



MOUNTAIN VISTA FIRE DISTRICT STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

FISCAL YEARS 2015-2016

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS



FISCAL & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

COMMUNICATIONS/RELATIONSHIPS

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND
CUSTOMER SERVICE**

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH



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MOUNTAIN VISTA FIRE DISTRICT



Peter Archuleta
Chairman



Donna Heidinger
Board Clerk



Jeff Sargent
Director



Al Pesqueira
Director



Louis Parrish
Director



Lisa Beck
Office Administrator

Fire Chief

The Mountain Vista Fire District operates under Arizona Revised Statute Title 48, Chapter 5 and is governed by an elected “At Large” five-person Board of Directors. The Board is the legislative body responsible for the overall policies and direction of the District, while the CEO/Fire Chief is responsible for the day-to-day operations carrying out those policies and direction.

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INTRODUCTION

The Mountain Vista Fire District has done a commendable job navigating through the recent recession. It is clear that the District's financial strategies and the careful execution of customer focused service delivery in a fiscally conservative manner have made a difference. The Board of Directors' guidance to the Fire Chief has been based upon the mission and vision for the District, which utilizes feedback from citizens and stakeholders as its source.

This Strategic Action Plan establishes a road map for activities and initiatives that will achieve the vision for the District and will ensure that Mountain Vista Fire District is poised to capitalize on opportunities to advance key initiatives. This plan is a flexible tool to guide and assist decision-makers with proactive policy development, and the achievements resulting from this plan will be enjoyed by current residents and future generations. This plan is designed to highlight key activities in support of stated priorities and goals over a period of several fiscal years.

This action plan is aligned with many other planning documents used by the District, including capital equipment replacement plans, five-year financial modeling, and annual operational plans, which guide District priorities and performance.

The Strategic Action Plan focuses specifically on activities outside of the day-to-day operational services that the District provides. The tactics included in the Strategic Action Plan are specific, measurable, on a timetable, and assigned to a responsible party/division within the District. The Action Plan may also be used as a mechanism to provide status updates on the progress of activities at regular intervals.

As the economy stabilizes and improves, the District now has more strategic decisions to make on continuously maintaining and improving its Core Functions, District Organization, Employee Development, Financial Sustainability, and Sustainable Growth Opportunities.

The Strategic Planning Process

The goal of the strategic plan is to build an alignment of strategies, projects and performance measures to address core principles. The development of a new strategic plan for the Mountain Vista Fire District is focused on three core principles:

1. Focus on citizen expectations and priorities.
2. Build on the Fire District strengths and address opportunities for improvement.
3. Continue to provide an organizational environment committed to delivering exceptional service to citizens, promoting innovation and cost effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

Environmental Scan

An Environmental Scan was conducted to judge the current “condition” of the District and to provide important information and data from key stakeholders such as the community, the potential employees, and the Board of Directors to set the alignment and foundation for building the strategic plan. The results, findings and summaries of the community surveys, community focus group meeting and online surveys were sent to the District in a separate document entitled “Environmental Scan”.

A telephone survey was conducted throughout July 2013 where residents were asked to provide answers and provide input to the Fire District on a series of questions. The focus of the questions was to ascertain citizen’s awareness, satisfaction, funding perspectives, and the quality of service and communications. The survey methodology was to randomly sample residential and commercial end users; 250 end-users were selected to participate. Detailed information is contained in the document entitled “Environmental Scan”.

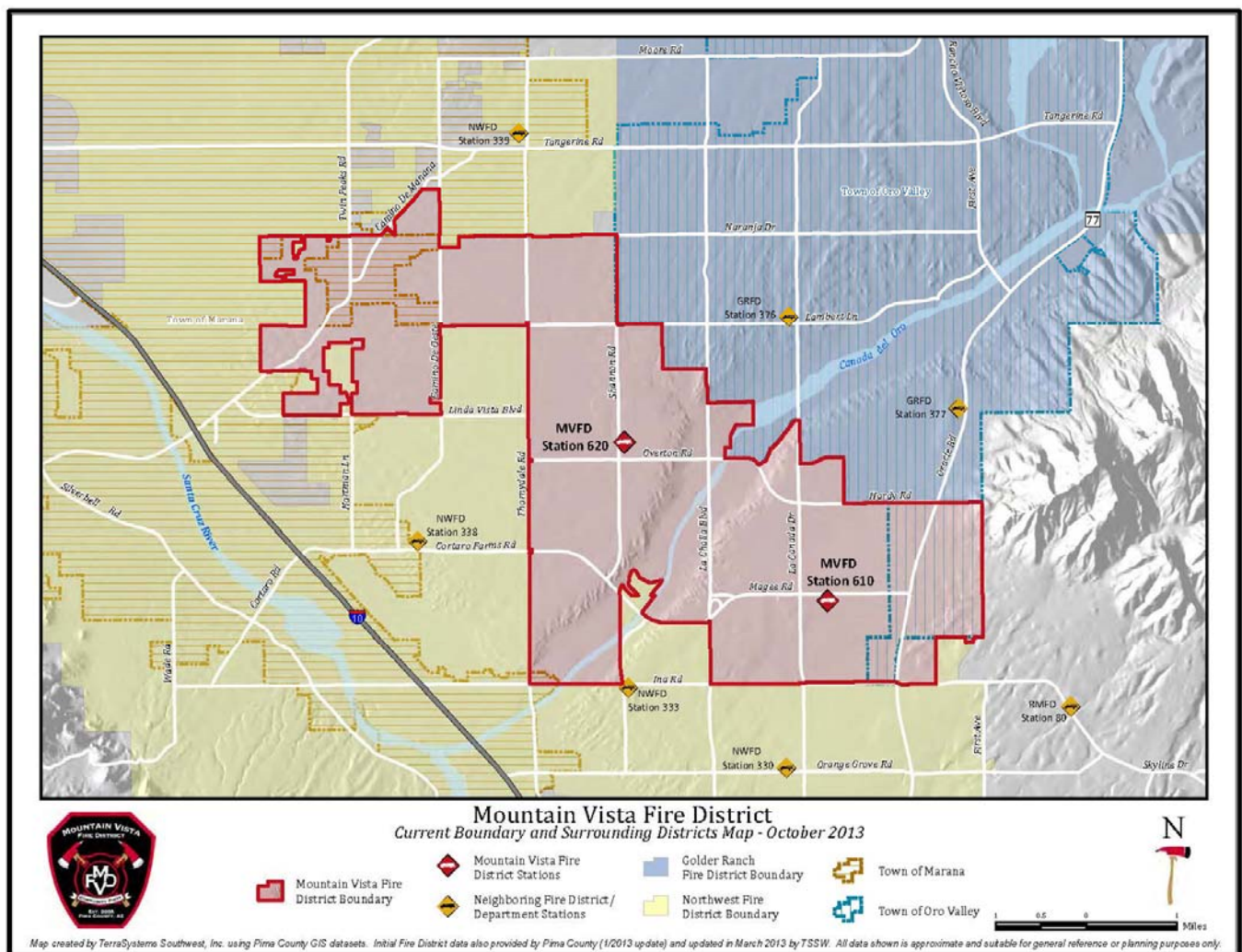
A Community Focus Group meeting was held on Tuesday, September 17, 2013, which focused a discussion on how the Fire District can improve communication and collaboration with key community stakeholders. The stated goal of the focus group was “to improve Fire/EMS cooperation with surrounding Fire Districts and increase our communication and public relations with our County, Oro Valley, Marana, our Neighborhoods and our Business Community.” This meeting was structured around small group discussions, reflection on the questions and reporting of the results. The responses and comments from each group were generally very consistent.

