



CITY OF KIRKLAND

Fire & Building Department

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MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: J. Kevin Nalder, Director of Fire and Building Services
Joseph Sanford, Deputy Fire Chief

Date: July 25, 2013

Subject: STRATEGIC PLAN BREAKDOWN, STAFF ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE TO FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION:

Public Safety Committee receives and provides feedback to the Department's draft prioritization, response and implementation strategies to the consultant's 91 recommendations contained in the Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) "Organizational Evaluation, Future Planning, Feasibility of Cooperative Service Deliver and Organizational Strategic Plan".

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In 2011, the City engaged the services of ESCI to conduct an organizational review of the Kirkland Fire and Building Department. The City Council received the consultant's report in September 2012. Since then, staff has developed a response and implemented certain recommendations through the budget process and Departmental work. Major findings in the consultant's review are:

- Response time analysis shows gaps in coverage in Finn Hill, Kingsgate and Bridle Trails neighborhoods
- Only meeting response standard 52% of incidents.....needs to be 90% per RCW
- Administrative support staff for the Fire Department has not kept up with operational growth and is insufficient
- Emergency Management plan has not been completed
- Fire Stations 22, 25 and 27 need Capital Improvement Plan for remodel or replacement
- Public Education and Community Outreach are limited and need improvement
- Policies and Procedures Manual needs updating

A three-day Strategic Plan Retreat was held on May 14-16, 2013 that included twenty-four participants with varied Departmental perspectives and responsibilities. Executive Staff, Administrative Staff, Training, Labor, Fire Officers and Firefighters met with the goal of achieving a consensus response to the recommendations listed in the Strategic Plan. . The recommendations contained in this memo used the results of that retreat as a basis for the Chief's recommendation for going forward.

Establishing the Department's Mission, Vision and Values statements was viewed as a necessary first step in reviewing recommendations for the future. From November 2012 to February 2013, members of the Department participated in a process to define the Mission, Vision and Values. Department members embraced the following:

Mission Statement:

"Our City * Our People * Our Duty * Our Commitment to Serve"

Vision Statement:

The Kirkland Fire Department is creating a safer community as a respected partner in our region and an innovative leader in the nation.

Values:

Supportive - Working together as a team toward a common goal.

Professionalism – Upholding industry standards and honoring the expectations of a professional firefighter both on and off the job.

Integrity – Maintaining consistency between actions and words at all times.

Respect- Treating others with understanding and compassion. Acknowledging there is strength in diversity.

Innovation – Providing a supportive work environment that encourages and empowers improvement through creativity.

Trust – Being fair, truthful, competent and honorable;
Confident that the actions of others are fair, truthful, competent and honorable.

Acronym **S.P.I.R.I.T**

Utilizing the adopted Mission, Vision and Values of the organization, the 91 consultant recommendations were sorted by priority, current status and estimated timelines for completion. The Department then identified probable assignments. Recommendations that were disagreed with, redundant or already completed were also identified.

The current status of the 91 consultant recommendations is broken down as follows:

14 recommendations, or 15%, that have been identified as already completed.

5 recommendations, or 6%, were disagreed with or identified as redundant.

36 recommendations, or 40% are currently in the process of being completed.

6 recommendations, or 7% are and have been ongoing. These are items that are currently being done and will continue to be done.

30 recommendations, or 33% have not yet been started and will need to be implemented over time, will require additional approval, information, resources, funding or staff.

In addition, the Department has added 5 additional high priority recommendations to bring the total to 96. These are discussed in detail later in this report. These recommendations are:

- Develop Incident Action Plans for special events and high hazard target occupancies
- Centralize Department purchasing
- Establish proactive community risk reduction
- Create Regional Fire Investigation Team
- Regional Cooperative Apparatus Purchasing

The Department broke down the 96 recommendations into three functional areas and a fourth category of additional Department recommendations. This was done in order to respond to all the recommendations comprehensively and to align them with their probable assignments for implementation. The four areas are:

1. Operations – the consultant's operational concerns surrounded response times, Emergency Medical Services, facilities, apparatus and equipment.
2. Emergency Management – the primary concern of the consultant was the hiring of a City Emergency Manager and the completion of the City Emergency Management Plan, Continuity of Government Plan and a Continuation of Operations Plan.
3. Administration – these recommendations consisted of updating policies and procedures, increasing administrative staffing, employee training, fire prevention and public education.
4. Additional Department Recommendations – Recommendations not included in the consultant's report that the Department places a high priority on include development of Incident Action Plans for special events and high hazard target occupancies. In addition, replacing staff positions responsible for public information and public education is a high priority and is necessary to meet all the consultant's recommendations.

A matrix containing Department response to each of the 96 recommendations is included as Appendix #1 to this memo.

