



# Immokalee Fire Control District

## FIVE YEAR Comprehensive Plan

2019 – 2024

Original October 2019

Revised October 2022

## Introduction

Florida Statute 191.013(2) requires that each independent special fire control District adopt a five-year plan to identify the facilities, equipment, personnel, and revenue needed by the District during the five-year period. This document is prepared in accordance with Florida Statute 191.013(2).

Immokalee Fire Control District (the District) is a distinctive entity in territory, diversity, and philosophy. Therefore, a history and background of the District is included.

The Immokalee Fire Control District is an independent special district providing fire rescue services to 234 square miles within the northern portion of Collier County. The fire district provides service to the towns of Immokalee, Ave Maria, and the surrounding agricultural interests. The District is governed by an elected five-member Board of Commissioners serving varying four-year terms and is comprised of 37 paid, highly skilled and dedicated personnel providing essential life safety, prevention, administrative, safety, education and emergency mitigation services.

A modern fire rescue District must function as a business while being paramilitary in nature. This allows for the efficient and effective use of time, resources and funds. To expand, business style management is used in the administration of the organization, while a paramilitary management style is used in emergency mitigation.

The District recognizes the importance of long-term planning, and this new 5-year plan will provide objectives and guidelines that will ensure the ever changing needs of the District and community are met. The plan establishes a foundation for the District to follow and creates a baseline by which to monitor and evaluate the success of the organization. The plan contains the following sections:

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## **History of Immokalee**

**Immokalee** is an unincorporated area and a census-designated place (CDP) here in Collier County, Florida, United States. Originally the region was occupied by the Calusa Indians and centuries later occupied by the Seminole, after they moved down from the northern part of Florida. Initially the settlement was known as Gopher Ridge by the Seminole and Miccosukee Indians. Immokalee means "My Home" in Miccosukee language.

When the swamps were drained in the region, agriculture became the dominant industry. European-American hunters, trappers, Indian traders, cowmen, and missionaries moved in before the development of permanent villages. The first permanent settlement was founded in 1872. In 1921 the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad was extended south to Immokalee.

Today, Immokalee is the center of the region's agriculture industry and home to many immigrant and migrant families who work the vast fields which produce a large amount of the United States' fresh produce. Crops include cucumbers, bell peppers, citrus and about 90% of the nation's tomatoes that are harvested during the winter months.

## **Purpose of This Plan**

In general, comprehensive plans provide the mechanism for organizations to align goals and service needs, strategically manage resources, improve service delivery, and cooperate with other jurisdictions. The Immokalee Fire Control District (IFCD) has adopted a second purpose for planning, as follows.

“A Five Year Strategic Plan is the document to establish detailed direction and actions for the IFCD’s near future (1-2 years) and broad direction for the remaining years of (4 and 5). Current data and projections (covering the time period of the plan) pertinent to the operation of the fire district will be used to formulate the actions in the strategic plan and will be included in a form that is easily updated every year. Financials will be applied to the actions and be integrated into the budget for future taxing authority decisions and balancing the service needs with the cost.”

## **Relationship to Other Plans/Reports**

The IFCD 2019-2024 Comprehensive Plan meets the State of Florida requirements to prepare Public Facilities Reports (PFRs). Special districts must submit PFRs to their appropriate local government authority. They must identify existing facilities owned and operated by the special district and must include the current capacity of each facility, estimate demand, and document facility locations. The PFR must describe any public facility the district is building, planning to build, or expanding over the next five years. PFRs must be based on data gathered from the district and other sources and analyzed in such a way as to make future projections.

### **Key Points**

- IFCD has a long history of service to the community with a number of changes to its mandate.
- IFCD has periodically experienced change and turnover in its administrative structure.
- IFCD has grown 21.6% from the 2010 US Census of 24,154 people to 30,779 people in the 2020 US Census.
- IFCD jurisdiction overlaps southern and western portion Hendry County, eastern Lee County and shares jurisdictional borders with North Collier Fire Control District and Greater Naples Fire and Rescue District.
- IFCD has embraced the opportunity to manage and direct change through the mechanism of a comprehensive planning process.

### **Methodology**

The Collier County Property Appraiser's office was resourced for the most current data on property use, ownership, number, and type of structures in the district. The Property Appraiser data provides important information on assessed values and the number of structures at risk of fire or hurricane damage. The main limitation of Property Appraiser data is that it lacks population estimates. Together, the Property Appraiser and the U.S. Census provides a relatively accurate description of the district demographics.

