



# 2025-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN



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The Center for Public Safety Excellence® (CPSE®) acknowledges and thanks the community and Fond du Lac Fire Rescue (FDLFR) stakeholders for their participation and input into this community-driven strategic planning process. The CPSE also recognizes Fire Chief Gerritson and all who participated for their commitment to this process.

This community-driven strategic plan was developed in July 2024, beginning with a meeting facilitated by representatives from the CPSE for community members, as named below. The community stakeholders' feedback considered by agency stakeholders in developing this strategic plan can be found in [Appendix A](#).

### **Community Stakeholders**

|                 |                 |                   |                |
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| Jason Gonzalez  | Gary Lakin      | Joe Pausa         | Jim Twohig     |
| Eric Halbach    | Amy Loof        | Larry Poch        | Tammy Young    |
| Matthew Harper  |                 |                   |                |

The agency stakeholder work sessions, conducted over three days, involved a group representing a broad cross-section of the FDLFR, as named below.

### **Agency Stakeholders**

|                 |                |                  |                |
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# Message from the Fire Chief

It is with great pride and honor that I present Fond du Lac Fire Rescue's 2025-2030 Community Driven Strategic Plan. This document clearly articulates the goals and objectives for Fire Rescue members that serve and protect the citizens of Fond du Lac and the surrounding communities. This plan reflects the voices, aspirations, and priorities of our community members, and it is the culmination of an extensive and inclusive planning process.

The purpose of this strategic plan is to provide a clear and actionable framework for addressing the needs and opportunities within our community. By engaging residents, stakeholders, and partners, we have identified key areas where our collective efforts can make the most significant impact. This plan will serve as a guide for decision-making, resource allocation, and collaborative initiatives that align with our shared vision.

This plan was developed through a comprehensive, community-driven process that included an external stakeholder session to gather feedback and input on the agency and the services provided. We engaged with diverse groups across the community to ensure that the plan is representative and inclusive. Additionally, the agency conducted three days of internal stakeholder meetings, evaluating the key components of our organization's core philosophies, vision, mission statements, and values. Every step of the way, the community's desires have been instrumental in shaping the direction and priorities outlined in this document.

At the heart of this strategic plan is our vision for the future: *Fond du Lac Fire Rescue will uphold the highest standard of professional public safety services, striving for excellence, innovation, and continuous improvement. We will attract and retain top talent, providing our FDLFR family members with progressive training while prioritizing health and wellness. Fond du Lac Fire Rescue is an inclusive environment where diversity will thrive. We will establish ourselves as a model emergency services agency while maintaining accountability to each other and the community.* This vision is rooted in our core values of dedication, collaboration, trust, teamwork, and loyalty, which have guided the development of this plan and will continue to inform our actions moving forward.

This document outlines our strategic priorities, goals, and the specific actions we will take to achieve them over the next five years. It is structured to provide a clear understanding of our objectives, the strategies to achieve them, and the metrics we will use to measure success. Furthermore, it includes an overview of the resources required and the roles of various stakeholders in implementing the plan.

The success of this strategic plan depends on the participation and collaboration of all of our community members and stakeholders. We are committed to fostering an environment of transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement as we work together to achieve our goals.

This strategic plan is not just a document; it is a living outline for our community's future. Together, we will build on our strengths, address our challenges, and create a resilient community that meets the needs of all its members. Thank you for your unwavering support. We look forward to the journey ahead and to the continued opportunity to be of service to each and every citizen of the Fond du Lac community.

Wishing all the best,

Erick Gerritson  
Fire Chief



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# Introduction

The community serviced by Fond du Lac Fire Rescue (FDLFR) receives high levels of professionalism and efficiency from the agency's proactive approach to risk reduction and emergency mitigation. As such, the FDLFR contracted with the Center for Public Safety Excellence® (CPSE®) to facilitate a community-driven strategic plan. The process utilized by CPSE aligns with the Commission on Fire Accreditation International's (CFAI®) fire and emergency services accreditation model but also considers all parameters prescribed by the authority having jurisdiction.

CPSE's approach to community-driven strategic planning gathers feedback and input from community and agency stakeholders while focusing on future change beyond the status quo. Beliefs, concepts, current processes, and values were among the many pieces considered and questioned to bring this planning document to reality. The FDLFR exhibited a commitment to the implementation and execution of this plan to become more efficient and effective in alignment with its community.

# Process

Understanding what the customer desires is vital to the success of any organization. In this case, the customer is the community that Fond du Lac Fire Rescue serves. This applies even if the service organization is a governmental entity. Community-driven strategic planning ensures the community remains a focus of the organization's direction, and community feedback is at the heart of all deliberations and development of this strategic plan.

The process of community-driven strategic planning and the plan itself represents the embrace of transition away from how an organization has always done things, seeking to find efficacies and outcomes based on change. The community-driven strategic plan provides a management roadmap built on a shared vision and structured for measurable results. With the involvement of a diverse group of agency stakeholders, Fond du Lac Fire Rescue's community-driven strategic plan encompasses various experiences, perceptions, and perspectives that can also work to build more internal organizational symbiosis. For the desired, measurable results to be realized, the process and the strategic plan must focus on substance, not form. Only then can the FDLFR truly benefit from the process and realize its ultimate vision.