Individual meetings were held with each Director on Tuesday, September 17, 2013, to discuss the results of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) surveys; Vision, Mission and Values Statements; and the Baldrige survey results. A confidential online survey was sent to the Fire District Board members prior to these meetings to analyze the strengths and opportunities to improve the District, set priorities for the District, and to suggest strategic projects and performance measures. The online survey response summaries reflect the observations made in person on key points raised by the Board Members.

MOUNTAIN VISTA FIRE DISTRICT

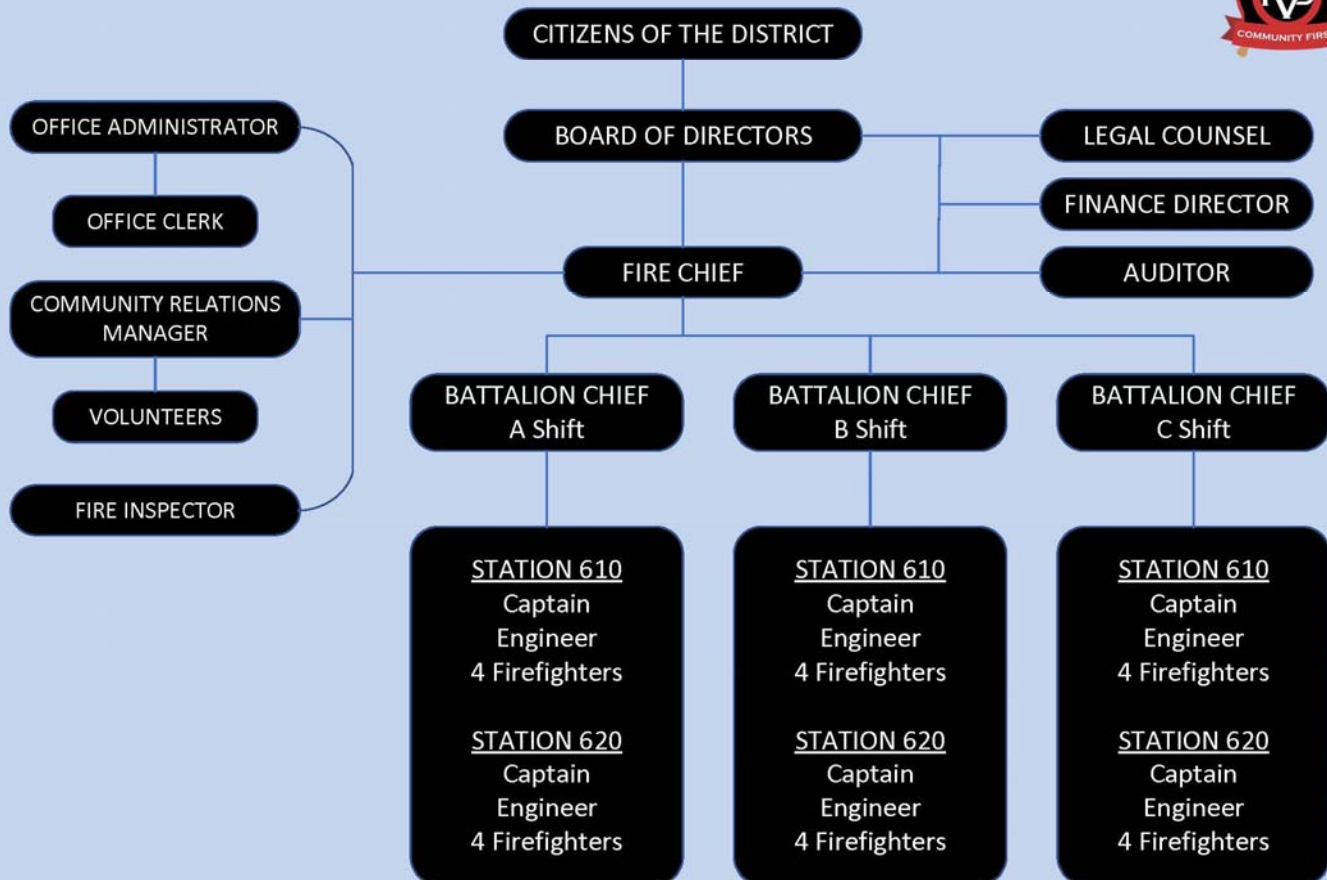
The District was formed in late 2008 as a result of the merger of three smaller fire districts (La Canada, North Ranch/Linda Vista and Heritage Hills) that were formed in 1992. Since that time, the governing Board of Directors has worked to expand the District in a progressive and responsible manner. In 2009, the District completed two annexations, the Lambert Lane area and the Suffolk Hills area, which added approximately five additional square miles to the District response area and a significant amount of commercial property. In 2013 the district annexed the Camino de Manana and Camino de Oeste III, neighborhoods. On July 1, 2014 the Mountain Vista Fire District went fully operational with all of our own employees.

The District has always had a philosophy of meeting the emergency response needs of the community by providing high quality and cost effective service. They have accomplished this by maintaining one of the lowest tax rates in the State of Arizona for comparable size fire districts and by continually looking at how best to meet or exceed national response time standards in an efficient and consistent manner, as well as meeting or exceeding national training standards.



ORGANIZATION CHART

Mountain Vista Fire District – Organization Chart



Executive Team

Fire Chief
Lisa Beck, Office Administrator

COMMUNITY FIRST

The Fire District's mission is to provide the highest standard of service to all those who may seek their help. They are a service provider and they stand ready to provide fire suppression, fire prevention and education, rescue services and emergency medical care. They proudly proclaim, "We will faithfully provide these vital services, promptly and safely, to any person that resides in, works in, or visits the Fire District."

The Mountain Vista Fire District believes that it has an important responsibility to its citizens to carefully manage its fiscal resources and to plan for adequate funding or services desired by the public. While the District has worked hard to maintain a steady growth rate in the tax base, the District needs to ensure that it is capable of adequately funding and providing the core services desired by the community. Ultimately, the reputation and success of the District will depend on the public's awareness and acceptance of the management and delivery of services.

