



# King County Fire District #2

Strategic Plan 2026 | Approved 11/18/2025

---



# KCFD #2 Strategic Planning Personnel

## *Fire Board of Commissioners*

Chris Elwell

Michael Ziegler

Ted Sitterly

## *Strategic Planning Committee Members*

Fire Commissioner Julia Hiatt, North Highline Fire

Captain Will Spruill

Fire Chief Jason Gay

Captain Chris Reed

Assistant Chief Wayne Metz

Captain Mativa Lemanu

Battalion Chief Ryan Anderson

Firefighter Eric Cunningham

Battalion Chief Joe Kupferling

Firefighter Matt Ready

Fire Marschal Ray Desmarais

Captain Seth Maxwell



STRATEGY ■ ANALYSIS ■ COMMUNICATIONS

2200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1000

Seattle, Washington 98121

P (206) 324-8760

[www.berkconsulting.com](http://www.berkconsulting.com)

---

### ***"Helping Communities and Organizations Create Their Best Futures"***

Founded in 1988, we are an interdisciplinary strategy and analysis firm providing integrated, creative and analytically rigorous approaches to complex policy and planning decisions. Our team of strategic planners, policy and financial analysts, economists, cartographers, information designers and facilitators work together to bring new ideas, clarity, and robust frameworks to the development of analytically-based and action-oriented plans.

#### **Project Team**

Brian Murphy · Principal

Oliver Hirn · Analyst

# Contents

Message from the Fire Chief..... 4

Our Vision, Mission, and Values ..... 5

    Our Vision for King County Fire District #2 ..... 5

    Our Mission..... 6

    Our Values..... 6

Strategic Plan Overview ..... 7

    Phased Approach to Implementation..... 8

        A. Excellent Service and Operations ..... 10

        B. Strong Team and Culture ..... 12

        C. Trusted Community Relationships..... 14

        D. Financial Sustainability ..... 15



All photos are courtesy of KCFD #2

# Message from the Fire Chief



King County Fire District #2 (KING2) is a department filled with hard-working, caring individuals who have a shared desire to serve the Burien, Normandy Park, and North Highline communities. After more than 85 years as an established fire department we feel the necessity to define our culture, declare our mission, vision, values and establish a favored path toward the future.

This strategic plan is our road map to that future. Within this plan we lay out challenges and opportunities key to the success of our department. Many of our challenges and opportunities revolve around how we find the balance between service to the community, investments in our team, and the financial impact on our community.

As we move forward we will focus on four core areas of performance:

- How we operate and provide service
- How we strengthen our team and culture
- How we plan to build trusted community relationships
- How we ensure financial stability

KING2 stands ready to move into the future providing the best community service focused on a culture rooted in drive, integrity, and compassion.

**Jason Gay**  
Fire Chief  
King County Fire District #2

# Our Vision, Mission, and Values

## Our Vision for King County Fire District #2

We strive to continually offer the highest possible services to our community while investing in our team and managing the financial cost to residents and business owners.

### Our Vision in Action

We aspire to the highest possible services, tailored to the community we serve.

- We care for and invest in a positive, trusting relationship with our community members.
- We get people what they need and help them break out of destructive cycles.
- We are fiscally responsible and cognizant of cost to taxpayers.

We are small yet mighty, and excellent at what we do.

- We are nimble and innovative, committed to continuous learning and improvement.
- We actively collaborate with local and regional partners.
- We manage our resources well and make smart investments in our facilities, apparatus, technology, and equipment.

We are a great place to work.

- We hire and retain amazing people who share similar values.
- We are a progressive department, seen as a model for others, particularly in training.
- We offer opportunities for professional growth and advancement.
- We have a positive, family-like culture only possible at our size.



# Our Mission

Providing value to our communities through excellent fire and emergency services.

# Our Values

**Compassion.** We care deeply for our community, our team, and ourselves as individuals. We serve with a unified purpose and collaborative teamwork to achieve the best outcomes for all.

**Integrity.** We honor our communities’ trust by safeguarding lives, property, and public resources with the utmost responsibility. We are dedicated to delivering uncompromised service at the greatest possible value.

**Driven.** We are proactive in solving problems in the moment and pursue innovative, lasting solutions for challenges our community and team face.



# Strategic Plan Overview

Our Strategic Plan focuses on four core areas of performance:

## **A. Excellent Service and Operations**

1. Strengthen key internal functions to best serve our community and team.
2. Continue to evolve our service delivery model.
3. Advance a long-term station configuration that best serves our community.
4. Manage our capital assets effectively.