# FOND DU LAC FIRE RESCUE

## Community Stakeholder Findings

- ✓ Identify, from the community perspective, things the agency should and should not change.
- ✓ Identify the community's expectations for the agency, concerns about or for the agency, and aspects the community views as strengths or positives.
- ✓ Define the programs provided to the community.
- ✓ Establish the community's prioritized view of the programs and services provided by the agency.



**Community Stakeholders Work Session**

## Agency Stakeholder Work

- ✓ Identify the agency's strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results.
- ✓ Revisit the mission statement, giving careful attention to the services and programs currently provided and which logically can be provided in the future.
- ✓ Revisit the values of the agency's membership.
- ✓ Revisit the agency's current vision, considering the consensus built from the strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and desired results.
- ✓ Identify the agency's challenges, service gaps, and causal effects through a thematic sifting process.
- ✓ Determine, by consensus, several strategic initiatives for outcome-based organizational improvement.
- ✓ Develop strategic goals, SMART objectives with relative timelines, and comprehensive critical task concepts focusing on outcomes.



## Agency Background

The area that is now the City of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, has an extensive history dating back to when Native American tribes lived in the area prior to the discovery by European explorers. The city's name is French for the farthest point of the lake, indicating the city's location at the south end of Lake Winnebago. The area continued to evolve and grow to the point of original incorporation as a village in 1847 and a city in 1852.



The city has continued to grow and change to its status today as a thriving area with a basis in industry and manufacturing. Mercury Marine has its world headquarters in Fond du Lac and is the largest employer in the area. The historical aspect of the community is evident in the varied architecture for a city with an approximate population of 43,000 residents who call the City of Fond du Lac home.

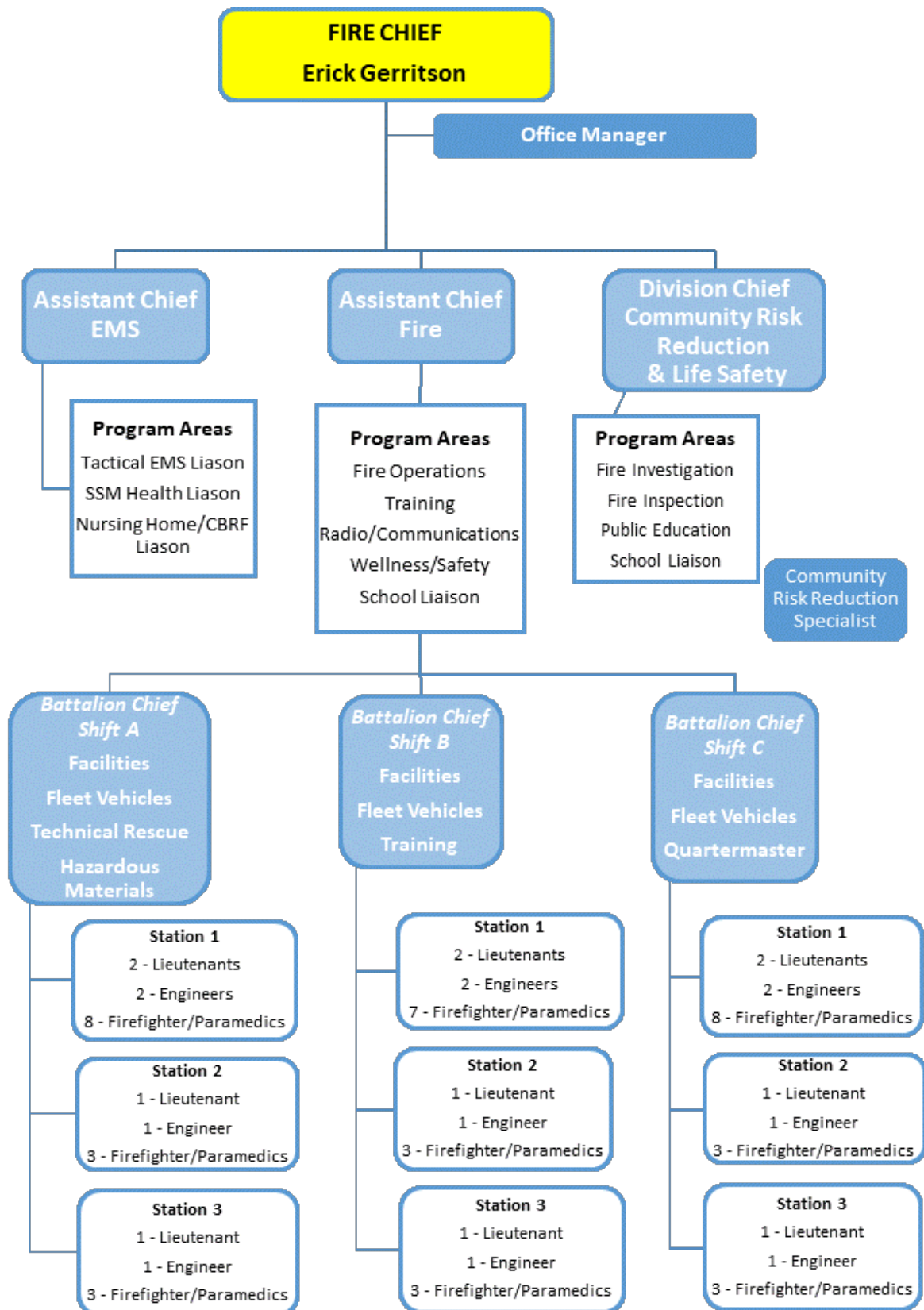
Fond du Lac Fire Rescue's (FDLFR) genesis dates to 1848, with the appointment of two Fire Wardens by the city. In 1849, the city purchased its first fire suppression equipment, buckets, hooks, and ladders and formed its first bucket brigade. The first fire chief was appointed, and the first organized fire company, the Washington Volunteer Company, was formed in 1854. In 1878, the department became an

all-paid career department. Over time, the department has grown and changed in order to meet the various risks and demands associated with a progressive, growing department. Staffed by 74 members, the FDLFR provides its services from three fire stations with resources strategically located throughout its coverage area. The department remains dedicated to providing an efficient response to all emergencies and improving public safety for those they serve.

