Frederick Amateur Radio Club
(FARC)

DRAFT
2026 Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

Purpose

The Frederick Amateur Radio Club's purpose is to further the exchange of information and cooperation between members, to promote radio knowledge, fraternalism and individual operating efficiency, and to so conduct club programs and activities so as to advance the general interest and welfare of Amateur Radio for the purpose of enhancing operator capabilities when called on in the event of an emergency.

Objective

This strategic plan outlines a phased approach to strengthen member training, expand operational capacity, and enhance readiness for public service over the next five years.

Vision

Provide amateur radio training, keeping pace with technology, emergency communication support, ensuring our community remains connected and resilient in times of need. Strive for continued growth and renewal of club membership.

Summary of Strategic Priorities

Year 1

- Membership Engagement: Recruit new members with a focus on youth and technical enthusiasts
- Infrastructure: Audit and upgrade club equipment (repeaters, antennas, portable kits) for reliability and County coverage.
- Testing Sessions: Re-establish Volunteer Examiner (VE) sessions.
- Operational: Review and update club documentation and web presence.

Year 3

- Member Orientation: Introduce specialized courses.
- Community Exercises: Conduct joint drills with local emergency response organizations.
- Launch structured training sessions covering radio operation, licensing, and emergency protocols.
- Public Outreach: Host community events and demonstrations to raise awareness of amateur radio.

Year 5

- Emergency Preparedness: Re-establish a formal relationship with local emergency management agencies and hospitals.

- Outreach: Reach out to other organizations introducing them to amateur radio.

Expected Outcomes

- A well-trained membership capable of contributing to public service.

- Modernized infrastructure ensuring reliable communication under adverse conditions.

- A sustainable, growing club that contributes to both technical education and public safety.

- Strong partnerships with local emergency services.

A. Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis:

The Strategic Planning team performed a SWOT analysis to identify internal strengths, such as technical expertise and community engagement, while recognizing weaknesses like limited funding or membership. It also highlights external opportunities, such as partnerships with local organizations and new technology trends, and threats like regulatory changes or declining interest. By examining these factors, FARC can make informed decisions to grow, adapt, and sustain its activities effectively.

1. Strengths:

A. Excellent Leadership.
B. Excellent educational sessions.
C. FARC has a defined purpose.
D. Open to new ideas.
E. Excellent on air nets (i.e. Skywarn, Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES), 10AM roundtable).
F. Willingness to help others.
G. Great camaraderie.
H. Good relationships with other clubs.
I. Good understanding of our repeater(s) operations.

2. Weaknesses:

A. New ham education - need improvement in providing training.
B. Become better at welcoming new members and visitors.
C. Ask members to be on committees/teams or be an officer instead of waiting for volunteers. We wait for volunteers that may or may not step forward. Individuals are more likely to accept if they are asked.

D. Keep the club meetings on track and not let it get into the details when a committee/team should be handling the details.
E. Let committees/teams work the details and bring the status of their work to the membership.
F. Little documentation in various areas and up-keep of such as (e.g. process, procedures, and credentials for maintaining the club website)

3. Opportunities:

A. Not on a committee/team for life.
B. Gain remote access to repeaters.
C. Expand our educational training sessions in many areas. (See Action Plan)
D. Provide backup communication for the county if ALL repeaters are down.
E. Form alliances with other clubs.
F. Have equipment available for members to use for club events.
G. Have equipment available for loan to new hams.
H. Work with external organizations to promote educational outreach.

4. Threats:

A. Loss of expertise and knowledge in certain areas.
B. No documentation, such as Standard Operating Procedure, website, reflectors, Amateur Radio Relay League (ARRL), etc.
C. Aging membership.
D. Lightning strike to repeaters - having to replace all equipment.

B. Goals and Action Plans:

The goals identified below, provide a clear, measurable targets that guide the club's activities and growth. They ensure members work toward shared priorities—such as expanding membership, improving technical skills, and increasing community outreach—while aligning resources and efforts to achieve long-term success.

1. One (1) Year Goals (Foundation & Readiness):

A. Integrate new members into the club by providing orientation in club operation.
   1. How to get started
   2. How to program Handy Talkie (HT)/mobile unit
   3. How to join a net

   <u>ActionPlan</u>: Form a team to develop an Orientation Plan.

