

*City of Minneapolis
Minnesota*



Fire Department Agency Evaluation and
Master Plan
Stakeholder Input

October 2011



City of Minneapolis Minnesota

Fire Department Agency Evaluation and

Master Plan

Stakeholder Input Summary

Summer 2011

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Emergency Services Consulting
International

**City of Minneapolis Fire Department Evaluation and Master Plan
Stakeholder Input Summary**

Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) was engaged by the City of Minneapolis to conduct a three-phased agency evaluation and master plan for the Minneapolis Fire Department (MFD). Phase I of the project was contracted to ESCI and consisted of the gathering of data and information from a variety of sources including the U.S. Census Bureau, the City of Minneapolis City Council, transportation planning officials, emergency communications personnel, finance personnel and the following divisions within MFD: Administration, Training, Information Technology, Suppression/Operations, Personnel, Finance, Fire Prevention/Public Education and Maintenance.

ESCI personnel that participated in the data collection and stakeholder interview process included Kent Greene (Project Manager), Dave Austin, Jack Snook, Don Stewart and Steve Trunck, while remaining team members gathered data and information electronically. The ESCI team was on-site August 30, 31 and September 1. The primary intent of this process was to gain insight into the operations and processes of the fire department, gather required data and information for future analysis of current conditions, and to conduct an environmental scan of the organization, including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges. This process synthesized a variety of perspectives including elected officials, department administration, ancillary city departments and department operations and support staff. This document serves as a summary of the data collection and stakeholder interview process and will be used in subsequent phases of the project as it progresses.

Tuesday, August 30th

The ESCI project team met with Fire Chief Alex Jackson on Tuesday morning at Fire Headquarters for a brief introduction before beginning stakeholder interviews. The ESCI project team also met with the following groups and individuals throughout the day.

Minneapolis Police and Fire Communications

ESCI met with the dispatch center supervisor to gather information as to how the center operates regarding the processing and dispatching of fire department incidents. Basic information was gathered regarding total workload of the center, staffing, equipment, communications technology, personnel allocation and training.

MFD Finance Personnel

ESCI staff met with personnel tasked with financial management within the fire department. The interviews consisted of gathering data and information relative to historical department funding, sources of revenues, user fees, taxation, expenditures and financial controls.

Minneapolis Facilities and Apparatus Maintenance Personnel

ESCI conducted interviews and site visits with personnel responsible for the management and maintenance of department capital assets, primarily facilities and apparatus. The intent of these interviews was to ascertain the level to which capital assets are being maintained and how these programs should continue into the future.

1. Survey instrument completed on General Overview of Department Capital Assets.
2. Facilities – visit and survey of:
 - a. 19 Fire Stations
 - b. 2 Fleet Maintenance Facilities
 - c. 1 Training Facility
 - d. 1 Radio Shop
 - e. 1 SCBA Repair Facility
 - f. 1 Stores/ Warehouse
3. Apparatus - Review and Survey Instrument on Department Fleet

ESCI conducted two Stakeholder Interviews with the Deputy Chief in charge of Training and Captain/Engineering Officer in charge of facilities and fleet. The following is a summary of the environmental scan and critical issues.

Strengths

- Department Personnel
- Operational Command staff- experienced and competent
- EMS System-360 degree improvement

Weaknesses

- Communication
- Constant transition in department leadership and direction
- Lack of resources
- No department strategic or master plan

Opportunities

- New energetic management team with new approach, programs, etc.
- Opportunity for change
- Shared resources and training with adjacent agencies

Challenges

- Financial
- Cultural – new programs, change
- New leadership
- “No roadmap”

Critical Issues

- Financial
- Resources - adequate staffing and equipment
- Providing adequate level of service

ESCI also conducted interviews and input sessions with several city councilors. An overall summary of those interviews will be provided at the end of this section. Questions in those sessions centered on completing an environmental scan including discussion of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges/concerns. Additional, stakeholders were asked to explore critical issues facing the fire department and to identify their report/project expectations. The following councilors were interviewed on this day of the visit:

City Councilor Reich

City Councilor Hodges

City Councilor Quincy

Wednesday, August 31st

Day two of stakeholder input began with a joint meeting with all MFD command and administrative personnel at the Emergency Operations and Training Center (EOTC). Below is a summary of the input received from this group.

ESCI staff attended a joint command and administrative staff meeting during which questions centered on completing an environmental scan including discussion of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges/concerns. Additionally, staff members were asked to explore critical issues currently facing the fire department. The following lists summarize the results of this session.