Through its commitment to the community, Fond du Lac Fire Rescue embraces excellence, which is evidenced by being an internationally accredited agency with an ISO Class 1 fire protection rating. FDLFR remains extremely mission-focused while demonstrating its core values in the delivery of its varied services to all who live, work, and play the City of Fond du Lac.



## Organizational Chart







**Agency Stakeholder Work Session Participants**

## Mission

The mission provides an internal aspect of the existence of an organization and, to a degree, an empowering consideration for all FDLFR members. The purpose of the mission is to answer the questions:

Who are we? Why do we exist? What do we do? Why do we do it? For whom?

A workgroup met to revisit an existing mission and after ensuring it answered the questions, the following mission statement was created, discussed, and accepted by the entire group:

**The dedicated members of Fond du Lac Fire Rescue proudly respond  
and serve the community.**

## Values

Values embraced by all members of an organization are extremely important, as they recognize the features that make up the personality and culture of the organization. A workgroup met to revisit the existing values agreed upon by the entire group.

**Dedication** – Committing to provide professional service with compassion and respect.

**Collaboration** – Encouraging cooperation with community partners, agencies, and citizens.

**Trust** – Fostering honesty and dignity in every interaction.

**Teamwork** – Working diligently to achieve agency goals.

**Loyalty** – Honoring the past while moving the organization forward.

The mission and values are the foundation of this agency. Thus, every effort will be made to keep these current and meaningful to guide the individuals who make up Fond du Lac Fire Rescue to accomplish their goals, objectives, and day-to-day tasks.

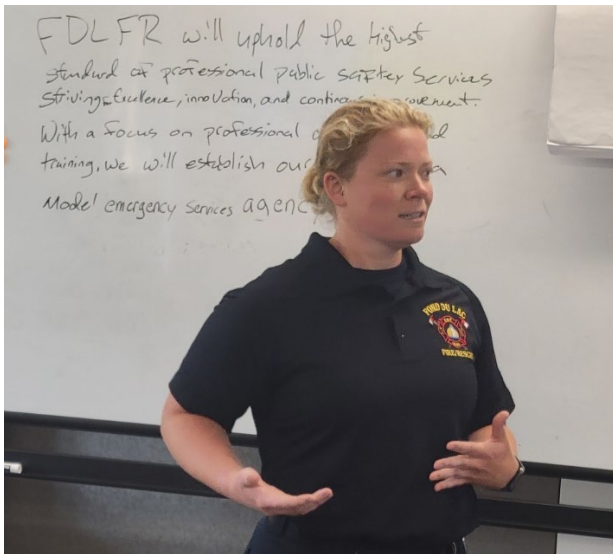


Agency Stakeholders Work Session

## Vision

An organizational vision exists to keep all agency members focused on the successful futurity of Fond du Lac Fire Rescue and to guide quality change and improvement in alignment with the community. In support of the future created within the community-driven strategic planning process, CPSE facilitated a revision of the FDLFR's vision. The agency will support the reality of this vision through successful plan implementation and goal achievement.

**Fond du Lac Fire Rescue will uphold the highest standard of professional public safety services, striving for excellence, innovation, and continuous improvement. We will attract and retain top talent, providing our members with progressive training and prioritizing health and wellness. Fond du Lac Fire Rescue is an inclusive environment where diversity will thrive. We will establish ourselves as a model emergency services agency while maintaining accountability to each other and the community.**



Agency Stakeholders Work Sessions



## Goals

Community feedback and the strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results (SOAR) process led to the determination of strategic initiatives representing the high-level issues the agency stakeholders developed into goals. The FDLFR must now make these goals a focus of efforts that will direct the agency to its desired future. Goals with complete objectives, tasks, timelines, and assignments are included in a separate **Management and Implementation Guide**.



**Improve personnel management to maximize effective staffing to provide the best services to the community.**



**Improve collaboration with external stakeholders to enhance communication and agency efficiency.**



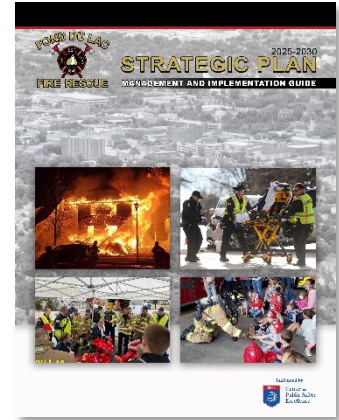
**Improve the existing training program areas to enhance performance and efficiency to comply with industry standards and community expectations.**



**Enhance internal communication to foster a more collaborative, informed, and responsive team environment within Fond du Lac Fire Rescue.**

## Conclusion

Working with community and department members from all levels, this strategic plan was developed...but the work is truly just beginning. Agency stakeholders must now execute and institutionalize the plan to ensure the community's expectations and the Fond du Lac Fire Rescue's vision remain congruent. The accompanying **Management and Implementation Guide** will assist FDLFR in the mechanics of implementation. The guide is not intended to be all-inclusive; rather, it provides flexibility to ensure future success.



