



2026-2029 Strategic Plan

Adopted January 28, 2026

Shaping our community through excellence

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This 2026-2029 Strategic Plan focuses on the areas that Fort Myers Beach Fire Control District (FMBFCD) will pursue as a way to deliver on its vision for the residents of Fort Myers Beach and surrounding jurisdiction. To meet these challenges will require continued collaboration and communication. Thank you to all who were involved in its development.

Acknowledgements

The Community of Fort Myers Beach, FL

Survey Respondents

Board of Fire Commissioners

John Bennett, Chair

Jim Knickle, Vice Chair

Ron Fleming, Secretary / Treasurer

Keran Farrell, Commissioner

Jacki Liszak, Commissioner

Fire Chief

Chief Scott Wirth

Fort Myers Beach Fire Control District Staff

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This 2026-2029 Fort Myers Beach Fire Control District Strategic Plan features a comprehensive perspective on the current conditions, stakeholder feedback and expectations; mission, vision, and values; goals, objectives, and critical tasks; and measures.

Strategic plans provide both historical and future perspectives. The best plans recognize that organizations have resource limits and require focus to accomplish goals. Plans should reflect what has occurred, what is on the horizon, and how to respond to future opportunities and threats. More specifically, a strategic plan should provide a road map for the organization to meet community needs, build resilience, and demonstrate success based on its vision, mission, and values.

The Fort Myers Beach Fire District has clearly recognized that the focus for this plan should remain on the core services of the District. In doing so, the emphasis remains on those initiatives that create the foundation for excellent service to the community. This plan provides five ways to organize and measure strategy through goals, objectives, and tasks. This approach recognizes an interrelationship between the community, financial, operational, organizational and governance perspectives. Each of these perspectives allow the District to take a comprehensive systems approach to planning, tracking, budgeting, and evaluation.



FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

As Fire Chief, I am proud to present this 2026-2029 Strategic Plan. This plan reflects continued focus on our core mission and fundamentals. This plan reflects the goals, objectives, and tasks that will provide the foundation to “shape our community through excellence.”

The purpose of this 2026-2029 Strategic Plan is to provide a road map for decision-making to help the organization sustain its focus on what is most important in the areas of community service, employee engagement, fiscal sustainability, and operational excellence. We plan to use this as a working document that should be consulted, distributed, and adapted as new information and challenges arise.

Over the past several years we have learned that our community is strong when faced with a challenge. We have learned that while recovery from storms is challenging, we possess the resilience to rise to the task. For the district, recovery is forward-looking and provides opportunities for innovation and continuous improvement. More importantly, we have learned that our ability to work together for a safer community is at the heart of the Fort Myers Beach Fire Control District.

It is my commitment, as Fire Chief, to be a part of our community’s success by upholding the mission, vision, and values that are articulated in this plan. It is my hope that we, together, use this plan to facilitate our continued resilience as we move into the future.

Scott Wirth
Fire Chief, Fort Myers Beach Fire Control District
January 2026



OVERVIEW OF THE DISTRICT

Jurisdiction

The Fort Myers Beach Fire District is located in Southwest Lee County, Florida, covering the Estero and San Carlos islands as well as a portion of the contiguous mainland. The district is bordered by the Iona-McGregor Fire District and the Bonita Springs Fire District. The district covers approximately 10.73 square miles with 3 fire stations¹ and an administrative headquarters (See Figure 1: FMBFCD Fire Jurisdiction). The boundaries also include an additional 3.13 square miles of water surrounding the Town of Fort Myers Beach. The District also responds outside its jurisdiction through an automatic aid and closest unit response system.



Figure 1: FMBFCD Fire Jurisdiction

Currently, the District serves approximately 5,824 full-time residents.² This is an approximate reduction of 3,779 residents from previous estimates.

Hurricane Ian has been well documented for its impact on the permanent population, visitors, and housing stock. For example, the population reduction is due, in large part, to the effects of Hurricane Ian in 2022. In the most recent U.S. Census data available for the year 2023, the number of housing units in the district was approximately 13,170; however, in the year following the storm only 33% of these units were occupied.^{3 4} The visitor population was also impacted by the hurricane. 2024 visitor estimates for Fort Myers Beach were approximately 384,000; this is down from a high of 1 million (in 2019).⁵ Because Estero Island is a well-

¹ Fire Station #1 is currently being rebuilt following post-hurricane Ian damage. The station will be completed early 2026.

² United States Census. 2020 Census Tract Reference Map. Retrieved 1/5/2026 from https://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/DC2020/PL20/st12_fl/censustract_maps/c12071_lee/DC20CT_C12071.pdf Map reflects the Town of Fort Myers Beach population derived from the Shimberg Center for Housing Studies (see: <http://flhousingdata.shimberg.ufl.edu/comprehensive-plan-data/results?nid=3510>) and the United States Census Tracts: 19.11, 601.01 and 19.08. Census tracts do not precisely correspond to the jurisdictional boundaries, and as such, the population expressed here may be slightly larger than actual. For example, small portions of Census Tract 19.08 and 19.11 includes population that is not within the jurisdictional boundaries of FMB Fire District.

³ See the 2023 5-Year Estimates from the United States Census American Community Survey. https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2023.DP04?q=household+size&g=1400000US12071001908,12071001911,120710601_01_160XX00US1224150

⁴ Estimates are derived from the 2023 American Community Survey. The 5-Year American Community Survey is published by the U.S. Census. The Shimberg Center for Housing Studies estimates future population. The following figures do not include seasonal residents for areas outside of the Town, for which there is no reliable data available. Another estimate of longer-term seasonal residents may be based on the number of housing units that are vacant in the town of Fort Myers Beach (see: <https://data.census.gov/table/ACS5Y2023.B25005?q=Vacancy+Characteristics&g=160XX00US1224150>).

⁵ See Lee County Visitor and Tourism Bureau Visitor Tracking Report for 2024 at: <https://www.visitfortmyers.com/sites/default/files/2025-03/The%20Beaches%20of%20Fort%20Myers%20and%20Sanibel%20CY%202024%20Visitor%20Tracking%20Report.pdf> and previous estimates of visitors at: <https://www.leevcb.com/media/37142/for-councils-info-1-the-beaches-of-fort-myers-and-sanibel-cy-2020-visitor-tracking-report.pdf>

known and highly frequented destination for visitors around the world, property redevelopment was a significant outcome of the hurricane. Prior to the hurricane, future development was limited, however, many properties were damaged and the future tax base of the district is now a factor related to the redevelopment and rebuilding. Redevelopment of properties has taken on a different character than historic patterns with low-density single-story buildings being replaced by taller buildings with pilings.

As a result of these factors, the population and service characteristics are undergoing significant change. For example, Shimberg Center for Housing Studies estimates the future permanent population of the Town of Fort Myers Beach will decline to 2,711 by 2050, presumably seasonal residents and visitors may increase and occupy condominiums.⁶

History

The district began as a volunteer fire department in 1949 by the Beach Improvement Association, Inc. The district incorporated as the Fort Myers Beach Fire Control District in 1950 with an estimated population of 2,500 residents. Since that time, the Fort Myers Beach Fire Control District has evolved into a professional all-hazards emergency response organization. The Fort Myers Beach Fire Control District provides a variety of services, including fire suppression activities, Emergency Medical Advanced Life Support (ALS) on all apparatus, ambulance transport, technical rescue, hazardous materials incident response, and a variety of other emergency and non-emergency services. To the general community, and throughout day-to-day operations, the District is referred to as the Fort Myers Beach Fire District (FMBFD).

Legal and Organizational Structure

Legal Structure

The Fort Myers Beach Fire District is legally organized as a special district under the State of Florida, defined as, "...a unit of local government created for a special purpose, as opposed to a general purpose, which has jurisdiction to operate within a limited geographic boundary and is created by general law, special act, local ordinance, or by rule of the Governor and Cabinet."⁷ Special districts are governed by Chapter 189, Florida Statutes. The FMBFD is an Independent District with an elected board (Fire Commission). There are special requirements for oversight, accountability, and reporting that have been enacted by the Florida Legislature, including requirements for performance measurement that took effect in October 2022.

Organizational Structure

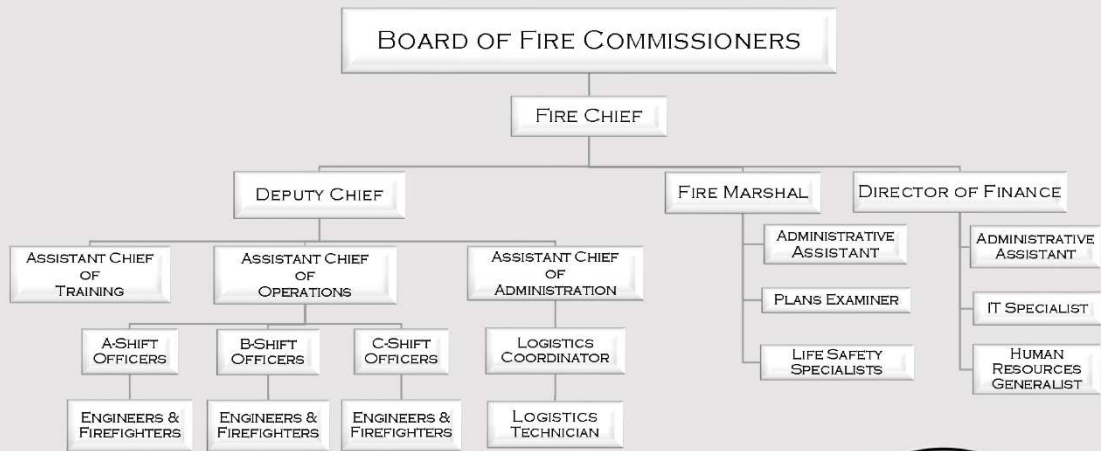
The FMBFD is organized into major branches to achieve the maximum benefit in all aspects of resident and visitor needs. The District utilizes a Deputy Chief, the Fire Marshal, and the Financial Director to oversee organizational branches to include the Operations Branch, Life Safety Branch, and Administrative Branch. All branch executives are responsible for overseeing the management of their areas of responsibility while working together in achieving the organization's operational and administrative goals.⁸

⁶ See: Shimberg Center for Housing Studies. Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse estimates at: <http://flhousingdata.shimberg.ufl.edu/comprehensive-plan-data/results?nid=3500&nid=3510>

⁷ See: http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0100-0199/0189/0189.html

⁸ Fort Myers Beach Fire Control District, <https://www.fmbfirefl.gov/about-us>

FORT MYERS BEACH FIRE CONTROL DISTRICT



2026

Figure 2: Fort Myers Beach Fire Control District Organizational Chart

Service and District Overview

The following overview is a snapshot of the District’s work over the last five years. The purpose of this analysis is to provide an overview of service trends and implications for the demands on personnel and administration.

Call Volume

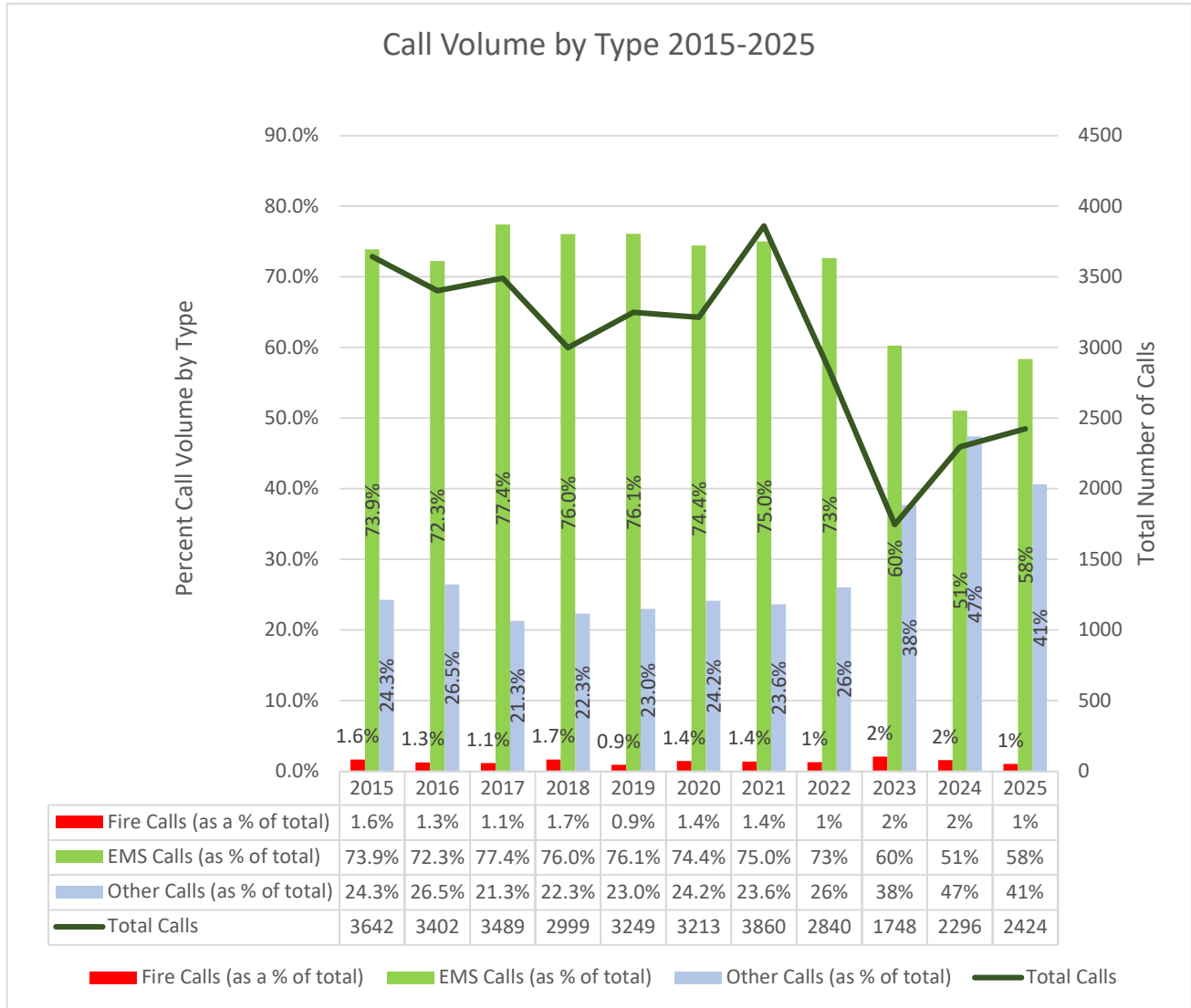


Figure 3: Call Volume Trends 2015-2025

Figure 3 displays the last 10 years of call volume in the District by percent of calls in the categories of Fire, EMS, and Other. Historically, the vast majority of response(s) were related to EMS or medical emergencies. However, since Hurricane Ian the percentage of those calls categorized as “Other” have risen as a proportion of the total calls. The main reason for this trend has to do with the process of rebuilding. As new alarm and detector systems are coming online there has been an increase in system/detector malfunction and unintentional system/detector activations with no fire. As far as the trends show, this category appears to have peaked in 2024.

