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# Strategic Plan 2024-2028







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# Executive Summary

The Riverview Fire and Rescue Strategic Plan summarizes the department's key objectives for the next five years, from 2024-28. This plan represents our pledge to good stewardship of the department's resources, funded by the residents of the Town of Riverview. It sets out recommendations for how our services should change to meet the demands of the future. The objectives contained within this plan will help guide the department in continuing to satisfy our mission statement, and provide core emergency services to the community.

We are committed to revisiting our strategic plan every year to ensure the plan accomplishes what it set out to do and to make adjustments where needed. The strategic plan will inform annual operational goals and capital budget planning.

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In this plan we strive to support the five strategic themes established in the Town of Riverview Strategic Plan (2021-26):

- **Safe and Inclusive Community**
- **Building a Sustainable Community**
- **Thriving Community**
- **Active and Engaged Community**
- **Service Excellence**



We have established six goals for Riverview Fire and Rescue within this strategic plan:

- RFR will develop and cultivate a brand to further our public education objectives.
- RFR will actively promote life safety initiatives within our community.
- RFR will increase and widen its engagement within the community.
- RFR will establish operational standards and associated quantitative metrics.
- RFR will improve the Fire Insurance Grading for the communities we serve.
- RFR will develop and implement plans to increase firefighter turnout to calls.

WHO WE ARE

# Organizational Overview

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# Mission Statement

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We are dedicated to safely protecting life, property and the environment through education, prevention & emergency response.

# Organizational Values

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## **PROFESSIONALISM**

As professionals, we perform our duties to the highest standards.

## **INTEGRITY**

We maintain the highest ethical standards.

## **RESPECT**

We acknowledge the ideas, beliefs, and opinions of others.

## **TEAMWORK**

We will work together to achieve a common goal.

## **PRIDE**

We take satisfaction in the achievements of our department.

## **DEDICATION**

We believe in our community, and serve it with honour.



# History of Riverview Fire and Rescue

Riverview Fire and Rescue has its roots in the former Coverdale Fire Department that was organized by the Parish of Coverdale. In 1961 a station was built for the Coverdale Fire Department. It responded to its first call on July 1, 1961.

In 1973 the Villages of Bridgedale, Gunningsville and Riverview Heights were amalgamated into the Town of Riverview. The Coverdale Fire Department became the Riverview Fire Department, reporting now to the Town Council of Riverview.

In 1977, Riverview Fire Department started an ambulance service. This was also the year of the unionization of the full-time career staff with the International Association of Firefighters. Local 2549, the Riverview Professional Firefighters Association, reached its first collective agreement with the Town in 1978.

Between 1978 and 1990 eight more firefighters were hired, which brought the shifts up to four firefighters each, while minimum staffing remained at three firefighters. In April 1998, the Riverview Fire Department changed its name to "Riverview Fire and Rescue". The name was changed to reflect the fact that it did not just provide fire services. It also provided emergency medical services and rescue services.

In 2006 Riverview Fire and Rescue moved to its current location on Pinewood Road, which is located to the south of the former station on Coverdale Rd.

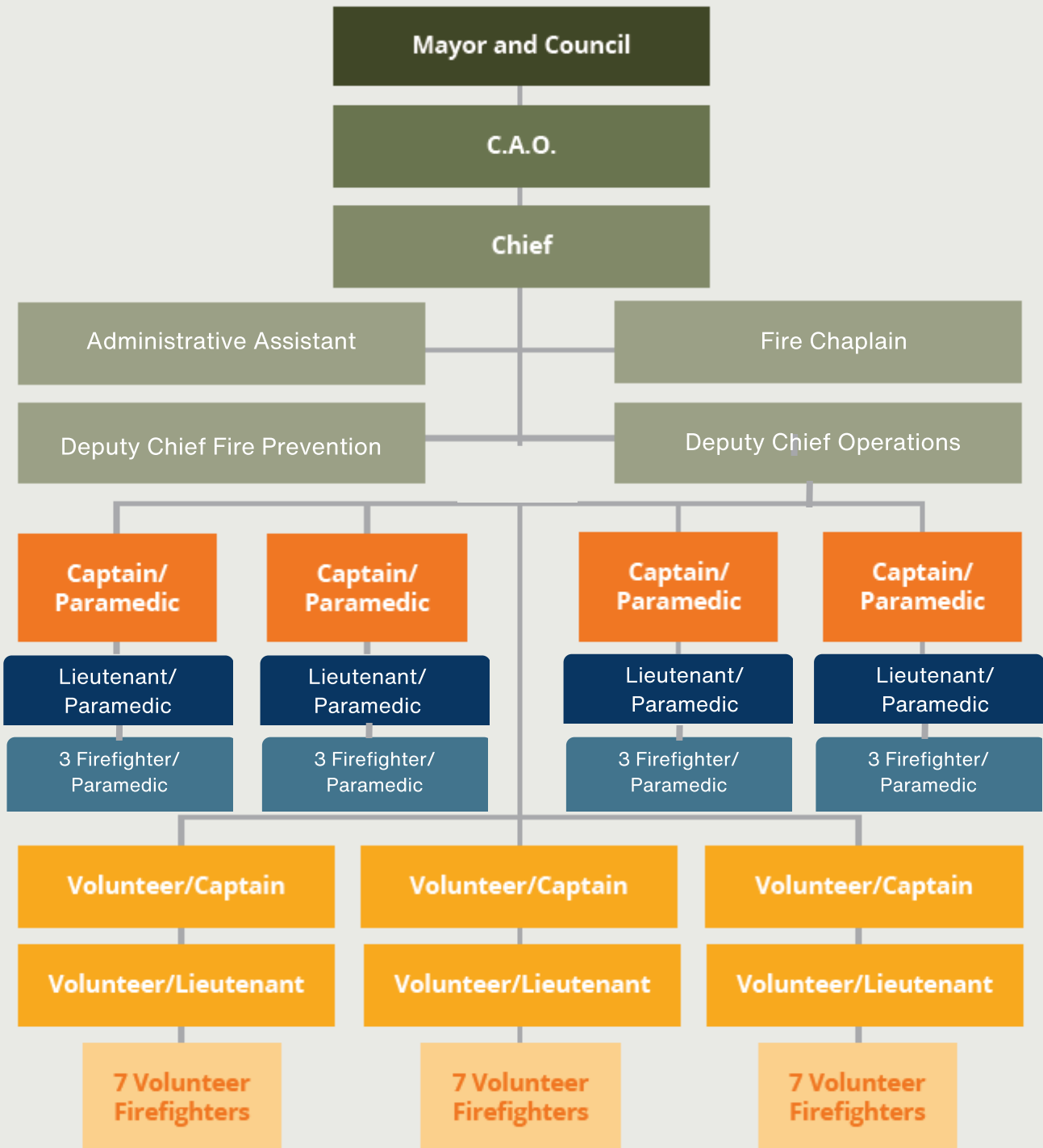
With the creation of Ambulance New Brunswick, RFR ceased to operate an ambulance service on July 3, 2007. In its place, Town Council authorized RFR to provide a Medical First Responder Service at a paramedic level. All career firefighters with RFR currently maintain a license with the Paramedic Association of New Brunswick.

