City of Hallowell, Maine

Hallowell Fire Department

Strategic Plan

Neil D. Courtney

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although Hallowell's fire experience can be considered infrequent, the city must maintain a level of fire protection consistent with the hazards present. Despite the city's small size, the potential for a significant fire incident involving one or more buildings in the compact downtown area is considerable. The city has large, historic homes, a variety of mixed occupancy buildings, and a multitude of commercial properties that would challenge the fire department's capabilities were those properties to experience a fire. Hallowell depends upon its neighboring communities to lend a hand in the event of a fire incident, as do most small cities and towns nationwide, because it does not have the resources to handle medium to large-scale incidents on its own. In a sense, the Hallowell Fire Department could be viewed as one component of a larger system when considering the entire nearby individual fire protection agencies from a collective and collaborative vantage.

This Strategic Plan is based on the outcome of the initial report, the "Hallowell Fire Department—Development of Options Relative to the Delivery of Fire Protection Services." The initial report was issued to the city in December 2011, and at a January 2012 City Council meeting, the Council decided that the city would continue to provide a semblance of autonomous, municipal fire protection services. This plan may consist strictly of an on-call fire department—as is currently in place—or a public safety department that would blend two or more city services into one agency.

The city of Hallowell should embark upon a long-term program that commits to the enhancement of fire protection services. The need for a new fire station is paramount in that effort, as the current facility is an impediment to any attempt at forward progress.

The fire department needs to obligate to an enrichment program that coincides with the plans to build a new facility. Increased membership, higher levels of training and certification, and the implementation of pro-active fire prevention services should be the major objectives over the next several years.

In order to move this strategic plan forward, the city and the fire department need to move in tandem. The planned construction of a new facility should encourage fire fighters to take the department to the next level in service delivery.

The key recommendations in this plan include the following:

- Construct a new fire station or joint public safety facility.
- Maintain a minimum of two engine companies to meet the minimum Insurance Services Office (ISO) criteria.
- Develop a Capital Improvement Program (CIP).
- Increase the number of on-call fire fighters.
- Implement a proactive fire prevention and public safety education program.

- Attain higher levels of fire-fighter training and validate that training with certification.
- Further the effort to collaborate with neighboring fire departments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.0 FIXED FACILITY

The fire department is in need of a modern, 21st-century facility from which to operate. In all likelihood, a new building will be required, as the current fire station may have limitations that would undermine a prudent rehabilitation project.

As conveyed at the January 4, 2012 City Council meeting where the initial fire department report, the "Development of Options Relative to the Delivery of Fire Protection Services," was reviewed, the city may have to defer a building replacement project for several years. Hallowell will be retiring outstanding debt within the next few years, after which funding for such a capital project could be undertaken. It is understood that this time-line means that the fire department will probably continue operating from the current facility for some time, and that certain rudimentary repairs and upgrades will be required.

During this forthcoming period, the city could initiate the planning process to construct a new stand-alone fire station or a combined public safety facility. Initially, the city will need to find a suitable location for a new facility. During this time, however, a property with an existing building may become available on the open real estate market, providing an option to new construction. Should an existing building be considered as a recycling project, a feasibility study would be required to ensure that the needs of the fire department could be integrated into a retrofit.

Should the city resolve to build a new facility, there should be sufficient time to thoroughly plan an optimal project. A new site would have to be identified somewhere within the city proper. The city will likely consider whether or not a new fire station would house other municipal functions as well. During the January 2012 meeting, it was mentioned that any new facility addressing the needs of the fire department should also include the needs of other city agencies, such as police services and/or public works. As the planning phase of the facility commences, a space-needs assessment of all city operations would be helpful in that process. The 2010 update of Hallowell's Comprehensive Plan, section 7.2 states: "Ensure adequate, cost-effective City services to meet community needs." Section 7.2.d states: "Study the potential for updating, relocating, or building new public facilities or public safety and public works functions." The recommendation to construct a new fire station falls in line with these objectives.

2.0 ADMINISTRATION

2.1 Clearly delineate between the Hallowell Fire Department and the Hallowell Fireman's Association.

The Hallowell fire fighters (municipal on-call employees) are also members of a sub-organization called the Hallowell Fireman's Association. Typically, fire associations are fraternal organizations that exist as benevolent entities to support the membership of the municipal fire department. The current organizational structure of the city's fire department may have evolved from either a quasi-municipal, non-municipal, or perhaps non-profit original entity. According to officials, the fire department became a true function of the city almost 30 years ago after having been a volunteer fire association since its inception.

