Penryn Fire Protection District
Strategic Plan 2026–2031

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Penryn Fire Protection District
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1 Introduction

The Penryn Fire Protection District (PFPD) is committed to providing dependable, professional, and cost-effective fire and emergency services to the residents and businesses within the District. As the community and the demands placed upon the District continue to evolve, thoughtful long-term planning is essential to ensure the organization remains prepared to meet current and future needs. This Strategic Plan provides a framework for establishing priorities, allocating resources, strengthening organizational capabilities, and maintaining a sustainable level of service while remaining responsive to the community.

The District's mission serves as the foundation for this planning effort: *"The Penryn Fire Protection District was formed with the goal of providing protection of lives and property to the residents and businesses of the District. This is accomplished through professional firefighting/emergency medical staff able to respond to all types of emergencies. In addition to emergency response, the District conducts enforcement of fire safety laws and public education to enhance fire prevention. The District strives to provide to its residents and businesses the highest possible level of protection for lives and property in a cost effective and professional manner."*

This Strategic Plan builds upon that mission by identifying the District's strengths, recognizing current and emerging challenges, and establishing strategic priorities to guide decision-making over the coming years. Through responsible financial management, continued investment in personnel and equipment, strong regional partnerships, and ongoing engagement with the community, the District will work to preserve the high level of service its residents and businesses depend upon while positioning the organization for long-term sustainability and operational readiness.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to establish a clear framework for organizational priorities and serve as a blueprint for informed, consistent, and effective decision-making. The plan provides direction for allocating resources, addressing emerging needs, and aligning operational and administrative efforts with the District's mission and long-term goals.

The Strategic Plan also promotes transparency and accountability by clearly communicating the District's priorities, direction, and objectives to both internal and external stakeholders. By establishing a shared understanding of the District's priorities, the plan supports collaboration among the Board, staff, community partners, and the residents and businesses the District serves.

3 Background

3.1 Regional Fire Service Delivery

The PFPD operates within a regional fire service system and maintains close working relationships with neighboring agencies to enhance emergency response capabilities and provide effective service to the community. The District is bordered by the South Placer Fire Protection District, Placer County Fire, and Placer Hills Fire Protection District, creating a service environment in which coordination, communication, and resource sharing are essential components of effective emergency response.

Through established automatic aid agreements and regional cooperation, the District both provides and receives assistance from neighboring agencies when additional resources are needed. The District provides Basic Life Support (BLS) emergency medical services, while neighboring South Placer and Placer Hills fire agencies provide Advanced Life Support (ALS) capabilities. This complementary service model allows the regional system to provide a broader range of emergency medical capabilities while leveraging the resources and expertise of participating agencies.

The District's participation in regional automatic aid demonstrates the importance of these partnerships to its overall service delivery model. Between 2023 and 2025, PFPD provided mutual aid to neighboring agencies on 537 occasions and received assistance from neighboring agencies 139 times during the same period. The substantial difference between aid provided and aid received demonstrates the District's significant contribution to the regional emergency response system and the value of PFPD resources to neighboring agencies.

The PFPD Station 38 also represents an important regional resource. According to the Placer LAFCO Fire Service Review dated April 2025, Station 38 has one of the lowest Unit Hour Utilization rates among surrounding fire stations. Lower unit utilization indicates that the District's available resources have greater capacity to respond to incidents outside the District when appropriate. This capacity, combined with the District's participation in automatic aid, enables the PFPD to contribute personnel and apparatus to neighboring jurisdictions without compromising its ability to serve its own community.

The District's regional role highlights the importance of maintaining strong interagency relationships and cooperative service agreements. The PFPD's ability to provide resources to neighboring agencies, while receiving specialized ALS capabilities and additional resources when needed, contributes to a coordinated regional system designed to improve emergency response and maximize available resources. As service demands and community needs evolve, continued evaluation of regional partnerships,

automatic aid arrangements, and resource utilization will remain an important component of the District's long-term strategic planning.

3.2 District History

The PFPD has a long-standing history of serving the local community, having been established in 1924 as a volunteer fire department. With more than 100 years of service, the District has evolved from its volunteer origins into a professional emergency services organization while maintaining its longstanding commitment to protecting the lives and property of the residents and businesses it serves.

Today, the District provides Basic Life Support (BLS) emergency medical and fire suppression services with a staffing model consisting of six personnel, including three Captains and three Engineers. The District's organizational structure has also evolved in response to changing operational and administrative needs. Following the departure of the PFPD Fire Chief in August 2020, the District entered into a contract with the Placer Hills Fire District for the provision of administrative and leadership services. Since July 2021, the Fire Chief, Fire Marshal, Battalion Chief, and administrative services have been provided through this partnership.

The District further strengthened its regional cooperation through a Joint Operating Agreement with the Placer Hills Fire District, effective September 2021. The agreement provides a framework for sharing resources and supporting operational efficiency, while enhancing the District's ability to provide emergency services utilizing available resources.

