

# Geneva Fire Department



STRATEGIC  
PLAN 2021

## A Message from the Chief

This community-based strategic plan is a product of hundreds of hours of work by all members of the Geneva Fire Department, residents and business owners. This plan was created for two reasons: provide guidance for the future and be a living document for the community, residents and business community.

Our community, visitors and businesses continue to evolve and grow. Demand for services has shifted and expanded into areas beyond traditional fire suppression. The age, concentration and distribution of our population is shifting and the community is looking to the fire department to help them become more resilient and prepared for any type of emergency. Our growing community is driving our innovation, best practices and service model modernization to meet these emerging needs.

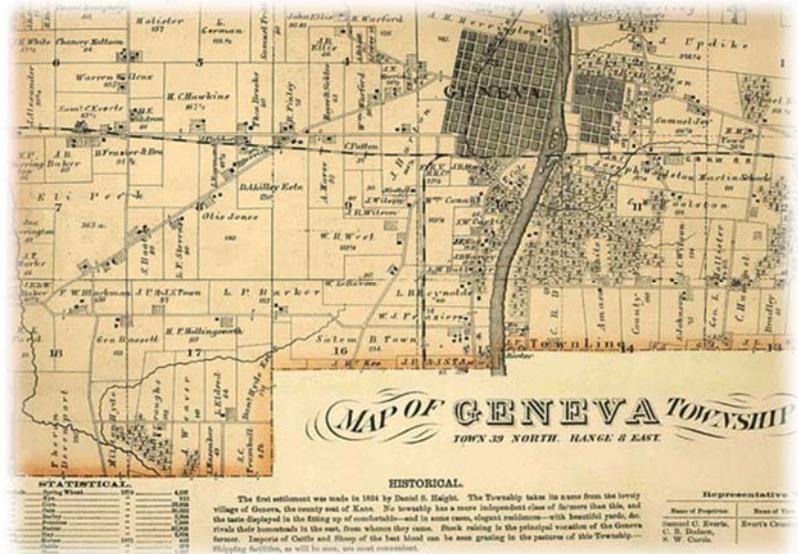
We are finding new ways to partner with other city departments and external agencies to approach community needs more holistically and collaboratively. We are transforming how we think about and respond to our citizen's needs. We are leveraging the expertise and perspectives of others working in our city to support a healthier, safer and stronger community. These new and broadened approaches will play a significant role in advancing the goals and objectives adopted by the city council.

We will continue to be a vital partner in identifying and delivering safety and community services to our citizens. We will work diligently to ensure the level of service we deliver strikes the best balance between appropriate, acceptable and affordable. By making smart decisions that balance economic, environmental and social needs of today and the future, we will create a more resilient, adaptable organization capable of weathering and withstanding threats while taking advantage of opportunities to improve. This document provides the critical link between the work we do today and the long-term vision for Geneva as outlined by the strategic plan approved by the city council.

Due to the pandemic a planned reimagining of this strategic plan did not take place as planned. Instead, the plan was reviewed internally and updated with new goals & objectives. It is a primary goal of the Geneva Fire Department to complete a reimage of this plan as soon as the pandemic has passed.

Thank you to every one of our employees who work each day to improve our community, deliver outstanding services and contribute to a city where every citizen can feel safe and protected.

Chief of Department  
Mike Antenore  
July 2021



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## Introduction

The Geneva Fire Department (GFD) is a department of the City of Geneva, Illinois, providing fire suppression, advanced life support emergency medical response, basic and advanced rescue, hazardous materials mitigation, fire inspection, plans review, public education, fire investigation, and emergency preparedness planning and response services to approximately 13.5 square miles and 21, citizens.



We are consistently working to achieve and maintain a high level of professionalism and efficiency on behalf of those it serves, and thus embarked on the complete re-imagining of the existing strategic plan in 2014 to document the our path into the future via a “Community-Driven Strategic Planning.” The following plan was written in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the CFAI *Fire & Emergency Service Self-Assessment Manual* 8<sup>th</sup> Ed., and is intended to guide our organization within established parameters set forth by the City of Geneva City Council.

We utilized the Community–Driven Strategic Planning process to go beyond just the development of a document. The membership was challenged to critically examine their values, philosophies, beliefs and desires, and challenged individuals to work in the best interest of the “team”. The process provided the firefighter’s with an opportunity to participate in the development of the departments long-term direction and focus. Additionally, representatives of the residential and business communities graciously donated their valuable time to share their insights and opinions about the department.

This plan, with its foundation based in community and department membership input, revisits the departments Mission and Vision statements and establishes a continuous improvement plan that offers a road map for justifiable and sustainable future.

## Community and Organizational Background

Geneva, Illinois, a community of 21,809 (2019) residents, was first incorporated in 1887 by settlers traveling west from New York. With the establishment in the early 1900's of a rail line running from Chicago to Iowa,

Geneva became a stable but small community that provided a quiet place to live and raise a family.

By 1974 the town had grown to have a little more than 9,100 residents. In 1989 the equalized assessed valuation (EAV) for the growing community was \$200,471,163 with a population of 12,200. Today, Geneva has a daytime population of 25,000, as estimated by the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission and the EAV had grown to 1,452,555,487 (2019).



The city is the county seat for Kane County, housing the historical Kane county courthouse and the county administrative complex. Extensive efforts have been made over the years to preserve and maintain structures, public and private, with historical significance. This includes a five-block-long retail area containing many former residences that have been turned into thriving businesses. Residential growth will continue to add to the population base of the community but at a slower rate due to the economy and availability of open land.

It is conservatively estimated that the population will level off at 25,000 residents. Coupled with continued development in the communities surrounding Geneva, the Tri City area of Batavia, Geneva & St. Charles will remain a dynamic and vital part of Kane County.

The fire department protects an area of approximately 13.5 square miles that extends to the eastern edge of the Mill Creek master planned community on the west, St. Charles on the north, Batavia on the south and West Chicago on the east. While largely residential, Geneva has a mix of commercial and light industrial development along the eastern and western edges of the city.



The fire department was legally established on February 9, 1895 by the City Council in Chapter X of the City of Geneva Municipal Code. At that time the Department consisted of one Fire Marshal, one Assistant Fire Marshal and “such number of Foremen and Firemen as the City Council may approve”. The current city of Geneva Municipal Code establishes the Fire Department in Chapter 14, Article II.