"...we will chase perfection, and we will chase it relentlessly, knowing all the while we can never attain it. But along the way, we shall catch excellence."

Vince Lombardi

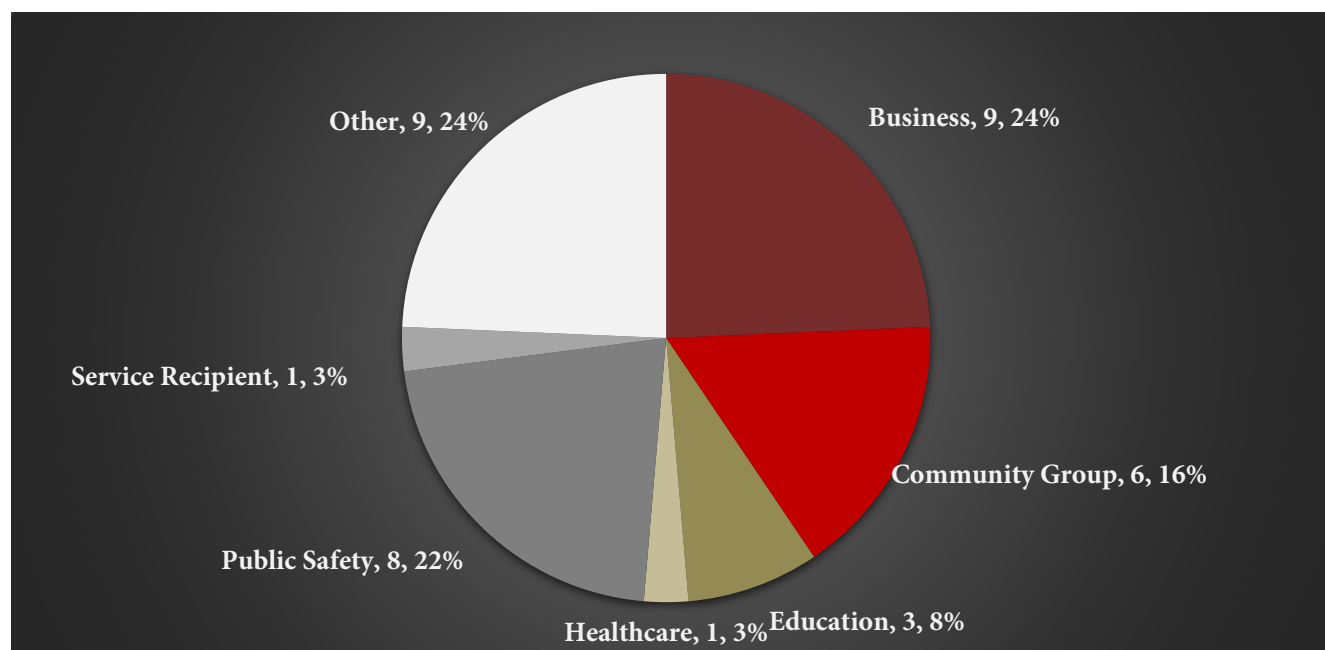
It must be remembered that during this journey of regeneration through change and improvement, recalculation may need to occur to find the success desired. This strategic plan is a roadmap to help Fond du Lac Fire Rescue navigate that change. The ability to pivot to meet the current environment as institutionalization and implementation occur provides a greater likelihood that the desired outcomes and efficacies will be realized as envisioned.

## Appendices

### A. Community Stakeholder Findings

Fond du Lac Fire Rescue demonstrates a commitment to its community via a focus on community input and satisfaction. A community stakeholder session was held to gather feedback from the respondents on the agency and its various services delivered. The information gathered from the community stakeholder feedback provided understanding to the agency stakeholders of any misalignment with its organizational foundation and performance or values-based expectations or concerns from which new improvement strategies and processes may be created.

**Community stakeholders** were identified by the agency to ensure broad representation. The breakdown of groups represented is presented here:



Respondents were asked to list, in priority order, up to three subjects relative to expectations, concerns, and strengths or positives for the FDLFR. Expectations and concerns were then analyzed for themes and weighted. The numbers in the parentheses are the cumulative weighted value that correlate with the themes identified. While the themes are listed in prioritized, weighted order, all responses were important in the planning process. Strengths or positives are listed verbatim and may be repeated based on different respondents.

The specific data and findings from the community stakeholder respondents are provided to follow.



