

Preliminary Successor Strategic Plan 2020 - 2022

Background Materials from September 15, 2020  
LAHCFD Regular Meeting



## MEMORANDUM REPORT

Meeting Date: September 15, 2020

TO: Los Altos Hills County Fire District Commission

CC: General Manager Logan  
Captain Gluhan  
Special Projects Consultant Henricks

FROM: Ad Hoc Strategic Plan Subcommittee: Commissioners Price, Spreen, Carr

PREPARED BY: Facilitator Marcie Scott, Municipal Resource Group (MRG)

SUBJECT: Recommended Process to Develop Successor Strategic Plan

### **Background:**

The existing Los Altos Hills County Fire District (District) 2015-2020 Strategic Plan is a critical component of the framework that informs Commission decisions around resource allocation. The other pieces of the framework are the annual budget and CWPP/Annex 4 and Addendum.

The District is nearing the end of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, prepared with the assistance of the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE). The District reserved time slots in March and September 2020 with CPSE but did not enter into a contract due to uncertainties about in-person stakeholder meetings required by CPSE to facilitate a Successor Strategic Plan. However, CPSE has withdrawn its interest in facilitating the Successor Strategic Plan process due to COVID-19 limitations related to gatherings in large groups.

At the July 28, 2020 District Board meeting the Commission authorized a not-to-exceed contract of \$5,000 to engage Municipal Resource Group (MRG) to assist in facilitating meetings of the Ad Hoc Strategic Plan Subcommittee to gather community input and prepare a recommendation for a process to develop a Successor Strategic Plan.

This memorandum summarizes the Subcommittee's activities to date and recommends a process that culminates in adoption of a Successor Strategic Plan at the November District Board meeting.

### **Subcommittee Recommendation:**

The Ad Hoc Strategic Plan Subcommittee recommends the Commission take the following actions to develop a Successor Strategic Plan:

1. Schedule a public Special Commission meeting Thursday, October 1, 2020 from 7- 8 pm devoted solely to the Successor Strategic Plan process.

2. Schedule a tentative public Special Commission meeting, if needed, Tuesday, October 27, 2020 from 7-8 pm
3. Review existing Mission, Values, Goals and Objectives in current Strategic Plan to acknowledge achievements to date and develop updated Goals and Objectives.
4. Receive public comment at each Commission meeting on the Successor Strategic Plan
5. Review and adopt a two-year Successor Strategic Plan for Calendar Years 2021 and 2022 at the regular Commission meeting scheduled on November 17, 2020.
6. Continue to use MRG to facilitate discussion and draft the Successor Strategic Plan
7. Authorize an additional 14 hours (NTE \$2,800) on the existing contract with MRG to facilitate Commission creation of Successor Strategic Plan

The special meeting(s) will allow the Commission to focus solely on the longer term, strategic direction of the District and not risk running out of time on a regular meeting night. The October 20<sup>th</sup> regular Commission meeting will have an agenda item check in for the Successor Strategic Plan, but the Subcommittee anticipates the majority of work will occur in the special meeting(s).

A two-year duration for the Successor plan is recommended by the Subcommittee based on the rapidly changing environment we find ourselves in. Even six months ago, we could not have envisioned the financial, health, climate change and wildfire threats we face today. A shorter term will allow the Commission to move forward with mid-term guidance and provide flexibility to adapt to results from current conditions.

#### **Ad Hoc Strategic Plan Subcommittee Actions To Date**

The Subcommittee held two community meetings in August, on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. Various District stakeholders attended and provided public comment, which is summarized in Attachment A (Community Meeting #2). While this era of COVID-19 makes in-person interactive meetings unadvisable, stakeholders joined the meeting online to discuss various aspects of planning for the future.

The Subcommittee's discussion was informed by several different resources, in addition to the community participation. A status report on accomplishments of strategic plan goals was prepared in November 2019 by the Ad Hoc Strategic Plan Subcommittee and submitted to the Commission at the November 19, 2019 meeting (Attachment B). Another helpful document used in the August meetings was a one-page infographic prepared by Staff titled "Forward-Looking Community Resiliency" to illustrate how District programs support the Commission's goals (Attachment C).

