

Aurora Fire Rescue



2020-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN

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Executive Summary

The City of Aurora is the 54th largest municipality in the United States. The population is currently estimated at approximately 380,000 and with the continued annexation of the eastern unincorporated areas and the influx of development that we are experiencing, we can easily forecast that the department will be serving over 400,000 citizens in the near future. Public transportation modifications have transformed the landscape of the city as our rail system is fully operable and used regularly by our citizens making our community a desirable and convenient place to relocate in the Front-range region. AFR must be prepared to develop response plans and identify technology/equipment that will allow for safe mitigation of entrapments, collisions, medical emergencies and malfunctions of critical infrastructure systems.

Due to the fertile environment, our population and service area will continue to grow. This growth will be very challenging to manage without a defined strategy, as it difficult to maintain service levels in the current core of the city and simultaneously invest resources into the necessary infrastructure of the areas undergoing and experiencing development. The Southeast portion of our community is remote from our core resources and has seen considerable residential development which will require additional resources to meet the community's response time expectations. AFR responds to over 70K requests for service every year and the demand increases on average of 2.5% to 5% each year. This metric adds another challenge to our organization as we have struggled to keep our fleet operable, as the majority of our units are in need of major repairs or replacement. However, the City of Aurora management team has developed an aggressive replacement program that will resolve this issue if we remain committed to sustaining the replacement program in conjunction with replacing aged/obsolete equipment. This replacement schedule is precisely the type of methodical approach and could be used as a model towards addressing the department's growth concerns.

The dynamics of the community demand that the department properly prepare to address new challenges and missions. The department must invest heavily in personnel development and training, as we have a very inexperienced organization (over 49% have less than five years of fire service experience and 40% have three years or less of fire service tenure). This might be perceived as a challenge, but this is a great opportunity to modify some cultural challenges and develop a resilient workforce. Recently, our community has begun to witness large scale construction/developments and these projects have an impact on AFR's capability to deliver service. For example, the massive Gaylord Resort Hotel opened in November 2018 in an area that did not have foundational service which means that funding must be directed to this area of concern as well residential development projects. High-rise response parameters and procedures must be constantly evaluated to ensure that mitigation of emergencies at these types of structures are managed in a safe and efficient manner. In addition, recent legislation will allow the management of privately-owned thoroughfares to submit directly to the state to request transition to a hazardous materials route. It is highly likely that there will be a request to have the entire E-470 Corridor serve as a third hazardous materials route through our city. The department has a HazMat team that has not been staffed or equipped properly. We have worked diligently to enhance service delivery to acceptable standards; however, adjustments and investments are necessary to ensure that we can manage any additional risk effectively and efficiently. These combined elements indicate that AFR must be prepared to enhance our capabilities to manage both our current challenges and the dynamic changes occurring within our community.

Aurora Fire Rescue is transitioning from a smaller, reactive agency to a department that will focus upon proactive interventions to address the safety of the community. The department has

implemented a Community Health Program to address high-utilizers of the 911 system and will also seek opportunities to partner with the private sector to further reduce unneeded usage of the system. This plan represents a template for success after critically analyzing the values, philosophies, service delivery, and the culture. This document also could be used to provide advanced notice for planning purposes to ensure that the necessary funding for the various projects, enhancements, and efficiencies are available. We offer this plan with anticipation of positive implementation results for our customers and our members.

Fernando M. Gray, SR. Fire Chief

General Department Description

Aurora Fire Rescue is an all-hazards department, with a full-time employee (FTE) personnel staffing level of 438. Resources include 15 Engines (Engine 17 will go in service in October 2019), 4 Ladder Trucks, 1 Quint, 3 Rescues (medical support units), and several ancillary resources to provide emergency service to the citizens of Aurora. The department has a total of 16 stations (Construction on Station 17 will begin in October 2019 and the total operating budget is approximately \$60 million.

