

Strategic Plan 2021-2024



Camas-Washougal Fire Department

CWFD Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Executive Summary

The Camas-Washougal Fire Department has developed a strategic plan to help guide it through the next three years. A strategic plan is developed by analyzing an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). The goal of a SWOT analysis is to build on organizational strengths, improve weaknesses, take advantage of opportunities, and eliminate or minimize threats. The strengths of this and any public safety agency is the people it is comprised of. We have a talented and engaged group of employees committed to constantly improving the services provided to the citizens of Camas, Washougal, and the surrounding Clark County areas we service. The information contained in this strategic plan was compiled from our internal steering committee process begun in late 2020. A strategic plan must be a dynamic and fluid document, and we will continue to monitor and modify this document. This strategic plan will serve as a blueprint for the department for the next 3 years, with the understanding that situations may arise that will cause us to deviate and move in another direction from time to time. I extend my sincere appreciation to the members of our steering committee that helped complete this important document. We will use this document to improve the safety of our members, and build upon our past successes to improve our department and the services we provide to our communities.

Nick Swinhart

Fire Chief

Camas-Washougal Fire Department

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CWFD Steering Committee

In late 2020, during the height of the COVID pandemic sweeping the world, the Camas-Washougal Fire Department convened a steering committee, comprised of department personnel with a diverse and wide background consisting of administration, operational officers, union officials, and line personnel. The goal of this group was two-fold; help department administration identify the most important issues facing the department, and using this information to determine strategic goals and the methods to accomplishing these goals that could then be compiled in to an internal strategic plan. This short range strategic plan could then be utilized to guide the department over the next 3-4 years. We are deeply indebted to the personnel who offered to participate in this ongoing process:

Battalion Chief Ben Silva

Battalion Chief Kevin Villines

Battalion Chief Mark Ervin

Battalion Chief Kevin West

Captain Brad Delano

Captain Ben Porter

Captain Wade Faircloth

Deputy Fire Marshal Kevin Bergstrom

FF/PM Cassandra Knierim

FF/PM Aaron Cliburn

FF/EMT Matt Baldwin

FF/PM Kekoa Paakaula

About the City of Camas

The City of Camas, incorporated in 1906, is located in Clark County in southwestern Washington. The City's population is 24,418, as of the US Census Bureau's 2019 Population Estimates Program, which represents an increase of 23.2% from the 2010 Census (19,813) and a 94.8% increase since 2000 (12,534).

The median age in Camas is 39.6, as reported in the 2018 American Community Survey, and the median household income is \$106,513. A total of 19.2% of individuals and 14.3% of families fall below the poverty line. Approximately 85.4% of the population identifies as White, 7.7% identifies as Asian, and 0.5% identifies as Black. Approximately 4.7% identify as Hispanic or Latino.

The City is located across the Columbia River, north of Troutdale, Oregon, part of the Portland metropolitan area. Camas is bordered on the east by the City of Washougal, Washington, and on the west by the City of Vancouver, Washington. Because the Columbia River is to the south, the City's remaining land area available for growth is the North Shore of Lacamas Lake in the northeast part of the City.

The City's Comprehensive Plan, *Camas 2035*, projects a population of 34,090 in 2035 and an additional 3,868 residential units. The City is expected to add 11,182 jobs during the same period. While the City is undergoing considerable growth, with 274 new homes estimated in 2020, the community prides itself on its "small town" feel. A welcoming historic downtown is the heart of the community, lined with commercial business that, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, were thriving. The City is also known for its excellent schools, library, community events, and outdoor recreational amenities, as well as proximity to the City of Portland, Oregon, and the Portland Airport.

About the City of Camas (cont.)

Structure

The City operates under a Mayor-Council form of government, with an elected Mayor and seven elected Council Members. Six of the members of Council are elected by ward, and one member is elected at-large. All elected positions are non-partisan. The City Administrator position is filled by appointment of the Mayor with consent and approval of a majority of the City Council.

The Mayor and City Council are responsible for the creation and revision of public policy in Camas. The City Administrator acts as “the administrative and executive supervisor of the city government under the authority and direction of the mayor.” The Administrator supervises City officers and departments in carrying out City ordinances, policies, and City Council decisions. The City Administrator is the personnel officer, responsible for hiring and discharge of all City employees except personnel of the police, fire, and library departments, and employees and officers required by state law or ordinance to be appointed by the Mayor or voters.

The City Administrator directly oversees the Administrative Service, Community Development, Finance, Fire, Library, Parks and Rec, and Public Works Departments.



About the City of Washougal

The City of Washougal, incorporated in 1908, is located in Clark County in southwestern Washington. The City's population is 16,107, as of the US Census Bureau's 2019 Population Estimates Program, which represents an increase of 13.7% from the 2010 Census (14,161) and a 86.3% increase since 2000 (8,595).