#### **Recommendations for Commission Consideration**

Based on the work conducted to date, the Subcommittee recommends the Commission review and consider updating the District's Mission Statement, Values and Goals. Upon refinement of Goals, objectives can be developed to define steps to be taken to accomplish Goals. The following suggestions are provided to allow for Commission and community input at the September meeting, and to trigger thinking on the District's strategic objectives prior to the October 1 Special Commission meeting.

Proposed revision to District Mission: The Mission of the Los Altos Hills County Fire District is to protect the lives, property and environment within the District it serves from fires, disasters, medical emergencies or other incidents through education, prevention, protection and emergency response services, and to be responsible for the financial stewardship of District taxpayer funds.

Proposed revisions to District Values:

- Organizational integrity, dedication, and trust
- Leadership actively seeks input from our community to adapt to their changing needs
- Providing essential services to the community served
- Regional approach for cooperative engagement with partners, agencies and entities to ensure, share and provide resources and support
- Local control while seeking positive solutions

Proposed revisions to Goals:

Since 2015, substantial progress has been made in each of the 5 Goals in the current Strategic Plan. Building upon that work, the following are proposed Goals that have been discussed by the Subcommittee, and recommended for consideration in the Successor Strategic Plan.

- 1) Continue development of an organizational structure that supports programs and operations to further the Mission and Values of Los Altos Hills County Fire District;
- 2) Maintain and develop forward-looking community resiliency programs built on fire science, the LAHCFD-CWPP Annex 4 and Addendum and in alignment with the District budget;
- 3) Update and revise the LAHCFD-CWPP Annex 4 and Addendum Guide to residents;
- 4) Seek common ground and a reasonable path forward to incorporate the LAHCFD Management Audit recommendations and resulting hearings and Board of Supervisors' directions to achieve positive solutions;
- 5) Managing and measuring 2021-2022 Strategic Plan

Attachments:

- (A) Report dated 8/13/20 from Community Meeting #2
- (B) Strategic Plan Subcommittee Report dated 11/19/19
- (C) Infographic titled Forward-Looking Community Resiliency



TO: Ad Hoc Subcommittee: Commissioners Price, Spreen and Carr

CC: General Manager Logan  
Special Projects Consultant Henricks  
Captain Gluhan

FROM: Facilitator Marcie Scott

DATE: August 13, 2020

RE: Community Meeting #2

**Objectives of Community Meeting #2:**

1. Overview of materials
2. Discuss Accomplishments achieved during first Strategic Plan (pages 19-25 SP)
3. Discuss survey(s) and review draft questions
4. Review and finalize Workplan for District Strategic Planning Process

**Background:**

Community Meeting #1 was held August 6, 2020 to gather community input to advise the Subcommittee as they develop a Workplan for the Commission's preparation of a successor Strategic Plan. The following community members participated:

- Anthony Stoloski, Operations Manager, Purissima Hills Water District. Relatively new in the role, interested in this process. Short discussion with LAHCFD General Manager about importance of their partnership for the effectiveness of the 540 District fire hydrants connected to Purissima Hills water infrastructure.
- Dru Anderson, Co-Chair of the Emergency Communications Committee, Town of Los Altos Hills and active in the District's CERT program. She expressed support for the District and this process and for working together.
- Bob Frankle, representative of Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos Hills. Spoke of the recent completion of their Emergency preparedness plan.

Community Meeting #2  
August 13, 2020

- Captain Gluhan, LAHCFD, comments on vegetation management programs, Hazardous Ignition Zone, Chipping
- SCCFD Assistant Chief Brian Glass – Pleased to be a part of this process. Santa Clara County Fire recently completed their successor Strategic Plan 2020-2022.
- Eugenia Rendler, Managing Director, Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council. Recently completed their strategic plan. Shorter plan is important, seeing many changes from effects of carbon credits. Mentioned an impact of the Stay Home order is more people have capacity to volunteer.
- Neil Katin, resident. Participant in District's CERT program.

