



EAST PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE

Strategic Plan 2025 - 2029

Adopted October 2024

"Where Compassion and Action Meet"



Welcome

We are on the brink of a major milestone for our organization: 25 years of serving our community. Over the past 25 years, we’ve evolved from several smaller organizations into a major fire district. Today, we have nearly 200 employees, soon-to-be eight staffed fire stations, and a wide range of service provision to over 100,000 residents.

By necessity, much of our growth over the past quarter-century has been reactive as we’ve risen to the challenge of keeping pace with a rapidly growing community. As we look forward to the next 25 years of EPFR, our focus is now on proactively providing exceptional service to foster a safe and resilient community. This updated strategic plan reflects that focus, as we aim to refine our work, our systems, and our internal culture to best serve our community.

A core part of this updated strategic plan is a commitment to our employees – our most important resource. Their dedication and sacrifice is what enables our organization to provide exceptional service with compassion and action. In the coming years, we will continuously strengthen an inclusive, accountable, and positive culture.

I am proud to present our updated strategic plan on behalf of the Board of Fire Commissioners and our employees. Thank you for your continued support—it is an honor to serve you, and we look forward to continuing to do so with the guidance of this document.



In the coming years, we will continuously strengthen an inclusive, accountable, and positive culture.”

Jon Parkinson

Fire Chief



CONTENTS

- 4** *Our Past, Present, and Future*
- 5** *Our Community*
- 6** *Our Foundations*
- 7** *Our Strategy at a Glance*
- 8** *Goals, Strategies, and Objectives*
- 16** *Implementation*
- 17** *Glossary*
- 18** *Acknowledgments*



Our Past, Present, and Future



2000-2005

EPFR 1.0: FOUNDING

EPFR was founded in 2000 to provide seamless response to emergency situations by merging the following departments and agencies:

- » Bonney Lake Fire Department.
- » Lake Tapps Fire/Pierce County Fire District 22.
- » Pierce County Fire District 24.

During this first phase of the District, EPFR focused on establishing our organizational systems and culture.

2006 - 2020

EPFR 2.0: GROWTH

EPFR and the community we serve grew significantly during this era, due to the following mergers and annexations:

- » 2006: Pierce County Fire District 12 and South Prairie/Fire District 20.
- » 2008: Sumner/Fire District 1.
- » 2010: Edgewood/Fire District 8.
- » 2013: Milton Fire Department.