## **B. Strong Team and Culture**

1. Proactively create a healthy and transparent team environment.
2. Recruit and retain the best possible team.
3. Enhance health, safety, and human resources.

## **C. Trusted Community Relationships**

1. Strengthen our relationship with the communities we serve.
2. Engage our public sector partners.

## **D. Financial Sustainability**

1. Pursue opportunities to increase resource efficiency.
2. Evaluate options to increase the resources available to serve our community.

# Phased Approach to Implementation

Recognizing financial and staff capacity constraints, it is important that we advance the Strategic Plan thoughtfully, not trying to do everything at once. While annual implementation planning will guide our work, the outline below describes our general approach to prioritization.

## Prioritized First Steps

The below actions are identified as **Year 1 Implementation Priorities** on the following pages:

- Align Board, union leadership, and personnel at all levels of the organization around the shared priorities established in this Strategic Plan.
- Strengthen our team and culture by building trust, increasing transparency, promoting communication, and collaborating around shared goals.
- Enhance administrative and planning functions to free up capacity among leadership staff and line personnel.
- Ensure our apparatus and equipment are properly maintained and replaced by establishing a reserve account.
- Strengthen communications with the public by making Fire Board of Commissioner meetings more accessible, enhancing our website and social media presence, and publishing an annual report tied to our Strategic Plan.
- Pursue opportunities to increase resource efficiency and conduct a Funding Options Assessment.

## Next Steps

After **Year 1 Implementation Priorities** are addressed, we will advance other topics, including:

- Strengthening communications and community and partner relationships.
- Expanding our Community Risk Reduction program.
- Planning for future capital investments.
- Developing career pathways and establishing a wellness program.

## Long-term Milestones

The following long-term milestones will be important considerations as we move ahead.

- Operating Levy renewal in **2027**.
- Potential Station 19 relocation will be considered after the current bond expires in **2030**.

## Planning Framework to Guide Ongoing Implementation and Reporting

KCFD #2 will center this strategic plan in our ongoing decision making, ensuring we stay true to our Vision, Mission, and Values and continue to advance the work laid forth in this document. We will use the annual January to December cycle outlined below:

Step	Timeline
<b>Implement Strategic Plan priorities identified in August of the previous year.</b>	January to December
<p><b>The Fire Chief provides quarterly updates</b> to the Fire Board of Commissioners and proactively and transparently share this information with union leadership, staff, and members of the communities we serve. The final quarterly report is summative of the year, taking the form of an annual report.</p>	March, June, and September
<p><b>Review strategic plan implementation progress and identify priority focus for the coming year.</b> Update an internal-facing version of the plan that has the same high-level structure as the public-facing plan.</p>	August
<p>Use that focus to inform <b>budgeting, work planning, and performance measures for the next year</b>, including internal milestones and clear roles and responsibilities.</p>	November
<p><b>Report implementation progress and outcomes</b> to staff, partners, and community members via an annual report.</p>	March (for prior year)

# A. Excellent Service and Operations

---

To fully achieve our vision of **excellent service and operations**, we must:

- Provide the highest possible services, tailored to the community we serve.
  - Deliver superior fire and EMS outcomes.
  - Benefit from fully developed planning, logistics, and administrative functions.
  - Make efficient use of staff time at all levels of the organization.
  - Deploy from modern and well-placed stations, including Station 18, a potentially relocated Station 19, Station 28, and Station 29.
  - Maintain careful stewardship of our apparatus and equipment.
- 

## 1. Strengthen key internal functions to best serve our community and team. [Year 1 Implementation Priority]

- Strengthen our planning and logistics functions.
- Enhance our ability to effectively manage our information technology resources.
- Add administrative support to free up leadership staff for strategic functions and alleviate the burden on our crews.

## 2. Continue to evolve our service delivery model.

- Evaluate staffing needs and deployment models to enhance the optimal use of resources.
- Continue to integrate the **CARES program** in our operations.
- Evaluate options to enhance our **Community Risk Reduction** program.

### CARES and Community Risk Reduction

---

The **Community Assistance Referrals and Education Services (CARES)** program partners together firefighters and social workers to assist community members navigating medical, behavioral, and other types of crises.

**Community Risk Reduction** is a process that gathers data about KCFD #2 community members, buildings, infrastructure, and incidents to better prioritize training, public education and prevention programs that keep the community safe.

### 3. Advance a long-term station configuration that best serves our community.

- Solicit team input on potential future station investments.
- Conduct a study to determine the preferred solution for Station 19.
- Implement the preferred Station 19 solution following retirement of the existing bond in 2030.