The "municipal fire department" needs its own set of policy statements and governance, and should function strictly as an emergency service delivery department under the authority of the city. The "fireman's association" needs to have its own set of bylaws that govern the organization as a nonprofit incorporated association. The Hallowell Fireman's Association perhaps needs to comply with the State of Maine, filing incorporation papers with the Maine Bureau of Corporations and reporting annually as required. The alternative may be to dissolve the association altogether, which is a decision the membership can address.

Historically, well-intentioned citizens created many of America's fire departments usually after a devastating fire had occurred in their community. Volunteer incorporated fire associations, which are private entities, were founded to address the fire-suppression needs of a community. Initially, these organizations were never established as part of a city or town government. They raised their own funds, purchased their own equipment, and developed their own methodologies without purview of the municipality, essentially acting on their own. Although such organizations still exist throughout Maine and the United States, more and more fire associations are converting to municipal agencies. The reasons are varied, but for the most part, these transitions have occurred because of fiscal constraints, organizational transparency and clarity, and concerns about risk management, liability, and accountability.

Typically, current organizational bylaws of volunteer fire-fighting groups are vestiges of some earlier set of governing rules. The Hallowell Fire Department has an internal set of bylaws dictating how certain aspects of the department are administered. To an extent, these bylaws are similar to those of a fraternal organization, and have been modified somewhat over the years. The department also has policy statements and methods of operation based upon past practices that provide guidance for fire fighters in a multitude of situations. The city of Hallowell's Personnel Policy Manual provides additional rules and procedures that also appear to impact the fire department to some degree.

It appears that the Hallowell Fire Department is a true function of municipal government. The bylaws, which have been crafted, revised, and adopted by the fire department membership, appear to have been sanctioned by the City Council. However, some aspects of the bylaws may conflict with the city's personnel policy. One example is the manner in which fire fighters become members of the department. The bylaws allow the membership to select or reject someone who applies for membership. If the applicant is chosen to become a member, his or her name is forwarded to the city manager's office and that person is then formally identified as a municipal on-call fire fighter. The city should review the fire fighter hiring process to ensure compliance with the guidelines set by the city.

The city and the fire department should review all aspects of the governance of fire protection in Hallowell and take whatever action is required to ensure that the department is fully aligned with the city in the way it conducts its business. If the fire fighters association continues to exist, the bylaws for that organization may need to be rewritten.

2.2 Develop mission, vision, and value statements.

The fire department should develop a mission statement. This statement should embody the department's philosophies, goals, ambitions, and mores. Supporting doctrines could include a vision statement and the department's values and beliefs, which would clarify the intent of the organization in the future.

For the most part, the scope of the department's services is limited to fire suppression. This arrangement is fairly common in small communities like Hallowell. The department has many constraints, and expansion to a full-service department may be unnecessary or impractical. The department may face situations for which they lack the required expertise or the specialized equipment. Some of those situations could include confined-space entry and rescue; hazardous material release; containment and mitigation; the many facets of technical rescue, emergency medical services, mass casualty incidents, etc. The recommended written statements would define the level of service the department is committed to provide.

2.3 Organize the department's policy statements into a more definitive compilation of guiding principles.

At a minimum, a policy manual should address the following areas:

Memoranda	**Subdivisions**
➢ Suggested operating guidelines (SOGs)	Administration
➢ Rules & regulations	Operations
➢ General orders	Rescue
➢ Informational bulletins	Fire prevention
	Training
	Communications

Definitions

Suggested operating guideline (SOG): An established procedure to be followed consistently for a given operation or situation. Some flexibility may be allowed based on sound judgment. (Note: A similar term, standard operating procedure, or SOP, has become obsolete and has generally been replaced by SOG.)

Rules & regulations: An authorized set of internal laws by which members are governed.

General orders: Directives that apply to specific individuals or situations, usually in the short term, e.g., assignment of new members, resignations, promotions, addition or deletion of equipment.

Informational bulletin: General information that should be passed along to the rank and file, e.g., available training, special programs, noteworthy events.

The fire department already has policy statements and generally accepted methods of operations based upon past practices. Policy manuals are always and necessarily "works in progress," as new guidelines are adopted, existing ones are revised, and in some cases obsolete directives are eliminated. It is incumbent upon the department's leadership to train all personnel in the department's modus operandi, to ensure adherence, and to properly document these activities.