Prior to 1895, the townspeople used a hand-drawn fire pump and hose cart owned by a local factory when there was a fire. The department remained a volunteer organization until 1966 when it converted from a volunteer to a Paid-On-Call (POC) structure. In 1968, the city hired its first full time firefighter

to improve the department’s response time and start a fire prevention bureau. The POC firefighters staffed the single station on weekday evenings and for 24 hours on weekends while the full time firefighter worked a Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. schedule.

In the intervening years the departments has grown to 20 career firefighters, 6 contractual paramedic/firefighters, and 50 paid-on-call (POC) members who staff two stations. A three-platoon schedule is used for staffing and POC firefighters are on-duty 24 hours a day to augment and complete the staffing model. A philosophy developed in 1979, and which continues to this day, that quite simply states, all members are trained to the same basic level of firefighting and are expected to do the same job.

The city is governed by a 10-member council with two aldermen elected from each of the five wards and the mayor who is elected at-large from the community. The city uses a “weak mayor, strong-council model for policy and expenditure decisions. The day-to-day operations are managed by the city administrator who is appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of the council. Title 2, Chapter 2 of the City Code of the City of Geneva establishes the agency, the position of fire chief and the duties and functions of the department

Figure 1: Geneva Fire Department Organization Chart by Position

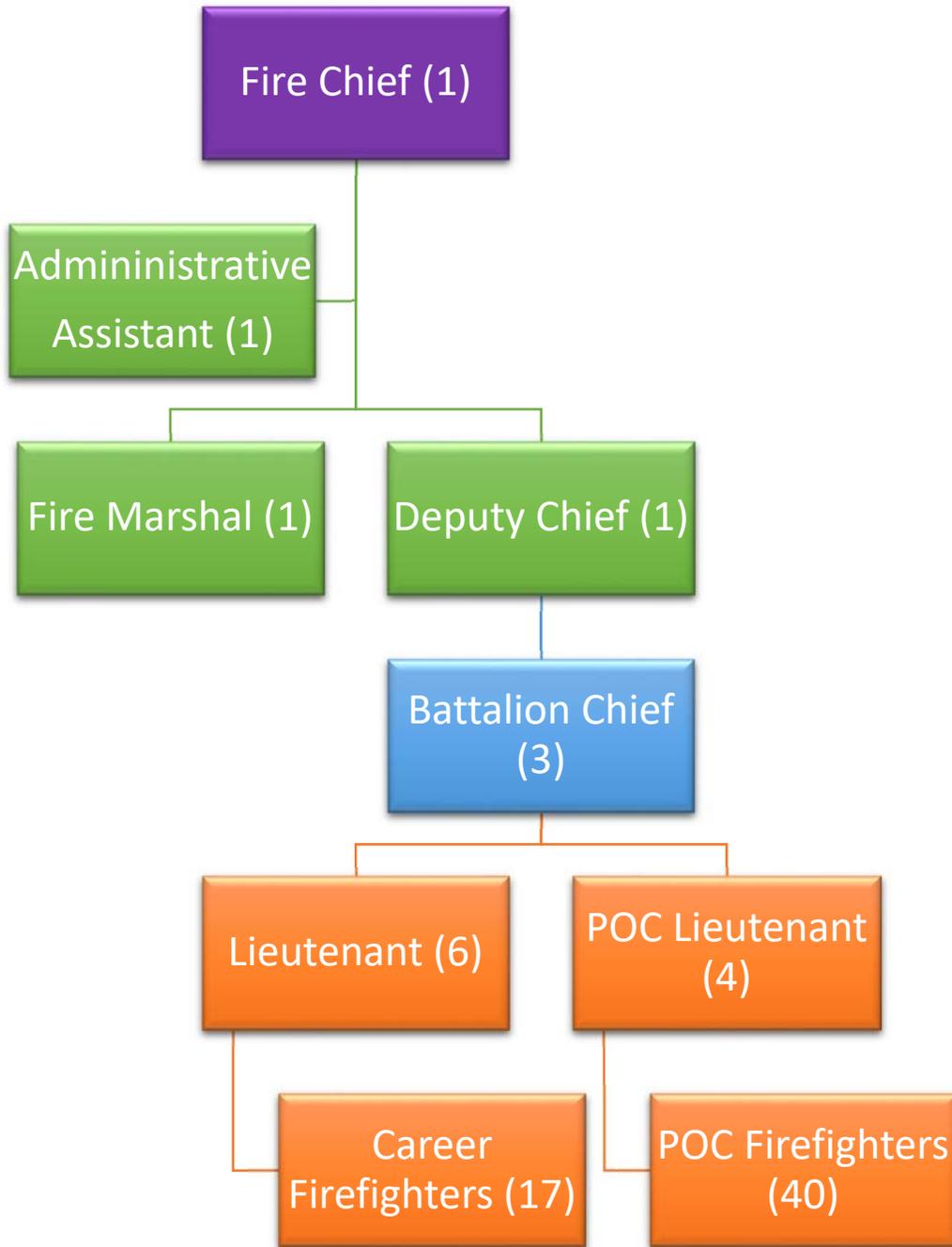
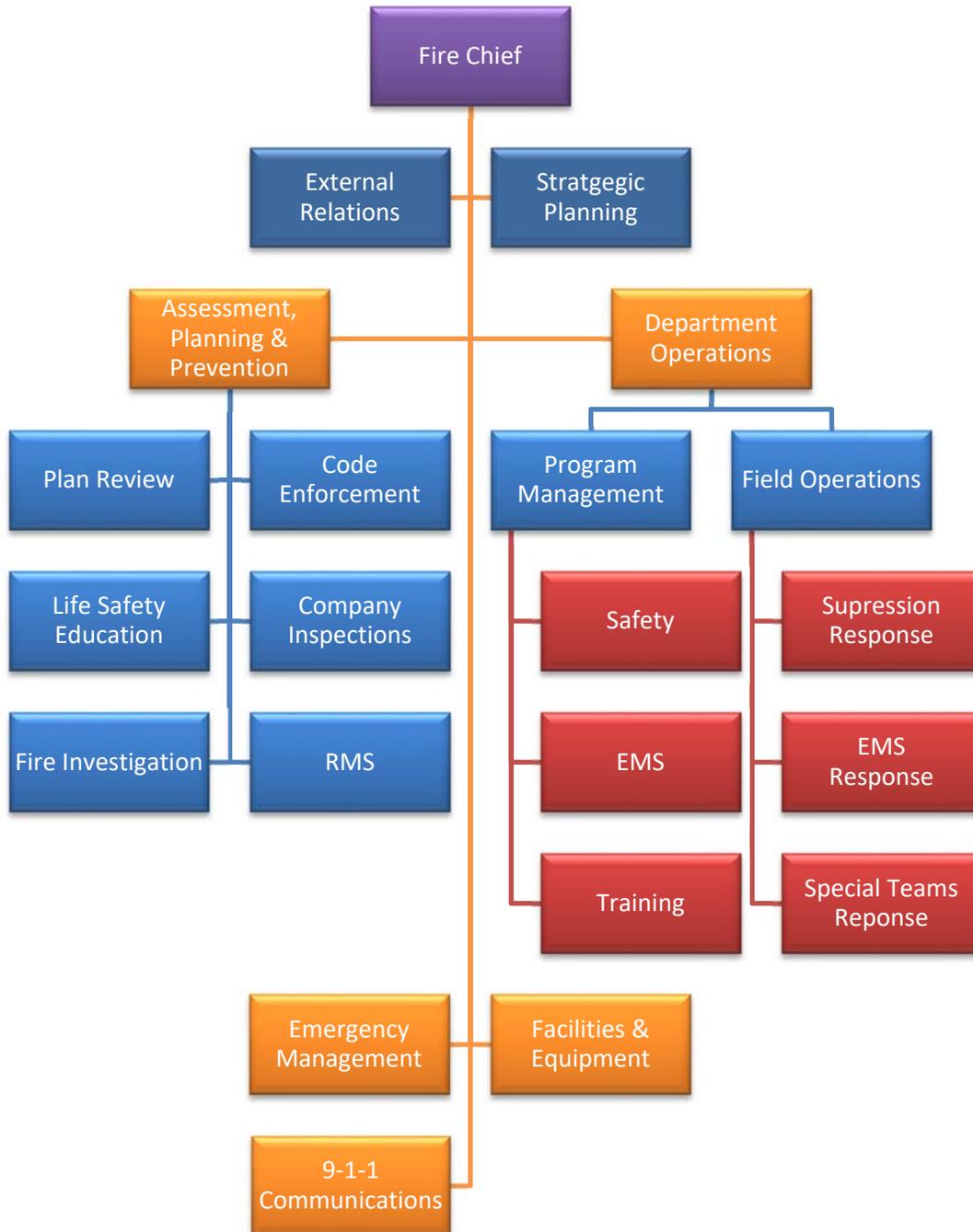