Figure 3 also represents the total number of calls for each year. These too, have been fairly stable despite the small decline in the year 2018, uptick in 2021, and downturn in all calls in 2023 – 2025. The fluctuations

in call volume reflect the impact of the external environment on the district. For example, 2018 reflected a depressed market and 2023 reflected the impacts of Hurricane Ian.

Travel Time

Figure 4 below, shows the district travel time for all calls (Fire, EMS, and Other). The majority of calls show a travel time of 8 minutes or less. Meanwhile, travel time in the 0 to 3 minute, 59 second increment reduced as a percentage of calls in the years 2017-2025 (as indicated in green). As indicated in yellow, travel time in the 4 to 7 minutes, 59 seconds increased somewhat between 2016 to 2025.

Travel time is an artifact of traffic congestion and road conditions throughout the district. The value of this analysis is to understand how external factors impact service response. This data demonstrates that travel times are getting longer over time, indicating worsening conditions for responding. Additional tools to shorten or reduce travel time response may be warranted.

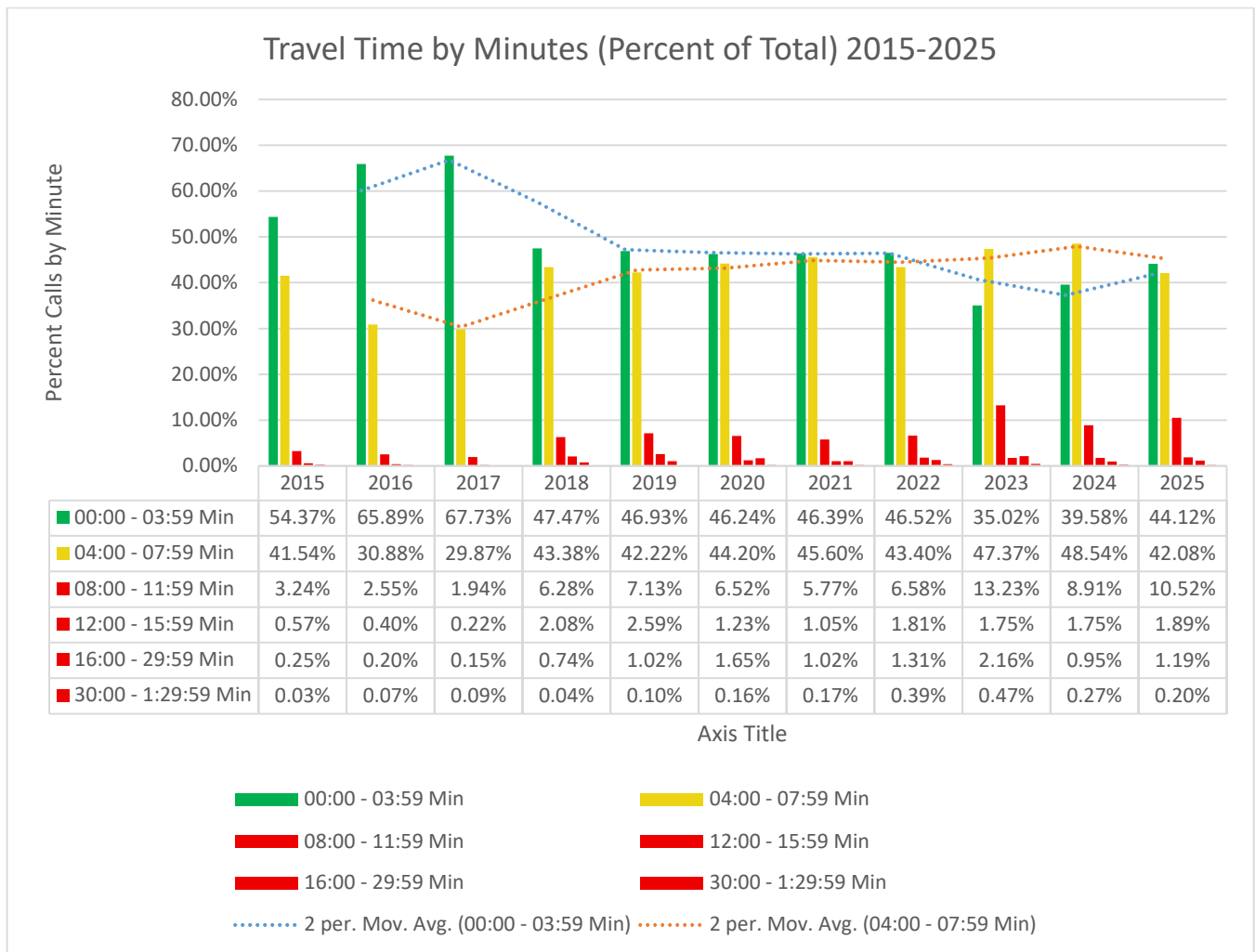


Figure 4: Average Travel Time Trends 2015-2025

Turnout Time

Turnout time is described by the National Fire Protection Association as the “time interval that begins when the emergency response facilities (ERFs) and emergency response units (ERUs) notification process begins by either an audible alarm or visual annunciation, or both, and ends at the beginning point of travel time.”⁹

Figure 5 below shows the turnout time from a comparative perspective (the 2015-2025 timeframe). Figure 5 shows that turnout time under 29 seconds has remained relatively stable and that turnout time in less than 1 minute has increased (green column in Figure 5). In 2025, turnout time below 1.5 minutes comprises approximately 72% of all calls. The longer turnout times (above 2 minutes) continue to improve (see columns in red). Turnout time is one element of response that is within the control of the district and having implications for station layout, communication systems, and PPE.

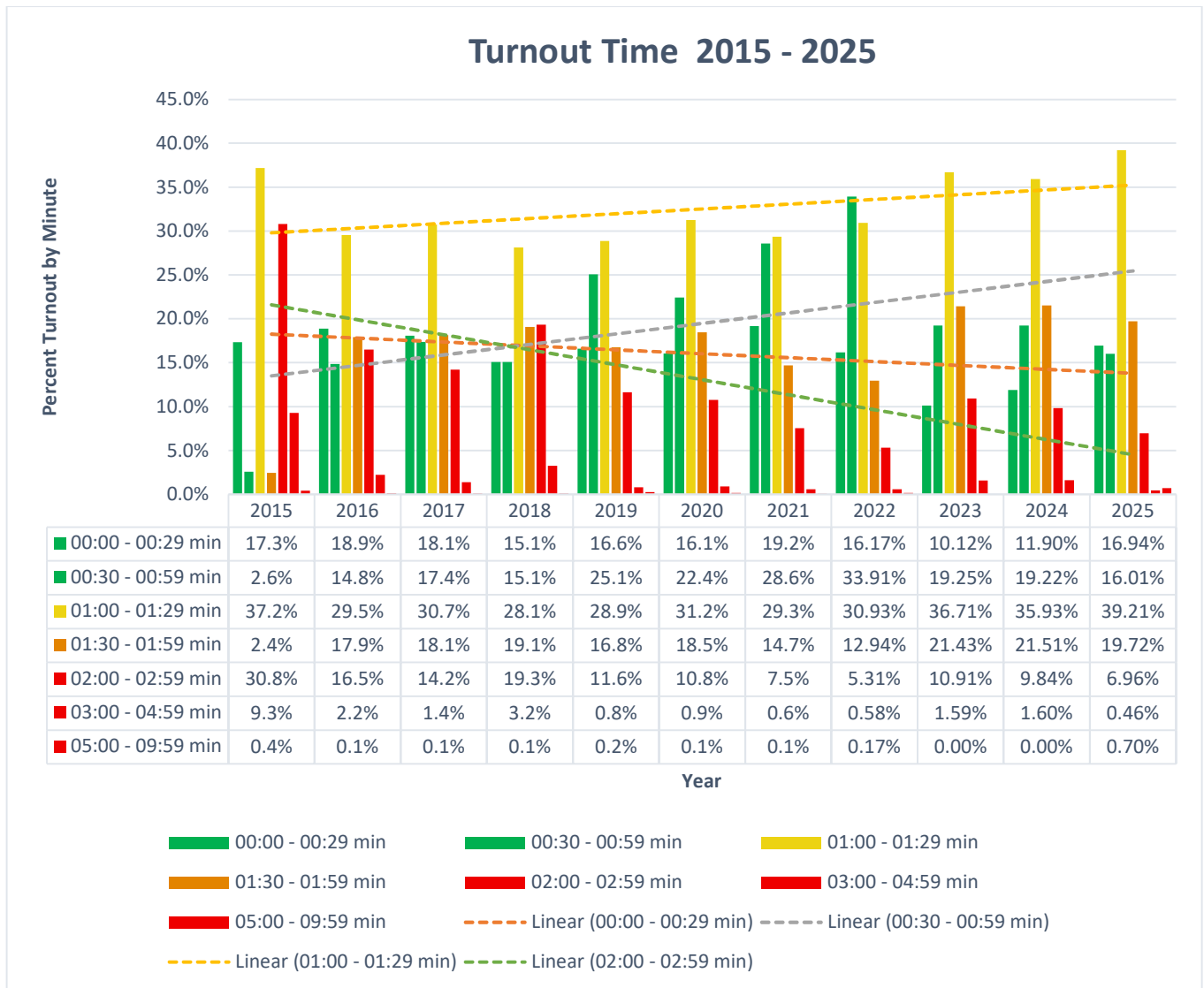


Figure 5: Average Turnout Time by Minute 2015-2025

⁹ See: <https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/all-codes-and-standards/list-of-codes-and-standards/detail?code=1710>

Fire Loss/Save Data

The Fire Loss and Save analysis is a snapshot of the community’s total estimated property loss from fire, compared to property saved from a fire. The value of understanding fire loss and save data is to quantify the impact of the district’s services. Fire loss / save is calculated by dividing the remaining value of a property by its pre-incident value.

Remaining Value of Improved Property

Pre-Incident Value of Improved Property

Save data is an estimation that is calculated not only from what remains of the origin of a fire, but also projects out what may have also been lost as a result of a fire not being brought under control. This data is an objective measure but notably includes factors outside of the District’s control. Cost estimates depend on external factors, such as the value of the property affected (e.g.: structure vs. motor vehicle, fuel loading (content), and construction types (wood frame vs. block). These values are calculated on present day appraised “just value” as determined by the Lee County Property Appraisers Office. As shown in the figure, property loss is minimal relative to the property saved.