All policy statements should be categorized, numbered sequentially, dated, and inserted into loose-leaf binders to be kept at the fire station. The Policy Manual can also be accessible in an electronic format and posted on the department's section of the city's web site.

The regular officers' meetings should dedicate a certain amount of time to creating, modifying, and reviewing this dynamic set of protocols. It must be understood, however, that the fire chief may at times need to address urgent circumstances by issuing memoranda without following this process. Members of the department should be encouraged to submit subject matter and/or draft policy statements for review and possible adoption by the department.

2.4 Improve activity reports.

The fire department reports its activity in written form each month and forwards the information to the City Council. The fire department also provides an annual report for inclusion in the city's annual report. These departmental reports are rudimentary and in many instances provide redundant information. These accounts may not fully represent the activities undertaken by the fire department during a one-month or 12-month period. The department should take full advantage of these opportunities to represent to its constituencies exactly what the department is doing and what its short- and long-term goals and objectives are. The department should document the work it does to stay

current in keeping the community safe, such as the training it provides to maintain a force of capable fire fighters, the challenges it faces in providing a certain level of service, and the complex needs of a fire department in the 21st century.

Soon, the department will begin to write its report for the 2011-2012 operating year, and some of the past year's activities should be highlighted. For example, the report should include the "Comprehensive Fire Department Study" from which this report developed. The department also crafted an agreement with the City of Augusta to bring their fully equipped aerial ladder to Hallowell for reported building fires. The fire department had input regarding the creation of an ordinance regulating fireworks. The department strengthened its alliance with the Farmingdale Fire Department in holding joint training sessions. The department forcefully addressed the urgent need to deal with the condition of the fire station. These are the types of achievements that should be incorporated into monthly and annual reports in an effort to inform the city administration, the residents, and businesses of the tasks at hand within the department.

The fire department needs to advocate for itself and convey a strong message with regard to its mission and commitment to the city. To enhance the fire department's opportunities to "market itself," its section of the city web site should be refreshed and updated routinely. The web site is an ideal medium for the department to communicate timely information to its constituencies. (Note: The department also has a Facebook page)

2.5 Initiate fire prevention inspections.

It appears that fire prevention inspections are not occurring in Hallowell. The city should implement—at a minimum—a program of conducting fire prevention inspections regarding the relevant occupancy groups as defined in National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 101, the Life Safety Code. The relevant groups in Hallowell are: Assembly, Educational, Health Care, Multi-Family Residential, Mercantile, Business, Industrial, and Storage.

Fire Prevention is that part of fire protection activities exercised in advance of the outbreak of fire to prevent such outbreaks and to minimize loss when fire does occur. Fire prevention inspections are designed to assess the condition of and remediate deficiencies regarding the following circumstances (at a minimum): means of egress, fixed and portable fire suppression systems, fire alarm systems, housekeeping practices, identify and address fire hazards, manufacture process, and the like.

The city should consider establishing a fire prevention division, either within the fire department; under the authority of a public safety department (if the city reorganizes and combines police, fire, emergency management, and code enforcement into a single agency); or under the office of code enforcement. The division would be responsible for conducting fire prevention inspections and delivering public safety education to the community. (Note: Fire prevention activities are a requirement of the fire department as

found in the city's revised ordinances of 1997 Subchapter II, Division A – Fire Department)

2.6 Apply for Fire Prevention & Safety (FP&S) grants.

The Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) grants are part of the Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) program, and are under the purview of the Grant Programs Directorate in the Federal Emergency Management Agency. FP&S grants support projects that enhance the safety of the public and firefighters from fire and related hazards. The primary goal is to target high-risk populations and reduce injury and prevent death. In 2005, Congress reauthorized funding for FP&S grants and expanded the eligible uses of funds to include Firefighter Safety Research and Development.

http://www.fema.gov/firegrants/fpsgrants/index.shtm

A funding mechanism may be the catalyst to implementing a fire prevention and public fire safety program for the city. The fire department should lead the charge in developing a program that fits the profile of the community based on its unique characteristics and public safety needs. According to fire department monthly reports, cooking fires in the senior housing complex require frequent responses. The department could develop a program that targets problematic incidents such as cooking fires, among others, that could impact the safety of the community.

