STRATEGIC PLAN

Fiscal Year 2025-2027

A Path Toward Our Smart One Water Future

A Message from the
Commission Chair

To Team H$_2$O, Our Customers and Partners,

I am pleased to present the strategic plan for WSSC Water, a roadmap to guide our efforts over the next three years. While comprehensive in scope, this plan focuses on our commitment to building a robust and dynamic workforce and emphasizes the critical importance of financial stewardship.

Our workforce is the backbone of our organization. As we look to the future, we must ensure that our team is skilled, knowledgeable, motivated and empowered to meet the challenges ahead. To this end, our strategic plan includes initiatives aimed at compensation adjustments, professional development, talent acquisition and employee well-being. We are dedicated to fostering a culture of continuous learning and growth where every member of our team can thrive and contribute to our mission.

Equally important is our responsibility to manage public funds with the utmost care and integrity. I view this priority through decades of experience in the budget world. I am pleased that Affordability & Financial Viability is a cornerstone of our strategic plan, reflecting our commitment to transparency, accountability and efficiency. We will continue to adhere to rigorous budgeting practices, invest in technologies that enhance our financial operations and continuously seek ways to optimize our resources. By doing so, we ensure that we can deliver high-quality services to our customers while maintaining the trust placed in us.

The most challenging aspect of strategic planning is ensuring this document does not gather dust on a shelf. This plan is a living, breathing tool that will guide every decision we make as an organization. It is a powerful instrument for governance, ensuring that WSSC Water's internal company culture manifests externally in how our customers interact with us. In the spirit of accountability and transparency, each objective in this plan is measurable to ensure accountability as we journey toward our Smart One Water future.

I join my fellow Commissioners in expressing deep gratitude to the hundreds of Team H$_2$O members and stakeholders from across our communities, whose fingerprints are clearly visible throughout the pages of this plan. Your active participation in its development is a testament to the importance of our mission, and a demonstration of what success can look like when we all work together towards common goals.

With continued dedication and collaboration, I am confident we will achieve the goals outlined in this plan and continue to serve our community with excellence.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to and support of our shared mission of providing safe, clean water to the citizens of Prince George's and Montgomery counties.

Board of Commissioners pictured left to right: Vice Chair Mark J. Smith, Lynnette D. Espy-Williams, Regina Y. Speed-Bost, Chair T. Eloise Foster, Fausto R. Bayonet, Howard A. Denis

With gratitude,

Commission Chair T. Eloise Foster

A Message from the
General Manager & CEO

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Dear Community,

As an anchor institution proudly serving 1.9 million customers in Montgomery and Prince George's counties, we stand at a crossroads. It is a pivotal time for WSSC Water as trends like climate change, an evolving workforce, affordability concerns and emerging contaminants, to name a few, are challenging, presenting opportunities and shifting priorities of utilities around the globe.

At WSSC Water, we know that our ability to tackle these challenges head on rests on being strategically aligned around a unified plan – providing us a roadmap to position us for success. Now, more than ever, we must be thoughtful and deliberate in the path we set forth to ensure our continued growth and transformation.

On behalf of our team, Team H_2O, I am proud to introduce our new Strategic Plan, which we believe will guide us on a path of innovation, transformation and excellence.

Our Strategic Plan is built upon eight strategic priorities: Workforce Development and Culture; Affordability and Financial Viability; Customer Engagement and Partnerships; Sustainability and Resiliency; Optimizing Operations; Asset Management & Infrastructure Reliability; Digital Transformation; Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI). Together with our core values, these priorities are the foundation of our efforts to provide high-quality, affordable water and resource recovery services to every customer. They will continue to shape a company-wide culture across Team H_2O that is rooted in trust and transparency. All of this while advancing environmental justice and ensuring the long-term sustainability of our infrastructure and resources.

The development of this Strategic Plan included an unprecedented degree of engagement with our staff, customers, trusted partners at the county and regional levels and other stakeholders. I extend special thanks to the more than 145 Team H_2O members from across our organization who spent countless hours conducting workshops, surveys and interviews to create this living plan. And to our stakeholders: Your input has been invaluable in shaping our priorities and charting our future course, and we sincerely thank you for your contributions.

As we embark on this leg of our journey together, we are excited about the promise this Strategic Plan holds. We look forward to collaborating with you to ensure every customer has access to clean, affordable water, our infrastructure operates seamlessly to meet our community's needs and expectations, and the actions we take today lay the groundwork for a more resilient tomorrow.

The path we have chosen is now clear. It is a path toward our Smart One Water Future, and we walk in unison with you to ensure a rising tide lifts all boats.

Yours in service,

Kishia L. Powell

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The Need for
Strategic Planning

As an anchor institution, WSSC Water is central to the wellbeing of our communities. However, issues like workforce competition, climate change, aging infrastructure and affordability are shaping the future of the water sector. These are known as Megatrends - large-scale issues impacting water utilities across the globe. Combined with a growing funding gap, the need for a strategic plan to serve as a guide for operational planning and decision making is more important than ever.

This strategic plan, our 'North Star', is a testament to our commitment. It underscores our journey to becoming a Smart One Water utility - one that values justice, equity, diversity and inclusion in every aspect of our operations, for our organization and the community we serve. The focus areas identified in this plan, which are grounded in our values and support our Smart One Water mission and vision, are:

- Workforce Development and Culture
- Affordability and Financial Viability
- Customer Engagement and Partnerships
- Sustainability and Resiliency
- Optimizing Operations

- Asset Management and Infrastructure Reliability
- Digital Transformation
- Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI)

The strategic plan outlines the objectives, milestones and measures needed to advance these strategic priorities with the intent of addressing challenges and leveraging opportunities relative to water sector trends. This plan is also a tool to keep stakeholders engaged and informed. We will provide regular updates to the public and other stakeholders on the plan's progress through various means including at our Commission meetings through the General Manager's Report and the Strategic Plan Performance Report.

WSSC Water at a Glance

★ **106 years** of no drinking water quality violations, *ever*.

★ **Platinum Peak Performance** recognition for wastewater treatment and resource recovery excellence.

8th
Largest combined water and wastewater utility in the United States by population served

1.9M
Residents served

162 MGD
Water provided each day

1,000 Sq. Miles
Size of WSSC Water's Service Area

1,700+
Members of Team H$_2$O deliver on our mission

$114.9B
WSSC Water supports the economic output of Prince George's and Montgomery counties

$1.8B
FY2025 Operating & Capital Budget

$5.9B
6-Year Capital Improvements Program

$9B
In infrastructure assets maintained on behalf of our customers

DAMASCUS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
PATUXENT RIVER
Gaithersburg
POTOMAC WFP
Rockville
Silver Spring
PATUXENT WFP
Laurel
POTOMAC RIVER
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
Bowie
Upper Marlboro
Accokeek

SERVICE AREAS

- Potomac Water
- Patuxent Water
- Blended Water
- Not Served by WSSC Water
- Water Filtration Plant
- Water Resource Recovery Facility

Parkway Water Resource Recovery Facility

Drivers for Change
Water Sector MEGATRENDS

Workforce Development

The industry is currently facing a workforce shortage that is expected to increase in criticality due to an aging workforce and anticipated retirements. At WSSC Water, 40 percent of employees will be eligible for full or early retirement within the next five years.

These challenges, combined with immense workforce competition, have resulted in the need to enhance employee recruitment, professional development and total rewards. These areas of increased focus align with the Good Jobs Principles, outlined by the US Department of Commerce and US Department of Labor as part of The Good Jobs Initiative, highlighting a nationwide prioritization of this challenge.

Water Supply & Climate Change

The impacts of climate change pose threats to water supply, infrastructure and amplify existing challenges for water utilities like extreme flooding, increased floodplain elevations and infiltration/inflow (I/I) problems.

Many utilities, including WSSC Water, are implementing Climate Action Plans, which are echoed at the government level with actions like Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan. Through these plans, many utilities are implementing green energy solutions, including renewable natural gas, solar and wind energy.

Seneca Water Resource Recovery Facility

Equity & Environmental Justice

Recent years have highlighted the need to address disparities in access to equitable water services across the nation. Many utilities are implementing initiatives to ensure equitable access to water and wastewater services for all communities, particularly those historically underserved.

Water scarcity and pollution disproportionately impact marginalized and income-constrained populations, leading utilities to incorporate equity and environmental justice considerations into their long-term planning and infrastructure development.