The median age in Washougal is 39.4, as reported in the 2018 American Community Survey, and the median income is \$91,100. A total of 7.4% of individuals fall below the poverty line. Approximately 88.4% of the population identifies as White, 3.5% as Asian, and 1.8% identifies as Black. Approximately 6.8% identify as Hispanic or Latino.

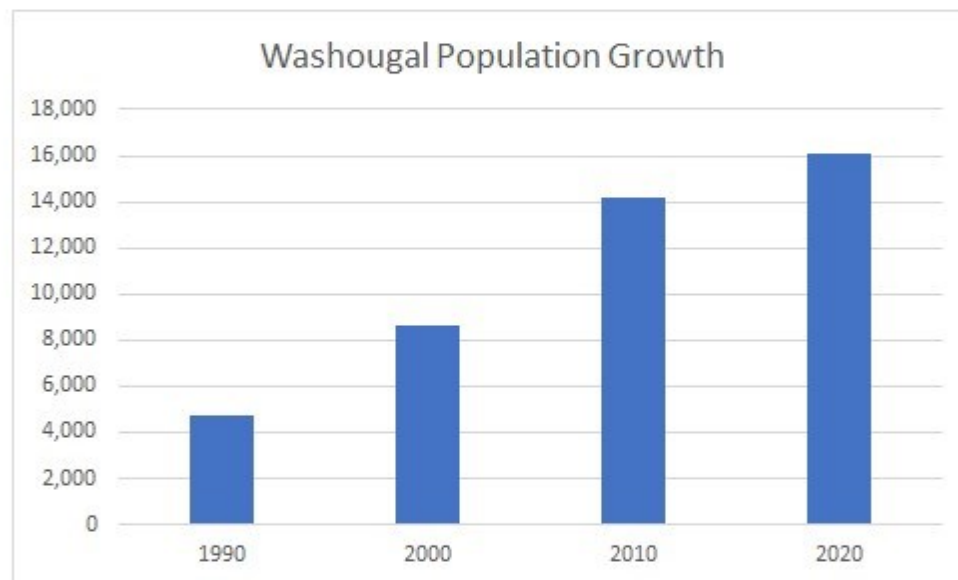
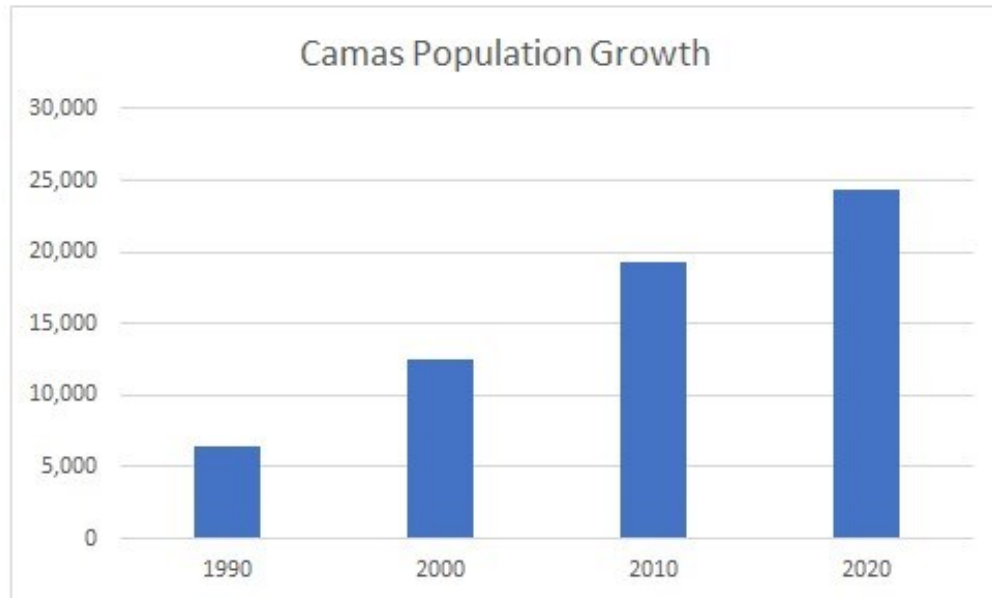
The City is located across the Columbia River, northeast of Troutdale, Oregon, part of the Portland metropolitan area. Washougal is bordered in the east by Skamania County, and on the west by the City of Camas. Because the Columbia River is to the south, the City's remaining land area available for growth is to the north and northeast of the City.

The City's Comprehensive Plan projects a population of 22,347 in 2035 and an additional 2,030 residential units and 1,700 jobs.

The City of Washougal is a full service city operating under a Council/City Manager form of government with the passage of Proposition 8 in November 2018. Upon certification, the elected mayor became the eighth council member and was appointed by the Council on December 3, 2018 to continue to serve as Mayor of Washougal.

In September 2020, Councilmember Ray Kutch resigned Position 5, and the Council approved a motion to revert council membership to the standard number of 7. Councilmembers are elected for four-year terms. The City Manager oversees the day to day operations of the city with five department directors.