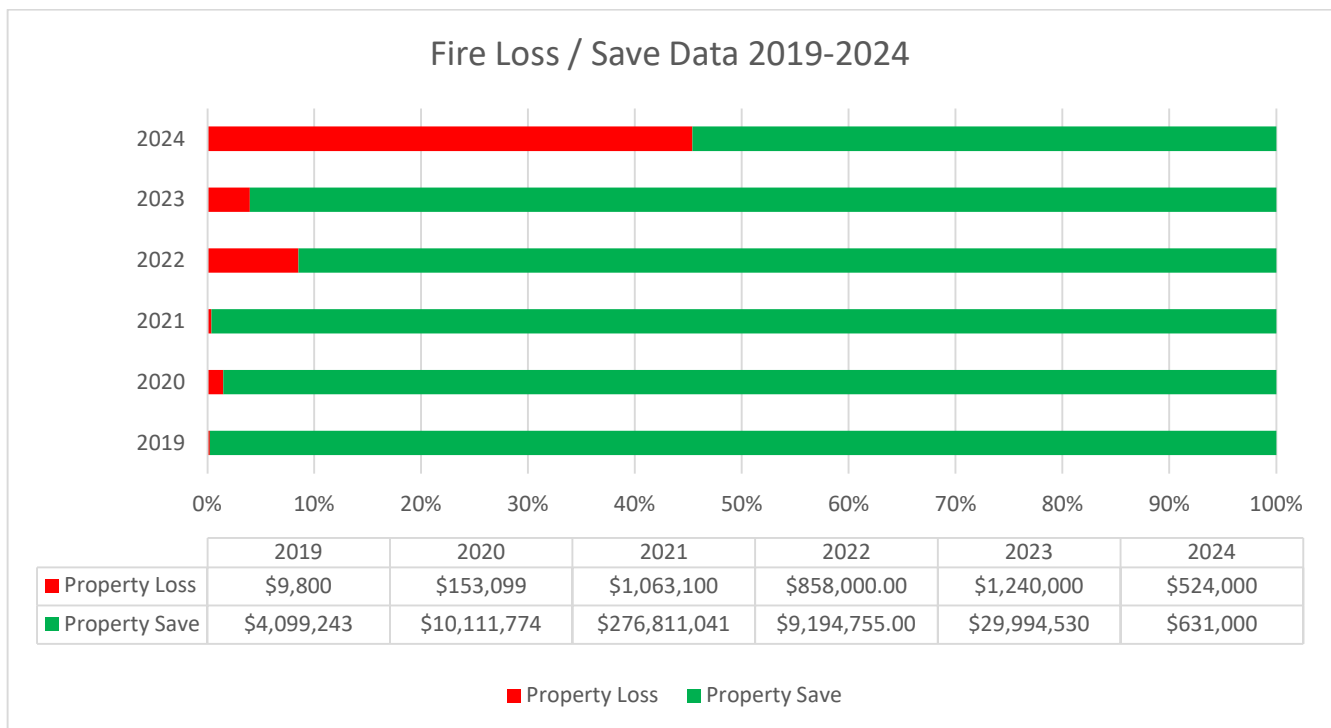


Figure 6: Fire Loss/Save 2019-2024

Financial Snapshot

Budget Highlights

The budget for year ended September 30, 2025, included a millage rate of 2.8, which was a slight decrease from 2.9851 assessed in the previous five years. Property values increased by 46.08% over the prior year, reflecting a rebound from the 40.05% loss in property values due to Hurricane Ian. As of September 30, 2025 property values were nearing 2021 levels.

Historical Notes

The District created a Capital Improvement Fund in 2025 to transfer the proceeds of a \$9 million grant received from the State of Florida. This grant was for the specific purpose of rebuilding Fire Station 31 that was destroyed by Hurricane Ian in September of 2022. Part of the District's long term capital plan had been to relocate and rebuild this station, purchasing property in 2020 for a combined fire station and headquarters building. Given the extensive damage to many structures on the island and mainland from Hurricane Ian, the District reassessed the environment and, with the State's financial assistance, accelerated the plan to quickly rebuild Station 31 without the addition of space for administration.

In July of 2024, the District purchased property on Shrimp Boat Lane for the purpose of relocating its administrative functions. The property can also accommodate a training structure as well as provide water access to other government agencies. The District will continue to evaluate this portion of the capital plan to ensure economic indicators support the project.

Between 2023 and 2025, the District purchased a new fire engine to replace the engine destroyed by the storm. Insurance proceeds, Federal and State grant funds were used to purchase the engine.

Expenditures

The following charts illustrate a snapshot of expenditures for the District Figure 7: 2022-2025 Expenditures compares expenditures over the past four years and Figure 8: 2025 Expenditures by Category illustrates the breakdown of expenditures for FY25.

As with most public safety organizations, personnel costs represent the bulk of the expenditures. Between June 2021 and May 2025, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for south urban wage earners increased 20.8%. The District and labor union agreed to increase wages over a two-year period beginning in 2024 to compensate for the significant increase in CPI.

Operating expenditures increased sharply in 2023 due to Hurricane Ian as did capital equipment in 2023 and 2024. Insurance proceeds and grant funding for the replacement of equipment were placed into the District's reserves until replacement was achieved (see also Figure 10 on p. 11). Debt service decreased in 2024 after the District made its final payment in 2023 to satisfy the Station 33 construction loan. Final payment for the only remaining loan for the purchase of a fire engine and ladder truck is scheduled for September 2028.

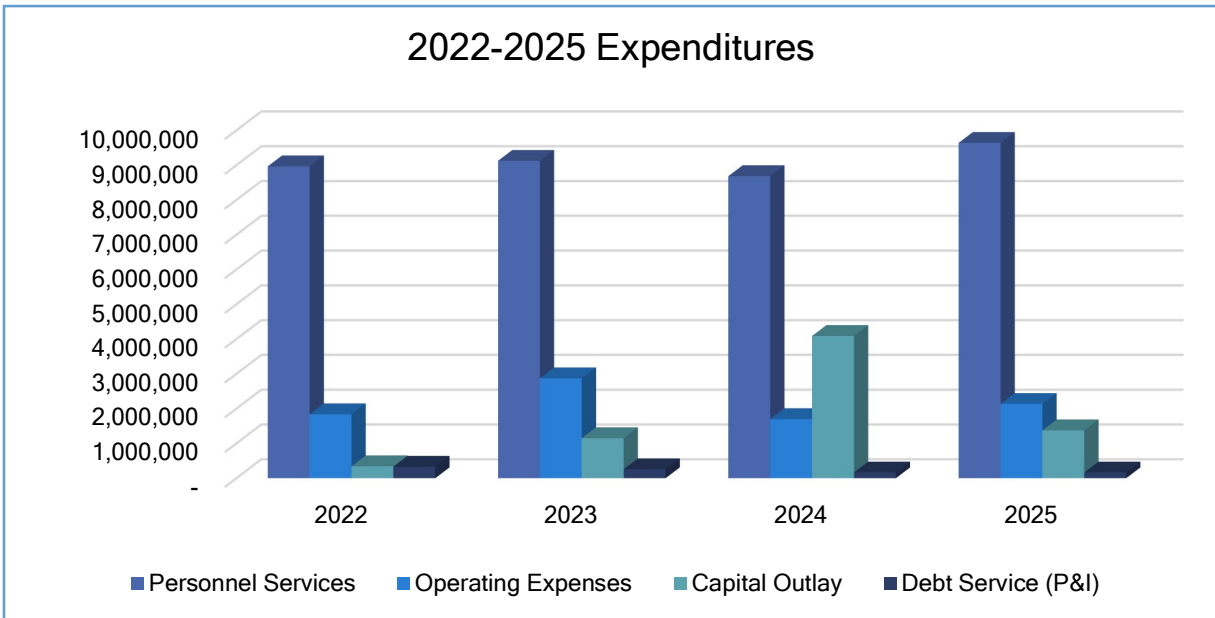


Figure 7: 2022-2025 Expenditures

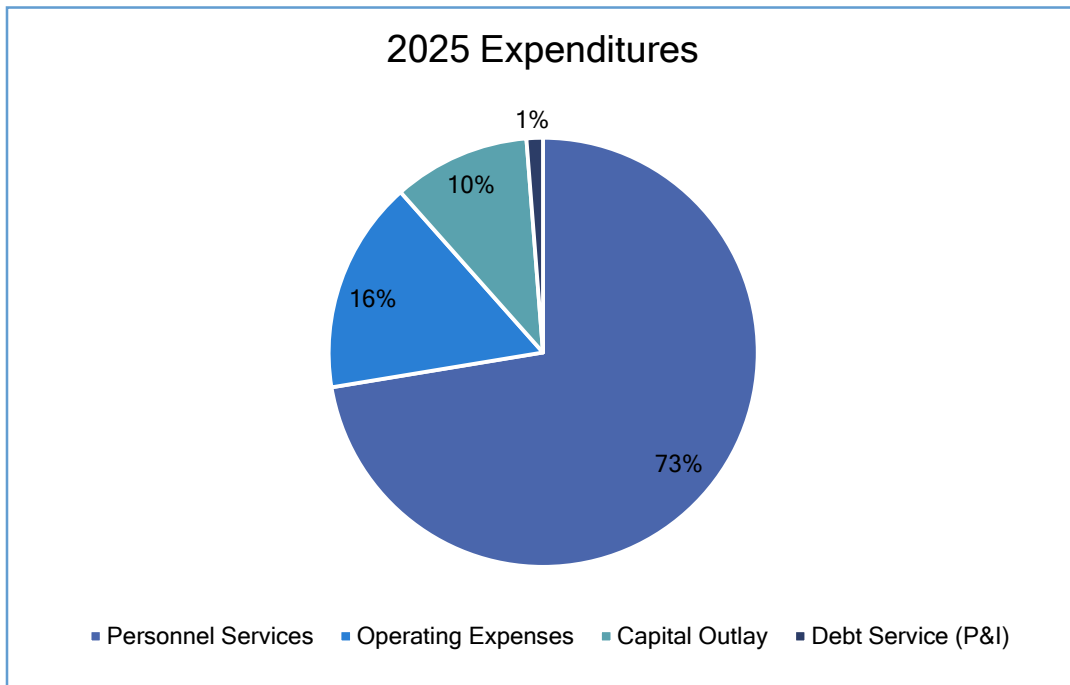


Figure 8: 2025 Expenditures by Category

Revenues and Expenditures

Figure 9: 2022 - 2025 Comparison of Annual Revenues and Expenditures illustrates the fiscal years 2022 – 2025. The District saw dramatic increases in both revenues and expenditures during 2023 and 2024. Insurance proceeds (recorded as revenue) to repair facilities and replace equipment destroyed or damaged during Hurricane Ian totaled \$2,901,854 over this two-year period. Grant proceeds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Florida Department of Emergency Management (FDEM) and other government agencies over the same two-year period totaled \$1,277,897. In fiscal years 2023 and

2024, an additional \$6,410,373 was received from FDEM for reimbursement of lost revenue and \$9,000,000 to rebuild Station 31.

Facility and equipment repairs attributed to Hurricane Ian totaled \$1,172,286 and replacement of equipment destroyed in the storm totaled \$2,089,148. All repairs and most equipment replacements were completed in 2025. The District expects a normalization of revenues and expenses in subsequent years.

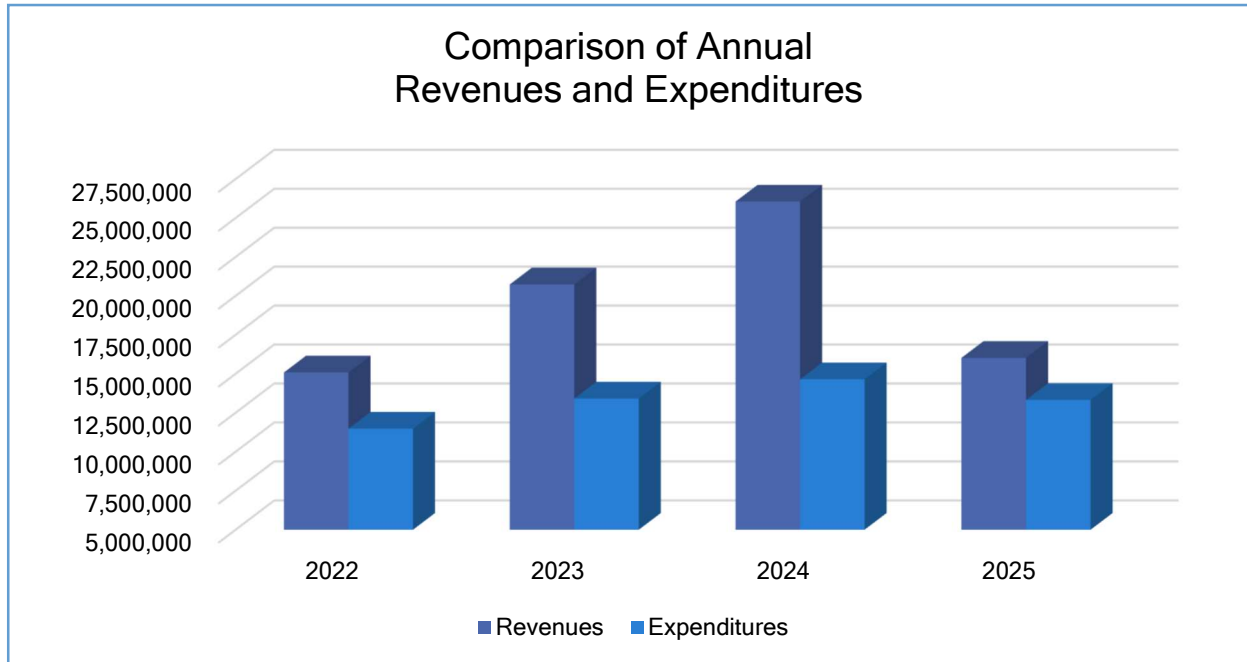


Figure 9: 2022 - 2025 Comparison of Annual Revenues and Expenditures

Designated Reserves- General Fund

As shown in Figure 10: Designated Reserves - General Fund and in Figure 11: 2025 Assigned Reserves, the District assigns reserves for specific purposes during the budgeting process each year. In 2017, the Capital Replacement and Sustainment (CAP Plan) reserve was consolidated with the Operating Bridge reserve to allow for temporary use of the CAP Plan reserves for operating purposes during the period between October 1st (the beginning of the fiscal year), and receipt of the first sizable tax revenue distribution at the end of November. Reserves in 2023 and 2024 were substantially higher than 2022 in large part due to FDEM grants received for Station 31 construction. A portion of insurance proceeds are also included for the replacement of additional apparatus. The construction grant from FDEM was transferred to the CIP Fund in 2025.