DEPARTMENT PRIORITY GOAL

The Department has always strived to provide the best service possible to the citizens of Kirkland. Based on the recommendations of the consultant, the Kirkland Fire Department is positioned to take the next step in becoming a world class Fire Agency. The consultant recommended seeking accreditation under the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) which provides major benefits to the City and the citizens the Department serves. Also recommended is moving to reduce our Washington State Ratings Bureau (WSRB) rating from the current 4 to a 1. This is our highest priority and will require significant new resources to be implemented. Departments that have Class 1 ratings and who are CFAI accredited experienced reduced fire loss, fewer fire fatalities, increased medical service and may receive substantial reductions in insurance premiums to both businesses and homeowners.

To determine a community's protection class, the WSRB evaluates four major areas:

- **Fire Department** - they review engine companies, ladder companies, fire station distribution, automatic aid, personnel and training to name a few.
- **Water Supply** – determining the adequacy for fire suppression purposes
- **Emergency Communications Systems** – evaluates the 911 system including facilities, dispatching for fires, personnel and training.

- **Fire Safety Control** – examines code enforcement, public education and building code enforcement.

Some neighboring cities WSRB ratings are as follows:

WSRB Protection Class 2 – Bellevue, Seattle and Federal Way

WSRB Protection Class 3 – Woodinville, Shoreline, Redmond, Everett, Renton and Kent

WSRB Protection Class 4 – Sammamish, Kirkland, Marysville and Auburn

CFAI accreditation requires assessment of these performance evaluation categories:

- Assessment and Planning
- Essential Resources
- External System's Relations
- Financial Resources
- Goals and Objectives
- Governance and Administration
- Human Resources
- Physical Resources
- Programs
- Training and Competency

Working towards accreditation and a WSRB rating of 1 also meets or exceeds the consultant's recommendations in the areas of response times, deployment, Fire and EMS training, facilities, apparatus, records management, water supply, fire prevention and public education. Consequently, achieving accreditation is the highest recommended priority.

In order to accomplish these recommendations, the Department must redefine positions and modify the Department organizational chart. With EMS now generating 70% of our call volume reorganization is becoming increasingly necessary. Operational efficiencies, cost savings and increased service delivery can be realized with these modifications.

ADDRESSING THE STRATEGIC PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Consultant and Department recommendations and modifications need to be addressed as directed by Council which must make difficult choices with finite revenues and many competing needs throughout City services. Several of the consultant's recommendations have previously been identified by the Department as needs but have not been accomplished because of a lack of required resources, funding and/or staff. Appendix #1 identifies likely staff assignments or staffing needs to accomplish each recommendation.

Following are the key goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan, their current status and recommendations for implementation.

OPERATIONS

The Kirkland Fire Department has relied heavily on "cross-staffing" of apparatus. When a fire call comes in, the crew takes the fire engine and leaves the aid unit unstaffed and vice versa. This leaves key pieces of equipment unstaffed and response areas covered by the next closest available units. This occurs at every fire station, every day.

Following is a summary of the recommendations and related staff responses for Operations:

Response Times

- Increase emergency operations by adding a BLS aid unit staffed for 12 hours to maintain adequate personnel for a moderate risk fire event. (3)
- Monitor mutual and automatic aid for equity. (54)
- Track failure rate of units to respond to incidents in their first due area by fire station and apparatus. (56)
- Modify the EMS response protocol of sending three responders to medical incidents. Redeploy with dedicated staffing of two-person aid units, or single person quick response unit for low priority EMS incidents. (79)
- Expand the current partnership with the King County Sheriff's Marine Unit and the Seattle Fire Department to provide a joint, coordinated response to marine firefighting and rescue incidents. (80)
- Develop a long-term plan to become a CFAI accredited fire agency. (82)
- Define and report (Response Time Objectives Report) geographic areas where response time objectives are not being met. Include information on predictable consequences and steps to achieve compliance. (83)
- Determine the cause of the dramatic decrease in the percent of full alarm assignment deployments. Develop a plan to reach the stated deployment goal of 90 percent (84)
- Adopt a two tiered response time objectives for fire, EMS, hazardous materials, technical rescue, and specialized rescue incidents. (85)
- Develop and adopt response time intervals, benchmark, and review at a minimum annually. (87)
- Adopt turnout time standards based on incident type and time of day. (89)

Standard of Cover Study

The Department currently has a two tiered response for fire and medical response with adopted turnout time standards. They are 5 minutes for medical response and 5.5 minutes for fire response. The consultant's report identified current response times were impacted by geographic area and station, however it was not detailed enough to truly understand the underlying factors impacting response times. The Department is conducting a Standard of Cover Study to obtain this information. This is an in depth evaluation of response times and resource allocation including dispatch times, turnout times and drive times to emergency incidents. The study will also look at Station location, deployment of resources and the steps necessary to achieve response time standards. It will provide valuable insight into the impacts of mutual and automatic aid, multiple false alarms, time of day, geographic hindrances, dispatching issues and non-emergent responses. Identifying possible regional consolidation and partnership strategies is also a necessary component in examining response times and attempts to improve them. Regional partnerships could also benefit other key areas of need in the organization including cost savings, inadequate staffing and other efficiencies.

The Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) accreditation is a comprehensive self-assessment and evaluation model that enables organizations to examine past, current, and future service levels and internal performance and compare them to industry best practices. This process can lead to improved service delivery.

The consultant recommends and staff agrees that the Department explore potential partnerships with surrounding jurisdictions for interest and mutual benefits including but not limited to reduction in response times. These would include organizational and functional consolidations or a Regional Fire Protection Service Authority.

In the summary of stakeholder input, both internal and external customers identified the lack of marine fire suppression capabilities as an organizational weakness. The Department agrees

with this based on the high dollar value of commercial, residential and marine structures. The consultant recommended expanding partnerships with King County Sheriff and Seattle Fire for marine services. The Department believes better service can be obtained by working cooperatively with neighboring waterfront communities (Northshore FD, Bellevue FD and Mercer Island FD), forming partnerships and seeking grant funding with those partners. The Department also recommends that this be placed on the unfunded CIP in order to assist us in the grant application process.

A lack of offshore water rescue capabilities was also identified as an organizational weakness. Kirkland has 13 miles of waterfront and unlimited access to the water for swimming and boating. On average, Kirkland suffers 10 drowning's a year. As water rescue responses increase and funding for lakeshore response by individual agencies continue to decrease the responsibility for providing this essential service becomes increasingly urgent. Kirkland Fire currently provides a limited Near Shore Water Rescue program and must enhance its response into deeper waters that are longer distances from the shoreline.

The lack of marine rescue and marine firefighting capabilities were also identified as a critical need in the 2000 Fire Strategic Plan.

Water rescue craft have ongoing staffing and maintenance funding element that needs to be addressed. In addition, strategic placement (where will it be located) must be identified. These will be examined in the Standard of Cover study and a resulting plan developed.

Council has placed the study of a Regional Fire Protection Service Authority (RFA) on the 2013-2014 work plan. The study will provide information on efficiencies and effectiveness that may or may not be gained. The staff recommendation is to wait on the RFA study until the Standard of Cover study is complete to see if any additional gaps in coverage are identified. Currently, response time gaps have been identified in the Finn Hill, Kingsgate and Bridle Trails neighborhoods.

Recommendation (84) seeks to determine the dramatic decrease in full alarm deployments in the Department's fire responses. This has been completed and was the result of restructuring the dispatching criteria. Three years ago, all calls for fires were dispatched as "full" responses. The Department now has two categories of fire response; "structure fires" and "full" responses. Full responses are now defined as unconfirmed structure fires. This allows us to dispatch additional units on fires that are confirmed "structure fires" more quickly and accounts for the decrease in full alarm responses.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

- Annually conduct a detailed analysis of revenue verses expenditure to validate EMS transportation activity is meeting stated goals established by the city (5)
- Add a Medical Service Administrator (MSA) at the rank of division chief to manage the medical division (6)
- Bill for EMS transport when responding and transporting patients outside of the City of Kirkland (7)
- Add one FTE administrative assistant for EMS and one FTE financial analyst to administrative support functions (8)
- Develop a comprehensive evaluation program to assess all aspects of the EMS system (76)

- Provide Advanced Life Support services within the City of Kirkland via the King County Medic One program (77)
- Participate in the King County Medic One Community Medical Technician (CMT) pilot (78)

Regional partnerships and focused program management should be pursued as a method to efficiently provide administrative support for EMS delivery. Emergency Medical incidents have risen to over 70% of total call volume. The Department agrees with the consultant's recommendation that an EMS division led by a Medical Service Administrator (MSA) be established to oversee EMS. The MSA would be responsible for training, quality assurance, quality improvement, regional medical protocol participation and implementation, risk management and grants. Currently, some of these functions are performed by a medical transport Captain and Operations staff.

Membership in the King County EMS leadership group primarily consists of highly-focused, professional Advanced Life Support (ALS) administrators. Hiring an MSA is essential to providing planning, development, implementation and management of programs in a regionally based emergency medical administration. It has been extremely difficult to represent Kirkland's needs and interests at a regional level with current staffing.