The following website link is about a fire department that secured a grant to address an identified problem in its community.

http://www.fema.gov/firegrants/program/success_stories/fps/BristolVA_Success.shtm

2.7 Participate in Maine Fire Incident Reporting System (MEFIRS): "Fighting Fires With Facts"

The Hallowell Fire Department should participate in the Maine Fire Incident Reporting System (MEFIRS) program. All incidents responded to by the department should be cataloged in accordance with this state mandate. The reporting should be done electronically and follow the criteria developed by the State Fire Marshal's Office. According to this office, the fire department has not submitted incident reports for several years. The department should have a computer and Internet access in order to accomplish this recommendation.

The submission of fire incident reports is also required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in applying for U. S. Department of Homeland Security funding through the AFG program. As the department requests funding in the future for equipment upgrades and replacement, and the acquisition of new technologies, this federally funded, matching grant program should be pursued in an effort to reduce costs at the local level. (As noted in the initial report, the city received an AFG grant in 2003.)

The MEFIRS program is an information- and data-gathering system initiated and supported by the Office of State Fire Marshal. The goal of the system is to encourage the use of a standardized incident reporting system as a means of addressing the state's fire problem and related emergency services issues. MEFIRS can play a major role in reducing injuries, fatalities, and economic losses from fire and related emergencies by facilitating the collection, compilation, analysis, and use of data to produce and disseminate the information needed by decision makers. Maine statute, Title 25 MRSA §2395, requires that fire chiefs shall submit to the State Fire Marshal an incident report for each response made, regardless of whether or not an actual fire occurred. The report must be submitted in a manner consistent with the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). (See the following web site for additional information.)

http://www.maine.gov/dps/fmo/mefirs/index.html

2.8 Maintain or improve upon the city's Insurance Services Office (ISO) Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS) - Public Protection Classification (PPC)

Hallowell's fire protection capabilities were last rated by the Insurance Services Office (ISO) in October 2002. At that time, the city received a split rating of 6/9. The ISO rating schedule is a tool for the insurance industry to measure quantitatively the three major elements of a community's fire suppression system, of which the fire department is one. The other two elements are the receiving and handling of alarms, and the public water supply. Measurements of these elements result in a Public Protection Classification (PPC) number on a relative scale from 1 to 10, with 1 representing the best possible fire suppression system and 10 representing less than minimum recognized protection. This rating schedule is used to assign fire insurance premiums on many properties within communities throughout the United States. Those areas of Hallowell serviced by fire hydrants are rated "6", while those beyond are rated "9."

(See Glossary, p. 18)

The department should attempt to at least maintain and perhaps improve upon the city's PPC. Two specific areas within the 2002 ISO's rating schedule that appear to be deficient were the training program and the number of fire fighters responding to incidents. The department should develop short- and long-term training programs with identified goals and objectives that will lead to higher levels of certification and address the shortfalls as found in the schedule. A pre-fire planning program should also be implemented. A well devised, documented program would require in-service fire companies to visit buildings to learn first-hand the configuration and nuances of many of the structures and complexes, starting with the "target" fire hazards located throughout the city. Fire fighters would strategize tactical operations that could be developed into suggested operating guidelines (SOGs).

As stated in the initial report to the city (Hallowell Fire Department—Development of Options Relative to the Delivery of Fire Protection Services), the small number of fire fighters in the Hallowell Fire Department is of concern, a concern confirmed in the PPC, Item #571 "Credit for Company Personnel." Of the potential 15 points of credit, the city

only received 1.71 points. There is a definite need to increase the number of fire fighters in the department, as well as strengthen the number of first-due fire fighters who respond immediately upon the receipt of a fire incident report.

Although this PPC rating is now 10 years old, the circumstances in the Hallowell Fire Department may not have changed enough to have a positive effect on this particular item. With that rating in mind, and considering the lack of aerial ladder service in Hallowell, the City of Augusta now responds automatically with a ladder truck to reported building fires in Hallowell. Furthermore, the Farmingdale Fire Department and the Hallowell Fire Department are now responding to one another's fire calls automatically. The city should quantify these relationships between these fire departments and ensure that the system fully qualifies under the intent of automatic-aid agreements according to the ISO's criteria. (Note: As this report was being prepared, the City of Hallowell and the Town of Manchester were pursuing the development of an automatic aid program between the two communities). Increasing the number of fire fighters and having an aerial ladder responding immediately to all reported fires in Hallowell may improve the city's ISO grade in the future.

(Note: The ISO is evaluating the Fire Suppression Rating Schedule, which has not been significantly revised in 32 years. Changes may be forthcoming to the current methodology of evaluating community fire protection services, and city and town fire service leadership should stay abreast of those potential adjustments.)

