CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY



BUSINESS PLAN 2027

Nanaimo Fire Rescue
COMMUNITY SERVICES

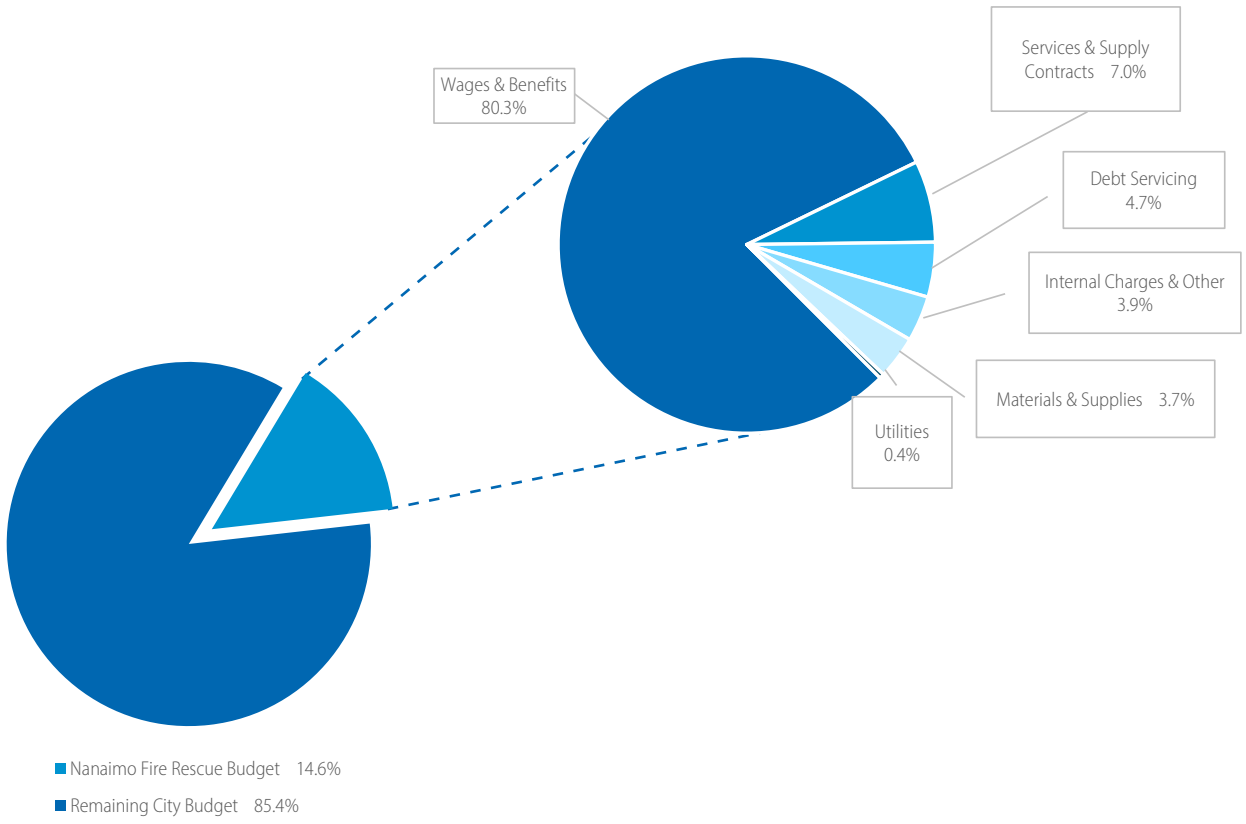
DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