Reporting on all phases of operations is necessary to improve efficiency and service levels to the community. The consultant had numerous recommendations regarding records management and reporting for both Fire and EMS. A comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of the EMS system is advised. This includes all existing EMS services plus evaluating Kirkland's role in providing Advanced Life Support services, the Community Medical Technician pilot program and reviewing existing EMS protocols.

ESCI concludes, "It is our opinion that the number of KF&BD support staff is inadequate to meet the needs of the fire Department and the expectations of the City. While it is possible to assign a staff person responsibility to work directly with the fire Department from finance, IT, or HR, so far this approach has not been effective. Even if this assignment arrangement were successful, the KF&BD requires additional administrative and support positions. Support staffing has remained static or decreased even as the number of emergency operations personnel and the services of the fire Department have increased."

The Department agrees that hiring one FTE administrative support for EMS is a high priority. This position would handle transport billing, HIPPA compliance, records management and the coordination of scheduling for training and other requirements. Currently a .25 position is temporarily funded with transport fee revenue. A full FTE position could be funded through the transport fee billing revenue. Transport fee revenue has exceeded projected revenues sufficient enough to fund a full time position.

Facilities, Apparatus and Equipment

- Dedicate a reserve engine to the training division, preferably a unit that can be shared by agencies (63)
- Store PPE in a separate, well ventilated room (53)
- Jointly construct and staff a new fire station with Northshore FD. The fire station should be located in an area to serve the Finn Hill neighborhood and Northshore FD (75)

- Develop a capital plan for the rebuild or replacement of Fire Station No. 25 (Finn Hill South) and Fire Station No. 27 (Totem Lake) (81)

A reserve engine has been identified and is awaiting formalization of the EMTG Interlocal agreement. Dedicating an engine to Training could occur regardless of whether formal consolidation occurs. Providing separate, ventilated rooms for PPE has been partially accomplished within the limitations of current facilities. Provisions in future building plans should be made to protect personnel from contaminated gear and to protect gear from UV, diesel exhaust and other contaminants.

Finn Hill Fire Station and Fire Station Capital Plan

The consultant recommends rebuilding or replacing Fire Stations 25 (Finn Hill) and 27 (Totem Lake). A capital plan would need to be developed for Station 27. The Standard of Cover Study should provide additional information to reinforce or modify existing plans for both Finn Hill and Totem Lake. The consultant has been reengaged to proceed with the Finn Hill Station siting. The consultant will look at single station and dual station options. In addition, the Department recommends that Station 22 (Houghton) also be considered in the capital plan as it is the same age and relative condition as Stations 25 and 27.

In addition, there were three coverage gaps identified by the consultant. The Standard of Cover study would identify whether these stations would move or stay in current location in order to better serve our community and meet our response standard.

Temporary funding was provided in the 2013-2014 budget to staff North Finn Hill Station 24. The Department feels that a more effective way to serve Finn Hill and provide a lower impact to other Kirkland neighborhoods will be by participating in a pilot study. The study calls for the staffing of the south Fill Hill Station 25 with a daily minimum of four firefighter/EMT's. Current daily minimum staffing is three firefighter/EMT's. This pilot provides two firefighter/EMT's for an aid response which leaves the other two to respond to subsequent alarms on Finn Hill. This provides for quicker response to subsequent alarms on Finn Hill and it eliminates the need to take other stations out of district to respond to Finn Hill. This approach is more cost effective as it provides this additional coverage on a 24 hour basis, not the proposed 12 hour model.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The consultant noted that a shift of responsibilities from the Deputy Chief of Administration to a full time City Emergency Manager needed to occur. In addition, the consultant recommends that the incomplete elements of the Emergency Management Plan take priority. Following is a summary of the recommendations and related staff responses for City Emergency Management:

Emergency Management Plan

- Identify a location and develop a dedicated EOC; apply for a matching grant from the Washington EMD Emergency Operations Center Grant Program (requires a 25 percent local match).(26)
- Develop and implement a plan outlining how volunteers will be used and managed during emergency events (25)
- Seek potential partner agencies to provide contracted emergency management services from KF&BD (27)
- Complete and publish the COOP and COG plans (28)

- Develop a Hazard Identification and Vulnerability Assessment and a Hazard Mitigation Plan. Submit to King County for inclusion as an annex to the County plan. (29)
- Involve KF&BD and other City of Kirkland employees in community-based emergency exercises at least annually (30)
- Hire a full-time City Emergency Manager, shifting daily responsibilities from the Deputy Chief of Administration to the Emergency Manager (31)
- Integrate the New World RMS (records management system) with emergency management plans, records, and reports (90)

The “inefficient administrative structure” identified by the consultant has been partly addressed by the funding of a full time City Emergency Manager (CEM). The City Emergency Manager will be responsible for planning a dedicated Emergency Operations Center and developing a City Emergency Plan, a Continuity of Operations (COOP) and Continuity of Government Plan (COG). In addition, the CEM will develop funding mechanisms and prepare necessary budgets and/or CIP’s for Council review.

