



January 2021

This report provides an update and status of the major initiatives of the 2020 - 2025 Strategic Plan. The report lists every goal, objective, and associated tasks with the initiative. Each objective has a status report and a comment section. In addition, each objective has an assigned staff member/or division that is responsible for that specific focus area. The report will be published semi-annually or as requested by the Fire Chief or Board of Governance.

To monitor the progress of each initiative, we have created four status report levels for each objective. The following color and explanation define the status level:

On-going: Represents an objective that will be continually worked on.

In progress: Represents an objective that is actively being worked on.

Deferred: Represents an objective that is not currently being worked on.

Completed: Represents an objective that has been achieved.

In summary, the following strategic initiatives were identified by external and internal stakeholders as the foundation for the development of goals and objectives:

[Initiative #1 - Accreditation](#)

The VRFA will strive to implement the goals and objectives of the strategic plan over the next five years and become an accredited agency.

[Initiative #2 - Capital Facilities Plan](#)

The VRFA will develop and implement a plan for capital facilities and equipment for future growth and improvement.

[Initiative #3 - Staffing](#)

The VRFA will examine current staffing levels, models and procedures, and identifying areas for improvement.

[Initiative #4 - Mentorship](#)

The VRFA will ensure the enduring success of the agency and its staff through sustainable internal mentorship.

[Initiative #5 - Communication](#)

The VRFA will examine both internal and external communication processes for service gaps and areas for improvement.



Initiative #1: Accreditation	
Goal 1	Pursue, achieve, and maintain official accreditation status through CPSE to better serve our community through a formal process.
Objective 1A	Form team or committee structures with management components as needed to pursue and maintain accreditation.
Timeframe	3 months Assigned to: Deputy Chief Olson
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the needed team/committee structure(s) for the various components of the accreditation process. • Outline management positions to lead and oversee the teams/committees, and overall accreditation process. • Establish team/committee member criteria objectives. • Select and assign team/committee members. • Select / assign management positions within the team (s) / committee(s)
Status	Completed September 2018
Comments	The accreditation team was selected, and areas of responsibilities assigned.
Objective 1B	Conduct a community hazards and risk assessment and publish a Community Risk Assessment - Standards of Cover document.
Timeframe	1 year Assigned to: Deputy Chief Olson/Larberg
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain instruction on hazard and risk assessment and standards of cover preparation. • Perform community hazards and risk assessment. • Evaluate historical community emergency response performance and coverage. • Establish benchmark and baseline emergency response performance objectives. • Publish the Community Risk Assessment - Standards of Cover. • Maintain and annually update the Standards of Cover document.
Status	Completed June 2019
Comments	A Community Risk Assessment and Standard of Cover document were completed and published.
Objective 1C	Conduct and document a self-assessment of the department utilizing the CPSE / CFAI Fire and Emergency Services Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM) criteria.
Timeframe	18 months Assigned to: Deputy Chief Larberg
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain instruction on writing a FESSAM. • Assign the self-assessment manual category and criterion writing to the department accreditation committee/team members, as appropriate. • Apply for “Applicant Agency” status with the CFAI. • Publish the FESSAM.
Status	In progress