Aging Infrastructure & Affordability

The water sector must balance increasing infrastructure costs while maintaining affordability for income-constrained customers. While water and wastewater costs are expected to continue to stay lower than other essentials like healthcare, energy and food, the prices for water services have increased just like these other essentials.

Support from federal funding, such as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), helps supplement financing for capital projects; however, there continues to be a gap in federal funding for low-income household water assistance.

Seneca Water Resource Recovery Facility

Regulatory Challenges

The funding gap for water infrastructure is further exacerbated by upcoming expenditures needed to address new regulations. Keeping up with rapid regulatory changes, like those related to Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR), is resource-intensive and time-consuming. In addition to investments in new monitoring equipment and treatment technologies, additional trainings and communication is needed to keep staff and the public informed.

Emerging Contaminants

Emerging contaminants, including PFAS, microplastics and pharmaceuticals, present significant challenges for water utilities due to their complexity and potential risks. These contaminants are often hard to detect and may not yet be well understood.

The evolving nature of emerging contaminants requires utilities to continually adapt their monitoring and treatment processes to effectively safeguard water quality, adding complexity and cost to water treatment operations.

T. Howard Duckett Reservoir

Technology & Digital Transformation

The water sector is leveraging advanced technologies to better serve our customers. These digital technologies and tools can improve decision-making, increase efficiency and enhance operations.

One example of this is the use of digital twins, which are realistic digital representations of physical assets used to make data-informed decisions. However, we must use best practices and technologies to protect critical data and support continued operations in the event of a cyberattack.

The Journey

This Strategic Plan represents the collaborative efforts of more than 145 Team H$_2$O members. The Strategic Plan Development Team (SPDT) engaged in workshops, surveys, and interviews to craft the plan, fostering collaboration across the organization.

Connection to the Transition Plan

The Strategic Plan builds on the Transition Plan, which was developed and released in 2023 with input from over 900 Team H$_2$O members. The Transition Plan identified 178 recommendations to improve WSSC Water's reliability and resilience in challenging situations. These recommendations and Team H$_2$O's momentum informed the development of the Strategic Plan.

The launch of this Strategic Plan marks a shift away from the Transition Plan. Over the next three years, Team H$_2$O will build on the Transition Plan's foundation to pursue the priorities and objectives outlined in this strategic plan.

Assessment

Plan development began with an onsite workshop where the SPDT conducted a Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results (SOAR) analysis to identify key focus areas and opportunities. Over 100 SPDT members also participated in interviews to describe their daily challenges and aspirations. Additionally, Commissioners were interviewed and their feedback was incorporated into the plan's development.

Megatrends impacting the water sector were evaluated through an environmental scan, identifying visionary, innovative and experimental focus areas to prepare WSSC Water for the future. An organizational gap assessment (OGA) compared WSSC Water practices and reports, including the Capital Improvements Program (CIP), Enterprise Risk Management Report and the American Water Works Association (AWWA) Benchmarking results, to industry best practices using the Effective Utility Management (EUM) framework. This framework includes foundational practices and attributes that support excellence in day-to-day operations.

Vision Building

The assessment results provided the basis for a two-day workshop with the SPDT, which focused on megatrends and specific opportunities identified in the OGA. Drawing inspiration from various sectors, the SPDT crafted values, vision, and mission statements. The workshop discussions also led to the creation of a promise statement. The outcomes of this workshop informed the selection of the eight strategic priorities.

External Stakeholder Input

Throughout this journey, we engaged external stakeholders through listening sessions, which included county representatives and community engagement teams. Local customers provided feedback through surveys on customer engagement tactics and areas for improvement. The final workshop, an open house with internal and external stakeholders, allowed for plan review and feedback before finalization.

Strategic Priorities

Cross-functional SPDT teams from across the organization developed the strategic priorities. They engaged in multiple working sessions with subject matter experts to define the objectives and results (milestones and measurements) detailed in this plan.

Milestones are markers of progress, helping to break down larger goals into manageable parts. Measures objectively gauge performance against specific criteria or targets.

Team H$_2$O Feedback

Finally, all of Team H$_2$O had the opportunity to provide input through a survey and leave comments on the Strategic Plan during a two-week review period before final publication.

Our Smart One Water Future

Vision

In every home, in every business, we make everything possible by ensuring access to dependable and safe water for everyday life.

Smart One Water Mission

WSSC Water ensures all communities thrive by ethically delivering safe, reliable and sustainable water and wastewater services.

Promise

Continue the legacy of treasuring our water, customers and employees through dedicated service for current and future generations.

Values

Just. We make fair and purposeful decisions by valuing and including each other.

Accountable. We take responsibility for our actions by being transparent and ethical with our decisions.

Caring. We maintain the highest level of safety and protection for our people, community and environment.

Community-Focused. We are responsive to our customers' needs and the protection of our natural resources.

Excellent. We exceed expectations and create meaningful impact through forward-thinking innovation.

Trustworthy. We strengthen partnerships through responsible actions and honest relationships within our community.

Patuxent Water Filtration Plant

Smart One Water is a holistic approach to water management that considers all water resources, including drinking water, stormwater, wastewater and other types, as interconnected in one water cycle. At WSSC Water, we aim to function as a Smart One Water utility by using innovative technologies and adopting sustainable, resilient and inclusive water management methods.

Strategic Priorities

These strategic priorities represent our investment areas to achieve the vision of our organization. Each priority was carefully crafted by the SPDT to advance us toward our Smart One Water future.

Workforce Development & Culture

WSSC Water will be a preferred employer by providing a competitive total rewards program, promoting career growth and workforce development in an innovative organization.

Affordability & Financial Viability

To ensure financial stability, we actively invest in our employees and systems to provide reliable service while balancing the financial impact on our customers.

Customer Engagement & Partnerships

To ensure all communities and partnerships thrive, WSSC Water will enhance customer experience and foster stronger connections through customer education, affordability, reliability and trust.

Sustainability & Resiliency

WSSC Water will invest in and develop Smart One Water solutions to mitigate key risks to achieve reliable and sustainable infrastructure, environmental health and net zero emissions by 2050.

Optimizing Operations

WSSC Water will leverage best practices and innovative technologies, continuously optimizing operations to sustainably meet the growing service needs of our thriving communities.

Asset Management & Infrastructure Reliability

Implement proactive procedures and protocols for Commission-wide assets, achieving financial efficiency to optimize the assets' life cycle and the level of service to the community while protecting the environment.

Digital Transformation

To address economic, social, regulatory, and environmental pressures, WSSC Water will leverage innovative technologies and techniques to improve decision making, organizational efficiency and service in support of our Smart One Water future.

Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (JEDI)

WSSC Water will build and sustain community trust and promote environmental justice by ensuring equitable access to our services and programs. We will build a diverse and inclusive culture of collaboration and interconnection within Team H_2O.

The following sections in this Strategic Plan detail the objectives for each strategic priority. Additional details are provided at the end of the plan and include the results, or milestones and measures, that Team H_2O will use to track our progress towards each priority.

Western Branch Water Resource Recovery Facility

Potomac River

Workforce Development & Culture

WSSC Water will be a preferred employer by providing a competitive total rewards program, promoting career growth and workforce development in an innovative organization.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

Developing a skilled workforce and fostering a positive, collaborative culture are crucial for WSSC Water to fulfill its core mission. Our aim is to become an employer of choice by attracting and retaining talented individuals across all departments. By emphasizing a one Team H_2O culture that values every member, we will nurture a skilled, engaged workforce that drives innovation and advances WSSC Water into the future.

WSSC WATER ACHIEVEMENTS

Our commitment to Team H_2O and alignment to the EUM attribute of Employee and Leadership Development through employee satisfaction and retention is demonstrated through the introduction of paid parental leave and demonstrating a culture of inclusion. Other achievements include a collaboration with the Baltimore City Department of Public Works to establish the Chesapeake Water Workforce Network, a regional ecosystem to address water utility employment challenges, particularly as it relates to knowledge retention and workforce development as well as removing barriers to internal promotions.

Strategic Priority Objectives
Workforce Development & Culture

Below are the objectives for the Workforce Development & Culture strategic priority. Milestones and measures for each objective can be found at the end of the plan.

1   **Objective:** Establish a framework and supporting policies to be a leader in compensation and offer a leading total rewards program.

2   **Objective:** Create an environment of trust and well-being where everyone can honestly and safely contribute to health and safety discussions.

3   **Objective:** Cultivate a supportive and sustainable environment that promotes, engages and recognizes the value of every Team H_2O member from on-boarding through the career journey.