## Community Expectations of Fond du Lac Fire Rescue (in priority order)

1. **Response Times.** Timely response to all emergency situations. Quick response. Show up right away in a bonafide emergency. Strong response times for both fire and EMS. Fast response time. When rescue is needed (or a fire), they come immediately. High level of service in terms of time/effective response. Fast response times. (123)
2. **Provide Services.** Be available for emergency situations. Respond to community safety needs - fire/ accident / etc. Help (put out the fire, provide medical care). Keep the community safe when disasters occur. When called, they will show up. Emergency medical services/put out fires. Medical assistance. That they will respond to any situation. Best attempt to resolve the issue. A high level of EMS care. (49)
3. **Training.** Educated staff from paramedic level to officers, chiefs, etc., and making sure they have the funding to support top-tier EMS/Fire. Knowledgeable team members. Know how to help. Best-trained paramedics with best practices to save lives. Well trained. Competent (qualified firefighters/responders). I expect them to have the skills to do their job. Personnel will have the expertise to handle the situation/event. Knowledge of community, with the ability to engage across diverse citizens and needs. Progressive in EMS care/fireground strategies. (42)
4. Community involvement through public relations efforts (national night out, schools, business events. Engagement with the community (parades, etc.). Engage with the community to provide educational opportunities, especially with our youth. Strong education to the community. To be good community partners. Community education, engagement with school-aged children. Clear communication. Fire safety/prevention education. (28)
5. Victims will be treated with courtesy and respect. Professionalism. That they will perform their duties in a professional manner. Friendly in the community. Stay professional. Quality response and professionalism. Professional and kind. A level-headed approach to all calls and response and respect from the top down. (26)
6. Work collaboratively with other government/private safety entities. Communicate with other community agencies and members so that multiple supports are in place when there is a need. Partnership with FDL community to serve and support them when they are having their worst day. Training/awareness of people with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Partnership development with local businesses to build the fire department and the local community. (17)
7. Equipment to handle electric vehicle crashes. State of the art equipment to perform duties. Equipment/resources to do your job. (7)
8. Common sense approach to fire safety. Fire safety. (6)
9. Efficient response. (5)
10. Create programs to drive down high-call categories (i.e., falls). (5)
11. Retention of firefighters - good wages and benefits. Placing focus on recruitment and retention strategies to ensure a strong and stable workforce. (4)
12. Work closely with businesses' needs for training and inspections. (3)
13. Scene safety and security. (3)
14. Transparency about all emergency calls (to the public/media). (1)
15. Collect data and look at processes for future improvements. (1)
16. Experts regarding hazardous conditions that exist in our buildings. (1)
17. The department has adequate resources allocated by the city council's annual budget. (1)
18. Facilities for proper storage/maintenance of equipment. (1)

## Areas of Community Concern about Fond du Lac Fire Rescue (verbatim, in priority order)

1. **Staffing.** Does the fire department have appropriate staff? Staffing - do people want to be firefighters anymore? Concerned they will lose good/trained staff to retirements. Is the fire department appropriately staffed to respond 24/7/365? Talent recruitment and retention. Talent pipeline, having enough highly qualified individuals from firefighter/paramedic to chief. Staffing/hard to keep employees in today's society. Is there enough staffing for a city our size? Qualified applicants. Not enough staff to respond in a safe manner. Attracting qualified applicants. (96)
2. **Budget.** Does the fire department have enough money to effectively do their job? Funding. Concerned they are not properly funded in the future. Budgets/cut in services. Fiscal and community support to do their job. Will the fire department have the resources they need to address any event? The cost of service is difficult, given inflation and taxpayer expectations. Hoping the FDL fire will always have support from the city for equipment/staffing. (43)
3. **Firefighter Safety.** Safety of the first responders - the job is hazardous to begin with - new concerns include hostile people, etc. That they are safe, regarding correct equipment and how they are treated by people. Concerned for personnel safety - strong need for continued training and advanced equipment. Mental health of staff and team members. Safety for firefighters when on call. (23)
4. Having appropriate equipment. Older cardiac equipment. That they have the tools (education, physical ability, hardware, vehicles) to do their jobs. Not enough equipment to do their job safely. (16)
5. Would like to see more community outreach; the police conduct active shooter training and organizational awareness; the FDLFR could offer community training through Envision. Concerned for the visibility in the community in a non-emergency setting. More than Fill the Boot. Communication to the public after incidents. opportunity to educate. Maintain and improve public outreach. Continued transparency. (15)
6. Aging population could mean increased demands, particularly for EMS services. Increased need for responses due to population changes (growing aging population). Rise in demand on resources to aging to pursue medical care or an inability for residents to receive medical care, thus relying on fire/rescue for that care. (13)
7. Covering County EMS - think we should have a County Rescue. Increase in EMS calls. Are there enough ambulances in FDL? (11)
8. Is the fire department staff appropriately trained? Training with outside agencies for fire suppression techniques and strategies. (8)
9. Need for additional fire station - what does that mean for staffing, finances, etc.? Facility locations that would affect response times. (6)
10. Bryter Communications. (5)
11. I know some people do not support having a truck follow the ambulance - I do support this. It is a great way to provide backup for any situation that could arise. Please continue this. (5)
12. Hazards in the area/city. (5)
13. Better backgrounds - actively go out into the community and add psychology/personality testing. (5)
14. Rise in demand for resources related to drug use/drug abuse. (5)
15. Notifications to businesses lack description - anticipating fines for monthly warning. (5)
16. Will there be a need to expand services to outlying areas as volunteer fire departments struggle to find volunteers/funding? Maintaining expansive and evolving services to the community. Increased call volume and demand for services. (5)