The goal of the Fire District is to deliver quality services on an affordable, efficient and cost-effective basis. The strategic planning process used to create this document embraced the philosophy of "Community First" through the creation of priorities that focused on financial management, communications, operations and managing growth to the benefit of the residents. The District worked conscientiously, in conjunction with the Board of Directors and staff, to produce a well thought out strategic plan that will sustain them into the future beyond the three fiscal years planned in this document.



MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

As part of updating the Strategic Action Plan, the Mission, Vision and Values statements were audited to ensure that they continue to represent the District and meet the needs of the Community.

The mission statement is designed to describe the organization's general purpose.

MISSION: Mountain Vista Fire District will . . .

- ❖ Put the "Community First"

The vision statement for the District establishes targets of excellence for the future.

VISION: Mountain Vista Fire District Strives . . .

- ❖ To be the accepted standard of excellence in the delivery of fire and rescue services.

It was acknowledged during the strategic planning process that while the vision clearly is a target of excellence, work remains to be done to expand the vision into several statements, which are specific and meaningful to the residents and workforce.

The value statement establishes a set of principles to guide the organization and its members in their decision-making and behaviors to enhance the organization and the community it serves.

VALUES: Mountain Vista Fire District values . . .

- ❖ Mountain Vista Fire District will be driven by Integrity, Partnership, Innovation and Service.

Integrity – "adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty"

Partnership – "the state or condition of being a partner; participation; association; joint interest"

Innovation – "the act of innovating; introduction of new things or methods"

Service – "an act of helpful activity; help; aid"

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

Mountain Vista Fire District's Strategic Action Plan was created by using the information contained in the environmental scan to create four strategic focus areas to serve as a foundation for specific initiatives and activities over a three-year period to advance these priority areas. The Strategic Focus Areas were set through consensus discussion with the Board of Directors in the Fall of 2013, and they define the general areas that drive policy decisions and priorities for the District. While there are many existing programs and practices that support these focus areas and goals, the Strategic Action Plan is intended to highlight elements of District operational plans and communicate key activities.

Strategic Focus Areas



1. Fiscal/Resource Management

Mountain Vista Fire District will implement innovative and responsible policies and business practices to effectively manage its fiscal and human resources. The District will maintain a stable financial environment that is transparent and sustainable.



2. Communications/Relationships

Mountain Vista Fire District will implement programs and projects to create sustainable relationships with and among the Board of Directors, its response partners, the community and its employees, which will be cultivated through citizen/employee engagement, meeting shared objectives and clear, accessible communication.



3. Emergency Response and Customer Service

Mountain Vista Fire District, while ensuring exceptional customer service, will develop and implement practices to manage risk and respond to all emergencies while providing the trained staff necessary to meet the needs of the organization and the community. We will develop a safe community through pro-active fire prevention, public safety education and hazard mitigation.



4. Sustainable Growth

Mountain Vista Fire District will develop and implement practices to promote annexation of unincorporated properties as a means to solidify the community, create service efficiencies, and ensure fairness among taxpayers. These practices will promote the provision of efficient services, foster an inclusive and diverse community, and consider the strategic implications regarding the growth of other nearby municipalities and fire districts.

The following pages reflect the principles and actions under each strategic focus area. The *responsibility* column reflects the division or manager to oversee the project. The *timeframe* column reflects the timeframe when the initiative will be underway and not intended to reflect a completion date.

Fiscal and Resource Management

Principle 1: Demonstrate fiscal responsibility through establishing financial policies and budgeting practices that accomplish the highest priorities and results.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Maintain balanced budget	Prepare annual budget that balances expenses to revenues. Compare projections to actuals throughout the year.	Board of Directors Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop in Jan, Feb, Mar. Draft in Apr. Adopt in June 	•
Implement a Strategic Agenda Process	Linking agenda items to the Action Plan keeps the focus on strategic issue	Board of Directors Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY 13-14 	•
Implement FireStat Reporting	Provides regular status updates to workforce and Governing Board	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY 13-14 	•
Implement performance measurement program	Develop and implement a system of measuring key performance indicators *Incorporate in communication plan	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY 13-14 	•
Fiscal Sustainability Policy review in addition to assessing the District's tax and growth policy	Review and add as needed, budget and financial policies and monitor assessed valuations	Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing and during annual budget cycle 	•
Align accounting principles and practices with the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)	Continue to integrate MVFD financial practices in alignment with GFOA standards	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 	•

Fiscal and Resource Management

Principle 1, cont'd: Demonstrate fiscal responsibility through establishing financial policies and budgeting practices that accomplish the highest priorities and results.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Continue to build on strategy for capital improvement/replacement, which is funded to meet facility, apparatus and equipment replacement standards	Update plan to anticipate the needed improvement/replacement of both capital and non-capital items	Board of Directors Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FY 14-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•
Annually update 5-year financial model	Based on current and future assumptions, review financial impacts	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FY 14-15• Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•

Fiscal and Resource Management

Principle 2: Develop, implement and communicate a comprehensive organizational development plan to address recruitment, retention and succession, which builds staff confidence and competence.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Establish job descriptions for administrative, suppression and support personnel	Research and develop necessary criteria for each employee position	Staff	• FY 13-14	•
Establish a comprehensive wage and benefit package	Research and develop wage and benefit criteria that is consistent with the District philosophy but maintains competitiveness	Board of Directors Staff	• FY 13-14	•
Hire necessary administrative, suppression and support personnel to meet the mission of the District	Create and implement a recruitment/hiring plan for future employees	Fire Chief	• FY 13-14	•
Create an employee handbook and procedure manual	Improve employee understanding of expectations and guidelines	Staff	• FY 14-15	•
Establish organizational development standards to enhance and promote professionalism and excellence	Communicate a professional development plan to meet the needs of current and future leaders	Fire Chief	• FY 15-16	•
Continue implementation of performance evaluation process	Match position criteria with performance expectations	Fire Chief	• FY 13-14 • Ongoing	•

Fiscal and Resource Management

Principle 2, cont'd: Develop, implement and communicate a comprehensive organizational development plan to address recruitment, retention and succession, which builds staff confidence and competence.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Implement an Employee Asset Mapping evaluation	Determine the knowledge, skills and abilities of all employees	Fire Chief Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FY 13-14• Ongoing	•
Establish a medical direction program for EMS personnel	Required to meet Pima County standards	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FY 14-15	•
Reduce medical costs and improve employee health by implementing NFPA compliant wellness initiatives	Create a Health and Wellness working group to determine the current and future needs to meet the NFPA Standard	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FY 13-14• Ongoing	•