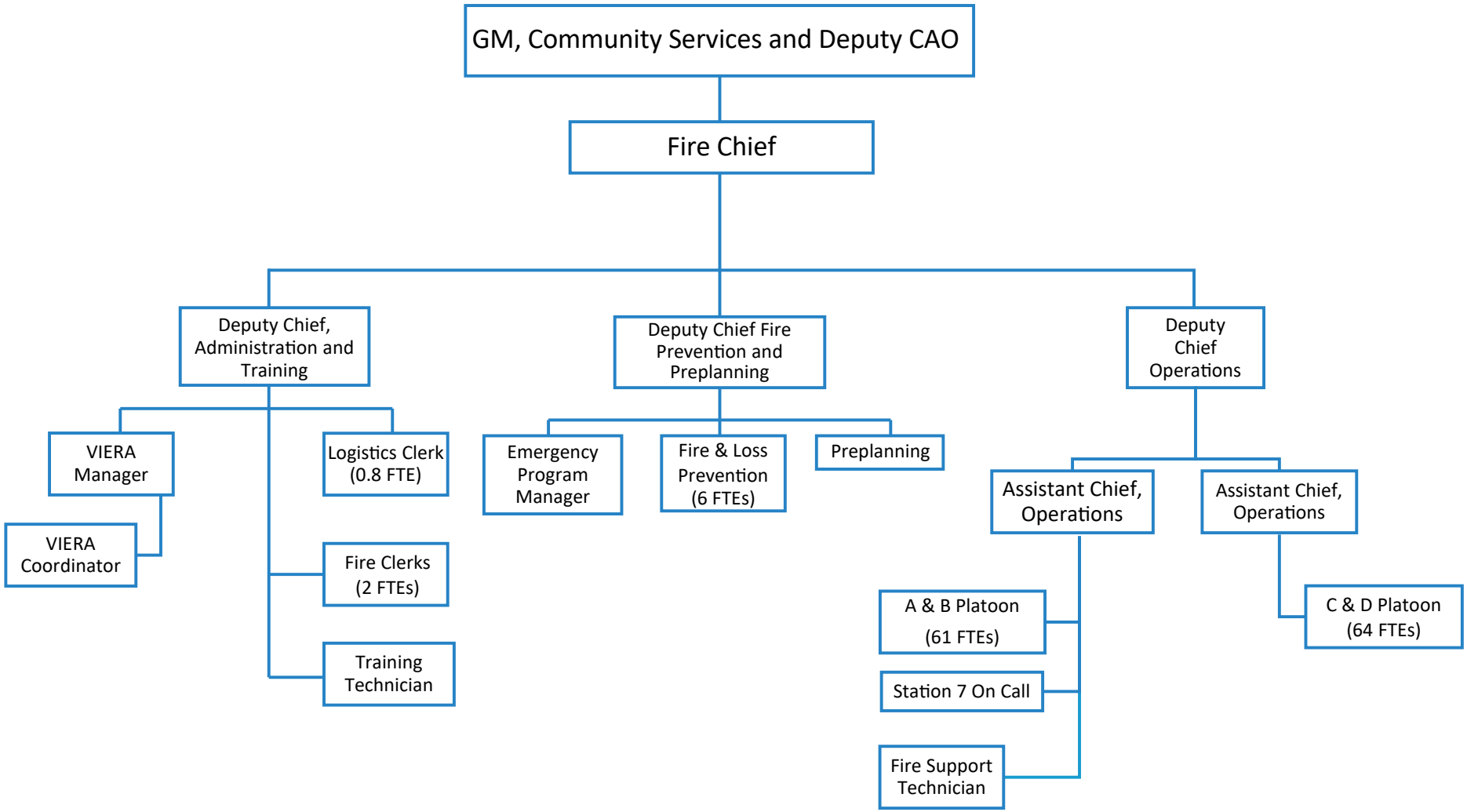
Nanaimo Fire Rescue (NFR) provides emergency and non-emergency services to preserve life, protect property and safeguard the environment, contributing to the overall well-being of the community. NFR responds to a wide range of incidents, including structure fires, wildfires, medical emergencies, motor vehicle incidents, hazardous materials responses, and specialized rescue operations such as water, ice, confined space and high-angle rescues.

NFR's core service areas include:

- Fire Operations
- Fire Loss Prevention Division (FLPD)
- Training, the Vancouver Island Emergency Response Academy (VIERA)
- Technology and Preplanning
- Emergency Management
- Administration
- Technical Support
- Fire Management.

Department's Share of Operating Expense Budget: $34.7 M




GM, Community Services and Deputy CAO
Fire Chief
Deputy Chief, Administration and Training
Deputy Chief Fire Prevention and Preplanning
Deputy Chief Operations
VIERA Manager
VIERA Coordinator
Logistics Clerk (0.8 FTE)
Fire Clerks (2 FTEs)
Training Technician
Emergency Program Manager
Fire & Loss Prevention (6 FTEs)
Preplanning
Assistant Chief, Operations
Assistant Chief, Operations
A & B Platoon (61 FTEs)
Station 7 On Call
Fire Support Technician
C & D Platoon (64 FTEs)

LEVEL OF SERVICE

NFR operates five fire stations. Four stations are staffed 24/7 by three platoons of 31 firefighters and one platoon of 32 firefighters, totaling 125 career firefighters. The fifth station, located on Protection Island, is staffed by paid on-call firefighters and supported by career personnel. With the addition of 20 firefighters in 2023 and 2025 as part of the Fire Rescue Master Plan, NFR is well positioned to deliver timely, effective, and comprehensive services. The department continually evaluates call volume, deployment and resource capacity to inform implementation of the final phase of the Fire Master Plan.