Figure 2: Geneva Fire Department – Functional Flow Chart



## Strategic Planning Process Introduction

The strategic planning process began when all fire department personnel were asked to help create the mission and vision for the Department. July 2014 marked a key milestone in the Strategic Planning process when the process to re-imagine the existing strategic plan started. To facilitate dialogue, the group considered three strategic questions that identified the needs of our constituents and provided an opportunity to gather ideas and suggestions for new ways of providing service.

**How do we become more competitive in the future?**

Competitiveness is about economics -- the cost of our business, in areas such as: labor, training, safety, maintenance, equipment replacement as well as how we utilize our resources, are all a part of the puzzle. Competitiveness is also about two other important factors in today's fire service: intellectual capital and reputation management. The department will have a number of career members who will be retiring in the next ten years. The organization needs to do an effective job in preparing future leaders to step up and continue moving the department forward and we must bring focus to managing our reputation. In many areas of the country, a negative attitude has developed toward public safety, which results from a variety of issues, such as a perception of poor service and reports of embarrassing or illegal behavior of firefighters are only two examples. This critical element cannot be overlooked by any public safety organization today. At a time when the cost of public safety can be upsetting, and the bombardment of negative news articles regarding the ineffectiveness of government can and does adversely impact the perception and reputation of the department.

**How can we create value added service for the customer beyond the 911 call?**

Sustainability is another critical element in remaining competitive. Cost's such as health care and pensions are dictated in large part by agencies and/or decisions that lie outside of local control, yet have a significant impact on the overall cost to deliver service. Sustaining existing service levels will require a competitive and innovative approach in how we utilize our resources in the future, and the ability to project long term cost and revenue trends for the city.

The fire department interacts with a small percentage of residents and visitors through emergency response and we cannot rely on those contacts to create value for everyone else whose only interaction with the department may be reading a headline or watching a story in the local media. Therefore, we must engage in a focused effort on customer service and community outreach to increase our visibility in the community and our customers. The challenge for us today is why should our customers buy our product? While we currently have a monopoly on the market; we should not assume that the public does not have a choice, because they do.

**How do we re-engineer and retool our profession for the future?**

People do not like change, and the fire service is no different. The fire service is tradition-bound, and while many of these traditions make us effective, it can also cause resistance to quick change. Re-engineering and retooling for the future must also focus on the fire service culture, not solely on the services and products we provide. We must explore service-delivery models that are more effective based upon changing service demands and must be open to exploring alternative

services that could be provided in the future. This could be a significant shift for many in our organization, but one the department has to make to be successful in this “new-normal” environment we work in today.

## What is Strategic Planning?

Strategic Planning is a management process that is used to set priorities, focus resources, strengthen operations, ensure that internal and external stakeholders are working toward common goals, establish agreement around intended outcomes/results, and assess and adjust our direction in response to a changing environment. It produces fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what the department is, who we serve, what we do, and why we do it, all with a focus on the future. Effective strategic planning articulates not only where we are going but also the actions needed to make progress, and how we will know if we are successful.

Effective strategic planning benefits from a consistent and cohesively structured process employed across all levels of the organization. Planning is a continuous process, one with no clear beginning and no clear end. While plans can be developed on a regular basis, it is the process of planning that is important, not the publication of the plan itself. The planning process should be flexible and dynamic, with new information from community members, like-providers, and life changes factored in appropriately.

