

La Pine Rural Fire Protection District

Strategic Plan

2021 to 2026



Plan Adopted 2/11 /2021

Mike Supkis, Chief

Board of Directors

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Acknowledgements

The planning team consisted of:

Board of Directors:

Doug Cox	President
Jerry Hubbard	Vice President
Joel Witmer	Secretary
Jim Landles	Director
Larry South	Director

Staff:

Mike Supkis	Chief
Dan Daugherty	Assistant Chief

Service Centered Strategic Planning Process

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Over the years the La Pine Rural Fire Protection District has committed to several strategic planning processes with each moving the district forward. The earliest documented work is from a 1992 retreat. In 2001/2002 the original La Pine Rural Fire Protection District comprehensive strategic plan was created and completed on September 24, 2002 with the help of community and district members and Chief Michael B Sherman of 4 M consulting.

In 2011, a revisit and strategic plan review was initiated and developed by the Board of Directors and Chief Mike Supkis along with District staff. Both the Board and all line staff quantitatively reviewed levels of services provided and/or that could be provided by the District. Those services were prioritized based on community need and the challenges in providing those services identified. The result of that work was then reviewed regarding the existing strategic plan, department mission and vision statements. The planning team then reviewed goals and objects for the new strategic plan.

In July 2013, the Board and staff reviewed the strategic plan and updated the goals and objectives within each goal.

In January 2020, The Board and Fire Chief and staff started the development of a strategic plan for 2020 to 2025.

Strategic Planning Process Outline

1. Establish the service priorities.
2. Establish community's expectations of the organization.
3. Identify any concerns the community may have about the organization and its services.
4. Identify those aspects of the organization and its services the community views positively.
5. Develop the mission statement.
6. Develop a vision of the future.
7. Establish the values of the organization.
8. Identify the strengths of the organization.
9. Identify and weaknesses of the organization.
10. Identify potential threats to the organization.
11. Establish realistic goals and objectives for the future. Identify implementation tasks for each objective.
12. Define service outcomes in the form of measurable performance objectives and targets.
13. Develop organizational and community commitment to the plan.

Executive Summary

This strategic planning process re-identified who the primary customer was for the La Pine Rural Fire Protection District regarding who sustains the District and the essential services they required. Emphasis was placed on which services were the most important with the realization that the District cannot be everything for everyone, but rather seek true excellence on the things that mattered most to the community. It was observed that the district could only provide what was required by law. The process challenged the strategic planning committee to look critically at values, philosophies, beliefs, desires, and futuristic goals focusing on service to the Fire District members. It was discovered that the 2002 mission was still applicable for the District:

“Minimizing pain, suffering, and the loss of life and property through prevention, fire suppression, rescue and emergency medical services”

With this Mission statement in mind, the committee identified a new Vision statement to establish future targets of excellence:

“To be a rural fire and rescue district that the community respects, trusts and supports”

Through its work the committee realized that the original 2002 vision of the District really best described the values of the District and that they are still very valid:

“Pride, Service and Dedication”

Goals

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The committee developed seven realistic strategic goals and supporting objectives that will guide the District to focus and excel on providing sustainable services the board identified as important to the community. In July 2020, the Board and staff confirmed each goal was still relevant.

The goals were identified as follows:

- Goal One** Maintain and improve an effective organization, responsive to the changing needs of the community we service.

- Goal Two** Effectively and responsibly manage the organization’s financial and capital resources.

- Goal Three** Deliver quality services as defined by the Board of Directors to effectively control risks to life, property and the environment.

- Goal Four** Maintain close and effective communications with the public, policy makers and other agencies.

- Goal Five** Provide comprehensive training and professional development to ensure personnel are fully prepared to effectively perform their duties and responsibilities.

- Goal Six** Ensure capital assets (facilities, apparatus, and equipment) meet the future needs of the District and our communities.

- Goal Seven** Promote and maintain a strong work force with a sense of teamwork and mutual respect.

This document has been created and updated to allow district personnel and community members an opportunity move forward with a sense of purpose and to find excellence. The strategic plan in no way attempts to predict the future, only prepares the essential elements for success from what has been projected.

