

STRATEGIC PLAN



2017

Serving the City of Middletown

Executive Summary

A community-centered strategic planning process was used to create this strategic plan for the Middletown Fire Division. A cross section of division members as well as external stakeholders from various community backgrounds worked collaboratively throughout the planning process. The Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association provided expertise in strategic planning and best practices in the fire service as well as serving as planning team facilitators.

During the initial planning process, it was determined that the division would conduct a self-review and revision of the existing mission, vision and core values. The strategic planning process, which was conducted over two separate planning sessions, resulted in the development of eight specific goals. The final plan document identified key steps or critical tasks for implementing each of the goals, resources needed (e.g., financial and staff), as well as a timeline for completion. The individual(s) responsible for completing the critical tasks and managing goal success will be determined by division leadership as plan implementation progresses.

The developed goals were:

Goal 1: Conduct a comprehensive, data-driven analysis to evaluate departmental inventories and develop appropriate replacement plans.

Goal 2: Conduct a staffing and deployment analysis that examines the number and types of response equipment and staffing requirements that meets the needs of the community

Goal 3: Explore future funding sources and possible alternative sources of revenue.

Goal 4: Develop a comprehensive program to enhance employee safety and well-being.

Goal 5: Evaluate current facilities to improve efficiency, safety and well-being.

Goal 6: Develop a recruitment strategy that meets the needs of the division as evidenced by an increase in the number of applicants.

Goal 7: Conduct a fire station location analysis.

Goal 8: Improve annual employee retention rate.

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Acknowledgements

The Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association (OFCA) acknowledges Middletown Fire Division's external and internal stakeholders for their participation and input into the community-centered strategic planning process. The OFCA also recognizes Fire Chief Paul Lolli and Assistant Fire Chief Thomas Snively for their leadership and commitment to this process. During the planning sessions, valuable discussions were held that revolved around public expectations, concerns, funding and future service delivery. Valuable relationships were also established with members of the community. The OFCA expresses a special 'thank you' to community members who contributed to the creation of this strategic plan, as it was truly a team effort.

Introduction

The Middletown Fire Division is a well-respected, professional fire service agency. The division is committed to delivering high-quality, value-added service to the community. The division has a long history of service to the community, but has been faced with significant challenges in recent years with a reduction in work force due to economic conditions while facing an ever increasing call volume.

With local governments facing increasing pressure to "do more with less", the strategic planning process provides an opportunity for an organization to examine itself from an internal and external perspective, and provide a roadmap or guide for the department to seek continual improvement. Strategic planning often allows organizations to prepare for future challenges and develop an action plan to meet those challenges rather than dealing with challenges in a reactionary, time-constrained manner.

Organizational History and Overview

Middletown is located in northeastern Butler County and also has land area in Warren County. The city has an area of 25.6 square miles and a population estimated at 48,400¹. The response area also includes a 2 square mile area of Franklin Township. This urban community consists of a mixture of low-density to high-density residential development, commercial occupancies, and light- and heavy-industrial properties and complexes. The city is well known as the home to AK Steel, a major steel manufacturing complex. In addition to AK Steel, Middletown is home to numerous affiliated companies such as Worthington Steel and Tomson Steel.



¹ U.S. Census Estimate 2015

The Middletown Fire Division is a full-service agency that started in 1848 as a volunteer organization. The division is currently staffed with 77 full-time personnel. The division roster includes the Fire Chief, Assistant Chief, three Deputy Fire Chiefs, six captains, eight lieutenants, 57 firefighters and an administrative assistant. In 2016, the division responded to 11,178 calls for service. In addition, the division conducted 1,399 fire safety inspections and 10 foster home inspections.

The division operates from four stations and maintains a fleet of seven EMS vehicles (three in reserve), five engines (two in reserve), two ladder trucks, one hazardous-materials response unit, six staff vehicles and one shift command vehicle.

The division provides fire suppression response, technical rescue, hazardous materials response, and emergency medical service at the advanced life support level including transportation. Due to an increasing number of drug overdose responses, the division participates in a community heroin response team. The division also provides fire prevention and community outreach programs that include:

- Fire code enforcement through plan review and inspections
- Fire investigation and arson task force
- Community outreach and event participation

The fire division is funded by the city's general fund and a .25% public safety levy, which is equally shared with the police division. The general fund and public safety levy generates approximately \$10.2 million and EMS billing generates approximately \$1.5 million annually. The division's projected operating budget for 2017 was \$9.4 million.