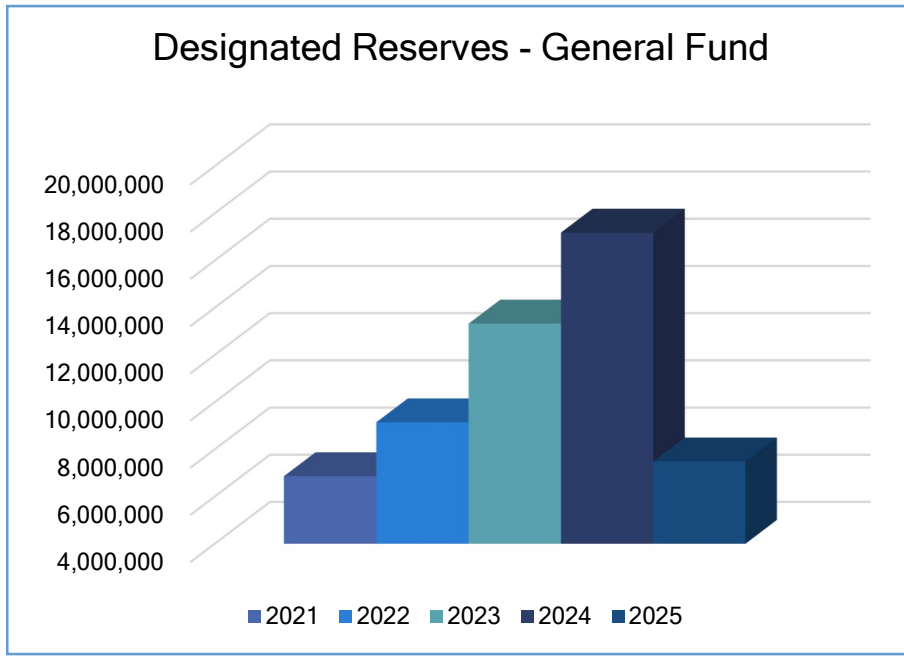


Figure 10: Designated Reserves - General Fund

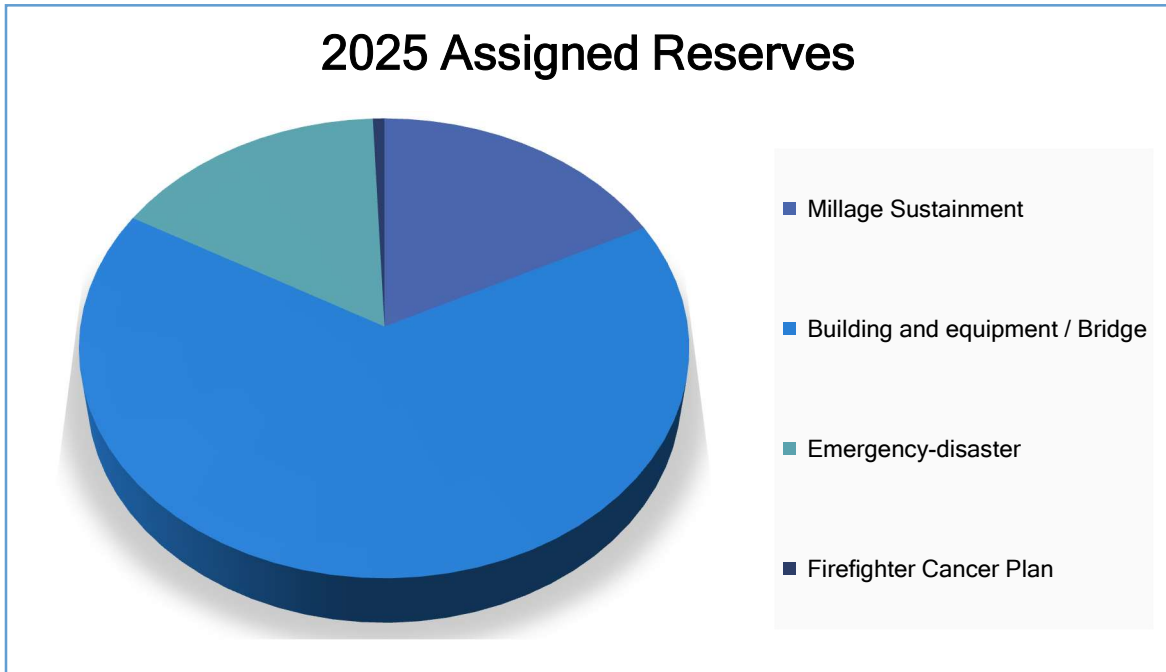


Figure 11: 2025 Assigned Reserves

Financial Overview – Millage Rates

Except for those grants previously described most of the District revenues are based on property taxes with an assessed millage rate. Figure 12 below reflects property values and millage rates assessed between 2015 and 2025. The millage rate reflects a reduction for the 2025 fiscal year. Lower property values reflected in 2024 were primarily due to the impact of the hurricane. However, the District is seeing rising values in 2025.

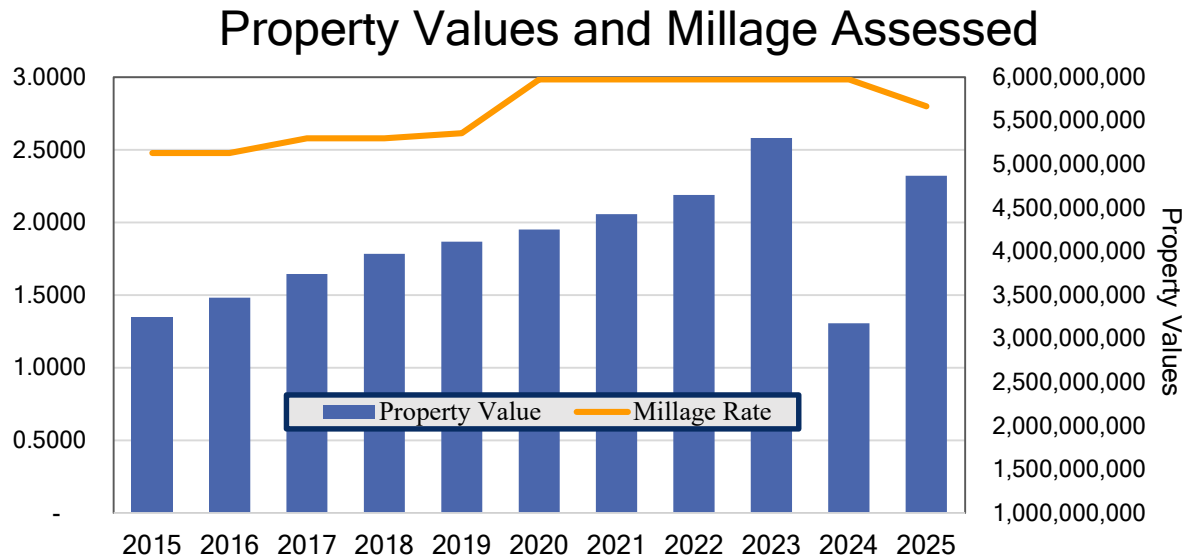


Figure 12: Property Values and Millage Rates 2015-2025

Bridging to the Future

The current conditions of the district recognize how the past shapes the future. Since 2022 the District has been focused on recovery efforts. The impacts of Hurricane Ian are most significant and are apparent in the characteristics of the population, the land development patterns, and the building types. The look backward also provides the evidence upon which to evaluate the future through a strategic lens where the district will continue to see a gradual pathway back to a more typical pattern of service needs in the community.

STRATEGIC PLANNING OVERVIEW AND PROCESS

Why Strategic Planning

As fire districts have advanced their level of professionalism to meet the increasing demands for excellence and efficiency in service delivery, strategic plans have become a method to meet the needs of area residents. Strategic plans allow policy makers, such as the Fire Commission and staff, to balance goals, resources, and clarify trade-offs. These plans are also a way to establish transparency and communicate priorities, constraints, and future goals. In addition, achieving efficiency and effectiveness means that districts find ways to leverage their activities to achieve maximum outcomes.

To accomplish this, FMBFCD engaged Dr. Margaret Banyan of Public Solutions, LLC to facilitate a process that would move the District toward a strategy for the next four years.¹⁰ The data collection, analysis, and plan development process appears in Appendix A: Collection and Report Development Process on p. 30 of this Plan.

Three guiding questions were used to identify priorities and activities for the current planning process:

1. What are the current Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats facing the FMBFCD?
2. What has changed over the past several years since the last Strategic Plan that should inform our future thinking?
3. How do we leverage this Strategic Plan and other planning tools to measure strategy and track progress?

Strategic Planning and FMBFCD

This process was adapted to meet the specific needs of FMBFCD. It was designed to be inclusive and consider all stakeholders: FMBFCD Commission, employees, leadership, non-profit organizations, businesses, and community members. This effort is consistent with the approach taken in other jurisdictions and fire agencies, both in the SW Florida region and nation-wide. Strategy is evolutionary, meaning that as the organization learns what works and what does not, it adapts and changes. As a result, so must a Strategic Plan.



¹⁰ This 2026-2029 Strategic Plan will cover a full 4-year cycle. Following this, the FMBFCD intends to move its planning cycle to 5 years (e.g., 2030-2034).

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

The planning process involved internal and external stakeholders to develop its conclusions. What follows is a summary of the priorities, expectations, concerns, and general feedback from external stakeholders. These were generated from the focus groups, interviews, and an online community survey. The full results and analysis from the online community survey appear in Appendix B: 2025 Community Survey Full Report on p. 31.

External Stakeholder Priorities

The following discussion of external stakeholder findings reports on feedback from the general community, public agencies, and businesses. Throughout the discussions with community members, and public agencies, as well as the online survey, there was alignment among priorities.

The following outlines the top priorities of community members in the three areas of services, capital expenditures, and operations:

- **Service and Service Delivery:** Response time for medical and fire emergencies constitute the top two priorities for the community. Many community members recognized the importance of focusing on emergency response as the core mission of the District. Planning to mitigate the impacts of other disasters constituted the third service-related priority. The focus groups indicated general agreement that response is the core issue for the District and noted support for those efforts that enhance service delivery.
- **Capital Expenditures:** Expenditures to enhance service delivery continued to be the highest priority for community members. This is consistent with the values placed on response time. The second priority for the community in the area of expenditures was existing facility maintenance, followed by water rescue resources. These priorities aside, there continues to be a clear desire for the District to continue to exercise fiscal responsibility and that expenditures should be cost effective.
- **Operations:** Retaining quality personnel and staffing the agency continue to be a high priority for community members, followed by ensuring financial stability for the District. The linkage between personnel and high quality services is an important foundation of the community feedback and was noted throughout the survey responses.

These priorities were consistent throughout the community survey and focus groups. For example, the survey used ranking questions to further identify priorities. These questions asked about how respondents would spend \$100 of their income on various services. The top three priorities: Investments in hiring and keeping quality firefighters, enhanced medical services to reduce hospital emergency department transports, and enhanced wellness, health, and safety programs for firefighters have persisted through the last several surveys. However, inspections rose as a priority, while community education programs and community paramedicine remained somewhat stable or declined.

Collaboration was seen across all external focus groups as an important means to achieving important outcomes for the community. Other priorities were connected to high quality services, including the need to recruit and retain quality personnel. However, respondents were quick to note that maintaining fiscal responsibility is still an important value to consider. These results show that the community priorities speak

to an overall desire to maintain or enhance the speed and quality of response to medical and fire emergencies – the core mission of the District.

External Stakeholder Expectations and Concerns

Overall Feedback

External stakeholders were also asked about their feedback on the District’s performance and service to residents. The feedback was consistently positive across all data collection efforts. In the online survey 85% of respondents rated the FMB Fire District as “Very Good” or “Good” in meeting the needs of residents and stakeholders. Four respondents, or 5% rated the District as Poor or Very Poor. In comparison, the 2021 survey showed that 82% of respondents rated the district in meeting the needs of citizens as “Very Good” or “Good”.