2021 - PRESENT

EPFR 3.0: ONGOING MATURATION AND DEVELOPMENT

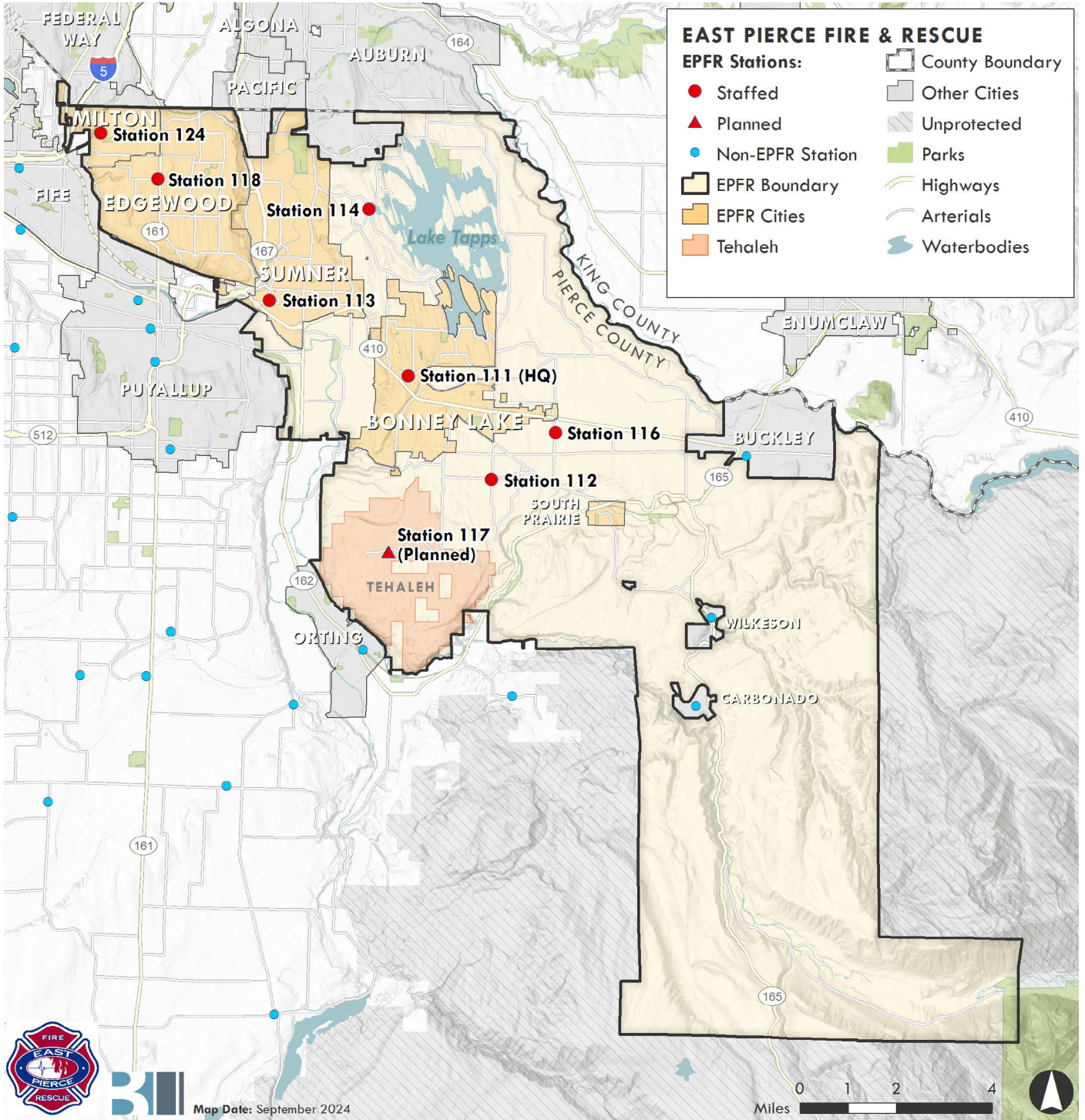
EPFR is in a more stable era for the District, one that focuses on continued maturation and internal development. Our work now focuses on the steps and actions that EPFR can take to continue our tradition of effective service provision through increased efficiency and a focus on employee development, training, and internal culture.

Key milestones in this phase have included:

- » 2021: Establishment of three-person engine companies.
- » 2023: Deployment of Shift Medical Services Officer.
- » 2024: Staffing of Station 124 and deployment of 5th Medic Unit.
- » 2025: Staffing of Station 117.

Our Community

EPFR serves the communities in and around Bonney Lake, Edgewood, Lake Tapps, Milton, the Ridge Communities, South Prairie, Sumner, and Tehaleh.



Our Foundations

Our Vision describes the role we strive to play in the community, and our Mission is our roadmap for carrying out that Vision. Our Core Values describe the principles that guide our actions and interactions with one another and with our community.

VISION

EPFR is a trusted cornerstone of a safe and resilient community.

We strive to be part of a foundation that serves our community. Just as a cornerstone is only one element of a foundation, we recognize that we are only one key player in a broader system that keeps our community safe and resilient. As a dedicated team of professionals, we work alongside city and county governments, law enforcement partners, and other community groups and organizations in carrying out our Vision.



MISSION

We provide exceptional service with compassion and action.

EPFR was founded on the principle of “where compassion and action meet.” It is our mission to not only rapidly and effectively respond to the needs of our community, but to do so with compassionate care and a commitment to exceeding customer service expectations.

CORE VALUES

Our Core Values are the foundation of how we work. These Core Values guide our interactions with our community, with our partners, and within our organization.