A third Chief Officer position was added in 2012, with a Deputy Chief of Training. This position was converted to a Deputy Chief of Operations in 2022. From 2018 through 2021 four additional career firefighter positions were created, bringing the shifts up to five firefighters each, and minimum staffing increased to four. The number of volunteer firefighter positions has remained stable at twenty-eight.

In 2022 an internal operational review was completed, which has helped to inform this strategic plan. A summary of the operational review can be found in Appendix "C". Lastly, in 2022 four career Lieutenant positions were added to the organizational structure of Riverview Fire and Rescue.



# 2023 Organizational Chart

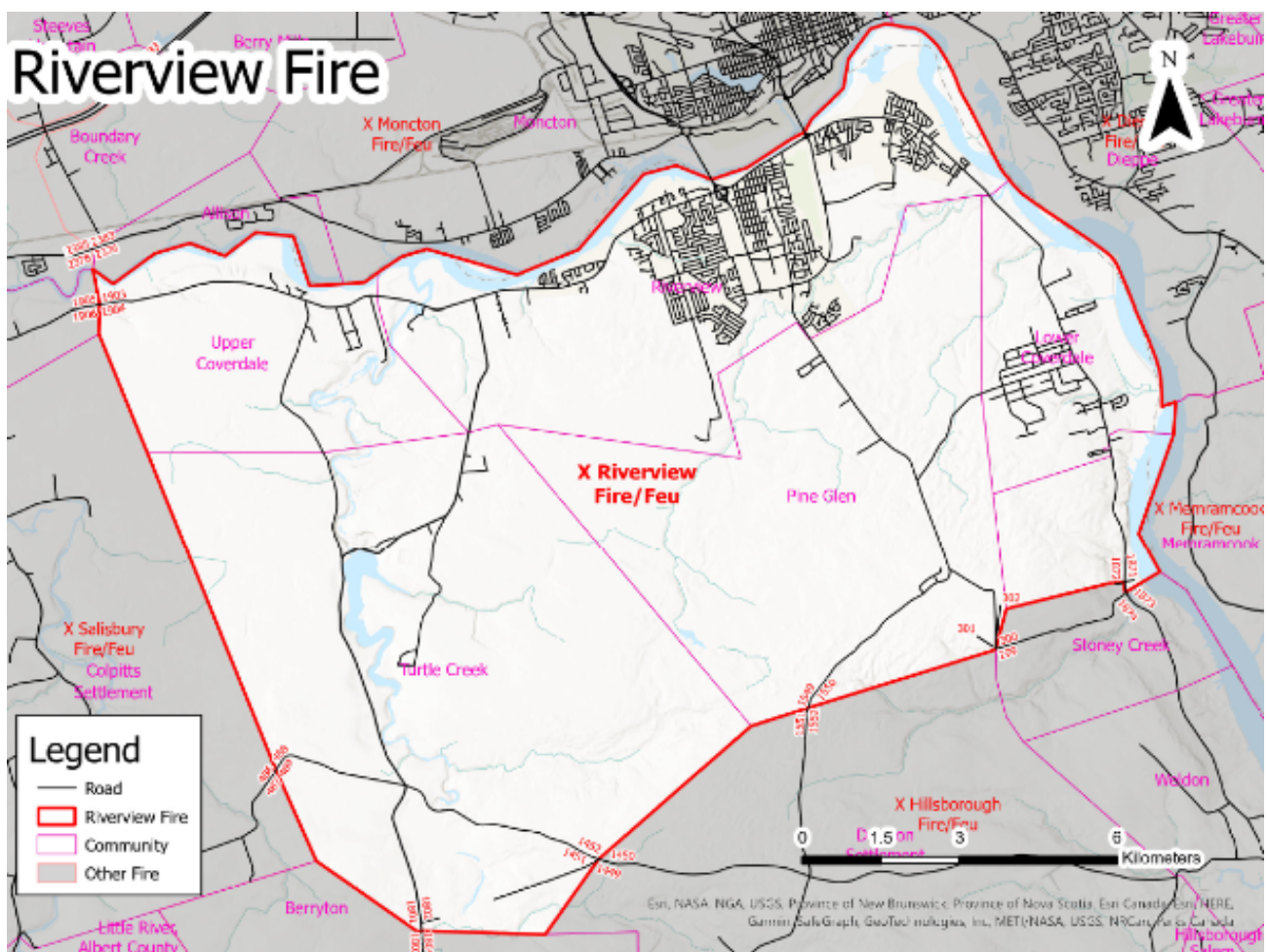




# Response Zone

Riverview Fire and Rescue provides fire and emergency services to the Town of Riverview, with a census population of 20,584 (2021). We also have an agreement with the Province of New Brunswick to provide these services to a portion of the Southeast Rural District (RD-7), including the communities of Pine Glen and Turtle Creek. Additionally, we provide these services to the community of Upper Coverdale, which rests within the Village of Salisbury, and Lower Coverdale, which rests within the Village of Fundy Albert. The combined population of these areas is 4,766 (2021 Census, Coverdale Parish).

Our combined response zone covers 193.9 sq km (74.8 sq mls) with a population of nearly 25,500 residents.



(Courtesy of Geomatics Unit NB 9-1-1)

# Services Provided

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Riverview Fire and Rescue has a history of being one of the most proactive Fire Departments in New Brunswick in providing comprehensive emergency response services, as well as Fire Prevention and Life Safety education.

The department provides not only fire prevention, fire suppression and medical first response, but several technical rescue disciplines.