4   **Objective:** Develop staff with appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities and provide growth opportunities to ensure alignment with the appropriate roles for a Smart One Water workforce and future sustainability.

5   **Objective:** Implement cutting edge strategies for recruiting, engaging and retaining top talent in the marketplace as a leader and anchor of the Chesapeake Water Workforce Network.

6   **Objective:** Sustain and enhance training and development programs to embody a learning culture.

7   **Objective:** Foster a collaborative One Team H_2O culture that encourages candid conversations and accountability at all levels and departments.

Affordability & Financial Viability

To ensure financial stability, we actively invest in our employees and systems to provide reliable service while balancing the financial impact on our customers.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

Water sector megatrends pose challenges for utilities in balancing essential system investments for future readiness with service affordability. WSSC Water is committed to enhancing financial strength by seeking additional external funds and diversifying revenue streams to safeguard our AAA bond rating for accessing low-interest capital. Prioritizing investments in process enhancements and customer assistance programs is crucial to delivering affordable essential services to our communities.

WSSC WATER ACHIEVEMENTS

Our strong financial metrics exemplify WSSC Water's alignment with the EUM attribute of Financial Viability. A concerted effort to align metrics with those used by all three financial rating agencies (Fitch Ratings, Standard & Poor's Global (S&P) and Moody's Investor Service) resulted in WSSC Water solidifying our AAA bond rating for the 23rd consecutive year. Additionally, the External Funding Task Force recently secured over $114 million in state and federal funding.

Affordability & Financial Viability

Below are the objectives for the Affordability & Financial Viability strategic priority. Milestones and measures for each objective can be found at the end of the plan.

1 **Objective:** Increase financial stability.

2 **Objective:** Optimize operational efficiencies.

3 **Objective:** Increase transparency and efficiency within the total Operating and Capital Budget.

4 **Objective:** Ensure availability of customer assistance programs.

Customer Engagement & Partnerships

To ensure all communities and partnerships thrive, WSSC Water will enhance customer experience and foster stronger connections through customer education, affordability, reliability and trust.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

As an anchor institution, WSSC Water's success is directly linked to the prosperity of our communities and customer satisfaction. In recent years, our sector has experienced a shift in customer expectations with an increasing focus on digital experiences and enhanced service. At the same time, increased risk from emerging contaminants like Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS), have resulted in an even greater need for clear communication and for us to continue to be a trusted partner in our communities.

WSSC WATER ACHIEVEMENTS

Our customers and delivering the essential are at the heart of what we do and aligned with the EUM attributes of Customer Satisfaction, Community Sustainability, and Stakeholder Understanding and Support. We were able to help 4,350 customers through a $3.7 million grant we received from the Maryland Water Assistance Program in 2023.

Customer Engagement & Partnerships

Below are the objectives for the Customer Engagement & Partnerships strategic priority. Milestones and measures for each objective can be found at the end of the plan.

1 **Objective:** Provide comprehensive and inclusive outreach.

2 **Objective:** Use technology and information to provide a better customer experience.

3 **Objective:** Develop simple, targeted communications.

4 **Objective:** Embrace partnerships, engagement and collaboration with all stakeholders.
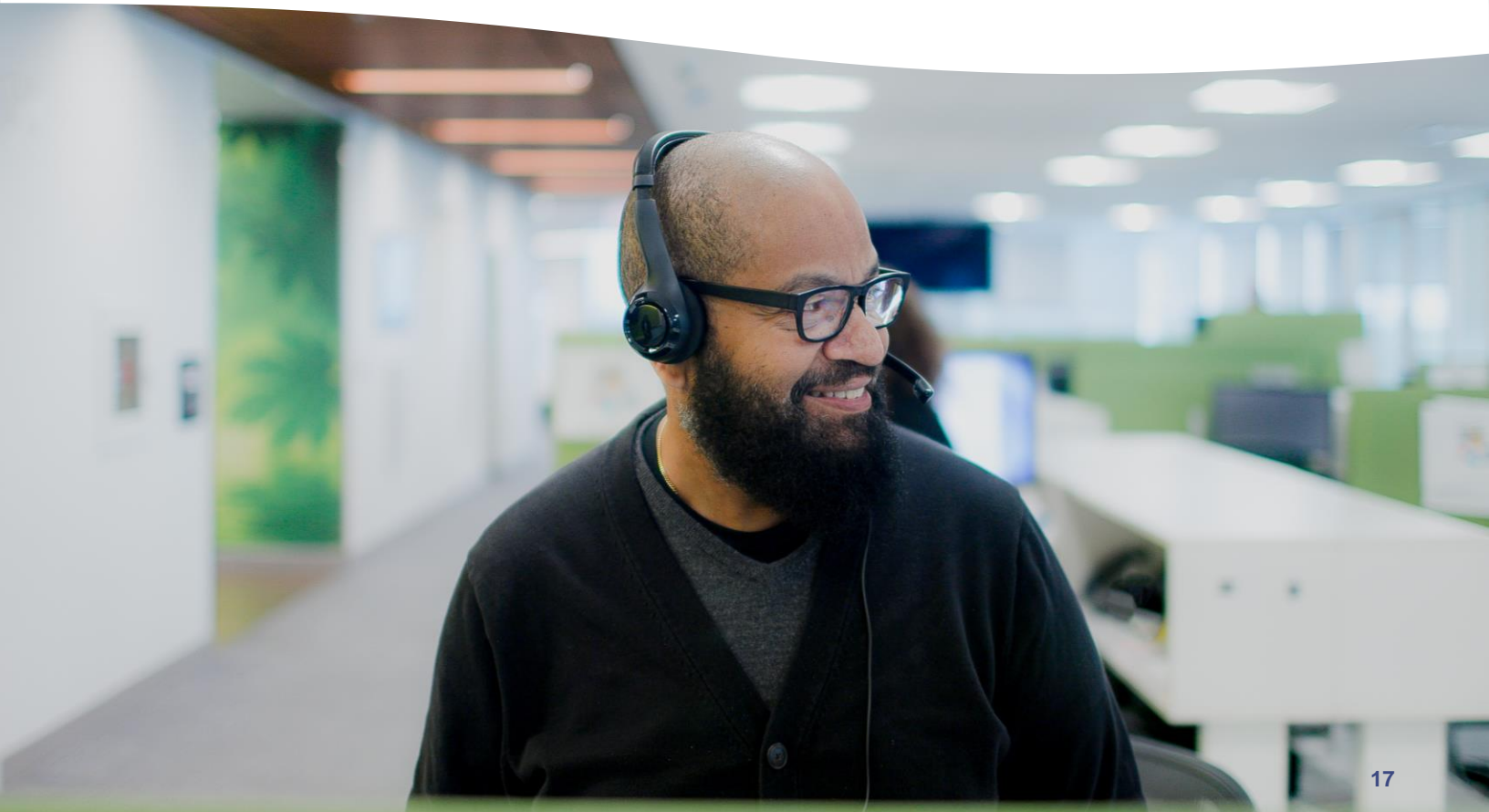
Sustainability & Resiliency

WSSC Water will invest in and develop Smart One Water solutions to mitigate key risks to achieve reliable and sustainable infrastructure, environmental health and net zero emissions by 2050.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

The increasing threats posed by climate change, water supply challenges, cyber security risks, physical security risks and other natural and man-made disasters highlight the urgent need for implementing Smart One Water solutions and sustainable practices. These threats not only have potential for service disruption but also have associated ongoing capital and operating costs if not addressed. By adopting integrated water management approaches and prioritizing sustainability and security measures, WSSC Water can enhance resilience and mitigate the impacts of these threats in a cost-effective manner.

WSSC WATER ACHIEVEMENTS

WSSC Water's Smart One Water mission and efforts for this Strategic Priority align with the EUM attributes of Enterprise Resiliency and Water Resource Sustainability. WSSC Water is nearing completion of our most technically advanced project yet, the Piscataway Bioenergy Facility, which will philosophically change the business of wastewater. The Piscataway Bioenergy Facility will receive all of WSSC Water's biosolids and will create renewable natural gas (RNG) to be sold to Montgomery County to power its Ride-On Buses.
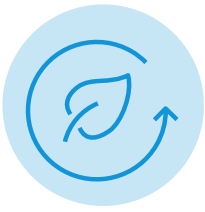
Piscataway Bioenergy Facility

Strategic Priority Objectives
Sustainability & Resiliency

Below are the objectives for the Sustainability & Resiliency strategic priority. Milestones and measures for each objective can be found at the end of the plan.

