



# STRATEGIC PLAN

OFFICE OF  
EMERGENCY SERVICES

2023-2028



# Table of Contents

**INTRODUCTION** .....4

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT .....6

STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS .....6

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE .....7

MAJOR THEMES .....7

**CORE VALUES and GUIDING PRINCIPLES** .....8

OES CORE VALUES .....8

OES GUIDING PRINCIPLES.....10

**DIAMONDS AND STONES: SWOT ANALYSIS** .....13

**OES VISION AND DIVISION MISSION STATEMENTS** .....14

VISION STATEMENT .....14

MISSION STATEMENTS.....14

**GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES**.....15

OES GOAL 1 .....16

OES GOAL 2 .....17

OES GOAL 3 .....19

OES GOAL 4 .....20

OES GOAL 5 .....22

OES GOAL 6 .....24

OES GOAL 7 .....26

**IMPLEMENTATION AND MEASUREMENT**.....28

**PLAN MAINTENANCE**.....28

**CONCLUSION**.....29





# INTRODUCTION FROM THE DIRECTOR

## Durham County OES Strategic Plan 2023–2028:

Fostering resilience, innovation,  
and collaboration for a  
responsive and well-aligned  
future with stakeholders and the  
public.



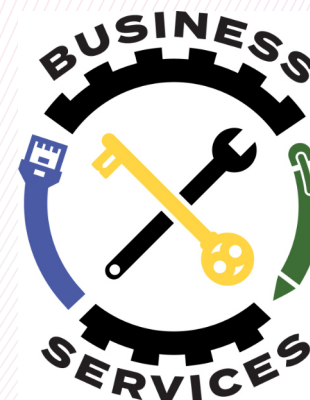
**Jim Groves**  
Office of Emergency Services

It is my distinct privilege to introduce the Durham County Office of Emergency Services (OES) Strategic Plan 2023-2028. It was developed as a collaborative effort among a team of OES volunteers from each Division of the Department and would not have been possible without the Strategic Planning Team's tireless efforts balancing their day-to-day obligations with the added responsibility of developing this plan. To the Planning Team, please accept my sincere admiration and appreciation for your hard work.

On March 1, 2020, the County Manager joined the County's Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Emergency Management, and Fire Marshal functions into the Office of Emergency Services (OES) and as part of the consolidation these functions, a Business Services Division was implemented to effectively

manage the new Department's budget, finance, contract, and logistical functions. OES was envisioned as part of the County's Managing For Results (MFR) process that reviews programs and services objectively for government performance, change, and accountability.

By definition, a strategic plan aligns a department's operations and budget structure with organizational priorities. This Strategic Plan does not describe how the department will respond to an emergency or disaster, but rather focuses effort on strategic approaches so that OES will be better prepared to prevent, prepare, respond, mitigate, and recover from emergent incidents and disasters. The goal of this effort is to develop resiliency and stability within OES by providing a road map to a desired end state that incorporates coordinated thought, insight, planning, and structure.



Effective implementation of the Strategic Plan will enable OES to move forward by forming stronger bonds of collaboration between each Division, our stakeholders, and the public we serve. At its core, the Strategic Plan documents the way toward building on program strengths, focuses on areas for improvement, and acts as a nexus for OES sustainability, innovation, and resilience.

To guide the development of OES Strategic Plan, a Strategic Planning Team of 12-15 members solicited input from the entire OES team at all levels of the organization, as well as community stakeholders. The Team sent out surveys, conducted a SWOT and Diamonds and Stones analysis, collected and synthesized data, identified major themes, and created this inaugural Strategic Plan. It is designed as a short, mid, and long-term guide that will assist the

OES team in directing programmatic efforts within each Division to assign tasks, monitor progress, ensure accountability, and effectively allocate departmental resources over the next five (5) years. The OES Strategic Plan has been developed in support of the Durham County Strategic Plan and the City of Durham Strategic Plan.

Please take a few moments to read through our Plan. We view it as a living and dynamic document that will be updated based on continuous evaluation of our progress. I hope you enjoy the read.

Sincerely,  
**Jim Groves**



# OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

# STRATEGIC PLAN | 2023 - 2028

## CORE VALUES



INTEGRITY  
& HONESTY



RESPECT



COMPETENCY  
& KNOWLEDGE



OPEN  
COMMUNICATION



COMPASSION  
& EMPATHY

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Accountability



Stewardship



Engagement



Flexible



Preparation



Safety



Results



Teamwork



Empowerment

## STRATEGIC GOALS

### GOAL 1

Enhance Leadership Skills & Professional Growth

Develop and implement comprehensive leadership training to foster growth and professionalism



Develop emotional intelligence training  
Implement leadership development tools  
Establish mentoring programs

#### KEY METRICS

Number of staff enrolled in leadership programs  
Feedback on leadership training programs

### GOAL 2

Develop Career Progression & Operational Efficiency

Establish a progression framework to facilitate growth and enhance operational efficiency



Create division specific career paths  
Implement multi-modal training methodologies  
Develop cross-division training for resilience

