



**Town of Leland
Fire/Rescue
Strategic Plan
2025-2029**



Table of Contents

2	Message from the Chief
3	Mission, Vision, Core Values
4	Background
6	2023 Snapshot
7	Strategic Planning Process
8	Community Survey Results
10	SWOT Analysis Results
12	Priorities
15	Index

Message from the Chief



Since the merger of the Leland Volunteer Fire/Rescue Department with the Town of Leland in 2017, Leland Fire/Rescue has grown and developed to meet our residents' expectations. The department has worked diligently to be one of the best fire departments in southeastern North Carolina, with our ever-present commitment to providing the best resources necessary for preserving life and property throughout the fire district.

To continue providing appropriate service to our residents and ensuring the wellness and satisfaction of our dedicated members, I am pleased to present you with our 2024-2029 Strategic Plan. This plan reflects our dedication to operational excellence and community safety. To further improve, we will invest in advanced training, upgrade our equipment, and strengthen our engagement with the community. These efforts will help us respond more effectively to emergencies and better serve our community.

We are guided by our mission to **Serve, Be Ready, and Create Excellent Outcomes**. By adhering to our mission and showing our commitment to focus on the priorities of this plan and the goals outlined, we will do the following:

- **Serve:** We will strengthen our community engagement and outreach programs, ensuring we are always accessible and responsive to your needs.
- **Be Ready:** Continuous training and professional development will keep our team prepared for any emergency. Upgrading our equipment and incorporating the latest technology will ensure we have the best tools available.
- **Create Excellent Outcomes:** By maintaining high standards through regular reviews, inspections, and updates to our procedures, we will deliver exceptional service and safety.

We recognize that our members are our greatest asset. Their health and well-being are essential for maintaining a motivated and effective team. We will expand our wellness programs, offer professional development opportunities, and promote a healthy work-life balance to support them. To sustain our high standards, we will continuously review and update our procedures, conduct routine inspections, and engage in ongoing training. These measures ensure we remain vigilant and dedicated to the community we serve. Together, we will build on our successes and address challenges head-on. Our community support and trust is invaluable as we strive for service excellence.

As Fire Chief, I cannot thank our community members, Town employees, and the Town Council enough for their support and commitment to excellence. Ultimately, it is our community that sustains our great department, and it is for the community that we continue our efforts to evolve and constantly improve our service.

Yours in Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ronnie Hayes', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Ronnie Hayes

Fire Chief, Leland Fire/Rescue



Mission

Serve. Be Ready. Create Excellent Outcomes.

Vision

Leland Fire/Rescue is the place of choice where motivated people can be their best. We have shared values and are fulfilled by the work we do and the excellent outcomes we create. We are engaged and dedicated in service to each other and our community, who trust us to protect their safety, resources, and quality of life.