2.9 Develop personnel training programs.

According to the Hallowell Fire Department Bylaws, the deputy fire chief is charged with administering the department's training program. This position is currently vacant, however, and it appears that the department has shuffled these duties to other officers.

The fire department should develop both short and long-term training programs. Officials have indicated the department is meeting the annual training requirements to comply with Maine Bureau of Labor Standards. Additionally, the department is engaging in joint training opportunities with the Farmingdale Fire Department, which should foster a good working relationship as the departments respond to one another's incidents now and into the future under automatic-aid response protocols.

Very few fire fighters in Hallowell are certified to the level required to fight fires within buildings. The department needs to encourage those fire fighters who have not completed the fire fighter I and II programs to do so. Here again, the collaboration between Farmingdale and Hallowell, and hopefully Manchester, should augment the number of qualified personnel through the automatic-aid program.

3.0 APPARATUS

The fire department currently operates with two Class A pumpers, a one-ton, four-wheel drive utility truck, and a converted truck that is classified as a tanker or water tender.

3.1 At a minimum, the city should maintain a two-engine company response profile.

The ISO Public Fire Protection Grading Schedule for Hallowell indicates the city should have at least two in-service engine companies with a minimum pumping capacity of 2,250 gallons per minute (gpm). The department currently meets the criteria.

The department appears to be on a 30-year rotation of its front-line apparatus, although the city does not currently have a formalized Capital Improvement Program (CIP) in place. The current engine #1 is a 1987 model, and engine #2 is a 2003 model. Having a new pumper put in service every 15 years to replace the oldest piece may be an adequate plan for Hallowell.

3.2 Replace engine #1, the 1987 pumper by 2017.

This acquisition should coincide with the opening of a new fire station. The design features of the replacement apparatus should not have to conform to the limitations imposed by the current fire station, and the new facility should be designed to accommodate larger, more versatile apparatus.

A new pumper should be equipped with a pump of no less than 1,250 gpm capacity. The water tank should contain no less than 1,000 gallons of water. Although most of the major fire hazards in Hallowell are located within the proximity of fire hydrants, much of the city west of Route 95 is not. First-arriving fire companies need sufficient water on-board so initial fire attack evolutions can be effectively launched. Fire-fighting resources that arrive after the initial on-scene fire fighters have deployed fire suppression tactics are typically charged with establishing a sustainable water supply, allowing frontline fire fighters to continue advancing on a “working” fire without water-supply interruption. A larger water tank than that now on the two existing apparatus would provide an extra measure of safety for first-due fire fighters.

A new pumper should be designed with as much compartment space as possible. The intention is to provide the maximum amount of cabinet space allowable so the department can carry most of its essential equipment onboard. Over the years, and as the mission of the American fire service has evolved, the array of technical equipment has morphed from fundamental hand tools mounted on the exterior of fire apparatus to today’s more sophisticated apparatus, with every piece of equipment securely positioned in a compartment and out of the elements.

To an extent, the utility truck the city purchased used during the fiscal 2005 budget year can be viewed as an augmentation of the city’s two pumpers. With the limited compartment space on engines #1 and #2, the assemblage of equipment the fire department had acquired up to that point had no place to go. One objective of acquiring the utility truck was to address the storage space limitations of the pumpers.

When designing a new pumper, consideration should be given to installing an on-board hydraulically powered electric generator. Often, the requirement for electrical power at an incident necessitates an on-site portable source of electricity. Power tools, electric pumps, lighting, and many other types of tools and equipment are needed for various situations the fire department may be called on to handle. Typically, a gasoline-powered portable generator is carried within a compartment of a fire apparatus for this purpose. Here again, stowing a portable generator on the pumper takes up space that could be utilized in other ways. The advent of the permanently mounted hydraulic generator in new fire apparatus has enabled some fire departments to streamline their fleet of apparatus, allowing for the consolidation of equipment on fewer vehicles. Although more costly up-front, a single apparatus that is designed to be more functional can actually reduce operational and capital expenses over the long term.

The apparatus should also be equipped with a three-section, 35-foot ground ladder, which could be stowed either within the body of the apparatus and accessible through a rear-facing compartment or externally mounted on a mechanically operated ladder rack. Hallowell's two in-service pumpers have their ground ladders mounted externally on the right side of the apparatus, which has been the norm in fire apparatus design for eons. Realizing the need for additional stowage capacity, many of today's pumpers are now fabricated with the ground ladders positioned differently. This region of the apparatus body traditionally occupied by the ground ladders now has become an optimum area for additional compartment space.