Integrity. We uphold the highest standards of fairness and honesty to ensure we remain trusted by and accountable to our community and one another.

Leadership. We set a meaningful example for our community and one another through principles that are grounded in humility, consistency, and respect among all employees.

Stewardship. We serve with responsibility and care for our community’s wellbeing and financial resources, and we prioritize a healthy, safe, sustainable workforce.

Innovation. We encourage new ideas at all levels of our organization to proactively adapt to our community’s changing needs through a measured blend of tradition and new practices.

Our Strategy at a Glance

This strategy focuses on a new phase for the agency: one of stability and maturation. To this end, we will pursue four *Goals* during this strategic plan timeframe. While the plan's *Goals*, *Strategies*, and *Objectives* provide directional guidance, more detailed and actionable *Tactics* will be established each year to direct implementation efforts as described on the following page. The plan's four *Goals* and supporting *Strategies* are summarized below.

GOAL 01 Cultivate a thriving workplace for our team.

- A. Support team health and wellness.
- B. Cultivate an inclusive, supportive, and accountable culture with high morale.
- C. Strengthen training and *succession planning*.

GOAL 02 Continuously refine our service delivery.

- A. Support effective and efficient fire and EMS service delivery.
- B. Leverage data and planning to enhance our community response.

GOAL 03 Engage our community.

- A. Cultivate strong relationships with the community we serve.
- B. Strengthen our *Community Risk Reduction program*.

GOAL 04 Be a highly efficient and sustainable organization.

- A. Ensure our financial sustainability.
- B. Ensure our facilities meet employee and community needs.
- C. Support an effective administrative support team.
- D. Establish and refine our organizational processes and policies for efficiency and effectiveness.



Goal 01

CULTIVATE A THRIVING WORKPLACE FOR OUR TEAM

Our team is at the core of our ability to carry out our Mission, and we are committed to ensuring EPFR is a highly desirable place to work through cultivating team wellness, professional development, and a constructive workplace culture with high morale.

STRATEGIES & OBJECTIVES

A. Support team health and wellness.

- i. Expand our health and wellness education and resources for employees.
- ii. Continuously engage employees to ensure our practices support and encourage employee wellbeing.

B. Cultivate an inclusive, supportive, and accountable culture with high morale.

- i. Regularly engage employees to identify and address emerging opportunities and needs.
- ii. Improve the effectiveness and transparency of our internal communications.
- iii. Update our accountability processes through a *Just Culture lens*.
- iv. Regularly evaluate our hiring, evaluation, and promotional processes to ensure a high-performing workforce.
- v. Provide learning opportunities and resources on expected workplace conduct so that everyone can be their authentic self.
- vi. Enhance workplace community-building opportunities among employees.

C. Strengthen training and *succession planning*.

- i. Develop methods to increase employees' ability to attend internal and external trainings.
- ii. Expand internal training provision and mentorship, including leadership training for our current and future leaders.
- iii. Ensure career pathway information is accessible and relevant through training and mentorship.





Goal **02**

CONTINUOUSLY REFINE OUR SERVICE DELIVERY

In recent years, we have conducted substantial work to prepare for our community's growing population. We are proud of the improvements made and the comprehensive level of care we provide today, and we are committed to continuous refinement of our services.