Emergency Management is a critical function for the City and requires adequate support. In the past, the City has received some funding for an Emergency Preparedness Coordinator position through the Federal Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) funding that is distributed through the State. The State has been in the process of redefining how the EMPG funding will be distributed. That process is nearly complete. The Department has submitted the application for 2013 and the State should announce the distribution amount sometime in August. Estimates are between \$30,000 - \$45,000. The Department recommends utilizing the emergency management grant funding and City funding to reinstate the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator position. This position was cut at the end of 2012 when the City was unable to continue the temporary funding that supported the remainder of the salary for the Coordinator position. The City funds and the EMPG funds together funded the Coordinator position for 5 ½ years.

ADMINISTRATION

Many of the consultant’s recommendations surrounding fire Department administrative functions deal with fire prevention, public education, staffing, employee training and policies and procedures. While the City added emergency response personnel to serve the newly annexed area, there was not a corresponding increase in administration and support. In fact, there was a decrease in Administrative Assistant FTE’s. The loss of the 0.9 Fire District 41 FTE has been significant. The consultant concludes this “hampers both strategic and day-to-day effectiveness”. Ongoing and one-time staff additions approved in the 2013-2014 Budget met some of the consultant’s recommendations.

Kirkland is significantly understaffed when compared to neighboring cities. The table below identifies this discrepancy as it compares:

- Percentage of Administrative Staff in relation to Operations Staff
- Number of Fire Department Staff per 1,000 population
- Total Fire Department budget per capita

Fire Department	Population	2013 Fire Budget	FTE's	Administrative Support Staff	Fire Fighters	Percent Admin to Firefighters	FTE's per 1,000 Pop	Fire Budget Per Capita
City of Redmond*	78,840	\$20,150,000.00	134.75	23.75	111	21.40%	1.71	\$255.58
City of Bellevue**	132,100	\$32,938,083.00	193	34	159	21.38%	1.46	\$249.34
City of Kirkland**	81,730	\$18,640,241.00	105.5	12.5	93	13.44%	1.29	\$228.07
City of Renton	95,540	\$24,293,143.00	156	26	130	20.00%	1.63	\$254.27
City of Everett	104,200	\$19,890,180.00	143	26	117	22.22%	1.37	\$190.88
Shoreline Fire	53,000	\$11,704,900.00	76	17	59	28.81%	1.43	\$220.85
<i>Does not include ALS funding/staffing</i>								
<i>*Includes District 34 served by Redmond Fire Dept.</i>								
<i>**Includes Emergency Management as Fire Dept. Administrative Support</i>								

Despite many of the consultant's recommendations focusing on inadequate staffing, the consultant gives "kudos" specifically identifying Kirkland as being "among a select few" fire Departments who can provide "virtually all emergency services with a minimum of non-emergency staff". The conclusion is that the Department is understaffed, not that staff is inefficient.

Following is a summary of the recommendations (including the recommendation number for cross-reference purposes) and related staff responses for Administration:

Support Services

- Amend Job descriptions to accurately reflect roles and expectations for administration and support staff.(1)
- Add one FTE administrative assistant for EMS and one FTE financial analyst to administrative support functions (8)
- Outsource development and maintenance of Administrative Rules and Standard Operating Guidelines to a third party. Development and maintenance of Administrative Rules and Standard Operating Guidelines should include involvement of the City human resource Department (11)
- Update KF&BD Department Manual Directive Number 3.001 to accurately reflect current daily minimum staffing level (45)
- Develop a procedure and policy for reporting and retaining all employee exposure records.(19)
- Develop, validate and employ a physical evaluation process that is job related (21)
- Provide a fire service related Occupational and Health Program (24)
- Periodically review sick leave and work-related injuries for patterns and opportunities to reduce occurrences (49)

Department Policies and Procedures have been outsourced to Lexipol International and draft policies will be examined shortly by a group of internal representatives of the Fire Department for acceptance, modification and/or elimination. This process should be completed within one year. The policy on employee exposure records is nearly complete. Exposures, as defined by law, are documented and retained by Health Force Services. Staff's modified recommendation includes retaining records of exposures that technically don't meet the exposure definition set by law. The technical definition of an exposure to EMS providers must include either blood or bodily fluid contact through the skin or splashed into the eyes, nose or mouth. The Department believes it important to document and store "non-reportable" exposures that involve airborne or

non-invasive contact contagions and contagions where sufficient study has not been completed on their long term effects to be currently classified as reportable.