Mission, Vision and Values Statements

One of the key elements to engage in the strategic planning process is the development of an organization's mission statement. The division's existing mission and vision statements were reviewed and revised by division members prior to beginning the strategic planning process.

Mission

The mission statement of an organization should clearly define services provided and focus members on what is truly important to the organization. The mission statement should be understood by all personnel and posted prominently throughout the organization's facilities. The Middletown Fire Division's mission statement is:

The mission of the Middletown Fire Division is to proudly serve with compassion, integrity and professionalism.

Vision

In addition to knowing who they are, all successful organizations need to define where they expect to be in the future. A vision statement provides department members with a visualization of how things can be and a sense of organizational pride and purpose. The division's vision is:

The vision of the Middletown Fire Division is to provide exceptional service, by a team of professionals, dedicated to the safety of the community and its citizens. While devoted to our mission and core values, we commit to continually bettering ourselves and holding one another accountable while maintaining a constant state of readiness. We will continually look to enhance our service delivery by being innovative and progressive, while ensuring fiscal sustainability and responsibility.

Core Values

Core values define what the organization considers appropriate employee behaviors that essentially identify the organization's culture and belief system. The following core values are what drive the members of the Middletown Fire Division to carry out the mission of the organization.

Honesty

Integrity

Respect

Self-discipline

Professionalism

Speak truth to power

Technical competence

Process

In May, 2017, the OFCA reviewed with the fire division administration the specific planning process and developed the planning schedule. It was determined that division personnel would review and refine, if necessary, the division's mission, vision and core values. The next step of the process was the development of the planning team, which was comprised of internal and external "stakeholders". Stakeholders included division personnel, city officials, citizens, business owners and other key individuals from the community.

External Stakeholders	
Destini Burns	Middletown City Schools
Logan Cottingim	AK Steel
Tina Gregory	Atrium Medical Center
Jake Halley	AK Steel
Pete Haverkos	Miami University
Dick Lange	Voss Auto Group
Brian Larson	Quaker Chemical
Rick Pearce	Middletown Chamber of Commerce
Mick Price	Kokosing Construction Co.
John Sauter	Retired Fire Chief
Ron Spaulding	Business Owner
Mimi Summers	Cincinnati State Community College
Jeff Travers	Butler Technology and Career Development Schools
Chris Vecchi	Kettering Health Network

Internal Stakeholders	
Dave Adams	Deputy Fire Chief
Tom Brickey	Planning Commission
Jake Burton	Finance Director
Ben Bultman	Firefighter
Jennifer Ekey	Economic Director
Tony Fink	Firefighter
Omer Hurlburt	Firefighter
Mike Jones	Firefighter
Tim Kinseworthy	Firefighter/Union President
Nicole Kirsch	9-1-1 Dispatcher
Steve Ludwig	Captain
Steve Riley	Firefighter
Andy Turner	Firefighter
Talbott Moon	City Council
Brian Wright	Lieutenant

Planning sessions were conducted on June 21 and August 2, 2017. Prior to the June 21 session, the division held an orientation session for external stakeholders. This provided the opportunity for those not familiar with emergency service operations to learn about services provided, daily operations, terminology and a general overview of current and future issues facing the division. To facilitate the planning process, the participants were broken into four work groups. Each work group was assigned an area of responsibility or pillar of planning. Using the pillars of planning approach allowed the work groups to focus on real problems or issues facing the

division and community rather than a more broad less focused approach. Those pillars of planning were:

- Service Delivery
- Human Resources and Professional Development
- Facilities, Equipment and Technology
- Community Outreach

During the first session, each work group performed a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis. The SWOT analysis is designed to provide an opportunity to identify internal and external factors facing the organization.

Strengths

It is important for any organization to identify its strengths in order to assure that it is capable of providing the services requested by the community and ensure that strengths are consistent with the issues facing the organization. Programs that do not match organizational strengths or the primary function of the organization should be reviewed to evaluate the rate of return on staff time.

Weaknesses

Performance or lack of performance within an organization depends greatly on the identification of weaknesses and how they are confronted. For any organization to either begin or to continue to move progressively forward, it must not only be able to identify its strengths, but also those areas with poor performance or in some cases, no performance at all. These areas of needed enhancement or improvement are not the same as threats (to be identified later), but rather those day-to-day issues and concerns that may slow or inhibit progress.