Riverview Fire and Rescue currently provides the following services to the residents of its coverage area:

## Fire Suppression

- Structural fire suppression
- Wildland fire suppression

## HAZMAT

- HAZMAT (Operations Level)

## Medical First Response

- Medical First Response at a Primary Care Paramedic level for career staff.
- Medical First Response at a First Responder level for volunteer members.

## Technical Rescue

- Auto Extrication
- Swift Water Rescue and Boat Operations
- Ice Rescue.
- Confined Space Rescue.
- Off Road Rescue (ARGO equipped with trailer for casualty evacuation).

## Fire Prevention

- Inspections of public and commercial occupancies.
- Approval of Fire Safety Plans.
- Fire investigations
- Public Fire education

## Mutual Aid Support

1. Moncton & Dieppe
2. Albert County

# Emergency Response Numbers

Type of Emergency Calls	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Structure Fires	5	6	14	8	9
Fires (Other i.e. Chimney, Electrical, etc...)	21	23	27	9	18
False Alarms (Malicious)	0	0	0	0	0
Alarms (No Fire - Residential or Commercial)	88	82	66	82	139
Vehicle Collisions, Water/Tech Rescue	82	82	76	79	86
Public hazards (Spills, Gas Leaks, Etc.)	65	91	41	50	65
Public assistance, Miscellaneous	11	15	35	38	55
Vehicle Fires	3	6	3	9	8
Grass/Brush Fires	10	25	8	23	11
Mutual Aid Provided	8	6	10	2	2
<b>Total Non-Medical Emergency Calls</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>393</b>
Medical First Responder Calls	767	629	746	1121	1551
<b>Total Number of Emergency Calls</b>	<b>1060</b>	<b>965</b>	<b>1026</b>	<b>1420</b>	<b>1944</b>



# Riverview Fire and Rescue Financial Data

## Operational Expenditures

This table provides a reflection of the fire department operational expenditures in comparison to the Town of Riverview operational expenditures. As demonstrated, the fire department annual operating expenditures have consistently represented between 12-13% of the Town's annual operating expenditures.

YEAR	2020	2021	2022
Total Town Operating Budget "Actuals"	\$ 29,617,658	\$32,166,255	\$31,829,537
Fire Dept Operating Budget "Actuals"	\$3,575,884	\$3,903,357	\$4,048,199
Percentage	12.1 %	12.11	12.7 %



# Riverview Fire and Rescue Financial Data

## Capital Budget

The capital budget outlines the department's recent expenses for assets and related programs, such as new vehicles, communication upgrades, and purchase of other high valued equipment needed to ensure that our residents have a well-equipped and modern fire and rescue service. Fluctuation within the capital budget is common as it varies with different projects undertaken in a given year.

YEAR	2020	2021	2022
Total Town Capital Budget	\$12,542,841	\$5,654,495	\$10,347,108
Fire Dept Capital Budget	\$142,251	\$38,397	\$286,012
Percentage	1.1 %	0.7 %	2.8 %

## Planned Future Capital Projects

- Continued investment in the fire department training area
- Replacement of two apparatus in 2025
- Replacement of one aerial apparatus in 2028
- Fire station renovations
- PPE Washer
- Technical Rescue hardware upgrades



## TRAINING OVERVIEW

Training at Riverview Fire and Rescue is done in support of fire department operations, and in the interest of firefighter safety. It is a department-wide effort to train our members.

In providing a broad array of services to the community, training is likewise diverse, ranging from structural firefighting, to technical rescue, to emergency medical services. Training is scheduled by the Deputy Chief of Operations in conjunction with the Fire Chief.

Regular scheduled training with career firefighters may be led by a Chief Officer, or alternatively a shift officer, four days out of each week. Regular scheduled training with volunteer firefighters occurs three Tuesday nights per month, excluding July and August. This training is conducted with the assistance of the duty career firefighters and the volunteer officers. In 2023 members of the department accumulated approximately 3200 training hours.

Certification courses are offered through a mixture of in-house instructors and outside contractors. Riverview Fire and Rescue has instructors who teach programs in-house on behalf of NBCC, the Canadian Red Cross, Rescue Canada, Blue Card Incident Command and Lifesaving Resources among others. The minimum level of training required of firefighters in Riverview is Firefighter Level 1 (compliant with NFPA 1001).

To the greatest extent possible training is held in Riverview utilizing our own facilities. For live fire training we now utilize our own facility located just outside of Riverview, which is scheduled to expand over the next few years. Additionally, Riverview has a training tower attached to the station which is used for instruction across several disciplines.

# Fire Prevention Overview

## Fire Inspections

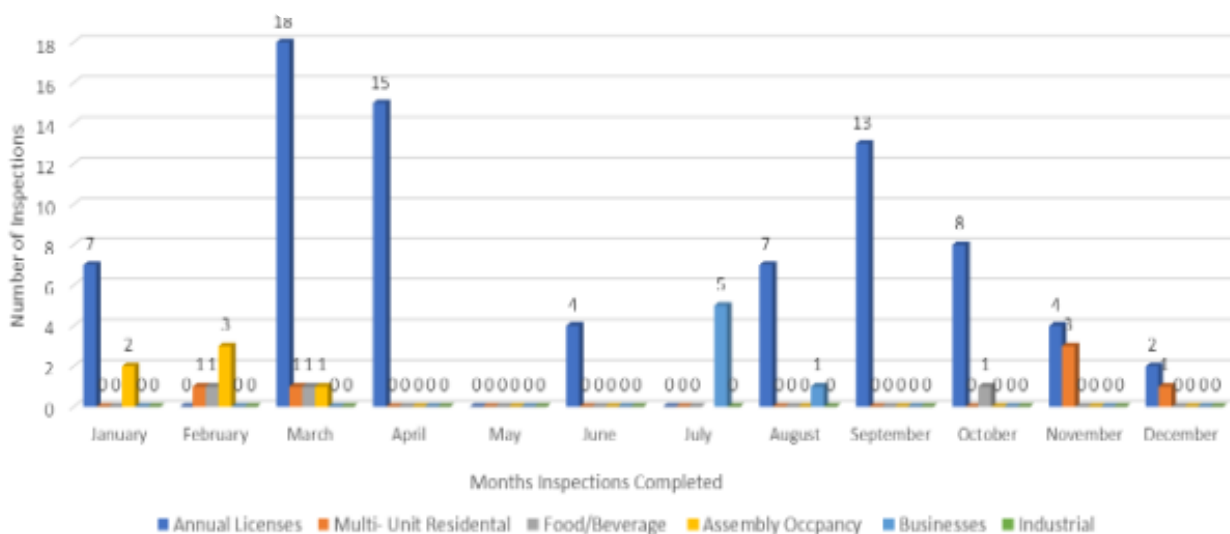
Fire inspections in Riverview are carried out by the Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention, with assistance from the Office of the Fire Marshal as required. The frequency of inspection is set forth by the Office of the Fire Marshal.