### 4. Manage our capital assets effectively.

- Establish a capital reserve account to ensure our apparatus and equipment are properly maintained and replaced. **[Year 1 Implementation Priority]**
- Make smart capital purchases and leverage peer agency efforts to identify the most advantageous apparatus manufacturers.



## B. Strong Team and Culture

---

To fully achieve our vision of a **strong team and culture**, we must:

- Be known as an employer of choice.
  - Be appreciated as a small department with strong communication and transparency.
  - Demonstrate a healthy culture, with high staff satisfaction and retention rates.
  - Share organizational priorities across the Fire Board of Commissioners, administration, union leadership, and membership.
- 

### 1. Proactively create a healthy and transparent team environment.

[Year 1 Implementation Priority]

- Strengthen day-to-day **communication and transparency**.
- Develop mechanisms to solicit, recognize, and respond to input from staff, including opportunities for anonymous feedback.
- Conduct an annual staff survey to gauge employee satisfaction and identify opportunities for improvement.

#### **Communication and transparency**

---

Ideas to advance this objective include:

- Exploring ways to promote access to desired information.
- Increasing regular interaction between command staff and front line personnel.
- Posting financial information on the District website and proactively sharing it with union leadership and the full membership.
- Sharing updates of labor/management meetings.
- Implementing an annual strategic planning update and reporting process that features a review of recent accomplishments and budget and plans for the coming year.

## 2. Recruit and retain the best possible team.

- Enhance KCFD #2's social media and share insights into the District's culture and daily operations to attract likeminded applicants.
- Develop leadership pathways and professional development support to facilitate staff growth.

## 3. Enhance health, safety, and human resources.

[Year 1 Implementation Priority]

- Establish a wellness program.
- Expand internal human resources capacity.



## C. Trusted Community Relationships

---

To fully achieve our vision for **trusted community relationships**, we must:

- Cultivate trusted relationships with community members, ensuring they are knowledgeable about who we are and the value of services we provide.
  - Be seen as a trusted steward of public resources and a trusted guardian of lives and property.
- 

### 1. Strengthen our relationship with the communities we serve.

- Invest in improved technology to make Fire Board of Commissioner meetings more accessible to those joining remotely. **[Year 1 Implementation Priority]**
- Increase opportunities for two-way communications with community members, including:
  - Enhancing our website and social media presence. **[Year 1 Implementation Priority]**
  - Publishing a community newsletter. **[Year 1 Implementation Priority]**
  - Sharing an annual report tied to our Strategic Plan. **[Year 1 Implementation Priority]**
  - Holding annual community events.
- Consider station identities that better reflect the communities we serve.
  - Station 18: White Center
  - Station 19: Boulevard Park
  - Station 28: Burien
  - Station 29: Normandy Park
- Implement an annual survey to gain input on how best to serve community priorities.

### 2. Engage our public sector partners.

- Deepen our relationship with the two cities and unincorporated area we serve, sharing what we learn with our full membership.
- Work with our partners to communicate our role and value with members of the public.

## D. Financial Sustainability

---

To fully achieve our vision for **financial sustainability**, we must:

- Make the most efficient use of every dollar.
  - Have the funding support necessary to properly meet the needs of our community.
  - Benefit from stable financial support from our community, in return for our fiscal discipline.
  - Have the financial resilience to sustain operations through short- and long-term, expected and unexpected changes in the department and the community.
- 

### 1. Pursue opportunities to increase resource efficiency.

#### [Year 1 Implementation Priority]

- Create avenues for crew members to identify opportunities to increase the efficient use of resources.
- Update policies and standard operating procedures to make them transparent, airtight, and efficient.
- Identify and implement strategies to reduce non-emergent calls to ensure the best outcomes for community members and relieve the burden on our team.

### 2. Evaluate options to increase the resources available to serve our community.

- Evaluate options that don't directly add costs for our community members, including GEMT, insurance company charge backs, grants, and others.
- Conduct an objective **Funding Options Assessment** to determine the best revenue model to support sustainable, quality services for our community.

#### [Year 1 Implementation Priority]

#### Funding Options Assessment

This objective study should evaluate the benefits and challenges of implementing a Fire Benefit Charge, Levy Lid Lift, and regionalization effort. Each option should be evaluated for:

- Cost impact on residents, businesses, and property owners as a proportion of their wealth.
- Revenue potential, stability, flexibility, and ability to provide appropriate service delivery to our community.
- Implementation feasibility.