Core Values



Dedication

Passionate belief in our mission as a fire department



Professionalism

Commitment to quality of service and pride in our work



Integrity

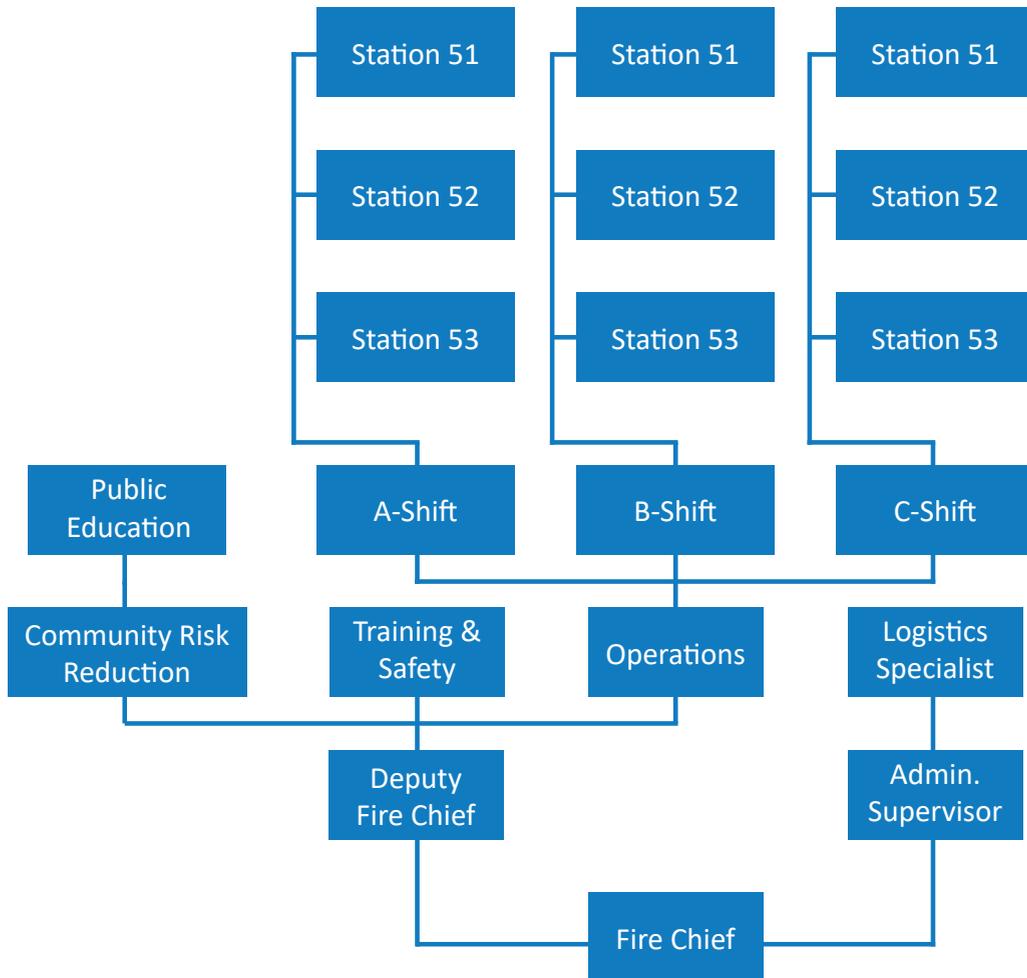
Moral and intellectual honesty

Background

The Town of Leland Fire/Rescue Department was founded in 1959 as a volunteer non-profit. In 2017, the department became part of the Town. As of July 2024, it has 50 full-time and four part-time staff across three stations, serving about 40,000 residents in Leland, Belville, and northern Brunswick County. The Operations Division has three 24-hour shifts (A, B, C), each starting at 7 a.m. and staffing three engine companies, one truck company, and a Battalion Chief. The truck company also handles a heavy rescue unit. The department offers fire suppression, basic life support, hazardous materials response, and technical rescue services.



Organizational Chart



 **Station 51**



1984 Popular Street

 **Station 52**



1379 River Road SE

 **Station 53**



187 Old Lanvale Road NE



2023 Snapshot

-  Fire District of 58 Square Miles
-  40,000 Residents
-  3,097 Incidents
-  Average Response Time of 6 Minutes 34 Seconds

Calls by Station

Station 51	935
Station 52	905
Station 53	1,254
Headquarters	3

Calls for Service

Rescue/Emergency Medical Service	1,750
Good Intent	435
False Alarm/ False Call	379
Service Call	323
Fire	118
Hazardous Conditions	75
Severe Weather/ Natural Disaster	9
Special Incident	6
Overpressure Rupture/ Explosion/Overheat (No Fire)	2

Strategic Planning Process

The Strategic Plan was developed from June 2023 to July 2024. Data collection included an internal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis of the department. To conduct a thorough SWOT analysis, each rank within the department designated groups to participate. This approach ensures that insights are gathered from diverse perspectives across different levels of the organization. Additionally, public input was solicited through an online community survey, gathering concerns, suggestions, and priorities from residents. This data was instrumental in shaping our strategic priorities for the next five years, ensuring alignment with our mission:

Serve, Be Ready, and Create Excellent Outcomes.

This Strategic Plan is intended to guide the department from 2025 to 2029.