Opportunities

The opportunities for an organization are varied and normally depend on the identification of strengths and weaknesses and how they can be enhanced. The focus of opportunities is not solely on existing services, but on expanding and developing new opportunities both inside and beyond (external focus) the traditional service area.

Threats

To gain full benefit of any opportunity, the threats (sometimes referred to as challenges) to the organization, with their new risks and challenges, must be identified in the strategic planning process. By recognizing possible threats, an organization can greatly reduce the potential for loss and deal with issues in a proactive rather than reactionary manner. It is also important to recognize that threats may not be under the control or direction of the organization. The SWOT analyses completed by each work group are listed in Appendix A.

After completion of the SWOT analysis, work groups were challenged with identifying two or three major goals from the information developed during the SWOT analysis. The work groups, who were led by an experienced facilitator, were asked to develop the goals using the SMART guideline. SMART goals are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-related.

Goals developed by the work groups are listed in no particular order of importance:

- A. Develop a comprehensive communication plan that addresses internal and external needs.
- B. Develop a community outreach program. (Improve the division's visibility and enhance their image; explore alternative methods and identify collaborative efforts to deliver community outreach)
- C. Develop a recruitment strategy that meets the needs of the fire division as evidenced by an increase in the number of qualified applicants.
- D. Improve annual employee retention rate.
- E. Develop a comprehensive program to enhance employee safety and well-being.
- F. Conduct a comprehensive, data-driven analysis to evaluate departmental inventories and develop appropriate replacement plans (SCBA, communications equipment, PPE, etc.)
- G. Evaluate current facilities and develop a plan to improve efficiency, safety and functionality.
- H. Ensure the new computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system is fully implemented to meet the needs and mission of the fire department.
- I. Conduct a station location analysis.
- J. Explore future funding sources and consider innovative alternative sources of revenue.
- K. Conduct a staffing and deployment analysis that examines the number and types of response equipment and staffing requirements that meets the needs of the community.
- L. Identify community risk reduction opportunities for non-emergent services that meet the needs of the community.
- M. Develop and enhance partnerships with commercial and industrial occupancies in our community.

This ended a full and productive first session. Several weeks after the first session, each planning member was asked to rank the goals in order of importance using an on-line survey instrument. As a result, the top eight goals for the division were identified. The number of goals was limited to eight; this allows the division a realistic opportunity for goal achievement and to manage the goal implementation process within the time frame of the final plan.

The second session was held on August 2, 2017. During this session, each work group was tasked with developing critical tasks or action steps, using the SMART guideline, which would help the division achieve the stated goal. Those are listed under each goal, along with a time-frame for completion and estimated cost. The individual, committee or group tasked with working on the goal will be determined by division leadership as needed, thus allowing the greatest flexibility possible. The following time-line references were used:

- Short-term; up to one year
- Mid-term; one year to three years
- Long-term; three years to five years.

Goals

Goal 1 Conduct a comprehensive, data-driven analysis to evaluate departmental inventories and develop appropriate replacement plans.	
Action Item 1.1	Establish a committee/workgroup. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify/assign internal stakeholders Conduct necessary research and development Assure regulatory compliance Select vendors as necessary Develop specifications as necessary Establish time frame for completion Make recommendations
Timeframe	Short-term to ongoing
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA
Action Item 1.2	Develop inventory lists for hose, SCBA, PPE, ladders, EMS equipment, small tools and equipment, station appliances, fixtures and furniture, and others as determined necessary.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lists should evaluate the following: value, cost, purchase date, manufactured date, life expectancy (manufacturer's recommendations), current condition, annual testing- including testing history Determine if barcoding or tagging will assist in inventory control
Timeframe	Short-term to ongoing
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: \$200 Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA
Action Item 1.3	Develop replacement plans
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compile necessary data from committee and inventories Determine funding process: budget, grants etc. Evaluate current best approach (CBA) within the fire service and other external organizations to develop appropriate plans Update plan
Timeframe	Short-term to mid-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA

Goal 2

Conduct a staffing and deployment analysis that examines the number and types of response equipment and staffing requirements that meets the needs of the community.