## Commissioners and Staff

- Patricia Goodnight – Commission Chairperson
  - Joseph Brister – Commission Vice-Chairperson
  - Robert Halman – Commission Secretary/Treasurer
  - Bonnie Keen– Commissioner
  - Donald Gunther – Commissioner
  - Laura Donaldson – District/ Legislative Attorney
  - Lara Donlon – District Labor Attorney
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### **Command / Administration:**

- Michael J. Choate – Fire Chief
  - Thomas Cunningham – Deputy Fire Chief of Operations
  - Becky Bronsdon – Chief Financial Officer (Part Time)
  - (Vacant) – Executive Assistant
  - Alma Valladares – Secretary/Receptionist
  - Derek Neuman – Battalion Chief of Support Services
  - Joshua Bauer—Battalion Chief Administration
  - Jason Burr – Captain, Administration (Information Technology) (Part Time)
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### **Officers:**

Robert Mendoza – Battalion Chief

Alan Davis – Lieutenant

Cody Rodgers – Battalion Chief

Christian Bartis – Lieutenant

David Patterson – Battalion Chief

Robert Rookard – Lieutenant

Winston Summeralls – Lieutenant

James Eidel, Jr. - Lieutenant

Jesse Necolettos – Lieutenant

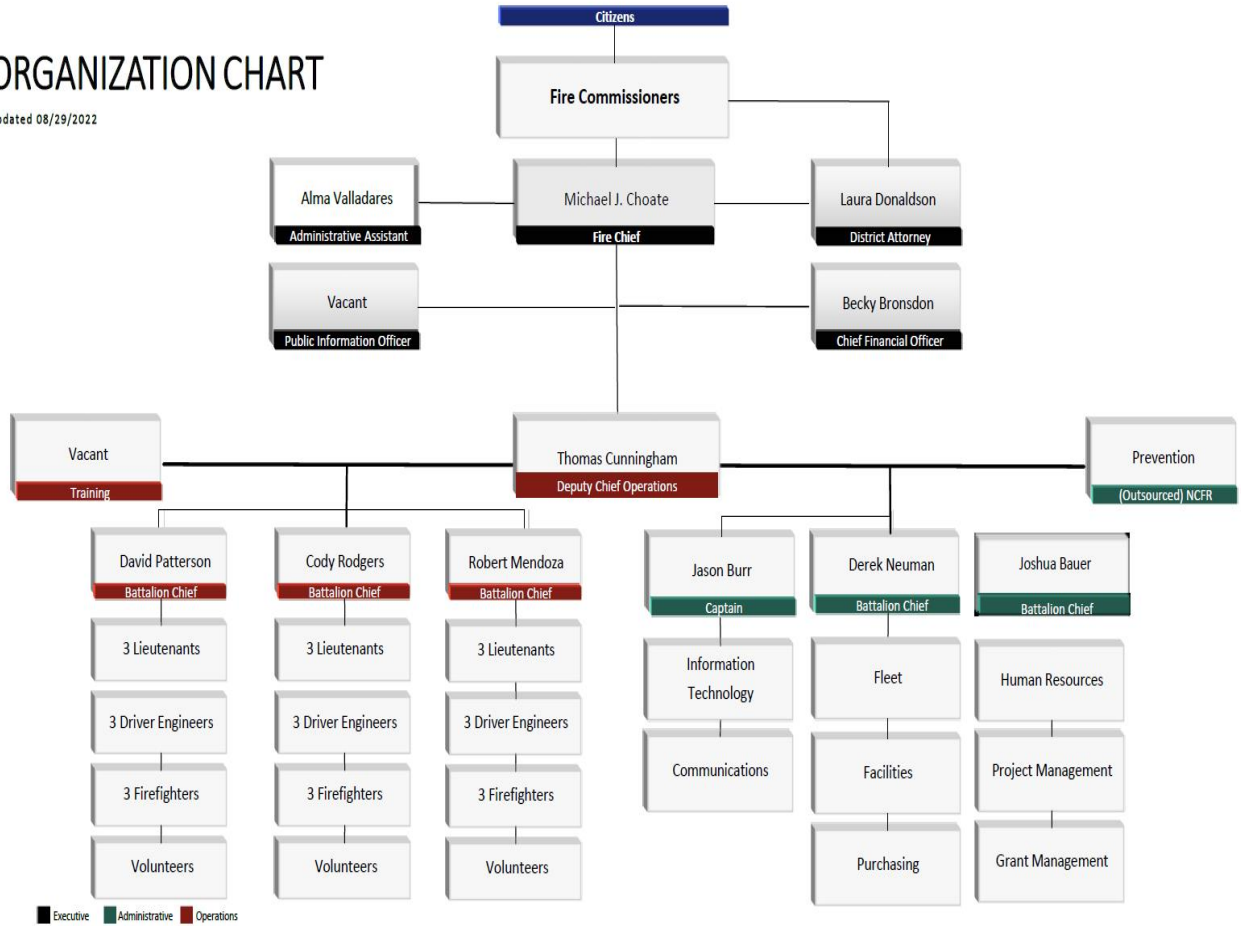
Javier Barcelá - Lieutenant

Justin Strickland – Lieutenant

Mitch Van Tine – Lieutenant

# ORGANIZATION CHART

Updated 08/29/2022



## Mission Statement

Whereas, The Immokalee Fire Control District is committed to protecting the people and property within our community; we will be responsive to the needs of our citizens by providing rapid, professional, humanitarian services essential to the health, safety, and well-being of the community. This mission will be accomplished through prevention, education, fire suppression, first responder and EMT service as well as other emergency and non-emergency activities. We will actively participate in our community, serve as role models, and strive to effectively and efficiently use all of the necessary resources at our command to provide a product deemed excellent by our citizens.

## Demographics/Profile

Population 2020 Census		Estimated Household income in 2020		
Immokalee CDP	Ave Maria CDP	Immokalee CDP	Ave Maria CDP	Collier County
<b>24,537</b>	<b>6,242</b>	<b>\$33,249</b>	<b>\$69,421</b>	<b>\$70,217</b>

Median Resident Age		
Immokalee CDP	Ave Maria CDP	Collier County
<b>29.4 Years</b>	<b>44.1 Years</b>	<b>51.3 Years</b>

	Immokalee CDP	Ave Maria CDP	Collier County
<b>White Alone</b>	<b>58.4%</b>	<b>90.3%</b>	<b>89.2%</b>
<b>Black or African American alone</b>	<b>22.7%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>7.3%</b>
