



# ESQUIMALT



# RESCUE SERVICES

Strategic plan 2022-2026







Cover: Esquimalt Fire public open house 2019

Left: axe handle used in rescue

Below: marine rescue training





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Image: Collaborative training between regional departments



# FIRE CHIEF'S MESSAGE

As Fire Chief for the Township of Esquimalt, I am excited to present the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan for the Esquimalt Fire and Rescue Services.

The basic concept surrounding Strategic Planning is that it is a process that anticipates the future by defining where you want to be, how to get there, and how you know when you have arrived. The strategies employed within the plan assist in decision-making at all levels of the organization with the focus remaining on the established goals.

Esquimalt Fire and Rescue Services (EFRS) is responsible for providing fire suppression, medical response, technical rescue, fire prevention and public education services to just under 18,000 residents, 750 businesses and several community buildings within the Township of Esquimalt.

EFRS has had a proud tradition of providing excellent service to the community. The growing demand for services, combined with the ever-increasing costs of service delivery, make it imperative that an effective Strategic Plan be put into place that will maintain the high standards expected by the community.

This document is a culmination of EFRS's efforts to detail how it will meet the needs of the community, how it will prioritize those needs, and establish timelines to achieve those needs.

This Strategic Plan was developed using a Community-Driven Strategic Planning process to go beyond the development of a static document. We included input from the community at large as well as input from staff.

Our process was collaborative and inclusive involving a working group which included representatives from administration, fire management, members of the fire department and the Union executive. The process challenged the working group and department members to critically examine paradigms, values, philosophies, beliefs, and desires and encouraged individuals to work in the best interest of the team. It further provided the department with an opportunity to participate in the development of the organization's long-term direction and focus.

As an innovative fire service, our community-focused efforts support an approach that ensures the well-being of our personnel and those we serve, always

holding ourselves to the highest levels of integrity. We have been working hard to demonstrate continuous improvement in the areas of fire suppression, technical rescue, and community engagement. The Township recognizes the ever-present influences of geography, demographics, diversity, and economics that factor into how we develop and support our Fire Department to be a leader in the region. We are striving to empower all our employees to be their best and create an environment where every individual can achieve that goal.

I am proud of the work that was accomplished in this process. All those involved displayed commitment and dedication to introspection, understanding where we were starting from and working through the process to set a path for where we will be going.



**Steve Serbic**  
Fire Chief, Esquimalt Fire Rescue

# Esquimalt Fire Rescue Services

# STRATEGIC PLAN

## Our mission

We make a difference in the lives of others by providing exceptional Fire and Rescue Services, Prevention and Education to our local community and regional partners. We are committed to the protection and well-being of our community, the environment and one another.

## Our vision

Our Vision is to be a proud, passionate and dynamic organization, recognized for our exceptional service and our highly skilled, innovative and dedicated workforce. We will be Leaders in public safety and Firefighter well-being.

## Our values

**Excellence**—We exceed expectations. We are proud, professional, accountable, and we are models of integrity.

**Innovation**—We inspire creative thinking, encourage new ideas and support a willingness to accept new challenges.

**Wellbeing**—We prioritize well-being by supporting physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health to achieve our full potential.

**Diversity, Inclusion and Respect**—We value people, honour differences, create a welcoming environment, and treat everyone with dignity and fairness.

**Compassion**—We are empathetic and kind. We care for each other and those we serve.

### VIVID DESCRIPTION

- We are a responsive and progressive part of the community we serve, and we are constantly adapting to changing needs.
- We embrace new technologies and techniques, focussing on training and education to provide the highest level of service and satisfaction.
- As EFRS, we are committed to developing exceptional Leaders.
- We attract the best to work with us and provide them an exceptional workplace environment where everyone feels valued and can achieve their full potential.
- We value the support we receive from the community we serve, which views us with pride, respect, and confidence.



# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

with goals and operational strategies



## PRIORITY: Deliver exceptional customer service

GOALS	OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES
<p><b>1</b> Ensure Comprehensive, Effectively Integrated &amp; Sustainable Customer Service</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Follow an integrated approach to ensure community safety through fire prevention, public education, and emergency response.</li> <li>2. Develop proactive risk mitigation awareness through enhanced prevention, investigation, and enforcement strategies.</li> <li>3. Continually improve our operational procedures, policies, and guidelines, ensuring they build upon national best practice to be as safe and effective as possible for firefighters and the public.</li> <li>4. Explore and support the development of new ideas and partnerships that can help improve service delivery.</li> <li>5. Empower all staff to understand, design, manage and improve everyday operations in the pursuit of extraordinary results.</li> <li>6. Increase awareness of our environmental impact and support green initiatives.</li> </ol>
<p><b>2</b> Promote Growth &amp; Resource Planning</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide effective and efficient fire services by ensuring adequate resources in response to community growth and needs.</li> </ol>
<p><b>3</b> Enhance Hazard Response</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support emergency preparedness planning and enhance information dissemination.</li> <li>2. Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of existing services and initiatives, assess gaps in capacity, and seek out best practices.</li> </ol>
<p><b>4</b> Support Leading Edge Equipment &amp; Technology</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide and maintain safe and reliable fire apparatus, equipment and tools that meet insurance and industry recognized standards.</li> <li>2. Explore, research, and invest in new processes and leading-edge technologies that will advance service delivery.</li> </ol>



# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

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## Priority: Strengthen, develop & expand partnerships

GOALS	OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES
<p><b>1</b> Promote Commitment to Regional Cooperation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to develop strategic partnerships to assist and enhance service delivery excellence.</li> <li>2. Continue to grow Regional training opportunities focusing on Mutual Aid Partners.</li> <li>3. Develop and participate in Regional Teams – examples: PSU, THARP, HAZMAT, Rehab Unit.</li> <li>4. Prioritize using local services and businesses.</li> </ol>
<p><b>2</b> Build &amp; Expand Community Relationships</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communicate EFRS’s Strategic Plan to staff and stakeholders, including Mission, Vision and Values, Strategic Priorities, Goals and Operational Strategies to better manage expectations.</li> <li>2. Further develop effective ways of engaging and communicating with our community about our services.</li> <li>3. Continue to plan and implement regular community events such as open houses for the public, Council, media etc. and celebrate key milestones.</li> <li>4. Develop and strengthen relationships with internal and external partners and work to identify new collaboration opportunities.</li> <li>5. Raise internal communication with other Departments in the Township of Esquimalt.</li> <li>6. Utilize identified outlets, such as social media, to communicate internally and externally.</li> </ol>
<p><b>3</b> Enhance Community Engagement &amp; Life Safety Education</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Evaluate and implement meaningful public education and community outreach platforms, programs, and resources to address identified trends and unique needs and expectations.</li> <li>2. Support our firefighters by providing the tools, training, programs, and resources they need to successfully deliver life safety education.</li> <li>3. Continually promote active community interaction and fire safety education to the residents of the Township of Esquimalt.</li> <li>4. Develop a Youth Fire Academy.</li> </ol>



# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

with goals and operational strategies



## PRIORITY: Enhance culture

GOALS	OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES
<p><b>1</b> Promote a Diverse and Inclusive Workplace</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Commit to the creation and maintenance of a diverse and inclusive workplace environment where all members of the EFRS community feel welcomed, valued, affirmed, and able to “show up” to participate as who they are.</li> <li>2. Advocate for and support progressive family life policies.</li> <li>3. Support Respectful Workplace Policies and participate in annual Respectful Workplace training programs.</li> </ol>
<p><b>2</b> Ensure Staff Engagement</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Connect all members to the Mission, Vision, Values, Goals and Operational Strategies of the EFRS.</li> <li>2. Effectively communicate by adopting a clear and transparent approach, coupled with effective communication channels.</li> <li>3. Build trust and respect through accountability to ourselves and others.</li> <li>4. Create opportunities to lead from all levels.</li> <li>5. Encourage and reward the participation and engagement of staff.</li> <li>6. Empower all staff to design, manage and improve everyday operations in the pursuit of extraordinary results.</li> <li>7. Embrace employee involvement through continually seeking and incorporating staff feedback into planning and decision-making.</li> <li>8. Reinforce employee engagement and build morale through recognizing achievements.</li> <li>9. Monitor the impact of work/life balance and take steps to maintain healthy ratios while maintaining staffing levels.</li> </ol>

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

with goals and operational strategies



## PRIORITY: Enhance culture (con't)

GOALS	OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES
<p><b>3</b> Establish and Maintain an Ideal Working Environment</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to work toward fostering, strengthening, and enhancing effective, cooperative, and collaborative working relationships within the EFRS.</li> <li>2. Integrate our values into every part of the EFRS.</li> <li>3. Recognize behaviours that reflect our five Core Values – Excellence, Innovation, Well-being, Diversity/Inclusion and Respect, and Compassion.</li> <li>4. Work to improve administrative processes that support staff and their needs.</li> </ol>
<p><b>4</b> Enhance Internal and External Communication</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Evaluate existing internal communication protocols and structures within the EFRS.</li> <li>2. Develop collaborative strategies to enhance transparency, communication, and feedback opportunities throughout EFRS.</li> </ol>



