

Staffing

February 25, 2026

By conducting a thorough financial SWOT analysis, we can identify areas for improvement, prioritize strategic initiatives, and develop effective plans to ensure long-term financial stability and effective emergency response capabilities. The SWOT provides an opportunity to take a closer look. It can help identify untapped areas for expansion or innovation. It can spot threats early to allow for proactive strategies. It can help give a realistic view of where things stand and where to go next. It helps in setting priorities and making informed decisions.

This is one of eight priority areas identified for a periodic SWOT analysis. Staffing is a critical element for effective emergency response, encompassing various components to ensure adequate personnel and resources are available when needed. It encompasses service delivery levels and the District's hierarchy, with defined roles and reporting lines essential for efficient operations and incident command. It also involves recruitment and retention, and mutual aid agreements.

Strengths: What we and others perceive as our strengths, our capacities and unique capabilities - what we do well. Identified to assure that CCFPD4 is providing the services requested by the community and to ensure that its strengths are consistent with the issues it's facing.

- Our people – involved, committed and proud – dedicated volunteers
- Considerable collective experience
- Development of new personnel
- Strong and capable leadership, well respected in the community
- A positive organizational climate and culture - great morale
- A proactive approach, service orientation, professionalism, effective communication

Weaknesses: To move progressively forward we must also identify areas where we function less than satisfactorily, poorly, or not at all, where we struggle or lack. These areas of needed improvement (day-to-day issues, concerns, inefficiencies, complacencies that slow or inhibit progress) are not the same as threats.

- Currently only have Volunteer responders. Ideally, we should augment this by having a paid/on-call or residency type program.
- Limited advanced life support services/personnel
- Succession planning

Opportunities: Trends that may positively impact the district and opportunities available to us. The focus is on existing service and on expanding and developing new possibilities both inside and beyond CCFPD4. How we might grow and continue to succeed.

- To raise public awareness about the importance of firefighting and promoting careers in the fire service
- To explore the feasibility, various models, and the cost effectiveness of creating full-time paid Firefighter/EMS positions given the steady rise in call volume in recent years,
- To add more responders to address rising call volume, potential district expansion, and increasing mutual aid demands
- To develop a plan for succession by identifying critical positions within the organization and developing action plans to support individuals assuming those positions

Challenges: Knowing the more general and internal challenges we face helps us make better informed and strategic decisions. These are internal obstacles or difficulties that we face in achieving goals. They can be related to internal resources, processes, or capabilities.

- Increased call volumes, long hours, high-stress situations, exposure to traumatic events, potential health risks all contribute to burnout
- The time and commitment required for training and certification can be a barrier for potential recruits, especially volunteers
- Physically demanding situations, requiring the ability to carry heavy equipment, climb ladders, and endure long periods of exertion can be difficult for some members
- Repeated exposure to high-stress situations can take its toll on responders both mentally and physically
- Limited funding, limiting our options as to staffing
- Continually changing regulations and compliance mandates and the associated paperwork can impact staffing needs and create additional burdens
- Economic downturns or changes in government priorities can lead to budget cuts, impacting the department's operations and staffing levels
- An aging workforce with potential physical limitations
- Lack of a younger population (small local recruitment pool)
- A diminished sense of civic responsibility and inclination toward volunteerism nation-wide
- Nationwide statistical downward trend in volunteerism
- Potential for anxiety, depression, PTSD, and the stigma surrounding mental health

Threats: External factors that could negatively impact our performance or success. They are largely, but not always, beyond our control and can include things like economic downturns, competition, or regulatory changes.

- Funding challenges - advancement toward full-time staffing is dependent upon continued community support and ongoing levy lid lifts
- Potential problem if recruitment cannot keep pace with attrition
- Impacts due to budget cuts and decreased ambulance reimbursement rates
- Potential loss of timber sales revenue due to ongoing political disputes

Proposed Staffing goals:

1. Given the steady rise in call volume in recent years, explore the feasibility of various new service delivery models, and the cost effectiveness of creating paid and/or on-call Firefighter/EMS positions, by 2030.
2. Plan for succession by identifying critical positions within the organization and developing action plans to support individuals assuming those positions, by 2030.
3. Increase the recruitment and retention of volunteers by developing a volunteer recruitment campaign targeting local communities, by introducing volunteer retention strategies, such as recognition programs, training opportunities, and career progression pathways, and by exploring partnerships with local businesses or community organizations to support volunteer needs.
4. Begin planning for the addition of more paramedics.