Fire Inspection Category	2022	2023
1. Annual Licenses	76	78
2. Multi-Unit Residential	4	6
3. Food & Beverage	10	3
4. Assembly	5	6
5. Business/ Mercantile	3	6
6. Industrial	0	0
Total	98	99

## Fire Inspection Key

1. Annual Licenses: Apartments without sprinklers, Daycares, Nursing Homes, Schools, Bars.
2. Multi-Unit Residential: Sprinklered apartment complexes with more than 4 units
3. Food & Beverage: Restaurants, Liquor Stores
4. Assembly: Clubs, Arts Centers, Halls
5. Business/Mercantiles: Offices, Banks, Retail Stores
6. Industrial: Gas stations, Repair Shops

## FIRE INSPECTIONS 2023



# Fire Investigation Overview

Riverview Fire and Rescue investigates all fires that we respond to in our jurisdiction. Minor fires may be investigated by the Duty Captain and/or the Duty Chief Officer.

Larger and more serious fires where there is significant damage, or results in injuries/death, are investigated by a Chief Officer. These typically number from 6-10 investigations per year. The Chief Officer may request assistance for these investigations from:

1. Another Riverview Fire and Rescue Chief Officer
2. The New Brunswick Fire Marshal's Office
3. R.C.M.P.
4. Insurance Investigators
5. Technical Specialists (Gas Inspector, Electrical Inspector, etc.)
6. Other agencies as required.

Fires that may be as a result of a criminal act will be jointly investigated by a Riverview Fire and Rescue Chief Officer, the NB Fire Marshal's Office and the R.C.M.P.





HOW WE GOT HERE

# Strategic Planning Process

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# Planning Process

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The process to formulate a strategic plan for Riverview Fire and Rescue began in 2022 with the completion of an operational review. The operational review speaks to the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) through an operational lens. The operational review also incorporates a comprehensive survey completed by career and volunteer firefighters. A summary of the operational review can be found in Appendix "C".

This was followed in early 2023 by the formation of a strategic planning committee, composed of seven members from RFR (Three chief officers, two career firefighters and two volunteer firefighters). One of the first actions taken by the committee was to formulate external stakeholder surveys. One of the surveys were directed at the general public, while a second was directed at the senior population within the community. The Town of Riverview Communication Coordinator was enlisted to administer an on-line survey to the general public, while the senior population survey was distributed manually.

With this information in hand, the committee agreed upon confirmation of our existing "Mission Statement". The committee further devised six long term organizational goals and the strategies to achieve them.

The committee acknowledges that the formation of a Strategic Plan is just one step in the overall strategic management process. Detailed annual operating plans will need to be developed that outline objectives which will serve the goals and strategies contained herein.

The plan has been reviewed by the Strategic Planning Committee and senior management within the fire department and will be implemented for the period of 2024-2028. The strategic plan will be reviewed each year to evaluate its effectiveness.



# Stakeholders

The identification of stakeholders is critical to the strategic planning process as it identifies who has an interest in the organization, and therefore who may support, or conversely oppose the actions of the organization. During this stage we identified three key stakeholder groups, namely the membership of Riverview Fire & Rescue, the residents of Riverview, and finally our Town Council. Data was collected from stakeholders by the following means;

1. Fire Department Employees: In 2022 a committee composed of career and volunteer firefighters, as well as Chief Officers, was formed to complete an operational review of Riverview Fire and Rescue. A comprehensive survey of Riverview firefighters formed part of this operational review.
2. Residents: in early 2023 surveys were conducted with the general public and the senior population of Riverview. The surveys contained sections related to the knowledge of services offered by Riverview Fire and Rescue, as well as the satisfaction levels with the organization.
3. Town Council: The Town of Riverview Strategic Plan (2021-2026), approved by Council, informs the fire department strategic plan. Additionally, this strategic plan will be presented to Council for approval.

Note: The resident surveys can be seen in Appendix "B" and Appendix "C"



# SWOT Analysis

A S.W.O.T analysis is a technique commonly used to develop a full awareness of an organization, from four unique perspectives. Analysis of the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats assists us in looking toward the future of Riverview Fire and Rescue. The results noted below are derived from the operational review, including a survey of firefighters and operational statistics, and draws upon our external survey results.

<b>Strengths</b>	Modern facility which continues to serve the operational needs of the department. The department has modern equipment and highly trained firefighters, and a strong base of internal instructional resources. A range of internal training facilities & props are available. There is a continuing strong level of volunteer firefighter recruitment.
<b>Weaknesses</b>	Challenges in volunteer firefighter retention. Aging apparatus fleet (note: new apparatus are on order). Lack of public awareness of RFR's public safety and education initiatives. Increasing operational demand (call volume) is taxing our current operational model.
<b>Opportunities</b>	Growth of the community (population and residential tax base growth). Additional opportunities for community engagement are available. Support from other TOR departments is available to achieve our goals.
<b>Threats</b>	Increases in operational call volume (growing population / climate change related responses). Pressure on the volunteer fire service (Both noted as national trends in the CAFC <i>Great Canadian Fire Census</i> Reports of 2022-23).

# SWOT Discussion

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Firefighters in Riverview recognize that we are fortunate to be well supported by the residents, and our Town Council. External surveys show a large majority of residents feel they have adequate fire protection and receive good value for their tax dollars from the department. The fire department benefits from one central station that meets its operational needs, and facilitates good response times. The off-site live fire training area is scheduled to expand further in the coming years and has greatly assisted with the training of firefighters in Riverview. Radio Communications has been dramatically improved since the last strategic plan was written with a capital investment in the NBTMR radio system. Although the apparatus fleet is aging, the current capital plan addresses this challenge over the next five years.

The strategic planning committee observed that in both the current public surveys, and in the previous round of surveys conducted in 2017, a portion of the population does not feel we conduct enough community outreach and public education. We believe there are improvements we can make in this area, but also feel part of the issue is inadequate communication of the work which is already being done.