#### KEY METRICS

Number of staff progressed in their careers  
Feedback on division-specific training

### GOAL 3

Recruit, Retain, & Diversify Team

Design and execute strategies to attract, retain, and diversify a highly competent team



Establish a coordinated recruiting program  
Develop job shadowing and ride along programs  
Gain insights on staff retention

#### KEY METRICS

Number of staff enrolled in leadership programs  
Feedback on leadership training programs

### GOAL 4

Foster Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Morale

Create a supportive environment emphasizing diversity, equity, inclusion, and positive morale



Incorporate DEI into all functions  
Develop equitable compensation initiatives  
Improve mental health resources

#### KEY METRICS

Team member satisfaction levels  
DEI training participation rates

### GOAL 5

Upgrade Fleet, Facilities & Tech

Enhance the department's resources via budget and capital improvement planning



Build new facilities as per CIP  
Follow fleet replacement schedule  
Implement new tech to enhance operations

#### KEY METRICS

Number of new facilities built  
Number of upgraded tech implemented

### GOAL 6

Update Policies & COOP Planning

Develop comprehensive policies, procedures, and continuity plans reflecting departmental functions



Develop decision review process  
Standardize SOPs/SOGs  
Develop a department-specific COOP

#### KEY METRICS

Number of SOPs/SOGs updated  
COOP exercise completion rates

### GOAL 7

Implement Community Risk Reduction

Develop a comprehensive Community Risk Reduction program



Foster organizational and community equity  
Create a Community Risk Reduction Coalition  
Evaluate community's risk and develop an implementation plan

#### KEY METRICS

Number of risk reduction initiatives implemented  
Feedback from the community on risk reduction efforts



# PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT



Our performance management process is a systems approach to governmental performance, change, and accountability that helps the organization plan strategically and operationally, budget for the outcomes it desires, manage service delivery to achieve those outcomes and evaluate continuously to learn, tweak, and improve. Performance management and the OES Strategic Plan are truly linked. Our performance measures are the “engine” under the hood moving the organization forward, and the Strategic Plan is the “road map” crafted by OES leadership to move the Department in the right direction. The [DCo Data Transparency Portal](#) provides data collected for all DCo Strategic Plan objectives.

The Office of Emergency Services (OES) Department is an integral part of the **DCo Strategic Plan's Goal 3: Partner with stakeholders to prevent and address unsafe conditions, protect life and property, respond to emergencies, and ensure accessible and fair justice.** The OES Strategic Plan goals, objectives, and strategies have been developed to correlate with Durham County's Strategic Plan.

## STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Volunteers were solicited and accepted from the four divisions within OES. All levels and participants were welcomed. Meetings commenced on Wednesday September 15, 2021 and were held on Thursdays with an attempt to meet biweekly. The committee agreed to work under the guiding principles outlined in the OES Ethos document and with specific importance placed on diversity, equity, and inclusion. They further concurred that for the purposes of this committee, all members would hold equal accountability and influence, regardless of position or title.

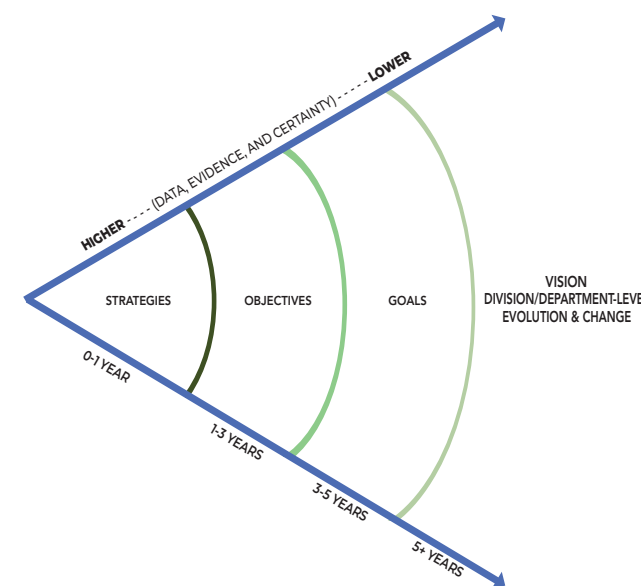
The initial steps were to research and return with reports of the strategic plans of our stakeholders, the larger county organization, and examples from other

entities. This allowed the committee to align their plan with other entities and to gain insight and garner ideas of content and areas of inclusion for this working group to consider. The team then moved on the creation of the 5-year vision statement and identifying the strengths and areas for improvement for the organization. A diamonds and stones survey and SWOT analysis was sent to all members within OES to garner a clear understanding of the issues that need to be addressed in the plan. The results were compiled, and themes were identified. The results were further analyzed to identify clear goals, objectives, and strategies within those themes.

## STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

As with any strategic plan, it takes time to implement and even years to realize the results of the plan. Strategies are initially developed and initiated, and eventually the completion of multiple strategies achieves an objective. The completion of multiple objectives achieves the goal. With the achievement of multiple goals, the Vision is realized where real change has occurred. At least that is our planning assumption.