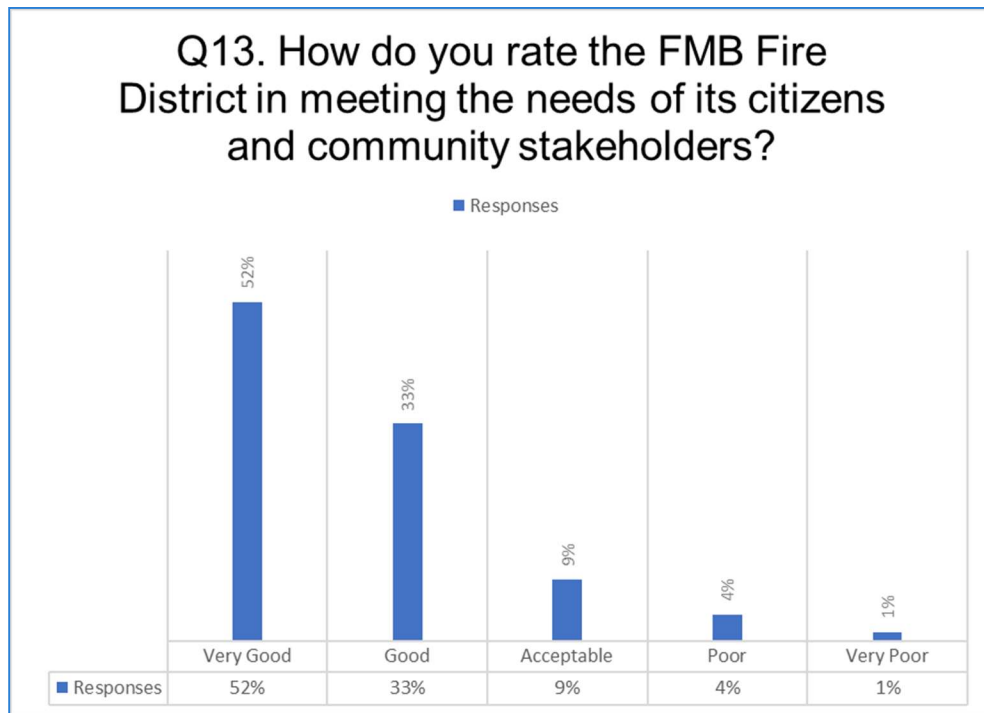


Figure 13: Community Survey Satisfaction Results

Expectations

As noted above, external stakeholders are consistent in that they expect the District to perform its core mission of fire and medical response in a high-quality and expedient manner. The community expectations for partnerships, education, planning, and employee relations are a part of how external stakeholders see the District meeting its core mission.

Concerns

Many respondents stated that they had no concerns about the District and/or offered appreciation for the service. However, there were some concerns noted. These included the increasing impacts of traffic and island growth on response time. Others noted the high cost of services and property taxes. Some questioned spending in general with specific concerns focused on administrative vehicles and the expense associated with building station(s). Other less frequent concerns were over the impact of inspections during the

rebuilding process and expenses for requirements (such as dry hydrants). Several responses did not support a merger with other fire districts, while another advocated for turning over operations to Lee County.

Internal Stakeholder Findings

The internal stakeholder groups findings are best organized into a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats). The SWOT analysis, along with the Stakeholder Analysis above helps to support a framework for critical issues and gaps. As noted above, internal stakeholders were categorized as the Fire Commission, administrative and support Staff, the Senior Leadership team, and shift personnel.

<p style="text-align: center;">District Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longstanding record of meeting community needs through response, education, and involvement • Strong community relationships and engagement • Cohesive Fire Commission with a focus on governance • Equipment and apparatus quality • Financially sound with good fiscal management • Tax basis improving through growth and redevelopment • Professional staff with expertise and leadership • Prepared and well-trained line personnel who are prepared to take on challenges • Enhanced fire training for line personnel • Improving communication • Increased health and wellness programs for line personnel 	<p style="text-align: center;">District Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Division and communication gaps between line staff, union, and District leadership with implications for morale • Battalion Chief demotions affecting morale • Inconsistent communication throughout the organization: Fire Commission, leadership, and line personnel • Outdated or conflicting policies • Employee turnover and recruiting challenges • Lack of advancement opportunities for employee growth • Current budget constraints as property tax base recovers • Lack of community engagement in meetings • Traffic and growth that impacts transport time and loss of capacity to transport additional patients • Loss in property values
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health and staff support • Redevelopment potential throughout the District with infrastructure improvement • Technology innovations offer new options for rescue and response • Enhanced relationship(s) with the public through remote technologies and electronic tools • New fire station with opportunities for meeting community needs • Strategic partnerships with other public agencies and fire districts 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment needs to service increased building heights • Population growth and increased demands for service delivery • Traffic and implications for response time and delays • Community fragmentation with increased visitor and less permanent residents • Housing and cost of living for existing and new employees • Economic and fiscal uncertainty with unpredictable property value recovery • Uncertainty of state policy decisions and impacts on district operations • Uncertainty of Medicaid and Medicare funding on ambulance revenues

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Mission

The Mission of the Fort Myers Beach Fire District is to honorably serve our community by providing caring, compassionate service through devoted professionals.

Vision

The Vision of the Fort Myers Beach Fire District is to be a best-in-class organization, shaping our community through excellence in service, changing lives in all that we do.

Values

Professionalism
Loyalty
Integrity

Slogan

The Slogan of the Fort Myers Beach Fire District is:
Shaping our community through excellence.

About the Core Elements

The FMB Fire District developed its mission, vision, values, and behaviors in an iterative and inclusive process that culminated in the adoption of a Policy and Procedure titled, “Core Elements” on 11/6/2017. The policy outlines the application of the mission, vision, values, slogan, and code of ethics in the daily decision making, and framework of the organization. These core elements have supported the framework of this and the previous Strategic Plan through which the priorities, goals, objectives, and tasks of the organization are carried out. The feedback received as part of this plan do not imply that changes are needed in the mission, vision, values, and slogan of the district. However, implementation of the mission continues to be at the forefront of the planning effort.

The *mission* identifies that FMBFCD members are fully dedicated to the organization’s values, sharing those values with personal values, and delivering service on behalf of our values.

The *vision* is a concept based on the specific components of the community we serve, people we serve with, and leadership of the organization.

The *values* have tremendous meaning to the members of the FMBFCD and identify the organization’s philosophy of service.

CRITICAL ISSUES AND SERVICE GAPS

The purpose of developing a critical issues and service gaps section is to identify those areas that, from a strategic standpoint, would most leverage the FMBFCD to meet its mission and achieve its vision. Consistent with the section below (described below), the issues and gaps fall into five main categories or perspectives. Two of these are externally focused perspectives, two internally focused perspectives, and one is associated with governance.

Table 1: Critical Issues and Service Gaps

Stakeholder	Financial	Operational, Life Safety & Support	Employee Growth & Development	Governance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and education programs to meet community needs • Community engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term organizational and fiscal stability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn out time • Long range planning • Technological innovation for increased operational efficacy and efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and retention of employees • Personnel training for emergency preparedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan implementation

PLAN OVERVIEW

Accomplishing the FMBFCD vision requires the tools to organize and focus efforts. This plan outlines Strategic Priorities, Objectives, Critical Tasks, and Timelines associated with the near term (0-3 years). This plan embraces the idea that working on organizational fundamentals must be in place for the District to accomplish its mission. These fundamentals are financial, operational, and employee centered.

The Plan also embraces the idea that tracking outcomes will yield better results by ensuring continuous improvement, funding initiatives tied to strategic priorities, and ensuring accountability for critical tasks.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Following identification of critical issues and gaps, the strategic priorities fall into five main categories, or perspectives, consistent with a moderated Balanced Scorecard Approach. These are two externally focused perspectives, two internally focused perspectives, and one associated with governance. Where the Balanced Scorecard generally suggests four perspectives, governance is important to capture the character of the District as a public agency with an elected body. Perspectives illustrate the relationship between these perspectives to one another and the mission of the District. Externally focused perspectives are indicated in green, and internally focused perspectives are indicated in blue. These perspectives are described below.



Figure 14: Strategic Plan Perspectives

The Stakeholder Perspective

The Stakeholder Perspective considers how the District is seen by its stakeholders and is guided by the question: “To achieve our mission, how do we want to be seen by our stakeholders and what services help to enhance their expectations?”

The Financial Perspective

The Financial Perspective considers the financial resources of the District that are needed to achieve the mission and is guided by the question: “To achieve our vision, how do we succeed financially?”

The Internal Operations Perspective

The Internal Operations Perspective is inward-facing and considers what the District must excel at to achieve its mission.

The Organizational Learning Perspective

This perspective is inward-facing and considers how the District works internally with its employees to adapt, change, and improve to achieve its mission.

The Governance Perspective

This perspective considers the way in which the Fire Commission governs the District in a way to achieve the mission. The Commission’s responsibilities include making policy, monitoring and approving the budget, and supervising the Fire Chief. Because the Commission has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the mission of the organization is achieved, governance is uniquely different from the other perspectives. Nevertheless, the Fire Commission does have certain priorities, which are to provide oversight for the Strategic Plan.

PLAN ELEMENTS IN ACTION: PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

As a tool for District management, this Strategic Plan should be considered as a living document. It provides short-term direction for a 0-4 year period, builds a shared vision, sets priorities and objectives, and optimizes resources.

The strategic priorities listed below describe the ultimate aim, or target, of an activity. These form the logic and ultimate direction to support activity. They are suitable for reporting in the context of District documents or in its Annual Report. Objectives are more specific in that they describe the steps that are to be taken to accomplish the priority. Critical tasks describe activities that staff may take to accomplish a particular objective. A Timeline and Lead is also indicated in the tables below. It is important to note that because there is considerable overlap throughout the agency, many staff members will be involved in accomplishing the priorities, objectives, and tasks as outlined.

The tables below are intended to provide guidance and clear activities for the upcoming planning period as a way to address the critical gaps noted above. These activities are not designed to be exclusive nor are they intended to constrain all District activities. In other words, the excellent on-going work of the agency should continue beyond what is listed here, as well as the workload of staff to achieve daily operations in addition to those identified in this plan, should be noted.



Strategy-Based Plan: Objectives, Tasks, Timeframe, Responsibilities, and Measures

Table 2: The Stakeholder Perspective

Strategic Priority	Objective	Exemplary Critical Tasks						Lead Branch / Division*
			0-6 mon	7-12 mon	13-24 mon	25-36 mon	37-48 mon	
1. Promote community awareness & access to public safety resources	1.b. Develop innovative programs for community education and information sharing	1. Collaborate with external public entities to increase stakeholder access to information through marketing or online tools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Life Safety IT
	1.a. Engage community with interactive programming	Provide digital resources to encourage robust public interaction (quizzes, activities, etc.)		✓	✓			
2. Embrace opportunities to enhance community safety	2.a. Develop community-based programs to address new and emerging safety needs	Identify and implement public education programs to address emerging issues (e.g., electric vehicles, emergency preparedness)		✓	✓	✓	✓	Life Safety
		Re-invigorate the community risk reduction program to address known hazards and risks			✓	✓	✓	
		Support efforts for updated code compliance throughout the redevelopment process	✓	✓	✓			

*Abbreviated to indicate title of Branch or Division

Table 3: The Financial Perspective

Strategic Priority	Objective	Exemplary Critical Tasks						Lead Division/ Branch
			0-6 mon	7-12 mon	13-24 mon	25-36 mon	37-48 mon	
3. Implement financial and revenue tools to sustain current operations and meet future needs	3.a. Monitor funds and plan for facility replacement	Monitor administrative / training facility funding feasibility based on economic conditions	✓	✓	✓			Finance & Administrative Services
	3.b. Assess costs and benefits of additional resources	Conduct cost-benefit analysis of additional resources for service delivery (e.g., fire boat)				✓	✓	
	3.c. Monitor economic indicators and external factors affecting District funding and resources	Develop dashboards and analytical tools to monitor housing costs and trends		✓				
		Monitor federal and state changes that may impact District revenues (e.g., health care)	✓	✓				
4. Achieve operational efficiency	4.a. Develop best practices to improve efficiency in operations	Assess merger study recommendations for feasibility and implement efficient practices where warranted (e.g., collaborative procurement policies)	✓	✓	✓			Finance & Administrative Services

Table 4: The Internal Operations Perspective

Strategic Priority	Objective	Exemplary Critical Tasks						Lead Division/ Branch
			0-6 mon	7-12 mon	13-24 mon	25-36 mon	37-48 mon	
5. Mitigate community risk	5.a. Continuous monitoring of resilience plans	Work with internal and external partners to update disaster resilience plans	✓	✓				Operations Life Safety
		Evaluate the effectiveness of updated emergency plans		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	5.b. Leverage technology to improve operations	Assess, test, implement, and evaluate emerging technologies and partnerships to mitigate community risk (e.g., drone program / Evacuation Survey for Fire District Property Owners)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Administration IT
6. Efficiently and effectively respond to emergencies	6.a. Ensure efficient and effective inventory and asset management programs	Develop and implement inventory management system	✓	✓				Administration
		Maintain asset and fleet repair schedule and plan		✓	✓	✓	✓	
		Develop strategies and implement actions for longer term storage space		✓	✓			
	6.b. Prepare for emerging staffing needs	Develop and implement staffing strategy to ensure adequate staffing for new and existing station(s) (includes hiring for new personnel and leadership succession)	✓	✓				Operations & Administration
	6.c. Improve response time	Identify barriers to reduce turnout time and implement strategies for improvement		✓	✓	✓		Operations & Training
7. Achieve excellence as a high-performing organization	7.a. Develop consistency in personnel management policy and practice	Standardize, update, and revise, and create consistency among organizational policies, procedures, and guidance documents including new and emerging issues (e.g., water rescue)		✓	✓	✓		Fire Chief Senior Leadership Team

Table 5: Employee Development & Learning

Strategic Priority	Objective	Exemplary Critical Tasks						Lead Division/ Branch
			0-6 mon	7-12 mon	13-24 mon	25-36 mon	37-48 mon	
8. Recruit and train for excellence throughout the workforce	8.a. Recruit for excellence in the workforce	Implement and evaluate recruiting action plan consistent with mission, vision, values, and behaviors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Fire Chief Human Resources Training
		Extend pathway for new hires to become fully certified as Paramedic	✓					
	8.b. Ensure all employees meet job performance requirements through fire and medical training in core competencies	Implement annual training plan to ensure compliance through monitoring and evaluation		✓	✓	✓	✓	
			8.c. Ensure all employees have opportunity for growth and development	Develop leadership and promotion potential of existing employees through training and acting opportunities			✓	

Table 6: The Governance Perspective

Strategic Priority	Objective	Exemplary Critical Tasks	0-6 mon	6-12 mon	12-24 mon	24-36 mon	Long Term	Lead Division/ Branch
9. Utilize a strategic planning and performance management system to guide the organization to perform at a high standard	9.a. Finalize 2026-2029 Strategic Plan to guide District operations and ensure continuous improvement	Finalize and adopt updated 2026-2029 Strategic Plan	✓					Fire Commission Fire Chief
		Evaluate and report District activities based on Strategic Plan		✓	✓	✓	✓	
		Update and approve annual work plan and Strategic Plan in coordination with the annual budget; incorporating new objectives, tasks, and timelines as warranted		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	9.b. Assess financial strategies to ensure long-term sustainability and excellent service	Continuously monitor opportunities to sustain and improve operations and meet organizational priorities		✓	✓	✓	✓	Fire Chief Finance & Administrative Services

MEASURING PERFORMANCE

There are two approaches to measuring performance. The first measures accomplishment of the objectives described in the Strategic Plan. However, because the plan requires regular review and revision to keep up with accomplishments and environmental changes, a second approach measures performance around long-standing indicators.

