

NORTH METRO



FIRE RESCUE DISTRICT



Strategic Plan 2014-2018



Message from the Chief

I am pleased to present the North Metro Fire Rescue District's Strategic Plan for 2014 through 2018. This plan is the result of a yearlong collaborative effort between members of our organization. Its text provides a framework for continued growth and improvement of the vital services we provide to our community. Through our planning process, we have gained a stronger understanding of our customers' needs and expectations and incorporated this understanding in the development of the District's goals.

This planning effort comes on the heels of a very successful 2009—2013 Strategic Plan, which brought significant enhancements in service delivery and organizational efficiency including: district-wide expansion of fire-based emergency transport services; enhanced medical training and quality assurance programs; and, the centralization of administration, fire prevention and life safety personnel. Energized by the success of our previous strategic plan, we entered this planning process with optimism and confidence in our abilities to implement future changes and achieve our mission. North Metro Fire has become a leader in providing exceptional service in a cost-effective manner. We are proud of our resourcefulness and consider this core strength essential to North Metro's continued success.

This strategic plan identifies four main goals that will guide us as we work towards achieving our mission and fulfilling our vision: (1) Enhance Customer Service and Life Safety Education; (2) Maximize Emergency Response Effectiveness; (3) Recruit, Develop and Retain a Strong Workforce; and, (4) Improve Organizational Efficiencies and Sustainability. This plan is a living, dynamic document that will be updated annually, adapting to our community's needs.

I wish to extend my thanks and praises to the members of the planning committee whose awareness, professionalism and tireless effort have produced a strategic plan that will serve our community well. Additionally, I would like to thank all members of the District for your unwavering commitment to service that is demonstrated on a daily basis—you truly embody the spirit of our slogan, "Excellence Through Each Individual Act."