1 **Objective:** Implement measures to ensure WSSC Water operations can recover quickly from any disruption through robust preparedness programs.

2 **Objective:** Harden WSSC Water infrastructure and systems by building a security culture, enhancing security protocols and improving systems for a more proactive response to physical and cybersecurity risks.

3 **Objective:** Focus operational approaches to implement programs that address the 4 P's of sustainable development: People, Planet, Productivity and Purpose.

4 **Objective:** Identify current and future gaps in the capability and redundancy of source water, treatment systems, infrastructure and processes to effectively respond to environmental, regulatory and supply chain challenges.

5 **Objective:** Reduce WSSC Water's greenhouse gas emissions and achieve a 50% reduction by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050.

Piscataway Bioenergy Facility

Seneca Water Resource Recovery Facility

Strategic Priority

Optimizing Operations

WSSC Water will leverage best practices and innovative technologies, continuously optimizing operations to sustainably meet the growing service needs of our thriving communities.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

Continuous improvement through optimized operations is crucial to effectively managing all our water resources, ensuring cost-effectiveness, delivering reliable services and maintaining a sustainable water supply. By streamlining processes, adopting best practices and leveraging technology, WSSC Water can enhance operational efficiency, reduce waste and improve overall performance, ultimately benefiting our customers and the environment.

WSSC WATER ACHIEVEMENTS

WSSC Water's continuous improvement mindset aligns with the EUM attributes of Product Quality and Operational Optimization. Expanding the laboratory facility, which will double its size, will enable more testing and analyses to maintain our exceptional track record of zero drinking water quality violations. Another achievement in this area is the nearly completed splitter box project at the Western Branch Water Resource Recovery Facility. This innovative project will improve processing efficiency during high flows.

TEAM H2O
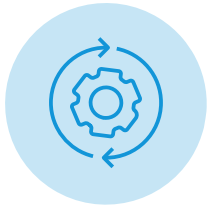
Optimizing Operations

Below are the objectives for the Optimizing Operations strategic priority. Milestones and measures for each objective can be found at the end of the plan.

1 **Objective:** Establish a continuous improvement framework to identify, review, verify effectiveness and adopt best practices for core procedures to ensure operational efficiency.

2 **Objective:** Adopt smart technologies to enhance system monitoring, data quality and accessibility to improve data-driven decision making.

3 **Objective:** Implement a Smart One Water system approach for asset management to support operational optimization.

Asset Management & Infrastructure Reliability

Implement proactive procedures and protocols for Commission-wide assets, achieving financial efficiency to optimize the assets' life cycle and the level of service to the community while protecting the environment.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

Sound and well-maintained assets and infrastructure form the foundation of WSSC Water's services. We need to ensure the reliability of our assets to fulfill our core mission and tackle industry challenges effectively. Investing in our infrastructure and operations is essential to enhancing resilience, reducing waste and maintaining and improving our system and level of service.

WSSC WATER ACHIEVEMENTS

WSSC Water's Asset Management and Infrastructure Reliability achievements align with the EUM attributes of Product Quality, Infrastructure Strategy and Performance, and Enterprise Resiliency. Excellence in this area has long been a focus for WSSC Water, as shown by our efforts in the early 2000s to voluntarily remove all lead pipes in our system, years before the revised Lead and Copper Rule. This commitment continues, as shown by the recent accomplishment of the Triadelphia Reservoir sediment removal project, which relieved pressure from the dam and increased storage by 4 million gallons.

Asset Management & Infrastructure Reliability

Below are the objectives for the Asset Management & Infrastructure Reliability strategic priority. Milestones and measures for each objective can be found at the end of the plan.

1 **Objective:** Develop and implement a Utility Wide Master Plan (UWMP) to standardize and communicate system improvement road maps.

2 **Objective:** Maintain and improve level of service goals and leverage data for agile allocations of resources.

3 **Objective:** Prioritize asset improvements and operations and maintenance (O&M).

4 **Objective:** Implement condition assessments for all asset classes to develop system roadmaps.

Strategic Priority
Digital Transformation

To address economic, social, regulatory, and environmental pressures, WSSC Water will leverage innovative technologies and techniques to improve decision making, organizational efficiency and service in support of our Smart One Water future.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

Technology and digital transformation underpin the solutions to some of the most pressing challenges in our industry, including aging infrastructure, energy efficiency, regulatory compliance and customer engagement. By leveraging advanced technologies and data-driven solutions, WSSC Water can enhance operational resilience and provide excellent services to our customers.

WSSC WATER ACHIEVEMENTS

The ongoing digital transformation of WSSC Water supports all the EUM attributes with specific positive impacts on Customer Satisfaction and Operational Optimization. A recent example of how digital transformation supports our customers is the launch of the Facility Services Customer Service (FSCS) portal, which streamlines the process of reporting issues and requesting services at all buildings, depots, plants and other facilities.

Strategic Priority Objectives
Digital Transformation

Below are the objectives for the Digital Transformation strategic priority. Milestones and measures for each objective can be found at the end of the plan.

1. **Objective:** Sustain a comprehensive cyber resilience program to protect our people, assets, critical operations and the environment.

2. **Objective:** Support and enhance a culture of continuous learning to improve the adoption of innovative technologies and techniques.

3. **Objective:** Provide universal access to data and information to improve decision making, organizational efficiency and service.

Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

WSSC Water will build and sustain community trust and promote environmental justice by ensuring equitable access to our services and programs. We will build a diverse and inclusive culture of collaboration and interconnection within Team H$_2$O.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

Intentional efforts in justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI) are crucial to ensure fair and equitable access to resources. By incorporating these principles into our day-to-day operations, WSSC Water can better address the diverse needs of our employees and the communities we serve, fostering a more inclusive and sustainable future for everyone. Prioritizing these values can enhance decision-making processes, build trust in our communities and lead to more effective and impactful solutions to environmental challenges.

WSSC WATER ACHIEVEMENTS

Our commitment to JEDI and achievements in this area support the EUM attributes of Customer Satisfaction, Community Sustainability, and Stakeholder Understanding and Support. In Fiscal Year 2023, we spent $148 million (28% of all payments) with Minority and Women-Owned Businesses. Recent outreach events involving our Procurement and Supplier Diversity & Inclusion offices have resulted in more than 600 new vendors registered in the supplier portal, demonstrating our engagement with local businesses. Our JEDI efforts were nationally recognized in 2023 when WSSC Water became one of the first recipients of the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies' new environmental justice and equity award.

Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Below are the objectives for the Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion strategic priority. Milestones and measures for each objective can be found at the end of the plan.

1 **Objective:** Infuse JEDI into the culture of WSSC Water.

2 **Objective:** Ensure career growth opportunities for Team H_2O are done so in a manner that promotes a more equitable and inclusive workplace.

3 **Objective:** Continue efforts to increase contracting equity and diversify our supplier portfolio.

4 **Objective:** Utilize environmental justice considerations to prioritize and optimize infrastructure investments and policy-making.

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the more than 145 Team H$_2$O team members who dedicated their time and expertise to the development of WSSC Water's Strategic Plan. The collaborative efforts of the Strategic Plan Development Team (SPDT) have been vital in shaping the future direction of our organization.

From November 2023 to June 2024, the SPDT engaged in various activities, including interviews, surveys, in-person and virtual workshops, as well as multiple working sessions for each strategic priority. The valuable contributions and insights provided during these engagements have significantly influenced the strategic priority areas outlined in this plan.

We also extend our thanks to all of WSSC Water's community of stakeholders who participated in the meetings and engagements throughout the development process, as their input has been essential in defining our organization's strategic direction.

We recognize and value the collective effort, dedication and expertise of everyone involved in the development of this Strategic Plan. It is because of your continued efforts to deliver the essential that WSSC Water can successfully chart the course of our future.