Set Priorities

- 1 Enhance Training and Professional Development
- 2 Optimize Service Delivery
- 3 Expand Community Engagement
- 4 Strengthen Interdepartmental Communication
- 5 Enhance Employee Well-being and Satisfaction
- 6 Strengthen Internal Communications
- 7 Enhance Disaster Preparedness

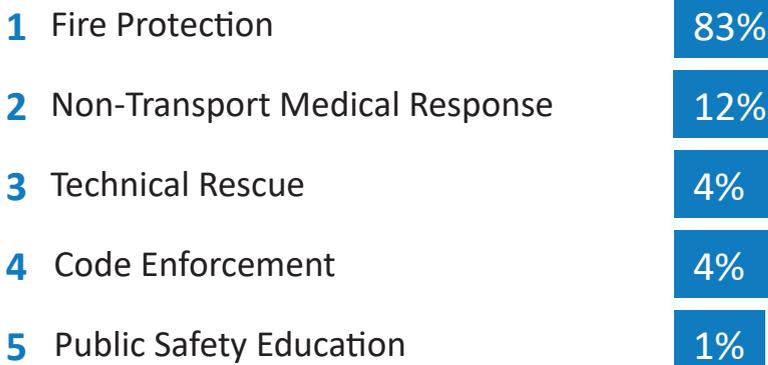
These priorities will be achieved through various objectives detailed in this plan.



Community Survey Results

Leland Fire/Rescue conducted an online survey asking respondents to prioritize the services listed below.

Service Prioritization



These percentages indicate the proportion of respondents who listed each item as their top priority.

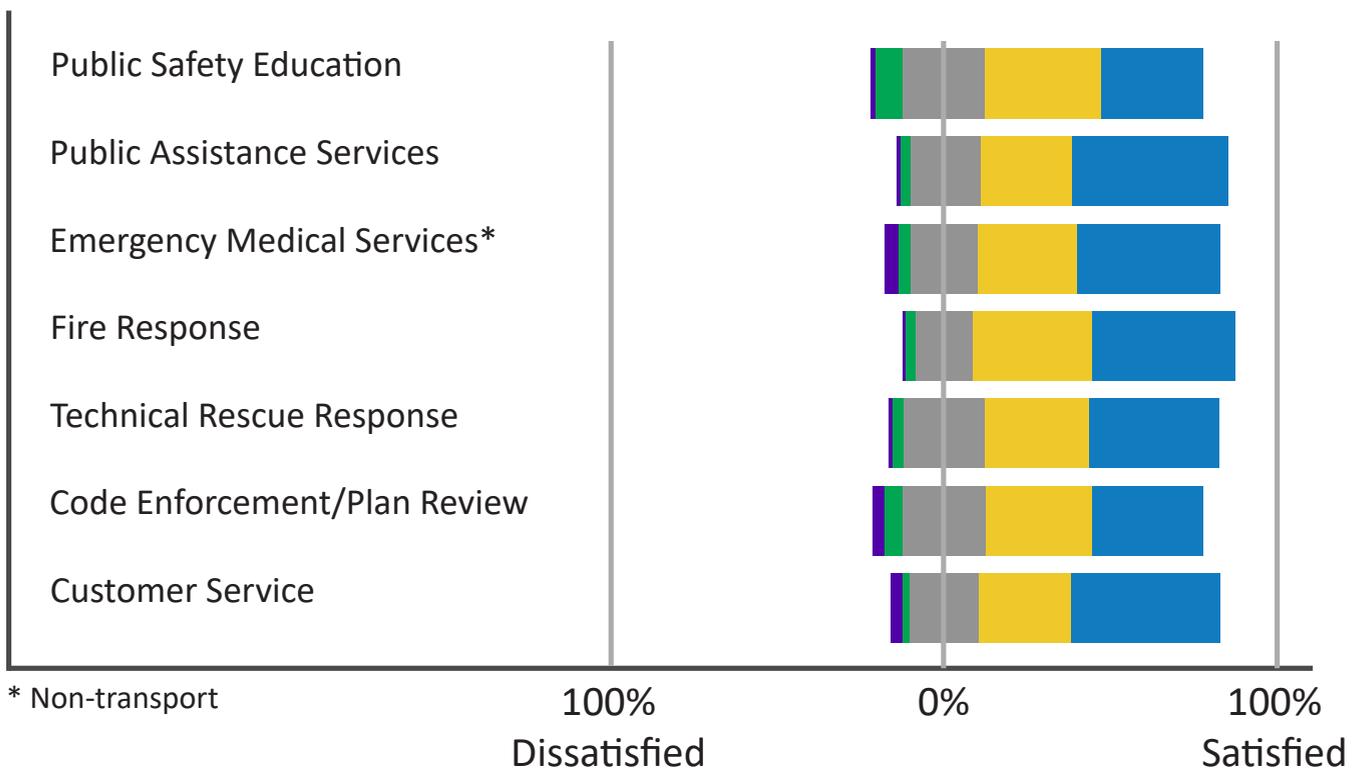
The results reveal that 83% of respondents believe fire protection should be the department's top priority, while only 1% consider public safety education to be the top priority. This data will help guide us as we move forward and incorporate public input into our strategic planning.