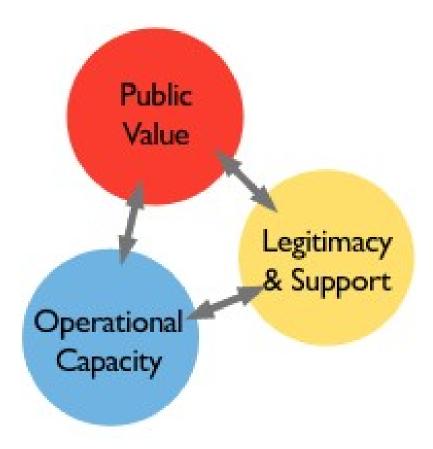
AFR'S MISSION, VISION STATEMENT AND VALUES OF THE DEPARTMENT

Aurora Fire Rescue is committed to providing the citizens and visitors to the City with exceptional service. AFR is an all hazards emergency services organization that focuses on customer service. Partnering with City Council, City Management, and the citizens to create and foster a safe community, through planning, mitigation, response, and restoration. Our mission is, "Exceptional Service to the Community Provided by Well-Trained Professionals".

The core four values of AFR are INTEGRITY, CUSTOMER SERVICE, RESPECT, and PROFESSIONALISM, which guide us to help provide our customers, both internal and external, with a better quality of life. In addition, all members are expected to understand and demonstrate the three components of the Fire Chief's doctrine: (1) member safety, (2) the workplace/service delivery will be appropriate and free from bias, and (3) the individuals providing the services will have input in the development of our processes.

STRATEGIC TRIANGLE

Aurora Fire Rescue will continually work with all stakeholders in the authorizing environment to ensure that there is clear approval/endorsement that the approaches listed in the plan are in fact needed. This should not be confused with a commitment towards funding any specific program, as funding is predicated on revenue generation and overall City of Aurora priorities. Capacity has been evaluated across all organizational boundaries to ensure that current resources are being optimized. The department will continue to maximize our operations and identify alternative means to address current and future challenges. Aurora Fire Rescue Continues to receive positive feedback as one of the top performers as it relates to customer satisfaction. The department has a Chief Officer attend all Council Ward meetings to answer questions about service delivery and obtain input from our constituents about our programs. AFR also began conducting an annual stakeholder meeting to ensure that the expectations of the community are intertwined with our operations.



External Stakeholder Input

To gather input from stakeholders regarding expectations of service, an initial focus group was conducted in Fall of 2018 and is planned for annual reoccurrence. The workshop-style meeting encouraged open dialogue with questions and discussion prompts and participants ranged from outside agency partners, to community members, to local business professionals. Based on the feedback from the initial meeting, the most common expectations discussed are detailed below:

- Hiring Practices Seek candidates for Aurora Fire Rescue who rank high on character attributes like honesty, integrity, and compassion, rather than physical strength and skill. Participants felt strongly that people who have these traits will translate well into the role of a first responder and that other job skills can be learned/attained.
- Customer Service Due to the seriousness of the work for our first responders, expectations are high in this category. Our members are expected to perform their jobs with professionalism and clear communication during patient care. Many

	icipants mentioned a fear asso		
	or a family member, making c		nication during the
pau	ent care process highly import	ant.	

Assessment Analysis

As mentioned in the Executive Summary, a SWOT analysis was performed as a tool to generate strategic options for future success. The following is a preliminary assessment of Aurora Fire Rescue's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats/challenges.

STRENGTHS

STRENGTH	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS FOR PRESERVING OR ENHANCING EACH STRENGTH
Talented Personnel	Highly dedicated and trained staff continuously provide excellent customer service to our City residents and employees	 Constant cross-training of Fire/EMS personnel and continued development of a standardized continuing basic and advance fire ground and paramedic training program Utilize millennial staff to assist in leveraging technology adjuncts as well
Culture of Service	AFR continually receives recognition for impeccable service delivery	 Continued focus upon fostering customer service by recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce that have a background of service Partner with Aurora community College and the Hispanic community to provide language training to raise the percentage of Spanish-speaking employees by 15% by 2019
Specialized Emergency Response	Capability to respond and mitigate Hazardous Materials Emergency responses, wildland urban interface incidents, and tragedies involving swiftwater	Continuous training to improve on technical skills as well as exploring partnerships with other agencies
Political/work Environment	The City of Aurora is led and managed by proven, collaborative leaders	 AFR labor/management will participate in the joint IAFF/IAFC labor management imitative training to sustain relationships Explore methods to enhance relationships with a "border drop" program