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Erika Brent

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Lana Burge-Weddington

Chris Bush

Claudia Calderon

Christopher Cape

Kelly Caplan

Matthew Carlson

Amado Carsky

Avionn Caruth

Carmen Chalmers

Christine Chang

Manoharan Chelladurai

D'Andre Cole

Amanda Conn

Lawrence Cumberbatch

John Curry

Monique Dames

Michael Delaney

Gregory Deloach

Glendon Diaz

Angelique Dorsey-White

Milad Ebrahimi

Courtney Edmonds

Benjami Ekhaifo

Anthony Ferrara

David Gill

Trene Gilliam

Indira Gonzales

Thomas Green

Srey Hai

Jennifer Hawes

Joseph Hawkins

Dawn Hickmon

Nina Hickson

Ronnell High

Rita Hines

Clark Howells

Michael Hughes

Allen Hutchins

Steven Irick II

Jerry Irvine

Adam Jawarish

Edward Jewell III

Eric Johnson

Michelle Johnson

Thomas Johnson

Delray Johnson

Sandra Jones

Rutland Jones

Denise Junis

Vera Kargbo

Tralonda Kelly-Redondo

Wanda Ketner

Frederick King

Thomas Kuczynski

Sejal Lakhawala

James (JC) Langley

Rosanna LaPlante

Frederick C. Lees

Erik Lewis

Nancy Lineman

Taryn Lowery

Jessica Macer

Robert "Bob" Maloney

Monica Marquina

Kevin Matthews

David McDonough

Eric McFarland

Jefferson McQueen

Reginald Miles

Eyad Mizian

Wayne Morris

Natosha Morris

Munetsi Timothy Musara

Mpande Musonda-Langley

Austin Naehrig

Robert Nally Jr.

Tyrone Nutter Jr.

Olabosipo Olaitan

Nana Olibris

Pamela Palmer

Yvette Parker

Satish Patel

Brady Payen

Donnette Perry

Brian Persing

Caprecia Poole-Williams

Kishia Powell

Mark Proctor

Edward Pumphrey

Keisha Rattan

Francell Reed

Yssa Resurreccion

Dena Richmond

Christina Robinson

Michelle Romney

Al Roshdieh

Dalmar Rushing

Jerimye Saname

Henry Sanchez

Alan Sauvageau

John Schlee

Omowunmi Shadare

Nathan Shearer

Elizabeth Shearn

James Simon

Sami Slorzano

Adriana Smith

Lisa Stafford

Caville Stanbury-Woolery

William Taylor

Aklile Tesfaye

Jonathan Thomas

Justin Thomas

Steven Thomas

Benjamin Thompson

Sara Titus

Priscilla To

Michael Vernon

Andres Villarraga

Leon Wallace

Lisa Watts

Venedra Whigham

Eric Whitall

David Wildasin

Christian Wilder

Romaijn Williams

Sydney Williams

Damika Winston

Lingyi Zhang

Anwer Zuberi

> *"The path we have chosen is now clear. It is a path toward our Smart One Water Future, and we walk in unison with you to ensure a rising tide lifts all boats.*
>
> *- Kishia L. Powell*

Strategic Plan for
Our Smart One Water Future

WSSC WATER
DELIVERING THE ESSENTIAL

Vision
In every home, in every business, we make everything possible by ensuring access to dependable and safe water for everyday life.

Smart One Water Mission
WSSC Water ensures all communities thrive by ethically delivering safe, reliable and sustainable water and wastewater services.

Promise
Continue the legacy of treasuring our water, customers and employees through dedicated service for current and future generations.

Values
Just. Accountable. Caring. Community-Focused. Excellent. Trustworthy.

Workforce Development & Culture

Affordable & Financial Viability

Asset Management & Infrastructure Reliability

Strategic Priorities

Customer Engagement & Partnerships

Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Sustainability & Resiliency

Optimizing Operations

Digital Transformation

34 Objectives to Navigate Team H₂O to Our Smart One Water Future

Workforce Development & Culture

1 **Objective:** Establish a framework and supporting policies to be a leader in compensation and offer a leading total rewards program.

Milestones	• Implement phased compensation improvements as a result of a total rewards assessment. • Maintain competitive total rewards by using reliable industry reports, surveys and market analysis to benchmark and identify areas for enhancement on an approved cadence. • Conduct an employee survey to learn what benefits matter most to Team H_2O and update benefits portfolio to match workforce needs (i.e., flexible rewards).
Measures	• Review and benchmark the total rewards package against industry standards on an approved cadence and positioning. • Survey Team H_2O on benefits and reward areas, targeting more than 50% survey participation. • In collaboration with the Affordability & Financial Viability team, utilize benefits and compensation metrics to inform annual budget for competitive pay. • Track metrics on total rewards communication campaign (i.e., click-rate, number meeting attendees, frequency of communications), aiming for 80% engagement across organization. • Target improvement of all people-related policies over the next three years.

2 **Objective:** Create an environment of trust and well-being where everyone can honestly and safely contribute to health and safety discussions.

Milestones	• In collaboration with the Sustainability & Reliability team, integrate health and safety into operational processes. • Develop a stakeholder review and development committee inclusive of frontline staff to provide input and insights into policy development. • Conduct a thorough analysis of all current health and safety policies. • Implement a process to assess and implement enhanced health and safety policies and procedures based upon work as performed rather than work as imagined. • Build capacity to understand normal operations and associated risks through learning sessions conducted by senior management.
Measures	• Conduct a regulatory compliance review and benchmark against industry best practices for health and safety policies; track percentage of policies reviewed and in compliance, targeting 100%. • Create new safety policies and procedures incorporating industry leading practices, including human and organizational performance; track percentage of departments with reviewed and updated safety policies and procedures, targeting 100%. • Complete evaluation of all Human Resources management policies, procedures and practices to ensure environment of trust and well-being; track percent that have been evaluated, targeting 100%. • Track percentage of safety protocols updated based on findings from assessment of work as imagined versus work as performed. • Track number of learning sessions conducted by senior management, aiming for a minimum of one learning session per month per senior leader with a goal of 80% completion (approximately ten sessions annually).

3 **Objective:** Cultivate a supportive and sustainable environment that promotes, engages and recognizes the value of every Team H$_2$O member from on-boarding through the career journey.

Milestones	• Conduct a thorough assessment of current onboarding practices to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement. • Implement comprehensive orientation sessions at the organization level and the department level, and schedule regular check-ins with new hires at 30, 60, and 90 days. • Research and analyze industry best practices and benchmarks to inform the development of a comprehensive onboarding framework, including a standardized onboarding program that includes a detailed onboarding checklist and timeline for all new hires. • Develop and implement support mechanisms including a buddy system, where each new hire is paired with an experienced employee to provide guidance and support during their initial months, and a mentorship program, where experienced employees are paired with new hires and junior staff. • Improve the WSSC Water Employee Recognition Program to celebrate and reward examples of excellent collaboration and accountability within the organization. • Implement employee journey (or experience) mapping program. • Update and implement policies and programs that facilitate internal promotions, career pathing and eliminates barriers to entry. • Develop policy and clear pathway for transition of temporary to permanent employment.
Measures	• Measure the completion rate of the standardized onboarding program, targeting 100% completion within the first 60 days of employment. • Gather feedback and measure satisfaction scores from interns, recent hires, managers and human resources personnel. Utilize feedback to identify areas for improvement in the internship pipeline and onboarding process, and target an average satisfaction score of 85% or higher for the onboarding process. • Measure engagement levels in mentorship programs and track participation by organization level and department with a goal of 70% of eligible employees participating. • Track the number of nominations and awards in the recognition program, with a goal of recognitions submitted by every department each year. • Track the retention rate of new hires, aiming for a 90% retention rate within the first year of employment.

4 Objective: Develop staff with appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities and provide growth opportunities to ensure alignment with the appropriate roles for a Smart One Water workforce and future sustainability.

Milestones	• Maintain updated job descriptions based upon classification, specific industry standards, leading utilities and the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to ensure WSSC Water has a fit for future workforce. • Reassess the current performance management system. • Develop skills assessments, performance management plans, career paths, job rotation/cross-training and succession plans for key positions; collaborate with the JEDI team to ensure equity and inclusion. • Use findings of job evaluations to establish an improved job architecture that supports succession planning, career pathing and development. • Collaborate with research institutions (e.g., utilizing peer reviewed studies) and gain insight from internal subject matter experts to complete a skills assessment for a Smart One Water workforce and assess what skill sets are needed to be prepared for the future. • Develop training programs to equip employees for the impacts of innovation and digital transformation.
Measures	• Continuously review all job descriptions and track percentage of job descriptions updated annually. • Develop a succession planning program and career pathing documents, initially targeting 100% of key positions. • Identify and grow the number of Team H_2O that participates in collaborative projects and research partnerships, aiming for 10% annual growth. • Review leadership structure for plants and depots to be fit-for-future; track review status, aiming for 100% reviewed.