17. Number of hours required per shift. (5)
18. Be aware of our people with disabilities; they may not understand the emergency. (5)
19. How the future of volunteer fire departments and shared services will affect this department. (3)
20. Representation of department members in terms of gender, race, language, gender identity, age, etc. (3)
21. Staying up-to-date with technology and training. (3)
22. Community support (or lack thereof). (1)
23. Members who may live further away than traditional times (i.e., one hour or more). (1)
24. Concern about not being able to check in on community members due to staffing. (1)
25. What is the relationship with CN Railroad to clear tracks if an incident occurs? (1)
26. Hospitals-SSM has had issues at the county level – hopefully will be better. (1)

### **Positive Community Comments about Fond du Lac Fire Rescue** (verbatim, in no order)

- FDL Fire Rescue is a wonderful community partner. When presented with needs/challenges, they will try different avenues to be a part of the solution.
- When working with people they interact with, the feedback is positive as we get involved with support and services.
- Strong, professional reputation.
- TEMS and emergency preparedness planning = Emergency Management.
- The fire department is visible in the community.
- Have worked at building relationships.
- Positive attitude of employees; strong presence in the community.
- Driven staff to get better at their job.
- Friendly and competent staff.
- Seemingly great facilities.
- Always seem to do a great job.
- Excellent EMS services.
- Great community presence.
- Strong, collaborative community partners.
- Leadership is very strong.
- Partnerships with other agencies/departments.
- Achieving and maintaining Accreditation.
- Community engagement,
- Fire prevention education communication to the community; opportunities to learn.
- EMTs and other staff have been outstanding during both times I needed to call 911 in the last 8-9 months.
- Well respected at the monthly FDL Crisis Team meetings.
- Experienced staff.
- Concern for public safety.
- They always show up at our events and hang out and play with our clients. They learn to respond in a calm way.



# FOND DU LAC FIRE RESCUE

- The fire department is always top-notch in their training.
- Do a great job on doing inspections of buildings throughout the city.
- Established a culture/expectation of excellence at a personal and organizational level.
- Community involvement.
- Amount of calls answered.
- Amount of problems resolved.
- Great to work with.
- Always willing to help.
- Friendly members.
- Communication.
- Community involvement and education.
- Response times to events or emergencies.
- Community has always been a priority, whether on the job and getting called for an emergency or volunteering time.
- Professionalism.
- Knowledge and explanation during building inspections and explaining why to other staff.
- Visible, they do good public outreach,
- Well-organized.
- Great leadership.
- Great team, almost 100% of interactions are positive.
- Quick response- response time is very quick.
- Available – department makes itself very available to public and businesses.
- Collaborative training.
- Open to discussion/debrief.
- Strong SWAT teams' relationship.
- Excellent leadership.
- Works well with community.
- Good leadership/chiefs/assistant chiefs.
- Proactive with the community.
- Involved in supporting our community beyond actual fire and rescue.
- Approachable.
- Quick response.
- Department is Accredited!
- They are timely and thorough.
- Very visible in community.
- Professional.
- Paramedic-level EMS.
- Stability in leadership – smart, qualified, caring people.

- Repeatedly receives Accreditation.
- Personnel are involved in the community they serve.
- Commitment to the well-being and the genuine concern for our community and visitors.
- As a community, we're thankful for the service they provide.
- Relationship with police departments and neighboring public safety departments.
- Public training facility.
- Excellent response time to incidents.
- Very professional responders.
- Very concerned with the status of our fire protection system in our building.
- I am a community partner. This fire department is a great community partner.
- They are caring to our community.
- They follow best practices and are willing to think outside the box on new projects and ideas to help the community.
- Passion for their profession.
- Passion for the community.
- Willingness and openness to pursue new alternatives to providing service; embracing challenges and working to address them.
- The level of Accreditation is incredible.
- FDL Fire Rescue does so much to engage with the community.
- The firefighter/paramedics staffing the FDL Fire Rescue are amazing.
- Collaborative chiefs – want to work together.
- Forward-thinking: want to include police on training.
- Overwhelming number of positive attitude members.
- Community interaction-this meeting.
- Involving stakeholders in exercises and training events.
- Accessibility – I can readily contact the key department members with questions.
- Training with/at community businesses.
- Outgoing team members.
- Work great with younger students/schools and the community.
- Are very kind and integrated in our community.
- Great leadership.
- Facilities are very well maintained.

## **Other Community Comments about Fond du Lac Fire Rescue** (verbatim, in no particular order)

- Wonderful with fall prevention initiatives.
- Thank you for including community members in this process, it means a lot.
- My employer has been asked several times to host and/or participate in the training or exercises - this is one of the best parts of interacting with them, keep it up.
- Good experiences recently with EMTs and with firefighters at Touch the Truck involving youth at the ARC.
- I appreciate the ability to work together.
- Would like to engage them in an exercise regarding hazardous chemical response.
- All of our interactions with them have been excellent over the years.
- Strong history of working together – considered family.
- Prompt and knowledgeable staff have always responded to my business when needed.
- Thank you for inviting our agency and thank you for lunch.
- I have worked with FD for years in business and volunteer work. I am always amazed to see the level of effort they put into all aspects of their area.
- Chief Erick is an awesome leader in the FDL community.

## **Things the Community Feels Fond du Lac Fire Rescue Should Change**

(verbatim, in priority order)

1. Transparency of notifications to businesses.
2. Number of resources that respond to alarms without being driven by intelligence received.
3. Representation of community among department.
4. Business outreach/hazard response.
5. Tell stories of organizational successes.
6. More social media engagement.
7. Encourage members to join volunteer fire department.
8. Perhaps hours of service; some community members think they are being paid to sleep while on 24-hour shifts; perhaps educating the reasons for that.

