

# THE NAPERVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

INNOVATION WITH PURPOSE – DRIVEN BY THE FUTURE

## 2026-2030





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# *Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030*



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# *Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030*



Scott A. Wehrli, Mayor

Mary Gibson, Councilwoman

Ian Holzhauer, Councilman

Supna Jain, Councilwoman

Patrick Kelly, Councilman

Josh McBroom, Councilman

Ashfaq Syed, Councilman

Dr. Benjamin M. White, Councilman

Nate Wilson, Councilman



# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



Doug Krieger, City Manager

Pam Gallahue, Deputy City Manager

Linda LaCloche, Director of Communications

Melanie Marcordes, Director of Community Services

Raymond Munch, Director of Finance

Mark Puknaitis, Fire Chief

Helga Oles, Director of Human Resources

Jackie Nguyen, Director of Information Technology

Michael DiSanto, City Attorney

Jason Arres, Police Chief

Brian Groth, Director of Electric Utility

Darrell Blenniss, Director of Water Utilities

Dan Randolph, Director of Public Works

Jennifer Loudon, Director of Transportation, Engineering & Development





## The City's Affirmation

The 2026-2030 Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan was developed through community engagement and serves as a vital blueprint for guiding the department's operations over the next five years. This document is also integral to meeting the requirements of the accreditation process. As mandated by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI), a division of the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE), the strategic plan must receive formal approval from the agency's governing authority.

This section affirms the City's dedication to the strategic planning process and reflects adherence to the performance standards set forth by the CFAI.

A black ink signature of Mayor Scott Wehrli, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a cursive 'W'.

Mayor Scott Wehrli

A handwritten date '8/19/2025' in black ink, written above a horizontal line.

Date

A blue ink signature of City Manager Doug Krieger, written in a cursive style.

City Manager Doug Krieger

A handwritten date '8/19/25' in blue ink, written above a horizontal line.

Date

A blue ink signature of Fire Chief Mark Puknaitis, written in a cursive style.

Fire Chief Mark Puknaitis

A handwritten date '8-20-2025' in blue ink, written above a horizontal line.

Date



## **Fire Chief Executive Summary**

I am honored to present the Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan for 2026–2030.

The goals and objectives within this document will help guide our department's efforts over the next five years.

Created in partnership with both internal and external stakeholders, this plan sets a clear course for addressing the community's evolving needs and priorities.

On behalf of the entire department, I extend my sincere appreciation to our partners for their collaboration and commitment to ensuring we remain ready to serve our community.





## **Accreditation and Community Excellence**

Naperville residents can take great pride in knowing that all three of the City's public safety agencies—the Naperville Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the Naperville Police Department, and the Naperville Fire Department—hold accreditation from their respective professional boards. Notably, the Naperville Fire Department is one of only two nationally recognized legacy organizations, maintaining accreditation through 2027. This achievement reflects three decades of continuous accreditation from the Center for Public Safety Excellence and underscores the department's commitment to excellence through ongoing improvement.

Naperville continues to distinguish itself as a community where families choose to build lasting roots. In 2025, Niche.com named Naperville the Best City to Live in America for the second consecutive year. Niche also recognized the City as the Best City to Buy a House, the Best City to Raise a Family, and the City with the Best Public Schools in the nation. In April 2025, Livability ranked Naperville the healthiest place to live in the United States, as well as third in education and safety.

These accolades build on a strong foundation of recognition from recent years: Naperville ranked No. 16 on Money's Best Places to Live list in 2022, No. 4 on Livability's 2022 Top 100 Best Places to Live and was named the safest city in America by MoneyGeek in both 2022 and 2023. In 2020, SafeWise ranked Naperville the safest city in the nation to raise a child, based on low property and violent crime rates and the number of registered sex offenders.

Collectively, these honors reflect the dedication of all departments to preserving Naperville's small-town, family-focused character while growing to Illinois' third-largest city.





## **History of the Naperville Fire Department**

Since 1874, the Naperville Fire Department has continually evolved to meet the needs of the community it serves.