WEAKNESSES

WEAKNESS	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS FOR OVERCOMING OR ELIMINATING EACH WEAKNESS
Recruitment and Retention	Work to increase diversity in all ranks of department to reflect all demographics of the community	 Establish a working group (retention/recruitment committee) that would include Human Resources to assist with researching best practices Develop a "grow our own" or seed program (Adopt-A-School, Camp Ladder, P-Tech) linked to community risk reduction endeavors allowing the department an accessible pool of candidates to reflect demographics of our City
Leverage Technology	Current technology is antiquated and needs updating	Research and develop a business plan to update and leverage technology such Pre-planning and Predictive Response Integration (operational efficiency)
Succession Planning	Currently the department does not have a supervisor leadership training program	 Officer Enrichment Program Provide leadership/supervisor training that starts with updating job specs at all ranks to include career ladder Replicate the ICMA Emerging Leaders Program Formalize a "boarding" process for new supervisors
Industrial Injuries	Industrial injuries instances of cancer are increasing nationally	Refocus staff on the use of protective gear and best practices related to injury/illness prevention

OPPORTUNITES

OPPORTUNITY	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS FOR TAKING ADVANTAGE OF EACH OPPORTUNITY
Community Risk Reduction	Public relations and education can be utilized to increase community awareness of services provided by the department and provide community risk education	 Increase the use of Social Media to reach community – Twitter is a more effective tool than Facebook Contribute to City of Aurora neighborhood enhancement programs Open house (rotated monthly at each fire station) Provide fire/EMS training and life skills for local youth through Partnership Program with Aurora area schools
Multi-Agency Training	Conduct training sessions with other surrounding agencies	 Improve inter-agency relations, improve interoperability and service delivery (pursue shared dispatch ops) Explore opportunities with military bases like Buckley Air Force Base
Mobile Community Health Program	Proactive approach of addressing increasing requests for EMS	 Utilize data to identify most common EMS requests for service/most frequent users followed by a distinct strategy to address these responses Partner with area hospitals to address any re-admittance of discharged patient concerns
Federal and State Grants	Federal and Statewide grants that become available will allow us to acquire new technology with little to no direct cost	 Designate one employee per section to research grant opportunities Leverage the fact military instillation is adjacent to our city-federal funding possibilities

THREATS/CHALLENGES

CHALLENGE	DESCRIPTION	OPTIONS FOR OVERCOMING EACH
Budget Stability – Taxes/Funding Increase in Call Volume	Public Safety accounts for a large amount of the City of Aurora general fund Response data projections indicates that additional resources may be needed to maintain/enhance current service delivery	 Reduce impact of unscheduled leave (Decrease overtime & increase ROI)- Dynamic Leave Scheduling Investigate alternative means of securing additional funding and continue researching service model efficiencies Lean Six Sigma-One AFR Black Belt Advocate/Accreditation (Commission on Fire Accreditation International) Address any identified Fleet Services/Parts/Supply Issues with inventory controls Fee Study Scene Mitigation for Vehicle Collison Ordinance Best practices research Review and update development profiles, investigate alternative options for response, investigate incorporating peak units as a beta program for alternative response units Smartphone/table Application
Increased	The increase in traffic	Optimization/Allocation of Resources- "Response must fit Request" • Technology Integration into Response • Protect infrastructure- Resiliency to manage acute shocks/chronic stress • Partner with Public Works in
Vehicle Traffic	through the City's major streets presents challenges to the department's resources in terms of personnel, specialized equipment and safety	planning for upcoming street design changes • Explore traffic signal preemption to reduce response times (public/private)-light rail often using traffic pre-emption devices
Collective Bargaining	Addressing the needs of department in a manner of acceptable to the public, labor and management	Better labor management relations and communications- LMI

AFR'S STRATEGIC PLAN: INTRODUCTION, KEY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR FY 2020-2024

Equipped with the mission, vision, values, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges, the Aurora Fire Rescue Department has focused on developing realistic strategic goals, strategic initiatives, and objectives designed to guide the department into the future with confidence and a well thought out business plan.