Fiscal and Resource Management

Principle 3: Implement reputable and innovative technology initiatives to support District business processes and improve the delivery of emergency services.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Implement a transition strategy to move from current dispatch system to a system more conducive to the District's needs	Create a plan to transition from current 9-1-1 dispatch to new system	Staff	• FY 13-14	•
Explore and implement IT connectivity options among 9-1-1 dispatch, stations and apparatus	Improve connectivity to enhance communication, reporting and firefighter safety	Staff	• FY 13-14	•
Explore and implement a comprehensive Fire District records management system (RMS)	Improve reporting, tracking and quality assurance measures	Staff	• FY 13-14	•
Complete radio transition project	Upgraded radio system	Staff	• FY 13-14	•
Implement Mobile Data Computer (MDC) technology into MVFD	Improve data sharing between PSAP and responding units	Staff	• FY 13-14	•

Fiscal and Resource Management

Principle 4: Demonstrate sound business practices through compliance with all legal requirements established by Federal, State and Local authorities.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Audit OSHA and NFPA 1500 requirements for compliance	Compliance with workplace safety regulations to limit/mitigate work-related injuries	Legal Counsel Staff	• FY 14-15 Ongoing	•
Maintain compliance with legal requirements	Monitor legal requirements for Federal, State and Local laws	Board of Directors Legal Counsel	• Ongoing	•
Develop strategies to ensure compliance with Affordable Care Act regarding employee benefits	Changes to healthcare laws will impact employment rules	Legal Counsel Staff	• FY 13-14 Ongoing	•
Continue to ensure compliance with open meeting laws	Foster a climate of transparency	Board of Directors Legal Counsel Staff	• Ongoing	•
Implement processes and procedures to ensure compliance with ARS Title 48	Provide regular review of statute	Board of Directors Legal Counsel Staff	• Ongoing	•

Communications and Relationships

Principle 1: Maintain and implement a long-range strategic communications plan that incorporates citizen, personnel and response partner relationships.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Update communications plan completed in Fall of 2012 to reflect changing priorities	Improving communications with District stakeholders	Staff	• FY 14-15 Ongoing	•
Maintain focus on providing outstanding customer service to our citizens to foster positive connection between staff and stakeholders	Integrate comments from the community forum into the plan	Staff	• Ongoing	•
Implement open book management	Share critical financial and operational information with workforce	Fire Chief	• Ongoing	•
Continue to cultivate interaction with our partners at both the Chief and Director levels	Improving communications with District Partners	Board of Directors Fire Chief	• Ongoing	•

Communications and Relationships

Principle 2: Create an enhanced connection with residents, neighbors, Pima County, and the Towns of Oro Valley and Marana through focused outreach, strategic utilization of various communication methods and focusing on outstanding customer service.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Enhance MVFD website to provide clear and concise information to the public by adopting best practices	Improve communications by implementing website best practices	Staff	• Ongoing	•
Continue to develop the MVFD website to include “blog” blasts to subscribers	Improve communications by implementing website best practices	Community Relations Manager	• Ongoing	•
Continue to promote and enhance MVFD open house events	Improve community outreach by bringing the citizens to the stations to “tell the story”	Community Relations Manager	• Ongoing	•
Ensure staff/Board attendance at regular Town, County and neighboring Fire District functions	Strive for quarterly attendance (minimum) at partner agency functions	Board of Directors Staff	• Ongoing	•
Promote MVFD involvement/outreach with neighborhood and homeowners associations	Identify associations and leadership and develop a plan to communicate through direct contact, as well as electronic and print media	Fire Chief Community Relations Manager	• FY 14-15 • Ongoing	•

Communications and Relationships

Principle 3: Evaluate and implement additional programs that bring Board Members together and strengthen their relationship with each other and the Chief Executive Officer to foster a sense of cooperation and unity.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Review the Board of Directors Policies and Procedures	Update as needed, the policies that guide the actions of the governing board	Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY 13-14 	•
Evaluate the Governance Relations Contract principles	Sets expectations for Board, Fire Chief and the Organization	Board of Directors Fire Chief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY 14 Ongoing 	•
Maintain an Integrated Strategic Planning Process to include strategic agendas	Links budget, to projects and performance measures	Board of Directors Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY 13 Ongoing 	•
Participate in an annual Governance Relations Survey	Independent, confidential survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the Governance Relations Contract	Board of Directors Fire Chief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY 14-15 Ongoing 	•

Communications and Relationships

Principle 4: Evaluate and implement opportunities to foster personnel involvement in meaningful ways that strengthen their relationship with the Executive Team to foster a sense of cooperation and unity.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Implement annual Baldrige assessments (workforce satisfaction surveys)	Annually measure the results and report findings to the workforce and Board of Directors	Fire Chief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 15-16 • Annually Thereafter 	•
Evaluate options to foster increased workforce input related to the annual budget development process	Improve budget comprehension and engage them in solutions	Board of Directors Fire Chief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 14-15 • Annually Thereafter 	•
Increase efficiency of operations by convening working groups (process improvement teams) to critically assess organizational issues	Enhances workforce involvement, relationships and empowerment	Fire Chief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY14-15 • Ongoing 	•
Implement quarterly workforce meetings	Facilitates ongoing communication among staff and executive team	Fire Chief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 14-15 • Ongoing 	•

Response & Customer Service

Principle 1: Identify, evaluate and implement effective organizational models, strategies and staffing plans to integrate and enhance service delivery by putting the community first.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Evaluate/implement MVFD staffing models to improve efficiency and effective response	Improve current resource utilization to meet the mission and needs of the District	Fire Chief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 13-14 • Ongoing 	•
Develop and enhance partnerships with regional agencies to capitalize on fleet, facilities and training programs, best practices and automatic/mutual aid	Continue to work on building relationships with neighboring agencies to include fleet and facilities opportunities as well as training	Board of Directors Fire Chief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY13-14 • Ongoing 	•
Develop, implement and maintain strong fire prevention presence in the community through annual inspections and plan review	Continue to reduce fires in the community through prevention	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY14-15 • Ongoing 	•
Create Standard Operating Guidelines consistent with Pima County standards	Improve employee understanding of expectations and guidelines	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 13-14 	•

Response & Customer Service

Principle 2: Continuously evaluate Fire and Emergency Medical Service response times and patient care while continuing to explore innovative models of service delivery.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Monitor, through FireStat, the performance measures to determine effectiveness of response models	Continuous monitoring of response times, effectiveness models	Staff	• Ongoing	•
Evaluate options for alternative service delivery of fire-based EMS programs	Researching opportunities to provide medical services	Staff	• FY 15-16	•
Research Quality Assurance options to ensure excellence in fire and emergency medical service provision	Develop/implement comprehensive Quality Assurance program for both fire and EMS	Staff	• FY 14-15 • Ongoing	•

Response & Customer Service

Principle 3: Develop, implement and deliver a comprehensive training plan to meet the needs of current and future employees to ensure high levels of employee satisfaction and enhanced customer service.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Ensure that training standards are implemented and tracked	Training standards ensure legal compliance and effective service delivery	Staff	• FY 13-14	•
Create a comprehensive training plan to meet the needs of current and future admin staff, firefighters and officers	Prepare employees to operate efficiently and effectively by building skills in technical and leadership competencies	Staff	• FY 14-15	•
Monitor, through FireStat, established performance measures to determine effectiveness of training plan	Continuous monitoring of training hours by subject	Staff	• Ongoing	•