Population Growth Comparison



Camas-Washougal Fire Department Organizational History

Camas Fire Department was formed in the early 1930s as a completely volunteer organization in response to a massive downtown fire. The department stayed very small over the years despite eventually adding a paid fire chief in the 1940s and a small contingent of full time staff. In the 1970s the department took over ambulance transport services from a local funeral home and trained and hired some of the first paramedics in Washington State. In 1979, CFD entered in to an agreement for contract for service to the City of Washougal and Clark County Fire Districts #1 and #9 (now combined as East County Fire and Rescue), which encompasses unincorporated county areas north of the cities. This agreement provided for ambulance transport services within the four entities jurisdiction in exchange for EMS Levy proceeds that would be forwarded from Washougal and Fire Districts #1 and #9 to Camas. This contract has continued to be renewed ever year since 1979 and Camas continues to have the only fire department based ambulance transport service in all of Clark County. Ambulance services in the greater Vancouver area are provided by the private agency "AMR," and the rural north end of the county is covered by a public agency called "North Country EMS." The EMS Levy rate that funds the ambulance service in what is called the "Three Parties Agreement" started out at .25/\$1000. It currently stands at .35/\$1000 in ECFR, and .46/\$1000 in Camas. By contract, ECFR forwards Camas 100% of their EMS levy revenue. Washougal has its own EMS levy as well, but keeps that to help fund their portion of the CWFD merger.



Camas Fire Department, 1933

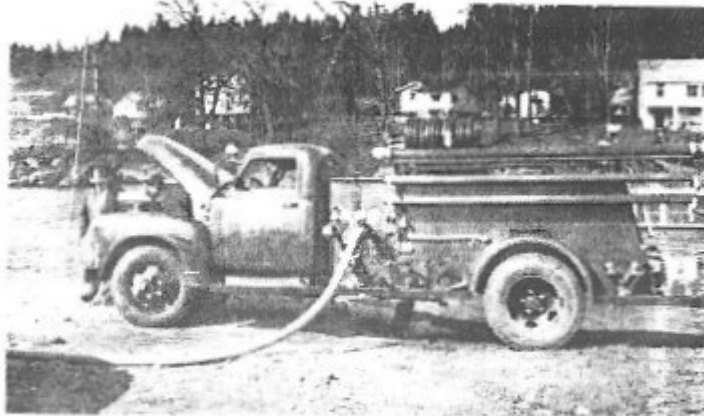
Camas-Washougal Fire Department Organizational History

The fire department continued to operate with a mostly volunteer staff until the city started seeing massive growth in the late 1990s. Paid staff quickly started to outnumber the volunteer staff. By 2021 the Camas-Washougal Fire Department has a total of 56 budgeted FTEs in front line positions. Additional administrative staff includes a Division Chief of EMS, Division Chief/Fire Marshal, two Deputy Fire Marshals, Fire Chief, and two administrative assistants.

Merger attempts between the three partners had been talked about several times over the years, with at least a couple of efforts that started and stopped. In the mid 2000s, a merger was attempted between Camas and Washougal. This never got farther than the planning stages. Following this, Camas began merger talks with ECFR. This merger process temporarily reached the point of operational integration. Within a short period of time, however, the ECFR merger dissolved due to various conflicts. By early 2011, talk began in earnest of making another merger attempt between Camas and Washougal. The Camas EMS budget was struggling and Washougal needed a medic unit stationed in their city to help shorten response times. The two firefighter unions had already formed in to one, the previous Camas fire chief had departed, and new officials had been elected in Washougal. The timing seemed perfect for Camas to merge with Washougal's nine full time personnel. In July of 2011, new fire chief Nick Swinhart was hired in Camas. Immediately following, a trial functional consolidation was started between Camas and Washougal. Initially good for only 6 months, the functional consolidation involved combining all personnel across all stations along with stationing an ambulance at the Washougal fire station. Washougal also transferred a sum of \$95,000 to Camas to help stabilize the EMS fund and purchased a new ambulance to use at their station as Camas didn't have a suitable third ambulance to put in-service at the time. At the end of the first 6 months, both councils approved extending the merger until the end of 2013 to give both parties time to figure out the "if" and "how" of making the merger more permanent. At the same time, Camas Fire Chief Nick Swinhart was appointed the Fire Chief of Washougal and the new Camas-Washougal Fire Department.

