



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
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## **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Kurt Triplett, City Manager

**From:** Marilynne Beard, Deputy City Manager  
J. Kevin Nalder, Director of Fire and Building Services

**Date:** September 14, 2012

**Subject:** FIRE STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

## **RECOMMENDATION**

City Council receives the staff's proposed Fire Strategic Plan implementation planning draft and provide feedback about the draft and the Fire Strategic Plan transmitted at the September 4<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting.

## **BACKGROUND**

On September 4, 2012, the City Council received the Fire Strategic Plan report prepared by Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI). At that time, staff indicated that the Council would be afforded some time to read the report and pose questions or share concerns at the October 2 meeting. An implementation development plan was also to be presented for Council's consideration. The purpose of this memo is to outline the recommended process for reviewing, evaluating, implementing and communicating the results of the report.

The Fire Strategic Plan report contains a number of observations and findings and provides 90 recommendations. The recommendations cover a wide range of administrative, policy and operational issues that reflect the opinions of the professionals that prepared the report. As with any consultant report, the findings and recommendations need to be reviewed by the appropriate City staff and discussed with the City Council so that an implementation plan can be developed that reflects the actions that are appropriate for Kirkland. As noted in earlier communications, the City may agree with and implement some of the consultant's recommendations while other recommendations may not be feasible or advisable as written, but could be addressed through alternative actions recommended by staff. The priority and timing of implementing the recommendations also need to consider factors such as the necessity for interagency collaboration and/or agreements, collective bargaining and the availability of resources. Internal and external communication about the report and the City's response will be important throughout the process. The following process was developed as a joint effort between the City Manager's Office and the Fire and Building Services Department. The primary responsibility for developing and completing an implementation strategy rests with the Fire and Building Services Department led by its director.

**Task1: Work Plan Development (September-October)**

Description: Develop recommended steps to review report recommendations and develop staff recommendation regarding implementation. Work plan elements would include development of a staff response and recommended actions, external and internal communication plans, and an accountability and reporting plan. Given the length and complexity of the report, the City Council will need to have time to absorb the findings and recommendations and have an opportunity to offer comments, concerns and to ask questions. The City Council's comments will help inform the work plan and the staff response.

Lead: City Manager's Office and Director of Fire and Building Services

Other Staff: Fire Strategic Plan Steering Team

Reviews: Present to Public Safety Committee for review and comment

Present to City Council for comment and further input and questions

**Task 2: Develop Response to Fire Strategic Plan Report (October-November)**

Description: Review and analyze findings and recommendations contained in Fire Strategic Plan report. Staff analysis will assess the feasibility, difficulty and advisability of the consultants' recommendations based on a series of criteria including:

1. Consistency with adopted laws, regulations and policies that govern the City;
2. Need for external concurrence or written agreements (e.g. interlocal agreements);
3. Requirement to engage in collective bargaining for recommendations that impact wages, hours and working conditions;
4. Availability of resources needed to implement recommendation (both monetary and staff resources);
5. Degree of community engagement;
6. Staff's professional judgment about most effective means of addressing findings;

Based on this discussion, each recommendation can be categorized according to the recommended actions:

1. Agree with recommendation as written and implement as resources allow;
2. Agree with recommendation with modifications;
3. Disagree with finding and/or recommendation;

A complete discussion will be provided regarding the rationale for modifying or rejecting selected recommendations. It will be important during this process to involve department personnel in discussions about the recommendations to benefit from their broad base of knowledge and to gain acceptance of possible changes. Suggested priorities and time frames would also be developed.

Lead: Director of Fire and Building Services

Other Staff: Steering team, department staff, City Manager's Office, Finance Department, other city staff, IAFF, partner agencies

Reviews: Present to City Manager for concurrence

The Public Safety Committee reviewed the draft implementation strategy and plans to stay closely engaged with staff over the coming months to review the staff response and to monitor the progress of implementation. The committee also suggested that staff reach out to the Finn Hill Neighborhood Association leaders to present an update to residents and discuss the findings and recommendations of the report, especially those related to siting and building a new fire station in Finn Hill. Staff will begin that outreach immediately and it will also be part of the communication plan.

It should be noted that the upcoming budget process is one opportunity to begin to address some of the recommendations in the report. The longer term implementation strategy will assure accountability for completion of all recommendations that are adopted by the City Council.

To access the Fire Strategic Plan report click on the following link:

[http://www.kirklandwa.gov/Assets/City+Council/Council+Packets/090412/3a\\_StudySession.pdf](http://www.kirklandwa.gov/Assets/City+Council/Council+Packets/090412/3a_StudySession.pdf)

### **Task 3: Present Staff Response for Review and Feedback (November)**

**Description:** A draft of the staff response with recommended actions and priorities would be presented for review and comment by the Public Safety Committee and, ultimately, the City Council. The purpose of this step is to gain City Council and community support for future actions prior to implementing recommendations. It will be important to understand that implementation of a strategic plan generally takes place over a period of years and as resources are available. If resources become an impediment to implementation, the City Council will need to either defer implementation or, if sufficient community support exists, secure new funding. A realistic assessment of the financial feasibility of implementing any recommendation may change the City's acceptance of a recommendation. For instance, large capital or operating investments may be deemed unrealistic by staff, the Council and/or the community. However, the City should endeavor to find alternative ways to meet the identified problem. Once there is concurrence on the actions, priorities and time frames for completion, the department can begin the implementation process.

**Lead:** Director of Fire and Building Services

**Other Staff:** Department staff, Finance Department and other <sup>support</sup> department representatives, City Manager's Office

**Reviews:** Public Safety Committee for review and City Council for approval of final actions

### **Task 4: Accountability and Reporting (ongoing)**

**Description:** The City Council Public Safety Committee will receive reports at all monthly meetings for the coming year about the status of the implementation. The City Council will be briefed quarterly or as appropriate to make decisions and approve actions. A webpage will be created for the implementation plan that outlines objectives and accomplishments as they occur. Additional public process is

anticipated relative to selected recommendations such as the staffing of a joint fire station in the Finn Hill area.

Lead: Director of Fire and Building Services

Other Staff: Department staff including web representative, City Manager's Office communications staff

Some of the recommendations and work plan items are already in progress. For example, a communications plan is being drafted. CMO communications staff is working with the Fire and Building Services staff to develop content for Currently Kirkland and other mediums. The 2013-2014 Proposed Budget will address some of the recommendations.