Response & Customer Service

Principle 4: Develop, implement and deliver a comprehensive public education and life safety program that reaches all aspects of the District.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Continue to develop and enhance quality public education programs to promote the wellbeing and safety of our community	Provide public education programs to the community	Community Relations Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 13-14 • Ongoing 	•
Develop and implement quarterly CPR and First Aid programs offered to the community	Providing lifesaving skills to the community	Community Relations Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 13-14 • Ongoing 	•
Promote fire prevention and life safety activities within the District	Provide timely information and education to District residents	Community Relations Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 14-15 	•
Monitor, through FireStat, established performance measures to determine effectiveness of public education programs	Continuous monitoring and tracking of public education programs	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 13-14 • Ongoing 	•
Develop and implement Citizen Emergency Response Team (CERT)	Community emergency response program to promote safety within the District	Community Relations Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY 14-15 	•

Sustainable Growth

Principle 1: Establish a long-range annexation plan that incorporates the desires and needs of the prospective residents while maintaining a balance with the financial ability of the District and its ability to maintain excellence in service to existing, as well as future, property owners.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Develop a long-range annexation plan	Create a comprehensive plan to meet the needs of current and future District	Board of Directors Fire Chief	• FY 15-16	•

Sustainable Growth

Principle 2: For existing developed properties adjacent to our District boundaries, develop strategies for annexation that are fiscally, legally and politically achievable that create opportunities for self-initiated annexation.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Develop information package for single-parcel annexation	Create a communications package that describes the District, its services and the benefits of annexing	Staff	• FY 14-15	•

Sustainable Growth

Principle 3: For new development adjacent to our District boundaries, create opportunities for developer-initiated annexation prior to starting the development approval process.

Action Item	Description	Responsibility	Timeframe	Status
Develop information package for developer annexation	Create a communications package that describes the District, its services and the benefits of annexing	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">FY 14-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

What are Performance Measurements? In a nutshell, they evaluate the achieved outcomes compared to the desired outcomes. A performance measurement system supports the planning and budgeting business functions of a government agency by providing objective information on the current state of capital assets, agency programs and services. This objective information is needed for critical decision making when contemplating adjustments to operations and, subsequently, they provide feedback if the adjustment worked. Performance measures increase agency accountability and build public trust.

All successful performance measurement systems contain similar key elements of: An organizational culture of performance, a clear understanding of what and how to measure, the application of performance measuring to strategic planning and budgeting, and the regular analysis and evaluation of the data. The measures must be relevant to everyone who sees or uses them: citizens, elected officials, managers and employees.

Clearly identifying the goals and purpose of the organization's functions is the first step to evaluating performance. Each area to be measured has had a "Statement of Service Approach" written to provide a "statement of piercing clarity" that defines: who it serves, what we do for them and why we do it. Individual measures have varying degrees of appropriateness and strength when evaluating overall performance of the organization.

Current performance should be compared to past performance and to target goals. This should take place on a quarterly basis as to identify trends or deviations long before they reach crisis status. Public leaders want to be responsive and efficient not reactive. Judging the adequacy of operations must be put into some form of context, which eventually will lead to a comparison of current performance to a standard benchmark. Benchmarks are generally based on technical standards, historical data, comparables from similar districts, or specific organizational priorities. Assumptions must be made in using benchmarks, and it is critical that these assumptions and their limitations be identified so they can be researched and improved upon.

Based on this information, the Mountain Vista Fire District created performance measurements to determine whether they are achieving reasonable levels of service quality, responsiveness and efficiency. Performance measures can be tailored to evaluate specific programs or services to determine if they should be maintained, enhanced or eliminated from District operations. The Executive team has identified the performance measures for each Strategic Focus Area.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

Fiscal/ Resource Management

(Fiscal Sustainability, Legal Compliance, Employees, Technology, Facilities, Apparatus)

Defined as: The Mountain Vista Fire District will implement innovative and responsible policies and business practices to efficiently and effectively manage its fiscal and human resources. The District will maintain a stable financial environment that is transparent and sustainable.

Statement of Service (Statement of Piercing Clarity) – defined for each major heading

Business/Financial – In order to best serve the citizens and members of the Fire District, and to continue to be good stewards of our public funds, we will employ best practices in business and financial matters that will uphold existing obligations and maintain financial sustainability in a legal, ethical, and fiscally responsible manner to ensure the provision of excellent services.

Human – In order to best serve the citizens and members of the Fire District, and to ensure engaged and satisfied employees, we will employ human resources practices and programs to ensure the fair treatment and acceptance of all members, attainment of individual professional goals, and inclusion in organizational decisions while protecting the health and well-being of all members to ensure a healthy life/work balance.

Fleet – In order to best serve the citizens and members of the Fire District, and within cost-effective perimeters, we will maintain our equipment and the fleet of vehicles while ensuring the highest quality of service, efficiency, and reliability of the vehicles and equipment in a manner that affords them the maximum life span.

Performance Measures:

- ❖ Revenue vs. expenditures compared to projections (**Business/Financial**)
- ❖ Total assessed valuation (**Business/Financial**)
- ❖ Compliance with legal requirements (**Business/Financial**)
- ❖ Annual employee survey results (**Human**)
- ❖ Injury Rates for incidents and non-incidents (**Human**)
- ❖ Training hours for ALL employees (**Human**)
- ❖ Operating cost per mile (incl. fuel cost per mile), by vehicle type (**Fleet**)

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

Communication/Relationships

(Public, Employees, Partners, Governing Board)

Defined as: Mountain Vista Fire District will implement programs and projects to create sustainable relationships with and among the Board of Directors, its response partners, the community and its employees, which will be cultivated through citizen/employee engagement, meeting shared objectives and clear, accessible communication.

Statement of Service (Statement of Piercing Clarity) – defined for each major heading

Communications – In order to best serve the citizens and members of the Fire District, and to sustain relationships internally and externally, we will actively engage the residents, neighbors, Pima County, the Towns of Oro Valley and Marana, and our response partners with communications through a variety of mediums that inform and educate.

Public Relations – In order to best serve the citizens and members of the Fire District, and to educate our residents, we will actively reach out and provide outstanding public information programs that will enhance citizen knowledge and understanding of the agency and the services that it provides.

Internal Relationships – In order to best serve the citizens and members of the Fire District, and to improve operational efficiency, we will engage members in organizational dialog through various mediums to improve awareness of District business, maintain positive morale and internal customer service, and improve relations between the Governing Board and the leadership team. The District will conduct employee satisfaction surveys to monitor morale.