The OES Strategic Plan is a 5-year plan for 2023-2028. Data, evidence, and certainty are high in the strategy phase; however, it takes time to understand if those strategies will be effective. The graph below shows that projecting the data, collecting evidence, and being certain that the strategies will work takes years to understand. So, our planning assumption certainty is high in the strategy phase that the current data and evidence we propose will work. As



we continue to collect data and evidence as part of the Strategic Plan implementation, our certainty about the effectiveness of the strategy becomes lower when projected out over several years through the objective and goal phases because we just don't know what the data will tell us yet.

## MAJOR THEMES

As with any strategic plan, it takes time to implement and even years to realize the results of the plan. Strategies are initially developed and initiated, and eventually the completion of multiple strategies achieves an objective. The completion of multiple objectives achieves the goal. With the achievement of multiple goals, the Vision is realized where real change has occurred. At least that is our planning assumption.

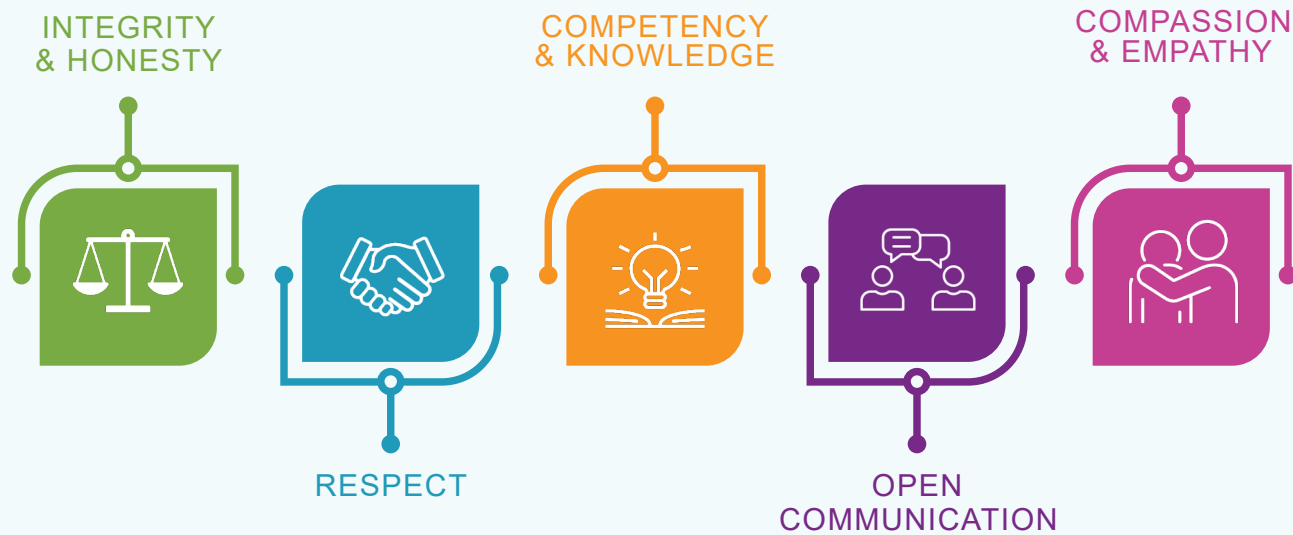
The OES Strategic Plan is a 5-year plan for 2023-2028. Data, evidence, and certainty are high in the strategy phase; however, it takes time to understand if those strategies will be effective. The graph below shows that projecting the data, collecting evidence, and being certain that the strategies will work takes years to understand. So, our planning assumption certainty is high in the strategy phase that the current data and evidence we propose will work. As we continue to collect data and evidence as part of the Strategic Plan implementation, our certainty about the effectiveness of the strategy becomes lower when projected out over several years through the objective and goal phases because we just don't know what the data will tell us yet.



# CORE VALUES & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Core Values and Guiding Principles are further defined in the OES Department's Ethos document, which will become a significant part of our new culture.

## OES CORE VALUES



### INTEGRITY & HONESTY

Integrity requires honesty. We communicate with each other, our customers, and our stakeholders in a truthful and meaningful way. Being honest is not being rude, accusatory, or malicious. If we cannot be honest with each other in a respectful and compassionate way, then we will not be able to effectively communicate with each other.

As individuals and as a collective Department, we recognize that integrity and honesty is our most valuable attribute. We are obligated as public servants to be transparent in our actions, conduct ourselves ethically and morally, and maintain the highest standards of conduct while on duty and off duty. We work diligently to establish productive relationships with our customers and stakeholders by earning their trust and always being there for them, especially when they need us the most. Integrity builds trust, trust builds honesty, and trust is not a right that is given, it must be earned.



### RESPECT

Respect is the practice of acknowledging the value of our team members and the customers and stakeholders that we serve. We welcome diversity of thought, opinion, and background. We are committed to treating our customers and stakeholders with fairness and dignity. We do this because it is the right thing to do, and it develops and maintains collaborative relationships. We are committed to understanding the unique sensitivities of diverse groups and members of our community and responding appropriately by treating everyone without intentional bias or preference.