Community-Driven Strategic Planning creates a platform for a wide range of opportunities.

Successful organizations have recognized that attaining community focus is essential. Aware of this necessity, public safety agencies must strategically plan how they will deliver high-quality products and services to the public through better and more efficient programs.

## Performance Assessment

Implied within every stage of the planning process is the ability to determine progress made toward the goals or targets set. This assessment ability is a monitoring function that simply tracks activities. It may be as simple as a “To Do List,” or as complicated as a plan of action with milestones and performance measures. Also implied within the planning process is the ability to measure effectiveness of the actions taken in the conduct of the organization's business.

## Steps to a Strategic Plan

Determine where we are: Some organizations see themselves how they WANT to see themselves, not how they actually appear to others. For an accurate picture of where our business is, we conducted external and internal reviews to get a clear understanding of the competitive environment, and our competencies.

Identify what's important: Focus on where we want to take the department over time. This sets the direction of the organization over the long term and clearly defines the mission and vision. From this analysis, we can determine the priority issues—those that are so significant to the overall well-being of the department they require the full and immediate attention of the entire management team. The strategic plan should focus on these issues.

Define what we must achieve: Define the expected objectives that clearly state what the department must achieve to address the priority issues.

Determine who is accountable: This is how we are going to get to where we want to go. The strategies, action plans, and budgets are all steps in the process that effectively communicates how we will allocate time, human capital, and money to address the priority issues and achieve the defined objectives.

Review: To ensure the plan performs as designed, regularly scheduled formal reviews of the process must be held to evaluate progress and refine the plan or objectives as necessary.



## Community–Driven Strategic Planning Process



1. Define the programs provided to the community
2. Establish the community's service program priorities
3. Establish the community's expectations of the organization
4. Identify any concerns the community may have about the organization
5. Identify the aspects of the organization that the community views positively
6. Revise the mission statement, giving careful attention to the services and programs currently provided, and which logically can be provided in the future
7. Identify the strengths of the organization
8. Identify any weaknesses of the organization
9. Identify areas of opportunity for the organization
10. Identify potential threats to the organization
11. Identify the organization's critical issues
12. Determine strategic initiatives for organizational improvement
13. Establish realistic goals and objectives for each initiative

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*"However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results."  
Winston Churchill*

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## Resource Management

*Figure 2: Community Risk Factors*

- ✓ The distribution of service requests in the community
- ✓ The frequency of the requests
- ✓ The ability of occupants to take self-preserving actions
- ✓ The construction features predominately used in the community
- ✓ The use of fire detection / suppression systems
- ✓ The number of target-hazard and critical infrastructure
- ✓ The presence of a sustained and adequate water supply for suppression
- ✓ The business-type and activity that occurs within the business occupancy

When creating a strategic plan and all that it encompasses a critical element in the process is the assessment of the emergency service delivery system and its ability to provide adequate resources for both fire and non-fire emergency incidents in the most effective means that the city can financially support. Each emergency requires a variable amount of staffing and resources to be effectively managed. Properly trained and equipped personnel must arrive, deploy, and mitigate the event within specific timeframes if successful emergency event strategies and tactical objectives are to be met.

Each event will require varying levels of resources. The higher the risk, the greater the number of resources that will be needed. More resources are required for the rescue of persons trapped within a high-risk building with a high-occupant load, than for a low-risk building with a low-occupant load. More resources are required to control fires in large, heavily loaded structures than in small buildings with limited contents. Therefore, decision making and the

distribution of department resources must also relate to potential demands for service.

With resource management, the objective is to have a distribution and concentration of resources that are able to reach a majority of events in the shortest period of time to begin to mitigate the emergency. There are many factors that impact the City's overall risk level and in turn influence the methods chosen to deploy resources throughout the community.

### How is the risk level of a community determined?

Evaluation of risk factors lead to the number of personnel needed to conduct the critical tasks necessary to contain the event in an acceptable time frame. The level of service provided by an agency should be based on their ability to respond to a variety of emergencies after conducting a risk assessment. This process starts with examining the Community Risk Factors which requires analysis and identifies the frequency, severity and distribution of risk related factors found in the community.

Overall, the city has a wide range of potential risks. There will be an inverse relationship between risk and frequency of events. Daily events are routine and often result in minimal losses, while significant events are less frequent. If the risk management system is working in the community, a catastrophic loss should be an extraordinary event. The objective of community risk management is to reduce serious loss to a very unusual event. This is best accomplished when a Standard of Cover has been developed, which helps to determine resources needed for those risks identified within the City based upon the community risk factors

noted and a thorough and continuous effort to enforce codes and educate both residents and businesses.

Figure 3: Community Risk Analysis

Community Risk Assessment Model		
Frequency of Events	Low	High
	Extraordinary Event	Total Destruction
	Rare Event	Major Destruction
	Annual Event	Significant Destruction
	Monthly Event	Minor Loss
	Weekly Event	Insignificant Loss
	Daily Event	
	High	Low

This chart illustrates the dimensions that are a part of the risk analysis of a community. There is an inverse relationship between the frequency of an event and the consequences it can have for a community. Frequent events such as a vehicle accident, activated fire alarm and the like tend to have a minor to insignificant impact on the residents and our resources are structured for the daily, weekly, and monthly events. However, When an extraordinary event, a tornado or a train derailment with a leak or spill of hazardous materials, rare events for sure, but ones that can have a significant impact on Geneva and are beyond the resources of the community to effectively manage these incidents without substantial assistance.

### Delivery of Emergency Services

Currently there are multiple methods used to evaluate or judge the delivery of emergency services including, the Insurance Service Office (ISO) Grading Schedule, NFPA 1720, (a consensus based voluntary standard on the deployment of resources), and the CFAI Accreditation Model. All have relevance, and analyze different segments of the overall delivery system and performance of the organization. When evaluating performance, it is imperative that all be considered in respect to the deployment of the emergency response system.

