



WEST COUNTY
WASTEWATER

STRATEGIC PLAN

FY 2021 - FY 2025

Embracing the future by planning today...

ABOUT WEST COUNTY WASTEWATER

West County Wastewater, founded in 1921, protects public health and the environment by safely and responsibly collecting and treating wastewater – keeping our community safe, while helping to make our planet better for future generations.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Alvarado
President

Cheryl Sudduth
Vice President

Sherry Stanley
Director

Harry Wiener
Director

Cesar Zepeda
Director



COMMUNITY. DISTINCTION. CONNECTION.

WEST COUNTY WASTEWATER

These three words are at the heart of West County Wastewater and our day-to-day operations as we strive to be an agency that promotes service, progress, safety and reliability, trust and leadership.

With these ideals in mind, we are transforming into a modern organization that is focused on customer service, public engagement, effective problem-solving, collaboration, and community and environmental stewardship – meeting the future with a fresh perspective and cutting-edge approach.

Building a strong internal team is at the forefront of our priorities. We are taking steps internally to improve our organizational culture – including redefining our hiring and onboarding process to build a team that meets the needs of our community, possesses a passion for the environment and provides a strong base for success right from the start of their West County Wastewater careers. We are committed to arming our employees with professional development and an open, supportive atmosphere. These efforts will produce a team that is dedicated, invested and employs innovative practices to keep this organization at the forefront of the wastewater world.

Our dedication to leading the future doesn't stop there. At West County Wastewater, we are devoted to the community we serve and the environment in which we live. Our agency already protects both public health and the environment in our daily activities and we will continue to expand those efforts in our workforce, community engagement and collaboration with state and regional partners.

The following five-year Strategic Plan outlines the ways in which we will continue building on our successes, taking our efforts to the next level and shaping the future as a regional leader in the wastewater industry.

Lisa K. Malek-Zadeh
General Manager



BACKGROUND

As part of the process to craft its Strategic Vision, West County Wastewater considered industry best practices, evaluated its organizational efficiency and reviewed associated metrics. Based on these considerations, the following plan offers a framework on which to build on the agency's current efforts and achievements, fill gaps and achieve goals for continued success.

For wastewater and water utilities, the Effective Utility Management (EUM) framework is a proven and widely used platform for assessing how well a utility organization is carrying out its core service mission. The EUM framework was developed over nearly a decade, with input from national utility organizations such as the American Water Works Association (AWWA), Water Environment Federation (WEF), National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) and the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

West County Wastewater used the attributes of the EUM framework to assess its effectiveness and efficiency as an organization. The framework provided a comprehensive and balanced review of how well West County Wastewater is doing, identified gaps between actual and preferred conditions, and narrowed the focus to what actions need to be taken to ensure the organization is highly functioning across the full spectrum of critical success factors. It provided a platform for next steps using the framework's five keys to management success.

Through this process the organization has re-evaluated its mission, vision, values and goals, and from there built out objectives and milestones to move the organization forward.

This document is intended to be a working document that is evaluated annually, adjusted as necessary to maintain progress, and ensure West County Wastewater continues to operate as an effective, high-performing organization.

STRUCTURE



VISION

A vision statement is the aspirational description of how you see the future of the organization. It harnesses the Board of Directors' foresight into a single statement and inspires staff to be part of something bigger than themselves.

Our Vision: Create a holistic plan for environmental stewardship through efficient wastewater management, extensive community engagement, inspirational leadership and integrated partnerships.

MISSION

A mission statement defines your organization's purpose. Your mission statement often describes what you do, who you're doing it for, and how you do it. It is a path forward toward reaching your vision. It is the foundation of how your organization operates.

Our Mission: Protect public health through safe, responsible wastewater collection and treatment, recovering the water for reuse and promoting environmental stewardship for our community

CORE VALUES

Core values describe your organization's culture. They are the tenets you hold that describe the way you will achieve your vision and mission. Our philosophy is people over process.