### COMPETENCY & KNOWLEDGE

Competency and knowledge are the skills, abilities, and behaviors that each of us must have to successfully perform our work role. Every member of OES must be masters of their craft, and OES will provide the resources, training, and experiences to our team members to enable them to be the very best that they can be. As individuals we strive to be the very best that we can be and work to make ourselves better every day. As a group of individuals that share our education and experiences with each other, we become a competent and knowledgeable team that provides enhanced and innovative services to our customers and stakeholders.



### OPEN COMMUNICATION

Information is shared frequently and transparently from all levels of OES. All team members are encouraged and empowered to express ideas, share their thoughts, and provide feedback to each other at all levels of the OES department without fear of retaliation.



### COMPASSION & EMPATHY

Compassion and empathy are the expression of our care for others. They are essential qualities that must be embodied in our planning, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. We focus on the needs of all members of our community, especially those who may have special functional needs requirements and those who have become most disadvantaged by the emergency or disaster. Our primary responsibility is to support our customers and, caring for those affected by any emergency or disaster fairly, with patience and understanding.



# OES GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## Core Values



Integrity & Honesty



Respect



Competency & Knowledge



Open Communication



Compassion & Empathy

## Guiding Principles



Accountability



Stewardship



Engagement



Flexible



Preparation



Safety



Results Oriented



Teamwork



Empowerment



## PREPARATION

Preparation is the key to achieving our vision. One of the most important preparation tasks that we continually engage in is the process of planning. We are committed to the planning process while ensuring that our plans are plausible, actionable, and grounded in reality. When developing plans, we solicit and incorporate input from our customers and stakeholders.

Our plans account for the various elements of Durham County's population and focus on equity and integrating the functional needs of all community members, not just the average community member. Our plans are flexible and readily adaptable to the situation at hand. We plan for events that exceed our capabilities so that we, and our community, are always prepared.



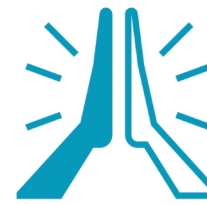
## SAFETY

Safety is our top priority, and every team member is empowered and encouraged to speak up if they have any safety concern. We will maintain and strengthen our culture of safety by providing the best equipment and technology to our team, through continuous learning, and through innovation to remove or control hazards. We will work together as ONE TEAM to ensure the physical and emotional safety of our team members, partners, stakeholders, and the public we serve.



## TEAMWORK

Within OES, our success is dependent on interdisciplinary, intergovernmental, and inter-agency collaboration, coordination, and cooperation. Understanding that disasters and major emergencies may be too complex for any single agency to handle, we are prepared to lead and embrace teamwork among all of our stakeholders, as well as those stakeholders outside of our county lines. We work hard to maintain and strengthen our relationship with these stakeholders by approaching our work with a ONE TEAM mindset, and pursuing every opportunity to identify, enable, and foster highly collaborative relationships.



## ENGAGEMENT

Informed stakeholders make better response and recovery partners; they make better choices for themselves, their organizations, and our community. The process of engagement enables us to develop and/or participate in highly functional teams that are needed to accomplish our vision.

We clearly and openly communicate and share the essential elements of our situational awareness to our leadership and our stakeholders to form a common operating picture. Not only are we on the same sheet of music, but we are also on the same note as we plan, train, exercise, respond, and recover as a community. Effective engagement means that we will respect and value the capabilities of our staff and stakeholders. We seek new opportunities and innovative ways to include our teammates and emergency service partners in critical decision-making processes. We also actively engage with our community of residents, visitors, and co-workers. A simple "how might I help you?" or "how are you today?" or "how are we doing?" goes a long way to help us engage our whole community.



## EMPOWERMENT

The nature of our responsibilities necessitates that we lean forward and are always prepared to make informed decisions and take decisive action. Each team member is empowered to take actions and make decisions that are in line with our Core Values and Guiding Principles. This Guiding Principle reflects the understanding that each team member in our department plays a critical role in reaching our vision.

Empowerment is achieved when those closest to the need make informed decisions and take appropriate action based on established policies, procedures, training, and experience. Making informed decisions and taking appropriate action during day-to-day operations, emergencies, and disasters requires asking the following questions: 1. Is it lawful? 2. Does the decision or action have the best interests of the County, customer, and stakeholder in mind? 3. Would the same decision action be made if the media or Commissioners were present? 4. Is the decision maker ready to be accountable for making the decision or action? If the answer to any of these questions is NO, then it is most likely not a good decision or action!





## ACCOUNTABILITY

We meet the extraordinary needs and demands of our respective mission areas, even when they are encountered in difficult and often harsh conditions. We accept responsibility for accomplishing any task without complaint, are transparent in our decision-making process and accountable for the actions we take and decisions we make, both on and off the job.