Action Item 2.1	Analyze the division's response data.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the number of ALS incidents v. the number of BLS incidents • Identify the number of simultaneous calls within each district (combo units) • Identify the number of personnel for each type of call • Identify the response times for each call • Evaluate current response data with national standards and best practices
Timeframe	Short-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA
Action Item 2.2	Identify the skills and certifications required for specialized operations and those personnel who possess them
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify existing personnel who possess the required skills • Identify external industrial partners who have personnel that possess these skills
Timeframe	Short-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA
Action Item 2.3	Conduct a staffing and deployment analysis based on identified community risk.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a community risk analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Technical Rescue ▪ Structural ▪ EMS ▪ Hazardous Materials • Conduct a natural hazard mitigation analysis
Timeframe	Mid- to long-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: \$3,000-\$5,000 if outside consultant needed Capital expense: NA

Action Item 2.4	Develop a standard response plan based on identified community risk and occupancy type.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate and update current response assignments for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EMS ▪ Fire ▪ Technical Rescue ▪ Hazardous Materials • Evaluate mutual-aid response v. automatic mutual-aid response (AMR) • Develop partnerships with private sector specialists and allied agencies • Consider accreditation process
Timeframe	Mid-to long-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	<p>Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: \$8,000-\$10,000 if accreditation pursued Capital expense: NA</p>

Goal 3 Explore future funding sources and consider alternative sources of revenue.	
Action Item 3.1	Evaluate current revenue.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify all current funding sources and revenue generated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income tax (General Fund) Public safety tax levy Grants (SAFER, Fire Act) EMS billing
Timeframe	Short-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	<p>Personnel: Staff time Supplies: Undetermined Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA</p>
Action Item 3.2	Evaluate the effectiveness of current EMS billing practices.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and evaluate current rate of collections Evaluate cost of third-party billing agency v. in-house billing Evaluate current billing model and options (hard v. soft billing), and rate schedule Look at billing for treated and not transported
Timeframe	Short-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	<p>Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: \$2,000 if outside consultant needed Capital expense: NA</p>
Action Item 3.3	Investigate non-traditional funding sources.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research applicable rules for charging for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire inspections Motor vehicle accidents False fire alarms Identify potential grant opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal State Local Corporate foundations Local foundations Consider corporate sponsorships
Timeframe	Mid-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	<p>Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: \$2,500 if outside consultant needed Capital expense: NA</p>

Action Item 3.4	Continue to pursue and evaluate the effectiveness of group purchasing opportunities.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Ohio Department of Administrative Services purchasing opportunities Identify local and regional consortiums
Timeframe	Mid-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA
Action Item 3.5	Investigate non-urgent EMS transportation opportunities
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and seek out potential community partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nursing homes Hospitals Doctor and medical offices Senior housing Determine financial feasibility of surge capacity of additional crews and trucks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fee costs Reimbursement rates Estimated calls for service
Timeframe	Long-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: Consulting Services \$5,000 Capital expense: NA

Goal 4
Develop a comprehensive program to enhance employee safety and well-being.

Action Item 4.1	Reinstate safety committee.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify current needs through surveys of current employees and safety standards review • Audit injury reports • Survey and evaluate what is currently being done • Recommend training based on audit and surveys
Timeframe	Short-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA
Action Item 4.2	Form a health and wellness committee.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify current needs • Identify what constitutes “well-being”; i.e., mental health, physical fitness, co-worker relations • Audit and evaluate injury reports (concurrently with safety committee) • Audit sick leave usage for trends • Survey potential mental health issues of employees • Evaluate current fitness program for effectiveness • Develop strategies to improve fitness program • Explore available programs from health insurance provider and other entities to promote health and wellness
Timeframe	Short-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA

Goal 5**Evaluate current facilities to improve efficiency, safety and functionality.**

Action Item 5.1	Establish a committee/work group.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify internal stakeholders • Prioritize needs from formal analysis • Make recommendations
Timeframe	Short-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA
Action Item 5.2	Conduct a formal analysis on each station.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis should evaluate the general habitability of the facility as well as the ability to support external visitors and programs (community focused). Areas of review include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information technology ▪ Energy efficiency ▪ Privacy and security ▪ Site limitations ▪ Intended use ▪ Compliance with local/state/federal rules and regulations ▪ Compliance with fire/life safety codes and NFPA standards ▪ Other items necessary to protect the members of the department
Timeframe	Short-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: Computer/tablet, excel Contractual services: \$6,000-\$10,000 if consultant needed Capital expense: NA
Action Item 5.3	Develop departmental and community forecasts/projections
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiscal • Community growth, including downtown area • Call volume • Demographics • Apparatus locations
Timeframe	Short-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: RMS, computer, budget, CIP Contractual services: Undetermined Capital expense: NA

Goal 6

Develop a recruitment strategy that meets the needs of the fire division as evidenced by an increase in the number of qualified applicants.