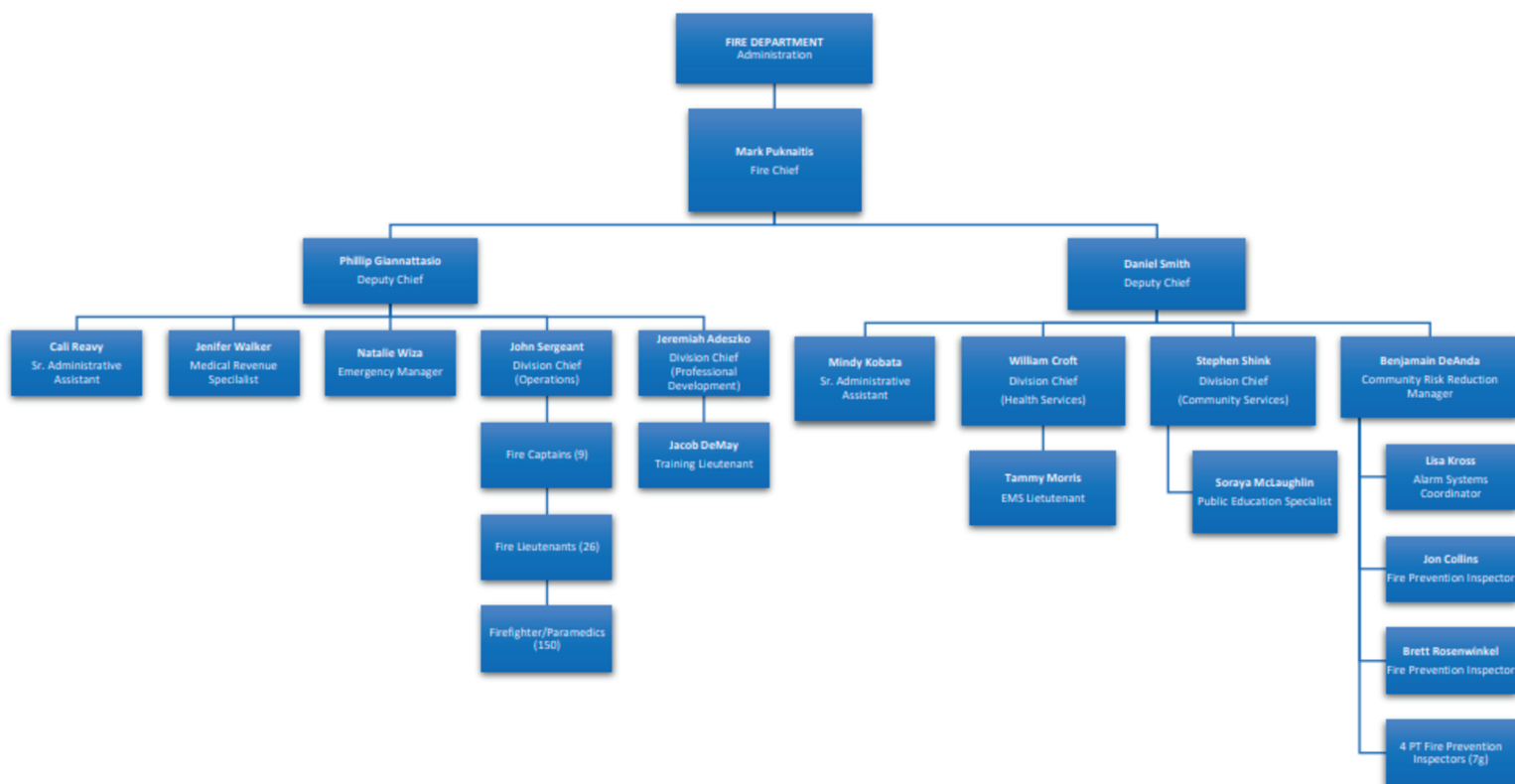
What began as a single horse barn has grown into a network of ten strategically located stations, enabling the department to deliver emergency services within a six-minute benchmark 90% of the time. Today, 207 uniformed personnel staff six fire engines, two ladder trucks, two squad companies, and up to eight front-line advanced life support ambulances, operating on a 24-hour on/48-hour off shift schedule.

In 2024, the department proudly celebrated its 150th anniversary. Throughout its century and a half of service, the Naperville Fire Department has guided the community through extraordinary growth—from a small town of just over 2,000 residents to Illinois' third-largest city, with a population of more than 153,000. Milestones such as establishing DuPage County's first Civil Defense Agency (now EMA) in 1950 and launching the Community Advocate Response Team (CART) highlight the department's longstanding commitment to innovation. The Naperville Fire Department remains a leading example of progressive, community-focused fire service.





# Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030





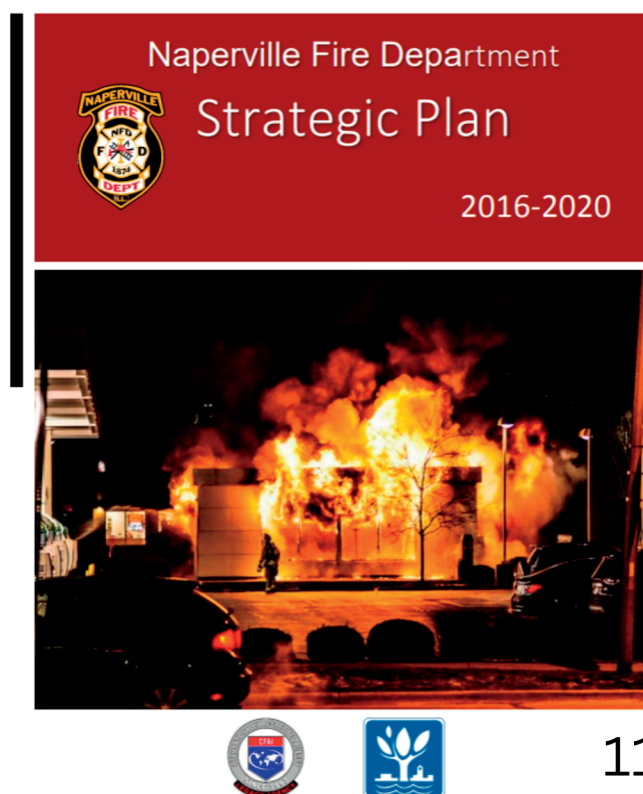
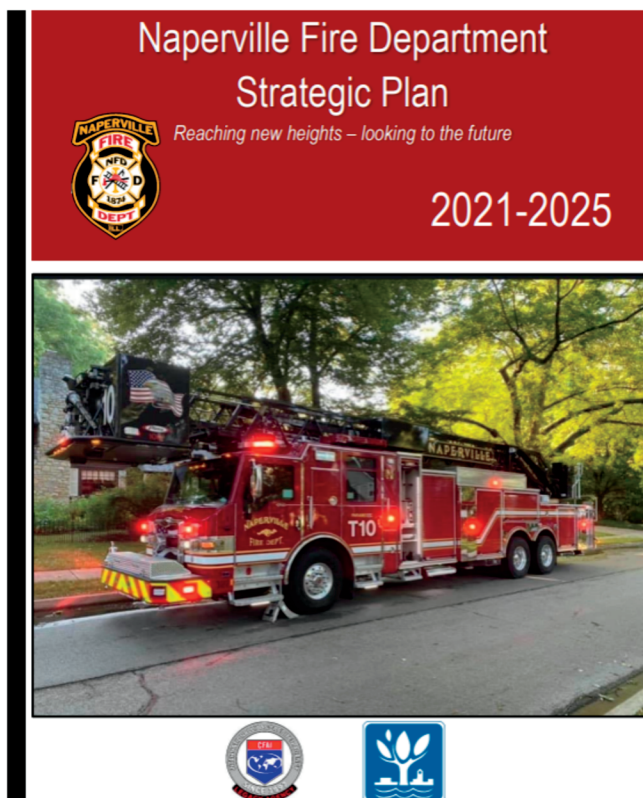
# Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030



## Strategic Plan Process

The Strategic Plan and the goals and objectives are a roadmap for the Naperville Fire Department over the next five years. Constant review of the document to ensure it remains relevant to community needs is essential. This requires communication with stakeholders at least annually to provide updates and seek input. It is important to note, the initiatives generated from the goals and objectives within the Strategic Plan are not limited to the five-year period, they are intended to be legacy projects that last well beyond the document generated.