<b>American Indian and Alaska Native alone</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>
<b>Asian alone</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
<b>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>
<b>Two or More Races</b>	<b>13.5%</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	<b>70.8%</b>	<b>46.8%</b>	<b>29.0%</b>
<b>White alone, not Hispanic or Latino</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>48.6%</b>	<b>61.7%</b>

## **District Revenues**

The District’s revenues come from 4 main sources, ad valorem taxes, impact fees, fees for service, and inspection fees. Each source is discussed:

### **Ad Valorem Taxes**

The maximum millage rate allowed by the State of Florida for special districts is 3.750 mills per \$1,000.00 of property value; Immokalee Fire Control District currently has a maximum cap of 3.750 mils and has charged that rate for the last 6 budget years. In the event it were to become financially necessary to raise the millage cap above the 3.750 mil limit the voters of the District would have to approve.

The revenues are controlled by the County Property Appraisers Office. They govern the Fair Market Value, and the Assessed Value. New construction that comes on the Tax Roll is also assessed.

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Ad Valorem Revenue</b>	<b>Millage Rate</b>
2018-2019	\$3,920,526	3.750
2019-2020	\$4,193,763	3.750
2020-2021	\$4,653,970	3.750
2021-2022	\$4,987,520	3.750
2022-2023	\$5,963,864	3.750

### **Impact Fees**

Impact fees are assessed on all new construction projects in the District. Collection of impact fees has remained steady in recent years and has remained ahead of other fire districts in the county in the last couple of years. Impact fees are restricted for use on new capital expenditures that are growth related.

### **Inspection Fees**

The District has entered into an agreement with North Collier Fire Rescue to perform all inspections and plans review. NCFR has become the AHJ due to the agreement and all fees for those services are paid to NCFR for their time to perform those tasks.

### **Fee for Service**

Unlike previous years the District no longer has any active service agreements.



## **Sustainability**

The District recognizes the importance of providing adequate fire protection, rescue services and prevention to the community. In order to ensure adequate funds are available to meet organizational needs both now, and in the future for capital improvement, fire prevention, emergency services, training and education, the District has established the following objectives.