## RESULTS ORIENTED

Results oriented means identifying what must be accomplished and accurately completing the task/assignment within that assigned time frame. If we say that we will do something or be somewhere, then we must be there or do it without excuse or delay. The focus of this principle is that the employee closest to our customers (both internal and external), will be empowered to, and held accountable for, getting things done.



## FLEXIBLE

We anticipate and accommodate changes in our Departmental goals, courses of action, and operating environments. We are prepared to adjust quickly as our stakeholder needs change to innovate and collaborate to overcome all challenges.

As public servants, we understand that in the event of an emergency or disaster, we may be deployed/dispatched/activated with little advance notice. We may also be asked to work irregular hours and perform duties other than those specified in our normal position descriptions.



## STEWARDSHIP

As government employees, we all are public servants. We are entrusted with taxpayer resources to perform critical tasks in each of our mission areas in support of the County's Strategic Plan. We have an ethical, moral, and legal obligation to protect these resources and ensure they are used effectively and efficiently for their intended purpose.

# DIAMONDS & STONES SWOT ANALYSIS



The Strategic Planning Team conducted a SWOT analysis to identify possibilities for new initiatives and solutions to ongoing issues. This analysis is an essential tool in shaping the Department's future actions, establishing priorities, and determining opportunities for significant change.

Diamonds in our SWOT analysis embody our strengths and the valuable things we do that should continue to be nurtured. These include a strong culture of continuous training and improvement, robust inter-agency cooperation, visionary leadership, and exceptional team dedication. Other

Diamonds include our consistent recruitment system, competitive benefits, and effective logistical management, supported by regular access to advanced technology. These facets underscore the Department's commitment to excellence and service.

On the other hand, our Stones represent areas of improvement. They reflect our weaknesses and challenges, including a lack of support for higher education, inconsistent communication, pay compression, understaffing, and difficulties in staff retention. The disruptive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the OES merger process is another Stone that requires attention.

However, much like how intense pressure turns carbon into diamond, focusing our planning and efforts on these Stones can convert them into future strengths. We are teeming with opportunities that could pave the way for our Stones to transition into Diamonds. These opportunities include the development of in-house paramedic training programs, improved work-life balance, technological upgrades for better communication, record-keeping, and positioning OES as a leading provider in the field.

Lastly, we must not overlook threats, external factors that could obstruct our progress. These include low morale, external recruitment competition, potential system failures during a disaster, potential takeovers, and bureaucratic delays. By addressing these threats effectively, we can ensure that our current Diamonds continue to shine and that our Stones metamorphose into future Diamonds. This SWOT analysis is a pivotal step in our journey towards constant improvement, turning challenges into opportunities and strengths.



# OES VISION AND DIVISION MISSION STATEMENTS

The vision statement describes a desired future state for emergency service capabilities. It is where the OES Department eventually wants to be. Each Division’s mission statement describes how the vision will be achieved by their program area. Vision is the end state of where the Department wants to be and how OES will be viewed by our residents, partners, and stakeholders if we are successful with implementing this Strategic Plan.

## VISION STATEMENT

**OES will be a dedicated, compassionate, and prepared community-oriented team building a safe, healthy, and resilient Durham County.**

## MISSION STATEMENT

**The OES team is comprised of dedicated, compassionate, and highly trained professionals that serve the Durham County community 24/7/365.**

Each Division’s mission statement explains why the work is done. They help formulate departmental goals, objectives, and strategies in the Strategic Plan. Each Division has a mission statement in support of the Vision.



**Business Services** - The Business Services Division (BSD) provides technical and organizational expertise in logistics, planning, administration, finance, public information, fleet management, information technology, and human resources to ensure the cohesive, efficient, consistent, and effective operational functions within OES.



**Emergency Management** - To foster a culture of preparedness and community resiliency through coordination and collaborative partnerships and to serve as a leader in preparing for, mitigating against, responding to, and recovering from all types of hazards.



**Emergency Medical Services** - As the principal provider of emergency medical services for the County of Durham, Durham County EMS will respond to requests for service via the 911 system and other routes in a manner that is safe, clinically appropriate, customer-oriented, fiscally sound, and employee-friendly.



**Fire Marshal** - The Fire Marshal Division promotes community risk reduction practices by providing effective fire safety education, fire code administration, fire investigations and fire suppression to reduce the impacts on the human, social, economic,

# GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

Goals are a clearer statement of the mission, specifying the accomplishments to be achieved if the mission is to become real. They clearly state outcomes and changes that can be reasonably anticipated as the Department moves toward the “end state”. Our Goals, objectives, and strategies were developed by incorporating data from brainstorming sessions and team feedback, County and City Strategic Plans, and best practices.

are stated in ways that describe what needs to be accomplished, and in some instances, how it will be done. The objectives address the difference between where the Department is (“current state”), and where the Department wants to be (Vision “end state”), by spelling out what will be done to get there. Strategies are even clearer statements of the specific activities that will be required to achieve each objective.