The consultant identified several places where the organizational structure in the Department needed review. The Department agrees and is assessing current and future service needs and believes review and update of the organizational chart is necessary. Job descriptions are in the process of being updated as part of this review.

A temporary financial analyst was hired this year. The Department believes this position is essential and will be evaluating budget proposals in the 2015-2016 budget cycle to make this position permanent.

The current IAFF collective bargaining agreement states the City will "closely follow or meet the intent of the IAFC/IAFF Wellness Fitness Initiative. This would satisfy the consultant's recommendation for an Occupational Health program but would require funding through the budget process. This initiative includes comprehensive annual medical evaluations including establishing medical baselines, immunizations and tracking occupational exposures. It also includes a job related physical fitness program and evaluation guided by peer fitness trainers, injury prevention, behavioral health and counseling components.

Mission, Vision and Values

- KF&BD review and validate the mission, vision, and values following completion of the 2012 strategic plan (9)
- Display the adopted mission, vision, and organizational values in City Hall and fire Department facilities (10)

Department Mission, Vision and Values were reviewed, modified and adopted by Fire Department members. The Department has begun placing these on employee identification, letterhead, Department documents, other printed materials and on apparatus.

Fire Prevention/Public Education

- Prioritize media messaging. Use "Currently Kirkland" and other media outlets as a tool to leverage the reach and impact of fire Department public information and education messages. (13)
- Develop interactive content for the fire Department website: citizen training videos and downloadable documents (fire escape plans, preparedness, and self-help checklists). (16)
- Update existing content on the fire Department website and schedule regular maintenance. (17)
- Produce a live monthly informational broadcast meeting between the fire chief and Department personnel. (23)
- Anticipate controversies or events which may generate media or community interest and develop a media or messaging plan in advance. (14)
- Develop a proactive message file where the subject is not time-sensitive, but timely release may position the message to its greatest advantage. (15)
- Conduct a fire and life-safety inspection of all inspectable occupancies in the next 12 months. If necessary use emergency services personnel to complete inspections. (33)
- Develop and implement a self-inspection program for light risk occupancies where the occupants have demonstrated regular code compliance. (35)

- Develop and adopt a plan to actively solicit feedback from a representative sample of recipients of KF&BD inspection and enforcement services. (37)
- Adopt a local residential sprinkler ordinance for new residential construction.(38)
- Form a regional partnership to develop and deliver juvenile fire-setter intervention and counseling. (39)
- Develop, adopt, publish, and implement a KF&BD Public Education Plan. (40)
- Form regional partnerships for the development and deployment of public fire and life safety education initiatives; also rotate operations personnel to deliver a structured curriculum.(41)
- Rotate emergency operations personnel to a temporary duty assignment as a public educator to deliver the public education curriculum. (42)
- Employ electronic information media from the United States Fire Administration and NFPA for linking or posting and making available on the Kirkland website.(43)
- Create partnerships with other public agencies and private sector companies to provide public education and information to the citizens of Kirkland. (44)
- Expand Chapter 21.35A of the Kirkland Municipal Code to include response by KF&BD to repeat false or malicious fire alarms. (57)
- Integrate pre-fire incident planning of community target hazards in training activities. (73)
- Establish proactive community risk reduction (**Dept. added**)

Several of these recommendations can be accomplished by Fire Prevention staff and others would require additional resources or reprioritization of duties. For instance, completing inspections of 5,279 identified occupancies within 12 months would require a shift in priorities to accomplish within the recommended time frame. In 2012, fire crews were able to inspect 1400 occupancies in their respective districts. Current fire prevention staff was unable to find staff hours to assist with inspections. The Department believes that this may be accomplished with current staff every 24 months but would need additional, dedicated Fire Prevention FTE's and a developed self-inspection program to accomplish every 12 months. A 12 month inspection cycle is necessary to obtain the highest WSBR rating and CAFI accreditation.

Community Relations Officer (CRO)

The consultant noted that management of external communication efforts are reactive in nature and extremely limited. The consultant didn't include a specific human resource recommendation for this body of work but noted "virtually all public education efforts outside some limited special requests have been discontinued since....the single fire Department community education specialist position was eliminated in 2010. Hiring a Community Relations Officer is the best way to determine avenues for material delivery, develop a marketing plan, develop strategies to meet public needs and implement outreach. A full-scope community education program would require additional staffing.

The CRO would be focused on making sure that the community and the City Council have the information about the Kirkland Fire Department and how the Department and the community partner together to create a safer community. This position will also become an on-scene and off scene Public Information Officer (PIO). The CRO will also update and maintain the Department website giving update information about incidents. This position will be responsible for providing dashboard reports to command staff and will also add to the City Emergency Operations Center (EOC) PIO position.