### **Objectives:**

- The District has funded the operating budget for its reserve accounts. The District's Auditors have stressed the importance of strengthening and maintaining our Operating Reserve Account. Their recommendation is to maintain a minimum of 3 months operating reserves with a goal of 5 months' worth or 35% to 55% of our total operating budget. The District will strive to accomplish this within the next 5 years.
- The District has and will continue to spend its money wisely and uses the state bid process to save funds wherever possible. The District has its funds in high yield money market accounts. The District has 2 Money Market type accounts; one for Ad Valorem monies and one for Impact Fees. There is also a checking account where money is transferred for the payroll and bank drafts used by the District to fund the costs of the District. The District also has a Business VISA card with Bank of America.
- The District will continue to review the impact fee structure and consult with the Board to make impact fees fair and equitable for all.
- The District continues to develop investment policies, as well as inventory control policies, accounting policies, and capitalization procedures to maintain accurate records and manage the District's resources. The District also works very closely with its auditors to keep up to date on any procedures or policies that the auditor might recommend.
- The District is constantly pursuing grants to fund special projects, equipment and manpower and will continue to do so.
- The District will continue to educate the public on the financial status of the District, as well as inform them of the future goals of the fire District.

## **District Growth and Development**

Since 2001 there has been tremendous growth in South West Florida. Where some areas have exploded in population and growth, Immokalee has experienced more conservative growth. With the exception of Ave Maria, business growth has been only moderate.

As other areas have seen large rises in property values, Immokalee experienced modest increases. By the same token as other areas are now experiencing a catastrophic decline in values and accompanying revenues, Immokalee has experienced a leveling effect with slight

decline. New Construction stopped for a short period and has now leveled off into a steady baseline.

Ave Maria Community including Del-Webb is continually building houses after depleting the inventory of homes to be sold.

Expansion of the Airport is of major interest to the District in a number of ways. In terms of service requirements; expansion would lead to Immokalee Fire to expand our services to Crash-Fire Rescue. This is a dedicated service that would require a specific apparatus, special training, and a dedicated minimum of 9 personnel for us to provide. Business growth at the airport would be of benefit to the District revenue.

The District recognizes the importance of long-term planning for future growth and development and has established the following general objectives in order to meet the demands of a changing District.

**Objectives:**

- To ensure that new growth and development within the District is coordinated through the District and that provisions for additional resources and facilities are available to meet the needs of this growth, and that the integrity and autonomy of the District is preserved and protected.
- The District shall maintain the independent integrity of the District, monitor activities related to merger and/or annexation, and become an active participant in all proceedings for the benefit of residents within the District.
- The District shall continue to coordinate with Collier County's Growth Management Plan and its adopted Fire Protection Plan.
- The District shall monitor the provision of services by adjacent jurisdictions and seek to offer its services in adjacent areas, as needed.
- The District shall plan for future expansion of existing District facilities, establish standards for manpower, equipment and resources for new stations, provide new facilities based on growth patterns within the District, as the need arises, and coordinate site location criteria with adjacent jurisdictions.
- New District substations shall be located within the District in areas that have been identified where service delivery requirement needs are enhanced due to current and projected call volumes.
- District growth has demanded change in personnel, equipment, communications and information technology. External organizational environment factors, such as local automatic mutual aid procedures, State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) requirements; Insurance Services Office (ISO), National Fire Protection Administration (NFPA), etc. have also required the organization to adjust. The District will address these important issues in this report.

## **Automatic and Mutual Aid**

Growth and development in Collier County has encouraged area Districts to work together in a collaborative effort to provide better services to the public of Collier County. The District recognizes the importance of establishing procedures within the organization to meet the needs of this county-wide goal and has established the following objectives.

### **Objectives:**

- Ensure that the District enters into both automatic and mutual aid agreements with parties of like interest to provide the best possible service to our citizens and those neighboring us.
- The District shall continue to support existing, and enter into any needed additional inter-local Agreements with other units of local government including, but not limited to, independent special Districts, municipalities, counties, the State, Seminole Tribe, and other jurisdictions as created. To facilitate the provision of services, coordinate the County's overall emergency plan for the community and to ensure that efficiencies are met, duplication of effort is reduced and adequate coverage is maintained for the maximum population at the lowest possible cost.
- The District has entered into many inter-local agreements with other fire agencies, most recently with North Collier Fire District, Greater Naples Fire District, Collier County EMS, Collier County Emergency Management, and Division of Forestry. The District has also entered into agreements with the State of Florida in respect to their State Emergency Response Plan (SERP).
- The District entered into an interlocal agreement with North Collier Fire and Rescue District to provide EVT and ASE Certified mechanics for our apparatus maintenance needs.
- The District is also aware of the subject of consolidation. The District will take part in any consolidation study it is asked to participate in. The District continues to search for ways to improve and will continue to search for items that can be shared by multiple like agencies. Examples of this would be administrative services, group purchasing of medical supplies, firefighting equipment, and specialized services.