Objectives are clearer statements of the specific activities that will be required to achieve each Goal. They

The flexibility built into the Strategic Plan enables each Division to morph or change strategies while continuing to meet the Objective. What looks good on paper may not necessarily work in real life. It is imperative to integrate the ability and flexibility to adapt the strategies to continue making progress.





# GOAL 1



Introduce OES team members to formal leadership training and education Leadership Skills & Professional Growth

### CORE VALUES



### GUIDING PRINCIPLES



**OBJECTIVE 1A** Identify, develop, and implement leadership development opportunities for team members to learn, practice, and enhance their leadership skills as part of their professional development.

### STRATEGIES

- 1A.1** – Develop emotional intelligence training that addresses the Core Values and Guiding Principles of our Ethos as well as interpersonal relationships, transparency, trust, honesty, communication, consistency, respect, removing favoritism and attitudes, accountability, active listening, and feedback. Group activities should be included in the training.
- 1A.2** – Identify and implement DCo Human Resources leadership development tools such as the leadership academy and managers matrix among others.
- 1A.3** – Identify and implement problem solving and decision-making training to assist team members with methodologies to help them identify and correct problems, and make good decisions based on facts and data.
- 1A.4** – Implement an emotional intelligence survey combined with team member feedback, training, and practice opportunities. This may dovetail with strategy 1A.1.
- 1A.5** – Develop and implement a mentoring program within OES.
- 1A.6** – Redefine our brand and department culture and include that as part of the leadership training.

# GOAL 2



Create a professional development and career progression framework that will facilitate team growth at all levels of the department within the strategic plan life cycle.

### CORE VALUES



### GUIDING PRINCIPLES



**OBJECTIVE 2A** Identify, develop, and implement division specific training to enhance departmental operations.

### STRATEGIES

- 2A.1** – Develop career paths in each Division from entry level to the Chief/Manager to the Director.
- 2A.2** – Identify the minimum education and training required for department positions and develop position task books (PTB) for each position.
- 2A.3** – Develop and implement supervisory training based off of the PTBs to prepare team members for career progression (emotional intelligence, coaching/mentoring, communication, etc.)
- 2A.4** – Identify and implement multi-modal training methodologies to better utilize training resources across the department to prepare them for advancement.

**OBJECTIVE 2B** Identify, develop, and implement training to better inform team members of Department and County processes, policies, and procedures to prepare them for advancement.

### STRATEGIES

- 2B.1** – Develop and implement a Business Services Division specific training course on “how things work here” in OES to familiarize team members of departmental policy, procedure, and process (budget development and management, use of P-Cards, Risk Management interface, training requests, leave requests, information sharing, communication, etc.)
- 2B.2** – Develop and implement a training program on key County processes, policies, and procedures (HR, timekeeping, BOCC, progressive discipline, grievance, legal, etc.)



# GOAL 2



Create a professional development and career progression framework that will facilitate team growth at all levels of the department within the strategic plan life cycle.

CORE VALUES



Respect

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Engagement



Flexible

**OBJECTIVE 2C** Develop cross-training among the OES Divisions to enhance departmental resilience and succession.

STRATEGIES

- 2C.1** – Identify and implement Incident Management Team (IMT) training for critical Command and General Staff positions within the Incident Command System (ICS) and include strategic partners in the training.
- 2C.2** – Develop and implement succession training and processes so that team members comprehend the duties of their supervisors, peers, and their subordinates.
- 2C.3** – Develop and conduct department-wide exercises at least annually in support of Goal 1 and to enhance team member career growth. Exercises should be discussion or operations based and include internal and external partners.

# GOAL 3



Create strategies to better recruit and retain talented and loyal team members to correct low staffing, and develop and enhance departmental diversity, equity, and inclusion.

CORE VALUES



Competency & Knowledge

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Preparation



Safety



Results Oriented

**OBJECTIVE 3A** Develop and implement a coordinated recruiting program.

STRATEGIES

- 3A.1** – Develop an OES recruiting team that are trained on public speaking, personal presence, and group interaction. As part of the team, develop appropriate messaging that will be used while they are recruiting.
- 3A.2** – Reach potential candidates before they graduate from high school and/or the Community College system by on-site visits, virtual recruiting, online videos on our website, job fairs, etc. Develop metrics to measure the recruiting program’s progress.
- 3A.3** – Implement a ride along and job shadowing programs.
- 3A.4** – Investigate and provide recommendations on a lateral transfer program from other EMS entities.

**OBJECTIVE 3B** Develop and implement a coordinated retention program.

STRATEGIES

- 3B.1** – Develop a solution to gain a more granular understanding of why people choose to leave the department.
- 3B.2** – Develop a solution to identify what employment looks like for new team members in the future (short-term vs long-term).
- 3B.3** – Based on 3.A.4 and 3B.2, become more flexible with our onboarding, training, and development program to meet the needs of the department and team members.



# GOAL 4



Create a workplace that encourages and embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the Department and that proactively supports our team members.