Community risk reduction is a core focus, achieved through fire inspections, investigations, prevention programs, and public education initiatives. These include the Smoke Alarm Installation Program, FireSmart BC, bystander CPR training and emergency preparedness.

NFR is strongly committed to wildfire prevention and preparedness through ongoing public education, specialized training, enhanced technology and equipment and active participation in BC FireSmart initiatives. The department also facilitates and participates in local and regional wildfire exercises and supports provincial wildfire responses when additional resources are required. These efforts strengthen community resilience and reduce wildfire risk both locally and provincially.

The FLPD includes six Fire Prevention Officers responsible for enforcing fire regulations through inspections, investigations and public education.

VIERA is a Pro Board-accredited training institution serving approximately 150 fire departments, primarily in British Columbia, with additional clients in Alberta, Nova Scotia and Quebec. It delivers more than 30 programs, generating revenue for the City and helping to offset operational costs.

NFR also administers the City of Nanaimo Emergency Program in accordance with the Emergency Program Act and City Bylaw 7202. This program ensures readiness to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies. It consists of three components: the Local Authority (Mayor and Council), the Emergency Management Committee and the Emergency Program Manager.

Emergency dispatch services are provided by E-Comm 9-1-1 and Surrey Fire Dispatch Services.

Through these services and activities, NFR plays a critical role in supporting a safe, resilient, and prepared community, addressing both day-to-day emergency response and long-term risk reduction. The department is committed to inclusive service delivery and fostering a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community it serves. NFR's strength is its people - highly trained professionals committed to service, continuous learning and community engagement.

	Benchmark	2025	2026 (Jan-June)
Incident Responses		11,637	6,511
Arrival of First Unit on Scene at Emergency Incidents within 6 minutes	90.0%	75.4%	74.9%
Arrival of Full Alarm Assignment at Emergency Incidents – Arrival within 10 minutes	90.0%	93.4%	93.9%
Turnout time within 60 sec for medical incidents	90.0%	42.6%	43.6%
Turnout time within 80 sec for non-medical emergency incidents	90.0%	52.8%	51.2%
Dispatch time within 60 sec	90.0%	99.0%	99.5%

NFPA standards establish industry best-practice benchmarks for emergency response performance. While these benchmarks provide important objectives for the department, consistently achieving them can be challenging due to factors such as incident and station location, travel distance, traffic conditions, training status, concurrent emergency calls, and the nature of individual incidents.

2026 ACHIEVEMENTS

2026 Department Achievements

- Fire Fleet apparatus replacement
- Training Center refurbishment
- Emergency Medical Responder training
- First Responder training
- Ongoing implementation of the FLPD consultant's report
- Equipment maintenance and purchasing
- Mutual Aid stakeholders regional exercise
- Fire Prevention Week Open House
- Emergency Management preparedness exercise
- Emergency Operations Center Open House
- Mental Health Initiatives
- FDIC Training Conference
- Smoke alarm installation program
- Bystander CPR high school program
- Public Education Collectable Trading Cards
- Pre-incident planning program
- BC Wildland - Urban Interface conference
- BC Wildfire deployment readiness
- FireSmart BC Open House presentations
- FireSmart BC home assessments
- FireSmart BC neighbourhood readiness - Protection Island, Long Lake Heights
- NFR Recognition Ceremony
- Island Ignite Sponsorship

2026 FLPD Achievements

- Fire investigations and inspections
- BC Fire Code enforcement
- Private hydrant safety
- Fire Prevention Officers' Association of BC Conference and International Association of Arson Investigators conference
- Modernized pre-planning program



2026 Training Achievements

- Live fire operations training
- Wildfire training
- Hazardous materials training
- Emergency driver training
- Fire truck operations training
- Fire ground survival training
- Aerial apparatus training
- Nanaimo Port Authority marine fire training
- Technical rope rescue training
- Tower crane training
- Water rescue training
- Cold-water rescue training
- Auto extrication rescue training
- Emergency Medical Responders (EMR) training
- Forcible entry training
- Fire Officer training
- Fire Training Officers' Conference
- Fire Training Center facility enhancements
- Critical Incident Stress Management training