The 2022 operational review highlights the need for continuous and standardized quantitative reporting in relation to fire department operations. This will assist the department as we address future challenges. RFR experienced a 50% increase in medical first responder calls between 2021 and 2022, and the call volume has remained at this new level. In 2023 the department experienced a 65% increase in residential and commercial fire alarms in comparison to the previous year. In the Town of Riverview Housing Needs Assessment Report (2023) Stantec projects the town population will reach close to 24,000 people by 2036. Additionally, Riverview will experience a general aging of its population in this same timeframe. Furthermore, the development trend toward multi-unit residential construction is expected to continue. As a result, we anticipate a continued gradual increase in call volume over the next twelve years in conjunction with this growth.

While the demand for emergency services have increased, and this is expected to continue, Riverview Fire and Rescue is simultaneously experiencing staffing related issues not uncommon within the Canadian Fire Service. The 2022 operational review shows challenges in volunteer firefighter retention, and in having adequate levels of career off-duty and volunteer firefighters attend calls. This highlights Riverview's composite fire department structure, as we rely heavily on volunteer firefighters and off-duty career firefighters to come in for fire/rescue calls to supplement the response of the on-duty crew. It is imperative to actively monitor these areas of concern and respond to them directly within the strategic plan.

WHAT WE'LL DO

# Goals and Strategies

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**GOAL #1**  
**RFR WILL DEVELOP AND CULTIVATE A BRAND TO FURTHER OUR PUBLIC EDUCATION OBJECTIVES.**

*Building a safe and inclusive community*

Strategies	Target Date
RFR will engage with TOR Communications to assist in brand development and media strategy.	Oct 2025
Consistent branding will be used in public education content developed by RFR.	Dec 2025

**GOAL #2**  
**RFR WILL ACTIVELY PROMOTE LIFE SAFETY INITIATIVES WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY.**

*Building a safe and Inclusive Community*

RFR will develop additional on-line educational content (in-house) to promote life safety initiatives	Dec (Annual Basis)
RFR will develop (in-house) additional traditional educational content to promote life safety initiatives (flyers, etc.)	Dec (Annual Basis)
RFR will begin to utilize the established branding (referenced in Goal #1) to promote life safety initiatives.	Dec 2025



**ACTIVE AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY**



**GOAL #3**

**RFR WILL INCREASE AND WIDEN ITS ENGAGEMENT WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.**

*Achieving an active and engaged community*

Strategies	Target Date
RFR will work with the Parks and Recreation Department to coordinate our participation in a broad array of events within the community.	June 2025

**GOAL #4**

**RFR WILL ESTABLISH OPERATIONAL STANDARDS AND ASSOCIATED QUANTITATIVE METRICS.**

*Achieving service excellence*

RFR will seek a formal operational mandate (and service level) from Town Council.	Oct 2024
An internal committee will be formed to choose operational metrics, and associated objectives within each metric.	June 2024
RFR will revise the monthly report template to Town Council to include additional operational metrics	Sep 2024







## GOAL #5

### RFR WILL IMPROVE THE FIRE INSURANCE GRADING FOR THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE.

*Achieving service excellence*

RFR will complete all sections within the Fire Underwriters Survey municipal portal.	Dec 2024
RFR will request a Public Fire Protection Classification Review from the Fire Underwriters Survey.	June 2026
RFR will seek Accredited Superior Tanker Shuttle Service classification from the Fire Underwriters Survey.	June 2026
RFR will action areas for improvement identified in the Fire Department Review in order to improve the Public Fire Protection Classification (PFPC) from the Fire Underwriters Survey.	Sept 2027

## GOAL #6

### RFR WILL DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PLANS TO INCREASE FIREFIGHTER TURNOUT TO CALLS.

*Achieving service excellence*

RFR will make recommendations to the Town of Riverview related to additional career firefighter staffing.	Jan 2024
RFR will complete a report related to volunteer firefighter retention and attendance.	Jan 2024
RFR will implement recommendations from the report referenced above.	Sept 2024





# NEXT STEPS

**Development of a strategic plan is one phase of the larger strategic management process. Strategic management is a comprehensive and ongoing management process that involves research, planning, resource allocation, implementation of strategies, and ongoing review of the goals and strategies set forth within the strategic plan.**

RFR commits to reconvening the strategic planning committee annually to revisit our organizational goals and discuss implementation successes and challenges. The Fire Chief is committed to developing operational road maps on an annual basis which will be used to fulfill our stated strategies. This road map will be used to determine specific resources needed and who to assign the responsibility of achieving the selected strategies.

Reporting to the Town CAO will occur through the review of annual operational plans.



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Riverview Fire and Rescue would like to acknowledge the following people for providing assistance and support in the production of this Strategic Plan:

1. Riverview Fire and Rescue Strategic Plan Committee, including members: Chief Robin True, Deputy Chief John Malloy, Deputy Chief Geoff Fisher, Captain Tom Babineau, Firefighter/Paramedic Zach Taylor, Vol. Captain Craig Fitzgerald & Vol. Firefighter Jeremy Langis
2. Riverview Fire and Rescue Staff, including: RFR Administrative Assistant, Shawni Lewis
3. Town of Riverview Communications Manager, Ashly Barron
4. Town Councilor Cecile Cassista for her assistance in distributing surveys
5. Members of RFR who participated in the online survey related to the operational review.
6. Residents of Town of Riverview who participated in the public surveys





# APPENDICES

## **Riverview Fire and Rescue Survey Results – 2023**

In early 2023 the strategic planning committee worked with the Communications Manager to develop a series of questions to help determine residents' awareness and satisfaction with our department. This general public survey was sent out via the Town's website and social media. A total of 332 responses were received. In addition to this, a separate survey was developed for Riverview's senior population with a total of 87 responses received.