CORE VALUES



GUIDING PRINCIPLES



**OBJECTIVE 4A** DEI will be a priority for all OES functions.

STRATEGIES

**4A.1** – Incorporate DEI into leadership training, documentation, recruiting, morale, and mental health initiatives.

**OBJECTIVE 4B** Create a work environment that improves and maintains positive morale among team members above 80% satisfaction.

STRATEGIES

- 4B.1** – Work with DCo HR on new compensation initiatives so that they are implemented equitably among team members.
- 4B.2** – Develop non-monetary initiatives to recognize and reward team members for outstanding effort.
- 4B.3** – Convene a working group to study work shifts and shift flexibility and make recommendations to the Director for implementation.
- 4B.4** – Based off of our Goal 2 efforts, develop a compensation program related to training and certifications completed/received and gain HR approval for implementation.
- 4B.5** – Develop a schedule where supervisors, Chiefs, Managers, and the Director can invite team members in for visits (outside of the discipline process).
- 4B.6** – Create opportunities for the OES team to gather outside of work hours to have fellowship. Create opportunities to do the same with our internal and external partners.

# GOAL 4



Create a workplace that encourages and embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the Department and that proactively supports our team members.

CORE VALUES



GUIDING PRINCIPLES



**OBJECTIVE 4C** Create a work environment that provides progressive mental health resources for our team members that includes self-care and peer support.

STRATEGIES

- 4C.1** – Investigate the use of an outside company to determine the existing mental health status of our team members. React appropriately based on feedback.
- 4C.2** – Identify Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and trauma informed mental health resources that can be used outside of the DCo EAP.
- 4C.3** – Continue and improve existing counseling opportunities, including CISM.
- 4C.4** – Identify and communicate mental health resources to our team members via an in-house seminar or workshop.



# GOAL 5



Improve the departments fleet, facilities, and technology through the budget and capital improvement planning (CIP) process.

## CORE VALUES



Integrity & Honesty

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Accountability



Stewardship

**OBJECTIVE 5A** Build and staff new facilities in accordance with the most recently approved CIP.

### STRATEGIES

- 5A.1** – Assign appropriate staff to support the planning and construction process so that the new facilities come online as scheduled.
- 5A.2** – Share planning and construction updates with staff routinely throughout the build process.
- 5A.3** – Continue progressive planning for future facilities and include co-location opportunities as possible and include OES team members in planning efforts.

**OBJECTIVE 5B** Continue to replace apparatus (vehicles, trailers, etc.) according to the DCo fleet replacement schedule.

### STRATEGIES

- 5B.1** – Load level vehicle/apparatus purchases to minimize peaks and valleys in each year’s budget request.
- 5B.2** – Surplus unused and unnecessary apparatus. Check with partners to see if they might have use of the apparatus before surplus process.
- 5B.3** – Follow the DCo “Green Initiative” to the extent possible while maintaining mission capability.

# GOAL 5



Improve the departments fleet, facilities, and technology through the budget and capital improvement planning (CIP) process.

## CORE VALUES



Integrity & Honesty

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Accountability



Stewardship

**OBJECTIVE 5C** Identify and implement new technology that will enhance OES services and operations.

### STRATEGIES

- 5C.1** – Conduct annual technology assessments with vendors and DCo IS&T so that we have visibility on solutions that could enhances our services and operations.
- 5C.2** – Utilize vendor offers of beta testing for technology. Place new technology in service on a limited basis until it can be vetted for success.
- 5C.3** – Perform a cost benefit analysis to ensure the technology enhances services and operations and does not place any unintended burdens on staff, the budget or IS&T.



# GOAL 6



Create and/or revise plans, policies, and procedures to accurately reflect the functions of the department and division positions, to include Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP).

### CORE VALUES



Competency & Knowledge

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Preparation



Safety



Results Oriented

**OBJECTIVE 6A** Develop and implement a coordinated recruiting program.

### STRATEGIES

**6A.1** – Create process in plans, policies, procedures that include oversight in decision-making and a decision review process for team members.

**OBJECTIVE 6B** Develop and/or revise Standard Operating Procedures/Guidelines (SOP/SOG) for each Division's processes in a common template.

### STRATEGIES

**6B.1** – Remove gender reference in all documentation and include diversity, equity, and inclusion considerations for all.

**6B.2** – Use existing SOP/SOG documents and revise them to reflect actual work or processes to be followed, remove gender references, and to engineer out “subjectiveness” when possible.

**6B.3** – Develop new SOP/SOG documents for each process to fill in gaps where they do not currently exist.

**6B.4** – Where possible, consolidate SOPs & SOGs to ensure common processes are implemented within the OES department.

# GOAL 6



Create and/or revise plans, policies, and procedures to accurately reflect the functions of the department and division positions, to include Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP).