Image: Victoria Pride Parade 2022

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

with goals and operational strategies



## PRIORITY: Expand training & professional development

GOALS	OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES
<p><b>1</b> Expand Career Development Planning</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop an effective succession planning model and approach with relevant training competencies, for higher level positions, that is both transparent and equitable.</li> <li>2. Collaborate with staff to promote awareness and facilitate implementation of the model.</li> <li>3. Build professional development plans.</li> <li>4. Define training or qualifications necessary to meet by specific career goals.</li> <li>5. Mentor to empower individual success and growth.</li> <li>6. Expand opportunities within EFRS.</li> </ol>
<p><b>2</b> Support Employee-Initiated Training &amp; Development</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve accessibility of training and education opportunities.</li> <li>2. Consult appropriate sources, industry standards and best practice material for EFRS to understand future learning and development needs, and plan accordingly.</li> <li>3. Develop and implement a comprehensive training program and include accountability by the individual and leadership.</li> <li>4. Enhance training programs by incorporating inter-agency training, and utilizing accredited programs, certifications, and live drills.</li> <li>5. Support employee requests for training where a need is identified to enhance personal growth.</li> </ol>
<p><b>3</b> Develop Future Leaders</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support diverse training and recognize the need outside of promotional or succession planning.</li> <li>2. Develop Leadership training requirements, plan, and budget for ongoing support.</li> <li>3. Encourage participation in the TOE Leadership Development Programme.</li> <li>4. Include a coaching and mentoring programme, which seeks to harness the skills and experiences of staff from across the service to help develop future Leaders.</li> </ol>
<p><b>4</b> Promote Effective Performance Evaluation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review competency-based job descriptions and performance criteria for all positions.</li> <li>2. Ensure regular reporting and assessment of performance.</li> </ol>



Image: Pink Shirt Day (anti-bullying) 2021

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

with goals and operational strategies

## PRIORITY: Support personal health & wellness

GOALS	OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES
<p><b>1</b> Build Relationships &amp; Connections</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote regular peer check-ins.</li> <li>2. Empower Captains to create opportunities for regular Crew discussions.</li> <li>3. Encourage wellness discussions.</li> <li>4. Promote activities that foster camaraderie.</li> <li>5. Learn each other's 'normal' and develop skills to recognize and address changes early.</li> <li>6. Work to establish an environment where individuals are comfortable discussing emotional health.</li> <li>7. Demonstrate and encourage open and honest communication.</li> <li>8. Proactively seek ways to address emotional and behavioural health issues before they become significant problems.</li> <li>9. Eliminate the stigma of emotional and behavioural struggles being viewed as a sign of weakness.</li> </ol>
<p><b>2</b> Prioritize Physical, Emotional, Mental &amp; Spiritual Health &amp; Wellness</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Empower all EFRS members to embody a high standard of safety, physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being to minimize risks and improve the health of each member.</li> <li>2. Provide safety, health and wellness programs that contribute to the long-term well-being of personnel.</li> <li>3. Empower Officers to implement physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being activities that fit their crew dynamics.</li> </ol>

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

with goals and operational strategies



## PRIORITY: Support personal health & wellness (con't)

GOALS	OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES
<p><b>3</b> Encourage a Healthy Lifestyle</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop lifelong health and wellness habits for EFRS members in order to make it part of the EFRS culture including nutrition and sleep hygiene.</li> <li>2. Provide resources for our members to increase resilience and healthy coping habits.</li> <li>3. Provide an opportunity to benchmark personal fitness annually.</li> <li>4. Support and encourage physical fitness and health screening.</li> </ol>
<p><b>4</b> Enhance Well-being Resource Awareness &amp; Utilization</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Roll out the Telus app-based wellness program.</li> <li>2. Create a directory of resources and promote regular use.</li> </ol>
<p><b>5</b> Promote &amp; Enhance Workplace Safety</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continually review scheduled in-house facility maintenance and housekeeping protocols.</li> <li>2. Support ongoing review, revision, and development processes for Standard Operational Guidelines.</li> <li>3. Educate employees regarding their health and safety responsibilities and emphasize the importance of injury prevention.</li> <li>4. Continue to support successful rehabilitation of members who have incurred injuries.</li> </ol>



# Strategic Plan

2022-2026

Esquimalt Fire Rescue Services

 TownshipofEsquimalt

 EsquimaltBC

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[esquimalt.ca/fire](http://esquimalt.ca/fire)

Township of  
**ESQUIMALT**