Performance Measures:

- ❖ Number of customers signed up for “MVFD Blog” (**Communications**)
- ❖ Number of inter-agency/partner meetings attended by the Board of Directors and Fire Administration staff (**Communications**)
- ❖ Number of public contacts/presentations made specifically to share information about the Mountain Vista Fire District (**Public Relations**)
- ❖ Customer satisfaction survey results (**Public Relations**)
- ❖ Baldrige standards results (**Internal Relationships**)
- ❖ Governance Relations survey results (**Internal Relationships**)

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

Response/Customer Service

(Responses, Managing Risk/Response, Staffing, Prevention and Public Education)

Defined as: The Mountain Vista Fire District, while ensuring exceptional customer service, will develop and implement practices to manage risk and respond to all emergencies while providing the trained staff necessary to meet the needs of the organization and the community. We will develop a safe community through pro-active fire prevention, public safety education and hazard mitigation.

Statement of Service (Statement of Piercing Clarity) – defined for each major heading

Fire and Emergency Medical Services – In order to best serve the citizens and members of the Fire District, and to save lives, minimize pain and suffering, reduce the loss of property, and provide for the safety of the public and District members, we will deploy compassionate, well trained personnel with modern tools, using industry best practices to provide fire suppression and emergency medical care services in a manner consistent with the highest standards of risk management.

Public Education – In order to best serve the citizens and members of the Fire District, and to educate our residents, we will actively reach out and provide excellent public education programs that will inform citizens about preventing accidents, injuries and fires while improving their health, well-being and ability to become self-sufficient to address their own fire prevention and life safety needs.

Fire Prevention – In order to best serve the citizens and members of the Fire District, and to reduce the threat to the public welfare, we will review all building plans, plats and developments for fire code compliance, conduct fire inspections of businesses and maintain records to help protect the local economy which will provide safe conditions for increased public and firefighter safety.

Performance Measures:

- ❖ Cardiac Survival rates for cardiac arrests (**Emergency Medical Services**)
- ❖ On-scene time for all patients transported to a Level I Trauma Center (**Emergency Medical Services**)
- ❖ On-scene time for all patients transported with suspected cardio vascular events (**Emergency Medical Services**)
- ❖ Percentage of emergencies handled by first-due units (**Fire Services**)
- ❖ Percentage of fires contained in room/structure of origin (**Fire Services**)
- ❖ Number of all incidents, fire and EMS (**Fire Services**)

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

- ❖ Response times for all priority incidents, i.e. fires, MVA, EMS, hazmat, rescue (**Fire Services**)
- ❖ Number of building plan reviews conducted (**Fire Prevention**)
- ❖ Number of fire inspections done by Fire Inspector (**Fire Prevention**)
- ❖ Number of fire inspections done by fire companies (**Fire Prevention**)
- ❖ Number of public education appearances in the community (**Public Education**)
- ❖ Number of school programs delivered (**Public Education**)

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

Sustainable Growth

(Annexation Planning and Responsive Growth)

Defined as:

The Mountain Vista Fire District will develop and implement practices to promote annexation of properties not included within the boundaries of a Fire District as a means to solidify the community, create service efficiencies, and ensure fairness among taxpayers. These practices will promote the provision of efficient services, foster an inclusive and diverse community, and consider the strategic implications regarding the growth of other nearby municipalities and fire districts.

Statement of Service (Statement of Piercing Clarity) – defined for each major heading

Annexation Planning - In order to best serve the citizens of the Fire District, while ensuring service efficiencies and fairness among taxpayers, we will develop plans and actively reach out and provide excellent educational materials that will educate property owners about the District and, when ready, provide assistance in the annexation process.

Responsive Growth - In order to best serve the citizens of the Fire District, while ensuring service efficiencies and fairness among taxpayers, we will engage in pre-annexation activities that create opportunities for developers and property owners to actively annex their properties when it is fiscally and politically achievable, without impacting current service delivery.

Performance Measures

- ❖ Number of community meetings attended to discuss annexation (**Annexation Planning**)
- ❖ Number of prospective resident contacts (**Annexation Planning**)
- ❖ Number of parcels annexed (**Responsive Growth**)
- ❖ Response times for ALL incidents in newly annexed areas (**Responsive Growth**)

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

FireStat

How do we know if we are being successful in implementing performance measures, the strategic plan and delivering effective and efficient services to our customers in the Fire District? Performance measures are only effective if they are monitored and used to improve operations in the Fire District. FireStat is a process that requires quarterly review of performance measures and strategic plan projects. The quarterly meetings will provide an opportunity to assess progress on strategic projects and redirect efforts if necessary. At these meetings, performance measures will also be reviewed to continuously look for opportunities to improve operations. FireStat provides the Fire District with a key accountability system for monitoring progress on its performance measures and strategic plan projects.



GOVERNANCE RELATIONS CONTRACT[©]

The role of a Governing Board often lacks clarity and is difficult to define, which often results in a disconnection between the board and its executive. Ideally, the role of an elected public board is to develop policy, while the role of the executive is to implement that policy and oversee the day-to-day operations of the organization. What is usually missing in these relationships are the expectations that the Board of Directors has for the manager or, in this case, the Fire Chief.

“Governing boards have been known in one form or another for centuries. Yet throughout those many years there has been a baffling failure to develop a coherent or universally applicable understanding of just what a board is for.”

**Carver’s Policy Governance Model
in Nonprofit Organizations**
By John Carver & Miriam Carver

The Governance Relations Contract (GRC) is designed to create a bridge between the Fire District Directors’ expectations of the Fire Chief and how those expectations relate to how the organization will be managed and how it will provide services and engage its citizens. It also sets expectations for the Directors’ to support the Fire Chief’s success in executing their expectations. The GRC for the Fire District includes four areas:

1. Expectations of the Organization
2. Expectations of the Fire Chief
3. Expectations of the Fire District Directors
4. Expectations of Customer Service/Civic Engagement

The GRC can be viewed as a series of interconnected gears that drive the organization and its management and leadership priorities. It is designed to foster a partnership, improve relationships and increase effectiveness between the Fire District Directors and Fire Chief. The expectations set benchmarks for annually evaluating the efforts of the Directors and the Fire



Chief. These expectations can be amended and adjusted over time to keep them relevant. The bar is set high with these expectations, but the journey in the search for governance excellence is never easy. Each step forward, or times when expectations are not met, is all part of trying to be the best governed Fire District for the Citizens and employees of Mountain Vista Fire District.