B. Evaluate all FARC repeaters for location and functionality.
   <u>Action Plan</u>: Form a team to develop an Improvement Plan.
   a. Link the 146.64 to the 448.425 repeaters

b. Determine if it is worth having a club digital voice repeater. (Digital Mobile Radio (DMR), D-Star, Fusion)
c. Provide better HT coverage throughout the county
d. Better coverage in northern part of county
e. Relocate club repeaters for better county coverage

C. Provide VE test sessions.
Action Plan: Investigate the requirements needed to become a VE and the process required for administering exams.

D. Update and review every ten (10) years, the Constitution and By-Laws to reflect current operations.
Action Plan: Board to update Constitution and By-Laws.

E. Publish a club roster.
Action plan: Board to develop and publish roster.

F. Update club website.
Action Plan: Develop a new architecture for the FARC website.

2. Three (3) Year Goals (Growth & Integration):

A. New member orientation on all aspects of Amateur Radio, such as:
1. What are all the different facets to amateur radio. (digital, FT8, HF, Satellite, contesting, etc.),
2. What equipment would be needed for each
3. Soldering class
4. Seminar on what equipment would be best served in an emergency situation. Not brand related, (i.e. HF, VHF, UHF, etc.)
5. Training for local emergency response organization. This would be based on different emergency situations
6. Classroom style training on emergency radio protocol. How and what to communicate
7. Classroom training on event communication protocol. (Bike events etc..)

Action Plan: Develop a training plan with a focus on meeting the mission/purpose statement in the By-Laws.

B. Establish communication with the local emergency response organizations, how the club can support them when the need arises.
Action Plan: Identify local emergency response organizations to determine a need and develop a plan.

C. Communicate to the Frederick community our existence and services.

1. Mike (K3MMM) had an individual in the community say to him, "I didn't know you guys (i.e. FARC) existed".

   Examples of making the club known to the community:

   a. A stand at the First Flight event at the airport
   b. Frederick Fair
   c. Ad in the Frederick paper
   d. Marketing Outreach - other social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.
   e. Work with colleges
   f. Have an Open House to demonstrate Ham Radio
   g. Have representation at the local fire company events. (e.g. Thurmont Fire & Ambulance fair in May).

   Action Plan: Develop a marketing plan.

3. Five (5) Year Goals (Leadership & Sustainability):

A. Re-establish communication with Emergency Operation Center to determine what is needed to assist with their operation.

   Action Plan: Develop a list of requirements needed to assist Emergency Operation Center during an emergency.

B. Reach out to other organizations, (such as the Boy Scouts, etc.), to introduce them to amateur radio.

   Action Plan:

   1. Investigate the requirements the Boy Scouts need for the radio merit badge.
   2. Develop a plan/curriculum to reach out to other organizations.
   3. Develop a list of activities on how participant(s) can become involved in Amateur Radio.

C. Strategic Plan Review:

This Strategic Plan will work best when it is treated as a living document, so it should be reviewed regularly. The club would benefit from a formal annual review to assess progress toward long-term goals and ensure the plan still aligns with current realities. In addition to yearly review, quarterly or semi-annual updates will help the club monitor implementation, address emerging challenges, and adjust tactics as needed.

References:

Team Members:

Sean Kedney	N9EBJ
Bryant Meldrum	N3NON
Jacob Lankford	N3DSO
Justin Overfelt	AB3E
David Kindred	K3PO
Larry Martin	N3DGK

Definitions:

- ARES - Amateur Radio Emergency Service, developed by ARRL to provide emergency communication service during disasters.
- DMR - Digital Mobile Radio, standard developed by European Telecommunications Standard Institute, design for voice and data transmission.
- D-Star - digital protocol developed by Icom.
- FT8 - digital communication protocol.
- Fusion - digital protocol developed by Yaesu.
- HF - High Frequency.
- HT - Handy Talkie or Handheld Transceiver.
- VHF - Very High Frequency.
- UHF - Ultra High Frequency.
- SKYWARN - program developed by the National Weather Service to train spotters in reporting severe weather.

ARRL Mission/Vision:

Mission

ARRL's mission is to promote and protect the art, science, and enjoyment of amateur radio, and to develop the next generation of radio amateurs.

Vision

ARRL, through our digital transformation, will be globally recognized by radio amateurs and the public for promoting amateur radio through our superior delivery of content, training, and licensing; protecting amateur radio through our work with regulators and industry; and investing in the future of amateur radio by inspiring and educating America's youth in radio communications and technology.

FARC is an ARRL Affiliated Club.