Performance measures are designed to assess the outcomes of the District's activities and how it achieves its mission. Performance measures allow the District to create targets with periodic assessment of methods, budget alignment, and communications. They can be reported in the Annual Report, on the District's webpage, or used in an email newsletter. Ideally, performance measures should remain consistent over time to ensure that there is standardization from year-to-year.

Florida Statutes, Chapter 189.0695 has also mandated a performance review process. This process requires fire districts to contract with an independent entity to conduct a performance review covering a variety of factors, such as purpose and goals, goals and objectives for programs, service delivery, alternative service delivery, comparison of programs, revenues and costs of programs, extent to which goals and objectives have been achieved, factors that contributed to failure to meet goals, and recommendations for statutory or budgetary changes to improve the special district. This reporting is ongoing.

For the FMBFD the following performance indicators will be implemented over the next plan cycle. The measures are consistent with the strategic priorities of the District. These indicators will be assessed annually with a process to inform their effectiveness to support the writing of the next strategic plan:

Performance Indicator 1 – Community: FMBFD rating in meeting the needs of citizens and stakeholders

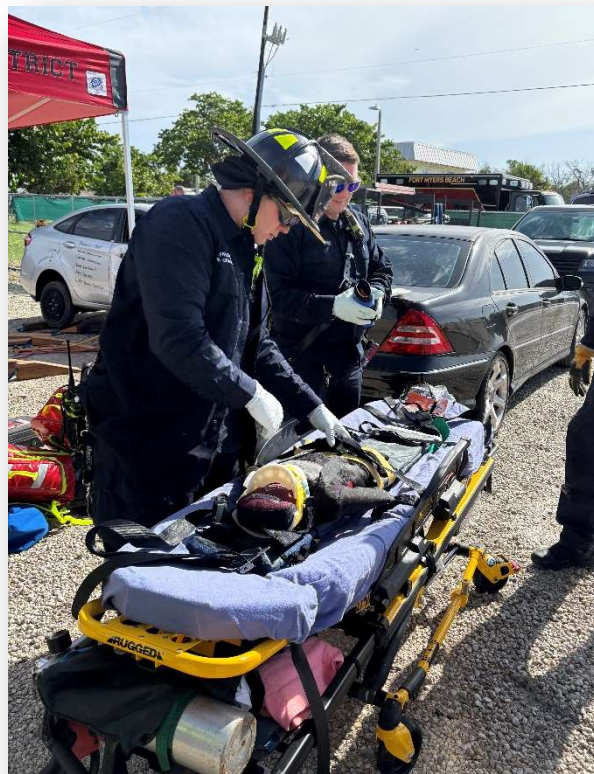
Performance Indicator 2 – Operational: Turnout time within 1 minute, 1-1.5 minutes, and 1.5-2 minutes

Performance Indicator 3 – Operational: Fire Loss / Save Ratio

Performance Indicator 4 – Employee Growth and Learning: Number of mandatory fire and EMS trainings delivered

SUCCESS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN: ACHEIVING ONGOING EXCELLENCE

The success of this Strategic Plan, and ultimately FMBFCD, depends on the extent to which all members of the District support and engage with it as a dynamic tool. The tools and the processes described herein can unify internal, and external stakeholders in the achievement of the FMBFCD mission, vision, and values. This requires all members to use, measure, change, and adapt the Plan with the ultimate outcome of District success. Success is defined in the mission statement: to honorably serve our community by providing caring, compassionate service through devoted professionals.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

AED	Automatic Defibrillator Device
CRR	Community Risk Reduction
Efficiency	A performance indication where inputs are measured per unit of output (or vice versa)
Input	A performance indication where the value of resources are used to produce an output (e.g., funding)
Outcome	A performance indication where qualitative consequences are associated with a program or service (e.g., the ultimate benefit to the public)
Output	A performance indication where a quality or number of units is produced (e.g., training hours)
Performance Measure	A specific measurable result for each goal and or program
Stakeholder	Any person, group, or organization that can place a claim on, or influence the organization's resources or outputs, is affected by those outputs, or has an interest in or expectation of the organization
SOC	Standards of Cover document. A Standards of Cover document is a systematic way of looking at the basic service provided by an emergency services agency. A SOC measures actual performance and impacts to deployment objectives, service delivery, and community risk.
Strategic Goal	A broad target that defines how the agency will carry out its mission over a specific period of time
Strategic Objective	A specific, measurable accomplishment required to realize the completion of a strategic goal
Vision	An idealized view of a desirable and potentially achievable future state. Where or what an organization would like to be in the future

APPENDIX A: COLLECTION AND REPORT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Table 7: Data Collection & Report Development

Data Collection and Report Development Task	Date
Presentation to Fire Commission with Feedback	August 2025
Fire Commission Individual Interviews	September 2025
Focus Group: Senior Leadership Team (various)	September 2025
Focus Groups: All Shift Personnel	September 2025
Online Community Survey	October – November 2025
Results Analysis	December 2025
Plan Draft	December 2025– January 2026
Plan Review and Approval	January 2026

APPENDIX B: 2025 COMMUNITY SURVEY FULL REPORT

The following survey report presents the quantitative and qualitative (open-ended) responses to the FMB Fire Community Survey, conducted as part of the Strategic Plan development. The following reports on the survey statistics, demographics, and survey results. The open-ended questions were summarized. The raw data of responses is also available.

Survey Statistics

- Number of Responses: 76 fully completed surveys; 84 partially completed
- Analysis for duplication: 1 instance of a duplicated IP address was noted in the survey; however, the survey responses were unique. This is indicative of two individuals in the same household completing the survey.

Respondent Demographics

Residency Status

- Full Time Resident: 65.79%
- Part Time Resident: 23.68%
- Visitor: 3.95%
- Business Owner: 2.63%* (see below)
- Other: 3.95%. One respondent self-reported as a property manager, one reported as identifying as a primary resident but not full time. One additional respondent was an employee in the Town of Fort Myers Beach.

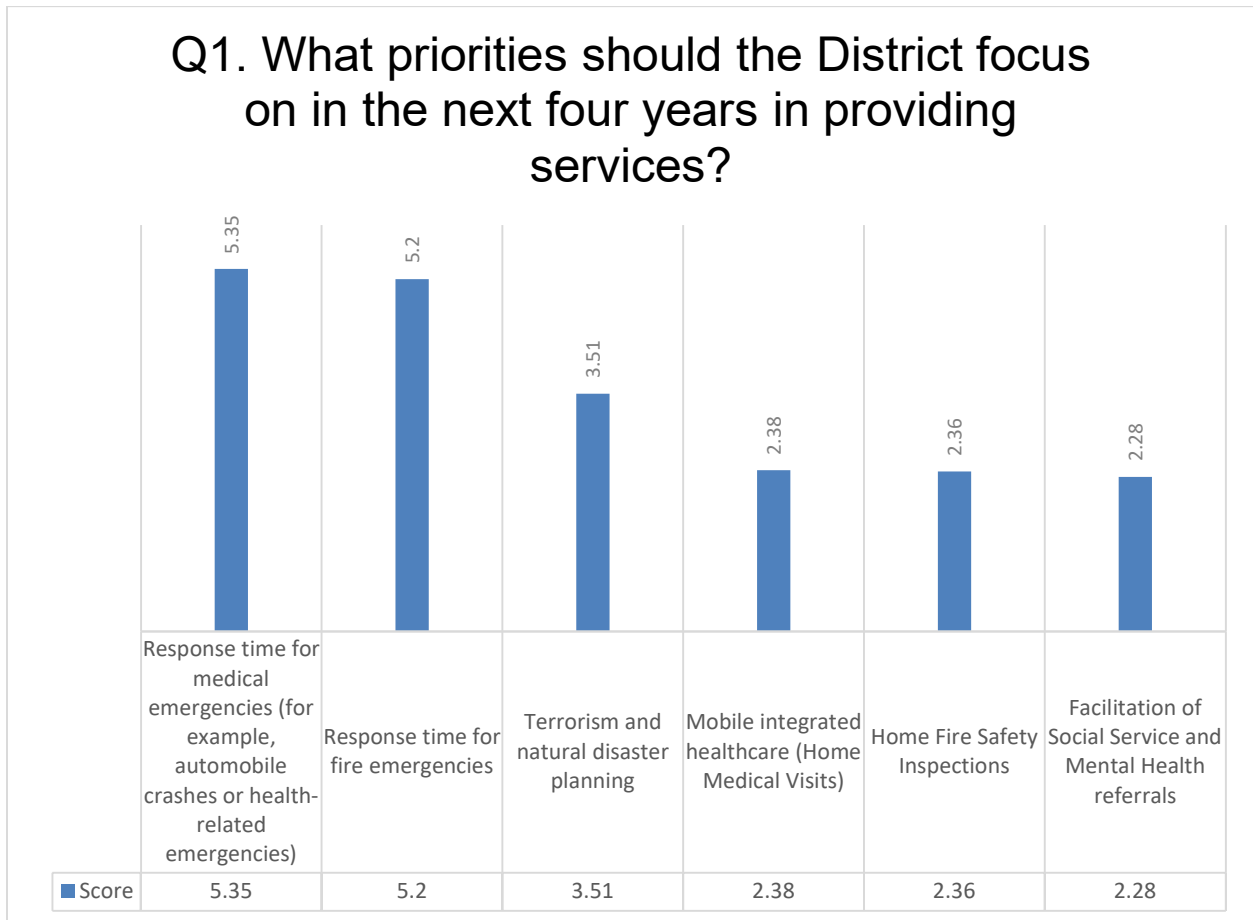
Characteristics of Respondents

- Average age of respondents was 66 years old.
- Average household size was 1.8 persons per household with 9 households reporting having children under 18 years old.

Zip Codes of Respondents

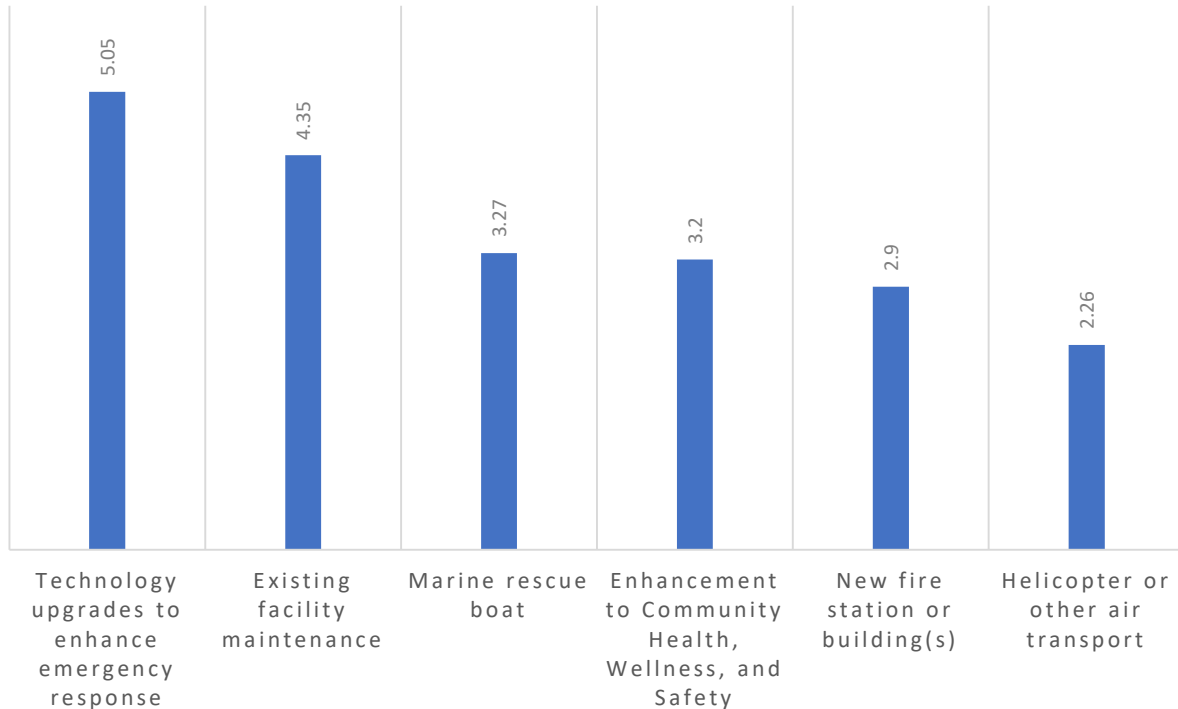
- 75% Fort Myers Beach 33931
- 7% Local (e.g., 33901, 33908, 33914, etc.)
- 13% Out of Area