GOVERNANCE RELATIONS CONTRACT[©]

The Expectations of the Organization

	Description
Maintain an Integrated Strategic Planning System that is linked to the annual budget, strategic projects, employee evaluations and performance measures.	The integrated strategic management system will allow for strategic projects that require funding to be considered during the annual budget process. Current and new strategic projects and performance measures will also be reviewed and approved at this time. The Fire Chief and staff will be evaluated based on the accomplishments in the past year under the strategic plan.
Strive to be an “open book” organization for its employees.	“Open Book” means that all critical, not confidential, operational and financial information concerning the Fire District will be shared and available to employees.
Executive Management Team is committed to developing and empowering employees.	Employee development and involvement is a high priority for Executive Leadership Team.
Continuously improve technology for internal and external services.	Continuous technology improvements are essential for the Fire District to meet and exceed expectations of customers.
Strive to be a national model for Fire District Board Governance.	Commitment for the Fire District Board and Fire Chief to work collaboratively on continuously improving their Governance Relations Contract.
Continuously improve internal processes and procedures.	Continuous internal process improvement is essential for efficiency and effectiveness of the Fire District.
Be good stewards of the public’s money and trust.	Ensure processes, procedures and practices are in place to meet this commitment
Focus on developing a learning organization.	Commitment to provide training for employees to ensure that the Fire District continues to have talented and well trained employees providing leadership and operational response readiness.
Transparency	Citizens will have access to key financial and operational information on the Fire District.

GOVERNANCE RELATIONS CONTRACT[©]

The Expectations of the Fire Chief

	Description
Conduct annual employee evaluations.	Employees will receive an annual evaluation.
Any written information provided to one Director will be provided to all Directors.	Information shared with one Director must be sent to all Directors
No less than quarterly dialogue meetings will be held with employees.	Series of meetings with employees to discuss issues not related to contractual requirements.
All critical and non-confidential financial and operational information will be shared with employees and the Fire District Directors.	Ensures that key information is shared with the Fire District Directors and employees.
Budget recommendations will be jointly developed with the Executive team and reviewed with the workforce before submittal to the Fire District Directors.	Ensures that the Executive Team is involved in budget development and that the workforce is aware of recommendations that are going to be submitted to the Fire District Directors.
Implementing Strategic Plan projects.	Annual evaluation will include progress on these projects.
Conduct annual Baldrige Survey.	Conduct an annual confidential Baldrige survey with results submitted to an independent group that will provide a summary report to the Fire District Directors.
Practice “collaborative leadership”.	Strive to ensure that your leadership is inclusive and not exclusive. Involve citizens, employees and other stakeholders and partners where appropriate.
Respect the decisions of the Directors	Implement the decision of the Directors.
Care about employees and their welfare Care about employees and their welfare.	Employees are the greatest asset of the Fire District. While you may not always agree, the Fire District Directors expect that they will be treated equitably, with dignity and respect.
Recognize citizens are our customers	The Fire District serves citizens; the Fire District Directors expect that they will be treated equitably, with dignity and respect. Their concerns will also be addressed in a timely manner by staff.
Agenda material	Staff will provide concise, accurate agenda material for the Directors’ review.
No operational surprises	Staff will keep the Board informed on all critical operational issues.

GOVERNANCE RELATIONS CONTRACT[©]

The Expectations of the Fire District Board

	Description
Value members' opinions.	You can disagree, but allow each Director to express his/her opinion.
Do your homework.	Before the meeting, read information sent by staff to be informed and prepared for discussion.
No surprises at board meeting	If possible, call the staff, prior to the meeting when you have a critical question that requires research.
Disagree with the vote, but do not undermine the will of the Board of Directors.	You can disagree with a vote and express your viewpoint on why you did not support an item, but understand that the Directors have voted for the item and you are responsible as a Director for its successful implementation.
Practice civility.	As the elected representatives we will strive to be a model for our community on how a Board should work together for the public good.
Support the Strategic Plan.	Board Members will support and require a Strategic Plan for the Fire District.
No public criticism of staff at meetings.	No Director will criticize Fire District staff at public meetings. They can discuss their concerns with the Fire Chief privately.
No operational interference.	Directors will not direct the work of staff. If they have issues or questions related to operations, they will be directed to the Fire Chief.
Governance Relations Survey (GRC)	Conduct an annual confidential survey on how the Governance Relations Contract (GRC) is working with results submitted to an independent group that will provide summary report to the Fire District Board.
Focus on outcomes not positions.	Before taking a position, review the outcomes, potential benefits/results and relationship to the Strategic Plan of a policy or issue first.

GOVERNANCE RELATIONS CONTRACT[©]

The Expectations of Customer Service/Civic Engagement

	Description
Timely responses to citizen requests	Staff will strive to provide timely responses to citizens.
Accurate information	Staff will ensure information provided to citizens is accurate.
Educate citizens of services we provide	Staff will continuously develop strategies and systems to educate citizens on the services of the Fire District.
Civic engagement	Opportunities to increase citizen engagement with the Fire District on a social and formal basis will be a priority.
Community safety first	Staff's first priority is to maintain and enhance the safety of the community

Building Collaborative Leaders Using Four Square Management

Mountain Vista Fire District will be using the Four Square Management as a project-planning tool to implement strategic plan projects. The tool is designed to provide a checklist for Fire District management to use to make sure all aspects of implementing the projects successfully have been covered. The role of leaders has changed significantly. From the early days of Fredrick Taylor to the ground breaking works of Tom Peters and Jim Collins, defining leadership has been an evolving and difficult road to fully navigate. This evolution of leadership continues. Leadership for the 21st Century requires a focus on building collaborative strategies, systems and structures to address complex problems that are not completely linear in nature. Leaders in the past relied more on hierarchy and predictable approaches to address problems. As an example, the building of the infrastructure for the explosive urban and suburban growth after the Second World War was far less complicated than today's problem of balancing sustainability with the need for economic growth in communities. Problems leaders confront today require more collaboration success than in the past.

Making Leadership Work

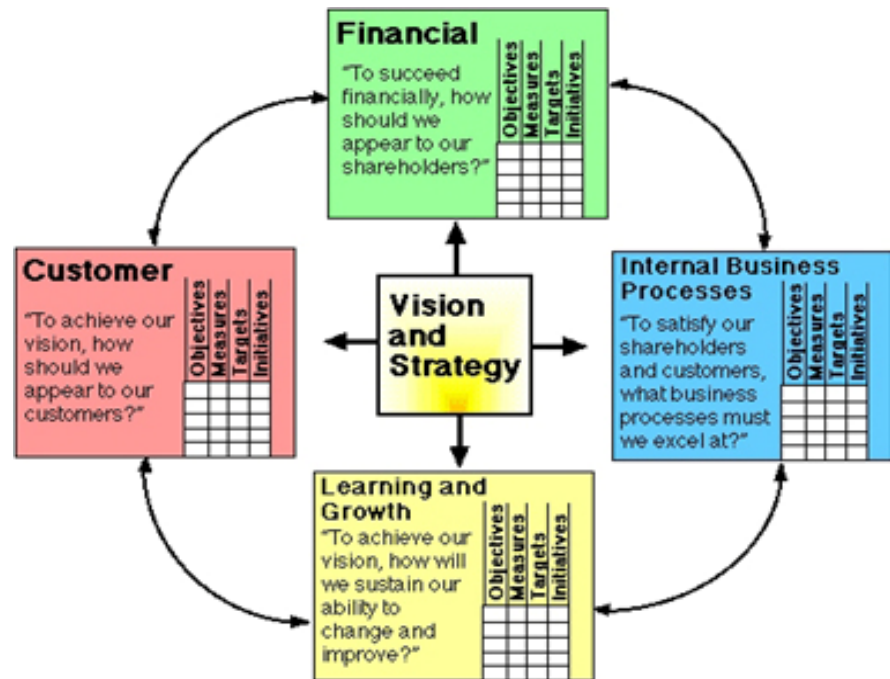
Management and leadership are complicated and involve both strategic and tactical execution on new initiatives for success. In the early 1990s, private sector companies started to use the balanced scorecard to develop a more strategic approach to their operations. The balanced scorecard helps organizations improve the articulation and understanding of their strategies. The balanced scorecard provides a framework for building strategies, for addressing financial issues, customer service perspectives, creating internal processes aligned to customer needs and creating an environment supporting technology, organizational learning, and continuous change. The components for Four Square Management are:

- ❖ **Financial** – The strategy for improving revenue diversification and excellence in financial reporting.
- ❖ **Customer** – The strategy for improving customer service.
- ❖ **Internal Business Processes**- The strategy for creating efficient and effective internal processes focused on customer satisfaction.
- ❖ **Learning and Growth** – The strategy for creating an organizational climate that promotes change, innovation, and continuous learning.

FOUR SQUARE MANAGEMENT ©

Leaders in the public sector need a scorecard tailored to their unique needs and challenges. The scorecard should serve as a compass for aligning strategy with tactical implementation of new initiatives and promote collaborative decision-making. The vacuum that is often created without this alignment can result in new initiatives that create unexpected consequences when implemented. A

simple, but impactful example of unexpected consequences is when a governing board acts on a policy, but the staffing and long-term financial resources to effectively implement the policy are not considered. Using a tool that provides a clear compass to guide an organization through avoiding the potential pitfalls of these unintended consequences is critical to more effective governance.

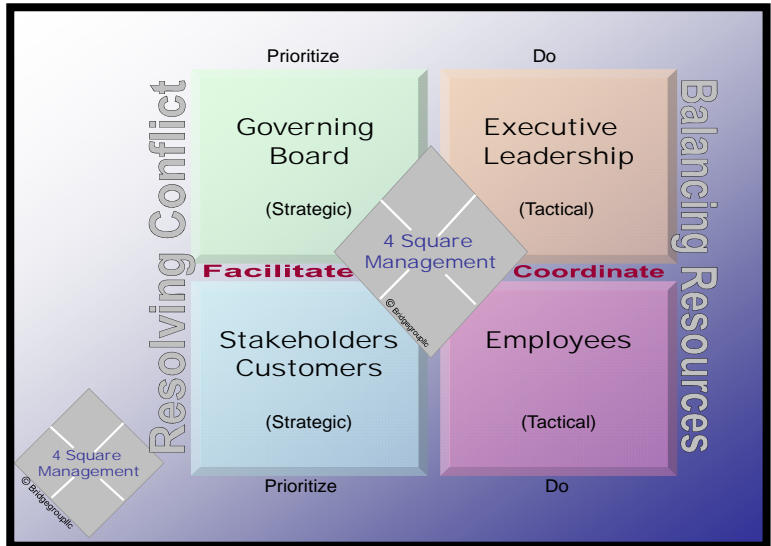


Staying on course is not easy in the public sector. Public sector environments have significantly more transparency than the private sector. The actions of governing boards that direct management are conducted in a proverbial "fish bowl" of public opinion, which is increasingly being shaped by print and social media. This can result in reactionary, instead of strategic decisions. Four Square Management provides a checklist for public sector leaders to use as a compass when developing and implementing new initiatives. The key to success when implementing new initiatives is finding the balance among:

- ❖ Stakeholder/customers' expectations
- ❖ Governing Boards desire to meet those expectations through policy direction
- ❖ Capacity to implement the policy
- ❖ Capacity of members to execute the policy for the stakeholders/customers

FOUR SQUARE MANAGEMENT ©

Four Square Management is a tool to strategically and tactically guide the District through a measured process of improving the effectiveness of implementing new initiatives or projects. How does Four Square Management work? Prior to implementing any new initiatives, the following questions should be addressed under each of the categories:



Stakeholder/customer expectations

- ❖ Is this initiative consistent with our Vision and Mission statement?
- ❖ Is it one of our stated priorities or strategic focus areas?
- ❖ Does it resolve an immediate and pressing problem that is appropriate for the organization to address?
- ❖ If funding is involved, can this initiative be sustained over the next five years with other competing budget priorities?

Governing Board's desire to meet those expectations through policy direction

- ❖ What are the outcomes we will use to determine if this initiative is successful?
- ❖ When will the initiative be reviewed to determine how it is being implemented?
- ❖ Do we have existing policy direction from an approved plan to undertake this initiative?
- ❖ What are the best practices for this initiative?

Management capacity to implement the policy

- ❖ Do we have the necessary operational procedures to implement the initiative?
- ❖ If the initiative requires technology, is it in place or do we have to purchase it?
- ❖ Is a performance measurement system in place to track the outcomes or results of the initiative?
- ❖ Do we have the necessary structure and supervisory capacity to implement the initiative?
- ❖ Do we need a field trip to an organization that has developed and implement the initiative?
- ❖ What are contingency plans if the initiative has problems while being implemented?
- ❖ What is our communication strategy for the initiative and the spokesperson?

Capacity of members to execute the policy for the stakeholders/customers

- ❖ Has input from first line members been received on how to implement the initiative effectively?
- ❖ Is member training required to implement the initiative?
- ❖ How will implementing this initiative impact current work cycles for services?
- ❖ How will implementing this initiative affect timelines on implementing any other initiatives directed by the governing board?

The Four Square Management model can provide the platform for implementing a more collaborative approach for leaders. This simple template for governing boards and management to use should not delay the development of new initiatives. It will help to make sure the initiative has run the gauntlet for its successful implementation.

INTEGRATED STRATEGIC PLANNING



The Mercer Group, Inc.

Consultants To Management

**Innovative Approach for
Developing Strategic Plan**

Integrated Strategic Plan for:

- ✓ Linking the budget, staff work plan and performance measures to the plan.
- ✓ Using performance measures and any other unanticipated issues to update and adjust the plan annually

Integrated Strategic Plan



The strategic plan should be updated and reviewed annually during the budget development process. Projects in strategic plan requiring funding over the next fiscal year should be identified. Strategic work plan projects should also be identified at this time. New strategic projects should also be identified and included in the work plan for the fiscal year or subsequent year. District performance measures should be reviewed and updated during the budget process.

In adopting the budget for future fiscal years, the Fire District Board should include:

- ❖ Any strategic projects requiring funding
- ❖ The strategic staff work plan for the year
- ❖ Performance measurement adjustments