The criteria that follows has been used as the basis for our analysis of the distribution and concentration of our resources, the provision of service, and the management of risk in our community:

1. First unit total response time to an emergency call
2. Total response time of paramedics to an ALS call
3. Total response time for the placement of 18 firefighters on the scene of a fire (Effective Response Force)
4. A focused effort of community risk reduction in single family dwellings fires

Another key objective in all the services we provide is the delivery of good customer service by implementing a strategic customer experience. Outstanding customer service is a result of an organizational expectation to deliver service to our customers by understanding that “it is an essential element to our mission and vision, and is reflective of the values of the department.” As such, the department has strategic initiatives, goals, and objectives which support core service level objectives and will be used to articulate elements of the strategic plan.

## Process and Acknowledgements

The department thanks our external and internal stakeholders for their participation and input into the Community–Driven Strategic Planning Process. In particular we recognize Mr. Mike Antenore for his leadership and commitment to this process.

Development of the GFD strategic plan took place in June, 2014 - April, 2015, during which time representatives from GFD held an open meeting to which residents and business owners in Geneva, or external stakeholders, were invited. Input from the meeting revolved around community expectations, concerns, and other comments about the department. The staff expresses a special ‘thank you’ to community members who contributed to the creation of this strategic plan, as it was truly a team effort. Those present at this meeting were as follows:

*Table 1: Geneva Fire Department Stakeholders*

Shirley Carlson	Steve Andersson
Joe Stanton	Jay Lau
Eileen Gillespie	Heidi Figs
Dan Klinkhammer	Fred Case
Peggy Carlson	Dave Rogers
Amy Campbell	Jim Kautz
John Martin	Arnold Northrup
Patricia Ward	Ron Singer
Traci McElroy	Tim Vetang
Beth Strawniak	Robert Backus
Tim Boewe	Emma Juby
Joel Erickson	Doug Holzrichter
Carolyn Hill	Jay Moffet
Jean Gaines	



## Community Group Findings

A key element of GFD’s organizational philosophy is having a high level of commitment to the community, as well as recognizing the importance of community satisfaction. Therefore, the agency invited community representatives to participate in a meeting focusing on the community’s needs and expectations of the agency. Discussion centered on the present service programs provided, and on priorities for the future.

## Community Priorities

In order to dedicate time, energy, and resources on services most desired by the community, we need to understand what the customers consider to be their priorities. The external stakeholders were asked to prioritize the programs offered by the agency through a process of direct comparison.

*Table 1 Community Service Program Priorities*

<b>Program</b>	<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
Fire Suppression	1	Swift Water Rescue	9
Emergency Medical Service	2	Confined Space Rescue	10
In-Service Inspections	3	In-School Safety Classes	11
Code Enforcement	4	Assisting Invalids	12
Hazardous Materials	5	Home Safety Inspections	13
CPR & AED Training	6	Elder Watch	14
Structural Collapse	7	Risk Watch	15
Accredited Agency Status	8		



## Community Expectations

Understanding what the community expects of fire department is critically important to developing a long-range perspective. With this knowledge, internal emphasis may need to be changed or bolstered to fulfill the community needs. In certain areas, education on the level of service that is already available may be all that is needed. Following are the expectations of the community's external stakeholders:

*Table 2 Community Expectations of the Geneva Fire Department In Priority Order*

1. Provide fire control & suppression
2. Provide Emergency Medical Treatment & Transport
3. Quick Response
4. Timely Response
5. Respond to emergencies ASAP
6. Prompt, efficient, effective response to emergency situations including fire & rescues on land and water.
7. Be current on issues in the community that will hinder a safe environment.
8. Professional service
9. Save lives as situations present themselves
10. Quick and well-trained responses to any personal injury, property damage or fire incidents
11. Provide community safety – through educational opportunities
12. Well trained staff
13. Interface with other agencies, such as the police, neighboring fire departments, medical facilities, or the EMA
14. Partnership with other service providers in the community
15. Professional staff who know how to evaluate and react to an emergency
16. Paramedic service
17. Education of the public
18. Allocate resources to respond to the dangers that are in every community
19. Cooperation with other communities to insure adequate response and back-up
20. Quick, safe response
21. Maintain accredited status
22. Obtain and maintain equipment needed to meet the challenges in the city
23. Code enforcement
24. On-going evaluation of services and equipment needed and available vis-à-vis services & equipment required by commercial & residential building trends
25. Great teamwork with personality and humor to make the client feel comfortable and safe
26. Disaster relief
27. Code enforcement
28. Able-bodied and ready to save & protect from fire
29. Assist people in harm's way
30. Ensure homes and businesses comply with safety regulations
31. Staff that is professionally trained
32. Public education
33. Compassion and understanding of civilians
34. Provide the community peace of mind that you will be there at our moment of need
35. Fire prevention bureau staffing
36. Assist the elderly
37. Inspection & code enforcement
38. Commercial safety inspections
39. Educate children on what to do in case of a fire and how to prevent one from happening
40. Engaged in the community through education
41. Solid, well-maintained equipment
42. Educational outreach programs
43. Commercial and residential building codes

- with minimum requirements to protect public safety
- 44. Community education about safety
- 45. Accessible
- 46. Professional

- 47. Budget
- 48. Code violations in the home and business
- 49. Medical attention
- 50. Fire inspections



## Areas of Community Concern

The Community–Driven Strategic Planning Process would be incomplete without an expression from the community regarding concerns about the agency. Some areas of concern may in fact be a weakness within the delivery system, while some weaknesses may also be misperceptions based upon a lack of information or incorrect information.