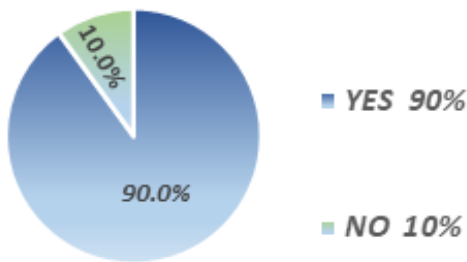
Key Takeaways from these surveys:

1. Residents who feel they receive adequate fire protection in Riverview.
  - General public survey: 90.1% satisfied
  - Senior population survey: 100% satisfied
2. RFR provides good value for tax dollars.
  - General public survey: 91.6% agree or strongly agree
  - Senior population survey: 91.6% agree or strongly agree
3. Do you feel the fire department does an adequate amount of public education and community outreach?
  - General public survey: 69.4% responded yes
  - Senior population survey: 79.4% responded yes

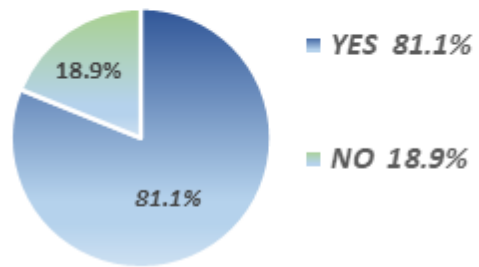
# APPENDIX A

## GENERAL PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS - JUNE 2023

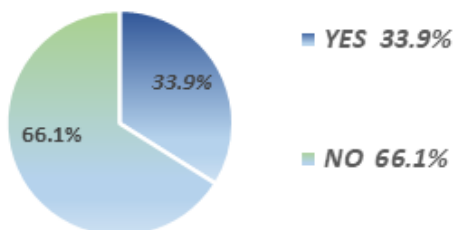
Are you aware that Riverview Fire and Rescue provides Medical First Responder service (at a Paramedic level) to the public for medical emergencies?



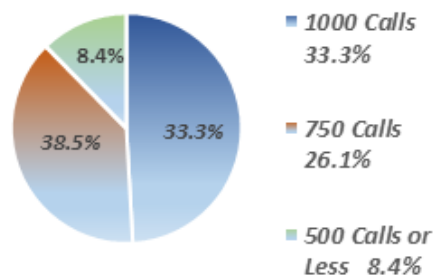
Are you aware that Riverview Fire and Rescue provides Technical Rescue service? E.g. Swift Water and Confined Space rescue



Are you aware that Riverview Fire and Rescue has conducted door-to-door smoke detector campaigns over the past several years?



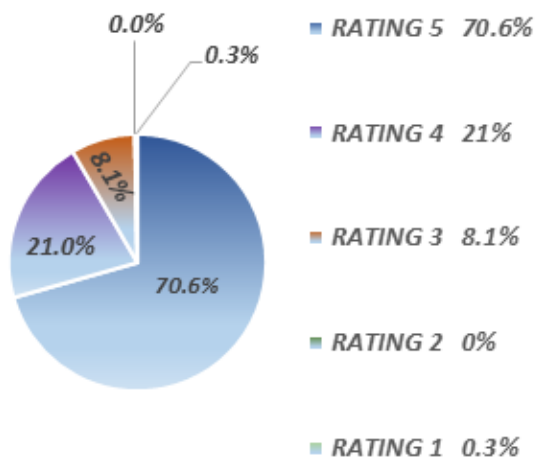
How many calls per year, on average, does Riverview Fire and Rescue respond to?



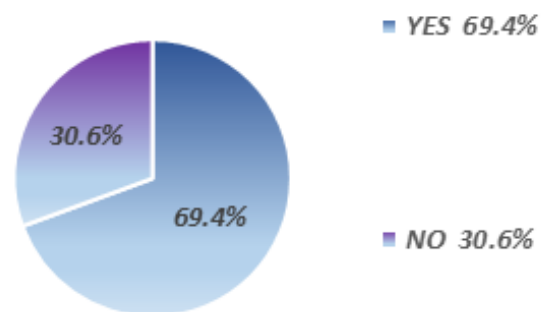
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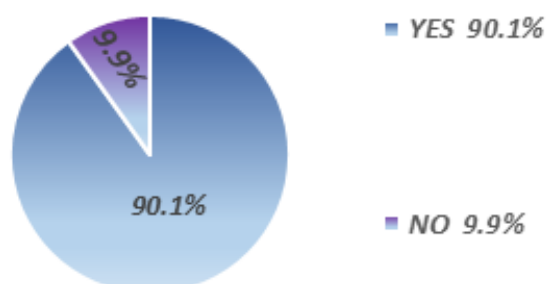
In my opinion, Riverview Fire and Rescue provides good value for my tax dollars.



Do you feel the fire department does an adequate amount of public education and community outreach?



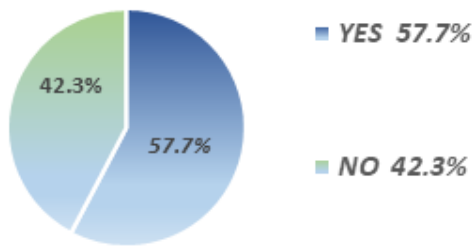
Do you feel you have adequate fire protection service in Riverview?



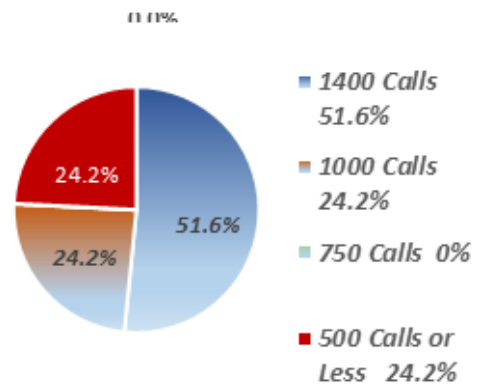
# APPENDIX B

## SENIOR POPULATION SURVEY RESULTS - JUNE 2023

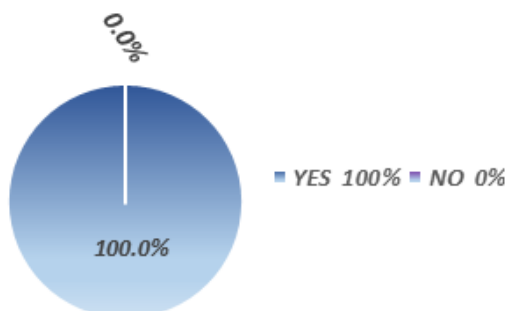
Are you aware that Riverview Fire and Rescue has conducted door-to-door smoke detector campaigns over the past several years?



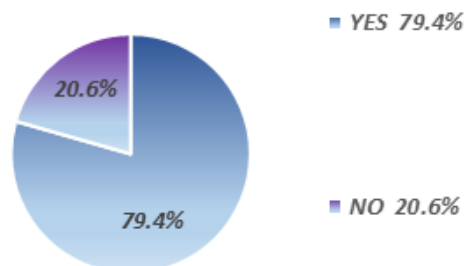
How many calls per year, on average, does Riverview Fire and Rescue respond to?



Do you feel you have adequate fire protection service in Riverview?