Comments	A first draft of all categories has been completed in the FESSAM. An assigned CFAI mentor is reviewing performance indicators and criterion in the FESSAM. Modifications will be made as requested by the mentor.	
Objective 1D	Develop a community-driven strategic plan.	
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to: Deputy Chief Larberg
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold an external stakeholder meeting where community members provide feedback on program priorities, service expectations, concerns, and strengths perceived about the VRFA. • Provide internal stakeholder work sessions to evaluate (and update, if necessary) the mission, vision, and values; determine internal strengths and weaknesses, external opportunities, and threats. • Establish critical issues and service gaps. • Determine specific strategic initiatives. • Develop goals, objectives, critical tasks, and appropriate timelines to include levels of measurability, to achieve over five years. • Create a vision for the developed strategic plan. • Publish and distribute the formal strategic plan to stakeholders as determined by the VRFA. 	
Status	Completed	
Comments	The 2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan was approved by the Board of Governance and published in January 2020.	
Objective 1E	Implement the community-driven strategic plan.	
Timeframe	On-going	Assigned to: Deputy Chief Larberg
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a subcommittee to review the draft strategic plan on a regular basis (as established by the VRFA). • Determine a work plan for the accomplishment of each goal and implement that work plan. • Evaluate completed and uncompleted/on-going goals and objectives within the plan on an annual basis. • Report progress to internal and external stakeholders on an annual basis. 	
Status	In progress	
Comments	A semi-annual report was completed and published in June 2020. The 2020 annual report will summarize the progress of initiatives of the Strategic Plan. A committee is being formed to evaluate the strategic plan.	
Objective 1F	Achieve agency accreditation by the CFAI.	
Timeframe	4 – 6 months	Assigned to: Deputy Chief Larberg
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for “Candidate Agency” status with the CFAI. • Prepare for CFAI Peer Assessor Team visit. • Upload Strategic Plan, Standards of Cover, and Self-Assessment Categories and Criterion for review and comment by the Peer Team. • Host the site visit for accreditation review. 	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Peer Team recommendation to CFAI for VRFA Accredited status. • Attend CFAI hearings and defend VRFA internal accreditation process and documents. • Receive vote during the CFAI hearings in favor of accredited status.
Status	In progress
Comments	Work is being completed in the Self-Assessment Manual (FESSAM). The agency will apply for Candidate Agency status when our mentor deems us ready for a peer team site visit. We expect a site visit in 2021.
Objective 1G	Maintain accredited status with the CFAI.
Timeframe	On-going Assigned to: Deputy Chief Larberg
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit the required Annual Compliance Reports to CFAI. • Attend CFAI Dayroom Discussion web-meetings for continued education. • Participate in the accreditation process by providing “peer assessors” for external department review and identification of possible best practices. • Participate in the annual CPSE Excellence Conference for continued education and networking with other accreditation teams and accredited agencies. • Submit annual compliance reports as required by CFAI policies. • Establish succession development of the internal accreditation team in preparation for the next accreditation cycle.
Status	On-going
Comments	Accreditation is an on-going process. Accredited agency status is for a five year term.

Initiative #2: Capital Facilities Plan	
Goal 2	Develop a capital facilities improvement plan that supports the mission of the VRFA and the community, based on the Community Risk Assessment – Standards of Cover (CRA-SOC) document.
Objective 2A	Evaluate the VRFA’s current capital facilities and equipment condition to establish a baseline for future improvements.
Timeframe	6 months Assigned to: Deputy Chief Mack
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the current valuations of the capital facilities and equipment of the VRFA. • Evaluate the current repair and maintenance costs. • Gather and consolidate current documents, data, and information relevant to capital facilities and equipment using content management. • Create a report with recommendations (if applicable) and submit it to agency leadership for further consideration and direction.
Status	Complete
Comments	The agency appointed a Deputy Chief to evaluate current capital facilities and equipment for future improvements. A final draft was completed by the Fire Chief.



A need's analysis and proposal for a new aerial apparatus was conducted, and a recommendation was forwarded to the Fire Chief. After consensus with Senior Staff, a 107' aerial ladder truck was ordered in January 2021. Delivery of the new ladder truck is expected in 12 – 18 months.

Objective 2B **Develop a formal capital facilities/equipment plan using the CRA-SOC, data projections, and established benchmarks to identify future areas of growth and/or improvement.**

Timeframe 12 months **Assigned to:** Deputy Chief Mack

- Critical Tasks**
- Conduct a gap analysis to analyze the area of current and future improvement needs.
 - Conduct a SWOT analysis on VRFA's status relative to the benchmarks and the CRA-SOC
 - Consider the short-term to define what capital is and use outside resources to establish future plans and standards.
 - Consider the long-term to analyze the size, design, and cost of facilities and fire stations to include but not limited to facility age, capacity, functionality, and hazard risk.
 - Research funding options.
 - Develop a formal capital facilities/equipment plan with recommendations to the Fire Chief.

Status **Complete**

Comments The Deputy Chief and Fire Chief developed a six-year capital facility (CFP) plan using the Community Risk Analysis/Standard of Cover, data projections, and established benchmarks. The CFP was introduced to the Board of Governance.