5 **Objective:** Implement cutting edge strategies for recruiting, engaging and retaining top talent in the marketplace as a leader and anchor of the Chesapeake Water Workforce Network.

Milestones	
	• Establish partnerships with local, regional and national stakeholders to build workforce pipelines.
	• Sustain and strengthen regional partnerships and alliances with other organizations as part of the Chesapeake Water Workforce Network (CWWN).
	• Collaborate with regional partners through CWWN to identify, build and accelerate career pipelines with a focus on hard-to-fill, mission critical positions in the water utility sector.
	• Develop a comprehensive plan to address internal workforce development needs including engagement and retention as well as external workforce development strategies to attract and recruit talent.
	• Create and participate in talent pipeline attraction events with public schools, industry associations and organizations.
	• Establish and expand engagement with local public schools, internship and apprenticeship programs to provide hands-on experience and pathways to employment within the organization.
	• Introduce new and sustainable pathways to entry for those seeking employment with WSSC Water.
	• Strengthen the water workforce by promoting diversity and inclusion efforts and developing and implementing strategies to attract talent from underrepresented communities.
	• Advocate for integrating water and wastewater operations and maintenance into civil and environmental engineering training programs.

Measures	
	• Maintain consistent engagement in regional partnership events to sustain network connections, targeting at least 10 events per year.
	• Measure attendance and engagement at career fairs and workshops, aiming for a 25% increase in participation each year.
	• Monitor the growth of internship and apprenticeship programs, targeting a 50% increase in program participants.
	• Gather and analyze feedback from talent pipeline events, aiming for 90% positive feedback from participants.
	• Facilitate opportunities for 50 members of Team H_2O to serve as Smart One Water ambassadors, promoting the organization's values and strategies.
	• Utilize applicant tracking tools and collaborate with JEDI team to identify underrepresented workforce demographics and set targets for improvement.
	• Track and improve retention rates of top talent, aiming for a 90% retention rate within the first two years of employment.

6 **Objective:** Sustain and enhance training and development programs to embody a learning culture.

Milestones	• Develop comprehensive learning journeys and skilled benchmarks to guide employee development for all positions. • Expand opportunities for training and development through additional on-the-job training and increased participation in learning courses, including the use of the Percipio platform, by promoting these opportunities across all departments. • Launch certification programs for specialized skills and knowledge areas relevant to our operations. • Implement leadership development programs tailored to emerging leaders and senior management. • Create cross-training programs to enable employees to gain skills and experience in different departments. • Create an enterprise-wide shadowing program for employees and incentivize participation. • Implement regular assessments and feedback mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of training programs.
Measures	• Measure employee advancement and promotions to assess the effectiveness of training initiatives, aiming for a 20% increase in internal candidates. • Provide quarterly metrics on participation in training and development courses, targeting a 30% increase in overall participation. • Measure the completion rates of newly introduced certification programs, with a goal of 100% of participants completing certification programs. • Monitor enrollment and completion rates of leadership development programs, aiming for at least 100% of identified emerging leaders completing the program. • Provide quarterly metrics on participation in cross-training and shadowing programs, targeting 25% of the workforce. • Collect and analyze feedback scores from training program participants, aiming for an average satisfaction score of 90%. • Use the Learning Management System (LMS) to ensure the career data is accurate, and all trainings, curriculums and career paths are accessible. Provide LMS quarterly metrics to measure increases in utilization.

7 **Objective:** Foster a collaborative One Team H$_2$O culture that encourages candid conversations and accountability at all levels and departments.

Milestones	• Implement regular surveys and 360-degree feedback mechanisms to gather insights on employee satisfaction and interdepartmental collaboration, as well as responding to survey feedback. • Develop metrics to measure the level of interdepartmental collaboration and establish a baseline for existing interdepartmental collaboration using annual survey and feedback. • Conduct assessment of existing collaborative tools and platforms (e.g., Microsoft Teams), identify existing gaps and implement guidance and tools to facilitate better communication and teamwork across departments. • Organize quarterly cross-departmental workshops and team-building activities to enhance collaboration and understanding. • Implement leadership training programs focused on fostering collaboration, accountability and candid conversations. • Conduct annual evaluations of collaborative initiatives to assess their impact on organizational culture and adjust strategies as needed.
Measures	• Track participation rate in surveys and 360-degree feedback mechanisms, targeting a 30% participation rate initially and aiming for 50%. • Ensure surveys and feedback cycles are conducted at least biannually, with a goal of identifying and addressing trends within three months of data collection. • Develop a collaboration score based on feedback and survey results, aiming for a 20% improvement over baseline. • Track and ensure that at least 30% of departments are represented in collaborative initiatives and feedback mechanisms. Collaborate with JEDI team to analyze trends to ensure equitable participation and engagement across departments. • Monitor attendance at cross-departmental workshops, aiming for a 25% increase in participation each year. • Measure the completion rate of leadership training programs, targeting 90% of managers and supervisors.

Affordability & Financial Viability

1 **Objective:** Increase financial stability.

Milestones	• Create and fully staff a dedicated grants office to identify, apply for, and manage external funding opportunities and leverage external funding to support key infrastructure projects and operational improvements. • Implement fiscal practices in alignment with the re-prioritized Commission rate setting policy recommendations: Cost-Based Rates, Revenue Stability, Rate Stability, Affordability and Minimizing Customer Impacts, Conservation/Demand Management, Ease of Understanding and Implementation. • Collaborate with applicable strategic priority teams to develop and execute plans to optimize water and wastewater system operations thereby reducing costs and increasing revenue. • Implement a program to upgrade meter infrastructure to improve accuracy and efficiency, reduce water loss and address billing discrepancies. • Identify and develop new revenue streams with set targets that do not rely on ratepayer contributions, such as partnerships and service expansions. • Develop and implement mechanisms for recovering costs associated with providing services (e.g., impact fees for new developments and service charges for specific activities) that are fair, transparent and contribute to financial stability. • Develop policies and guidelines to establish and maintain financial reserves to buffer against economic downturns and unexpected expenses and ensure long-term financial health. • Improve financial reporting systems to provide more timely and accurate financial data and conduct regular financial analysis and performance reviews to identify trends, opportunities and areas for improvement.
Measures	• Track total of external funding and target increase in funding from external sources by 20%. • Measure the percentage of meters replaced that are more than 15 years old and aim to complete 100% replacement of all aging meters within a specified timeframe. • Monitor delinquencies and target reducing delinquencies to not exceed 5% of total revenue. • Measure revenue from non-ratepayer sources and target increasing to 12.5% of total revenue.

2 Objective: Optimize operational efficiencies.

Milestones	• Identify and map processes (e.g. customer service) to maximize productivity within internal operations and enhance external stakeholder relationships through the implementation of technology solutions to automate routine tasks.
	• In collaboration with the Workforce Development & Culture team, establish a comprehensive training and development strategy to grow staff expertise internally and reduce reliance on external resources.
	• In collaboration with the Optimizing Operations team, benchmark critical processes to identify areas of improvement by utilizing performance metrics and industry standards and implement best practices, data-driven decision making and continuous improvement initiatives.
	• Conduct a resource allocation analysis, implement resource management software and implement a flexible staffing model to track and ensure optimal use of staff and material.
	• Encourage a culture of continuous improvement through collaboration with the Innovation, Technology and Research Department to explore and implement new technologies and methodologies, conduct regular training and workshops and recognize employees who contribute.
Measures	• Target a 10% annual increase in overall operational efficiency.
	• Benchmark 15% of critical processes annually to identify areas for improvement.
	• Facilitate knowledge and skills from contractors to employees, reducing staff augmentation by 20%.
	• Aim for a 10% reduction in resource waste annually.
	• Aim for 10% annual increase in engagement across departments involved in implementation of innovations, including innovation projects that are in development.

