

Strategic Plan: 2026-2030

February 25, 2026

Introduction

Strategic planning is vital to the long term financial and operational success of CCFPD4. It involves the process by which the district envisions its future and sets goals to achieve aspirations. It involves identifying both short and long-term objectives. The district believes thinking strategically and attempts to solve problems before they arise will improve the organization. It understands that effective strategic planning includes three separate, equally important components: strategic thinking, long-range planning, and operational planning. The systematic process helps facilitate discussion, helps set priorities, helps focus energy and resources, ensures that employees and other stakeholders are working toward common goals, and helps monitor and adjust the district's direction in response to a changing environment.

The strategic planning process is intended to help CCFPD4 maximize operations by leveraging innovations that can improve efficiency and effectiveness, by aligning initiatives with priorities, by streamlining processes, and by optimizing workflows to enhance overall productivity and reduce costs. A comprehensive Background Information and District Data document and a set of eight Situational Analyses help develop shared knowledge and understanding and a shared perspective.

The District has focused its efforts to perform at a high level in support of the local community, consistently delivering quality public safety and emergency services. It has explored, implemented and integrated technological innovations and advancements and has enhanced the community's disaster recovery capabilities and resilience. At its core, the District aims to invest in its employees and volunteers' expertise, maintain appropriate infrastructure, communicate effectively with the public to keep the community safe, and seek continual improvement.

To achieve these aims, the District recognizes that effective strategic planning involves gathering relevant information, exploring different options, and selecting appropriate objectives. This five-year plan and the two related documents mentioned above will help the district monitor progress and make informed decisions regarding resource allocations. Because emergency services are a dynamic work environment, the strategic plan has built-in flexibility.

Several factors come into play when planning strategically, including: an understanding of the District's desired and required skill sets (capabilities); ability to meet service demands and increase output (capacity); potential hurdles and constraints; and the teamwork, collaboration, and optimism necessary to execute on details (culture). CCFPD4 is constantly monitoring the environment, the changing climate, the economy, and developments within its jurisdiction and region.

The plan serves as a roadmap for growth and further development. It accounts for trends and positions the organization must take to address the changing needs of the community and serves as a guide for moving forward to implementation and continuous improvement. It's considered a living document and a work in progress, subject to change under continual reassessment and evolving circumstances, ensuring timely and effective adaptation.

The Board of Commissioners and Fire Chief will review the plan each year, prior to the annual budget workshop which involves making current-year amendments and decision-making for the year ahead. The chief will update the board on an ongoing basis regarding progress and, most importantly, address goals and timeline objectives that may require modification due to uncontrollable issues arising since the previous update.

Eight strategic priorities - *Shared goals*

The district's 2026-2030 Strategic Plan recognizes eight strategic priorities, each one key to the continued success of the district. Specific goals have been identified for each priority, identifying desired outcomes considered reasonable to achieve with available or anticipated resources.

Background information and district data - *Shared knowledge and understanding*

This separate companion document provides information useful to the strategic planning process. It includes clarifications regarding the district's organization and governance and historical data. It reveals patterns and trends (i.e. the number and nature of emergency responses, and ten-year views of revenues and expenditures across all BARS code categories). The document also provides details regarding the district's relationships within the Joyce community and its efforts to network within the state, region and county. It serves as institutional memory, noting developments over time and noteworthy initiatives, acquisitions, and adoptions.

Situational Analysis - *Shared perspective*

Eight at-a-glance analyses, one for each priority area, have been completed to help monitor relevant aspects of the organization's internal and external environments in the interest of formulating realistic goals and strategies. Each considers the attributes of the organization and environment and identifies factors both helpful and potentially harmful to achieving the district's objectives. Each analysis addresses [1] perceived strengths - our capacities and unique capabilities; [2] perceived weaknesses - where we function less than satisfactorily, poorly, or not at all - where we struggle, where we think we're lacking; [3] perceived opportunities for further development and improvement; [4] perceived challenges - internal obstacles or difficulties that we face in achieving goals, and [5] perceived threats, external factors that can negatively impact performance or success, which may not be completely and/or directly controllable.

Governance

The District's first priority is to ensure that its mission, core values, legal obligations, bylaws, policies and procedures, roles and responsibilities, strategic plan, and its 70+-year history are clearly documented and understood. Three Governance goals have been identified for 2026-2030:

1. To conduct an annual review of the District's Policies & Procedures Manual to ensure current applicability.
2. The revision and formal adoption of a "Background Information and District Data" document by the end of February 2026.
3. To identify areas in the budget (essential vs non-essential services) that could be cut or reduced in a catastrophic reduction-in-revenue-scenario, beginning October 2026.

Services

The District's second priority addresses the services it provides and its legal limitations and ensures that it meets its obligation to preserve life, protect property, and safeguard the local community, including its commitment to emergency and disaster preparedness, prevention, response, and recovery. Six Services goals have been identified for 2026-2030:

1. Establish a residency or evening/night, paid, on-call program by 2030.
2. Add an additional two paramedics to the team by 2030.
3. Exercise our Incident Command System by the end 2027, by reviewing current ICS protocols, by improving clarity and coordination with JEPP, CERT, CCEM, and other community organizations, by updating training materials, and by conducting periodic ICS training sessions to ensure readiness in the event of a disaster.
4. Conduct a biennial review of our Incident Command System, from 2029 forward, to ensure readiness for major disruptive events, especially regarding the risk of a Coast Subduction Zone Megaquake and other natural hazards, further developing a comprehensive emergency response plan in partnership with local, regional and state agencies.
5. Develop a Wildfire Risk Reduction and Vegetation Management Program by the end of 2027, determining legal authority by consulting legal advisors to about the district's scope for implementing wildland risk assessments and public education programs, while complying with RCW 52.
6. Ensure consistent compliance with the Health Insurance and Portability Act (HIPPA) and ESO incident reporting.