Washougal Fire Department Organizational History

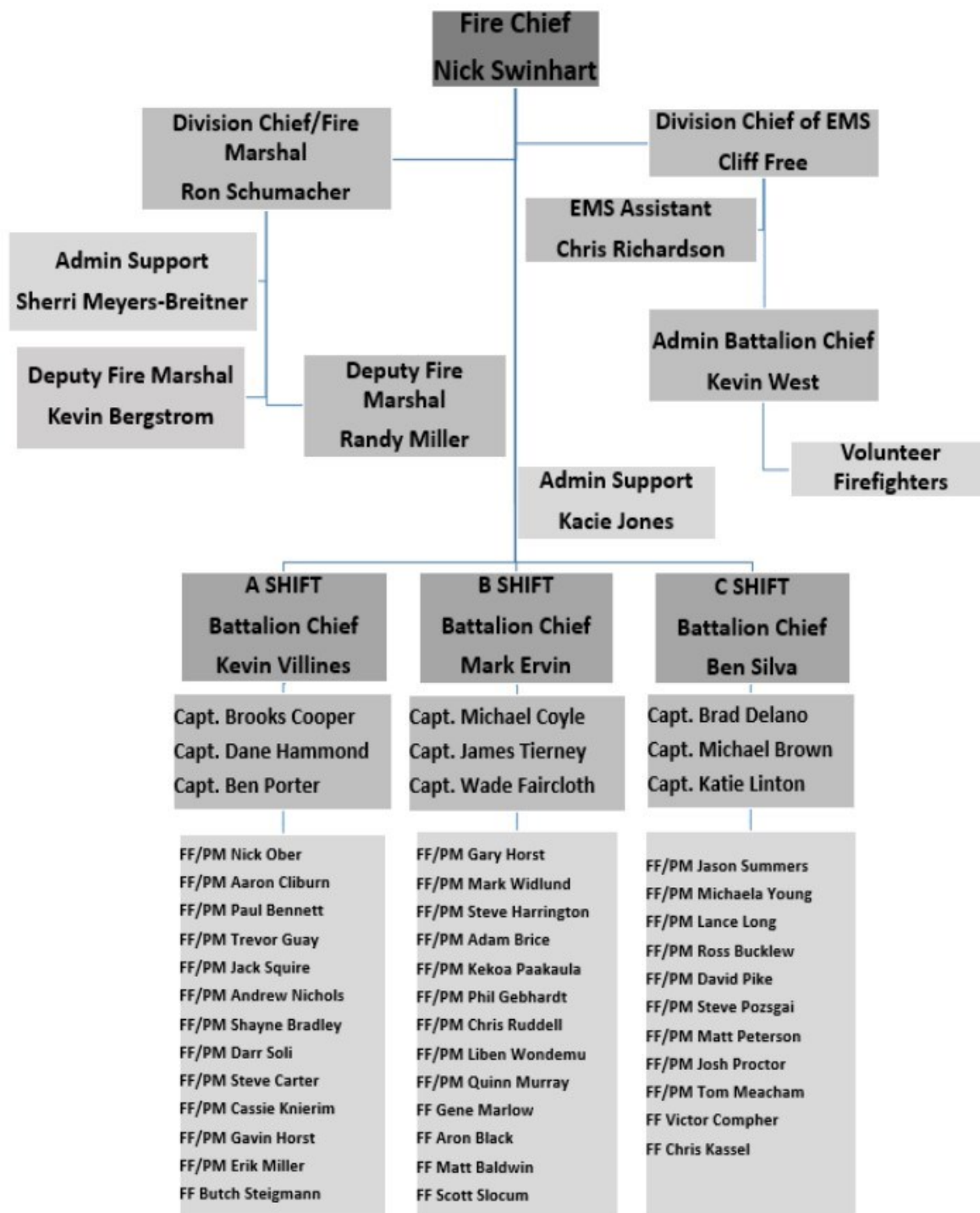
The Washougal Fire Department was formally incorporated as an all volunteer agency in 1931 after the Pendleton Woolen Mills was nearly destroyed in the 1920s by fire. The department of that era consisted of 36 volunteer firefighters and was located at 16th and B Street in Washougal in the Peterson Apartments Building. The first paid firefighter, Darrell Alder, was hired in 1966. Alder served as Fire Chief until the early 1990s. The department moved in to the present 1400 A Street station in 1974. As the city grew, the WFD continued to add paid personnel, albeit at a slower pace than neighboring Camas. The City of Washougal had long relied on ambulance response and transport from the Camas Fire Department, thru an interlocal agreement started in 1978. Of ongoing concern for Washougal was the fact that the nearest paramedic response and transport unit came from Camas. If the downtown Station 41 was on another emergency response, the next nearest medic unit could be responding from Station 42 in Grass Valley, a response time that could be up to 20 minutes or longer. This was one of the main factors, among others, that incentivized Washougal interest in forming a more permanent partnership with the Camas Fire Department. When CWFD was formed in 2013, Washougal Fire Department brought 10 paid firefighters, a fire chief, and some 25 volunteers in to the combined agency.



A WASHOUGAL Fire Department pumper, circa early 1950s, loads up with river water at Sandy Swimming Hole on SE Shepherd Road.



ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Our Mission

To Provide the Highest Quality Service to our Community Through
the Protection and Preservation of Life and Property

Our Values

To Serve Our Community's Needs Through

Excellence

Courtesy, Equality and Respect

Professionalism

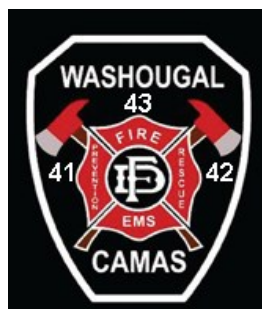
Readiness, Education, Training,
Competency and Accountability

Integrity

Dependability, Trust and Honesty

Pride

Enthusiasm, Optimism and Recognition



CWFD Strategic Plan 2021-2024

SWOT Analysis

A “SWOT” analysis is a strategic planning technique used to help an organization identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to business competition or project planning. For this section of the strategic plan, the steering committee was tasked with completing a SWOT analysis for CWFD.

Strengths

	Promotional testing process
High paramedic standards	Good diversity for department our size
Special duty assignments established	Ambulance inventory is maintained well
Target Solutions training program	We are efficient (doing more w/less)
Good wellness program	Blue card training program
Entry level hiring process	PCC recruit training partnership
EMS Chief provides high quality system	Hold probationary staff to high standards
Prevention and Fire Marshal's Office	
Good training opportunities for staff	
Mostly positive culture	
New hires (brings new/fresh perspectives)	
Peer support	
Staff have strong fire background	
In-house recruit academy	
Participation in JATC	
Relationship with ECFR & neighbors	
Public image is good	
Drill ground space at Station 42	

CWFD Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Weaknesses

Need to improve fire training

We lack water rescue capabilities

Dynamic training model

We are reactionary to challenges

Need to focus/train on target hazards

Lack of a boat for water rescues

No apparatus replacement plan/fund

We get very few grants

Relationships w/ area departments can be improved

No medic rotation

No training officer or training captain

We don't have Haz-Mat capabilities

Department lacks operations chief

No formal plans adopted (i.e. apparatus replacement, capital, staffing)

Lack of apparatus operator program/position

Better top-down communications

Probationary year needs to be outlined better w/improvements to task book

Department lacks 3-person engines

Technology improvements are needed

Morale issues related to staffing/3-person engines

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Opportunities

Port development/Green Mountain
Ladder truck
Updated impact fees
Improved public image
Public events/social media presence
Improved staffing
Improved pub-ed and prevention
More utilization of new firefighters
Robust training program
Captain's projects
Getting out in public more
More buy-in from elected officials
Fire Ops 101
Swift water rescue team
Set and improve department culture
Chief officers sitting down with new recruits and setting expectations
Operations chief
Cross-staffing eliminated
Intern program

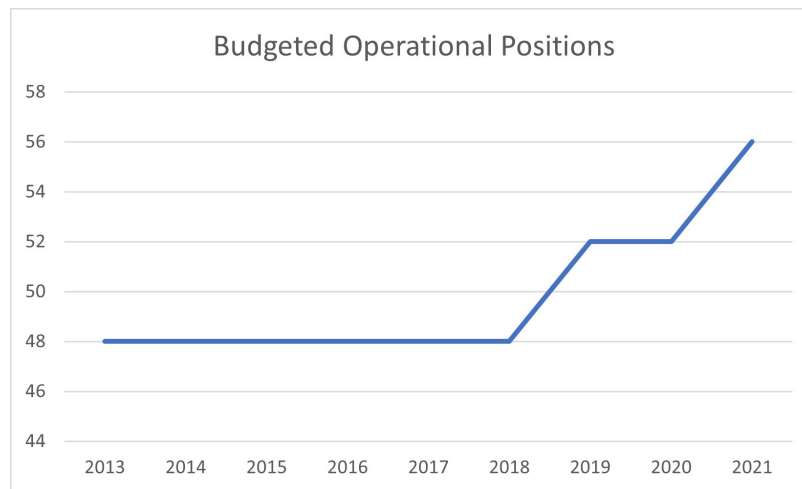
Threats

Some necessary initiatives not supported by city/council
Lack of trust
Morale, we need buy-in to change it
Catastrophic threat potential
Lack of a ladder truck
Lack of water rescue capabilities
Washougal/Camas partnership
Resources stretched too thin
Keeping apparatus we don't need
Lack of training on target hazards
Access to trail systems
Cost share formula of CWFD partnership
Age of apparatus, stations, equipment
Lack of organized training
Upcoming retirements
Utilize our internal subject matter experts
AMR is a threat to our transport capabilities
People leaving for depts with higher pay and better staffing
Lack of needed specialized training opportunities
Suggestions for improvement not implemented

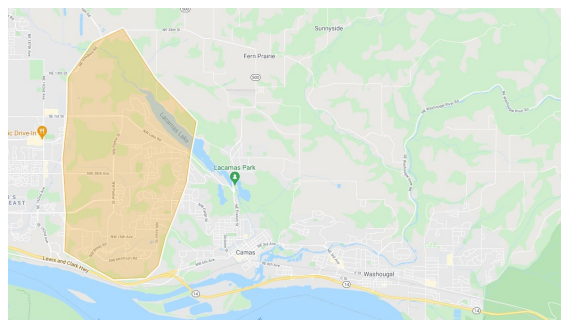
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Staffing Discussion

A common theme in the CWFD strategic planning process was the need for additional staffing. While staffing levels have been increased over the past several years by Council, they have not been enough to allow the increasing of daily minimum staffing numbers at Camas stations, which was last increased in 2000 to coincide with the opening of Station 42.