Respondents were also asked to share their satisfaction ratings for the various services listed below.

Service Delivery Satisfaction

■ Very Dissatisfied
 ■ Dissatisfied
 ■ Neither
 ■ Satisfied
 ■ Extremely Satisfied



- Fire response and public assistance services received the highest satisfaction ratings, highlighting our effectiveness and reliability.
- Public safety education received the lowest satisfaction ratings, indicating a need for improved outreach and education.
- Code enforcement/plan review services garnered the most neutral responses, likely due to their business related application.

SWOT Analysis Results

A SWOT analysis is a tool used to identify and evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of an organization, project, or individual. It helps organizations understand their current situation and develop strategies to improve. For Leland Fire/Rescue, the SWOT analysis helped determine what internal and external factors affect our success.

Strengths

These strengths position the department as a regional leader, attracting top talent and maintaining strong community support.

- Community Trust
- Community Outreach
- Growth/Career Advancement
- Equipment
- Pay & Benefits
- Training

Weaknesses

Recognizing weaknesses enables a department to address areas for improvement, boosting staff morale through a culture of transparency, growth, and continuous enhancement.

- Absence of Local Training Facilities
- Internal/External Communication
- Dispatch Monitoring
- Maintaining Accountability
- Facility Design
- Disaster Preparedness Equipment
- Interdepartmental Relationships
- Aging Fleet
- Staffing Minimums*

* Explanation can be found in the index on page 17.

Opportunities

Recognizing opportunities to improve allows the department to identify areas where it can innovate and refine its services, leading to heightened efficiency and effectiveness in addressing community needs.

- New Training
- Updated Community Outreach Methods
- Departmental Growth
- Pursue Grants
- Seek Accreditation
- Mutual Aid Training
- Out-of-State Training

Threats

Recognizing threats empowers the department to allocate resources to mitigate risks and bolster its resilience against potential challenges. The allocation of resources safeguards against imminent threats but also cultivates a culture of preparedness and adaptability.

- Vulnerability of Public Trust
- Lack of Organizational Culture Buy-In
- Supply Chain Delays
- Population Growth
- Delay in Updates to Dispatch Services
- Misinformation
- Disasters
- Regulation Changes

SWOT analysis results explanation can be found in the index on pages 14-16.

Priority 1:

Enhance Training and Professional Development Programs

Goal

Enhance the quality and accessibility of training for all personnel ensuring readiness and excellence.

Objectives

- Develop a comprehensive plan for access to an in-district training facility.
- Increase internal training opportunities with nationally recognized instructors.
- Secure grants to fund advanced training programs and equipment.
- Expand internal instructor cadre.
- Expand diversity of training opportunities.

Priority 2:

Optimize Service Delivery

Goal

Enhance efficiency and effectiveness of emergency response and community services.

Objectives

- Identify and secure land for the construction of Station 55.
- Work closely with dispatch to improve dispatch response times and ensure effective run cards.
- Invest in essential disaster response equipment.
- Work towards NFPA 1710 staffing standards.