The District operates with a relatively modest financial base while maintaining a diversified revenue structure. The adopted 2026 budget is approximately $1.36 million, excluding Strike Team revenue. The District's primary revenue sources include approximately 49.5 percent from ad valorem property taxes, 37.7 percent from Measure A, and 8.4 percent from Measure C. The remaining approximately 4.4 percent is derived from other sources, including interest and donations. This revenue structure provides the foundation for the District's ongoing operations while requiring careful financial planning to address increasing personnel, equipment, facility, and operational costs.

The District currently operates a Type I engine and a Type III brush engine. The Type I engine was placed in service in 2018 and remains subject to loan payments through 2033. The Type III brush engine was placed in service in 2008 and continues to provide an important resource for wildfire and vegetation-fire response.

Station 38 serves as the District's primary facility and has undergone several improvements in recent years. However, the facility was rated in "poor" condition in the Placer County Local Agency Formation Commission's 2025 Municipal Services Review, highlighting the need for continued attention to aging infrastructure and future capital improvements. Over

the past five years, the District has completed improvements to the station, including enhancements to engine-bay exhaust handling, exterior windows, exterior walls, and site grading.

The District's history reflects more than a century of community service, adaptation, and commitment to emergency preparedness. As the District looks toward the future, its historical foundation, regional partnerships, existing resources, and community relationships provide important context for understanding both its current capabilities and the strategic challenges and opportunities that will shape the organization in the years ahead.

4 District Strengths and Challenges

4.1 District Strengths

The District benefits from a dedicated and committed workforce with a strong organizational culture and a deep sense of pride in serving the Penryn community. This commitment is reflected in the District's ability to retain its personnel, with no staff turnover since 2021. The continuity and experience of the current team provide a strong foundation for maintaining operational effectiveness, institutional knowledge, and consistent service to the community.

The District also benefits from a positive and collaborative relationship between staff and the Board of Directors. Open communication, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to the District's mission support effective governance and decision-making. This strong working relationship enables the District to address operational priorities while remaining focused on the needs of the community.

A well-established Intern Program represents another significant organizational strength. The program provides an opportunity to develop future firefighters, strengthen the District's workforce pipeline, and introduce individuals to the culture, expectations, and operational standards of the organization.

The District maintains strong working relationships with neighboring fire districts, the United Auburn Indian Community, local government agencies, and local elected officials. These partnerships enhance coordination, communication, and resource sharing and provide a strong foundation for regional cooperation during both routine operations and significant incidents.

Financial stability is another key strength. The District maintains budget reserves that can support significant capital expenditures, including the anticipated purchase of a new Type III (Brush) engine. In addition, the District maintains economic reserves that provide

financial flexibility and help position the organization to address unforeseen needs, changing operational demands, and future strategic priorities.

Finally, the District benefits from strong community support. The community's confidence in and commitment to the District provides an important foundation for continued service delivery and long-term organizational success. Together, the District's dedicated personnel, collaborative governance, workforce development efforts, regional partnerships, financial stability, and community support provide a strong platform from which to pursue the District's strategic goals and prepare for future needs.

4.2 District Challenges

The District faces several challenges that will require ongoing evaluation, strategic planning, and careful allocation of resources to sustain reliable and effective emergency services. One significant challenge is the age and condition of Station 38. As the District's primary operational facility, maintaining the station and addressing aging will require continued investment to ensure the facility remains safe, functional, and capable of supporting current and future operational needs.

Recruitment and workforce development also remain important challenges. Increasing entry-level requirements, including firefighter academy and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certification requirements, have created additional barriers for individuals seeking to enter the fire service. The closure of the Regional Occupational Program (ROP) has further reduced opportunities for individuals to obtain early exposure to fire service careers and develop foundational skills prior to pursuing employment.

The District also operates within a competitive regional labor market. Surrounding fire districts and municipal agencies may offer compensation packages and career opportunities that make recruitment and retention more challenging, particularly as the District seeks to maintain qualified personnel while operating within available financial resources. Addressing salary competitiveness must be balanced with the District's broader budgetary constraints and long-term financial sustainability.

Financial pressures are expected to remain an ongoing challenge. Annual revenue growth may not keep pace with increases in personnel, equipment, facility, insurance, and other operating costs. At the same time, the District has limited opportunities for significant new development or expansion of its revenue base. These factors require careful prioritization of expenditures and long-term financial planning to ensure available resources remain aligned with essential service needs.

Future population growth may provide some additional service demand while offering limited opportunities for corresponding revenue growth. According to projections cited in the Placer LAFCO Fire Service Review dated April 2025, applying the California Department of Finance projected annual growth rate of 0.55 percent through 2060 could result in the

territory within the District reaching approximately 4,000 residents by 2060. This potential increase in population will require the District to evaluate its future staffing, facilities, apparatus, equipment, and service-delivery requirements.

Vehicle and apparatus replacement represents another significant long-term financial challenge. Fire apparatus are substantial capital investments, and the District must plan for replacement costs well in advance to avoid placing excessive pressure on annual operating budgets or reserves. Maintaining an appropriate replacement schedule will be important to ensure the reliability, safety, and operational readiness of the District's fleet.