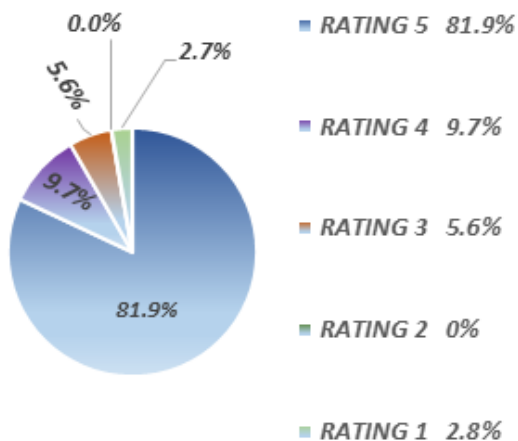
Do you feel the fire department does an adequate amount of public education and community outreach?



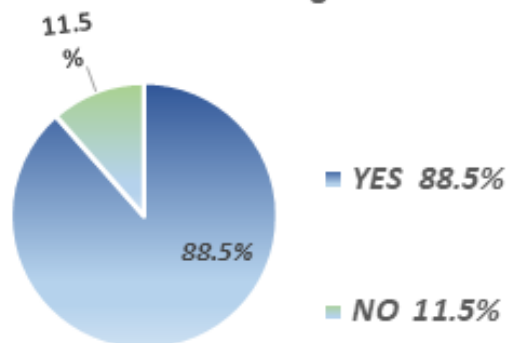
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## SENIOR POPULATION SURVEY RESULTS - JUNE 2023

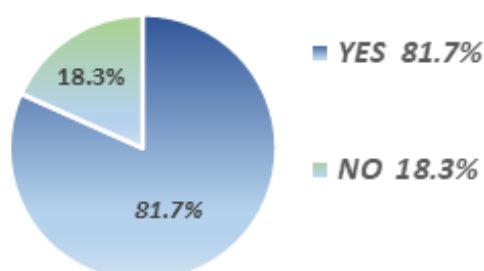
In my opinion, Riverview Fire and Rescue provides good value for my tax dollars.



Are you aware that Riverview Fire and Rescue provides Medical First Responder service (at a Paramedic level) to the public for medical emergencies?



Are you aware that Riverview Fire and Rescue provides Technical Rescue service? E.g. Swift Water and Confined Space rescue







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# APPENDIX C

## SUMMARY OF OPERATIONAL REVIEW (2022)

### Methodology

The operational review included a review of applicable fire service standards, including a discussion related to the applicability of the standards. The document further assessed the organization as it now exists, including the organization structure, fleet overview and a range of operational statistics. Finally, the review examined the profile of the community as it moves into the future, including demographics and property development. The implications (specific to operations) of what the community may look like in the future were considered.

### Current Industry Standards

NFPA 1710, the Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments (2020 Edition) was reviewed by the committee. Furthermore NFPA 1720, the Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments (2020 Edition) was reviewed.

There is no specific NFPA standard similar to NFPA 1710 and NFPA 1720 for composite fire departments such as Riverview Fire and Rescue. It is also important to note that neither of the above noted consensus standards have been adopted by the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ). Having said this, the committee felt these standards remain worthwhile to draw upon as they indicate best practices in the North American fire service.

### **Specific areas where RFR meets these standards include:**

- RFR's basic organization structure is documented.
- The functions of members are documented. Job descriptions exist for all positions.
- The department maintains a standardized reporting system, including identifying responding members. This is currently met through the use of CriSys, the CAD used by Fire Control.
- Supervisory chief officers shall be dispatched to respond to all full alarm assignments. RFR currently meets this requirement through a duty chief officer on-call schedule.
- Supervisory chief officer ensures that an incident management system is established. RFR currently meets this requirement through the use of the Blue Card Incident Command system.
- Regarding fire suppression capability, an engine company should be staffed with a minimum of four on-duty members. RFR currently staffs the first due engine company with a minimum of four on-duty members. Subsequent companies are staffed by a mixture of career and volunteer members. Current SOGs require four personnel prior to responding.
- Regarding the assignment fire alarms, the standard calls for a minimum of one engine and four firefighters to investigate the cause. RFR exceeds this standard currently as a full assignment is carried out (unless a cancellation is received by the Incident Commander on scene).
- The standard calls for an incident management system to be used to provide management of incidents of different types. RFR uses the Blue Card Incident Command system for standard responses, and ICS for expanding incidents.

### **Specific areas where RFR should demonstrate improvement:**

- RFR does not have a fire department organizational statement that defines the services (and service level) the department is required to provide.
- Turnout times are captured within the CAD system but are not reported in a standardized fashion. Turnout time goals have not been adopted by the organization.
- Response times are captured within the CAD system but are not reported in a standardized fashion. Response time goals have not been adopted by the organization.
- The department has not identified the minimum staffing requirements for calls (total effective response force).

## Operational Statistics

Turnout Time- the time interval that begins when the notification process begins by audible alarm or visual annunciation and ends at the beginning point of travel time.

- In 2022 the average turnout time to fire/rescue calls for the first out apparatus is 2 mins & 11 seconds (131 seconds).
- In 2021-2022 the average turnout time to fire/rescue calls for the second out apparatus is 7 mins. This is up from the average of 5 mins and 26 seconds in 2012 and is a concerning upward trend.

## Staffing Levels to Fire Calls- Alternatively defined as the “response force”.

- Combining career and volunteer firefighters, the average number of firefighters attending fire calls in 2012 was 16. This average in 2021 is 14.08, a drop of 1.92 (close to 2 firefighters).
- Calls paged out as a “structure fire” do see higher numbers. In 2012 the combined career and volunteer average was 20.44 firefighters. In 2021 an average of 17.83 firefighters attended calls paged out as a structure fire.
- There is a correlation between the decreased staffing levels to fire calls, and longer chute times for the second out apparatus.

## *Medical Calls, On-Scene Times, Unavailability for Fire Calls*

- For medical calls the average time elapsed from “on location” to “back in quarters” during the four-month sample period in 2019 was 19 mins & 6 seconds. In 2022, this average was 19 mins and 23 seconds.
- In the 2019 four-month sample period, 23 calls had times between 30-45 minutes, whereas in the same period of 2022 this was 36 calls. In the 2019 four-month sample period, 5 calls had times exceeding 45 minutes, whereas in the same period of 2022 this was 12 calls.
- In short, two members of the duty crew when on a medical call can sometimes be attached to that call for longer periods of time.