Each strategic objective is directly linked to a performance measure provided by the CPSE. The continuous improvement model provided by the CPSE and adopted by the Naperville Fire Department ensures that the goals and objectives will evolve as the department and City undergo changes over the five-year period.





## Assumptions

Assumptions are the foundation for the strategic planning process. They create a starting point for the stakeholder meetings and help guide the decision-making process. Strategic plans are based on accepted and reliable strategic assumptions, which provide a framework for decision-making. Assumptions help clarify the context and conditions under which strategies will be developed and implemented, allowing for better alignment and decision-making.

By explicitly stating key assumptions and eliciting the community's assumptions, the Naperville Fire Department can better prepare for and manage risks. Understanding and responding to key assumptions also allows the Strategic Plan to maintain flexibility.

The key assumptions driving the Strategic Goals and Objectives are described in detail below.

### Assumption 1:

*Over the past two years, the Naperville Fire Department has experienced a noticeable decline in the number of applicants seeking positions as firefighter/paramedics. This trend poses a significant challenge, as it directly impacts the department's ability to uphold the high standards of public safety that the community expects. The role of firefighter/paramedic is both physically demanding and emotionally taxing, requiring a unique blend of technical expertise, medical training, and resilience under pressure. As fewer individuals enter the recruitment pipeline, the competition for qualified candidates becomes increasingly fierce, not only within the public safety sector but also with private organizations. The anticipated increase in emergency call volume, coupled with ongoing population growth and the number of personnel approaching retirement eligibility, is expected to necessitate the mass hiring of candidate firefighters over the next five years.*



# Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030



## Assumption 2:

*As the City continues to grow, the Fire Department must adapt to meet increasing demands while ensuring resources are used efficiently and duplication of efforts is avoided. The Naperville Fire Department must evolve alongside the city, ensuring we meet increasing demands. Through the Standard of Cover – Community Risk Analysis (SOC-CRA), the department will determine the most strategic placement of city resources, ensuring that adjustments are made to support both current and future needs. As emergency call volume increases, the way calls are prioritized and dispatched may also need to be reevaluated. Maintaining high-quality service and prompt response times will remain a top priority, regardless of the city's expansion and the increased call volume. Through the allocation of personnel, equipment, and facilities that align with population growth and shifting service demands, the Naperville Fire Department will ensure a high standard of response.*

# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



## Assumption 3:

*The Naperville Fire Department must remain proactive in adapting our emergency plans and resources to maintain resilience and protect our community. The Naperville Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) must coordinate with other city departments, ensuring a unified and efficient response during emergencies. Public Safety Announcements, media releases, and social media platforms can provide residents with essential emergency preparedness information. It can be expected that NEMA will face similar recruitment issues as the Naperville Fire Department. Additionally, the incident response of NEMA will continue to increase year over year. City leadership should be trained in the National Incident Management System to ensure seamless operations between the Emergency Operations Center and the Incident Command System. In addition, NEMA must remain proactive in adapting our emergency operations plans and other key documents to best protect our community during a disaster.*



# Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030



## Assumption 4:

*Communication is a regularly cited problem in any organization. Through the Strategic Planning Process the Naperville Fire Department establishes lines of communication with both internal and external stakeholders. By enhancing communication with both stakeholder groups the Fire Department will strengthen overall emergency preparedness and response. By partnering with formal and informal educators, the Naperville Fire Department aims to integrate Community Risk Reduction principles into STEM curricula, fostering early awareness and engagement among students. Clear, transparent communication is essential to building trust and readiness within the community. To support these goals, we must also address inefficiencies in current software systems to ensure they are fully utilized and contribute to higher-quality communication and coordination across all levels.*

# Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030



## Mission

The mission of the Naperville Fire Department is to respond to all emergency and non-emergency calls for service in a time that meets the expectations of the community and to promote safe practices through ongoing fire prevention and public education programs.

## Vision

The Naperville Fire Department will cultivate a culture of compassionate, diverse, and resilient firefighters, who will strive to meet the evolving needs of the community by focusing on mental and physical health, all hazards emergency preparedness, collaborative data analysis, and implementing robust community risk reduction strategies.

## Values

Honesty

Integrity



Loyalty



Commitment

Dedication



# Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030



After researching strategic planning methodology utilized by Fortune 500 corporations, the Fire Chief elected to incorporate the Delphi technique.

The Delphi technique involves multiple rounds of questionnaires, with feedback from each round shaping subsequent questions, ultimately leading to a more informed and reliable group decision. The technique is widely used to forecast future trends, identify critical issues, and develop strategic goals. It has proven to reduce bias through anonymity, allow stakeholders to reflect on their responses, and maintain a structured approach.

First, assumptions from the External Stakeholder Group were gathered. The members of the External Stakeholder Group were encouraged to involve their peers in the first questionnaire. This allowed the Naperville Fire Department to gather input from a larger cross-section of the community.

During the External Stakeholder Group meeting, the Delphi method was then utilized to focus on a group consensus, prioritizing the Naperville Fire Department's direction over the next five years and setting a focus on legacy programs that would benefit the community for decades.



# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



Over the course of 2024, the Naperville Fire Department selected a representative cross-section of the community. This group was chosen considering the demographics of the City of Naperville and ensuring community organizations and municipal departments were represented. Once established, the External Stakeholder Group was emailed a worksheet to compile initial assumptions about the Naperville Fire Department and available services. The initial assumptions received as part of the Delphi 1 exercise from the External Stakeholders were analyzed and used to generate a second questionnaire that was presented at the External Stakeholder meeting on February 27, 2025. In the second questionnaire, participants were asked to answer more specific questions to clarify their initial responses. In addition to completing the Delphi 1 questionnaire and the Delphi 2 group activity, the External Stakeholder Group prioritized Naperville Fire Department divisions through a Snow Card exercise.