SERVICE: *Delivering value with humility, agility and reliability*



TRUST: *Starts with truth and ends with truth*



COLLABORATION: *More than the sum of our parts*



LEADERSHIP: *Be an example that inspires others*



ACCOUNTABILITY: *If it is to be, it's up to me*



SUSTAINABILITY: *Securing what we have for what will be*



STRATEGIC GOALS

Strategic goals are informed by the vision and mission of the organization. They define the direction provided by the Board to staff in order to move the agency forward. Each strategic goal is a broad statement of what your organization hopes to achieve over the next five years. It is more qualitative than quantitative in nature.

Goals are supported by Objectives (steps toward the overarching Strategic Goal) and Milestones (measurable accomplishments). Below is the list of Strategic Goals established by the Board of Directors.

Strategic Goal 1

Adopt infrastructure maintenance and modernization strategies that maximize performance, reduce risk and ensure reliable service in collaboration with local, regional and national partners to further the mission of the District.

Strategic Goal 2

Be an environmental steward in our community through a commitment to reducing carbon emissions, maximizing resource recovery, minimizing our environmental footprint and making significant strides toward becoming a carbon-neutral enterprise.

Strategic Goal 3

Promote financial policies and practices that support sustainability, integrity, innovation and responsible resource allocation for the organization.

Strategic Goal 4

Identify and leverage information and data management systems to ensure responsible infrastructure management and promote an effective and innovative organization.

Strategic Goal 5

Recruit, develop, inspire and retain employees who embrace West County Wastewater's identity, values and culture, while also providing a working environment that supports and rewards their efforts.

Strategic Goal 6

Engage with our community, enhancing the image of West County Wastewater and building awareness of our role in keeping our community healthy.

OBJECTIVES

Objectives are high-level statements that outline what exactly you want to achieve, with clearly stated deadlines that support the overarching strategic goals.

CONNECTING INTENTION WITH RESULTS

This plan is built to align West County Wastewater's staff with Board direction. The Board of Directors has established a Vision, directed the organization's Mission, defined its Core Values and provided Strategic Goals to move the organization forward. The Executive Leadership Team has carried that direction by building Objectives to support those Strategic Goals. These Objectives will allow the Board to hold the Executive Leadership Team accountable through Milestones identified in the Implementation Plan, a complementary, staff-driven tactical support document.



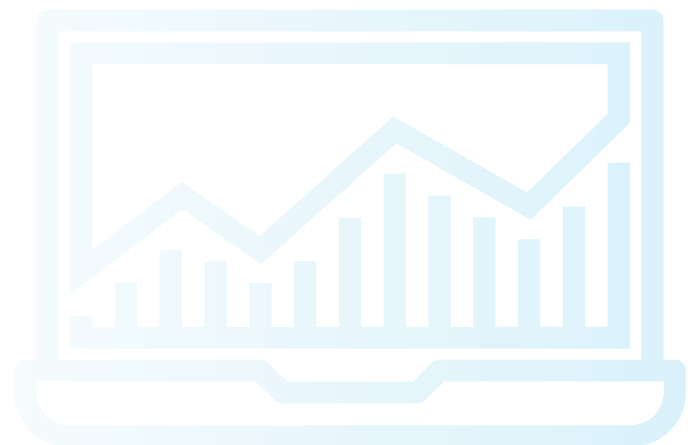


INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Adopt infrastructure maintenance and modernization strategies that maximize performance, reduce risk and ensure reliable service in collaboration with local, regional and national partners to further the mission of the District.



- ★ **OBJECTIVE 1:** Create an organization-wide Asset Management Plan
- ★ **OBJECTIVE 2:** Complete a comprehensive set of organization-wide Standard Operating Procedures
- ★ **OBJECTIVE 3:** Prioritize and implement capital improvement projects to increase system reliability
- ★ **OBJECTIVE 4:** Develop comprehensive preventative maintenance schedules
- ★ **OBJECTIVE 5:** Complete the implementation of a new capital project delivery system
- ★ **OBJECTIVE 6:** Enhance partnerships with local public agencies, trade organizations, municipalities, and other entities
- ★ **OBJECTIVE 7:** Develop a comprehensive organization-wide safety program





ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: *Be an environmental steward in our community through a commitment to reducing carbon emissions, maximizing resource recovery, minimizing our environmental footprint and making significant strides toward becoming a carbon-neutral enterprise.*