- Station 7 – B.C. Structure Firefighter Minimum Training Standards
- Wildfire Engine Boss training
- Respectful Workplace training
- Medical training
- Rapid Intervention Team training

2026 VIERA Achievements

- Pro Board approval to conduct live remote practical evaluations
- First remote practical evaluations for Emergency Scene Management officer training successfully executed for students in Cranbrook BC
- Pro Board approval to transition to current NFPA 1550 Standard for Incident Safety Officer
- Pro Board approval to transition to current NFPA 1010 Standard for Fire Fighter I and II
- Pro Board approval to transition to current NFPA 1010 Standard for Driving and Pumping
- Evaluation tools, curriculum and learning management system platforms updated to support NFPA 1550 and NFPA 1010 programs.
- New curriculum on Advanced Fire Ground Safety and Strategies and Tactics for the Modern Fire Ground delivered at the BC Fire Training Officers Association Educational Conference
- BC Fire Training Officers Association Vendor Expo

2026 Operations Achievements

- Operation's Leadership Team leadership meetings
- Bystander CPR program instructed Grade 8's throughout the district
- All staff enrolled in the BC Fire Fighter Occupational Awareness Mental Health Program
- Labour-Management Mental Health Committee reinstated
- Mental Health Headspace App offered to all staff
- New Critical Incident Stress Management team members trained
- New 24-hour Critical Incident Stress Management streamlined communications
- Enhanced practices to reduce exposure to carcinogens during live fire training
- Parks, Recreation and Culture Wildfire Park Preparedness
- Regional Wildfire exercise

2026 Emergency Program Achievements

- Distributed the Emergency Management Plan to stakeholders.
- Business Continuity Planning.
- Delivered Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) training.
- Implemented seasonal cold-weather response measures.
- Implemented seasonal hot-weather response measures.
- Conducted an EOC windstorm activation exercise.
- Continued implementation of the Climate Hazard Assessment Report.
- Developed the Emergency Planning and Safety Guide for City Events.
- Attended the BC Emergency Management Building Resilience Conference.
- Participated in regional emergency management stakeholder meetings.
- Attended the UBC Disaster Resilience Risk Network Annual Workshop and contributed to provincial HRVA governance initiatives.
- Coordinated with SFN and RDN partners to utilize Indigenous Engagement funding
- Conducted a city-wide Voyent Alert emergency notification drill during Shake-Out.
- Supported Sea Level Rise Management Plan.
- Supported Coastal Emergency Communications Association conducting a full-scale emergency communications exercise.
- Attended the Salish Unity 2025 Maritime Mass Rescue Operation (MMRO) tabletop exercise and supported the NPA in developing Nanaimo's MMRO plan.
- Secured Community Emergency Preparedness grant funding for Emergency Operations Center audio/video equipment upgrades.
- Secured funding through a regional partnership for 500 emergency sleeping cots to support Group Lodging Centre activations.
- Presented the Climate Hazard Assessment and Mapping Project at the Building Resilient Communities Conference in Penticton.

2027 OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSIDERATIONS

A Green Nanaimo: Resilient & Regenerative Ecosystems

NFR continues to advance environmentally responsible operations that support the City's climate and sustainability goals.

In 2025, NFR introduced three new fire apparatus equipped with anti-idling technology, reducing engine idle time, fuel consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and equipment wear. These vehicles complement two existing apparatus with similar systems, further improving fleet efficiency and environmental performance. In 2027 and 2028, new apparatus incorporating this same technology are scheduled for delivery, further advancing alignment with the Green Nanaimo initiative.

NFR's newest fire station, completed in 2022, was designed with energy efficiency as a key priority, incorporating features that reduce emissions while lowering long-term operating costs.

The department is also modernizing firefighter personal protective equipment by sourcing turnout gear from manufacturers that adhere to responsible labour standards and sustainable production practices, including reduced material waste and packaging. As part of this transition, NFR is adopting non-PFAS personal protective equipment that eliminates the use of persistent "forever chemicals," supporting both environmental protection and firefighter health and safety.