Of longstanding concern is that Station 42 in Grass Valley has been cross-staffed since its opening in 2000. Cross-staffing refers to the fact that the station usually only has two personnel, to staff either an engine or an ambulance, depending on the call type. Since the vast majority of CWFD's call volume is for medical calls, Station 42's primary response area is left without fire engine coverage when they are dispatched on most calls. This area of Camas contains significant residential development, as well as large commercial facilities like WaferTech. Additionally the station's location close to the City of Vancouver border means that Medic 42 is frequently on calls in Vancouver. When this occurs, there is no engine coverage in the Grass Valley area.



Station 42 primary response area shaded in yellow

CWFD Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Staffing Discussion (cont.)

Another part of the staffing puzzle the department has long sought to address is the staffing component of engine companies in the organization. Standard 1710 of the National Fire Protection Association recommends a minimum staffing of 4 personnel on all fire engines. This is an exceedingly difficult standard to meet for all but the larger metropolitan areas. Indeed the Portland Fire Bureau and Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue are the only agencies in the metro area to deploy 4-person engine companies. The minimum engine staffing complement that most smaller agencies strive to meet is 3-person engines. This has long been the standard in Clark County, with all career agencies providing 3-person engine deployment, with the exception of CWFD and very small rural departments like Yacolt and ECFR. Providing 3-person minimum staffing on fire engines helps ensure firefighter safety, improve rescue outcomes, and provide for quicker and more efficient extinguishment of fire situations. Additionally, the 3-person minimum complement on engines helps ensure that departments can meet Washington State Labor and Industries rules on the minimum number of firefighters required before personnel are allowed to effect a rescue of a trapped victim in a fire situation. Additionally, 3-person engine companies provide for:

- More personnel for lifting of patients, which decreases injuries
- First response ALS engines to medical calls before a medic unit can arrive
- Additional trained personnel for cardiac arrest calls
- Increased personnel to effectively deploy at water rescues without need for mutual aid
- Increased personnel to effectively deploy at motor vehicle accidents and rope rescues without need for mutual aid
- Decreased paramedic fatigue and increased wellness by allowing engine rotation
- Safer response to mental health emergencies since police no longer respond
- May end the need for Medic 44 to be cross-staffed
- More consistent engine company training, which increases proficiency in skills

CWFD Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Staffing Discussion (cont.)

The increased staffing of 4 additional FTEs approved by the City Council in the 2021/2022 budget brings the total operational staffing to 56. While helpful, this still will not allow CWFD to accomplish the full staffing goals identified by the steering committee. With a change in shift deployment, 56 FTEs is the minimum required to ensure 4-person staffing at Station 42. The committee believes that an additional 4-6 FTEs will be required to additionally ensure 3-person staffing on all engines in the cities. The fire chief has stated among his primary goals for the department are to ensure elimination of cross-staffing at Station 42, and to increase engine staffing to a 3-person minimum. The steering committee concurs with this assessment and believes this goal can and must be accomplished within the life of this 2021-2024 strategic plan. This would also align with Council's stated desire to follow and implement the recommendations of the 2019 Master Plan.

Minimum Staffing for 1st Alarm:

- Exterior incident commander
- Uninterrupted water supply – operator
- Attack line – 2 firefighters
- Back-up line – 2 firefighters
- Support person – one firefighter per line
- Search and rescue team – 2 firefighters
- Ventilation team – 2 firefighters
- Aerial (if used) – operator
- IRIC – 2 firefighters