## Things the Community Feels Fond du Lac Fire Rescue Should NOT Change

(verbatim, in priority order)

1. Values of personnel: good team at department currently.
2. Positive interaction with the community.
3. Services provided as it isn't just fire service but emergency response, etc.
4. Mutual aid agreements with volunteer fire departments.
5. Their community involvement.
6. Their passion for the community.
7. Open relationship, quality.
8. Community engagement.
9. Shifts and response strategies.
10. Visibility in the community.
11. Community engagement.
12. People and culture: community perception is great.
13. The high expectations set for and buy management.
14. Excellent community engagement.
15. Focus on community engagement.
16. Training and dedication of staff.
17. Leadership.
18. Commitment to community.
19. Great community partners.
20. Being involved in our community
21. Responding to emergency calls for help.
22. Community events, professionalism, fire prevention through enforcement and fire prevention.
23. The partnership with our FDL schools for safety and critical response feedback.
24. Their willingness to be involved where asked in the community.



Community-Prioritized Programs

Understanding how the community prioritizes the agency’s programs and services allows Fond du Lac Fire Rescue to ensure its focus on resource allocation aligns. With that, prioritization feedback was garnered with an instrument that compared the prioritization of the programs and services offered by the FDLFR. The results were as follows:



## B. Agency Stakeholder Work

A group of agency stakeholders representing the various segments of FDLFR attended a three-day work session to review the community feedback, develop or revise the agency's mission and values, and establish a quality focus on the way forward in developing this community-driven strategic plan. Additionally, the process included an environmental scan in the form of a strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results (SOAR) analysis to better understand the current situational aspects impacting the agency.

### SOAR

The agency's internal stakeholders utilized a strategic environmental analytic method known as SOAR, where members consider the organization's current strengths, opportunities, future aspirations, and strategic results to formulate a path for continuous improvement. The SOAR process was conducted for reflection, focus, and alignment with the organization's set of values, its vision, and its mission. This appreciative inquiry process provided environmental scanning for strategic direction, associated plans through the application of innovative ideas, and a positive strategic framework that brings clarity to the agency's vision for leadership in day-to-day functions.

### Strengths

|  |  |
|--|--|
| How we conduct ourselves-professionalism.                      | Public perception is positive.   |
| Level of service – all paramedics.                             | Ability to respond in a timely manner.   |
| Willingness from members to maintain a high level of training. | Continued support in providing state-of-the-art equipment and facilities.                  |
| Strong management/union relationship.                          | Adapt to workforce needs to hire.  |
| Invest in our members with additional training and schooling.  | Strong stance on ensuring positive mental health among all members.                        |
| Ability to do more with less as it pertains to budgets.        | Multi-faceted programs we offer the FDL community.   |
| Adapting to community needs.                                   | Collaborating with community partners.   |
| High value on customer service/empathy.                        | Partnership with the Fond du Lac School District.  |
| Cooperation with community partners.                           | Set the standard for outside fire agencies to model.                                       |
| Ensuring the success of probationary members.                  | Willingness to support community events.   |
| Willingness to do what is right.                               | Willingness to share our expertise.  |
| Maintain a stance and focus on long-term health.               | Openness to accept help from outside partnerships.   |
| Being active in the community eye both on and off duty.        | Maintain continuity of operations during high call volume or during large-scale incidents. |
| Set high expectations internally.                              |  |

# FOND DU LAC FIRE RESCUE

## Opportunities

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Amplify ourselves in a good light with what we do and do well.                              | Focus on internal opportunities for improvement.                        |
| Continue to build partnerships with neighboring response agencies.                          | Create a more diverse workforce that is reflective of the community.    |
| Utilize a more diverse partnership within the community.                                    | Add proactive elements to our mental health program.                    |
| Create a program to address community mental health.  | Professional development and mentorship.                                |
| Enhance capabilities to safely and effectively respond to all water and ice emergencies.    | Enhance training to stay current with fire industry standards.          |
| Enhance transparency in all internal and external communications.                           | Increase staffing and response capabilities, emergent and non-emergent. |
| Utilize the new generation of hard-charging firefighters to set a higher cultural standard. | Further improving relationships to promote organizational success.      |
| Further improving relationships with community partners.                                    | Finding a happy medium for social media presence.                       |

## Aspirations

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Joint, multi-jurisdictional response for all hazards; water/ice/fire investigation. | Leader/standard of excellence in health and wellness for the FDL community.      |
| County-wide ALS to provide excellent paramedic-level service.                       | Develop and staff qualified in-house mechanic.                                   |
| Leader in the green energy initiative for the community.                            | Be the leader in recruitment/retention.  |
| Develop a dedicated inspection staff to enhance community risk reduction.           | Establish an effective mobile integrated healthcare program within the county.   |
| Fond du Lac County moves toward a fire district, and our agency leads.              | Develop a dedicated training staff to develop and deliver training consistently. |
| Develop and staff 911 communications specific to Fire/EMS.                          | Better communication with external stakeholders                                  |