Priority 3:

Expand Community Engagement

Goal

Diversify and enhance methods of community engagement to foster trust and transparency.

Objectives

- Develop a Community Risk Reduction Plan that outlines community outreach programs and leverages digital platforms.
- Enhance public transparency and communication to build and maintain trust.
- Increase hands-only CPR and fire safety education program delivery.

Priority 4:

Strengthen Collaboration with Town Departments and Other Agencies

Goal

Foster collaboration with other Town departments and neighboring agencies, enhancing professionalism, teamwork, and service delivery.

Objectives

- Conduct regular joint training exercises with neighboring departments.
- Organize workshops to collaborate with other Town departments.
- Ensure mutual aid agreements stay current and explore new agreement opportunities.



Priority 5:

Enhance Employee Well-being and Satisfaction

Goal

Promote well-being, job satisfaction, and morale of department personnel.

Objectives

- Conduct regular surveys to gather employee feedback and address concerns.
- Include feedback from all staff when constructing new facilities.
- Continue to work with Human Resources to ensure competitive benefits are provided to staff.
- Implement modern programs focused on mental health and wellness.

Priority 6:

Strengthen Internal Communications

Goal

Improve communication channels within the department, ensuring readiness and fostering a culture of inclusiveness.

Objectives

- Review and upgrade current communication channels for better information flow.
- Establish regular meetings and briefings to ensure all personnel are informed and engaged.
- Create a feedback loop for continuous improvement of communication practices.



Priority 7:

Enhance Disaster Preparedness

Goal 7

Improve the department's capability to respond effectively to disasters.

Objectives

- Work with Emergency Management to develop comprehensive disaster preparedness plans and conduct regular drills.
- Invest in essential disaster response equipment and training.
- Establish dedicated Swift Water Rescue Teams and improve on their capabilities.

Trusted Information Sources



Town of Leland



Leland Fire/Rescue



Town of Leland



Leland Fire/Rescue



Town of Leland



Town of Leland



townofleland.com/fire

Emergency

911

Non-Emergency

(910) 371-2727



Index

ISO Rating

The ISO rating recognizes a community's efforts to provide fire protection services for residents and property owners. The rating is used to help set insurance rates. The Insurance Services Office (ISO) fire rating system ranges from one (best) to 10 (not recognized as a certified fire department by the state). According to the Office of the State Fire Marshal, lower ratings suggest a department is overall better equipped to respond to fires in its district.

In 2024, the Leland Fire District received a class 2 rating. Of more than 1,500 fire districts in North Carolina, only 118 are class 2 or better, putting the Leland Fire District in the state's top 8%.

SWOT Findings Explained

Strengths

Equipment:

Well-maintained and up-to-date equipment ensures operational efficiency and safety. Investment in modern technology and tools supports effective emergency response.

Community Trust:

Strong community involvement and visibility contribute to public trust and support. Consistent delivery of high-quality services reinforces positive community perception.

Pay and Benefits:

Competitive compensation packages attract and retain skilled personnel. Comprehensive benefits enhance job satisfaction and employee well-being.

Growth/Career Advancement:

Opportunities for career growth in one of the fastest-growing communities in the country. Support for professional development and advancement within the department.

Internal Training Opportunities:

High-quality training programs with nationally recognized speakers. Access to various training facilities, including live burn training. Strong training budget supporting continuous professional development.

Community Outreach:

Extensive CPR training provided to residents, enhancing public safety. Regular presence in schools, fostering early fire safety education. Active engagement in community events, building strong community relationships.

Recruitment:

Higher application numbers compared to surrounding departments, indicating a desirable workplace. Competitive pay attracting top talent.

Weaknesses

Lack of a Training Facility in District:

Limited on-site training resources necessitate reliance on external facilities, which impacts scheduling and availability. Performance issues are harder to address promptly due to limited access to immediate, hands-on training resources. The absence of a local training facility restricts opportunities for continuous skill development and practice. On-site training centers allow for tailored training programs that directly address the team's specific needs and performance gaps.