Currently, the department only carries 24-foot ground ladders on its two pumpers. The department has a critical need for longer extension ladders in many applications throughout the city. Despite the agreement between Hallowell and Augusta fire departments for Augusta's aerial ladder to respond to Hallowell's building fires, and considering backup ladder service is available from Gardiner, it is still imperative that Hallowell carry a longer ground ladder on its first-arriving apparatus. If people were trapped by fire, with no means of egress, on upper levels of a building, the longer portable extension ladder could make the critical difference in their successful rescue.

3.3 Ensure aerial ladder service.

The ISO Fire Suppression Rating Schedule states that response areas with five buildings that are three stories or 35 feet or more in height, or with five buildings that have a Needed Fire Flow (NFF) greater than 3,500 gpm, or any combination of these criteria, should have a ladder company. Based on this requirement, it is important that Hallowell have access to a ladder company. The configuration of buildings, especially in the core of the city's downtown, warrants a first-due response of an aerial ladder company.

In 2011, the City of Hallowell entered into an inter-local agreement that has the Augusta Fire Department send its ladder truck to Hallowell on reported building fires. Presently, this arrangement negates the need for Hallowell to acquire its own ladder truck.

3.4 Retrofit the utility truck.

The fire department operates a small utility truck that is used to transport personnel and equipment that is not carried on the front-line pumpers. The fire department has been considering the acquisition of a forest fire-fighting apparatus, either an additional off-road fire apparatus or a smaller all-terrain vehicle. The 1996 four-wheel drive utility truck could be retrofitted with a forest fire-fighting module known as a skid unit. This unit can be demounted in the off-season, making the truck versatile. The truck would still be utilized as it currently is, provided that some of the equipment it now carries can be relocated. With the growing relationship between the Farmingdale and Hallowell fire departments, perhaps some of this equipment could be relocated to Farmingdale's larger squad truck, an idea that has been discussed among the fire fighters.

3.5 Eliminate the tanker.

This 38-year-old truck now serves as a tanker carrying approximately 1,200 gallons of water. The vehicle gets little use. The fire department has stored it off-site until the beginning of the 2011-2012 winter, when it was returned to the Hallowell fire station. Having this vehicle parked in the apparatus bay overburdens the limited space available in the fire station. It is understood that the fire department is looking for space in another fire department, perhaps Manchester, that has room in its new fire station.

The truck should be disposed of. It is of little fire-fighting value with perhaps the exception of forest fire-fighting applications. If the city decides to put a forestry skid unit in the utility truck or purchase a smaller, all-terrain vehicle for off-road application, there would be no need to retain the tanker.

4.0 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF ON-CALL FIRE FIGHTERS

4.1 Increase the number of fire fighters.

A number of technical schools throughout Maine have launched fire fighter and emergency medical technician (EMT) programs at the high school level. At this time, the region's technical high school in Augusta does not offer this public safety curriculum. At least one student in the recent past who was interested in pursuing the fire-fighter training program went to Waterville's Mid-Maine Technical Center.

The Capital Area Technical Center could begin delivering the fire fighter and EMT programs to the region's students. However, it may take a collaborative effort by a number of key players to make it happen. The Central Maine Fire Chief's Association, the local political forces, and the Technical Center's administration could undertake a feasibility study that would determine the merits of such a plan.

The following technical high schools provide either certifiable fire fighting and/or EMT educational programs:

- Foster Technology Center in Farmington
- Mid-Maine Technical Center in Waterville
- Westbrook Regional Vocational Center in Westbrook
- Northern Penobscot Tech Region 111 in Lincoln
- United Technologies Center in Bangor
- Waldo County Technical Center in Waldo
- Mid-Coast School of Technology in Rockland
- Maine Region 10 Technical High School in Brunswick

Offering these programs at a local technical school may be another way to attract young people into the ranks of the volunteer and on-call fire and EMS services. The opportunity to take this specialized training during the junior and senior high school years, at a location close to home, may attract the non-traditional student into a vocation, either as a career track or as a way to serve in his or her hometown volunteer or on-call fire or ambulance department. Furthermore, graduating students who achieve certification in these disciplines save the fire or ambulance department they join the time, expense, and effort it takes to get new personnel qualified to perform the duties of an emergency responder.