Agency Stakeholders Work Session

## Results

| Group 1   | Group 2   | Group 3  |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Favorable feedback from external stakeholders.</li> <li>- Be fully staffed with quality members and retain current staff.</li> <li>- Keeping the community informed on fire department business.</li> <li>- Reduce the amount of mental health emergencies, helping to provide access to resources.</li> <li>- Creating a more confident/competent officer.</li> <li>- Continue to maintain Accreditation and CDSP.</li> <li>- Maintain transparency through open communication.-</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve county-wide response</li> <li>- Decrease out of service time.</li> <li>- Increase time efficiency.</li> <li>- Consistency and proficiency.</li> <li>- Early detection of serious mental health issues.</li> <li>- Thoroughness and timely compliance.</li> <li>- Reduce repeat contacts.</li> <li>- Better community cooperation.</li> <li>- Improved public perception.</li> <li>- Improved and safer response.</li> <li>- Consistent communication.</li> <li>- Transparency.</li> <li>- Create balance within the agency.</li> <li>- Improved scene turnaround.</li> <li>- Reduction of ancillary duties to improve response.</li> <li>- 911 call to response to arrival time reduction.</li> <li>- Build response cooperation and transparency.</li> <li>- High quality employees</li> <li>- Happy/Healthy/Retirement.</li> <li>- All calls do not go unanswered.</li> <li>- Increased efficiency while being good stewards of spending.</li> <li>- Reduction of employee vacancies/ overtime spending/ mental health issues/increased morale.</li> <li>- Challenges employees to achieve results.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Joint dive team with other established dive teams.</li> <li>- More effective water response with FDLSP.</li> <li>- Joint county-wide fire investigation team.</li> <li>- Full-time county-wide ALS service.</li> <li>- City-wide leader in reducing the carbon footprint.</li> <li>- Reduction of chronic illnesses.</li> <li>- Community health improvement.</li> <li>- Complacency elimination.</li> <li>- Buy in to the overall mission.</li> <li>- Destination for firefighter careers.</li> <li>- Every member is part of a program.</li> <li>- Formal professional development program.</li> <li>- Reduction of falls.</li> <li>- Reduction of property loss.</li> <li>- Maintain business operations.</li> <li>- Increased education of business representatives and citizens.</li> <li>- Expand communication platforms.</li> <li>- Improved outreach to diverse populations.</li> <li>- FDLFR is the sought-after commodity.</li> <li>- Institute a department-wide customer service program.</li> </ul> |

## Programs and Services

It is imperative that agency stakeholders distinguish between the core deliverables (programs and services) provided by Fond du Lac Fire Rescue and those supporting services that help the agency provide the core programs and services. With this understanding, the agency stakeholders can further define where the issues and gaps exist within the organization and provide more basis for the environmental scan that is conducted. To bring this understanding to fruition, CPSE provided guidance and gained consensus understanding with the entire group so that the difference between the deliverables and the supporting functions were understood.



## Challenges and Service Gaps

After sifting through data and feedback provided by the community stakeholders and the internal environmental scan conducted, the agency stakeholders, by consensus and group effort, determined that the following challenges and service gaps exist within Fond du Lac Fire Rescue. Each challenge or gap listed is accompanied by the causal effects determined by the two groups. They are then linked to the strategic initiative identified by the agency stakeholders.

| Group 1  | Group 2   | Initiative Link                |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>Personnel Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recruitment and retention</li> <li>○ Adequate staffing</li> <li>○ Lack of diverse candidates</li> <li>○ Lack of interest in overtime</li> <li>○ Lack of participation in department ceremonies, events, Fill the Boot, Walleye Weekend, open house, etc.</li> </ul>   | <b>Recruitment and Retention</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lack of qualified applicants</li> <li>○ Competition with other agencies</li> <li>○ Lack of city appeal</li> <li>○ Lack of inclusion</li> <li>○ Lack of attracting local talent</li> <li>○ Lack of information and education</li> </ul>  | <b>Personnel Management</b>    |
| <b>External Communications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Social media</li> <li>○ Third-party system software</li> <li>○ Public education</li> <li>○ Getting feedback</li> <li>○ Police department</li> <li>○ Dispatch</li> <li>○ City garage</li> <li>○ Hospitals</li> <li>○ Nursing homes</li> <li>○ Information technology</li> <li>○ Schools</li> </ul>  | <b>Collaboration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lack of a unified response</li> <li>○ Fear of loss of control</li> <li>○ Lack of specialized resources</li> <li>○ Insufficient response time</li> <li>○ Ineffective communications</li> <li>○ Unknown capabilities</li> <li>○ Inaccuracy</li> </ul> | <b>Collaboration</b>           |
| <b>Training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recruit academy-improve consistency, lack of lateral track vs. new hire, time of year</li> <li>○ Outside training</li> <li>○ Shift scheduling</li> <li>○ Required continuing education</li> <li>○ Lack of lesson plans and skill sheets</li> <li>○ Lack of consistency in recruit check-offs</li> <li>○ Lack of professional mentoring</li> <li>○ Consistency in fireground communications</li> </ul> |   | <b>Training</b>                |
|  | <b>Internal Communications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lack of consistency, transparency, clarity, and information flow</li> <li>○ Decreased efficiency</li> </ul>   | <b>Internal Communications</b> |

## Personnel Strategic Initiatives

Based on all previously captured information and determining critical issues and service gaps, the following strategic initiatives were identified as the foundation for developing goals and objectives.

**Personnel Management   Collaboration   Training   Internal Communications**

Complete goals with objectives, tasks, and outcomes can be found in the accompanying **Management and Implementation Guide**.

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**FIRE RESCUE**

**2025-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN**

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