### CORE VALUES



Competency & Knowledge

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Preparation



Safety



Results Oriented

**OBJECTIVE 6C** Develop a department COOP that includes specificity for each Division.

### STRATEGIES

**6C.1** – Develop essential functions based on General Statute and Ordinance requirements.

**6C.2** – Review or develop procedures to support essential functions.

**6C.3** – Identify technology, equipment, and supplies needed for COOP activation.

**6C.4** – Assign a COOP team and COOP leader, with succession for each.

**6C.5** – Exercise the COOP at least every two years.

**OBJECTIVE 6D** Create a multi-level communication strategy to keep team members informed.

### STRATEGIES

**6D.1** – Continue weekly and bi-weekly meetings to gather and share information.

**6D.2** – Develop new methodologies to share information at all levels of OES.

**6D.3** – Develop methodologies to receive anonymous feedback from any team member at any time throughout the year, to include a response mechanism to that feedback.



# GOAL 7



Develop and implement a comprehensive Community Risk Reduction program.

## CORE VALUES



Open Communication

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Team Work

**OBJECTIVE 7A** Build organizational and community equity.

### STRATEGIES

- 7A.1** – Share the community risk reduction vision and foster champions to participate in the risk reduction initiative.
- 7A.2** - Integrate community risk reduction within Goal 3 of the Durham County Strategic Plan.

**OBJECTIVE 7B** Create a Community Risk Reduction Coalition.

### STRATEGIES

- 7B.1** – Identify and assemble stakeholders to present a strategic community risk reduction model that embraces a managing risk approach.

**OBJECTIVE 7C** Evaluate the community's risk by conducting a community risk assessment, supported by data collection tools and data analytics.

### STRATEGIES

- 7C.1** – Analyze community risks by assessing vulnerability to risks and analyzing acceptable level of risk. Categorize identified risks based on their probability and impact and establish risk-reduction priorities.

# GOAL 7



Develop and implement a comprehensive Community Risk Reduction program.

## CORE VALUES



Open Communication

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Team Work

**OBJECTIVE 7D** Build organizational and community equity.

### STRATEGIES

- 7D.1** – Incorporate the analysis of the risk assessment into the Community Risk Reduction Plan.
- 7D.2** – Design appropriate intervention strategies for the targeted risks.
- 7D.3** – Analyze cost/benefit of specific risk-reduction strategies.
- 7D.4** – Design a marketing strategy for specific targeted risks.
- 7D.5** – Develop impact evaluation measures for each risk-reduction target.

**OBJECTIVE 7E** Garner leadership support for risk reduction initiatives recommended by the coalition.

### STRATEGIES

- 7E.1** – Provide recommendations from the coalition to the Board of County Commissioners and City Council to adopt resolutions to address the identified risks.



## IMPLEMENTATION AND MEASUREMENT

The implementation plan will identify the goal, objective, and strategy as well as providing the tactical tasks for implementing each strategy. A person or team will be assigned to implement each strategy and their progress will be monitored throughout the implementation process.

As the Strategic Plan matures, each Division will develop performance indicators that will be specific to each goal, objective, and strategy. The performance indicators will serve as a scoreboard to track our progress of the Strategic Plan implementation.



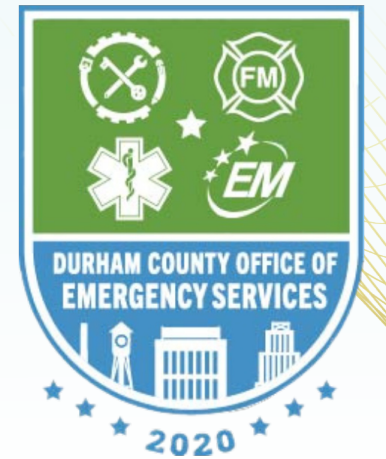
## PLAN MAINTENANCE

This Plan is a living document that will be reviewed at least annually to determine if implementation is being successful. It will be updated every five (5) years to reflect new or changing goals and priorities. To update the Plan, a Strategic Planning Team will be convened to review, provide feedback, develop consensus, and revise the contents of the Plan.

Each time the Plan receives a major update, it will be presented to the Durham County Manager's Office for input, feedback, and consensus before implementation occurs. The final Plan will be available to all of the OES team and our stakeholders.

## CONCLUSION

OES embraced the task of developing a departmental Strategic Plan during a global pandemic because we believed that a road map to move the department toward success was needed for the next three to five years. This document would not be possible without the diverse group of volunteers who came together to form the strategic planning committee. They met bi-monthly for many months to develop the draft version of the strategic plan, and they were successful by practicing our Core Values, being transparent, and providing immediate, honest, unfiltered, and respectful feedback to each other. Practicing our Core Values was foundational in developing the goals, objectives, and strategies identified in the plan. This committee exemplified what an efficient, competent, engaging, and respectful department functions like.







## OES VISION STATEMENT

OES will be a dedicated, compassionate, and prepared community-oriented team building a safe, healthy, and resilient Durham County.



# OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

This Strategic Plan describes how the department will respond to an emergency or disaster, and focuses effort on strategic approaches so that OES will be prepared to prevent, prepare, respond, mitigate, and recover from emergent incidents and disasters.



📍 201 E Main St Durham, NC 27701  
✉️ [OES@dconcc.gov](mailto:OES@dconcc.gov)  
☎️ 919 560 8285