3 Objective: Increase transparency and efficiency within the total Operating and Capital Budget.

Milestones	• Incorporate sophisticated forecasting models (e.g., historical data and trend analysis) into planning for more accurate and predictable budget.
	• Increase stakeholder involvement in planning through regular meetings and forums to gather input and feedback.
	• Use life-cycle cost analysis to inform budget decisions and prioritize investments.
	• Develop and implement a robust budget tracking system to monitor real-time spending and generate detailed budget reports to ensure transparency with stakeholders.
	• Establish multiple communication channels (e.g., emails, Intranet and website) to keep stakeholders informed about budget planning and execution.
	• Conduct quarterly internal and cross-departmental budget reviews to ensure alignment with financial goals and address budget discrepancies early.
	• In collaboration with the Workforce Development & Culture team, encourage a culture of financial responsibility and awareness by providing training and resources to staff on financial management and budget.
Measures	• Ensure no more than 10% difference between budget and spend.
	• Hold 10 external stakeholder engagement and budget transparency meetings each year and measure stakeholder satisfaction through the process.
	• Identify project life-cycle cost for 20% of projects and programs each year and track the impact of life-cycle cost analysis on budget planning and decision-making.
	• Aim for a 90% adoption rate of a new real-time budget monitoring system among relevant departments within the first year of launch.
	• Utilizing communications channel metrics (e.g., click-rate, number of views), increase stakeholder awareness and understanding of the budget process, aiming for 15% annually.
	• Target a 10% reduction in budget discrepancies identified during reviews.
	• Measure the improvements in staff financial management skills through training assessments and feedback.

4 Objective: Ensure availability of customer assistance programs.

Milestones	• Identify and secure new external funding sources to support the expansion and long-term availability of the customer assistance programs. • Improve and expand program options/availability based on customer feedback and performance metrics to better meet the needs of diverse customer groups. • In collaboration with the Customer Engagement & Partnerships team, implement targeted outreach campaigns to raise awareness of available assistance programs by partnering with community organizations and developing multilingual resources. • In collaboration with the Customer Engagement & Partnerships team, simplify the application process for customer assistance programs to reduce barriers to entry by implementing an online application portal and self-service option, reducing the processing time. • Regularly review (i.e., using data and analytics) program outcomes to assess the impact and identify areas for improvement. • In collaboration with the Customer Engagement & Partnerships team, create a feedback mechanism for customers to share their experience and suggestions and involve the customers in the design and improvement of the assistance programs. • Collaborate with local, state and federal agencies and non-profit organizations to leverage additional support for customer assistance programs.
Measures	• Increase the amounts available for direct funding to support customer assistance programs by at least 10% annually. • Expand the financial assistance portfolio by adding at least one enhancement or initiative under the customer assistance program annually. • Measure the increase in the number of customers accessing the assistance programs, aiming to increase by 10% annually. • Target a reduction in application processing time by 20% annually. • Evaluate customer satisfaction with the programs and aim for a satisfaction rate of at least 85%.

Customer Engagement & Partnerships

1 **Objective:** Provide comprehensive and inclusive outreach.

Milestones	• Conduct a community needs analysis including focus groups to identify priorities. • Create a tool/matrix to respond to community needs. • Develop and implement outreach plan to improve all community outreach, including a process to assess results of community outreach. Develop an annual outreach plan by June each year and implement by July each year. • Develop and launch multilingual outreach campaigns to ensure inclusivity for non-English speaking communities. • Form strategic partnerships with local organizations and leaders to co-host community events. • Leverage digital platforms to conduct virtual outreach events and webinars, ensuring accessibility for all community members. • Implement focus groups to gather community feedback to adapt and improve outreach efforts. • In collaboration with the JEDI team, provide comprehensive training for outreach teams to enhance their cultural awareness and provide education around WSSC Water initiatives, programs, resources and frequently asked questions.
Measures	• Track the total number of outreach events conducted, aiming for 175 outreach events over the course of the strategic plan including at least two outreach events annually in each Council district across both counties. • Improve on JD Powers' customer satisfaction performance indicators each fiscal year. • Measure and aim to increase community engagement levels by 10% annually, as measured through surveys and attendance records. • Track participation in conjunction with partners at events in non-English speaking communities, aiming for 10% of events annually to be in non-English speaking communities. • Assess the impact of outreach training programs through pre- and post-training evaluations, aiming for 90% of participants to express increased confidence and knowledge about WSSC Water initiatives, programs, resources and frequently asked questions.

2 | Objective: Use technology and information to provide a better customer experience.

Milestones	• Assess current communications platforms (i.e., app, website, my.WSSCWater.com) to identify areas for improvement. • Utilizing assessment findings, redesign the online customer portal to be more user-friendly and informative, enhancing the overall digital experience. • Evaluate and revise the process and questions for the customer experience survey to provide more customer intelligence and create a customer experience baseline benchmark. • Expand customer self-service options and develop a customer communications technology improvement plan to facilitate easier customer interaction and service requests. • Grow customer contact using email, text messaging and emerging technology and implement a customer-friendly email management solution.
Measures	• Increase customer email list and text alert sign-up by 10% annually. • Track number of customer self-service enhancements, targeting one additional enhancement each fiscal year. • Achieve a 15% improvement over customer experience benchmark annually. • Measure the adoption and usage rate of new self-service options and utilize data to identify additional areas for managing the customer experience.

3 | Objective: Develop simple, targeted communications.

| Milestones	• Assess the current communications practices and identify gaps through a communications and tools gap assessment. • Create and implement comprehensive and inclusive communications plan for all community outreach. Develop communications plan by June 1 each year and begin implementation of communications plan and schedule by July 1 each year. • Improve communications on key topics (e.g., water usage, leaks and consumption, PFAS and LCRR) for readability and language access. • Create educational materials to address customer needs (e.g., water usage, leaks and consumption, PFAS and LCRR). • Implement mechanisms for ongoing feedback on communications to adapt and improve messaging. • In collaboration with the Workforce Development & Culture team, provide training for all customer-facing staff to enhance the effectiveness of customer interactions.
Measures	• Improve JD Powers' traditional communications (e.g., web, email, phone, social media, paper) performance indicators each fiscal year. • Expand and grow traditional and non-traditional communications tools and processes (e.g., social media, advertising partnerships), exploring the utilization of a minimum of one new tool or process each year. • Track the number of language offerings beyond English and Spanish for major initiatives each year, tailoring language offerings to meet the needs of the specific initiatives. • Ensure all communications are accessible and inclusive, with a target of 90% of new materials being available in multiple languages and platforms. • Track the percentage of customer-facing Team H_2O members participating in customer interactions trainings, aiming for 100% participation.

④ Objective: Embrace partnerships, engagement and collaboration with all stakeholders.

Milestones	• Assess existing partnerships, identify potential partners and develop a partnership engagement plan with a focus on vulnerable and hard-to-reach customers; update and implement annually. • Establish a formal framework for collaboration with community-based organizations, including initiation of regular meetings and collaborative projects with local government agencies to address community needs. • In collaboration with the other strategic priority teams, identify and develop strategic partnerships with industry leaders to leverage expertise and resources. • Implement a system for ongoing feedback and engagement with partners to continuously improve collaboration efforts.
Measures	• Grow new partners by 10% annually. • Assess, initiate and track collaborative projects with local governments and industry partners, aiming for at least five new potential projects annually. • Track the engagement levels of targeted outreach programs, aiming for annual increases in participation from vulnerable and hard-to-reach customers.
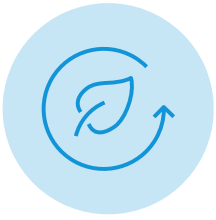
Sustainability & Resiliency

1 **Objective:** Implement measures to ensure WSSC Water operations can recover quickly from any disruption through robust preparedness programs.

Milestones	• Establish a Risk and Resilience Preparedness Council (RRPC), an enterprise-wide team responsible for coordination of risk and resilience activities. • Finalize the Emergency Operations Plan and identify a path for completion of all identified plans. • Achieve saturation of National Incident Management System training within the WSSC Water workforce. • Establish and complete a hazard mitigation plan that addresses supply chain gaps and identifies key projects (capital and non-capital) necessary to build resilience. • Establish and complete a multi-year training and exercise plan for emergency preparedness.
Measures	• Track frequency of RRPC meetings, aiming for a minimum of four per year. • Measure the number of emergency plans updated each year. • Measure the number of employees with Incident Command System (ICS) training each year. • Measure the number of employees involved in an emergency management exercise each year.

2 **Objective:** Harden WSSC Water infrastructure and systems by building a security culture, enhancing security protocols and improving systems for a more proactive response to physical and cybersecurity risks.