2. The current Strategic Plan lists five Goals with specific Objectives for each. The Subcommittee will discuss progress made to date in each of the Goals. In the current Strategic Plan pages 19-25, the Goals are listed as:

- 1) Develop a comprehensive personnel management system
- 2) Establish an effective district administration
- 3) Provide sound financial and contract management plans and practices that are understandable by the community
- 4) Develop a plan to identify hazards and risks in order to reduce, eliminate and mitigate them
- 5) Maintain awareness of current and future knowledge of technologies that affect the District's mission

3. Community and stakeholder engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic is a substantial challenge. It is recommended the District initiate two online surveys concurrently: Survey #1 for stakeholders who regularly interact with the District, and Survey #2 for the community to gauge awareness of District programs and communication modes. Attached are draft questions for each survey. Input from these surveys will inform the Commission as they develop a successor Strategic Plan.

4. A draft Workplan chart has been created to map out a process to build upon the existing strategic plan and update the District's Goals in a new strategic plan document. The first objective is to obtain stakeholder and community input through two online surveys. Commissioners will hold two special meetings in October devoted to 1) reviewing survey results, conducting a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, challenges). And 2) developing Goals with specific objectives for the new strategic plan. The final successor Strategic Plan is scheduled for review and adoption at the regular November Commission meeting.



**LAHCFD Commission Meeting  
STRATEGIC PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT  
November 19, 2019  
7 PM  
EL MONTE FIRE STATION**

SP Subcommittee: Commissioners: Price, Spreen, Carr; General Manager Logan

Subcommittee met on Friday, November 15, 2019:

1. Review 2015-2020 Strategic Plan -- develop a status report of Strategic Plan accomplishments
2. Website Update – ensure messaging context reflected update regarding the Strategic Plan
3. Strategic Plan 2020-2025 – develop recommendations for coordinating SP 2020-2025

**REPORT**

1. Review 2015-2020 Strategic Plan -- develop a status report of accomplishments

See attachment A.

2. Website Update – The 2015-2020 Strategic Plan is currently on the website.

- Roger will update with context that is contained in the summary of Attachment A.

3. Strategic Plan 2020-2025 – recommendations:

- a. Retain the same SP subcommittee members to develop and coordinate the next 5-year SP
- b. Budget – submit request for 2020-2021 budget cycle of \$20,000 to \$30,000 for the program; submit to Budget Committee
- a. Contact Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) to provide the process services; Duffy will do.
- b. Stakeholders – request community participants from a variety of sources; Town of LAH, Unincorporated areas; San Antonio Hills; residents impacted by fire, ECC; CERT, etc.
- c. Meeting site – recommend El Monte Fire Station Training Room and Bay for breakouts
- d. Time frame: January 2020 – April 2020 for meetings; May – Sept. for Development of Strategic Plan; Finalize/Publish: October 2020.

## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **LOS ALTOS HILLS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2020**

**First -- the Core Values and Associated Statements adopted by the members of the Commission.**

#### **VALUES**

- **Internal agreement of members to establishing values**
- **Organizational integrity, dedication and trust**
- **Leadership seeking input from the community**
- **Providing essential services**
- **Cooperation with regional partners, agencies to ensure critical infrastructure is in place.**

#### **STRENGTHS**

- **Adequate funding**
- **Experienced board and staff**
- **Strong leadership**
- **Managing costs through contracting**
- **Agile**

#### **WEAKNESSES**

- **Contract management**
- **No Bylaws, SOP's**

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

- **Staff succession**
- **Regional initiatives**
- **Contract negotiations**

#### **THREATS**

- **Disasters**
- **Inadequate fire suppression water supply**
- **Terrorism (targets)**
- **Uninformed citizenry**

#### **CRITICAL ISSUES & SERVICE GAPS**

- **Organization Chart and areas of Responsibility**
- **Contract management**
- **Succession Planning**
- **Financial Management Plan**
- **Community Outreach**



- Wildland Urban Interface
- Leveraging use of technology
- Salary analysis for consultants

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- Personnel management
- Financial Management District Administration
- Hazard and Risk Management
- Leverage Technology
- District administration
- Hazard and Risk Management
- Leverage technology

## SP STATUS ACCOMPLISHMENT OF 2015-2020 GOALS

### Goal 1 **Status: Partially completed**

- 1A. Identify roles and responsibilities of the organization.  
Analyze Job roles (commissioners, general manager, staff, and consultants) Completed: org. chart
- 1B. Job descriptions completed for consultant positions, New General Manager; New Commissioner Member Orientation
- 1C. Compensation analysis performed for District Clerk; new General Manager; and consultants
- 1D. Succession timetable developed for member's terms

***TO DO: Publish personnel manual; develop time frame to review***

### Goal 2

- 2A. Administration development complete
- 2B. Reviewed P&P of other districts
- 2C. Gaps required completion of Annual Report to the Community. Completed in 2017-2018. Published in LAH Our Town Newsletter.
- 2D. Organization chart completed.
- 2E. Community communications via website and Town Newsletter and separate mailings, brochures;

updated periodically; include social media Facebook & Twitter

**2F. *TO DO: Update review process policies – to be done.***

**Goal 3**

Evaluate sound financial and contract management plans and practices.