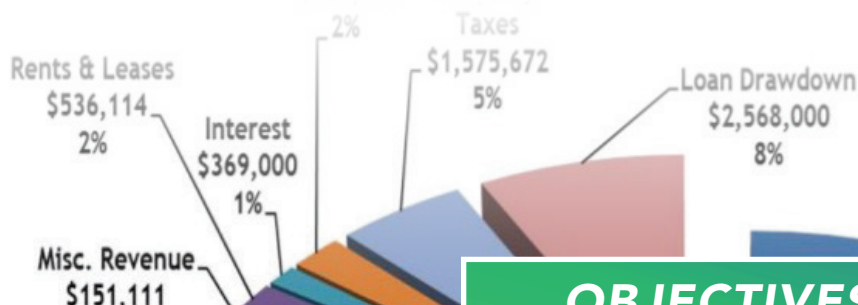
OBJECTIVES

- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 1:** Implement the Climate Action Plan
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 2:** Ensure employees reflect the organization's environmental stewardship values
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 3:** Strengthen environmental and public health educational programs



FINANCIAL VIABILITY

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: *Promote financial policies and practices that support sustainability, integrity, innovation and responsible resource allocation for the organization.*



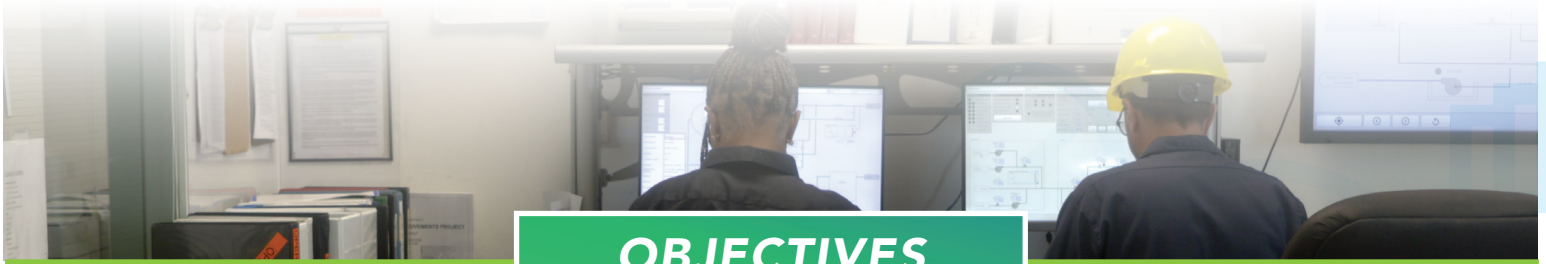
OBJECTIVES

- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 1:** Develop comprehensive financial policies
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 2:** Evaluate rate and fee structure
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 3:** Enhance financial reporting
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 4:** Evaluate billing process and procedures



INFORMATION SYSTEMS & DATA MANAGEMENT

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: Identify and leverage information and data management systems to ensure responsible infrastructure management and promote an effective and innovative organization.



OBJECTIVES

- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 1:** Develop an IT Master Plan
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 2:** Develop and implement a records management program
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 3:** Implement project management system software
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 4:** Complete implementation of work collaboration software
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 5:** Evaluate IT hardware to support organizational needs
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 6:** Implement a paper-free workplace



OPERATIONAL OPTIMIZATION

STRATEGIC GOAL 5: Recruit, develop, inspire and retain employees who embrace West County Wastewater's identity, values and culture, while also providing a working environment that supports and rewards their efforts.

OBJECTIVES

- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 1:** Expand and streamline current recruiting efforts
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 2:** Enhance on-boarding experience
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 3:** Build on the employee experience
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 4:** Support employees by providing career enhancement opportunities
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 5:** Optimize how and where staff works
- ✦ **OBJECTIVE 6:** Complete the implementation of a wellness program



COMMUNITY IMAGE

STRATEGIC GOAL 6: Engage with our community, enhancing the image of West County Wastewater and building awareness of our role in keeping our community healthy.

THE LATERAL

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY



OBJECTIVES

- ★ **OBJECTIVE 1:** Complete and implement Communications Master Plan
- ★ **OBJECTIVE 2:** Develop and implement effective external communications tools
- ★ **OBJECTIVE 3:** Develop and implement effective internal communications tools