Survey Response Detail



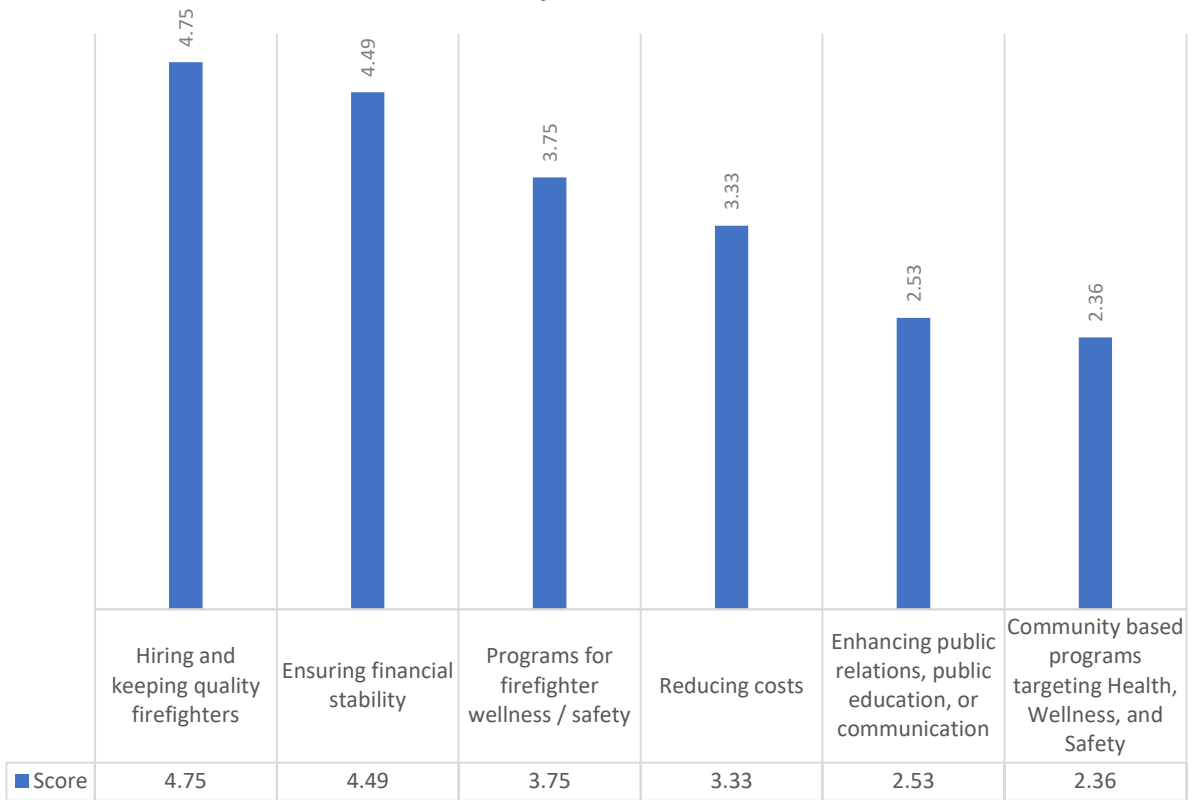
The top three priorities were the same as what was reflected in the 2021 survey. The bottom three priorities were similar to survey responses in 2021.

Q2. What priorities should the District focus on in the next four years in capital expenditures (facilities and/or vehicles)?



The top three priorities were the same in the 2021 survey with the top priorities reflected the desire for future investments, if any, in technology upgrades and maintenance of facilities to support emergency response. The marine rescue boat has persisted as the third priority since the 2021 survey. However, the new fire station dropped down to the fifth priority, largely due to the current rebuilding of Station 1. Helicopter or other air transport continued to be the lowest priority since the 2021 survey.

Q3. What priorities should the District focus on in the next four years in operations?



The top three priorities, hiring and keeping quality firefighters, ensuring financial stability, and programs for firefighter wellness and safety were also the top three priorities in 2021. Feedback from the 2025 survey shows that community based programs dropped to the lowest priority since the 2021 survey.

Q4 Briefly, share any more information about why you selected your top ranked issue in each area.

Respondents to this question were invited to add additional detail to their choice in ranking.

There were two main themes in these responses that indicated that the main mission and priorities of the District should focus on response times to fire and emergency services and fiscal constraint.

The first theme emphasized that the priority should be delivery of the core mission of the fire district, which is service quality and good response times, especially as the population density and traffic increases. Responses also addressed the logistics of service delivery, specifically mentioning the frequency of incidents. Respondents continue to question why a fire truck and ambulance are dispatched together.

A second major theme reflected concerns over the budget and the overall fiscal responsibility of the District. These responses included requests to reduce the budget and questioned the necessity of expenditures or services, such as new buildings, a fire boat, or staffing. Some participants suggested that Lee County should have a role in service provision or oversight, while others focused on long-term financial planning and sustainability regarding the cost of services. Still others expressed interest in how the fire district can rethink service delivery to reduce cost.

Q5 Would you add any additional priorities that are not mentioned here?

Respondents to this question mentioned a number of additional priorities that the Fire District could consider. These fell into two main categories of operational responses and administrative feedback.

The first of these operational themes suggested increasing staffing for emergency response, and expanding beach lifeguards, seadoo response, and airlift capabilities (due to traffic). Additional training was suggested to support effective response. Still others looked to the fire district to provide additional services, such as CERT, volunteer service, educational events, and vaccination clinics.

A second theme focused on transparency of budget information and efficient finances. These included responses that support greater collaboration or merger with Lee County or Bonita Springs.

Q6 Would you be opposed to any priorities listed above? If so, please provide detail as to your reasons.

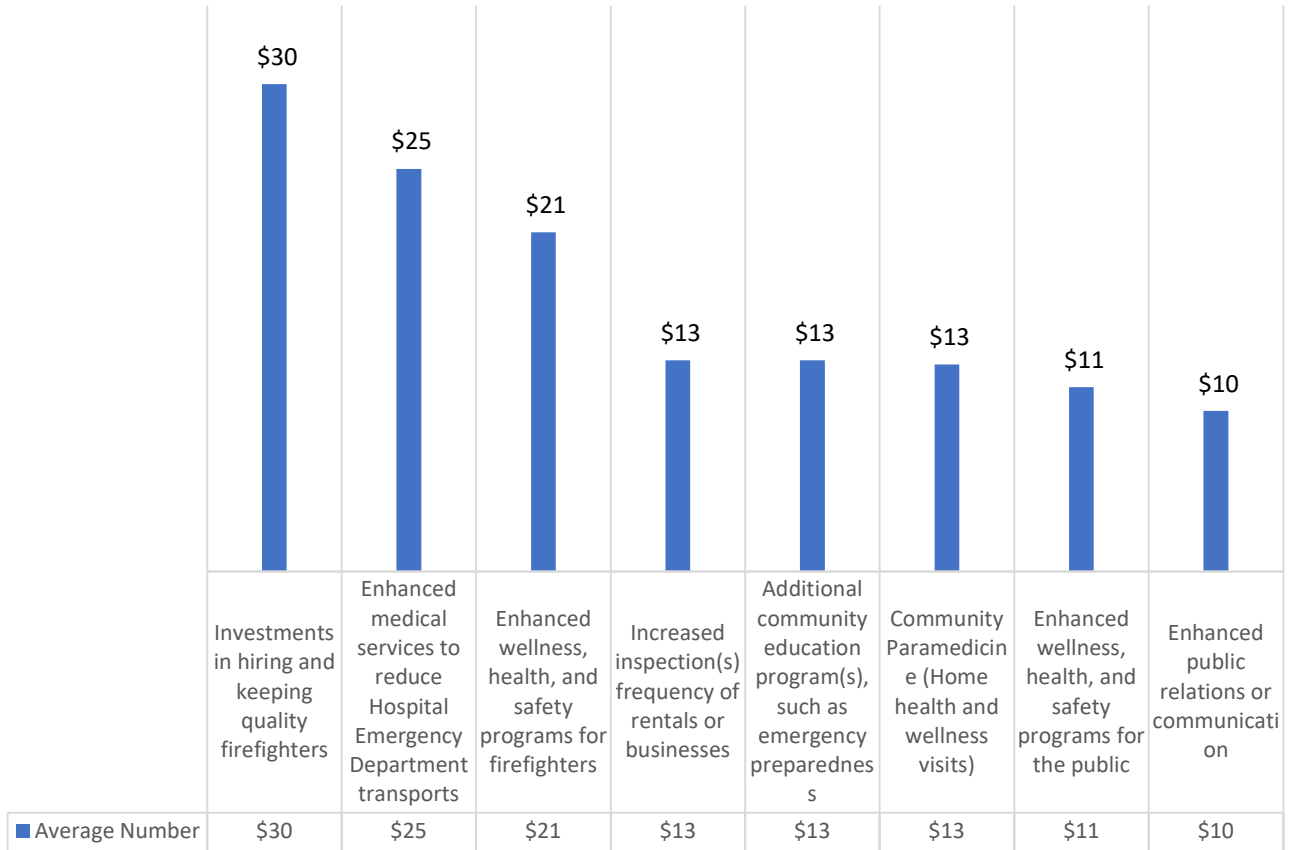
Respondents noted that there is support for the fire district but wanted more clarification. For example, some questioned the mission of the fire district in terms of hazmat / terrorism response, public information, and the number of new fire stations that are planned. Responses to this question reiterated the need for cost control and avoidance of new expenditures, such as the training facility on San Carlos Island or fire stations.

Q7. How should the District fund any new activities or services?

	Fees for Service	Property Taxes	Total
Inspections of rentals	92.21%	14.29%	77
	71	11	
Inspections of businesses	85.90%	15.38%	78
	67	12	
Emergency transport	57.14%	48.05%	77
	44	37	
In home wellness or mobile integrated healthcare visit(s)	70.67%	33.33%	75
	53	25	
New equipment (marine rescue or trucks)	23.68%	78.95%	76
	18	60	
Other (please specify)			9

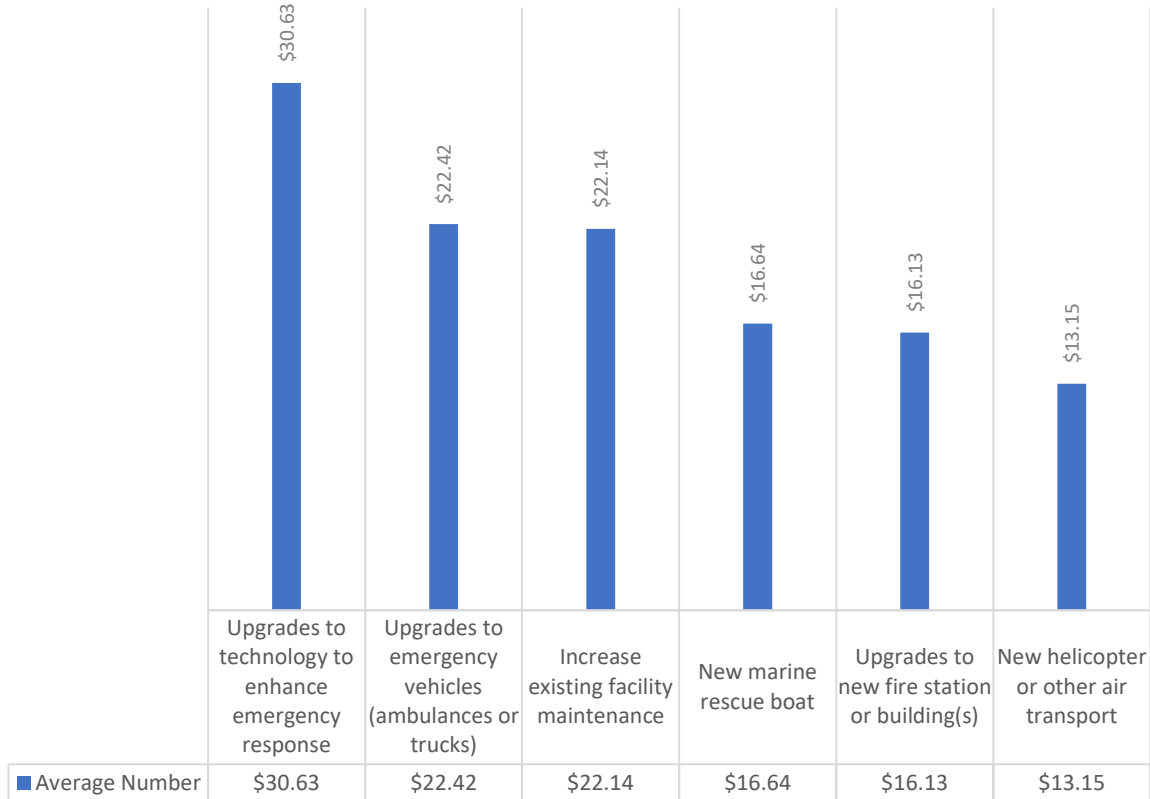
In comparing the responses from the 2021 survey, there is a general shift away from property tax support for any additional / new services. The shift emphasizes increased interest in relying on fee for service support. Additional comments, indicated as other, suggested that there should be few/no new services and expressed concern over duplication of inspections. Others considered that grants Fort Myers should pay for additional services. Finally, one respondent requested inspection information for all gas tanks buried in the island.