Mission, Vision and Values

The mission of the LA Pine Rural Fire Protection District is:

“Minimizing pain, suffering, and the loss of life and property through prevention, fire suppression, rescue and emergency medical services.”

With this Mission Statement in mind, the committee identified a new Vision Statement to establish future targets of excellence. The 2011 vision statement and reviewed in 2020 and is:

“To be a rural fire and rescue district that the community respects, trusts and supports.”

Through its work the committee realized that the original 2002 vision of the District really best described the values of the district and that they are still very valid. The 2020 planning team re-identified the department’s values as:

“Pride, Service and Dedication”

Goals

The planning team focused on developing realistic strategic goals and objectives that will guide the District moving forward. They did this by identifying the mission, vision, values, strengths, weaknesses,

opportunities and threats with sustainable service priorities foremost in their minds. They were identified as follows:

- Goal One** **Maintain and improve an effective organization, responsive to the changing needs of the community we service.**

- Goal Two** **Effectively and responsibly manage the organization’s financial and capital resources.**

- Goal Three** **Deliver quality services as defined by the Board of Directors to effectively control risks to life, property and the environment.**

- Goal Four** **Maintain close and effective communications with the public, policy makers and other agencies.**

- Goal Five** **Provide comprehensive training and professional development to ensure personnel are fully prepared to effectively perform their duties and responsibilities.**

- Goal Six** **Ensure capital assets (facilities, apparatus, and equipment) meet the future needs of the District and our communities.**

- Goal Seven** **Promote and maintain a strong work force with a sense of teamwork and mutual respect.**

Organization Background

The La Pine Rural Fire Protection District jurisdiction covers about 117 square miles for which it is responsible by law for fire protection services. The District also serves a larger ambulance service area of

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1,000 square miles in which it provides ambulance service. The population of the district is about 22,000 residents with over 9,000 structures in a largely rural wildland urban interface mix. The main station is in La Pine proper with two other stations on Burgess and Day roads and on South Century Drive.

The Fire District is organized under ORS 478 as a special public entity for the purposes of providing fire protection services as well as the option of providing emergency medical services and ambulance service per ORS 682. An elected five person Board of Directors oversees the La Pine RFP District. The District employs 25 full-time staff including: A Fire Chief, an Assistant Fire Chief, three shift Captains, 19 Fire Fighters/Paramedics, an Office Manager, Administrative Assistant and an EMS Billing Clerk. The District has 12 college scholarship students. The District also has a volunteer Fire Corp/Service Support Staff of eight who provide non-firefighting support.

The District has four parcels of land with seven buildings making up 25,000 square feet of facilities. The District has a fleet of 22 vehicles. Each station has a structural engine, wildland engine, tender, and ambulance. The 2019-2020 budgeted personal services are \$4,326,594; budgeted materials and supplies \$645,082, budgeted capital outlay \$675,428 and a \$100,000 contingency.

In 2019, the District's voters approved two local option levies (LOL). One LOL was for five years to fund six fire fighters and the student and reserve program. The second LOL for ten years funded the capital needs of the District with the exception of a new central fire station (based on a future needs analysis).

The Board of Directors and the Budget Committee developed the 2020-2021 budget which was approved:

Personal Services	\$4,416,617
Materials and supplies	\$695,405
Capital	\$400,000
Contingency	\$40,000

District Service Priorities

The Board of Directors and the Administrative Staff prioritized over 100 types of services and ranked the most critical services. The Fire Fighting staff did the same prioritization and ranking. The following are the joint priorities which the Board and staff reviewed in January 2020:

Service Priorities for the La Pine Rural Fire Protection District:

1. **Tax supported fire district first and always first with the ambulance service area and outside jurisdiction second, but not at the exclusion of in-district service.**
2. **Always have an in-district La Pine response, even if only for command.**
3. **Fire suppression – residential, wild land urban interface, car, small commercial in both hydranted areas (30% of District) and unhydranted (70% of District).**
4. **Emergency Medical Services where paramedic advanced life support staff stabilized the patient then transports. Support the medical care facilities in La Pine.**
5. **Rescue services for fire, extrication, low angle and shore based ice and water rescue for in-district and road based rescues.**
6. **Public communications and information on prevention of wild land fire, burn permits, proper use of 911, smoke and CO detectors, home fire safety, development check lists and district operations.**
7. **Hazmat identification and isolation**
8. **Public relations services such as blood pressure checks, station tours, presentations, and participation in major community events.**
9. **Prepare the Oregon Fire Marshall’s required reports on a timely basis.**

THE MISSION STATEMENT

An organization’s Mission Statement is intended to describe the purpose of its existence. It articulates the principal reason for the organization’s presence within the community.

La Pine Rural Fire Protection District Mission Statement:

“Minimizing pain, suffering and the loss of life and property through prevention, fire suppression, rescue and emergency medical services”

THE VISION STATEMENT

Successful organizations define where they expect to be in the future. The Vision Statement helps to clarify a future positive direction that supports the previously define Mission Statement. A vision statement is further strengthened through goals and objectives with set timelines, addressed later in this Strategic Plan.

La Pine Rural Fire Protection District Vision Statement:

“To be a rural fire and rescue district that the community respects, trusts and supports”

VALUES

Values are very important for the future of any organization. They must be recognized and embraced by the organization and its personnel.

La Pine Rural Fire Protection District Values:

1. We operate with a progressive and open minded attitude that fosters innovation, ideas, reasonable risk-taking, and actively seek to understand others view point.
2. We will always be honest and tactful in our communications, listen first, and provide communication that is timely (to the receiver) which is clear, accurate, and concise.
3. We facilitate success (of ourselves and others) at all times by promoting cooperation, inclusiveness not leaving any team member behind then sharing and celebrating the successes. When we fail we will value the teachable moment and commit to making then next outcome better.
4. We are efficient and effective in the use of resources by prioritizing needs, being resourceful, and frugal in providing the personnel and tools to carry out the district's mission.
5. Ethics and integrity will not be compromised by the individual or organization.
6. We always act in a positive and respectful manner that directly reflects our compassion in helping all citizens as well as fellow members.
7. We are community leaders that are highly visible, who will be consistent in being proactive and promoting progressive and innovative planning and action for the future and empowering others through inclusion.
8. We are professionals who commit to excellence by obtaining and maintaining high levels of knowledge, education, and skill by personally learning and practicing our trade every day.
9. We foster strong and reliable relationships through showing empathy and by sharing in outcomes that earn us the position of respected community leaders.

STRENGTHS

The organizational strengths need to be identified to help ensure the district can provide the services expected by the community. With identified strengths, the District can channel efforts and resources into meeting or exceeding the community services that they are capable of providing.

Strengths of the La Pine Rural Fire Protection District

• An effective Board of Directors
• Board of Directors and staff discussions and decision making
• Leadership of the Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief
• Office staff's management of resources and decision making - Professionalism
• Fire Fighting staff's competence
• Fleet and facilities
• Relationships with the community, partners and governments
• Community support -Compassion
• Local Option Levy for capital passed in 2019 for another ten years
• Local Option Levy for operations passed in 2019 for another five years
• Fiscal Responsibility
• Student Program/training

WEAKNESSES

An organization performance or lack thereof depends upon identified weakness. They must be confronted and eliminated; if at all possible, to provide excellence in customer services for the District to progress forward. It will utilize its strengths and opportunities to overcome any weakness.

Weaknesses – Areas of Improvement of the La Pine RFPD

- EMS call volume in increasing
- Multiple EMS and Fire calls
- Call back of Fire Fighters
- Funding for maintenance of facilities, apparatus and equipment
- 48-hour shifts – duration between shifts – follow up
- Succession planning
- Lack of emergency room/advanced care facility
- Fire Hydrant coverage and water supplies
- Staff involvement
- New 911 Radio System

OPPORTUNITIES

Non-realized opportunities exist with every organization. The focus of opportunities is to be able to expand and develop new service possibilities.