## The External Stakeholder Group

Naperville Police Department	The Interfaith Alliance
Edward Hospital	Alliance of Indian Americans in Naperville Area
Will County OEM	Naperville Development Partnership
North Central College	Chinese American Women in Action
Naperville Settlement	Naperville City Manager's Office
DuPage County OEM	Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce
School Districts 203 and 204	Naperville Emergency Management Agency

# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



Volunteers from within the organization were solicited to obtain a representation of each rank and division. The Internal Stakeholder Group utilized a variation of the Snow Card technique to prioritize the services provided by the Naperville Fire Department and completed a group exercise focused on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) predicted to affect the department over the course of the next five years.

Immediately following the Internal Stakeholder Group ranking of department divisions, the participants were shown the results of the External Stakeholder rankings. The two Snow Card exercises yielded very similar results, showing a consistency in perceived need and actual need by the community.

The final exercise focused on the Mission, Vision, and Values of the Naperville Fire Department. The Internal Stakeholders reviewed the effectiveness of the message presented by each statement. It was decided that a committee to review the Mission, Vision, and Values would ensure a clearer message.

## Internal Stakeholder Group

Mark Puknaitis - Fire Chief

Phil Giannattsio - Deputy Chief

Tom Kriss - Lieutenant

Daniel Smith - Division Chief

Tim Posing - Firefighter / ACO

John Sergeant - Division Chief

Joe Bendewald - Firefighter / Paramedic

Daniel Donahoe - Acting Division Chief

Soraya McLaughlin - Public Education

Jame Perkovich - Captain

Joe Koch - Firefighter / Paramedic

Mike Jost - Lieutenant

Ben DeAnda - CRR Manager

Jake Demay - Lieutenant

Jen Walker - Admin Support



# *Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030*



The Naperville Fire Department incorporated two variations of the Snow Card technique, one for the External Stakeholder Group and one for the Internal Stakeholder Group. The Snow Card technique is a group exercise. Using index cards, this method combines brainstorming, which produces a long list of discrete ideas that are grouped into categories.

For both stakeholder groups, technology was used to generate a living document viewable during the External Stakeholder meeting. Specifically, a Jotform questionnaire replaced the index cards, limiting errors caused by illegible handwriting. The information was then placed into narrower categories, allowing for a detailed priority ranking of department services.

For the Internal Stakeholder meeting, the scope was narrowed through small group SWOT analysis brainstorming sessions, incorporating the second more traditional variation of the Snow Card exercise. This elicited participation from all in attendance.

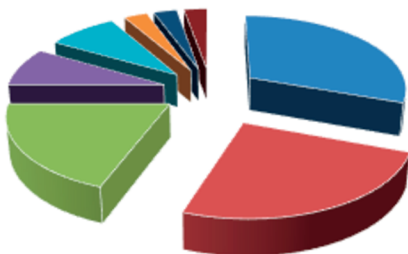
Together, both methods equipped the Strategic Planning team with valuable tools to identify common goals of the community while accounting for the vision, mission, and values of the department which ensured the diverse priorities and expertise of partners were included.



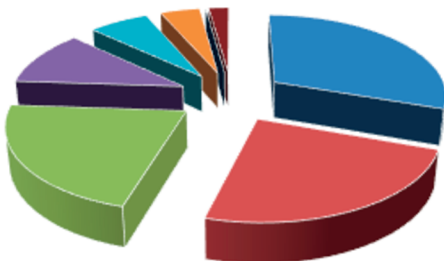


# Snow Card Exercise Results

External Stakeholder Rankings



Internal Stakeholder Rankings



Combined Rankings



- |                               |                                    |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ■ Emergency Medical Services  | ■ Emergency Response               |
| ■ Firefighter Training        | ■ Emergency Preparedness           |
| ■ Communication               | ■ Community Advocate Response Team |
| ■ Community Risk Reduction    | ■ Public Education                 |
| ■ Fire Prevention Inspections | ■ Being an Accredited Agency       |



## Strengths

- Training Opportunities
- Community Services
- Innovation / Adaptation to Change
- Specialty Teams
- Labor Relations
- Emergency Response
- Succession Planning
- Influential to Outside Organizations
- Lack of Barriers to Innovation
- Reputation and Community Support
- Quality of People and Equipment

## Weaknesses

- Lack of Consistent Training for Low Frequency/High Risk Events
- Lack of Career Development Model Past Year 1
- Software Systems Inefficiencies / Full Utilization
- Emergency Management
- Mental Health Resilience
- Recruitment
- Training Facilities
- Quality of Internal Communications
- Increase in Call Volume Without an Increase in Responders





## Opportunities

- Building While Landlocked
- Partnerships With Other City Departments
- Collaboration – Fire / Police / L4302 – Social Events
- Outreach to the Fire Cadets
- Demand for Non-Emergency Calls (311)
- O.E.M. – Education for Nursing Facilities
- Use A.I. and Maximize the Technology We Already Have
- Chamber of Commerce
- Underserved Populations and Cultures

## Threats

- Resistance to Change (Internal/External)
- Cost of Service
- GEMT Revenue
- Unnecessary Re-Organization and Change of Work Assignments
- Politics and Federal Mandates
- Economics
- Recruitment and Retirement
- Reduction of Mutual Aid Partners
- Call Volume Increase
- Demographic Changes
- Duplication of Efforts Between the Naperville Police and Fire Departments

# Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030



## **Strategic Goal 1:** **Promote recruitment and retention within the Fire Department**

To enhance recruitment, retention, and workforce development, the Naperville Fire Department should take several key steps. These include engaging younger firefighters for insights into candidate expectations, supporting nursing and paramedic students through sponsorships and business partnerships, and expanding training in cultural competency, mental health, and evolving technologies. Strengthening the cadet program, offering more internships, and introducing fire service education in schools can build early interest. Inclusive leadership development and diversifying employee involvement in events are key to retaining staff. Recruitment efforts should focus on underrepresented groups and lateral candidates like nurses and veterans, using Naperville's strong public image and strategic military partnerships to attract talent. A strong, inclusive leadership culture will support long-term success.



# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



## **Objective 1 A: Promote professional development through certification and mentorship.**

Timeline:	18 months
Lead:	Division Chief of Professional Development
Support:	Captains and Training Lieutenant
Indicator:	8A.4, 7D.5, 8B.2, 7B.10
Critical Tasks:	<p>Identify Fire Department members with professional goals for rank advancement.</p> <p>Promote professional credentialing through the Center for Public Safety Excellence.</p> <p>Identify a pathway for department members interested in specific programs to modify their schedule for a defined time.</p> <p>Add the Company Fire Officer and Advanced Fire Officer courses to the curriculum that the Naperville Fire Department offers in-house.</p>
Budget:	Professional Development Budget
Outcome:	Provide a defined pathway and opportunities for career development beyond the probationary firefighter period.



# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



## **Objective 1 B: Formalize a recruitment team in coordination with the City of Naperville Human Resources Department.**

Timeline:	24 months
Lead:	Division Chief of Professional Development
Support:	Training Lieutenant and City of Naperville Human Resources Department
Indicator:	7B.2, 7B.4
Critical Tasks:	<p>Define recruitment responsibilities for the City of Naperville Human Resources Department and the Fire Department.</p> <p>Identify Fire Department members interested in participating in recruitment activities.</p> <p>Coordinate with outside agencies to generate recruitment materials and form partnerships to incorporate into the recruitment process.</p>
Budget:	Professional Development Budget
Outcome:	Establish clear lines of communication and define the responsibilities of the Human Resources, recruitment specialists, and the Fire Department.

# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



## **Objective 1 C: Generate a pathway for Naperville Fire Cadets to enter the Naperville Fire Department.**

Timeline:	36 months
Lead:	Division Chief of Professional Development and Division Chief of Health Services
Support:	Lt. Training and Lt. EMS
Indicator:	7B.1, 7D.6
Critical Tasks:	<p>Establish a pathway for progression from EMT Basic to Paramedic.</p> <p>Evaluate the cost and benefit of providing a Naperville Fire Department-sponsored EMT-Basic program.</p> <p>Formalize an internship program for the firefighter-paramedic role within the Fire Department.</p>
Budget:	Professional Development and Health Services Budget
Outcome:	The Naperville Fire Department Cadet program offers a unique opportunity to begin the department recruitment process when youths enter high school. By offering a formal pathway for cadets, the Naperville Fire Department can develop future firefighters.

# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



## **Objective 1 D: Promote a more diverse workforce by coordinating with community groups within the City of Naperville.**

Timeline:	12 months
Lead:	Division Chief of Community Services
Support:	Public Education Specialist
Indicator:	7B.4, 7B.8
Critical Tasks:	<p>Coordinate with local collegiate athletic programs to offer a CPAT free of charge to the athletes.</p> <p>Work with the AIANA, CAWA, the Interfaith Alliance, and other organizations to educate diverse groups about careers in the fire service.</p> <p>Define a benchmark to ensure outreach to diverse populations of Naperville.</p>
Budget:	CPAT Budget
Outcome:	Educate those cultures unaware of the benefits of a career in the fire service and establish a workforce in the Naperville Fire Department more in line with the diversity of the city.





## **Strategic Goal 2: Explore new ways to offer existing services and adapt service delivery to meet the community's needs.**

As development continues to accelerate in Naperville, adding a fire station or even a satellite station may become necessary to maintain low response times and meet growing demand. While residents may be concerned about the associated costs, it's important to understand that continued growth often requires increased investment in public safety. To ensure response times remain consistent, the City may consider hiring additional personnel, adopting the latest technologies, and collaborating with neighboring communities. The expansion of programs like CART may also be needed to support an aging population and increasing mental health needs. An Standard of Cover and Community Risk Assessment (SOC-CRA) should be completed to evaluate resource placement and future station locations.

# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



## **Objective 2 A: Explore, identify, and implement mental health initiatives serving the diverse cultures of Naperville and the personnel of the Naperville Fire Department.**

Timeline:	24 months
Lead:	Division Chief of Community Services
Support:	Division Chief of Health Services
Indicator:	10A.3, 11B.4
Critical Tasks:	<p>Coordinate with local mental health organizations dedicated to helping culturally diverse communities.</p> <p>Strengthen the role of the Significant Incident Advocate committee by fostering frequent and open communication with senior staff.</p> <p>Identify training opportunities for personnel to ensure operational members are equipped to mitigate a mental health crisis.</p>
Budget:	Health Services Budget
Outcome:	A strategic framework is established to identify and implement effective mental health initiatives that meet the needs of Naperville's cultural communities that are at risk, while also adapting to fit the needs of department personnel.

# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



## **Objective 2 B: Evaluate and update the placement of personnel and vehicle response, reducing unit utilization hours and lowering overall response times.**

Timeline: 36 months

Lead: Deputy Chief

Support: Division Chief of Community Services

Indicator: 2C.4, 2D.6, 5F.1

Critical Tasks: Update the Naperville Fire Department Community Risk Assessment and Standard of Cover (CRA-SOC)

Analyze the potential benefits of changing vehicle personnel compliments.

Evaluate the unit response against the overall ERF and set benchmark times for the unit utilization.

Evaluate the effect on response times with the implementation of satellite or temporary stations.

Budget: Operations Budget

Outcome: Optimization of personnel and vehicles by reviewing and updating placement. Resulting in a reduction of unit utilization hours and improved overall response times of the ERF.



# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



## **Objective 2 C: Expand the current Prehospital Registered Nurse program to include other medical professionals with advanced degrees.**

Timeline: 42 months

Lead: Division Chief of Health Services

Support: Division Chief of Professional Development

Indicator: 7B.8

Critical Tasks: Explore the implementation of a Prehospital Physician Assistant Program through the Naperville Fire Academy.

Coordinate through the City of Naperville Human Resources Department and the Board of Fire and Police to adjust the Fire Department minimum requirements.

Collaborate with North Central College to establish a pilot program and explore interest from Physician Assistants in joining the fire service.