**CALL VOLUME**

Riverview Fire & Rescue Call Breakdown	2021	2022
Structure Fires	14	8
Fires (Other – Chimney, Electrical)	27	9
False Alarms (Malicious)	0	0
Alarms (No Fire – Residential or Commercial)	66	82
Vehicle Accidents, Water/Special Rescue	76	79
Public Hazards (spills, gas leaks, etc.)	41	50
Public Assistance Miscellaneous	35	38
Vehicle Fires	3	9
Grass/Brush Fires.	8	23
Mutual Aid Provided	10	2
Medical First Responder incidents	746	1121
TOTAL	1026	1421

Medical calls have increased 50% in 2022 in comparison to 2021, which is a dramatic (unprecedented) increase. Given this increase, a comparison was conducted comparing the first ten months of 2022 to the first ten months of 2017 in regard to the number of multiple ongoing calls, which places a strain on staffing for calls.

**Instances of Multiple On-going Calls**

Year	Total Calls (Jan-Oct)	Multiple Call Incidents	Multiple Call Incidents (2 calls)	Multiple Call Incidents (3+ calls)
2017	881	38	31	7
2022	1134	64	58	6
% Change	30% Increase	66% Increase	85% Increase	20% Decrease

## Travel Time

Travel time for fire suppression incidents was analyzed for the period of January 1, 2020 until October 21, 2022. Engine 11, the first due apparatus was used for this analysis.

For the complete RFR response area in this time frame, 167 travel times to calls were averaged. This includes calls in the Town of Riverview, as well as the LSD area including Upper Coverdale, Lower Coverdale, Pine Glen and Turtle Creek. The average travel time to fire suppression incidents was 5 minutes and 48 seconds.

For the Town of Riverview only in the same time frame, 139 travel times to calls were averaged. The average travel time to fire suppression incidents was 4 minutes and 22 seconds.

In comparison to NFPA 1710, the average travel time is 22 seconds above the recommended four minutes. Overall, the results indicate that the fire station location (#650 Pinewood Road) is serving the residents of Riverview well. In December of 2020, Bridgedale Blvd was opened, which is a travel route to the east end of Riverview that should in the long term improve travel time averages to calls in the east end of Riverview.

## Analysis and Recommendations

In consideration of the operational statistics brought forth in this report, the input of firefighters and other contributors, as well as industry standards, we draw the following conclusions and make the following recommendations:

- RFR has a strong incident command program, as well as an up-to-date structure fire tactics training regime.

***It is recommended to actively keep pace with industry developments to maintain a high level of performance and safety.***

- The department has a strong overall training program in place. The department has many instructors in various disciplines, which has been a benefit to the organization.

***It is recommended that additional in-house instructional capability be added in the areas of technical rescue, as well as UTV/ATV operations. Further, the department should proactively plan for succession in the various instructional disciplines. The department needs to achieve a greater number of firefighters trained in technical rescue disciplines.***

## Analysis and Recommendations

- The station at 650 Pinewood Rd is serving the members of the organization, and the community well. This is highlighted by an average travel time of 4 minutes and 22 seconds to fire calls within town limits.
- Due to municipal reform, the signatories to some existing mutual aid agreements are changing.

***It is recommended that RFR pursue updated mutual aid agreements as the new municipal entities come into existence in 2023.***

- The existing fleet of apparatus was well designed to meet the needs of the department in the past, but does not meet the needs of today, and the future. The TOR ten-year capital plan is in place to address these concerns. The apparatus specifications for the replacement of Rescue 10 and Engine 13 in 2024 will address many of the concerns raised in this report (more water supply, and more capability for the “first due” apparatus).

***It is recommended that a 100' ft aerial equipped with a bucket be considered to replace the current 75' aerial apparatus. This is in consideration of the growth in multi-unit residential structures in this community.***

- The quality of dispatch services received from Fire Control (Codiac RCMP OCC/PSAP) is an issue as brought forth in the firefighter survey. The CAD system in use is of high quality, and allows for adequate incident reporting.

***It is recommended that the Fire Chief put concerns with the quality of dispatch services in writing to the Codiac RCMP OCC/PSAP. The issue of dispatcher training specific to the fire service is to be addressed in this letter.***

- There is some value in looking to NFPA 1710 and NFPA 1720, however neither standard completely fits RFR (as it is a composite department).

***It is recommended that the Fire Department develop an organizational statement and consider formal adoption through Town Council.***

***It is recommended that the strategic planning committee establish appropriate performance benchmarks related to turnout times, response times, and total response force.***

***It is recommended the department report on these benchmarks to members of the department and Town Council on a regular basis.***

## Analysis and Recommendations

- Based on the combination of projected population growth, property development and expansion to the Mill Creek Nature Park, RFR should anticipate a gradual increase in fire calls over the next several years.

***It is recommended that the department trains and equips itself to better respond to a higher volume of off-road rescues.***

***It is recommended that the department trains and equips itself to better respond to low-rise apartment building fires, specifically those which have a built-in standpipe system.***

- Given statistics that include a dramatic increase in the volume of medical calls, increased on-scene times associated with some medical calls, an increase in the instances of multiple calls, a decrease in the number of career and volunteer firefighters coming in for fire calls, longer turn out times for second and subsequent apparatus, the operational review committee has identified risk. Specifically, we run a greater risk now of a significant event occurring where the department cannot staff an adequate response, or there is an unacceptable delay in response.

***It is recommended that the Deputy Chief of Operations form a committee to explore both volunteer firefighter retention, as well as call attendance. The goals of this committee are to include better volunteer retention, and increased rates of call attendance.***

***It is recommended the Fire Chief, with assistance from the HR and Finance Departments, perform a staffing review in 2023.***

***It is recommended that additional quantitative data be obtained to determine more specifically where our risk lies (time of day, day of week, time of year, etc.)***

- The historical and existing operational model (which to this point has been only informally articulated) relies on call-back career firefighters and volunteer firefighters to staff apparatus beyond the first truck. Call attendance statistics, in combination with survey comments, bring this historical model into some degree of question. Specifically, should, or can, career firefighters be expected to come in for calls on their days off? This is an open question at this point.

***It is recommended that the Fire Chief engage with IAFF Local 2549 as well as the volunteer firefighter force in order to discuss this issue, and gain additional feedback. The strategic planning committee may also be utilized to explore this issue further and make specific recommendations.***

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