

February 7, 2012

# LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT



BRIAN L. CUMMINGS  
FIRE CHIEF

January 17, 2012

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
FILE NO. 12-017

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners

FROM: Brian L. Cummings, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: ENVISION OUR LAFD – STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

FOR INFORMATION ONLY:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved w/Corrections	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied	<input type="checkbox"/> Received & Filed	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

## For Information Only

On January 17, 2012 the Board of Fire Commissioners requested a status report on the "Envision Our LAFD" Strategic Planning Process.

Attached for your review, is a report prepared by Dr. Pat Lynch that provides an overview and the current status of the process.

Board report prepared by Michelle Banks, Firefighter/Lead Paramedic, Office of the Fire Chief.

## Attachment

*Envision Our LAFD – Strategic Planning Process*

## **Fire Commission Report: Strategic Planning Process Envision Our LAFD**

### **Background**

Strategic planning typically is done by the chief executive and a handful of top leaders of an organization, who hand the completed plan over to subordinates to implement. However, the Fire Chief has decided to take a more participative approach that is more in keeping with the Department's inclusive culture. Using an appreciative inquiry framework, the Department has embarked on an innovative strategic planning process that provides an opportunity for all members and interested non-members who wish to be heard to step up and contribute to the conversation about how the Department will achieve its mission and vision in the coming years. The results of those conversations will provide the foundation for the strategic plan.

A strategic plan is an integral part of the succession process. A fully implemented succession process ensures that there are qualified individuals prepared to step into positions throughout the Department as vacancies arise. The LAFD strategic plan will provide the framework within which succession-related decisions are made to achieve the Department's mission and goals.

### **Envision Our LAFD**

The theme of the Department's strategic planning process is "Envision Our LAFD." The word "envision" indicates that the process begins by having people create a picture of what they want the Department to look like as it works toward achieving its mission and vision. We then develop a strategy that supports this collective "picture" by building on the Department's strengths. The word "our" is meant to emphasize that the Department cannot achieve its mission and vision alone; we need the support of those we serve and those who partner and work with us. It also highlights the fact that now is the time for those who have a stake in public safety to step forward and be heard.

Envision Our LAFD is designed to identify and understand the distinctive values, practices, skills, and talents that together create our organizational vitality and enable the Department to be at its best. Those who participate in this process will help us identify the core factors that give the Department life by examining situations in which we have been at our best. We will bring our positive past with us as we move into the future.

Please note that the Department's strategy will be built around its existing mission, values, and Operating Principles as well as the Fire Chief's vision of becoming the premier world-class all-risk life safety service provider in the region, the country, and then the world. We are *not* replacing any of those existing components; rather they are the foundation on which the strategy will be built.

### **Process and Methodology**

Envision Our LAFD begins with a series of conversations. Using a structured interview process, seventeen Department members who have been trained as facilitators ("Facilitators") will conduct one-hour interviews with members who volunteer to be part of the conversation about the Department's future. All interviews will be conducted during normal work hours; no V-hours are assigned for this project. The intention is to have conversations with a representative sample of Department sworn and civilian members. Given current staffing levels and recognizing that resource constraints may cause us to

fall short of our ideal of reaching 10% of our members, we would like to hear from about 360 members. The Fire Chief has invited all members who wish to participate in Envision Our LAFD to indicate their interest by sending an e-mail to the Planning Section with their contact information so a Facilitator can schedule an appointment with them no later than February 23, 2012.

To ensure representativeness, Facilitators are noting three characteristics: participants' rank or level, years on the job, and work location. Members who choose to participate in Envision Our LAFD are assured that while their stories will be heard, their feedback will be kept confidential. We are interested in what participants have to say, not in knowing which person said what. An outside consultant is monitoring the three characteristics for purposes of meeting our representativeness goal. Identifying information will be removed before anyone other than the Facilitator and the consultant sees the information.

In addition to hearing from Department members, the Fire Chief is inviting non-Department employees to participate in the Envision Our LAFD conversation, such as the Fire Commissioners, the Mayor, the City Council, Mayoral and Council staff, healthcare providers, volunteers, General Managers of City departments, Department partners, and members of the public. As is the case with Department members, all participation is strictly voluntary. Conversations with non-Department individuals will take the form of one-on-one interviews or focus groups conducted by an outside consultant.

Envision Our LAFD participants will be asked questions to help identify the Department's strengths in four areas that it must address as it moves into the future:

1. Adding value to customers' experiences
2. Engaging in positive change efforts
3. Participating in an exceptional team
4. Establishing the Department's core values as organizational norms

Following completion of the interviews, the Facilitators will meet to make sense of the data and identify some preliminary themes and strengths, then discuss those preliminary findings with the Fire Chief and the Strategic Planning Leadership Team. They also will design a one-day Department-wide Envision Our LAFD Summit to which all Department members and non-Department individuals who participate in the interviews will be invited. Following a day of discussion of the findings and additional interviews, the Fire Chief will have a prioritized list of Department strengths that will be incorporated into the strategy. The strategy will be completed by the end of May, 2012.

#### **Envision Our LAFD Facilitators**

The facilitators represent a cross-section of Department members who volunteered to participate in Envision Our LAFD by listening to the ideas and experiences of other members. They all participated in a one-day Facilitator training session in December. Their role is critical to the succession of the strategic planning process: to solicit members' input and report it accurately and completely to the Fire Chief. The Department would like to recognize these individuals and express its appreciation for the time and effort they have provided in stepping forward to play a key role in this process. These are the Envision Our LAFD Facilitators:

Zina Abram  
Greg Apodaca

James Patrick Hayden  
Hector Hernandez

Jeffrey Rickey  
Orin Saunders

John Cardenas	Percy Jones	Laura Triner
Kristin Crowley	Christopher Kuzmich	Darnell Wade
Dale Drummond	Steve Meiche	Steven Wynne
Ellsworth Fortman	John Potter	

### **Strategic Planning Leadership Team**

The roles of the Strategic Planning Leadership Team are to (1) be active advocates for Envision Our LAFD, (2) facilitate a small number of conversations, (3) listen to members' feedback, and (4) help the Fire Chief incorporate that information into the strategic plan. These are the current members of the Strategic Planning Leadership Team; there may be one or two additions as we move forward:

Michelle Banks	Bill Jones	Mark Stormes
Rosemarie Barraza	Allen Norman	Stacy Taylor
Roxanne Bercik	Daren Palacios	Ronnie Villanueva
Ron Corona	Gregory Reynar	Wade White
John Drake	Trevor Richmond	David Yamahata
David Frelinger	Corey Rose	John Vidovich
Paul Hayashida	Mario Rueda	
Chuong Ho	Kurt Sato	

### **Timeline and Important Dates**

Facilitator and Leadership Team Training	December 2011 and January 2012
Conversations	December 16, 2011 - February 23, 2012
Facilitator Debrief and Summit Design	March 6-8 and April 10, 2012
Envision Our LAFD Summit	April 11, 2012
Strategy Development	April 12-May 31, 2012