

4.03.01 Create methodology for the measurement of resource deployment and response effectiveness
4.03.02 Core Compliance Team to annually review resource deployment and response effectiveness based upon set criteria
4.03.03 Core Compliance Team to provide annual report and provide suggestions for improvement to the Fire Chief based upon findings

## Goal #5: Create an enhanced listening and learning organization

### Objective 5.01 – Actively engage employees

5.01.01 Every workgroup will meet with an administrative chief twice annually; one meeting shall be with the Fire Chief
5.01.02 Conduct annual group meetings with all supervisors
5.01.03 Conduct a biennial employee survey of all CSFD personnel beginning in 2021

### Objective 5.02 – Develop and promote an employee feedback process by June 2020

5.02.01 Use internal television broadcast capabilities for announcements
5.02.02 Initialize a unique Fire Chief recognition program
5.02.03 Develop a mechanism to ensure a response to every suggestion/question
5.02.04 Publicly celebrate/recognize successes and contributions
5.02.05 Post priorities of the Fire Foundation of Colorado Springs on the CSFD intranet site

### Objective 5.03 – Develop a "Critical Takeaway" posting

5.03.01 Develop a mechanism by which conference attendees can post top three takeaways
5.03.02 Enable employees to pose questions in a forum related to top three takeaways

# APPENDIX A: CSFD SERVICES

**The Human Factor:** From the entry level employee to our most senior member, our personnel are our greatest asset and most valuable resource. We ensure compliance with all City and department policies and employment law, as well as Civil Service Rules regarding recruitment, hiring, organizational development, and promotional testing.

**Customer Service:** All employees of the CSFD are community problem solvers. They provide non-emergency support at community events, and they assist citizens in need with everything from keys locked in vehicles to helping stranded motorists. Our employees care for the citizens of Colorado Springs as though they were family.

**Emergency Response:** As an all hazards department we respond whenever our citizens call. Personnel in the Operations Division respond to all manner of fires, hazardous materials incidents, and rescues wherever they arise; from the inner city to wilderness areas. This division also responds to medical incidents, providing both advanced and basic life support as well as medical support to law enforcement tactical units.

**Fire and Injury Prevention:** These services range from the education of our most vulnerable citizens to fire code enforcement and fire investigations. The professionals in the Division of the Fire Marshal issue permits as well as burn restrictions, and they review building plans and inspect new and existing structures. This group is also responsible for wildfire mitigation and property assessments.

**Medical Services:** The CSFD Medical Division personnel provide continuous medical education, equipment and medication research, testing, and quality assurance reviews for all of the advanced and basic life support providers on our department. Our Community and Public Health section is an innovator in mobile integrated health services. Personnel help individuals reliant upon the 9-1-1 system to find more effective and efficient solutions to their healthcare needs. In collaboration with the Colorado Springs Police Department and AspenPointe, we also address the needs of patients in a behavioral health crisis, providing them options which appropriately address their healthcare concerns.

**Emergency Planning and Recovery:** Personnel from all divisions fill critical roles in the Pikes Peak Regional Office of Emergency Management. This work entails planning for incidents, logistical assistance for planned events, and supporting field responders as they provide emergency services to those in need. Recovery work can take months, but begins sometimes as an emergency unfolds (for example, through the After the Fire Program).

**Support Services:** Sworn and non-sworn personnel work together to support the operations of the CSFD. We have personnel who develop specifications for, order and maintain our apparatus, tools, and equipment. Others who inspect and ensure the maintenance of over 26 addressed facilities, many of which are 24/7 operations. This division also has the responsibility of training new and incumbent employees in all phases of fire and emergency response.

**Finance:** Nothing happens without budgetary support. Our finance team helps every work group to identify and articulate their needs for the next year, then assembles a budget plan to properly request the highest priority items. This group also performs statistical analysis for planning purposes, and they support our information technology needs.

**Accreditation:** The pursuit of continuous improvement is ongoing, and one measure of our success is our International Accreditation through the Center for Public Safety Excellence. This process touches every aspect of what we do as a department to ensure we continue to press forward as professionals entrusted with the care of the citizens we serve.