David Ramos, Fire Chief
North Metro Fire Rescue District

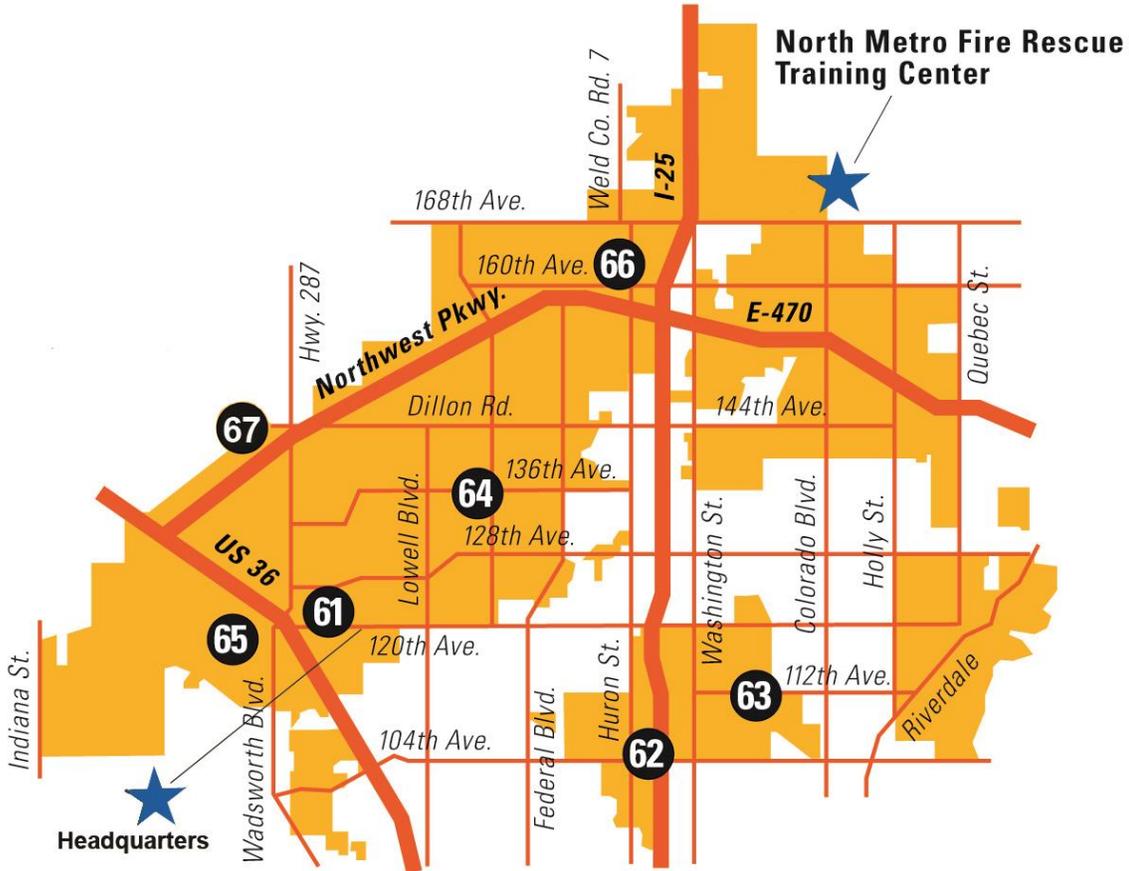
Background

Since 1946, North Metro Fire Rescue District has served to protect its citizens and their property as an all-hazard emergency response agency and provider of fire prevention and life safety education services.

Originally called West Adams County Fire Protection, the District began with one station and 30 volunteer firefighters who covered a primarily rural area of Eastlake, Colorado. In 1967, the first full-time, professional firefighter came on line. Today, North Metro Fire is a thriving fire district mirroring the diversity and growth of its community with 99 full-time firefighters on the line and 25 administrative and fire prevention personnel. North Metro Fire is a special district governed by a board of directors elected at large to serve four-year terms.

The District operates seven active fire stations that cover 63 square miles and provide services to approximately 111,000 residents including the City and County of Broomfield, the City of Northglenn and unincorporated areas of Boulder, Adams, Weld and Jefferson Counties. The District maintains a constant response capability of five engines, two ladder trucks, five ambulances and several specialized rescue, hazardous material and support vehicles.

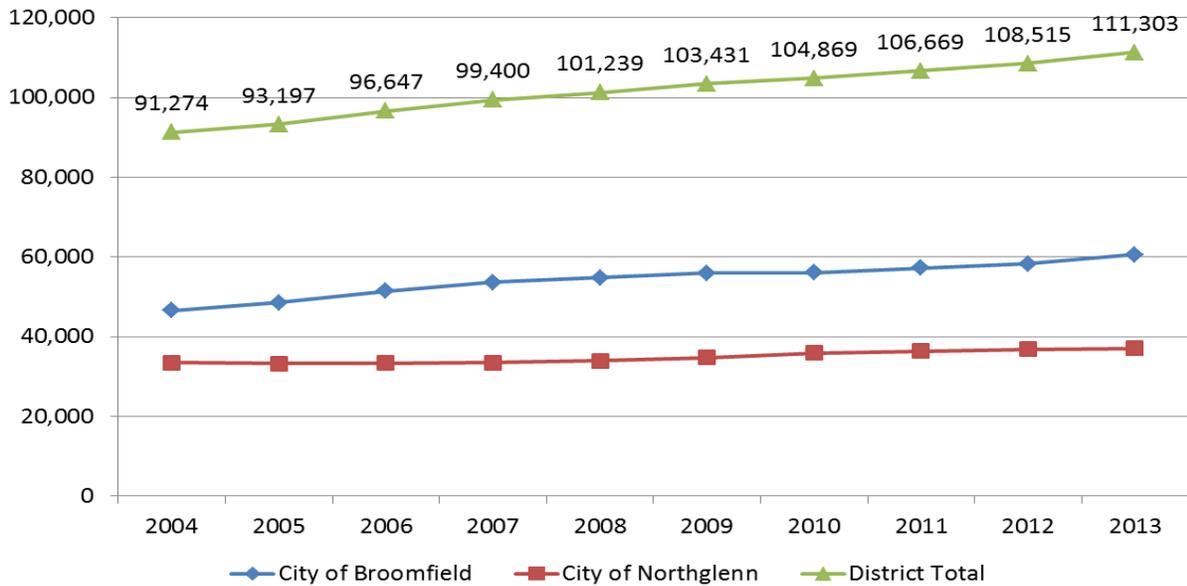
In addition, 125 miles of divided interstate and toll highways span the District. These major traffic corridors carry very high traffic volumes (225,000 vehicles daily) from surrounding communities and add to the overall service volume.