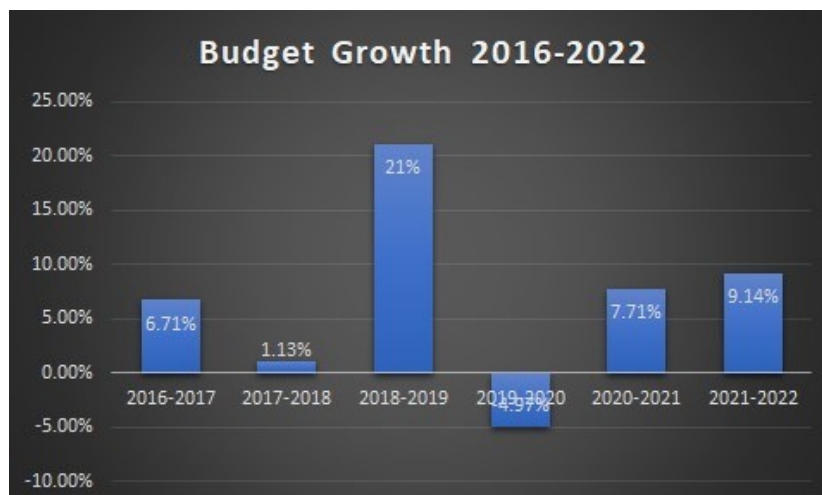
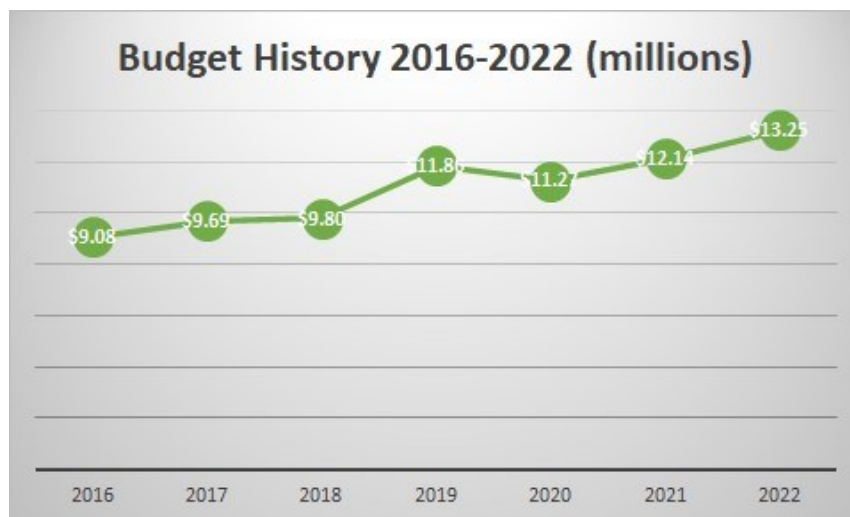
TOTAL 14 or 15

With 3-person engines and all units available, CWFD would be able to meet this minimum need

CWFD Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Budget Discussion

The CWFD annual budget is funded thru the provisions of the interlocal agreement that created the combined agency in 2013. A cost-share formula based on a combination of population, structural AV, and call volume, is used to assign weighted costs to each city for the operations of the agency. At the time of the creation of this strategic plan, Camas funds approximately 60% of CWFD's budget, while Washougal funds 40%. This financial arrangement has caused difficulty in recent years when Camas stations require additional staffing or equipment and the cities cannot reach agreement on who should fund them or at what portion they should be funded. A study is currently under way by the consulting group Merina, seeking to find alternative cost-share formulas or governance arrangements that would be acceptable to both cities. This study is expected to be completed by the end of 2021.



CWFD Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Strategic goals and objectives are based on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, affecting CWFD's vision, mission, and values. They outline strengths and weaknesses in service and staffing levels, finance, and management structure. These strategic goals and objectives provide a vehicle to take advantage of current and future opportunities.

Strategic goals are organization-wide benchmarks that detail the most pressing issues identified through the Steering Committee. We believe the identified goals are the most critical facing the department and should be the focus of accomplishing within the lifespan of this strategic plan.

Objectives are more specific components of the strategic goal and outline the more detailed actions or tasks that support the strategic goals. They are essentially the steps the organization must take to accomplish the stated goals.

The Department's strategic goals and objectives must be integrated into long-term fiscal plans, as well as future operating budgets and capital improvement plans. The outline below includes a series of critical tasks or actions that will be used as benchmarks in which to measure the progress towards the completion of the goals and objectives for the strategic plans timeline of 2021 to 2024.



CWFD Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Strategic Goal #1: Hire necessary staffing to ensure 4-person minimum staffing at Station 42

Strategic Goal #2: Hiring necessary staffing to ensure 3-person engine companies in both cities

Strategic Goal #3: Fill training captain position and plan for establishment and filling of Division Chief of Operations position

Strategic Goal #4: Create and appropriately fund an apparatus and facilities replacement plan

Strategic Goal #5: Establish a water rescue training program and team



CWFD Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Strategic Goal #1: Hire necessary staffing to ensure 4-person minimum staffing at Station 42

Objectives:

1. Increase safety of personnel working at Station 42
2. Provide higher level of service to community by:
 - A. Ensuring a staffed engine and medic unit are available 24/7
 - B. Availability of closer staffed units to 911 calls in west response area
3. Shortened response times leading to improved emergency outcomes

Desired Outcomes:

1. Staffing increased to ensure 4-person minimum staffing at Station 42 at all times.
2. Daily minimum staffing increased from 11 to 13
3. Data analysis showing shortened response times for 911 calls in Station 42 response area and department wide

Timeline Goal:

2022: With the approved hiring of 4 new FTEs in 2021, and a change in deployment, this may be attainable by the end of 2022.

