



# Forest Lakes Fire District

*where customer service is job one*

## 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE - TOP LEVEL SUMMARY

### MISSION

To provide comprehensive fire, emergency medical and search and rescue services to the Forest Lakes community and our surrounding Service Delivery Area.

### VISION

To provide superior services to our communities via the use of up to date facilities, rolling stock, supplies and trained personnel funded, to the greatest extent possible, by new revenue sources.

### GUIDING OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES

**Excellence** - If you are going to hang out your shingle, you better be prepared do the best job you can.

**Integrity** - We will act with integrity in everything we do.

**Responsibility** - We will do what is morally, legally and ethically responsible.

**Compliance** - We will comply with all legal and statutory requirements.

**Safety** - We will operate in a way that makes the safety of our personnel and equipment paramount.

### STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal: Continue to pursue our designated Master Facilities Plan projects including completion within this 5-year strategic timeframe.

Goal: Upgrade our rolling stock as planned in our latest STRAP (Strategic Plan).

Goal: Improve non-tax revenues each year by identifying new revenue sources, and by leveraging community resources via the Auxiliary, grants, on-going donations and corporate/other.

Goal: Rebuild cash reserves to take advantage of unexpected opportunities and ultimately, to purchase a new engine.

Goal: Develop governmental relationships and influence with our local politicians at the Federal, State and County levels, coordinating with the Arizona Fire District Association or other representative groups as appropriate.

Goal: Identify and develop the FLFD Leadership Team for the future, including qualified candidates for the Board of Directors.

### DISTRICT ISSUES

**Facilities Master Plan/Equipment.** With the completion of our new fire station and exterior refurbishment of our Annex, we have finalized a master plan for the rest of our property. A primary goal for the coming year is to continue work on the Annex, repurposing it for equipment storage, training/meeting space, and other secondary needs. The Master Planning Committee has also addressed ancillary needs such as updates to the blue garage and storage buildings as well as cleanup of the back lot. We also plan to install new fencing along with a permanent water runoff barrier on the south side of the property. With the addition of a new ambulance, we are starting the planning to replace our engine and our water tender within this 5-year strategic timeframe. Finally, we have agreed to make the upcoming final balloon payment on the Front Loader. We plan to keep the front loader due to its low hours, relatively good condition, and high value at both the GWTS and throughout the community during the winter months of the year.

**Staffing Model/Sustainability/Demographics.** Our combination staffing model continues to receive high marks from our community and customers. We plan to maintain the 24X7 Paramedic plus Firefighter service delivery model. We remain concerned about the declining participation of Paid-On-Call support from the local community although we have made some progress in this area. Our 5 Year Finance and Budget projections are based on maintaining the current level of Paid-On-Call support. Our community's demographics are changing making it a challenge to keep the community engaged in supporting the fire district as it has in the past. Our updated financial plan includes modest pay increases for both On-Duty-Staff and Paid-On-Call personnel. This is both well-deserved and important for our pay rates to remain competitive.

**Revenue Constraints.** We continue to experience significant pressure on fire district revenues. Arizona fire districts are limited as to both tax levy and property valuation increases and Mill rates are capped at \$3.25 per \$100 assessed valuations. We are effectively triply constrained. For districts like Forest Lakes, this essentially means we are restricted to a 5% tax levy increases, presenting additional challenges to the leadership team for addressing our building needs and sustaining our staffing and service delivery models. Therefore, to accomplish our strategic goals over the coming 5-year time frame, we are committed to finding new revenue sources outside of the traditional tax revenue structure, such as this past year when we were able to facilitate the construction and activation of our new cell tower. We will continue this focus along with ongoing efforts to decrease expenses to the greatest extent possible so that we can increase our cash levels to take advantage of future opportunities to improve the capabilities of the District. In addition, FLFD actively supports the efforts of the Arizona Fire District Association to work with the legislature to loosen caps and increase potential MIL rates.