In alignment with non-PFAS initiatives, NFR is replacing legacy firefighting foams used for fuel-related fires with non-PFAS alternative foam. This transition reduces the risk of environmental contamination, particularly to soil and water systems, while maintaining effective fire suppression capabilities and ensuring firefighter safety.

Through these measures, NFR is integrating sustainability into its operations, contributing to the protection of local ecosystems and supporting a more resilient and environmentally responsible community.

A Healthy Nanaimo: Community, Wellbeing & Livability

The 2022 Fire Department Master Plan provided a comprehensive review of fire and emergency service delivery in Nanaimo, supporting informed decision-making and long-term service excellence.



Phase 1, implemented in 2023, added 20 firefighters, followed by an additional 20 firefighters in Phase 2 in 2025. These investments have significantly enhanced Nanaimo Fire Rescue's (NFR) capacity to deliver timely, effective, all-hazards emergency response. Increased staffing has improved operational resilience during concurrent incidents, large-scale events, and complex emergencies, including wildfires and medium- to high-risk scenarios such as low- and high-rise fires and responses in higher-density developments. Each phase enabled the deployment of an additional fully staffed fire engine, improving response coverage across the community.

The Master Plan also identified future considerations, including the potential development of an additional fire station and the introduction of smaller, multi-purpose vehicles to complement the existing fire fleet and address evolving service demands.

NFR will continue to monitor incident trends, population growth, and development patterns to ensure resources and service levels remain aligned with community needs.

NFR contributes to a safe, livable, and resilient community through proactive public engagement, education and risk reduction initiatives. Programs such as the Smoke Alarms Save Lives campaign support early fire detection and life safety through direct installation initiatives. Bystander CPR training provides residents with life-saving skills, while FireSmart BC programs provide practical tools and education to help residents reduce wildfire risk to their homes and neighbourhoods. NFR also hosts regional wildfire training and implemented a new Wildfire Structural Protection Unit, further strengthening local and regional response capacity.

Ongoing implementation of recommendations from the FLPD consultant review - including enhancements to training, inspection and pre-planning programs, equipment, and strategic priorities - will continue to strengthen fire prevention outcomes and reduce community risk.

The City's Emergency Management Program further enhances community safety by improving preparedness for emerging hazards through risk monitoring, seasonal planning and effective emergency communications. Central to the program is the Emergency Operations Centre, which coordinates the City's response and recovery efforts during major emergencies. Public education and outreach initiatives remain essential for increasing hazard awareness and promoting personal and community preparedness.

A Prosperous Nanaimo: Thriving & Resilient Economy

The Vancouver Island Emergency Response Academy, operated by Nanaimo Fire Rescue (NFR), provides accredited, high-quality training to fire departments across British Columbia and beyond. By delivering recognized certification programs locally, VIERA improves access to professional training while reducing travel costs and time for NFR and participating agencies.

VIERA continues to expand its program offerings to meet evolving industry standards and the needs of both internal and external partners. Its operations support fire service development, strengthening emergency response and firefighter safety across the region.

Revenue generated through VIERA helps offset NFR operating costs, contributing to responsible fiscal management while reinvesting in advanced training for NFR personnel. This model supports both organizational excellence and the broader regional economy by attracting training participants to Nanaimo and reinforcing the City's role as a hub for emergency services education.

2027 KEY INITIATIVES

Strategic Priority: Implementing City Plan
IAP Priority Action #C1.21 - Continue to use social media, online platforms and other tools such as the Emergency Call Alert System – called Voyent Alert, to share seasonal hazard information related to fire, heat waves, flooding, wind, storm, or other seasonal events.
IAP Priority Action #C1.2.3 - Use a climate risk and vulnerability assessment method to be used for reviewing large capital infrastructure investments in the city (e.g. a Public Infrastructure Engineering Vulnerability Committee (PIEVC)).
IAP Priority Action #C1.2.4 - Update and implement the City's Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan.
IAP Priority Action #C1.2.7 - Undertake a community education campaign on FireSmart practices including park use fire safety and awareness, areas of higher potential fire risk, Fire Smart principles in private landscapes (balanced with tree protection and retention), and, FireSmart building materials, such as non-flammable roofing, siding and thermal pane windows.
IAP Priority Action #C1.2.10 - Develop guidelines and priorities for managing wildfire risk, sea level rise, and extreme weather events for City parks and infrastructure, and budget implement them as part of regular budgeting and maintenance.
IAP Priority Action #C3.1.1 - Work with fire, police, and ambulance services to maintain emergency response times.