Communication Channels:

Current communication systems may benefit from enhancements to improve clarity and efficiency in information dissemination.

Dispatch Not Monitoring Tac Channels:

Lack of continuous monitoring of tactical channels by dispatch can affect situational awareness during emergencies.

Disaster Preparedness Equipment:

Absence of essential equipment, such as a 5-ton vehicle, may limit disaster response capabilities.

Collaboration with Other Town Departments:

Opportunities exist to improve interdepartmental collaboration, which can enhance overall service delivery and efficiency.

Educational Opportunities to Learn About Other Departments:

Increased exposure to the operations of other departments could foster greater understanding and cooperation.

Staff Input for Facility Design:

Incorporating more input from staff in facility design could ensure that features such as showers, bathrooms, and floor drains meet operational needs effectively.

Weaknesses Continued

Out-of-State Training Opportunities:

Limited access to out-of-state training opportunities may restrict exposure to diverse firefighting techniques and strategies.

Aging Fleet:

Upgrading older vehicles is essential to maintaining reliable and efficient emergency response capabilities.

NFPA 1710 Compliance Minimum Staffing:

Ensuring compliance with NFPA 1710 staffing standards: Minimum four personnel on engine and truck companies.

Accountability and Ownership:

Strengthening accountability and ownership among team members can enhance overall performance and responsibility.

Opportunities

New and Improved Training:

The potential to develop a state-of-the-art training facility within the district.

Incorporating cutting-edge training methods and technologies to enhance firefighter skills and preparedness.

Increase Community Outreach Methods:

Expanding existing outreach programs to include new methods and technologies for greater community engagement.

Utilizing social media and other digital platforms to reach a broader audience and provide fire safety education.

Growth as an Opportunity:

Leveraging the rapid growth of the community to expand and improve fire services.

Increased funding and resources to support the department's expansion and modernization efforts.

Grants:

Actively pursuing grants to secure additional funding for equipment, training, and facility improvements.

Utilizing grant opportunities to enhance disaster preparedness and response capabilities.

Accreditation:

Seeking accreditation to validate the department's commitment to excellence and continuous improvement.

Accreditation can lead to improved operational standards and increased community trust.

Mutual Aid Training:

Enhancing partnerships with neighboring departments through joint training exercises.

Building stronger mutual aid agreements to improve regional emergency response capabilities.

Out-of-State Training:

Expanding opportunities for firefighters to attend out-of-state training programs.

Exposure to diverse firefighting techniques and strategies can enhance overall skill sets and knowledge base.

Threats

Public Trust Vulnerability:

Any incident or miscommunication can quickly erode public trust, impacting the department's reputation and community support.

Maintaining transparency and consistent communication is essential to preserve and strengthen public trust.

Disasters:

Natural or man-made disasters pose significant challenges and can strain resources and personnel.

Ensuring robust disaster preparedness plans and adequate equipment is critical to effectively manage such threats.

Regulation Changes:

Changes in fire service regulations and standards can require rapid adaptation, potentially leading to operational and financial strain.

Staying informed and proactively preparing for regulatory changes can mitigate these impacts.

Rumors:

Unverified information and rumors can create confusion and undermine morale within the department and community.

Clear and timely communication is vital to dispel rumors and maintain a positive and informed environment.

Growth:

Rapid community growth can outpace the department's capacity to provide services, leading to potential gaps in coverage and response times.

Proactive planning and resource allocation are necessary to keep up with the growing demands.

Supply Chain Issues:

Delays or disruptions in the supply chain can affect the availability of essential equipment and materials.

Developing contingency plans and maintaining strong supplier relationships can help manage these risks.

Buy-In/Culture:

Ensuring buy-in from all team members is crucial for implementing new initiatives and maintaining a positive organizational culture.

Continuous engagement and fostering a sense of ownership and accountability can enhance buy-in and cultural cohesion.

Dispatch Updates:

Outdated or inadequate dispatch systems can affect operational efficiency and personnel safety during emergencies.

Regular updates and investment in modern dispatch technology are essential to maintain effective communication and response capabilities.



Town of
Leland