Several recommendations call for expanded use of various media types for both community and inter-departmental communications. This would include use of City website, "Currently Kirkland" and proactive media messages. Some of these had been done on a limited basis until the loss of the Community Education and Information Specialist position two years ago. These recommendations require subject matter experts in their related fields. The use of these tools could be enhanced by a Community Relations Officer.

The Department is challenged because it agrees with the majority of the consultant's fire education and prevention recommendations. However, without additional staff, the Department can only continue to react on a limited basis to these needed services. The Department recommends hiring a subject matter expert in the field.

Risk Reduction Officer (RRO)

In addition to the CRO, the Department recommends hiring a Risk Reduction Officer who would focus on supporting the City Council stated goal of "providing public safety through a community-based approach that focuses on prevention of problems and a timely response". This position would develop and lead preventative programs such as public and school life safety programs, a false alarm reduction program, fall prevention and intervention on repeat EMS alarms through the Citizen Advocate for Resources Education Support (CARES) program. The CARES program pairs frequent users of the 911 emergency system with appropriate care and social-services resources that can address the underlying cause of repeated calls to 911. Partnering with other cities to contract with a licensed Master of Social Work provides meaningful care to Kirkland's most vulnerable citizens that have not traditionally been available through the EMS system. In Bellevue, one patient who had activated the 911 system 89 times was directed to appropriate services. The Risk Reduction Officer reported the patient hasn't had another need to dial 911 since. The program has the potential of significant impact on call volume which reduces response times and at the same time increases appropriate care levels. Examples of patients that would typically benefit from CARES are patients with chronic health conditions that are not being managed effectively with their primary care physician, patients suffering from behavioral health conditions or addiction, and older patients in declining health. CARES programs are currently partnering with Bellevue, Seattle, South King F&R, Kent RFA, Tacoma FD, Olympia FD and SeaTac FD.

Risk reduction benefits everyone. Citizens are safer and responders are available to respond more often which improves service and reduces response times. Working with community and regional partners, programs like CARES have been making a significant impact to their communities and to response unit availability.

Residential Sprinkler Ordinance

The Fire Prevention Bureau, in cooperation with the Building Division, has initiated a public outreach process regarding residential sprinklers and will return with a report to the Public Safety Committee later this year. A residential sprinkler ordinance is a mandatory element of increased WSBR rating and CAFI accreditation.

Employee Training

- Create a formal mentoring program to develop for officers to use with subordinates. (59)
- Formalize the East Metro Training Group (EMTG) via an interlocal agreement between participating agencies, with Kirkland Fire & Building Department as a permanent member. (60)
- Develop a consistent program for training hazardous materials technicians. (62)
- Develop a joint recruit academy with other members of the EMTG. (64)
- In the absence of a combined EMTG training manual, KFD should develop its own training manual, in concert with the other members of the EMTG. (66)
- Establish a minimum number of annual training hours an individual or company is required to complete. (68)
- Conduct at a minimum two night drills per shift per year that involve all fire suppression personnel. (69)
- Establish a minimum requirement for annual company and individual training evaluations. Include shift battalion chief involvement in annual evaluations. (71)

Many of the consultant's recommendations are in process at the East Metro Training Group (EMTG) consortium. Joint recruit academies, mentoring programs and minimum training requirements are all either currently being worked on or completed within the consortium. The Department is awaiting formalization of the consortium through an Interlocal Agreement.

The Fire Department has no budget to fund training academies. For example, the Department will need to hire and send recruits to the joint EMTG academy in January of 2014. Currently, our funding options are limited to requesting additional funding during mid-year budget adjustments or utilizing funds designated for mandated operational training. The Department recommends that a funding mechanism be developed and money be budgeted and dedicated to this function.

The HazMat consortium is assessing options to solidify training consistency and funding options. Currently, they are receiving the mandated 40 hours per year and additional training as available.

The Department disagrees with recommendations establishing minimum number of hours of training opting instead for requiring demonstrated competencies. Current training is competency based and includes minimum hours when mandated by Federal, State or County law.

ADDITIONAL DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff has identified the following needs in addition to the consultant's recommendations.

- Develop Incident Action Plans for special events and high hazard occupancies.
- Centralize Department purchasing
- Establish proactive community risk reduction
- Create Regional Fire Investigation Team
- Regional Cooperative Apparatus Purchasing

Incident Action Plans (IAP) should be developed for events such as the 4th of July, Summerfest and other events that draw large numbers of people to Kirkland. In addition, occupancies such

as Evergreen Hospital, adult care facilities and Kirkland City Hall all present unique challenges during an emergency event. Large events and target occupancies require preplanning and coordination between public safety and other City Departments to handle large-scale emergencies. Developing IAP's with corresponding training serves to better prepare responders, staff and the citizens the Department serves.