IAP Priority Action #C3.1.4 - Continue offering public education programs such as smoke alarm installation, bystander CPR, and the FireSmart program.

IAP Priority Action #C3.1.5 - Continue Fire Loss Prevention through inspection of commercial and public buildings, building plan checks, business license inspections, fire safety plan reviews, fire code and bylaw enforcement, public education and fire investigations.

IAP Priority Action #C3.1.2 - Support public safety and security through:

- Fire Rescue Services
- RCMP & Community Policing
- Bylaw Enforcement
- Extreme weather response
- Graffiti Program
- Shower program
- Emergency food

IAP Priority Action #C3.1.8 - Support grants to fund health, safety, and security initiatives.

IAP Priority Action #C3.1.22 - As per the actions in the Fire Master Plan, construct a new fire station midway between Stations 1 and 2.

IAP Priority Action #C3.1.26 - Explore new opportunities to expand mental health supports for fire department staff.

IAP Priority Action #C3.1.30 - Prepare for adoption and changes to the BC Fire Code, BC Building Code and Fire Safety Act.

IAP Priority Action #C3.1.40 - Annually review projections and demand for RCMP, Fire Department, and Bylaw Enforcement staffing needs to support a growing community

IAP Priority Action #C3.5.1 - Maintain upcoming seasonal hazard awareness and overall organizational readiness.

IAP Priority Action #C3.5.2 - Conduct staff training and periodic emergency exercises to refine response programming.

IAP Priority Action #C3.5.3 - Lead and enhance the Emergency Social Services volunteer program and explore opportunities for further development.

IAP Priority Action #C3.5.4 - Develop functional capability and formalize processes for public alerting via Voyent Alert.

IAP Priority Action #C3.5.5 - Engage with community members to provide education on personal preparedness and neighbourhood resilience.

IAP Priority Action #C3.5.6 - Update the rapid damage assessment program.

IAP Priority Action #C3.5.7 - Update the Emergency Response and Recovery Plan.

IAP Priority Action #C3.5.8 - Update the Hazard Risk Vulnerability Assessment.

IAP Priority Action #C3.5.9 - Create and implement an emergency communication plan for the public.

IAP Priority Action #C3.5.11 - Maintain the business continuity plan for the City and lead the future updates to this project.

IAP Priority Action #C3.5.12 - Build relationships with industry partners, focusing on critical infrastructure and hazardous materials, to coordinate response planning and better understand the industrial risk landscape.

IAP Priority Action #C4.8.1 - Host, permit and support festivals, celebrations, sporting, and other events in public spaces such as Family Day, Concerts in the Park, Pride Festival and Blues Festivals.

IAP Priority Action #C4.8.7 - Facilitate and expand the support for large events and festivals to offer alternative transportation and bike valets for events such as the National Truth & Reconciliation, VIEX, Silly Boat, and Marine Festival.

Strategic Priority: Social, Health and Public Safety Challenges

Advance FireSmart BC initiatives to reduce community wildfire risk and improve neighbourhood resilience

Deliver public education programs including Smoke Alarms Save Lives, bystander CPR, emergency preparedness, and wildfire awareness.

Explore opportunities for a comprehensive Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Assessment to identify and prioritize emerging risks facing the community.

Enhance emergency management readiness through training, exercises, public alerting systems, and community engagement initiatives.

Support community safety through coordinated partnerships, emergency planning, and preparedness for extreme weather and major emergencies.

Strategic Priority: Maintaining and Growing Current Services

Continue implementation of the Fire Rescue Master Plan by monitoring community growth, incident trends, and service demands to guide future staffing and infrastructure decisions.

Maintain timely and effective all-hazards emergency response through ongoing investment in personnel, training, equipment, and technology.

Enhance operational readiness through continuous improvements in training, pre-incident planning, and emergency response capabilities.

Strengthen community risk reduction through fire prevention inspections, investigations, public education, and emergency preparedness programs.

Support firefighter health, wellness, and professional development to maintain a resilient and highly skilled workforce.

Strategic Priority: Capital Projects

Advance Station 7 renovation planning and design consultation to support evolving operational requirements and aging infrastructure.

Continue strategic fleet replacement and modernization to improve reliability, efficiency, and emergency response capabilities.

Evaluate future fire station requirements identified through the Fire Rescue Master Plan to support community growth.