Budget: No budgetary Impact

Outcome: Drawing on the success of the PHRN program, to continue to expand the pool of firefighter candidates. We will open the testing process to other advanced practice medical professionals. This will allow a swath of medical professionals an opportunity to serve their community as firefighters.



## **Strategic Goal 3: Promote emergency preparedness through a coordinated approach**

The Naperville Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) should take a stronger leadership role in emergency planning by actively supporting all City departments and serving as a key partner in preparedness efforts. The agency's role—and the critical support provided by its volunteers—needs to be better communicated to the public, who are largely unaware of NEMA's disaster plans or decision-making processes. As a vital link between the City, county, and state, NEMA ensures coordinated response efforts and provides residents with meaningful volunteer opportunities. Increased public outreach and engagement, especially with downtown businesses through planning exercises and tabletop drills, would strengthen community resilience and preparedness.

# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



## **Objective 3 A: Improve the resiliency of City Departments and the community, through collaborative in-person and online training.**

Timeline:	18 months
Lead:	Division Chief of Community Services
Support:	Naperville Office of Emergency Management
Indicator:	5D.2, 5D.5, 10A.3
Critical Tasks:	<p>Collaborate with the Naperville Area Chamber of Commerce to provide businesses with tabletops and planning for emergencies.</p> <p>Establish a benchmark for NIMS ICS training for each level of city employee.</p> <p>Establish a long-range training plan or Integrated Preparedness Plan with the intention to hold at least 75% of the training in-house.</p>
Budget:	Emergency Management Budget
Outcome:	Expansion and formalization of NEMA's involvement in training and preparedness for the City as a whole will increase the city's capacity to withstand or recover quickly from a disaster or emergency.



# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



## **Objective 3 B: Expand Naperville Emergency Management's Leadership throughout the city and empower volunteers to remain engaged.**

Timeline:	24 months
Lead:	Division Chief of Community Services
Support:	Naperville Office of Emergency Management
Indicator:	5D.5, 5D.6
Critical Tasks:	<p>Establish a formal method to recruit and promote volunteers for NEMA.</p> <p>Collaborate with the Directors Leadership Team to establish representatives for an Emergency Management Committee.</p> <p>Utilize department representatives to update critical documents like the COOP, COG, and THIRA.</p>
Budget:	No Budgetary Impact
Outcome:	The assistance provided by NEMA volunteers during critical events is essential to the overall success and resilience of the city. Formalizing the promotional process of volunteers will make the increase of responsibility more meaningful to the volunteer. The expansion of responsibility for emergency management to all City departments creates ownership and promotes compliance.

# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



## **Objective 3 C: Promote communications between the Naperville Emergency Management Agency and the citizens of Naperville.**

Timeline:	30 months
Lead:	Division Chief of Community Services
Support:	Naperville Office of Emergency Management and Public Education Specialist
Indicator:	5B.3, 5D.8
Critical Tasks:	<p>Promote the mission of NEMA through informational content on social media platforms and a public service announcement program.</p> <p>Establish and maintain a series of in-person informational programs focused on our community partners.</p>
Budget:	No Budgetary Impact
Outcome:	The citizens of Naperville do not have extensive knowledge of the integral role NEMA plays during an incident. By educating the public and encouraging them to be involved, we will build a stronger community more prepared to respond to an emergency.

# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



## **Objective 3 D: Partner with other agencies and city departments to increase the resiliency of the City of Naperville.**

Timeline:	48 months
Lead:	Division Chief of Community Services
Support:	Naperville Office of Emergency Management and Division Chief of Professional Development
Indicator:	5D.3, 5D.5, 5D.6, 10A.1
Critical Tasks:	<p>Empower supervisors in other city departments to get involved with training personnel in emergency preparedness.</p> <p>Avoid duplication of efforts by coordinating with neighboring and county agencies on a comprehensive long-term training plan.</p> <p>Coordinate assets with neighboring agencies when generating the long-term vehicle replacement plan.</p>
Budget:	Emergency Management Budget
Outcome:	Emergency Management Agencies are integral to overall public safety. NEMA, coordinating with neighboring agencies, limits the redundancy of training and asset allocation. In addition, NEMA can act as a valuable liaison with neighboring communities, counties, and the State of Illinois.



# Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030



## Strategic Goal 4 : Foster communication with internal and external stakeholders

The Naperville Fire Department Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Division can expand its efforts by partnering with formal and informal educators. Public education on the proper disposal of hazardous materials, including the use of the city's household hazardous waste facility, can also be expanded. Citizens need training on emerging risks such as electric vehicle (EV) fires—how to prevent them and respond safely. The Naperville Fire Department has an opportunity to enhance public outreach through social media, school programs, video demonstrations in high-traffic areas, and both virtual and in-person instruction. A citywide education campaign using tools like online modules, public kiosks, and classroom-based learning can increase awareness and empower residents to take proactive steps in fire prevention. The more informed the community, the lower the likelihood of severe fire-related incidents.

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## **Objective 4 A: Collaborate with community partners to expand our ability to communicate with external stakeholders.**

Timeline: 12 months

Lead: Deputy Chief

Support: Division Chief of Community Services

Indicator: 10A.4, 10B.3

Critical Tasks: Explore opportunities to coordinate Fire Department messaging with local social media influencers.

Generate a platform for external stakeholders to communicate with the Fire Department annually regarding their assumptions and concerns.

Coordinate with special interest groups to provide in-person informational sessions focused on the services provided by the Naperville Fire Department.

Budget: No Budgetary Impact

Outcome: Expanding our voice through coordination with outside entities will allow us to educate those otherwise unaware of the innovative programs provided by the Naperville Fire Department.



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## **Objective 4 B: Explore new ways to educate the public in hands-only CPR**

Timeline: 18 months

Lead: Division Chief of Health Services

Support: Division Chief of Community Services

Indicator: 5F.8

Critical Tasks: Develop a program focused on hands-free CPR that can be taught by on-duty crews in five minutes or less.

Explore installing CPR trainer kiosks in community buildings and other public venues.

