

Training

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. Training is a critical element for effective emergency response, encompassing classroom instruction, refresher courses, specialized courses, physical fitness training, practical hands-on training exercises, live fire and smoke simulations, SCBA, EMS, wildland firefighting, hazardous materials trainings, and training for rescue operations including for vehicle extrication, confined spaces extractions, and structural collapse. It also involves the initial and ongoing training of commissioners.

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.

- A robust training program providing solid, realistic, and ongoing training consistent with district and industry standards, through refresher training during monthly drills and training beyond the district
- Rigorous training to ensure a strong foundation of knowledge about fire behavior, safety procedures, medical incidents, and hazardous material responses
- Care taken that all personnel can respond to emergency incidents in a safe, effective, efficient, and timely manner by having the necessary equipment, supportive technologies, apparatus and resources
- Quality of on-the-job experience for volunteers (paramedics/EMTs/firefighters)
- Experienced, knowledgeable and skilled instructors, cross trained in different subject areas
- A mix of in person and online training
- Access to up-to-date equipment and training facilities enhances the quality of training
- Proven ability to adapt to changing circumstances and adjust as needed – flexibility
- A professional working environment
- Collaboration with other agencies and organizations broadening training opportunities

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.

- Lack of available time to thoroughly cover all required training disciplines

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 regularly update training curriculum, ensuring content remains relevant and effective
- To pursue measures that contribute to responders' life safety and work-life balance
- To continue to add modifications to the training tower to increase its functionality, such as window/door coverings to retain smoke
- To explore the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Virtual Reality (VR) as supplemental training systems - expanding scenario-based training opportunities and teaching de-escalation strategies
- To expand the scope of training to address emerging threats and challenges
- To create our own live burn house using Conex containers or some other suitable substitute
- Increase IFSAC certification credentials of District instructors

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.

- In the event of forced budgetary cutbacks, all areas of training would suffer
- Overburdened volunteers may have less time for extra training
- Inconsistent training can lead to variations in skills and procedures
- New or stricter regulations requiring extensive retraining efforts
- Ensuring the general health and wellness of our emergency responders
- Volunteer turnover, and need to train new recruits
- Retirements or resignations impacting the availability of instructors and experienced volunteers
- Increasing burdensome and time-consuming demands for required documentation

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.

- Health and safety risks (hazards and potential for injury) within our stations and on scene
- Risks associated with Lithium-ion batteries
- Risk of illnesses resulting from exposure to hazardous materials and toxic gasses
- Risk of occupational cancers due to prolonged exposure to carcinogens
- Loss of revenue that could reduce training opportunities

Proposed Training goals:

1. Add modifications to the training tower to increase its functionality, such as window/door coverings to retain smoke, by the end of 2026.
2. Certify all officers as IFSAC I instructors by October 2027.
3. Acquire and/or build our own safety-compliant live burn training prop by October 2028.
4. Certify a minimum six personnel as Rescue Task Force (RTF) responders by December 2026.