The potential transition to Advanced Life Support (ALS) services presents additional considerations. Expanding to ALS capability would involve significant financial and personnel implications, including additional staffing, training, certification, equipment, medical supplies, and ongoing operational costs. Any consideration of ALS implementation will therefore require a comprehensive evaluation of service demand, costs, staffing requirements, and sustainable funding sources.

Finally, the District must consider the organizational and financial implications associated with ensuring adequate administrative and operational leadership while maintaining fiscal responsibility. The District is currently contracting for these services from the Placer Hills Fire Protection District. The ability to contract for these services long-term from a neighboring fire protection district cannot be guaranteed, and the organizational and financial implications of maintaining an appropriate command and administrative staff structure for a single-station organization significant. Developing an organizational structure that appropriately balances leadership capacity, operational effectiveness, and financial sustainability will remain an important strategic consideration.

5 Operational Priorities

The District's operational priorities establish the key areas of focus necessary to maintain reliable emergency services, support organizational readiness, and ensure the responsible use of public resources. These priorities are intended to guide the District's near- and long-term efforts while remaining aligned with its mission to protect the lives and property of the residents and businesses it serves.

Collectively, these priorities provide a framework for allocating resources and making informed operational decisions while maintaining the highest practical level of service in a cost-effective and professional manner.

1. **Fiscal Solvency**

The District will maintain fiscal solvency through responsible financial management, careful monitoring of expenditures, and alignment of available resources with operational priorities.

2. Emergency Response Performance

The District will continue to monitor emergency response performance and implement appropriate measures to ensure response times remain within established district objectives.

The District will annually evaluate and report emergency response performance using measurable response time objectives. Performance will be evaluated using District incident data and compared with applicable National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards and nationally recognized benchmarks. Where District performance or locally established objectives differ from NFPA benchmarks, the District will identify relevant geographic, staffing, deployment, service-demand, or resource factors affecting performance

Table 1. Response Time Objectives

EMS Turnout Time	60 seconds or less for 90% of emergency medical incidents.
Fire and Special Operations Turnout Time	80 seconds or less for 90% of applicable emergency incidents.
Total Response Time	First-arriving District unit within 6 minutes of dispatch when reasonably achievable, with an overall objective of first-unit arrival within 8 minutes for 90% of emergency incidents.

3. Operational Readiness

Operational readiness will remain a priority, with continued emphasis on retaining qualified personnel through competitive salaries and benefits, maintaining Strike Team readiness, and ensuring that personnel, equipment, and resources are prepared for deployment when needed. The District will also continue to support and strengthen its Intern Program as an important component of workforce development, recruitment, and long-term succession planning.

To support emergency response capabilities, the District will initiate the process for ordering a new Type III brush engine to enhance wildfire response and off-road operational capacity.

In addition, to enhance facility safety, reliability, and energy efficiency, the District is undertaking the replacement of the Station 38 air-conditioning system and roof.

6 Strategic Initiatives

The Strategic Initiatives identified in this plan represent focused, long-term efforts intended to strengthen the District's organizational capacity, operational effectiveness, and ability to meet the evolving needs of the community. These initiatives build upon the District's existing strengths while addressing identified challenges and opportunities. They are intended to provide clear direction for future planning, resource allocation, and organizational improvement, while remaining consistent with the District's mission, available resources, and commitment to providing professional, reliable, and cost-effective emergency services.

1. **Evaluate the feasibility, potential benefits, and available options for future consolidation or enhanced regional service delivery with one or more neighboring fire service agencies.**

   The District will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of opportunities for future consolidation, regional collaboration, or other organizational partnerships with one or more neighboring fire service agencies. This evaluation will consider the operational, financial, governance, and service-delivery implications of potential consolidation options and identify strategies that may enhance the District's long-term sustainability, efficiency, and ability to meet community needs.

2. **Evaluate the feasibility, options, and resource requirements associated with transitioning the District's emergency medical services from Basic Life Support (BLS) to Advanced Life Support (ALS) capabilities.**

   The District will assess the feasibility and long-term implications of expanding emergency medical services from the current BLS delivery model to an ALS service model. The assessment will consider community needs, response times, staffing and training requirements, equipment and infrastructure needs, financial impacts, and potential partnerships to determine viable approaches for enhancing the level of emergency medical care provided by the District.

3. **Evaluate the feasibility, options, and long-term costs associated with renovating or replacing Station 38 to meet the District's current and future operational needs.**

   The District will undertake a comprehensive assessment of the future needs of Fire Station 38, including the feasibility of renovation (modernization and/or expansion), or replacement. The assessment will consider the facility's current condition, operational functionality, regulatory requirements, projected service demands, personnel needs, and long-term capital costs. The resulting analysis will establish a strategic direction for

ensuring Station 38 remains a safe, functional, and sustainable facility capable of supporting the District's future operational requirements.