Objective 2C **Perform an evaluation to reflect the VRFA's progress relative to capital facilities and equipment plan.**

Timeframe 6 months **Assigned to:** Deputy Chief Mack

- Critical Tasks**
- Create an evaluation report with recommendations and submit to the leadership team for further consideration and direction.
 - Create, establish, or modify the funding to fit the capital facilities and equipment document.
 - Conduct an annual evaluation and monitor for desired outcomes.

Status **Complete**

Comments The Deputy Chief and Fire Chief developed an extensive evaluation report in the Capital Facilities Plan. The six-year CFP is a planning document that details current operations, predicts mid-range future service demands, and anticipates capital facility needs.

Initiative #3: Staffing

Goal 3 **Ensure the VRFA has the adequate number of staff to achieve and sustain current and future organizational initiatives.**

Objective 3A **Conduct an operations and suppression staff analysis.**



Timeframe	On-going	Assigned to: Senior Staff
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a demographic analysis to assess the projected population growth in each service area for the next five years. • Perform a station coverage analysis to assess if the current station locations and quantity meet the needs of all communities and VRFA performance measures. • Perform a deployment/apparatus analysis to determine if the current apparatus location and staffing is adequate. • Identify any staffing gaps from the analyses. • Create a report with recommendations and submit it to agency leadership for further consideration and direction. • Develop and implement any recommendations approved by agency leadership. 	
Status	On-going	
Comments	Senior staff will continue to analyze population growth, call volume, performance reports, and service gaps. Quarterly performance reports are generated to measure total response times.	
Objective 3B	Conduct a workload analysis of administration, technical services, and support services.	
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to: Senior Staff
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a consistent staffing review process for department heads to review workloads, to assess performance relative to workloads, and to identify gaps or needs. • Task department heads with the staffing review process, to include an annual timeline for completion. • Analyze the data from the annual staff review by department. • Identify, based on the data, any impacts on workload that could be improved. • Create a report with recommendations (if applicable) and submit it to agency leadership for further consideration and direction. • Develop and implement any recommendations approved by agency leadership. 	
Status	On-going	
Comments	Senior staff and division heads continually review workloads, data, and performance to identify service gaps and needs of their divisions. Support Services is evaluating a new software platform to increase efficiencies for equipment, supplies, and consumables.	
Objective 3C	Develop a cost analysis based on the results of objectives 3A and 3B, to determine potential budgetary impacts and to support budget requests.	
Timeframe	12 months	Assigned to: Senior Staff
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on recommendations from objectives 3A and 3B, determine the cost points for capital and operations. • Determine the projected costs of needs/changes. • Present recommendations and requests to the Board of Governance for approval. • Secure approved funding through the annual budget process. 	
Status	On-going	



Comments	Senior staff and division heads consider various costs associated with potential budget impacts and requests.	
Objective 3D	Ensure that the VRFA is recruiting and hiring the most qualified and diverse candidates that represent the community served.	
Timeframe	12 months	Assigned to: Senior Staff / Human Resources
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze all historical data relative to recruitment and hiring for administrative and non-administrative positions. • Conduct outreach and marketing relative to recruitment using various media sources. • Create outreach programs to recruit individuals that are representative of the diverse demographics of the community served. • Evaluate current testing practices. • Incorporate innovative ideas with current practices for recruitment (marketing and outreach). • Create a report with recommendations for improved recruitment strategies and processes and submit to the leadership team for further consideration and direction. • Develop and implement any recommendations approved by leadership. • Secure adequate funding to recruit more personnel, so that the VRFA has a more diverse staff. 	
Status	On-going	
Comments	VRFA Human Resources and select staff are participating with the King County Fire Chiefs Association and Zone 3 agencies to develop county-wide recruiting materials intended to draw in a more diverse candidate pool.	
Objective 3E	Utilize current training systems, resources, and practices for the onboarding of new hires (firefighter recruits and other staff).	
Timeframe	6 months	Assigned to: Senior Staff / Human Resources
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a documented process for the onboarding of new hires. • Conduct an orientation for the new hires. • Conduct an outfitting process of equipment and PPE for each new hire. • Conduct station tours for understanding and acclimation of new hires. • Transition new recruits to the SKCFTC for operational training. • Begin the training for recruits and shadowing process for support services and administration hires. • Assign mentors to each new hire. 	
Status	Completed	
Comments	A new onboarding process was instituted with new hires. The feedback has been positive and Human Resources continues to evaluate and improve the process.	
Objective 3F	Evaluate the overall VRFA recruitment process and determine if further analysis is needed.	
Timeframe	12 months	Assigned to: Senior Staff / Human Resources



Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify efficiencies and deficiencies observed (internally) during the outreach and recruitment activities.• Create a survey for new hires regarding VRFA recruitment processes and resources.• Administer a survey to new hires and review the results.• Create a report with recommendations and submit to the leadership team for further consideration and direction.• Develop and implement any recommendations approved.
Status	In progress
Comments	Senior staff and HR will continue to analyze recruitment, marketing, and outreach activities for new employees.



Initiative #4: Mentorship	
Goal 4	Develop an agency-wide mentorship and succession program to enhance the personal and professional development of all VRFA members.
Objective 4A	Conduct an assessment to identify division-specific mentorship and succession needs.
Timeframe	6 months Assigned to: Deputy Chief Thompson/Division Heads
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Division heads meet, including senior staff, to define and set expectations for mentorship and succession. • Initiate two-way communication within each division to identify key leadership roles and mentorship needs. • Develop a report of mentorship program recommendations and submit to the leadership team for consideration and direction. • Department heads meet to consider leadership findings and reach consensus on division mentorship and succession needs to include minimum standards.
Status	On-going
Comments	Personnel continue to pursue higher education degrees and enroll in various leadership programs. Several personnel have been appointed provisional and temporary assignments for staffing purposes and career development. Tuition Program Policy revisited and updated on 08/01/2020.
Objective 4B	Design and implement division-specific mentorship programs and succession plans.
Timeframe	6 months Assigned to: Deputy Chief Thompson/Division Heads
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Division heads identify stakeholders (staff) responsible for developing minimum standards for a mentorship and succession program in their area of responsibility. • Division heads, with support from staff, develop the relevant mentorship curriculum and succession planning, based on agreed-upon minimum standards. • Department heads collaborate with leadership and finance to identify program costs. • Division heads submit a mentorship curriculum and succession plans to leadership for approval. • Implement approved programs and monitor outcomes.
Status	On-going
Comments	The FMO has started succession planning and professional development for their division. Support Services is analyzing supportive software to assist with inventory management. On-line learning paths for Company Officers and Battalion Chiefs are encouraged and currently assigned to Operations personnel. These include task books and job shadowing.
Objective 4C	Develop an evaluation and improvement process for mentorship programs and succession plans.
Timeframe	On-going Assigned to: Deputy Chief Thompson



Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design an evaluation process to determine the effectiveness of the programs and identify opportunities for improvement. • Gather feedback from division heads and staff about their experiences. • Create a report with recommendations and submit to leadership for further consideration and direction. • Implement approved changes and continue to monitor the effectiveness of the program.
Status	On-going
Comments	On-line learning paths are evaluated on an annual basis by training division staff. Due to known retirements, resignations, and/or promotions, the agency is more pro-active with succession plans. Plans are being implemented before positions are vacated. This allows for a successful transfer of information and responsibilities associated with new positions.

Initiative #5: Communication (internal and external)

Goal 5A Enhance the quality of service delivery through diversified communication to citizens and establish a consistent and transparent message to employees.

Objective 5A.1 Identify all ways that the VRFA communicates internally.

Timeframe 6 months **Assigned to:** Senior Staff

Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with stakeholders to identify the ways communication is currently being conducted internally at the VRFA. • Create a report of findings and submit it to leadership for further consideration and direction.
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Status **On-going**

Comments This is an on-going effort to identify different methods of internal communications.

Objective 5A.2 Conduct a needs assessment to determine areas of improvement in internal communication.