Opportunities for the La Pine RFPD

- Grants from Federal and non-federal entities
- Proper use of 911
- Community planning and fuel reduction
- Community population growth
- Increased property tax revenue
- Increased staffing and better trained staff
- Transparency and public relations
- Student program
- GMET revenue and possible expansion of GMET
- Training Bank
- ASA Modifications

THREATS

There are external conditions that an organization may or may not be able to control or influence. The District should develop plans to lessen or eliminate identified potential threats through planning. Programs can be developed to mitigate these threats prior to them becoming a reality and be able to reduce or eliminate potential loss of life, property or the environment.

Threats to the La Pine RFPD

- Increased Medical call volume – Transporting to Bend.
- Operations of medical clinics in La Pine.
- Wild land fire potential.
- Neighborhood fire potential
- No funds to create defensible spaces in neighborhoods
- Cost shifting by hospitals and clinics
- Future economic decline and negative impact on tax revenue
- Community size and demographics – Homeless population (fire danger)
- PERS liability
- Labor negotiations
- Retirement of the Fire Chief
- Fleet Maintenance Civil Unrest
- Age of Facilities
- Federal Medical Reimbursement

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The planning team focused on developing realistic strategic goals and objectives that will guide the District moving forward. They did this by identifying the mission, vision, values, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats with sustainable service priorities foremost in their minds. They were identified and revisited by the Board and staff in July 2013 as follows:

Goal One – Maintain and improve an effective organization, responsive to the changing needs of the community we serve.

Objectives:

- Board to review and evaluate annually the service demands of the District.
- Board to review and prioritize services and service levels.
- Ensure 80-90% of Board policies, operational SOP and SOG manuals are current within a five-year period.
- Maintain student, reserve and career recruitment to maintain quality staffing.
- Maintain recruitment of quantity personnel - administrative staff, career, reserves, student reserves and support – on both in station and available for recall to handle expected service demands.
- Evaluate District operations using existing standards such as Special Districts of Oregon, OR-OSHA, Oregon Health Authority, ISO and NFPA to be able to meet or to determine a local acceptable standard.
- Create and maintain a personnel succession plan.

Goal Two – Effectively and responsibly manage the organization’s financial and capital resources.

Objectives:

- Maintain a six year financial forecast of resource needs to accomplish strategic efforts.
- Ensure fiscal accountability and integrity by accurately tracking income and expenses so that the district’s assets are appropriately utilized to meet its mission.
- Promote frugality and spending effectiveness with every purchase with expense reduction budgeting initiatives.
- Maximize cost recovery efforts and to increase department revenues.
 - Review EMS costs vs. billing rates
- Ongoing Bond and Levy planning to facilitate important capital improvement plans and maintenance of staff resources in fiscally responsible manner.

- Develop strategies for each grant applied for to ensure the long-term sustainability of the grant-funded programs.
- Identify and pursue new and continuing sources of revenues.
 - Review non-federal grants from Foundations, Corporations and other sources to fund facilities, equipment, apparatus, Fire Fighter, Student and Reserve services.
 - Federal and Governmental grants – develop a five year program to apply for grants for facilities, equipment, apparatus, Fire Fighter, Student and Reserve services.
- Develop strategies for each grant applied for to ensure the long-term sustainability of the grant-funded programs.
- Review the ten-year capital replacement plan.
- Understand the impact of PERS and employee benefit plans on the operating budget and future impacts.

Goal Three – Deliver quality services as defined by the Board of Directors to effectively control risks to life, property and the environment.

Objectives:

- Periodically review the District’s “standard of cover” document that identifies performance objectives for fires suppression, emergency medical, rescue, hazardous materials, and public assist requests and implement within community and district.
- Collaborate on community health care access solutions thus reducing non-emergency EMS calls.
 - Monitor EMS service alternatives.
 - Assist other entities the development of urgent care services in La Pine.
 - Explore all options including public/private partnerships.
- Collaborate, review and revise the regional mutual aid plan and wildland operating agreements to improve coordination efforts in emergency planning and response to enhance interagency coordination and effectiveness.
- Collaborate and coordination efforts for emergency planning and response with non-fire agencies community response partners such as Sheriff Office, ODOT, County Highways, Search and Rescue, Red Cross, Deschutes County 911 and other entities.
- Develop strategies, prioritize and implement prevention programs that enhance fire and safety within this community.
- Collaborate with County FireFree Program, UDRC, neighborhood associations USFS, ODOF, and Walker Range in the development and implementation of wildfire prevention strategies for urban interface communities and properties.
 - Seek grants to fund the planning and implementation.
- Collaborate with OSFM, County and City planning on community development ensuring new and re-developments do not add to the fire and life safety risk of the community.