*Table 3 Areas of Community Concern - Random Order*

1. Limited resources may cause the dilution of services
2. Ever increasing cost of equipment and employees
3. Very few, on the very few occasions we have needed them, response time was excellent and the ability to solve the issue was fast and professional. If anything, I hope the population growth in the future does not affect the speed of response time
4. Concerned about rising pension costs and relationships to services (will money be diverted from services to pay for pensions?)
5. Do they have proper equipment?
6. Funding
7. Lack of resources / staff
8. Ability to respond to a mass disaster with adequate and appropriate resources (not necessarily a problem, just unknown).
9. Do they have the resources, training, and equipment along with the direction to perform their mission?
10. Are personnel adequately qualified?
11. Is the geography of the city properly accommodated to the number of stations?
12. Is the leadership ready for the next 10 – 15 years?
13. State mandates that take away from our local resources
14. Health and safety of the firefighters – concerned about their exposure to carcinogens in fire and smoke
15. Safety of the firefighters as they do their job
16. Length of response time with the fire stations at the edges of the city
17. Not having a paramedic at the west side station
18. Increasing amount of traffic in area may impeded response times or cause accidents while responding
19. Maintain training in tight budgets
20. Ability to respond to new threats quickly
21. Wasting efforts on false alarms
22. Disaster plans – is the plan set in place if we have a disaster? Are drills set up?
23. Volunteers – are you getting assistance from the community or other counties?
24. Funding – are you setting funding for education / training?
25. The ability to conform with the increasing regulations and the expanding definition of an emergency
26. As code enforcement improves, with presumed less “fire” calls, the mission of the department may blur and community support suffer as a result

## Positive Community Comments

*Table 4 Positive Community Comments - Random Order*

1. Timeliness & Extensive knowledge. They were able to solve a “hidden problem” that was behind a wall
2. Good response times
3. Work well with community partners
4. Personnel to be competent with regard to their assigned tasks
5. Very well trained professionals
6. Good response times
7. Great community relations – outreach, education, etc.
8. Trained professionals
9. Approachable
10. Community involvement
11. Professionalism
12. Well trained members
13. Leadership
14. Sincere servants to the community
15. Public perception
16. Dedicated to the task
17. Quality service
18. Well trained
19. Strong leadership
20. Low turnover
21. Good leadership
22. Dedicated professionals
23. Good training
24. Community support
25. Strong leadership in command position
26. Well managed
27. Committed to the community well-being and safety
28. Highly responsive
29. Well trained fire and paramedic staff
30. Good People
31. Confident leadership (chief)
32. Quick response time
33. Quick response
34. Professional staff – well trained, treated me well as a user
35. Preparedness – fire safety, medical training, physical strength
36. The willingness to sacrifice for others
37. Good communication skills and the ability to educate
38. Training
39. Equipment
40. I’d like to see educational training brought into companies – companies hold fire and disaster drills but many questions go unanswered
41. Desire to head off a disaster before it happens
42. Educated in disasters, willingness to help
43. Response time
44. Accessibility
45. Understanding
46. Response
47. I have always been impressed with its professionalism and visible striving toward increased, viable community service

## Internal Stakeholder Group Findings

The internal stakeholder work sessions were conducted over the course of three days. These sessions served to discuss the agency’s approach to Community-Driven Strategic Planning, with focus on the GFD’s Mission, Vision, as well as the perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. The work sessions involved participation by the broad agency representation in attendance, as named below and pictured on the next page.

*Table 5: Geneva Fire department Internal Stakeholders*

Colin Burgess Firefighter/Paramedic	Fred Kriwanek Battalion Chief	Kevin Swanson Battalion Chief	Kevin Forest Battalion Chief
Nick Cellini Firefighter	Dave Lentz Firefighter/Paramedic	Mark Einwich Deputy Chief	Mike Antenore Lieutenant
Patrick Burgess Firefighter	Carlos Aburto Firefighter	Eric Warfel Firefighter	Dan Maluta Firefighter/Paramedic
Greg Knopka Firefighter/Paramedic	Tony Campagna Firefighter	John DePauw Firefighter/Paramedic	Andy Giarratano Firefighter/Paramedic
Gavin Hayes Lieutenant	Scot Helmlinger Firefighter	Matt Lohse Lieutenant	Dave Skaar Firefighter
Andy Ryan Firefighter/Paramedic	Nick Pedersen Firefighter	Jordan Stallman Firefighter	Jake Cichorski Firefighter
Mark Shultz Firefighter	Mike Wigder Firefighter/Paramedic	Rob Moore Firefighter/Paramedic	Zach Schullo Firefighter
Lauren Butler Firefighter	Fred Kriwanek Battalion Chief	Andrew Shad Firefighter/Paramedic	Dave Mashal Firefighter
Steve Olson Fire Chief	Fred Tichenor Lieutenant	Steve Jones Firefighter	Joel McNally Firefighter
Dave Link Firefighter/Paramedic	Alex White Firefighter/Paramedic	Nathan Beck Firefighter/Paramedic	Matt Williams Firefighter
Mike Benz Lieutenant / Paramedic	Phil Affrunti Firefighter	Chad Clark Firefighter	Phil Conley Fire Command Aide
Rod Johnson Lieutenant / Paramedic	Dustin Schultze Firefighter	Ted Sciaky Lieutenant	Andrew Sciaky Recruit
Andrew Bodowski Recruit	Riley Coomes Recruit	Scott Singer Firefighter	Mike Krueger Recruit
Alex Drager Recruit	Mike Frieders Lieutenant	Cam DeHaven Firefighter	Will Gray Firefighter/Paramedic

## Vision Statement

We are an internationally accredited fire and rescue agency dedicated to providing diverse, professional and skilled services to the citizens of Geneva. We believe in deep collaboration with both our internal and external partners to maintain a safe community in which to raise a family and conduct business.

## Mission Statement

A work group of the GFD's internal stakeholders met to review the existing Mission and collectively agreed to the following.

We will be a leader among our peers and to the community through compassion, selflessness and the stewardship of the public's trust. We will do this through education, prevention, mitigation of fire & non-fire risk, collaborative relationships with external partners and providing diverse

## Values

Establishing values and associated statements embraced by all members of an organization is extremely important. They recognize those features and considerations that make up the personality of the organization. The GFD internal stakeholders agreed to the following values terms and supporting statements.

### **Compassion**

We affirm that our pursuit of compassion is grounded in core values, including empathy, civility and honesty.

### **Education**

Is the cornerstone of everything we do for our community

### **Trust**

Building and earning trust is a priority for our department.

The Mission and Values are the core foundation of this agency. Every effort will be made to keep these current and meaningful so that the individuals who make up the GFD are guided by them in the accomplishment of the goals, objectives, and day-to-day tasks.