Timeframe 6 months **Assigned to:** Senior Staff

Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review findings from the report generated in objective 5A.1. • Design a survey to capture areas for improvement regarding internal communications. • Administer the survey to all VRFA internal stakeholders, with a timeline for completion / submission. • Collect and evaluate the survey results. • Create a report with survey findings and recommendations (if applicable) and submit it to leadership for further consideration and direction.
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Status **Deferred**

Comments A needs assessment has not been conducted as of this date.



Objective 5A.3 Develop strategies to address internal communication gaps and opportunities.

Timeframe 12 months **Assigned to:** Senior Staff

- Critical Tasks**
- Establish a committee of staff representing all departments within the VRFA.
 - Research and discuss solutions to internal communication needs.
 - Create a report with recommendations (if applicable) and submit it to leadership for further consideration and direction.
 - As approved, implement changes or inputs to improve internal communications.

Status In progress

Comments Strategies will be developed when the needs assessment is completed. An internal team has been identified and is actively implementing new communication methods through the implementation of dashboards in all facilities.

Goal 5B Enhance the quality of the VRFA’s service delivery and in turn, the safety of the public through diversified external communications.

Objective 5B.1 Analyze the current external communication information and channels utilized and determine their effectiveness.

Timeframe 6 months **Assigned to:** Human Resources / Public Information and Education Division

- Critical Tasks**
- Review information shared externally, and channels currently used to share information.
 - Collect current/projected demographics and related information needs for external stakeholders.
 - Identify gaps and opportunities relative to external communication info and channels.
 - Prioritize opportunities identified and create a report with recommendations (if applicable) and submit it to leadership for further consideration and direction.
 - Eliminate any inefficient processes in external communication.

Status In progress

Comments Surveys have been distributed via social media to solicit feedback regarding external communication. Data from the website, and local media have been collected. Demographics for the VRFA service area have been collected. The information is currently being analyzed for gaps and opportunities and a report with recommendations is forthcoming.

Objective 5B.2 Enhance the information shared externally as well as the channels used to share information externally.

Timeframe 12 months **Assigned to:** Public Information and Education Division

- Critical Tasks**
- As approved (outcome of objective 5B.1), develop any new or updated external information content.
 - Initiate or create VRFA accounts with new channels for external communications, as identified.
 - Distribute the information content developed via existing and new channels.



Status	On-going
Comments	Information is being shared externally by numerous social media platforms, the department website, newsletter and media partners. The department recently added Nextdoor and LinkedIn as communication services. We added a social media management tool (Sendible) to coordinate consistent messaging and schedule posts during non-business hours. Content on the VRFA website has been reconfigured to allow for translation into over ten languages to reach non-English speaking populations. Recommendations for external communication channels are forthcoming from objective 5B.1.
Objective 5B.3	Identify, develop and implement (external stakeholder) feedback mechanisms for the VRFA.
Timeframe	6 months Assigned to: Public Information and Education Division
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify feedback mechanisms currently used by the VRFA. • Evaluate the current mechanisms for applicability and effectiveness. • Research any unused / additional feedback mechanisms / tools. • Create the mechanisms to allow for feedback from the community. • Outline feedback content focus areas (i.e., feedback regarding service delivery, reputation, quality of information shared, credibility of staff). • Create a report with recommendations (if applicable) and submit it to leadership for further consideration and direction. • Implement the new mechanisms and collect data. • Evaluate and revise annually or as determined.
Status	On-going
Comments	This is an on-going process that the Public Information/Education division is analyzing. Based on survey feedback, we will develop improved channels of external communication.
Objective 5B.4	Develop and implement a process for evaluating external communication systems and processes while planning for improvement.
Timeframe	On-going Assigned to: Public Information and Education Division
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives from the PIEO and EM divisions meet to establish a process for annual review of external communication processes and systems. • Create a documented process (plan) for annual review of external communication processes and systems. • Submit plan to leadership for further consideration and direction. • Implement the approved plan and strategies on an annual basis.
Status	Deferred
Comments	This process will coincide with the feedback (5B.3) received from the external stakeholders. A preliminary report with recommendations from the Public Information and Education division is forthcoming. Collaboration with the Emergency Management (EM) Division is deferred due to a vacancy in the EM division.