Strengths:

- Diversity
- ICS
- Resilient members

Weaknesses:

- Depleted fleet, particularly truck companies
- Funded with one time money
- ICS training of Chief Officers
- Recruit quality
- Annual re-draws
- No light duty program
- Lack of succession planning
- Overlapping responsibilities for staff members
- Job descriptions
- Hiring list is 7 years old
- Concern was raised regarding 3 “Maydays” in recent months
- No training budget
- Equipment is not standardized

Opportunities:

- Training center
- Increase training
- Emergency operations plan needs to be socialized with City staff including MFD

General observations:

- Command structure should be assessed
- Need for a comprehensive equipment replacement schedule
- Several staff related concerns about which cities/departments the Council compares MFD to
- Hazmat team is understaffed

In addition to the command and administrative staff, the following individuals and groups were also interviewed throughout the day.

Transportation Planning

In the past, ESCI has conducted studies intended to look into the future regarding fire department service delivery and has found it beneficial to meet with transportation planning personnel to determine if any current roadway conditions are impeding emergency response, or if any future modifications to the roadway infrastructure (including rail crossings, bridges over waterways, etc.) could impact emergency response.

ESCI met with city transportation planning officials and was able to collect information regarding current and future transportation conditions.

MFD Information Technology

MFD receives Information Technology (IT) services from two individuals within the department. ESCI met with the Deputy Chief of IT to discuss the issues facing the department regarding technology. Also, this position was able to provide a large amount of electronic data that will be essential in Phases II and III of this project.

In addition to these meetings, ESCI staff met with and interviewed the following city councilors:

City Councilor Gordon

City Councilor Tuthill

City Councilor Johnson

City Councilor Hofstede

City Councilor Glidden

Thursday, September 1st

The third and final day of stakeholder input and interviews began with ESCI's project team meeting with the Executive Board of International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 82 as well as the past president. The meeting took place at the Minneapolis Police and Fire Union Offices. The following is a summary of the input received from labor.

Strengths:

- Diversified
- Service is good

Weaknesses:

- Since 2003 they have 3 fewer response units and have suffered a 45 second degradation of response time?
- Re-draw needs to go
- Human Resources
- Lack of policies for operating Quints
- Chief Officer overtime (appearance of self-dealing)

Opportunities:

- Training is improving
- Improve training academy (get dirty)

Challenges:

- Sick leave use

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Deputy Chief

ESCI met with the Deputy Chief of EMS to gather information about how the emergency medical function is performed within MFD as a basic life support (BLS) first responder service. The health, safety and wellness initiatives this position is charged with were also discussed. The primary concerns voiced during this interview included:

- The aging population being served by MFD
- Changing socio-economic conditions within the population being service by MFD
- The need to begin planning now for growing the EMS function within MFD rather than reducing the level of service

In addition to labor, ESCI met with the following individuals:

City Councilor Glidden

City Councilor Schiff

City Councilor Samuels

City Councilor Roy

The following summarizes the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges/concerns voiced during the interviews with city councilors. Additionally, there were expectations noted during the process that are documented here. Those items noted with an '*' were voiced multiple times by three or more individuals.

Strengths:

- Response times*
- Reliability and dependability
- High level of community satisfaction*
- Outcomes are good currently
- Fires are down
- Respect for first responders *
- Professionalism*
- Emergency planning

Weaknesses:

- Morale*
- Budgetary management
- The quality and timeliness of reports from staff
- Local Government Aid being reduced and is unpredictable
- Accountability
- Slow and resistive to change
- Lack of involvement in "broader community"
- Consistency of inspection program

Opportunities:

- Expand mission from simply firefighting and basic life support (EMS)
- Community involvement*
- Expansion of automatic and mutual aid agreements
- Explore regionalization*
- EMS model – can MFD participate further in service provision (e.g. "stop the clock")
- Find the appropriate size for MFD
- Continue and expand focus on prevention
- Explore additional revenue opportunities for MFD*
- Provide response data specific to individual Ward

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- Provide comprehensive description of MFD services
- Look at alternate work schedules*
- Ability to bill insurance companies for certain responses

Challenges:

- Revenue sources and funding future operations*
- Predictability of Local Government Aid
- Providing for safety of citizens and firefighters*
- Consequence of Council decisions
- Managing overtime*
- Controlling sick leave utilization*
- Pension plans (need for merging current plan to State plan)
- Is MFD providing unbalanced support to neighboring agencies (mutual and auto aid)
- Develop political will to carry out required change
- Government image
- 25% of service area is not taxed
- Do we need 5 person crews performing inspections?
- Developing a higher level of accountability for MFD staff
- Determining the safety threshold for staffing levels

Expectations:

- Recommendations for staffing
- Look for innovative solutions to providing service
- Look for flexibility in delivery system
- Emergency preparation
- Be an efficient organization
- Provide good information and analysis
- Creation of a sustainable model (match resources to delivery model)
- Fire Department should be outcome driven
- Priority based budgeting
- Look at other activities of MFD and how they interrelate
- Evaluation of the fleet
- Evaluate cost effectiveness of leasing engines and stations
- Message in report supports contemplation of current events and public discourse of issues

Critical Issues:

- Overtime costs*
- Sick leave utilization*
- Injury rates
- Funding*
- Collective bargaining strategies
- Health of culture – saturation of companionship allows for over-processing issues
- Look at MFD connectivity to City information technology initiatives
- Playing politics with City budget issues (letters from Senator and County EMS)

General Data and Information Collection

Prior the ESCI project team visiting Minneapolis, the project manager supplied MFD with a Data and Information Request. The document contained a large number of items to be collected by the fire department to expedite the project team's on-site time and prevent unnecessary utilization of personnel during ESCI's site visit.

The Data and Information Request contained requests for items and/or documents including, but not limited to, the following:

- General Department Information
- Department Response Information
- Department Financial Information
- Department Records Management System Information
- Computer Aided Dispatch Records
- Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Data
- Lists of capital assets and personnel
- Critical Tasking Analyses

Although a tremendous amount of data and information was gathered during stakeholder interviews, as of the submission of this stakeholder input summary, ESCI is still awaiting final completion of this request for information. Completion of the Data and Information Request is crucial to the completion of Phases II and III of this project.

Development of Project Work Plan

Part of Phase I of this project was the development of a Project Work Plan based on the data, information and input received during the stakeholder input process. The following page outlines the preliminary project work plan with an estimated project completion date of 30 November, 2011 given that all the necessary data and information is made available to the ESCI project team in a timely manner.

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Project: Minneapolis, MN – Fire Department Evaluation and Master Plan

Phase I – Development of Project Work Plan and Stakeholder Input

Task Name	Assignment	Finish
Review of Background Information		8/26/11
Client data preparation period	Department Officials	
Reminder Calls to Client Coordinator	Kent Greene	
Emails with explanatory material for data requests forms		
Early collection of GIS data	Kent Greene Joe Parrott	
Review of all background information	ESCI Team	
Stakeholder Input		9/2/11
Complete logistical preparation for on-site fieldwork visit	ESCI Team	
Forward proposed fieldwork itinerary to client		
Interview necessary officials		
Interview appropriate agency managers & staff		
Development of Project Work Plan		
Assemble project activity plan	Kent Greene	
Prepare proactive schedule of all project tasks		
Review work plan and timeline with client		

Phase II – Evaluation of Current Conditions

Task Name	Assignment	Finish
Evaluation of Current Conditions		10/21/11
Develop Organizational Overview	Kent Greene	
Evaluate Management Components		
Evaluate Capital Assets	Steve Trunck	
Evaluate Risk Management Programs	Kent Greene	
Evaluate Staffing and Personnel Management Components	Kent Greene	
Evaluate Current System Performance	Kent Greene Joe Parrott Dave Austin	
Evaluate Support Programs	Kent Greene Steve Trunck Steve White	

Phase III – Future System Demand and Future Delivery System Models

Task Name	Assignment	Finish
Future System Demand Projections		10/28/11
Develop population growth projections	Kent Greene Joe Parrott	
Develop service demand projections		
Complete community risk analysis		
Future Delivery System Models		11/5/11
Develop of response standards and targets	ESCI Staff	
Develop recommended long-term strategy		
Compile short and mid-term recommendations		
Complete fiscal analysis of options		
Development and Review of Draft Report		11/15/11
Compile all report sections	Kent Greene	
Proofread	ESCI staff	
Present to client for review	Kent Greene	
Conduct draft review meeting	Kent Greene Client representatives	
Deliverable - Final Presentation		11/30/11
Complete necessary revisions	Kent Greene Jack Snook Dave Austin	
Publish Full Report and Forward to Client		
Present Final Report to City Council and Client Representative Groups		
Forward Final Data to Client		



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