CWFD Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Strategic Goal #2: Hiring necessary staffing to ensure 3-person engine companies in both cities

Objectives:

1. Increase safety of personnel working on all CWFD engines
2. Provide appropriate level of service to all citizens by:
 - A. Ensuring more personnel available to respond for fires, rescues, and EMS
 - B. More personnel available for water emergency response
 - C. More personnel available for motor vehicle accidents and rope rescues
3. Fulfill minimum staffing standard required by state law to perform rescues
4. Decreased paramedic fatigue by allowing engine rotation schedules
5. Safer response to mental health emergencies
6. Decrease injuries by having more staff available to help lift/move pts & equip.

Desired Outcomes:

1. Staffing increased to ensure 3-person minimum staffing on every CWFD engine
2. Daily minimum staffing increased from 13 to 16

Timeline Goal:

2023: Request budgetary authority as part of 2023-2024 biennium.

CWFD Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Strategic Goal #3: Fill training captain position and plan for establishment and filling of Division Chief of Operations position

Objectives:

1. Improve and expand formal training programs within department
2. Ensure consistency of training
3. Provide even distribution of administrative oversight through 3 staffed divisions: EMS, Operations, Fire Prevention/FMO
4. Improve command oversight and safety at emergency scenes

Desired Outcomes:

1. Promotion or assignment of shift captain to training captain role
2. Create, fund, and staff a Division Chief of Operations position

Timeline Goal:

2021/2022: Training Captain position already has available personnel to fill, pending labor contract negotiations

2024: Request budgetary authority for Division Chief of Operations as part of 2023/2024 biennium

CWFD Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Strategic Goal #4: Create and appropriately fund an apparatus and facilities replacement plan

Objectives:

1. Have fully funded apparatus and capital replacement plans that allow for the future needs and growth of the department
2. Ability to purchase large expenses like apparatus and facilities without having to go thru additional budget requests, go out to public bond, or utilization of loans
3. Ensure safety of personnel by utilization of the newest technology and equipment
4. Ensure public receives a high level of service through use of modern equipment
5. Utilize public funding for purchasing of new and modern equipment and facilities instead of using it to repair aging and outdated equipment and facilities

Desired Outcomes:

1. Department's future apparatus and facilities needs planned for and fully funded by both cities
2. Staff are housed in modern facilities, utilizing the safest equipment available

Timeline Goal:

2021/2023: New capital facilities and apparatus replacement plan will be available in 2021. Appropriate funding of plan will require approval of Councils in both cities. Next opportunity during 2023/2024 biennium.

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Strategic Goals and Objectives

Strategic Goal #5: Establish a water rescue training program and team

Objectives:

1. Maintain and improve responder water safety through proper training and equipment
2. Obtain budget authority to properly train and equip a CWFD water rescue team

Desired Outcomes:

1. Staff are properly trained and equipped to operationally deploy at water rescues
2. Community receives higher level of service, and likely better patient outcomes, by having locally trained responders and equipment available
3. Increased safety for responders
4. Decreased liability for city, department, and responders

Timeline Goal:

2022/2023: Next opportunity for budgetary request will be 2023. Earlier adoption possible through grants or a council-approved omnibus.

CWFD Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Strategic Goals	2021	2022	2023	2024
Strategic Goal #1 - 4 person staffing at 42	X	X		
Strategic Goal #2 - 3 person engine staffing			X	
Strategic Goal #3 - Training Captain		X		
Strategic Goal #3b - Operations Chief				X
Strategic Goal #4 - Capital facilities and apparatus plan	X			
Strategic Goal #5 - Water rescue team		X	X	

CWFD Strategic Plan 2021-2024

Future Considerations

The Camas-Washougal Fire Department faces many challenges, during the lifetime of this strategic plan, and beyond. According to *Camas 2035*, the City of Camas is expected to grow some 43% in the next 14 years. While not projecting the same level of growth, Washougal will also see a significant increase in population during this period of time. These communities are being protected by a fire department that is still using minimum daily staffing levels that haven't been increased in over 20 years. In those same 20 years the City of Camas has grown by 94%. While the added staffing received over the past two years has been useful and has helped improve operations, it is still not enough to deal with the continued growth of our communities while also ensuring our personnel are safe and meeting the minimum staffing standards in our industry.

Our cities must also consider the future retirement liabilities facing the department. We currently have 8+ employees eligible for retirement that we must start planning to replace. With this large amount of impending turnover, the department faces losing irreplaceable institutional knowledge, as well as staffing gaps caused by the length of time it takes to hire and train new personnel.

Of particular importance and consideration will be protecting our ongoing partnership between the cities of Camas and Washougal. Since 2013, this partnership has demonstrated the efficiencies of combining and blending services and the subsequent improved level of service for our citizens. For our agency to realize the important strategic goals in this plan will require our communities to find ways to keep our partnership viable.

Finally, there must be continued emphasis on pairing the growth needs of the cities with the growth needs of the fire department. This will require the tools, resources, and personnel to allow the department to respond to the emergency needs of our growing community.