1. IMPROVE EMERGENCY RESPONSE OPERATIONS (BASED UPON NFPA STANDARDS)

2020

- 1.1. Add additional resources commensurate with increased call volume and response time benchmarks
 - 1.1.1.Full-year implementation of Station 17 (temporary) and Truck 16 (grant funded)
 - 1.1.2.Full-year utilization of AVL GPS Dispatching
 - 1.1.3.Initiate eight-person specialty team staffing at HazMat and TRT stations
 - 1.1.4.Re-evaluate the Aurora Highlands and eastern developments to determine effective triggers for additional resources
 - 1.1.5. Identify alternative transport solutions

2021

- 1.2. Add additional resources commensurate with increased call volume and response time benchmarks (new NFPA 1710 standard will be effective in 2021)
 - 1.2.1. Full-year implementation of Truck 8 relocation to Station 5
 - 1.2.2.Utilize data and a committee approach to determine if aerial apparatus are at optimum locations

2022

- 1.3. Add additional resources commensurate with increased call volume and response time benchmarks
 - 1.3.1.Review aerial optimization committee recommendations, form action plan, and implement the strategic adjustments

2023

1.4. Add additional resources commensurate with increased call volume and response time benchmarks

1.4.1.Full-year implementation of aerial optimization plan

2024

- 1.5. Add additional resources commensurate with increased call volume and response time benchmarks
 - 1.5.1.Reassess the overall strategy through a committee approach and develop a pathway for the upcoming years

2. IMPROVE TRAINING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

2020

- 2.1. Implement Aurora Fire Rescue Five-Year Training Plan (based upon identified gaps)
- 2.2. Expand and enhance the physical and mental health monitoring of the work force (Partner with APD on Physical therapy)
- 2.3. Provide Officer I training/certification to all members at the rank of Lieutenant
- 2.4. Provide Officer II training/certification for all members at the rank of Captain
- 2.5. Full year implementation of the Physician Care Consortium-Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement Program
- 2.6. Reduce/maintain 2019 Academy attrition rate to ensure adequate staff is available to reduce overtime expenditures
- 2.6.1.Full year implementation of reorganization of Training Staff (Recruit Training and Incumbent)
 - 2.7. Year-one implementation of standardized inspection and cleaning of protective gear (NFPA 1851 compliant)
- 2.7.1.On-scene decontamination process fully implemented
 - 2.8. Annual company evolution/verification process implemented
 - 2.9. Promote training of staff in leadership positions through command simulations (recognition primed decision making)
 - 2.10. Train and certify all Captains to the Incident Safety Officer level
 - 2.11. Utilize adjunct instructor pool to assist with facilitation of field training
 - 2.12. Compile and analyze injury/collision data and develop training to reduce occurrences
 - 2.13. Pursue an in-house EMT and Paramedic Training Program

2021

2.14. Maintain adherence/compliance with the Aurora Fire Rescue Training Plan (based upon

identified gaps)

- 2.15.Reduce/maintain Academy 2019 Academy attrition rate to ensure adequate staff is available to reduce overtime expenditures
- 2.16. Train and certify all Lieutenants to the Incident Safety Officer level
- 2.17. Continue utilization of adjunct instructor pool to assist with facilitation of field training
- 2.18. Compile and analyze injury/collision data and develop training to reduce occurrences

2022

- 2.19. Maintain adherence/compliance with the Aurora Fire Rescue Training Plan (based upon identified gaps)
- 2.20.Reduce/maintain 2019 Academy attrition rate to ensure adequate staff is available to reduce overtime expenditures
- 2.21. Train and certify all Lieutenants to the Incident Safety Officer level
- 2.22. Continue utilization of adjunct instructor pool to assist with facilitation of field training
- 2.23. Compile and analyze injury/collision data and develop training to reduce occurrences

2023

- 2.24. Maintain adherence/compliance with the Aurora Fire Rescue Training Plan (based upon identified gaps)
- 2.25.Reduce/maintain 2019 Academy attrition rate to ensure adequate staff is available to reduce overtime expenditures
- 2.26. Train and certify all Lieutenants to Officer II level
- 2.27. Continue utilization of adjunct instructor pool to assist with facilitation of field training
- 2.28. Compile and analyze injury data and develop training to reduce occurrences