Action Item 6.1	Form a Hiring Task Force.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify an alternative hiring strategy Evaluate motivations for recruitment Interview recent hires to learn their motivation for applying Ensure an appropriate number of applicants Convey realistic job expectations during recruitment Research potential government incentives that can be used to attract recruits
Timeframe	Mid-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: Undetermined Capital expense: NA
Action Item 6.2	Investigate financial and legal aspects of hiring strategy.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the costs associated with turnover of employees Review potential income from providing EMS precepting that could be used to fund recruitment Review impact of hiring strategy on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civil service rules Collective bargaining agreement with the IAFF Other governing documents or legal authorities
Timeframe	Mid-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA

Goal 7
Conduct a fire station location analysis.

Action Item 7.1	Establish a planning committee/workgroup.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify internal stakeholders • Establish a timeframe for completion • Make recommendations • Review the completed analysis
Timeframe	Mid-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA
Action Item 7.2	Evaluate and select an appropriate vendor to conduct the analysis.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine funding source
Timeframe	Mid-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: \$10,000-\$20,000 Capital expense: NA

Goal 8
Improve annual employee retention rate.

Action Item 8.1	Determine why employees leave as well as what keeps long-term employees here.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform exit interviews with all employees when they leave employment • Interview former employees who have left in the last five years (retro exit interview) • Review previous exit interviews completed by city staff • Identify trends from these interviews • Coordinate future exit interviews with Human Resources Department
Timeframe	Short-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA

Action Item 8.2	Review and evaluate trends found in Action Item 8.1.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a comparative analysis of other department's turnover rates (locally and nationally) • Establish best practices, if feasible, learned from other departments
Timeframe	Mid-term and on-going
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA
Action Item 8.3	Develop a mentoring program.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review other department's mentoring programs • Evaluate best practice for use in MFD
Timeframe	Mid-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA
Action Item 8.4	Explore cost neutral or low-cost employee benefits that are attractive to employees.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalize and identify new forms of the fellowship and FD family values of the department. • Develop an employee recognition program • Develop programs that connect employees (especially new employees) to the community • Improve communication between leadership and the employees to facilitate early identification of employee issues
Timeframe	Long-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA
Action Item 8.5	Review and evaluate pay and benefits compared to other departments.
Critical Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review revenue sources • Explore alternative revenue sources
Timeframe	Mid-term
Assigned to	
Budget Estimate	Personnel: Staff time Supplies: NA Contractual services: NA Capital expense: NA

Appendix A

The results of the SWOT analysis as developed by each work group.

Service Delivery

STRENGTHS

1. We make runs and solve problems
2. Response time
3. Participation in the county technical rescue system
4. Well-trained and dedicated personnel
5. Professional
6. Conducting post-incident analysis, after-action reports, critiques
7. Participation in the Hazardous Materials Co-op
8. Community relationships
9. More versatile and improved EMS delivery
10. Selective transport protocol (allows for not transporting of certain patients with doctor approval)

WEAKNESSES

1. On-scene communications and confusion during haz mat release
2. Response time (combo units affect the type of equipment v. the need)
3. Staff retention and turnover
4. Attracting qualified personnel
5. Safer Grant (limited in time and funding)
6. Layoffs
7. Combo units (has an impact on the depth of resources)
8. Aging fleet of apparatus

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Safer Grant
2. Union & City collaboration (retaining workforce)
3. Better educate the community
4. Improved relationships with our commercial & industrial customers
5. Automatic Mutual Aid
6. Community risk reduction (both emergent and non-emergent)
7. Enhance the selective transport protocol

THREATS

1. Future workforce and their work ethic
2. Funding short falls
3. Privatization

4. Ridiculous runs / abuse of 9-1-1
5. Staffing related to the community's risk

Human Resources and Professional Development

STRENGTHS

1. Strong legacy and traditions
2. Very busy fire department allows rookies to gain experience quickly
3. Work schedule and flexibility of time off
4. Benefits
5. Paid online training for CEUs
6. Contract with city through the IAFF local
7. Brotherhood

WEAKNESSES

1. Turnover due to:
 - Pay
 - Burnout
 - Injury
1. Limited upward mobility
2. Change in generational values
3. Not knowing our audience when it comes to recruiting
4. Audience doesn't know us
5. Staffing levels
6. Diversity of workforce
7. Officer development
8. Lack of staff recognition