4.2 Apply for Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response (SAFER) grants.

The Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant program was created to provide funding directly to fire departments and volunteer fire-fighter interest organizations in order to help them increase the number of trained, front-line fire fighters available in their communities. The goal of SAFER is to enhance the local fire departments' abilities to comply with staffing, response, and operational standards established by the NFPA and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). (NFPA 1710 and/or NFPA 1720 and OSHA 1910.134).

http://www.fema.gov/firegrants/safer/index.shtm

Across the country, numerous volunteer and on-call fire departments have taken advantage of this federal program to entice and bolster fire-fighter recruitment and retention efforts. Hallowell, and perhaps its neighboring fire departments, should aggressively pursue this funding opportunity once they devise a program that would fit the profiled needs, in order to bring additional people into their local fire departments and retain them as viable resources for the long term.

To date, only a few Maine fire departments have implemented specified programs with SAFER funds intended to maintain and perhaps increase the ranks of volunteer and on-call fire fighters. The town of Levant instituted an insurance program for its fire fighters as an incentive to keep the on-call fire-fighter system intact and functioning. There are stipulations regarding attendance at department-sponsored programs and an individual's

response frequency to emergency incidents. Elsewhere throughout the Unites States, savvy fire departments have come up with unique programs to attract new people in to and retain volunteer and on-call personnel. (See success story link)

http://www.fema.gov/firegrants/program/success_stories/safer/MariposaCA_Success.shtm

4.3 Utilize public works and other city employees as fire fighters.

Current or future city employees could be encouraged or required to be included as members of the fire department. A new candidate applying for a vacant position with the city who is either already a fire fighter, or is willing to become one, would have preference over other candidates.

The new city employee would be inducted into the Hallowell fire department in addition to the actual job that he or she was specifically hired for. As an incentive, the employee could be a dual wage earner. If the employee is called to a fire incident while on the city payroll, the employee would be paid the fire department wage plus their wage from their full-time position.

The Town of South Berwick, Maine has crafted a unique relationship with at least one local business, reimbursing the employer for any time one of its employees leaves work and responds to emergency calls for the South Berwick Fire Department. The employee continues to receive his regular wage from his place of business, plus earn his fire department wage. This program may seem costly up front, yet it really has negated or deferred the need to hire full-time staff, which would likely be more expensive.

This town-initiated program is in place for its own employees as well. Several town employees such as the code enforcement officer and highway department personnel can leave their regular assignments and go to a fire call, all the while remaining on their regular payroll, plus receiving an hourly fire department wage.

Hallowell's leadership team, and not just the fire department administration, could work toward developing a symbiotic relationship between the business community and the city. The effort here would be to explore which businesses could potentially allow some of their employees who are fire fighters in their hometown beyond Hallowell to respond to fire incidents in the city during the hours they are working. To an extent, such an arrangement would hark back to a time when local businesses routinely stopped production to allow volunteer fire fighters to respond to fires in the community.

4.4 Hire a volunteer fire fighter "recruitment and retention coordinator."

On a regional or county level, consideration should be given to implementing a position of "fire fighter recruiter." The individual would be responsible for seeking out and encouraging residents and business people to join the ranks of their respective fire departments. The fire service in general has not done a good job of enlisting people into

fire-fighter roles. We expect people to come to us and express interest in the fire service, but we the fire service need to actively pursue other approaches.

The Town of Greenwich, Connecticut has such a recruiter position. This combination department has a core of about 100 career fire fighters, and at one time had several hundred volunteers. A few years ago, after seeing the number of volunteer members shrink dramatically, the town hired someone from within the fire service who had a business and marketing background. Since then, the volunteer ranks have increased five-fold. According to Greenwich officials, quality management and effective leadership was key in the redevelopment of the volunteer sector. The process and program is an ongoing one. The office of volunteer fire fighter recruitment and retention will continue to foster the volunteer sector. The town realizes the value of keeping someone fully focused on the needs of the volunteer service. In order to retain volunteers, the town recently gave the volunteer fire fighters a medical benefits program of up to $500 per month toward the purchase of health insurance.

In and around the Kennebec County area, as stated in the initial report, the Kennebec County Emergency Management Agency could be a logical governmental division where this office could be located. An attempt by one small, individual fire department to secure funding for a SAFER grant might be unlikely to succeed. But if the application were made on behalf of several departments, the chance of success would be greater. Many grants have been awarded to services that recognized the value of collaboration.