Goal Four – Maintain close and effective communications with the public, policy makers and other agencies.

Objectives:

- Collaborate and attend routine meetings and program reviews with those agencies whose programs or efforts directly influence the performance outcomes of the district, e.g. water district, UDRC, health care facilities, and city.
- Provide timely (within 24 hours) response with accurate information and supplemental pictures etc. - as appropriate- to all local news media requests, especially during major emergency situations.
- Provide a monthly District-related newsworthy article to local media (i.e. grants awards, personnel promotions, new equipment, and service and safety tips).
- Update monthly the district's web-based presence and service.
- Update station reader boards at least on a bi weekly basis.
- Maintain efficient and reasonable public access and information services such as telephone answering and routing, messaging (e-mail), burn permits, and administrative support services.
- Encourage the public to utilize Deschutes County emergency information resources.

Goal Five – Provide comprehensive training and professional development to ensure personnel are fully prepared to effectively perform their duties and responsibilities.

Objectives:

- Assure daily shift and monthly training programs reserve training to keep all employees trained and/or certified to perform the duties to which they are assigned.
- Conduct at least one annual recruit training academy to train and support growth of new district staff.
- Conduct at least one annual driver-engineer training academy to train and support growth of district staff.
- Conduct at least one officer training academy to train and support growth of district staff.
- Conduct at least one annual live burn (either donated structure, DPSST trailer or burn training prop) to train and support growth of district staff.
- Conduct at least two "all staff" drills or training sessions to insure multi company consistency.
- Maintain a "Performance Competency and Certification Plan" which follows established firefighter/EMT/officer competency and certification requirements for all district staff.
- Monitor performance standards and core competencies of all district staff – such as testing for and meeting task performance standards.
- Maintain the training bank to allow staff outside training.
- Develop a training plan related to the succession plan.

Goal Six – Ensure capital assets, facilities, apparatus, and equipment meet the future needs of the District and our communities.

Objectives:

Apparatus

- Maintain and update long range apparatus replacement strategy and plan.
- Provide for a least one annual full service of all apparatus, high use vehicles such as medics at the recommended mileage.
- Repair all practical and affordable deficiencies and breakdowns as soon as possible.
- Develop and implement an easy and efficient maintenance records program.

Fixed Facility

- Maintain and update ten year schedule for major maintenance needs for all facilities
- Develop an annual short term capital replacement plan of current or projected major facility repairs to present at each budget session.
- Repair all practical and affordable deficiencies as soon as possible.
- Develop and maintain a facility inspection and preventive maintenance program.
- Develop a long-range fire station replacement/update plan for Stations 101, 102 and 103.

Equipment

- Maintain and update a long range equipment replacement plan to support adequate equipment to assure safe operations to achieve district performance objectives in compliance with industry standards.
- Develop an annual short term capital replacement plan of current or projected equipment due for replacement at each budget session.

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Goal Seven – Promote and maintain a strong sense of teamwork and mutual respect.

Objectives:

- Ensure all job descriptions are accurate and prioritize expectations for the employees.
- Provide each employee an annual evaluation by direct supervisor.
- Promote and maintain an environment of cooperation, discipline, responsibility and accountability.
- Award initiative, share and learn from failure, celebrate success.
- Ensure all employee work agreements have mutually understood expectations and are fairly applied.
- Annual review for each employee on districts wellness and fitness initiatives.
- Maintain and support a computer network that provides consistent and dependable information exchange throughout the district.

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- At least monthly, provide timely information to all employees to keep them informed of district activities (quality face to face personal communications remains the highest priority).