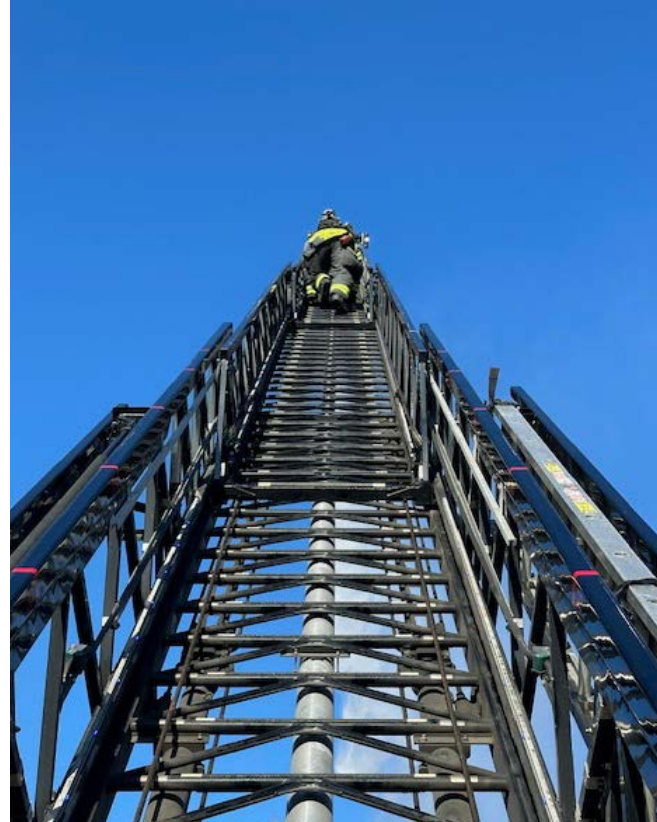
STRATEGIES & OBJECTIVES

A. Support effective and efficient fire and EMS service delivery.

- i. Expand collaboration with emergency service and non-emergency service partners.
- ii. Understand EPFR's role with respect to *MIH* and ensure staffing capacity matches that role.
- iii. Advocate for necessary systems changes.

B. Leverage data and planning to enhance our community response.

- i. Regularly evaluate our community's needs.
- ii. Continuously evaluate and update response plans and metrics to ensure effective deployment of employees and resources.
- iii. Improve data collection and maintenance including training for employees working with data.
- iv. Identify opportunities to reduce response times.





Rena Thompson

Goal **03**

ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITY

*We exist to serve our community, and to do so effectively, we must continuously engage the community through building awareness and relationships and offering a strong **Community Risk Reduction program.***

STRATEGIES & OBJECTIVES

A. Cultivate strong relationships with the community we serve.

- i. Regularly engage our community to understand their needs and provide education about our services.
- ii. Continue to build our ability to serve with cultural competence.
- iii. Build community awareness of our services and strengthen our brand.
- iv. Partner with local community groups and industries that serve the community.

B. Strengthen our *Community Risk Reduction (CRR) program.*

- i. Define the scope of our CRR program and implement planned changes.
- ii. Advocate for legislative changes that strengthen protections for the community.





Goal 04

BE A HIGHLY EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATION

Our processes, facilities, and administrative team all support our organization in carrying out our core functions of emergency service delivery and community risk reduction.

STRATEGIES & OBJECTIVES

A. Ensure our financial sustainability.

- i. Explore underutilized financial mechanisms for operating costs and capital projects.
- ii. Continuously evaluate opportunities for cost-savings.

B. Ensure our facilities meet employee and community needs.

- i. Implement Phase 2 of our Capital Improvement Program, including consideration of a fire training facility.
- ii. Explore opportunities to improve the environmental sustainability of our facilities.
- iii. Ensure ongoing maintenance and upkeep of stations.

C. Support an effective administrative support team.

- i. Continuously evaluate staffing needs for administrative support employees.
- ii. Clarify roles and resolve vulnerabilities in our organizational structure.

D. Establish and refine our organizational processes and policies for efficiency and effectiveness.

- i. Expand formal processes for our practices.
- ii. Leverage technology solutions for process efficiency and provide training to support usage.
- iii. Annually evaluate our policies and update as needed.



Implementation

EPFR will use the following annual process to advance implementation of our four *Goals*.

ONGOING ANNUAL PLANNING CYCLE

Each year, we plan our priorities and Tactics for the coming year in an annual planning cycle.

Q1 Develop draft annual Implementation Plan. In the first quarter of each year, command staff review the District's past efforts and develop a draft Implementation Plan for the following year. This process involves two steps:

- 1. Review and report:** Command staff review the *Goals* and *Strategies* that have been substantively advanced.
- 2. Prioritize and plan:** Based on the prior year's progress and in consideration of current opportunities and needs, command staff develop draft priority Tactics for the following year. While the *Tactics* change annually, the *Goals*, *Strategies*, and *Objectives* remain constant throughout the duration of this plan.