Funding for a variety of fire and EMS service enhancement programs is available through the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)—Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The purpose of the SAFER grant is to assist fire departments with the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters who are involved with, or trained in, the operations of firefighting and emergency response. The grants are intended to create a net increase in the number of trained, certified, and competent firefighters capable of safely responding to emergencies that are likely to occur within the grantee's geographic response area.

http://www.fema.gov/firegrants/docs/2010SAFERGuidance.pdf

GLOSSARY

(Note: These terms are from ISO publications)

Insurance Services Office (ISO) Public Protection Classification (PPC) Program. To help establish appropriate fire insurance premiums for residential and commercial properties, insurance companies need reliable, up-to-date information about a community's fire-protection services. ISO provides that information through the PPC program.

What is the PPC program?

ISO collects information on municipal fire-protection efforts in communities throughout the United States. In each of those communities, ISO analyzes the relevant data using our Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS). We then assign a Public Protection Classification from 1 to 10. Class 1 represents exemplary public protection, and Class 10 indicates that the area's fire-suppression program doesn't meet ISO's minimum criteria.

By classifying communities' ability to suppress fires, ISO helps the communities evaluate their public fire-protection services. The program provides an objective, countrywide standard that helps fire departments in planning and budgeting for facilities, equipment, and training. And by securing lower fire insurance premiums for communities with better public protection, the PPC program provides incentives and rewards for communities that choose to improve their firefighting services.

Alternative Water Supplies

The Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS) recognizes alternative water-supply systems, including dry hydrants, suction points, large-diameter hose relays, and hauled water using tanker shuttles.

The water-delivery system must be available 365 days a year and provide 250 gpm for a two-hour duration, within five minutes of the arrival of the first apparatus. If a community uses a dry hydrant or suction supply point, ISO may need certification of the water capacity available during a 50-year drought cycle. Many state and local governments have geological engineers or hydrologists who can provide that information. A good place to start is with the local department of environmental conservation.

ISO treats dry hydrants with suction points in the same way as it treats standard fire hydrants. Any property within 1,000 feet of a dry hydrant may be eligible for a protection class better than Class 9, provided the building is within five road miles of a responding fire station and the community has obtained 20% credit or more under the FSRS.

ISO may extend credit beyond 1,000 feet of a fire hydrant when the company uses large-diameter hose, if the fire department can demonstrate a standard procedure for deployment of hose and also establish a relay operation.

ISO may extend credit for the use of tanker-shuttle operations. In general, ISO divides the tanker capacity (minus 10% to account for spillage and incomplete filling and discharge) by the sum of the fill time, round-trip travel time, and discharge time of each tanker to determine a gpm capability. ISO considers all tankers, as well as the use of automatic- aid apparatus. If the community is capable of increasing the 250 gpm within 15 minutes of the arrival of the initial apparatus, and maintaining the flow for the duration (usually two hours), ISO will credit the higher delivery rate.

To determine your fire department's eligibility for recognition of a tanker shuttle, ISO needs to understand the delivery capability of each apparatus. ISO considers:

- Fire-site pump capacity
- Drop-tank capacities
- Distance of responding apparatus from the fire station to the fire site
- Distance of responding supply pumper to supply site
- Distance from the fire site to the supply site
- Amount of water carried by apparatus
- Discharge rate of water-supply apparatus
- Fill rate of water-supply apparatus
- Quantity of water available and the rate available from the supply source
- Set-up times

The procedure for determining your system's capability involves running a time-line analysis. ISO considers apparatus arrival times, travel times, discharge rates, fill rates, fire flow at the fire site, wait time for apparatus to fill or discharge their water supply, and supply delivery capability.

In grading a community, ISO *does* consider apparatus — including tankers, supply-point pumpers, and relay pumpers — that support the alternative water-supply effort as in-service engine companies. ISO does *not* consider apparatus located more than 1,000 feet from the fire site as fire-site engine companies. However, ISO *does* consider firefighters remaining at the fire site as company personnel.

ISO considers that second-alarm apparatus operated by paid drivers leave their fire stations 3 minutes after arrival of the first apparatus at the fire site. ISO considers that second-alarm apparatus operated by volunteer drivers leave their fire stations 6 minutes after arrival of the first apparatus at the fire site. The delay covers the time needed for decision (2 minutes), communication (1 minute), and assembly (3 minutes).

ISO's calculations assume that fire apparatus travel at 35 mph on average. ISO calculates the travel time according to the formula:

$$T = 0.65 + 1.7D$$

where T = the travel time in minutes
D = the distance in miles

ISO uses slower speeds for underpowered apparatus or apparatus laying hose lines.