## Programs and Services

The GFD internal stakeholders identified the following core programs provided to the community, as well as the services that enable the agency to deliver those programs:

*Table 6: Core Programs of the Geneva Fire Department*

Fire Suppression	Emergency Medical Services
Technical Rescue	Hazardous Materials Mitigation
Code Enforcement / Life Safety Ed.	Public Fire/EMS Safety Education
Fire Investigation	Domestic Preparedness Planning and Response

*Table 7: Support Services of the Geneva Fire Department*

• Risk management	• Tri-Com Central Dispatch
• Law enforcement	• Project Medical Director
• Information technology	• City attorney
• Mutual & auto aid agreements	• Support staff
• Board Of Fire & Police Commissioners	• Southern Fox Valley EMS
• Community strategies	• Red Cross
• IAFF Local 4287	• Health and safety
• Facilities maintenance	• EOC
• City government	• Geneva District 304
• Project management	• Training
• Health and wellness	• Social services agencies
• Legislative body	• Salvation Army
• Financial services	• Northwestern – Delnor Hospital
• Geneva Emergency Management Agency	• Geneva Park District
• Assessment & Planning	•

## S.W.O.T. Analysis

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis is designed to have an agency candidly identify its positive and less-than-desirable attributes. The EFRS participated in this activity to record their strengths and weaknesses, as well as the possible opportunities and potential threats.

### Organizational 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 to ensure that strengths are consistent with the issues facing the organization. Often, identification of organizational strengths leads to the channeling of efforts toward primary community needs that match those strengths. Programs that do not match organizational strengths, or the primary function of the organization, should be seriously reviewed to evaluate the rate of return on staff time. Through a consensus process, the internal stakeholders identified the strengths of the GFD as follows:

*Table 8: Strengths of the Geneva Fire Department*

• Community-oriented organization
• Personnel live in the community
• Department cohesiveness / rapport / morale
• Stable personnel ranks / virtually no turnover
• Continually seeking opportunities to improve the organization
• Work collaboratively with fellow city departments
• Data-driven planning and decision-making
• Incident operations structure
• Highly trained resources
• Access to an extensive array of mutual aid resources
• Rigorous recruit training program
• Regularly do more with less
• Life safety programs: code enforcement, public education, risk
• Training programs/instructors
• Explorer Program
• Paid-On-Call Program
• Going above & beyond on a day-to-day basis / compassionate
• Well maintained apparatus/stations
• Charitable causes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close collaboration with neighbors</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stable labor-management relations</li> </ul>

## Organizational Weaknesses

For an 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 where it functions poorly or not at all. These opportunities for improvement and are those day-to-day issues and concerns that may slow or inhibit progress. The following items were identified by the internal stakeholders as weaknesses:

*Table 9: Weaknesses of the Geneva Fire Department*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educating the public on what services we provide</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly do more with less</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfilled position</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistent callback coverage</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate funding for capital products</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More robust safety program</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited funding for special team training/drills</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited involvement of POC's on special teams</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of EMS training for those who don't do it a lot</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not carrying Epi-Pens or all of the expanded-scope BLS equipment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal communications</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak Wellness program</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aging work force</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding for outside education</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of large scale drills</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Station wear safety standards</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• POC uniform allowance</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special team equipment (hazmat &amp; swift water)</li> </ul>

## Strategic Opportunities

The opportunities for an organization depend on the identification of strengths and weaknesses and how they can be enhanced. The focus of opportunities is not solely on existing service, but on expanding and developing new possibilities both inside and beyond the traditional service area. The internal stakeholders identified the following potential opportunities:

*Table 10: Opportunities for the Geneva Fire Department*

• Communications (internal) technology
• Improve staffing to better cover open career shifts due to scheduled time off
• Expand the use of Communication & Data Technologies
• Wireless access for special teams in the field
• Station alerting
• Automatic Vehicle Location
• Preplan info move to CAD-based platform
• Off-duty call notification
• Better use of smart phones
• Simulators & training aids
• Grant funding
• Fire ground overhaul operations
• Basic Life Support EMS equipment
• Education and funding
• Collaboration with neighboring departments
• Mobile integrated healthcare
• Succession planning
• Deepen the reach of the department safety program

## Environmental Threats

To draw strength and gain full benefit of any opportunity, the threats to the organization, with their new risks and challenges, must also be identified in the strategic planning process. Fundamental to the success of any strategic plan is the understanding that threats are not completely and/or directly controlled by the organization. Some of the current and potential threats identified by the internal stakeholders were as follows:

*Table 11: Threats to the Geneva Fire Department*

• Funding, including unfunded mandates
• Privatization
• Time (not enough)
• Community apathy
• Lack of community awareness (loss of community support)
• Department consolidation
• Threat to the health of the employees
• Regulatory legislative changes
• Loss of membership amongst the ranks of the Paid On Call



## Critical Gap Analysis

After reviewing the GFD’s core programs and support services, and identifying internal strengths and weaknesses along with external opportunities and threats, we identified our primary gap analysis as the foundation for the development of our objectives and goals.

*Table 12: Critical Gap Analysis*

<p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public engagement and education</li> <li>• Communicating fire rescue roles and response</li> <li>• Consistency of internal communications</li> <li>• Improve community involvement and education</li> <li>• Interagency cooperation</li> </ul>	<p><b>Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development</li> <li>• Mentoring efforts</li> <li>• Health and wellness program</li> <li>• Training with outside agencies</li> <li>• Special team education &amp; training needs.</li> <li>• Cultural and social expectations of and for new firefighters</li> </ul>	<p><b>Personnel Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurate performance measures</li> <li>• Succession planning</li> <li>• Loss of institutional knowledge</li> <li>• Increasing EMS responsibilities</li> <li>• Fire service research and development</li> <li>• Improved hands on training</li> <li>• Health and wellness programming</li> </ul>
<p><b>Adaptability of Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategy - Tactics - Visibility</li> <li>• New technology</li> <li>• Infill projects, change of use</li> <li>• Specialized risks in the community</li> <li>• Special team resources</li> </ul>	<p><b>Adaptability to Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community risk reduction</li> <li>• Decrease response times</li> <li>• Proactive prevention - code enforcement/development</li> <li>• Changing demographics</li> <li>• City infrastructure</li> </ul>	
<p><b>External Communication Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External stakeholder input</li> <li>• Community awareness, involvement, and visibility</li> <li>• Community Education</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personnel: career, paid on call, and administrative</li> <li>• Inventory control</li> <li>• Maintain capital replacement schedule</li> <li>• Efficient management of budget</li> <li>• Care and maintenance of vehicles, equipment, and facilities</li> </ul>	

## Strategic Initiatives

After a careful review of the agency's critical gap analysis, the following core strategic initiatives were identified to guide the agency in establishing the long-term goal plans.