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Fire department fund professional development through reimbursement
2. Recruitment outreach
 - Explorers
 - Marketing
 - Job Fairs
3. College tuition reimbursement program
4. Out of the box thinking when it comes to recruiting; i.e. housing offers as an example
5. Mentor programs
6. Use of social media as a recruiting tool
7. Build relationships with other fire and police departments
8. Awards and recognition program
9. Development of an employee counseling program specific to firefighter work environment

10. Retention of current employees

THREATS

1. Burnout; long-term impact of job
2. Staffing:
 - Hiring
 - Turnover
 - Safety
3. Post-traumatic stress disorder
4. Catastrophic event impact on human resources
 - Loss-time injury
 - Mental health issues
5. Budget

Facilities, Equipment and Technology

STRENGTHS

1. Twenty-year apparatus replacement plan is well-established
2. Fiscally responsible
3. Purchase apparatus, tools and equipment utilizing items such as stock, used and state bid options
4. New computer aided dispatch system (CAD) with a “go live” set for the end of July, 2017
5. Have kept current with technology upgrades
6. Keeping small tools and equipment up and running with knowledge, skills and abilities of line staff

WEAKNESSES

1. No replacement plan for personal protective equipment (PPE)
2. Station 2 is not sufficient to meet the needs of the members
3. Station 5 is in disrepair and needs attention, especially looking at the plumbing and sewage
4. PPE gear washer only at fire headquarters and not the other stations; this requires transport of gear, planning and time to assure gear is washed when necessary
5. Portable radios are becoming outdated and are no longer repairable
6. Station alerting-seem to be missing runs from time to time
7. Radio communications at AK Steel in the lower levels and other locations in the city can be an issue
8. Stations lack modernization
9. Execution of maintenance vendor needs improved

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Communications Center- city v. county; is operating an individual communications center as cost effective as a regional operation
2. Communications Center should be included in training drills between fire and industrial partners so they can experience and learn through training as well
3. Continually develop regional partnerships to reduce cost
4. Fully implement new CAD
5. Combining facilities with other city departments or organizations to develop a more cost effective and efficient facility for the community
6. Grant writing options to include types and quantity of grants the department should apply for (i.e. AFG, SAFER, BWC, Ohio EMS, Firehouse Subs etc.)

THREATS

1. Self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) is becoming outdated and needs to be replaced in the near future; funding is not necessarily secured at this point and the department is evaluating options
2. Radio replacement is imminent as the radios are outdated and no longer repairable
3. Radio communication issues in the lower levels of AK Steel can play a role in crew safety and overall operations
4. PPE storage at the stations is a threat as the gear is exposed to the diesel exhaust released by the apparatus; this can be an issue especially with the studies that show firefighters are at an increased risk of cancer

Community Outreach

STRENGTHS

1. Well-respected in community
2. Personnel are trained professionals
3. Valued service
4. Heroin response team
5. Fire Prevention Week-school programs
6. Safety Town program
7. Division history-strong community tradition
8. Division Facebook page
9. Web page (as part of the city's overall web site)
10. Twitter
11. Smoke detector giveaway program
12. Fire inspection program
13. Preceptor site for multiple EMS training programs
14. K-9 Arson Dog-collaboration with outside agencies
15. Regional Safety Coalition

WEAKNESSES

1. Web page undeveloped and underutilized
2. Social media platform underdeveloped and underutilized for education and marketing
 - a. Twitter
 - b. Facebook
3. Infant car seat program
4. Overall fire prevention effort
5. Proper training for outreach efforts and safety education
6. Community relations
7. Internal communication flow
8. Non-emergency public telephone access (especially after hours)
9. Heroin response team
10. Collaboration with other agencies on major events (limited pre-planning)

OPPORTUNITIES

1. Overall communications plan
2. Promote Middletown community
3. Promote fire division services
4. More visibility in the community (e.g. public events)
5. Identify community programs and opportunities for community engagement
6. Tell the fire division story
7. Partnering with local organizations
 - Police
 - Hospital
 - Social Agencies
8. Community risk reduction programs
9. Improve EMS customer service
10. Actively participate in the city revitalization effort
11. Community paramedicine
12. Improve communications with non-English speaking community

THREATS

1. Heroin crisis
2. Grant performance (SAFER Grant-loss of additional personnel)
3. Reduced revenue
4. Significant population change
5. Negative public perception
6. Emergency equipment liability
7. Aging telephone system
8. Keeping pace with technology
9. Insufficient staff for community outreach

References

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