Q8. If you had to spend/divide \$100 of your income on services, how would you spend/divide it?



Another way to understand priorities is to understand how respondents would spend their dollars on new services. This analysis notes that this survey, nor the results, proposed new services, but remains a way to better understand community priorities. The top three priorities have remained the same in comparison to the 2021 survey where investment in firefighters remains important. In contrast, inspections rose as a priority, while community education programs and community paramedicine remained somewhat stable. Interestingly, despite expressed interest in increased transparency suggested elsewhere in the open-ended responses, funding for enhanced communications remains a low priority.

Q9. If you had to spend/divide \$100 of your income on new facilities or equipment, how would you spend/divide it?



Similar to Q8, another way to understand priorities is to understand how respondents would spend their dollars on new facilities or equipment. This analysis notes that the survey, nor the results, proposed any new equipment, but the question is useful as a way to better understand community priorities. The top priority in the 2025 survey was similar to that in 2021, which is technology upgrades for enhanced emergency response. Not surprisingly, upgrades to new fire stations dropped to the fifth priority, largely due to the building of Station 1 replacement. The emphasis on upgrades and maintenance is shown in the 2025 survey. A new marine rescue boat has remained as the fourth priority in the 2025 and 2021 surveys.

Q10 In a few words, please share what you expect of your Fire District?

Most respondents focused on the fire district core of fire, emergency, and rescue services. Response time was a clear priority. As part of that central focus, several respondents expected high-quality services and proper equipment.

A second theme in the responses emphasized reducing the budget and cost-effective service delivery (salaries and equipment), reduction in the reserves, and no increases in fees (e.g., inspection).

Respondents varied in their expectations over governance where some expected the fire district to operate independently, while others advocated for turning operations over the Lee County. At least one respondent emphasized increased transparency, such as the fire district success rate.

Q11 In a few words, please share any concerns about your Fire District.

There were less frequent responses to this question overall. Many respondents stated that they had no concerns about the District and/or offered appreciation for the service.

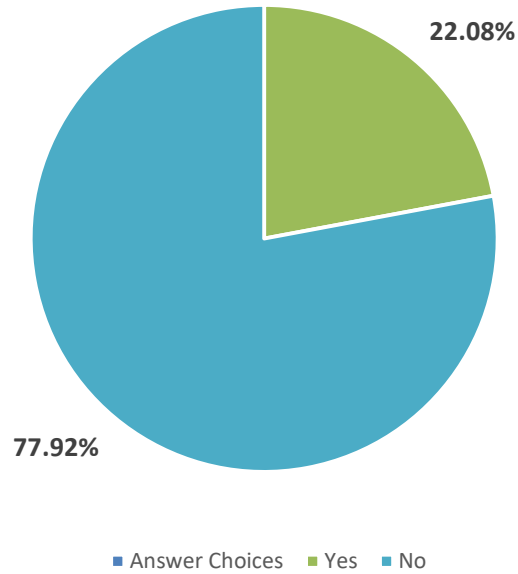
As noted in the previous question, response time was also a noted concern with the increasing impacts of traffic and island growth as part of the cause of delays.

Others noted the high cost of services and property taxes. Others questioned spending in general with specific concerns focused on administrative vehicles and the expense associated with building station(s).

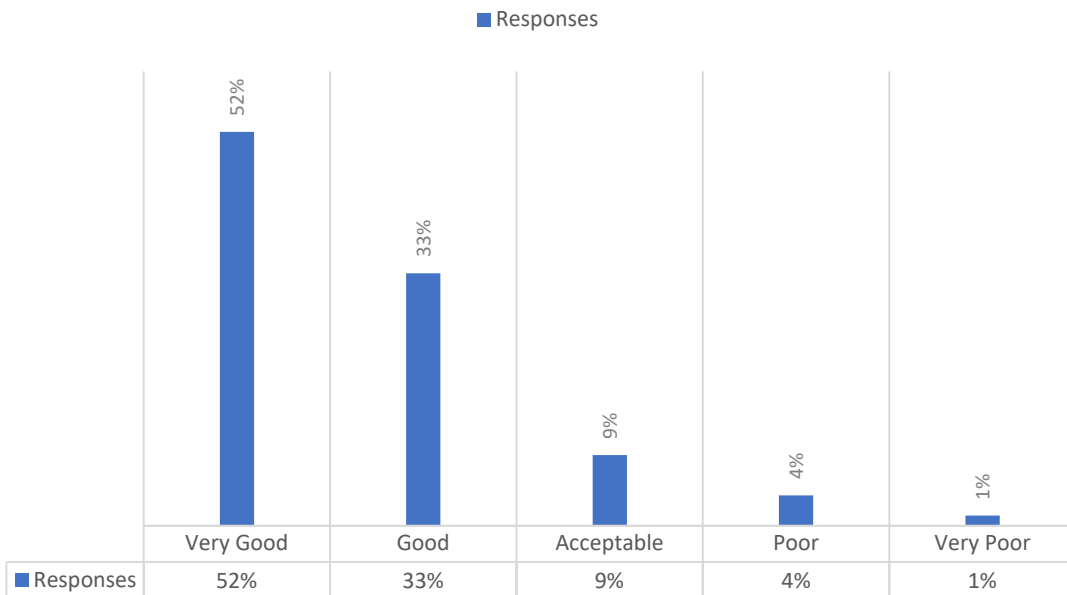
Other less frequent responses noted concern over the impact of inspections during the rebuilding process and expenses for requirements (such as dry hydrants).

Several responses did not support a merger with other fire districts, while another advocated for turning over operations to Lee County.

Q12. In the last 12 months, have you required the assistance of a member of the FMB Fire District?



Q13. How do you rate the FMB Fire District in meeting the needs of its citizens and community stakeholders?



A total of 85% of respondents rated the FMB Fire District as “Very Good” or “Good” in meeting the needs of residents and stakeholders. Four respondents, or 5% rated the District as Poor or Very Poor. In comparison, the 2021 survey showed that 82% of respondents rated the district in meeting the needs of citizens as “Very Good” or “Good”; while none in 2021 provided a poor or very poor rating.

Additional analysis shows that of the respondents that used district services in the last year, 88% rated the fire district as “Very Good” or “Good” while 6% of those that utilized the services rated the district as “Acceptable” or “Poor”.

Q14. Briefly, share any more information about the reasons for rating the FMB Fire District as you have.

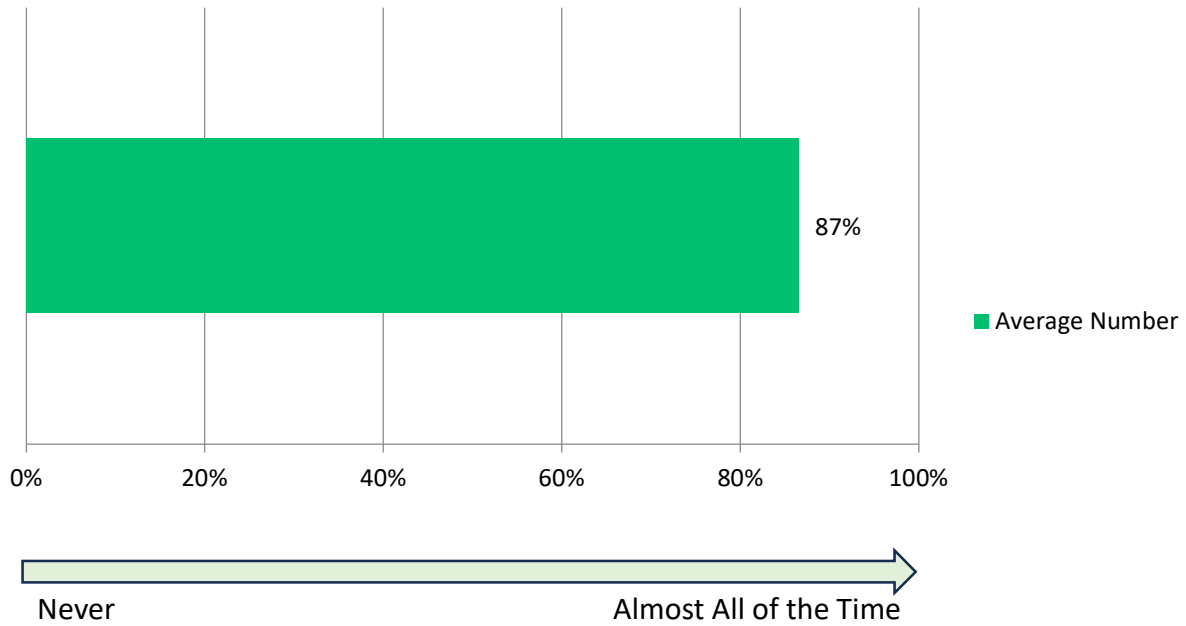
The purpose of Q14 was to better understand the rating of the fire district.

Overall, many respondents offered positive feedback regarding professionalism, competence, and personalized care, communication, and presence of staff, including inspectors and firefighters.

Some respondents noted their concerns regarding response time and transport issues off-island.

Others respondents to this question expressed concerns about expenses related to building and equipment, management of reserves, and the need for tighter budgets. There were calls to get the budget under control and use reserves more effectively, with some skepticism toward individual emergency transportation fees and their application. Others offer suggestions, such as improving training in oil spill first response, testing fire hydrants after major events, and turning operations over to Lee County. One respondent noted concern with staff retention and battalion chief controversies. At least one responded expressed concern that the survey questions were misleading.

Q15. How would you rate your perception of safety in the community as it relates to the services provided the FMB Fire District? I feel safe...



Respondents were asked to rate their perception of safety on a scale of 0 to 100, with 0 indicating that they never felt safe and 100 indicating they felt safe almost all of the time. The average response was a rating of 87%, indicating that the respondents' perception of safety leaned heavily towards feeling safe more, rather than less, of the time.

Q16: What could the FMB Fire District do to enhance your feeling of safety?

Many respondents expressed satisfaction with current safety levels and considered that there was not much more the fire district could do to increase their feeling of safety.

Several other respondents emphasized the need for better and more transparent communication across all areas of the fire department's operations.

A number of respondents offered that safety could be improved through enhanced services and infrastructure, such as more frequent fire hydrant inspections, safer walking infrastructure, and storm surge preparedness.

Concerns were offered about emergency response times, especially in high-traffic periods and in residential buildings, including the importance of staffing adjustments during peak seasons. Several participants advocated for increased community outreach, the return of programs like CERT, and more public education about fire department services.

There was notable support for maintaining independence from other districts, focusing specifically on serving the Fort Myers Beach area, and not merging with other districts. However, two respondents advocated for merging services with other fire districts or Lee County.

Additional suggestions included upgrading equipment, increasing department visibility, ensuring proper uniform and equipment provision for all staff, and opening new facilities on schedule.

Q17: Do you have anything else you would like to share that we have not captured in this survey?

Many respondents took the opportunity to thank the department for their service, professionalism, and responsiveness. Some expressed that the survey was thoughtful and offered thanks to the fire district.

However, some respondents expressed concerns about a lack of open and truthful communication. Suggestions for improvement included increasing transparency through objective public updates through social media or video outreach.

There were mixed opinions about mergers or consolidation. Some were not sure if it would offer efficiencies, while others commented on savings through economies of scale. Others questioned the need for new facilities and urged the department to use existing resources more efficiently. Concerns were raised about the cost of building new training facilities, especially compared to shared county options.

Several participants highlighted emergency response times, especially during high-traffic periods, but acknowledged that some challenges lie outside the fire department's control. One participant suggested safety improvements to improve night-time visibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

Finally, some respondents felt the survey was designed to elicit expected responses, and encouraged the inclusion of more critical, operational, and budgetary questions in future planning efforts.

Q18-Q21 Demographics survey data

Responses to these questions are reported on page 1 of this report.

Q22: Please enter any questions you may have about the Fire District or Strategic Plan.

The survey collected the following questions. Included in the question below is the response.

1. How will these responses be shared with the public?
 - a. Responses will be shared in conjunction with this strategic plan document.
2. You only provide leading questions in order to get the answers you want. How much are you getting paid by the fire department for this survey. Will the results be available to the public?
 - a. The survey cost included the design, draft, revisions, web-based tool subscription, input into web-based tool, participant recruitment and advertising, data collection, administration, analysis, and reporting. The survey costs a flat fee of \$3,000.
 - b. The survey results are publicly available.
3. No questions at this time.
 - a. Thank you for your input!
4. why no budget accountability
 - a. Without further context, it is difficult to respond to this question with specifics. However, the District's finances are publicly available through the website and at Fire Commission meetings.
5. The FMB fire district should NOT turn control over to the county!!!
 - a. Thank you for your input!
6. I think the more the FD is integrated into the community, the better off we are
 - a. Thank you for your input!
7. See above
 - a. Thank you for your input!
8. Where did the helicopter idea come from and why?
 - a. The survey was designed to offer a range of options without bias towards one option or another. The helicopter has been mentioned by previous community members and in previous focus group sessions. Some respondents offered suggestions for an emergency flight option off island during seasonal traffic.