*Table 13: Strategic Initiatives*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Better serve our customers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strengthen the use of data and technology</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effectively manage resources and plan for long-term resiliency</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cultivate an environment of excellence and respect</li></ul>



## 2021 – 2026 Goals & Objectives

Strategic Initiative	Goal	Objective
<b>Better Serving Our Customers</b>	Meet Community Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct data analysis to track performance and measure outcomes</li> <li>• Work collaboratively with partner public safety agencies</li> <li>• Provide educational opportunities for residents</li> <li>• Lead community disaster planning efforts</li> <li>• Respond to changing demographics in the community</li> <li>• Seek input from internal and external stakeholders</li> </ul>
	Community Risk Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain current fire and life safety codes</li> <li>• On-going analysis of fire &amp; non-fire risk</li> <li>• Balance “Best Practice” vs. available resources</li> <li>• Conducts assessment &amp; planning through regular evaluation and code enforcement</li> <li>• Evaluate opportunities for additional sharing of resources with partner agencies</li> <li>• Develop educational programs based in-part on annual response data, community demographics, and program evaluation</li> </ul>
<b>Strengthening the Use of Data and Technology</b>	Emergency Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand use of broadband resources during field operations</li> <li>• Replace out of date station alerting systems</li> <li>• Expand the use of iPad apps to improve field based data management</li> </ul>
	Incident Response & Code Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand opportunities to utilize iPads to reduce/eliminate paper based management systems</li> <li>• Use data analysis to evaluate specialized risk in the community</li> <li>• Replace records management system</li> </ul>

<b>Effectively Managing Resources and Planning for Long-Term Resiliency</b>	Personnel Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify educational paths for career development</li> <li>• Promote and assist staff members in obtaining professional credentialing tied to their position</li> <li>• Look for opportunities to further develop the city health and wellness program</li> <li>• Expectations and motivations of younger demographic entering the fire service</li> <li>• Improve training and certification tracking</li> <li>• Investigate developing an acting Battalion Chief program</li> </ul>
	Apparatus & Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain capital improvement plan schedule</li> </ul>
	Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilizing the city’s facilities assessment plan to manage necessary repairs, maintenance and upgrades to the fire stations</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

The Community-Driven Strategic Planning Process dealt with establishing the mission, values, S.W.O.T., critical issues, service gaps, and strategic initiatives of the department. In order to achieve the mission realistic goals and objectives must be established to enhance strengths, address identified weaknesses, provide individual members with clear direction, and address the concerns of the community. The internal stakeholders met for several hours to complete this critical phase of the planning process.

Department leadership will annually assign resources and meet quarterly during each fiscal year to review progress toward these goals and objectives, adjusting timelines as needs and the environment change. The goals included in this plan will be incorporated into the annual budget process as time and financial resources permit. Staff will develop the specific objectives necessary to accomplish the goal when it is incorporated into the budget plan for the coming fiscal year. The city council will review the proposed objectives through the annual budget development process and either approve or reject the initiatives.

The goals and objectives are management tools and as such, shall be updated on an on-going basis to insure they continue to reflect the needs of the community and the organization.

## Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

<b>Accreditation</b>	A process by which an association or agency evaluates and recognizes a program of study or an institution as meeting certain predetermined standards or qualifications. It applies only to institutions or agencies and their programs of study or their services.
<b>CAD</b>	Computer aided dispatch
<b>Customer(s)</b>	Residents, business / property owners of, and visitors to Geneva
<b>EMT-B</b>	Emergency Medical Technician-Basic which is certified and regulated by the Illinois Department of Public Health
<b>EMT-P</b>	Certified paramedic who is licensed and regulated by the Illinois Department of Public Health
<b>Environment</b>	Factors that interact with and can affect an organization. These can include economic, political, cultural, and physical conditions inside or outside the boundaries of the organization.
<b>EOC</b>	Emergency Operations Center
<b>ERF</b>	Effective Response Force
<b>Firehouse</b>	Firehouse records management system, the primary software used by the department in nearly all facets of operations
<b>GEMA</b>	Geneva Emergency Management Agency
<b>GPD</b>	Geneva Police Department
<b>Input</b>	A performance indication where the value of resources are used to produce an output
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>Mission Statement</b>	An enduring statement of purpose; the organization's reason for existence. Describes what the organization

does, for whom it does it, and how it does it.

**NICOR**

Northern Illinois Gas Company

**Outcome**

A performance indication where qualitative consequences are associated with a program/service; i.e., the ultimate benefit to the customer.

**Output**

A performance indicator where a quality or number of units produced is identified.

**Performance Measure**

A specific measurable result for each goal and/or program that indicates achievement.

**PPE**

Personal Protective Equipment

**RMS**

Records Management System

**Stakeholder**

Any person, group, or organization that can place a claim on, or influence an organization's resources or outputs, is affected by those outputs, or has an interest in or expectation of the organization.

**Strategic Goal**

A broad target that defines how the agency will carry out its mission over a specific period of time. An aim; the final result of action. Something to accomplish in assisting the agency to move forward.

**Strategic Objective**

A specific, measurable accomplishment required to realize the successful completion of a strategic goal

**Strategic Plan**

A long-range planning document that defines the mission of the agency and broadly identifies how it will be accomplished, and that provides the framework for more detailed annual and operational plans

**Strategic Planning**

The continuous and systematic process whereby guiding members of an organization make decisions about its future, develop the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future, and determine how success is to be measured

**Strategy**

A description of how a strategic objective will be achieved. A plan or methodology for achieving a goal.

**Tri-City Ambulance**

A multi-jurisdictional emergency medical service delivery and transport system providing advanced life support (ALS) care and funded by five local units of government

**Tri-Com**

Regional dispatch center owned and operated by the cities of Batavia, Geneva, and St. Charles and governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the police and fire chiefs and one alderman from each community

**Vision**

An idealized view of a desirable and potentially achievable future state - where or what an organization would like to be in the future