Staffing

The District's third priority involves recruitment, the retention of personnel, inclusivity in the work environment, organizational culture, mentoring for internal promotions, the promotion of health and wellness, the provision of resources for physical and mental well-being, compensation and benefits, and the maintenance of a well prepared, resilient and engaged workforce. Four Staffing goals have been identified for 2026-2030:

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.

Training

The District's fourth priority involves fostering a professional working environment designed to enhance firefighter health, safety, and survival, and to ensure 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. It involves providing solid, realistic, and ongoing training consistent with district and industry standards, through refresher training during monthly drills and training beyond the district. Four Training goals have been identified for 2026-2030:

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.

Finance

The District's fifth priority involves funding operational priorities and ensuring CCFPD4's ability to provide quality community services in a dynamic and sometimes challenging economic environment by continuing to pursue all available funding opportunities, including grants and by maintaining fiscal accountability for clean audits. Two Finance goals have been identified for 2026-2030:

1. Develop and begin to implement a long-term financial plan by December 2026, via a subcommittee, to include members of the community, to ensure the district's financial stability and sustainability, identifying and prioritizing various financial needs and sources of revenue.
2. By August 2026, begin educating the community regarding the need for a voter approved \$1.50 per \$1,000 AV levy lid lift, demonstrating the necessity for increased funding to meet current and future operational needs, maintain effective emergency response, and ensure the safety of our community, as the levy rate will have fallen below \$1.00 per \$1,000 of assessed value due to levy degradation.

Facilities, Vehicles and Equipment

The District's sixth priority involves the preventative maintenance of its stations, fleet of apparatus, and associated equipment in a cost-effective, environmentally sensitive manner to meet or exceed industry best practices and legal requirements to deliver high-quality service to the community into the future. The priority also addresses equipment and tech acquisitions and replacement plans. Ten Facilities, Vehicles and Equipment goals have been identified for 2026-2030:

1. Acquisition of tactical gear, including ballistic plates, helmets and shields for team safety during active shooter incidents by January 2026.
2. Acquisition of a multi-functional drone/UAV bundle for incident evaluation, scene-over watch, search and rescue, locating wildfires, and monitoring hot spots by April 2027.
3. Installation of a new Reader Board along Hwy 112, in front of Station 41, by May 2026.
4. Paint the exterior of Station 42 by June 2026.
5. Fresh rolled layer of gravel applied to the full length of the Station 42 driveway by June 2026.
6. Acquisition of a brush truck from DNR for wildland firefighting by February 2026.
7. Acquisition of a gazebo and picnic table to be placed outside the kitchen, and all-weather benches to be placed outdoors along walkways at Station 41 by September 2026.
8. Construction of a roof over the Conex storage containers at Station 41 by September 2027.
9. Acquisition of a Search and Rescue side-by-side (mini ambulance), equipped with a medical skid for off-road and tight-space incidents in challenging terrain by September 2026.
10. Acquisition of a large potable water storage tank for Station 41 by June 2026.

Local Community Relations

The District's seventh priority involves meeting community expectations for operations, fiscal accountability, and public education. It also involves continuing to engage the community by participating in local events, communicating regularly using the most appropriate means, and ensuring that residents in the unincorporated rural area hold a sense of ownership and pride in the organization. Four Local Community Relations goals have been identified for 2026-2030:

1. Emphasize the importance of a local area disaster response strategy and communicate the comprehensive, multi-scenario, disaster concept to local partners by April 2027.
2. Emphasize the need for wildfire risk reduction and vegetation management within the greater Joyce community by October 2026, by educating local citizenry to reduce the potential of ignitions and loss, and by promoting vegetation management and fuels reduction practices.
3. Develop a community communications team and plan to include a communication schedule, media channels, and methods to collect content and photos, sharing district news, volunteer recruiting opportunities, non-combat volunteer opportunities, preparedness tips, and educational events by October 2026.
4. From 2026 forward, publish two CCFPD4 newsletters per year.

Networking

The District's eighth priority involves benefitting from networking within the state, region and county, ensuring access to valuable knowledge, insights, industry trends and fresh ideas through participation in professional associations and relevant conferences, seminars, webinars and workshops, helping it stay ahead of the curve while building useful, professional relationships and partnerships. CCFPD4 strives as well to serve as a resource to others. Two Networking goals have been identified for 2026-2030:

1. Continue to enhance inter-agency cooperation by strengthening collaboration with neighboring fire districts, EMS providers, and law enforcement agencies, by formalizing mutual aid agreements with surrounding districts to ensure swift, coordinated responses during major incidents, and by participating in joint training exercises with inter-agency partners to improve readiness. To conduct a review by June 2027.
2. Review the local inter-local response plan and MOUs for major disasters on an ongoing basis.

Note: The 35 goals identified for the 2026-2030 period have also been mapped on color-coded calendars, one for each year, considered addendums to the Strategic Plan itself. The at-a-glance calendar format, with goals stated in brief, provides a helpful view of the implementation timetable.