Invest in training facilities, technology, and emergency management infrastructure to enhance organizational readiness.

Incorporate climate resilience and sustainability considerations into future fire and emergency services infrastructure, equipment, and fleet investment and replacement.

Strategic Priority: Communicating with the Community
Deliver timely, accurate, and accessible information to residents and stakeholders through a variety of communication channels, including social media, the City website, public meetings, and community events.
Strengthen public awareness of emergency preparedness, wildfire risk reduction, fire safety, and life-saving programs through proactive education and outreach initiatives.
Enhance emergency communications by expanding the use of Voyent Alert and other public notification tools to keep residents informed before, during, and after emergencies.
Foster trust and confidence through transparent communication, responsive engagement, and regular updates on Fire Rescue initiatives, programs, and community safety projects.
Build strong relationships with residents, businesses, community organizations, Indigenous partners, and regional stakeholders to support collaboration and shared responsibility for community safety and resilience.
Strategic Priority: Governance and Corporate Excellence
Update and align Fire Protection and Life Safety Regulation Bylaw No. 7108 with the new British Columbia Fire Safety Act.
Continue implementation of Fire Loss Prevention Division consultant recommendations to strengthen prevention and regulatory compliance programs.
Support Vancouver Island Emergency Response Academy (VIERA) accreditation, curriculum modernization, and standards compliance.
Leverage technology, data, and performance monitoring to support evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement.
Foster organizational excellence through leadership development, workforce wellness, training and collaborative partnerships.

PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET

	2026 Approved Budget	2027 Draft Budget	2028 Draft Budget	2029 Draft Budget	2030 Draft Budget	2031 Draft Budget
Revenues						
Nanaimo Fire Rescue	$ 1,501,226	$ 1,532,779	$ 1,454,674	$ 1,463,254	$ 1,520,484	$ 1,530,380
Emergency Management	-	-	-	-	-	-
Emergency Communications (911)	487,589	448,903	467,889	498,505	481,685	441,111
Annual Operating Revenues	**$ 1,988,815**	**$ 1,981,682**	**$ 1,922,563**	**$ 1,961,759**	**$ 2,002,169**	**$ 1,971,491**
Expenditures						
Nanaimo Fire Rescue	$ 31,831,949	$ 32,864,465	$ 33,603,784	$ 34,676,277	$ 35,463,080	$ 36,300,344
Emergency Management	273,339	306,730	317,381	325,846	333,715	341,767
Emergency Communications (911)	1,443,000	1,483,399	1,562,582	1,664,180	1,674,907	1,640,201
Annual Operating Expenditures	**$ 33,548,288**	**$ 34,654,594**	**$ 35,483,747**	**$ 36,666,303**	**$ 37,471,702**	**$ 38,282,312**
Net Annual Operating Expenditures	**$ 31,559,473**	**$ 32,672,912**	**$ 33,561,184**	**$ 34,704,544**	**$ 35,469,533**	**$ 36,310,821**
Staffing (FTEs) - Budgeted	145.8	145.8	145.8	145.8	145.8	145.8

** For 2026 funding for the new CUPE contract and management increases is budgeted in committed contingency under Corporate Services*

*** For 2027 to 2031 contingency for a new IAFF collective agreement is budgeted in committed contingency under Corporate Services*

	2026 Approved Budget	2027 Draft Budget	2028 Draft Budget	2029 Draft Budget	2030 Draft Budget	2031 Draft Budget
Expenditure Summary						
Wages & Benefits	$ 27,026,874	$ 27,826,215	$ 28,870,706	$ 29,897,660	$ 30,518,731	$ 31,201,651
Services & Supply Contracts	2,352,322	2,440,290	2,538,640	2,659,187	2,689,852	2,676,678
Materials & Supplies	1,178,285	1,275,285	1,262,412	1,196,400	1,243,697	1,286,917
Utilities	126,200	138,800	141,576	144,408	147,295	150,240
Internal Charges & Other	1,267,594	1,361,441	1,435,773	1,514,327	1,597,603	1,671,564
Debt Servicing	1,593,513	1,609,063	1,231,140	1,250,821	1,271,024	1,291,762
Grants & Subsidies	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500
Annual Operating Expenditures	**$ 33,548,288**	**$ 34,654,594**	**$ 35,483,747**	**$ 36,666,303**	**$ 37,471,702**	**$ 38,282,312**