**3 A** ID exiting plans, practice, liabilities and impacts

**3 B** Analyze gaps where the district compares to the best practices to ID gaps

**3C** Develop financial and contract management policies and procedures.

**3D** *TODO: Develop a five-year plan*

**3E** *Establish a process of periodic review of all elements*

**Goal 4**

Develop plan to I.D. hazards and risks in order to reduce, eliminate, and mitigate

**4A** Conduct a hazard and risk assessment of the district

**4B** Evaluate gaps between the district capabilities and things identified in the assessment

**4C** Research and coordinate with partnering agencies

**4D** Establish a process for periodic review and update

***ACCOMPLISHMENTS GOAL 4 – Implementation of the Countrywide Fire Protection Plan; residential hazardous tree program; brush chipping; collaborating with Fire Safe Council has provided and expanded the LAHCFD capacity to mitigate fire and implement fire protection. Periodically reviewed.***

**Goal 5**

Maintain awareness of current and future knowledge of technologies' that affect the Districts mission.

**5A** Identity major areas that technology affect the district – operations, finance, planning and logistics

**5B** Research the use of social media and marketing for community outreach

**5C** Develop a communications plan both emergency and non-emergency

***ACCOMPLISHMENTS: The CERT Program and use of Social Media have been utilized in effective communication with the community. Community Education and Outreach Programs provided review of the 2 articles for publication in Sept. Newsletter; update of the Los Altos history museum Emergency Preparedness Exhibit; contributions of LAHCFD to the Exhibit by Commissioners.***

**Forward-Looking Community Resiliency**  
 Built on Fire Science & LAHCFD-CWPP Annex 4 and Addendum  
 Guided by Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020 – Resourced by FY Budget

**LEGEND**  
 \*Indicates programs are delivered in collaboration with partner agencies  
Underlined text indicates a clickable link

**LAHCFD Board of Commissioners**

**Prevention and Protection\***

**Integrated Hazardous Fuel Reduction Program (IHFR)**

**Emergency Access Roads\***  
 Development with partner agencies

**Community Outreach & Education (COE) and Communication**

- \*[CERT/Volunteers](#)
- Educational Videos
- \***ARK & Supply Containers**
- \*[Neighborhood Evacuation Workshops & Drills](#)
- \***Volunteer Recruitment**
- \*[Preparedness](#)
- \***Resiliency & Skill Development**
- [Website & Social Media Channels](#)
- [Website & Social Media Channels](#)

**Public Alert & Warning**

- Early detection devices
- Early warning devices
- [Website & Social Media Channels](#)
- \*[HAM radio](#)

**Hydrants, Valves, & Laterals**

- Hydrant Flow / Pipeline Resiliency
- No program in queue
- Hydrant Repair, Maintenance, and Management

**\*Evacuation/Relocation**

- Temporary Refuge Areas

**Vegetation Management Hazardous Fuel Reduction**

- [Home Ignition Zone \(HIZ\):](#)  
Removal of hazardous fuel; Property hygiene
- [Brush Chipping & Debris Removal](#)
- [Monthly Yard Waste Drop-off](#)
- Annual Goat Grazing
- Residential- and Neighborhood-focused IHFR
- [FireWise Community; Neighborhood Networks](#)

**Fire Fuel Mitigation Shaded Fuel Breaks**

- Page Mill Road Project Phase 1
- TBD Project Phase 2

**General Manager**

**Organizational Functions to Support District Programs**

- Operations
- Data Collection & Integration (GIS)
- Analysts
- Finance
- Legal
- Risk Management
- Emergency Services Manager
- District Clerk
- PIO
- Consultants