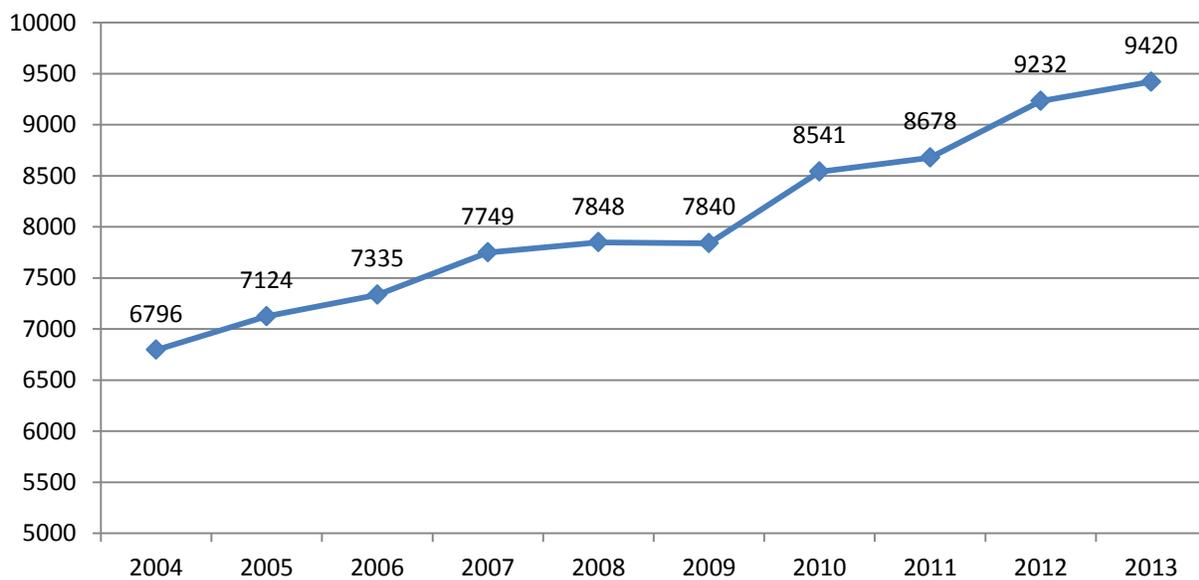
Background

North Metro Fire's population continues to grow at a rapid pace and, correspondingly, so do the demands on the District for emergency and life safety services. Over the past ten years the District's population has grown by 22 percent. During this same 10 years period, North Metro's emergency call volume has grown by 37 percent, significantly outpacing population growth.

District Population



District Emergency Call Volume



Background

Due to the growth and diversity of needs within the community, North Metro Fire responds to a variety of incidents. Through extensive training and experience, North Metro responders have earned a strong reputation in the fire service industry and within the community for their response capability and professionalism. Stringent hiring standards, a dedication to continuing education and a state-of-the-art Training Center contribute to a highly capable workforce trained and equipped to deal with any emergency.

Of the many services North Metro Fire provides its residents, the primary areas of focus include:

- **Emergency medical service** - Calls for medical assistance account for around 70% of all responses by the District. As a commitment to its citizens, each North Metro Fire engine and ambulance is staffed with a minimum of one paramedic and fully equipped to handle advanced medical life support.
- **Fire protection and rescue** - Responses to fires of all types, specialized rescue responses, hazardous material mitigation, airport support, automatic alarm response and other requests for assistance make up the remaining 30% of District 911 calls. The District has specially trained teams in wildland fire, technical rescue, hazardous materials and airport rescue to deploy for riskier and more technical incidents.
- **Fire prevention** – The Fire Prevention Division provides code enforcement, public education and fire investigation services for the District. Trained Fire Prevention professionals partner with City and County officials, business owners and contractors to ensure all buildings in the community meet applicable national fire codes and hazardous material regulations.
- **Fire and life safety education** – Working with schools, community groups and senior organizations, North Metro’s life safety educator and firefighters proactively help prevent injuries and fires through education and raising awareness.

After nearly 70 years, North Metro continues to grow its services, adapting to the needs of residents and businesses in its District. With the guidance of a new strategic plan, the District continues its commitment to enhance customer service by developing programs that best align with the vision of its community.



Planning Process

The development of this strategic plan was a yearlong process that included broad stakeholder participation. A central focus of the planning efforts was to better understand the needs and expectations of the community. This awareness enhanced North Metro Fire Rescue District's ability to develop goals and objectives that ensure progress towards a shared vision.

The planning committee was comprised of 37 employees from all levels and service areas of the organization. Community participation was achieved through focus groups, survey collection and stakeholder planning meetings.