Explore the use of online modules accessed by a QR code and coordinate with local businesses to display the QR code.

Coordinate with faith-based institutions at other representative organizations for the delivery of in-person CPR training.

Budget: Health Services Budget

Outcome: The Naperville Fire Department has been striving to attain credentialing as the first Heart Safe Community in Illinois through the Citizen CPR Foundation. By embracing innovative ways to deliver CPR training to our citizens, we aim to train the minimum 23,000 required to attain the credential.



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## **Objective 4 C: Foster formal communications with internal stakeholders through clear paths for the chain of command.**

Timeline: 6 months

Lead: Deputy Chief

Support: Division Chiefs

Indicator: 3B.1, 3B.3

Critical Tasks: Enforce the chain of command with formal communications. Messages should be conveyed clearly through the appropriate Division to the Battalions and to the line personnel.

Maintain consistency of role and responsibilities, limiting reorganization to maintain a clear division of responsibilities

Budget: No Budgetary Impact

Outcome: Senior staff is in constant flux of reorganization. By making a clear path for members to follow the chain of command, we promote a more structured and efficient organization while limiting the frustration of line personnel.

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## **Objective 4 D: Develop an internal Culture and Climate Committee focused on building department involvement and communication on and off duty.**

Timeline: 6 months

Lead: Division Chief of Community Services

Support: Deputy Chief

Indicator: 3C.2, 7B.10

Critical Tasks: Establish a committee with representation from each rank of the line personnel to evaluate the organization's culture by assessing the beliefs, values, and behaviors that define the Naperville firefighter.

Generate a consensus on new events and present them to the senior staff liaison for funding.

Reinforce the Fire Department's core values by promoting its history.

Budget: Community Services Budget

Outcome: The fire service is a community that lives, works, and plays together. The creation of a Cultural Development Committee will promote department involvement and build the members' resiliency through socializing and shared experiences.

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**Accreditation** - refers to a quality improvement model used by fire and emergency service agencies. It's a process where agencies self-assess, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and work towards meeting established community-adopted performance targets.

**Benchmark** - a set standard metric against which something is measured.

**Community Risk Analysis (CRA)** - a systematic process of identifying, analyzing, and evaluating potential hazards and vulnerabilities within a community.

**Community Risk Reduction (CRR)** - is a comprehensive approach where fire and emergency services work with communities to identify, prioritize, and mitigate risks, promoting safety and reducing the impact of potential emergencies

**Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE)** - a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation serving as a primary resource for the fire and emergency profession to continuously improve services, resulting in a higher quality of life for communities.

**Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI)** – a division of CPSE that provides agencies with the accreditation model, various accreditation publications and training, and access to experienced peer assessors.

**Delphi Method** - a structured group communication technique used to reach a consensus of opinion on complex issues by anonymously soliciting expert opinions through multiple rounds of questionnaires.



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**Mission** - a concrete, action-oriented description of what a company or organization does. It communicates the company's purpose to stakeholders.

**Office of Emergency Management** - a governmental organization responsible for preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and disasters.

**Snow Card** - a planning method that combines brainstorming, which produces a long list of discrete ideas, with a synthesizing step, in which ideas are grouped into thematic categories.

**Standard of Cover** - a document used by emergency services agencies to systematically evaluate and improve their service delivery. It outlines how an agency plans to deploy its resources to respond to various community risks.

**STEM** - STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. It refers to a set of disciplines that are closely related and often integrated in education, research, and professional practice.

**Strategic Goal** - a long-term, measurable objective that an organization aims to achieve within a specific timeframe (usually 3-5 years) to guide its overall direction and resource allocation.

**Strategic Objective** - a measurable, time-bound task that an organization sets to achieve its long-term strategic goal. These objectives provide direction, guide actions, and serve as a roadmap for success, ultimately helping the organization reach its desired future state.

# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



**Emergency Management Agency** - a governmental agency responsible for coordinating efforts to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters.

**Emergency Operations Center** - a central command and control facility used during emergencies to coordinate information, resources, and response activities.

**External Stakeholder** - a person, group, or organization that isn't directly involved in a business or project but has a stake in its outcomes or is affected by its actions.

**Indicator** - quantifiable measures that help agencies track progress, identify areas for improvement, and demonstrate compliance with accreditation standards.

**Internal Stakeholder** - individuals or groups who have a vested interest in a company or project because they are directly involved with it, such as employees, managers, board members, or owners.

**Jotform** - an online form builder that allows users to create, customize, and share forms for various purposes without needing coding skills.

**Strategic Planning** - a process where organizations define their future direction and how they will achieve it, including setting goals, developing strategies, and implementing actions.

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## **Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats (SWOT) Analysis - a**

technique for assessing these four aspects of an organization. A SWOT Analysis is a tool that can help analyze what the organization does best now, and to devise a successful strategy for the future.

**Values** - an organization's core beliefs and principles. Values guide its actions, decision-making, and interactions with stakeholders.

**Vision** - a statement that defines an organization's long-term goals and aspirations, outlining what the organization hopes to achieve in the future. It serves as a guiding principle, providing direction and inspiration for internal decision-making and communicating the organization's philosophy to stakeholders



# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



The City of Naperville should partner with various temples, churches, community organizations, and school districts to assist with training people in CPR.

Online pre-recorded training with intermittent quizzes to ensure that the participants are learning the material being presented.

Partnering with other agencies who are interested in providing similar training may allow for more people to be trained at the same time.

Explore different technological interfaces such as online interactive courses, virtual reality, or an app on a smartphone.

Visit various satellite seminars held throughout the community to gather information regarding what works best for educating a large amount of people at once.

NCTV17 could design a program that could be put out for residents interested in learning how to do CPR at home.

Video or virtual training would reach the masses but since CPR is a physical activity, there may be limited value in holding this type of training.

CPR training should be provided to all 203/204 students within the school setting and any applicable clubs. YouTube videos could be used as refreshers each year.

During special events, the Fire Department should have mobile units that would be available to train the general public in CPR.

Being CPR certified should be a requirement of driver's education training provided within the school districts.