Q2 Finalize the Implementation Plan. Command staff bring the proposed Implementation Plan to the Board of Fire Commissioners ("Board"), who review and provide feedback. Command staff incorporate Board feedback to finalize the plan.

Q3 Develop a draft budget. Based on the final Implementation Plan, command staff develop a draft budget and present it to the Board. Command staff update the draft budget as needed based on Board feedback.

Q4 Adopt the budget. The Board adopts the District budget for the following fiscal year. EPFR employees begin implementing the Implementation Plan with the allocated resources.

ONGOING IMPLEMENTATION

Throughout each year, we will advance Tactics, measure and monitor our progress, and provide regular updates.

Tactics: We will advance this strategic plan through priority *Tactics*, which we will update annually in the end-of-year process outlined above.

Reporting: We will feature updates on implementation progress in communications materials and in meetings of the Board of Fire Commissioners, employees, and the community.



Glossary

A - M

Community Risk Reduction program Efforts to reduce risk associated with fires, natural disasters, and health emergencies. Examples include building codes, emergency preparedness planning, and fall prevention.

Goal, Strategy, Objective, and Tactic The strategic plan's framework includes four overarching **Goals**, which state EPFR's top themes of focus for the plan's time frame.

Strategy Each Goal has multiple Strategies. These are aspirationally-stated ambitions that help advance the larger Goal.

Objective Each Strategy has multiple Objectives, which lay out actionable areas of work.

Tactic Each Objective will be advanced by specific, actionable Tactics that can be completed within one or two years. These Tactics will be updated each year, and as a result are not included in this published version of the plan.

The Goals, Strategies, and Objectives will remain constant throughout the five years of this plan. Tactics will be updated annually.

Just Culture lens This is an organization-wide approach that promotes a process of reporting and owning mistakes in a way that does not result in corrective action but initiates a process of identifying the cause of a mistake and working to systemically improve work processes.

N - Z

Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) A program that provides improved quality of care for individuals, reduces dependency on emergency services for non-urgent needs to decrease ongoing healthcare costs, and improves the health of the community.

Personnel Vulnerability This refers to areas within EPFR where a single person holds a significant amount of institutional knowledge, and, if they were to leave EPFR, the organization would struggle to seamlessly operate without their expertise.

Succession planning Systematic efforts to ensure that institutional knowledge and capacity are retained when individual employees retire.



Acknowledgments

This plan was developed with the support of EPFR’s Board of Fire Commissioners, partners, employees, and community stakeholders. An Employee Strategic Advisory Committee comprised of nine employees guided the creation of this plan.

LEADERSHIP



Jon Parkinson
Fire Chief



Matt Gilbert
Deputy Chief
Operations



Kevin Stabenfeldt
Deputy Chief
Administration



Jeff Moore
Assistant Chief
EMS



Will Poe
Assistant Chief
Operations and
Training



Bill Sandlian
Assistant Chief
Health and Safety



Mike Westland
Assistant Chief
Logistics





BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Jon Napier, Chair

Ed Egan, Vice Chair

Justin Evans

Kevin Garling

Randy Kroum

Pat McElligott

Cynthia Wernet

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Cynthia Wernet, Chair

Randy Kroum

Jon Napier

EMPLOYEE STRATEGIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Alessandro Aracri, Firefighter/EMT

Chelsea Lovejoy, Firefighter/Paramedic

Jeff Berry, Lieutenant/MSO

Jen Killion, Lieutenant/Community Resource
Paramedic

Joe Worley, Deputy Fire Marshal

Matt Lowery, Lieutenant/EMT

Nick Van Maren, Firefighter/Paramedic

Tanya Lynch, Human Resources Manager

Tricia Brown, Administrative Support
Specialist-EMS



East Pierce Fire & Rescue

Headquarters Station / Station 111

8601 Main Street East

Bonney Lake, WA 98391

253-863-1800

info@eastpiercefirerescue.org

www.eastpiercefirerescue.org