- 2.29. Maintain adherence/compliance with the Aurora Fire Rescue Training Plan (based upon identified gaps)
- 2.30.Reduce/maintain 2019 attrition rate to ensure adequate staff is available to reduce overtime expenditures
- 2.31. Train and certify all Engineers and Rescue Technicians to the Officer I level
- 2.32. Continue utilization of adjunct instructor pool to assist with facilitation of field

training

2.33. Compile and analyze injury data and develop training to reduce occurrences

3. STRENGTHEN MANAGEMENT, OUTREACH AND PLAN DEVELOPMENT 2020

- 3.1. Annual review of all manual of procedures to ensure policy is consistent with best practices
- 3.2. Full-year implementation of Research/Planning and Community Engagement Sections
- 3.3. Focus Community Health/Paramedic prevention program efforts towards high utilizer addresses in the core of the city
- 3.4. Initiate an assessment of facilities to determine the cost/benefit of remodel versus replacements of existing stations
- 3.5. Conduct a Second Camp Spark
- 3.6. Pilot a Fire Explorer Program
- 3.7. Evaluate and revise standard of cover document to include benchmarks for multicompany stations
- 3.8. Enhance Smoke Detector Installation Program
- 3.9. Utilize data analytic software to reaffirm resource and growth strategy-requires an updated, compliant RMS
- 3.10. Pilot a station based Integrated Risk Management Program
- 3.11. Continue to reaffirm and establish open forum meetings
- 3.12.Require each member of the Executive Staff (Deputy Chiefs and Commanders) to pursue extensive career development opportunities
- 3.13.Review all performance measure criteria for alignment with objectives and customer expectations
- 3.14. Strengthen relationships between local firehouses and the communities they serve with station attendance at HOA meetings
- 3.15. Formulate a representative/inclusive group to revamp the performance appraisal system for civil employees
- 3.16. Participate in the Labor Collective Bargaining Agreement Process
- 3.17.Implement the Adopt-A-School Partnership with both Aurora Public Schools and Cherry Creek School districts

- 3.18.Reassess the organizational structure of the department (last reorg was implemented in 2018)
- 3.19. Annual review of all manual of procedures to ensure policy is consistent with best practices
- 3.20. Enhance Smoke Detector Installation Program
- 3.21. Pursue Mobile Community Health Program contracts with area hospitals
- 3.22. Implement components of the new Collective Bargaining Agreement
- 3.23. Implement new Performance Appraisal system for civil employees
- 3.24.PAD program fully operational for City of Aurora sites
- 3.25.Market and introduce an Adopt A Station Program to establish better relationships with community stakeholders

2022

- 3.26. If applicable implement a new organizational structure
- 3.27. Annual review of all manual of procedures to ensure policy is consistent with best practices
- 3.28. Incorporate social media usage analytics as a recruiting tool/baseline

2023

- 3.29. Annual review of all manual of procedures to ensure policy is consistent with best practices
- 3.30. Incorporate social media usage analytics as a recruiting tool/baseline
- 3.31.Pilot a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
- 3.32. Determine the feasibility of an in-house Wellness, Fitness, and Physical Rehabilitation Program

2024

- 3.33. Annual review of all manual of procedures to ensure policy is consistent with best practices
- 3.34. Incorporate social media usage analytics as a recruiting tool/baseline
- 3.35.Implement the Wellness/Fitness initiative

4. IMPROVE INSPECTIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS

- 4.1. Implement Records Management System Acella
- 4.2. Initiate a specializations program to improve efficiency
- 4.3. Determine if a compliance engine program (occupancy classification accuracy)

- would be effective in the City of Aurora
- 4.4. Conduct a fee-study of inspection services with local competitors/jurisdictions
- 4.5. Identify internal/external stakeholders for a collaborative and transparent International Fire Code (IFC) and International Building Code (IBC) adoption for 2021.
- 4.6. Analyze the efficiency of utilizing post-certified investigators for arrests versus outsourcing to APD
- 4.7. Enhance the Juvenile Fire setters' program to reduce recidivism

2021

- 4.8. Develop one additional in-house educational program, which targets a high-risk group each year
- 4.9. Implement a compliance engine program in the City of Aurora
- 4.10.Implement fee-study results of inspection services based upon comparisons with local competitors/jurisdictions
- 4.11.Request additional FTE to support specialized inspection program and increased commercial occupancy inspection requirements due to population growth
- 4.12. Adopt the 2021 IFC and IBC

2022

- 4.13. Develop one additional in-house educational program, which targets a high-risk group each year
- 4.14.Increase the number of inspectors to account for the increased workload associated with the population and development that the City of Aurora is experiencing
- 4.15. Evaluate and determine if a unified task force comprised of the AFR, APD, Building Department, and Neighborhood Services would streamline ordinance compliance in a more efficient approach reducing duplicative efforts (Unified Task Force)

2023

- 4.16.Develop one additional in-house educational program, which targets a high-risk group each year
- 4.17. Evaluate the need for an additional Investigator

- 4.18. Develop one additional in-house educational program, which targets a high-risk group each year
- 4.19. Evaluate the need for an additional Investigator additional FTE to account for specialized inspections and population growth/workload.