## **Insurance Services Office (ISO)**

The District strives to comply with the Insurance Services Office (ISO) requirements in an effort to provide better insurance rates to the community. The District's current ISO rating is a 5/5X. The District plans to continue to improve by using a good record keeping management program with regard to training, hydrant maintenance and proper apparatus purchases and vehicle maintenance. The District has established objectives pertaining to ISO.

## Objectives:

- Strive to improve the District's ISO rating of a "5/5X".
- A new ISO evaluation was performed in the winter of 2019
- The District shall continue to update and purchase the necessary equipment and apparatus to achieve a lower ISO rating.
- The District will continue to maintain the proper training programs to achieve a lower ISO rating.
- The District shall endeavor to employ the sufficient amount of manpower required to achieve the mission of the District and a lower ISO rating.
- The District shall continue to use state of the art communications systems sufficient to achieve a lower ISO rating.
- The District will collaborate with Immokalee Water and Sewer District and Ave Maria Utilities to provide Hydrant testing and records.

## Facilities

The District continues to operate 3 stations for emergency response to calls throughout the 234 square miles of our District as well as mutual aid to the surrounding areas.

- Station 30 – located at 502 New Market Rd. East
  - a. Current demands – Fire, medical, rescue, prevention, Community/departmental conference and training room. Building has 4 bay spaces for apparatus and no additional storage space. Multiple apparatus are exposed to the elements. (Construction to replace this station at 510 New Market Rd started in December of 2021 with a completion targeted for Spring of 2023)
- Station 31 – located at 1107 Carson Road Current demands –
  - a. (Closed for Fire Operations Nov 2018)
- Station 32 – located at 5368 Useppa Dr.
  - a. Current demands – Fire, medical, rescue, prevention and administrative offices. The Districts Emergency Command Center, community/ departmental conference and training room, also where the monthly Board meetings are held. This is a joint facility shared by Immokalee Fire, Collier County EMS, and Collier County Sheriff's Office.

The District is proactively moving forward with facility project projection goals and is strategically planning to secure properties for future stations located in areas of the District that will see future growth.

## Apparatus

In 2008 the District took delivery of 2 new E-One Pumper apparatus (Engines 30 and 32). In 2015 the District purchased an additional Pumper allowing one of the aging 2008 Pumpers to be placed into reserves. As both of the 2008 pumpers approached the 10-year mark, the District began the process of replacing one of these older trucks (new pumper delivered in 2020). The second 2008 was kept in reserve and utilized as a reserve engine when we have a mechanical failure of frontline apparatus and also allowing the district to provide the necessary preventative maintenance on front line apparatus ensuring continued quality care of District assets.

Due to the growth of the District specifically in the Town of Ave Maria the District purchased a 2021 Ladder Truck and a 2021 Ford F-550 Attack Truck. Additional considerations and needs for purchase due to the growth in the District is a new Water Tender anticipated delivery is Q2 of 2023.

### Current Fleet Apparatus and Staff Vehicles:

Vehicle	Identifier	Purchase YR	Reserve Date	Replace Date 1
Engine 30	Engine 30	2020	2027	2030
Engine 31	Engine 31	2022	2029	32-33
Engine 32	Engine 32	2016	2023	2026
Ladder 32	Ladder 32	2021	2031	2036
Water Tender 30	Water Tender 30	2021	2031	2041
Water Tender 32	Water Tender 32	2023	2033	2043
Squad 30	Squad 30	2021	2028	2026
Attack 30	Attack 30	2006	2024	** (1) **
Attack 32	Attack 32	2021	2028	2031
Brush 30	Brush 30	1978		** (1) **
Brush 32	Brush 32	1978		** (1) **
Chevy Tahoe	Chief 300	2018		23/24
Chevy Tahoe	Battalion Chief 341	2018		23/24
Ford Expedition	Chief 310	2021		** (1) **
Ford F-250	Battalion Chief 331	2021		** (1) **
Ford F-250	Battalion Chief 30	2021	2027	** (1) **
Ford F-150	Reserve	2015	2024	** (1) **
Ford F-150	Reserve	2016	2021	** (1) **
Support 30 Explorer	Support 30	2022	2028	** (1) **
<b>Disposed Vehicles</b>				
F150	Reserve	2009		Sold 2022
Expedition	Battalion Chief 30	2015		Sell 2022
Nissan	Support 30	2018		Sell 2022
** (1) ** To be replaced based on serviceability				
*All Purchase and replacement Dates are subject to budget and Vehicle availability*				