Currently, the Department does not have a central source for purchasing supplies and equipment. Because of limited resources, there is a long history of purchasing being done by operational firefighters out of fire stations. Firefighters have limited time and expertise in purchasing policies. This decentralization of the purchasing process has not produced the efficiencies and cost savings to the City that a central source would. Having a central purchasing specialist will allow more efficient and effective purchasing. This includes seeking economies of scale with other agencies, planning and coordinating procurement, establishing vendor relationships. This will reduce costs for the City, will improve compliance with internal controls, and will reduce errors in processing purchases and accounts payable transactions. The Department will develop funding mechanisms and prepare necessary budgets to accomplish this high priority need.

The Department believes there are several benefits derived from forming a regional, Metro Fire Investigation Team. Economies of scale, federal grant funding possibilities, shared data and access to integrated information are a few of these benefits. The Department has begun to share investigations with Bellevue, Bothell, Redmond and Mercer Island and are tracking the hours it takes to fully investigate fires. Staff is working towards an Interlocal Agreement so the City might fully realize these benefits.

Joint regional apparatus purchasing has long been identified as having the potential for substantial savings in the cost of apparatus and sharing of reserve apparatus. The Department is discussing this possibility with Zone 1 representatives and hopes to reach mutual agreement to begin this process.

Department Disagrees with Five Consultant Recommendations

- ❖ Recommendation (68) advises "establish a minimum number of annual training hours".
Individuals and companies are evaluated by competency and not by a set number of hours unless required by law.
- ❖ Recommendation (23) advises to shoot live, monthly informational broadcasts with the Fire Chief to Department personnel.
The Fire Chief prefers face-to-face contact and accomplishes that through executive staff meetings, monthly officer meetings and regular station visits.
- ❖ Recommendation (42) advises to rotate emergency operational personnel to temporary duty assignments as public educator to deliver curriculum.
Line personnel need to be backfilled with overtime so there is no cost savings. Line firefighters can deliver some curriculum but it requires a subject matter expert to develop.
- ❖ Recommendation (46) asks that the Department maintain two swing personnel at each rank to fill vacancies or step up.

Currently the Department trains and utilizes Acting Officers to fill these vacancies. This is less expensive and provides valuable training to firefighters pursuing organizational advancement.

- ❖ Recommendation (47) recommends using personnel at Capt. and Lt. levels to work down to fill vacancies.

The situation this deals with is extremely rare and is not permitted within the current collective bargaining agreement.

IMPLEMENTATION COMMUNICATIONS

Regular status updates will ensure accountability at all levels. Communication of those updates to Department staff and Council along with continued reinforcement of the content, purpose and objectives of the plan will verify the importance the City places on implementation.

Formal timelines will be established once approval for specific recommendations is given. The Fire Department website has a link to the Strategic Plan and will be updated as implementation progresses.

SUMMARY

The Department agrees with the consultant's recommendations to become a CAFI accredited Fire Department and to lower the Washington Survey and Ratings Bureau public protection class rating from the current 4 to the goal of a 1. This process will take a period of time and substantial resources to accomplish. The updates necessary to achieve these ratings will result in increased service, decreased response times, cost savings and staff efficiencies. In the process of working towards these two goals, the Department will set the following goals as priorities over the next two years:

- Determine best way to meet response time standard 90% of the time. Will conduct Standard of Cover Study
- Determine coverage strategies for identified gaps in Finn Hill, Kingsgate and Bridle Trails neighborhoods
- Complete Finn Hill Station Siting Study and begin construction of new Finn Hill Fire Station
- Hiring City Emergency Manager
- Reinstate the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator position
- Complete Policy and Procedure manual update
- Adopt a residential sprinkler ordinance
- Develop and implement a Fire and Life Safety self-inspection program
- Develop Incident Action Plans for high hazard occupancies and events
- Improve our capabilities through partnerships with neighboring waterfront jurisdictions to respond to water related rescues
- Explore regional marine/shoreline fire suppression opportunities
- Engage Consultant for Regional Fire Authority (RFA) or alternative funding mechanism to increase efficiencies through regional partnerships
- Complete Emergency Management Plan (COOP and COG)
- Improve community risk reduction efforts
- Improve community outreach

- Position Kirkland as provider of Advanced Life Support (ALS) services

Funding for the RFA study and the Station siting study have been approved and are budgeted. The Standard of Cover study is estimated at \$40,000 and is unfunded at this time. ALS services would be funded through King County EMS. Costs for other recommendations will be developed as additional information is received and partnerships are solidified.

A side by side comparison of consultant and Department recommendations for staffing is attached as Appendix #2. This spreadsheet shows recommendations by source, the estimated annual costs for each staff position and possible funding strategies.