5. EHNHANCE FINANCIAL STWEARDSHIP

2020

- 5.1. Develop a formal process with all division chiefs to create annual spending plans, including replacement schedules for PPE and equipment (SCBA, Hose, Small tools, etc..)
- 5.2. Annually reassess staffing coefficient
- 5.3. Implement inventory control system at the Warehouse
- 5.4. Establish a manual that documents departmental financial, budgetary, procurement, and contract management policies
- 5.5. Establish a departmental training curriculum for financial-related topics
- 5.6. Develop and provide training (minimum of 4 hours) to all Executive Staff personnel related to the aforementioned budget and finance topics
- 5.7. Evaluate cost recovery opportunities and propose new or revised fee schedules (i.e.Treat No Transport, Scene Mitigation, Lift Assist, Haz-mat recovery, etc.)
- 5.8. Provide feedback to the collective bargaining team to ensure that negotiated pay and benefits help meet the goals of Aurora Fire Rescue and are fully funded in the budget.

2021

- 5.9. Reevaluate annual spending plans, including replacement schedules for PPE and equipment.
- 5.10. Annually reassess staffing coefficient
- 5.11. Update the manual that documents departmental financial, budgetary, procurement, and contract management policies
- 5.12. Update the departmental training curriculum for financial-related topics
- 5.13.Expand annual training (minimum of 4 hours) to all Command Staff personnel related to budget and finance topics
- 5.14. Re-evaluate cost recovery opportunities and propose new or revised fee schedules
- 5.15.Collaborate with the Purchasing Division to re-bid service contracts and supply orders to ensure AFR is receiving the best pricing on goods and services

- 5.16. Reevaluate annual spending plans, including replacement schedules for PPE and equipment.
- 5.17. Annually reassess staffing coefficient
- 5.18. Conduct a staffing analysis at the warehouse to evaluate impacts of department

- growth, changes to business practices (i.e. "Amazonization"), and/or cost savings by moving towards "civilianization" of the warehouse workforce
- 5.19. Update the manual that documents departmental financial, budgetary, procurement, and contract management policies
- 5.20. Update the departmental training curriculum for financial-related topics
- 5.21.Expand annual training (minimum of 4 hours) to all Captains related to budget and finance topics
- 5.22. Re-evaluate cost recovery opportunities and propose new or revised fee schedules

2023

- 5.23. Reevaluate annual spending plans, including replacement schedules for PPE and equipment
- 5.24. Annually reassess staffing coefficient
- 5.25.Update the manual that documents departmental financial, budgetary, procurement, and contractual management policies
- 5.26. Update the departmental training curriculum for financial-related topics
- 5.27.Expand annual training (minimum of four hours) to all Administrative personnel related to budget and finance topics
- 5.28. Re-evaluate cost recovery opportunities and propose new or revised fee schedules

2024

- 5.29.Re-evaluate annual spending plans, including replacement schedules for PPE and equipment
- 5.30. Annually reassess staffing coefficient
- 5.31.Update the manual that documents departmental financial, budgetary, procurement, and contractual management policies
- 5.32. Update the departmental training curriculum for financial-related topics.
- 5.33.Expand annual training (minimum of 4 hours) to all administrative personnel related to budget and finance topics
- 5.34. Re-evaluate cost recovery opportunities and propose new or revised fee schedules

CONCLUSION

This document was created to provide a clear and concise snapshot of the priorities and direction of Aurora Fire Rescue for the next five years. It was designed to address the inevitable and progressive change the City of Aurora is currently facing, and the adaptations of a modern fire department to meet

purpose of the departi	ment. Aurora Fire Re	escue will continu	e to operate and st	rive to achieve high	ier
standards of service to the community based on these priorities.					