Environmental Scan and SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)

The first phase of the planning process was to conduct a SWOT analysis and to complete a comprehensive internal and external environmental scan. This assessment process provided insight and a consensus understanding of North Metro Fire's strengths to be leveraged, critical issues that must be addressed and opportunities that must be realized to ensure organizational success.

Key factors identified for planning:

- Customers desire greater options for accessing North Metro Fire's many services and sources of information, including self-service, web-based tools.
- The District's most valuable resource is its employees, and the development of exceptional human resource programs is an essential component of the organization's mission.
- The community continues to grow at an above average pace, and keeping stride with this growth creates an increasing demand for emergency and life-safety services.
- Enhancing regional partnerships for emergency response will provide significant gains towards North Metro's goal of delivering exceptional emergency services in the most cost-effective manner possible.
- Leveraging the efficiencies of enhanced regional partnerships will necessitate investment in greater interoperability of regional communications and dispatching systems.
- The effects from the previous economic recession still remain as decreased District revenues have created service level sustainability challenges.
- The District struggles with securing sustainable capital funding sources for timely maintenance and replacement of its apparatus and facilities.
- Rapid emergency response remains a top priority of North Metro's citizens and commercial enterprises.

Mission and Value Statements

With insight garnered from the assessment process, the committee reviewed North Metro Fire Rescue District's mission and value statements for current and future relevance. Both the mission and value statements were found to provide a clear image of the District and what it aims to accomplish.

Department Slogan

Excellence through each individual act

Mission Statement

To be a responsive, all-hazard organization that works to provide a caring, high-quality, professional delivery of service

Core Values

Members of North Metro Fire Rescue District take pride in their commitment to professional service by maintaining their skills, knowledge and abilities. All members of the District are committed to conducting themselves in an ethical manner, conforming to a standard that treats one other and the people they serve humanely, professionally and honestly. Through their actions, North Metro Fire personnel uphold the following values:

Accountability: Members of North Metro Fire Rescue District are accountable to each other and the community they serve. They accept responsibility for their decisions and actions.

Transparency: Members of North Metro Fire Rescue District make decisions and implement services in a forthcoming manner, providing accurate information to internal stakeholders, government partners and members of the community.

Integrity, Trust and Respect: Members of North Metro Fire Rescue District demonstrate trust and respect for all persons and cultivate individual and organizational integrity in all that they do.

Flexibility: Members of North Metro Fire Rescue District adapt to the ever-changing needs of their community, the organization and the environment.

Innovation and Resourcefulness: Members of North Metro Fire Rescue District are committed to the advancement of District services and programs through inquiry, evaluation, problem solving and constant improvement.

Teamwork: Members of North Metro Fire Rescue District recognize that every member of the District is important and has value. They practice collaborative decision-making, when appropriate, at all levels of the organization.

Humility: Members of North Metro Fire Rescue District do not seek personal recognition. The strength of their character is based not on individual recognition or importance, but through their work and opportunity to serve.

These principles and values reflect the makeup of the men and women of North Metro Fire and the community they serve.

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Enhance Customer Service and Life Safety Education

North Metro Fire Rescue District strives to be a highly customer-centric organization and will base its service delivery enhancements on customers' desires and needs.

Objectives:

1. Provide customers with greater options for accessing North Metro Fire Rescue District's many services and sources of information.
 - a. Provide web-based application and payment options for services including plan review fees, inspection fees and the ambulance membership program.
Year: 2015
 - b. Provide web-based tools that allow customers to track the progress of plans submitted for review through the District's plan review, permitting and inspection processes.
Year: 2016
2. Enhance citizen safety through effective community risk reduction and safety education.
 - a. Analyze community risk trends and develop programs specifically designed to reduce prominent risks in our community. Provide annual progress reports to ensure goal attainment.
Year: 2014 – 2018
 - b. Actively support and provide education for the adoption of life safety codes that will enhance public and emergency responder safety.
Year: 2014 – 2018
3. Maintain a strong awareness of customers' needs through customer satisfaction surveys, focus groups and citizen-led steering committees. Adjust and improve District services based on customers' input.
Year: 2014 – 2018

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Goal #2: Maximize Emergency Response Effectiveness

North Metro Fire Rescue District will adapt to the community's ever-changing needs while protecting the safety of its responders. The District will continuously evaluate its service delivery performance and develop improvement plans that are well-matched with citizens' expectations and community risk.