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Identify several community influencers within the Naperville community and have them compete in a CPR Tik Tok challenge event to get more people interested.

Virtual reality may be a viable option for teaching CPR to a large amount of people.

The Fire Department should partner with the park district to provide CPR classes to all coaches and parent volunteers involved with city sports.

The Fire Department should create a CPR storytelling campaign where survivors talk about only being alive due to the kindness and quick actions of strangers.

CPR training programs should be established through the Fire Department, the Police Department, the Naperville Park District, and Endeavor Health Edward Hospital.

Adding an 11th station could be beneficial for the city as there continues to be a lot of development in south Naperville.

It would be disappointing to see an increase in response times but it is also important that the population understand the repercussions of this.

If growth continues within the city, the people need to understand that costs tend to be higher in times of growth. To be the best you need to spend the best.

Response times should not increase. The City of Naperville should hire additional manpower, keep up with the latest technology, and collaborate with other cities to keep the response time low.

Response times should remain unchanged. With new growth and development occurring daily within the city, serious conversations need to be had about increasing the # of fire stations within the city.

# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



Taxes may need to be raised to keep up with all of the growth within Naperville. The response time should not increase because of the growth within the city. More growth=more tax revenue for resident services.

If the response time increases, the City of Naperville will need to hire additional personnel to provide the same level of service that residents have grown accustomed to.

The demand for instant support will continue to grow. Additional stations/staffing may be required to address the community's needs.

An expansion of the CART program may be required as the population continues to age and the mental health crisis within the city continues.

As the city grows, the Fire Department may also need to grow. A study should be completed that determines where the best place for city resources is and adjustments to meet those demands should be made.

The City needs to continue to grow in order for the city to remain prosperous. Growth requires expansion and additional resources.

The way emergency calls are dispatched within the city may need to change. Calls that don't require an immediate response should not be prioritized over those truly emergent calls, such as a possible stroke or heart attack.

Services and response times should not be sacrificed due to growth within the city of Naperville. A strategic plan should be implemented that allocates resources in a way that best addresses the population's needs.



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Draw on feedback from younger firefighters in order to understand what new candidates may be looking for within the job.

Provide sponsorship and support to nursing/paramedic students. Partner w/ local businesses to provide financial support for these students.

Ongoing and increased training in cultural competencies and mental health. Maybe a CART expansion.

Stronger cadet program to get youth interested in the fire service. Better employment packages and perks to retain staff.

Training should keep up with the latest evolving technology.

The fire department should explore how the use of AI could be beneficial for the city. Staff should consider both positive and negative impacts that AI could have within the department and how to navigate an emergency situation best.

Develop different groups of NFD personnel. The same employees should not be chosen everytime to participate in work events. The department should work on opportunities for growth and development of all staff members.

Competitive beginning/lateral salaries and benefits.

Reinvention of the recruitment process. Solicit information from your target audience about what would entice someone to work for the Naperville Fire Department.

Employee recognition is very important. The Naperville Fire Department should think of innovative ways to recognize their employees regularly.

# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



Additional training in empathy and interpersonal communication should be mandatory for all Naperville Fire Department employees, including senior leadership.

New programs should be implemented within the school districts that fosters a curiosity for the fire service at an earlier age.

Additional training should be provided to Naperville Fire Department personnel that focuses on effective communication, conflict resolution, and emergency preparedness.

A compensation study should be completed for all Naperville Fire Department personnel. The staff should be paid a comparable salary to towns with similar populations and call volumes.

Naperville Fire Department needs to focus on providing good leadership within the department.

A tier II pension system may help keep staff working for the Naperville Fire Department longer.

Scholarships, subsidies, and business sponsorships may be viable options for those interested in paramedic school but who may be unable to afford the cost to attend.

A partnership directly with our military services may assist departments with their current recruitment issues.

Naperville EMA could be more robust in terms of planning, assisting departments with their specific plans, and taking on a true partner role with other organizations.

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Additional training should be offered to the Naperville Fire Department staff such as mental health training, de-escalation training, defensive tactics training, breathing exercises, etc.

Actively recruit for minorities that are not traditionally represented within the fire service.

Survey staff to gain better knowledge regarding their job satisfaction. Provide additional opportunities for staff to use their skills. Remain competitive with salary and benefit compensation.

Offer additional opportunities for internships and/or cadets to be involved within the department.

Use outreach capabilities and Naperville's image to continue providing lateral service programs for interested candidates.

Exit interviews should be given to all who resign from the department. There could be some insight provided as to why people may choose to leave the Naperville Fire Department and maybe something could be improved upon.

Continue seeking additional groups that may be effective employees for the Naperville Fire Department (ex: nurses).

Based on the latest population trends within the city of Naperville, senior care and crisis intervention training would be beneficial for the Naperville Fire Department as the data shows the need for these types of services within the community.

Training hours should increase to slow the downward trend that NHF

The Naperville Fire Department should entertain the idea of possible satellite stations should the City continue to see population growth and longer response times.



# ***Naperville Fire Department Strategic Plan 2026-2030***



Employee engagement is critical. The Fire Department should seek out and encourage participation in activities that build relationships between the Fire Department personnel and members of other city departments.

The City of Naperville needs to find the balance between growth and fire department response time. If the city continues to grow, more resources will be needed to maintain the current "status quo."

Webex and Zoom instruction is highly valuable and important in reaching large numbers of people; however, there is no substitute for in-person instruction.

Online modules and kiosks in public areas. Video demonstrations in areas like the Secretary of State would be beneficial when people have to wait in a line.

Computer based trainings would be beneficial. Training offered at various community events would allow for large amounts of people to be trained at once.

The general public is unaware of what Naperville EMA's plan is in the event of a disaster. The public needs to be better informed about who contributes in an emergency situation and who makes the decisions for the general public.

Naperville EMA fulfills the community expectations. The community could be made more aware regarding the role that volunteers play within EMA.

An additional weekday should be added to the operating hours of the household hazardous waste facility.

Naperville Fire Department should provide a longer vacation to those that stay with the department longer. Every 5-7 years of service should equate to additional vacation days being provided.



## References

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