

FREDERICK COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES

CURRENT CONDITIONS

As residential and commercial developments continue to locate and expand in Frederick County, there will be an increased need for emergency services to provide services to protect the citizens and transient population. Emergency services are provided by The Frederick County Fire and Rescue Department, The Sheriff's Office, and the Department of Public Safety Communications. These three departments are located at the Frederick County Public Safety Center.

The goal of the fire and rescue system is to provide the most efficient fire and rescue services Countywide. Responses include, but are not limited to, emergency medical services, fire suppression, rescue, hazardous-materials, special services and emergency management. The Department is made up of the Operations Division, Training Division, Fire and Life Safety Division, Emergency Management Division, and the Fire Marshal's Office.

The Fire and Rescue Department consists of eleven volunteer fire and rescue companies. The Department has career personnel assigned to all eleven stations, which are staffed 24 hours a day. Volunteer personnel staff their stations when available.

FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

Future challenges for the Fire and Rescue Department include developing additional fire and rescue stations to meet future growth within the County and keeping up with the staffing needs to continue to provide quality and timely service.

Planning for future fire and rescue station locations and equipment needs must be accomplished by developing a five-year strategic plan. This plan will identify future fire and rescue station sites and equipment needs based on projected service demands and response times. The plan will encourage the dedication of sites for new fire and rescue stations within the identified areas during the rezoning process.

Non-residential areas such as retail, office, and industrial areas require increased fire protection because specialized equipment is necessary to ensure safety for these land uses. Other land uses identified as target hazards continue to grow. These include land uses such as schools, nursing homes, daycare centers, and industrial facilities. These land uses have a higher risk of injury due to the specific demographics of person utilizing these facilities.

Existing road conditions, primarily those with gravel or dirt surfaces and horizontal and vertical curvatures, located outside of the county's Urban Development Area (UDA) create longer response times. The greatest factor contributing to the need for new fire and rescue stations is the rapid population growth and increases in dwelling units within the County.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

The development of new fire and rescue stations could provide an opportunity to extend satellite services provided by other County Departments and agencies. Allocation of space could be created within new fire and rescue stations for community services provided by the Sheriff's Office, the Treasurer's Office, the Voter Registrar's Office, and the Commission of the Revenue's Office, to provide the residents of Frederick County more accessible options for government services. Locations for future facilities are encouraged within the UDA and Rural Community Centers.

GOALS/STRATEGIES

GOAL: WHEN PLANNING NEW FACILITIES, CONSIDER SITE LOCATION, SITE SUITABILITY, BUILDING DESIGN, AND CONSTRUCTION TIMING.

STRATEGIES:

- Co-locate fire and rescue stations with other County facilities and agencies for maximum efficiency.
- Construct fire and rescue stations at strategic locations throughout the County to help achieve desired response times to all emergency calls and increase the level of service. Locate fire and rescue stations with easy access to a major arterial or at an intersection of two major arteries to gain both east-west and north-south access.
- Locate fire and rescue stations on sites of between two and five acres to allow for future expansion. Sites may be smaller when developed as part of a Neighborhood Design in an Urban Center or Neighborhood Village.
- Select and design sites to minimize the adverse impact of sirens and other noise on residential areas.
- Investigate the need for a Regional Public Safety Training Center as the demands for public safety related training increase and existing facilities age.
- Continue working towards replacing the County's public safety communication system.