Objectives:

1. Establish objectives and standards for primary emergency response types: Fire, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Technical Rescue, Hazardous Materials, Wildland and Airport Operations.
 - a. Conduct a thorough analysis of the District's emergency response capabilities, establish acceptable standards for each type of response, identify response deficiencies and propose service delivery improvement plans to the Board for approval.
Year: 2014
 - b. Implement service delivery improvement plans adopted by the Board.
Year: 2014 – 2018
2. Enhance EMS delivery through greater resource allocation to program management, training and quality assurance.
Year: 2015
3. Provide greater quality and reliability for radio communications and alerting systems.
 - a. Improve critical safety and efficiency components of in-building radio communications.
Year: 2015
 - b. Reduce response times and improve initial dispatch information transfer through District-wide implementation of First-In Fire Station Alerting Systems.
Year: 2016
4. Enhance response capabilities and employee safety by improving interoperability with the District's mutual aid partners.
 - a. Implement compatible radio technologies with shared operational talk groups.
Year: 2015
 - b. Improve mutual aid dispatching through technologies that share resource status information including unit availability, unit capabilities and real-time unit location.
Year: 2017
5. Enhance emergency preparedness through active participation in the development, training and implementation of County Emergency Operation Plans.
Year: 2014 – 2018

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Goal #3: Recruit, Develop and Retain a Strong Workforce

North Metro Fire Rescue District's employees are the organization's most valuable resource. North Metro Fire will develop exceptional human resource programs for the hiring, development and retention of its employees. Additionally, the District will enhance employee morale, productivity and safety through the development of wellness and safety programs.

Objectives:

1. Centralize human resource functions for greater focus, uniformity and efficiency.
 - a. Enhance employee motivation and growth by creating greater consistency between job descriptions, employee evaluation, training programs, educational requirements and promotional processes.
Year: 2015
 - b. Develop effective and motivational mentoring and succession planning programs.
Year: 2017
 - c. Enhance employee growth and education through hosting top quality instructors at the Training Center, increasing participation in regional and national training opportunities and developing online video conferencing capabilities.
Year: 2016
2. Develop a comprehensive wellness program that will enhance morale, improve productivity, decrease healthcare costs and reduce illness and absenteeism.
 - a. Expand fitness and health education programs to include all employees.
Year: 2015
 - b. Develop wellness goals and measure progress.
Year: 2014 – 2018
3. Reduce on-the-job injuries and illness through improvements to the District's Safety Program.
 - a. Improve policies and procedures for tracking and analyzing workplace injuries, and develop risk reduction programs.
Year: 2015
 - b. Complete workplace safety audits, including the development of safety action plans.
Year: 2015
 - c. Train and deploy safety officers to all high-risk incidents.
Year: 2016

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Goal #4: Improve Organizational Efficiencies and Sustainability

Guided by its mission statement, North Metro Fire Rescue District will focus organizational efforts on delivering exceptional services in the most efficient manner possible.

Objectives:

1. Improve organizational sustainability through the development of diverse revenue sources that support North Metro Fire's mission.
 - a. Develop a Vehicle Maintenance Business Plan that maximizes potential income while maintaining a primary focus on the safety and reliability of North Metro Fire Rescue District's fleet.
Year: 2016
 - b. Develop a Training Center Business Plan that maximizes revenue and capacity utilization while expanding internal training opportunities and regional response capabilities.
Year: 2016
 - c. Increase grant revenue through greater program commitment and resource allocation.
Year: 2014 – 2018
2. Develop a sustainable long-term capital program with identified funding sources.
Year: 2015
3. Develop cost reduction programs focused on identifying and implementing strategies for reducing expenditures and enhancing resource efficiency.
Year: 2014 – 2018
4. Improve budget development, management and reporting capabilities by implementing new software that fully integrates budgeting and accounting processes.
Year: 2015
5. Improve Records Management System (RMS) to ensure efficient and reliable data entry, maintenance, analysis and reporting.
 - a. Provide a dedicated RMS Program Manager.
Year: 2014
 - b. Expand field-based inspection reporting to the Fire Prevention Division.
Year: 2015
6. Protect the community's investment in facilities and infrastructure through proactive maintenance programs and cost-effective building improvement plans.
 - a. Develop a facilities maintenance program, including the addition of a dedicated facilities maintenance employee to centralize management of maintenance, repairs and improvements.
Year: 2014
 - b. Remodel and expand Station 63 to accommodate the addition of medic unit personnel and upgrade aging infrastructure.
Year: 2017