Milestones	• Assess and implement a more robust security training for new employees. • Upgrade existing security technology for 21st-century threats. • Maintain an active and regularly updated register of risk, vulnerability and resilience for WSSC Water infrastructures, systems and operations. • Complete the US EPA-required Risk & Resilience Assessment using Risk Analysis and Management for Critical Asset Protection (RAMCAP) J-100 analysis. • Identify and deliver key security training for all employees including training for critical incidents such as active shooter. • Implement "security and safety moments" at WSSC Water meetings to build mindfulness of security.
Measures	• Track percentage of employees completing security training, aiming for 100% completion. • Track departments that have implemented "security and safety moments" in meetings, aiming for 100% of departments. • Conduct a minimum of two cybersecurity tests/exercises with after-action recommendations each year. • Conduct a minimum of one physical security penetration test per year at each staffed facility and implement identified corrective actions.

3 **Objective:** Focus operational approaches to implement programs that address the 4 P's of sustainable development: People, Planet, Productivity and Purpose.

Milestones	• In collaboration with the Asset Management & Infrastructure Reliability team, incorporate a "Planet" consideration into capital project prioritization for long-term infrastructure investments. • Establish department-level sustainability goals that address the climate, biodiversity and related impacts. • Review environmental compliance permits and set goals for operational efficiency and sustainability in WSSC Water processes. • Identify any negative current and historical impacts of WSSC Water operations on community members and develop programs to address those impacts.
Measures	• Meet 100% of permit requirements for all facilities to support thriving of ecosystems, biodiversity and Chesapeake Bay restoration. • Set and track progress towards departmental goals for sustainability that reflect the function-specific impacts of individual departments. • Evaluate and monitor environmental and biodiversity metrics for financial decision-making processes.

4 **Objective:** Identify current and future gaps in the capability and redundancy of source water, treatment systems, infrastructure and processes to effectively respond to environmental, regulatory and supply chain challenges.

Milestones	• Develop a plan for resilience from the most catastrophic, mission-threatening events. • In collaboration with the Asset Management & Infrastructure Reliability team, plan for future treatment, distribution and collection needs that acknowledge the evolving regulatory and public health impacts of climate change and environmental exposure to chemicals and other pollution. • Support regional efforts to fund and implement water supply resiliency. • Develop source water protection priorities. • Begin assessment of water demand reduction potential by water conservation, reuse and gray water systems and water loss reduction.
Measures	• Track percentage of operational risk scenarios with strategies for maintaining modified level of service, initially aiming for 100% plan completion of low-probability/very-high impact risk scenarios. • Seek, monitor and track amount of funding for solutions to off-river source-water storage to support drought or contamination operations. • In collaboration with the Asset Management & Infrastructure Reliability team, prepare one or more CIP Roadmaps through facility plans each year.

5 **Objective:** Reduce WSSC Water's greenhouse gas emissions and achieve a 50% reduction by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050.

Milestones	• Complete WSSC Water's public facing climate action plan and begin implementation. • Incorporate climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience planning into the RRPC. • Apply for Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program funding through the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) when available.
Measures	• Track number of projects and strategies identified in the climate action plan, which are prioritized for funding and grant opportunities. • Monitor number of communications about the climate action plan and progress to employees and the public, aiming for a minimum of one communication campaign per year. • Continue to measure GHG emissions annually; identify annual reduction targets and track.
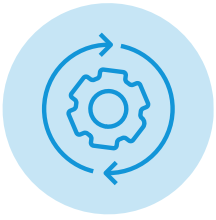
Optimizing Operations

1 Objective: Establish a continuous improvement framework to identify, review, verify effectiveness and adopt best practices for core procedures to ensure operational efficiency.

Milestones	• Conduct gap analysis on the existing framework and guidelines for revising procedures, establish guidelines and a cadence for the review and revision of core procedures, identify additional procedures that need to be created and implement corrective actions. • Standardize, consolidate and post all core procedures and business processes to a central location accessible to all relevant staff. • In collaboration with the Workforce Development & Culture team, develop and launch a comprehensive training program for employees on the continuous improvement framework and updated procedures. • Implement a feedback mechanism for employees to suggest improvements and report issues with current procedures. • Establish a monitoring and reporting system to track the progress of the continuous improvement initiatives and share updates with all stakeholders.
Measures	• Review at least 20% of all procedures each year. • Achieve 100% consolidation and accessibility of core functions and business processes in the central location. • Track percentage of employees completing the continuous improvement training program, aiming for 100% completion for all relevant employees.

2 Objective: Adopt smart technologies to enhance system monitoring, data quality and accessibility to improve data-driven decision making.

Milestones	• Research and identify technologies for metering infrastructure that will support a Smart One Water mission. • To enhance system monitoring and data reliability, identify and develop prioritization criteria (e.g., difficult-to-read locations, environmental justice screening criteria, meter age) for meter replacements and enhance meter infrastructure. • Develop new dashboards and continue the expansion of the performance management "Stat" process to assist with data-driven decision making as needs are identified. • Replace facilities information tool (FIT). • Replace maintenance management information system (MMIS). • Create and implement mobile workforce management tools to improve field operations and data collection. • In collaboration with the Digital Transformation team, develop and implement data governance policies to ensure data quality, security and compliance.
Measures	• Replace 30,000 residential meters and 500 commercial meters each year. • Track and replace 100% of obsolete software programs to identify, prioritize and track replacement of obsolete operations software to optimize processes and systems. • Collaborate with Digital Transformation to monitor and report dashboard usage rate. • Ensure 90% of field operations staff adopt and use mobile workforce management tools.

③ Objective: Implement a Smart One Water system approach for asset management to support operational optimization.

Milestones	• Collaborate with the Asset Management & Infrastructure Reliability strategic priority team to implement asset management approach to improve operational reliability of all assets. • Complete facility plans for Source Water Supply, Storage and Water Treatment Facilities; Water Resource Recovery Facilities; Water Distribution Facilities; Wastewater Conveyance Facilities; and Non-Process Facilities. • Complete prioritization of facility plans based on operational risk. • Develop and conduct training programs for staff on the Smart One Water system approach and new asset management tools. • Collaborate with Asset Management & Infrastructure Reliability to regularly review and update asset management policies and procedures to align with best practices and emerging technologies.
Measures	• Collaborate with Asset Management & Infrastructure Reliability to use a continuous improvement process for asset availability and reliability by performing proactive maintenance measured as a percentage of total maintenance hours. Benchmark with industry standards. • Implement asset management approach to minimize Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSO). Benchmark with US EPA standards. • Ensure 100% completion of facility plans for all key infrastructure. • Ensure 90% of relevant staff complete training programs on the Smart One Water system approach and asset management tools.

Asset Management & Infrastructure Reliability

1 Objective: Develop and implement a Utility Wide Master Plan (UWMP) to standardize and communicate system improvement road maps.

Milestones	• Conduct a gap analysis and maturity assessment of WSSC Water's current Asset Management Program. • Develop, publish and implement Utility Wide Master Plan (UWMP). • Develop, publish and implement Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) to document how the program is applied to the newly expanded asset portfolios and provide Asset Management Program development roadmap. • Update Asset Management policy and risk framework. • Update the enterprise asset portfolio and hierarchy, including expanded and redefined asset definition and build upon the comprehensive asset registry. • Collaborate with the Optimizing Operations team to update standard operating procedure (SOP) and internal operating procedure (IOP) based on UWMP and SAMP. • Develop key stakeholder communications plan for Asset Management Program.
Measures	• Develop and implement SAMP within 12 months of gap analysis completion and track frequency of updates, targeting every three years. • Establish Asset Management Program goals and track percent achieved annually, aiming for 100% completion within three years. • Track number of additions to comprehensive asset registry each quarter. • Review and update 100% of Asset Management policies and procedures within 6 months of UWMP and SAMP completion and establish periodic update cycle; track number of Asset Management policies and procedures reviewed and updated per periodic cycle. • Aim for 100% of key stakeholders to be informed and engaged in Asset Management Program implementation.

2 Objective: Maintain and improve level of service goals and leverage data for agile allocations of resources.

Milestones	• Update and create new performance measures to align with strategic plan to include a greater understanding of leading and lagging indicators relevant to primary level of service goals. • In collaboration with the Digital Transformation and Optimizing Operations teams, create a unified platform that utilizes prescriptive analytics. • In collaboration with the Digital Transformation and Optimizing Operations teams, establish data governance framework to support levels of service and resource allocation decision making. • In collaboration with the Digital Transformation and Optimizing Operations teams, establish an Asset Management performance dashboard for priority service levels and performance measures within 12 months of data availability on the Water Data Hub. • In collaboration with the Workforce Development & Culture team, create data management positions within Asset Management Program, including a data scientist/analyst position in the Enterprise Asset Management department to support data-driven resource allocation.
Measures	• Define performance measure data needs in the Water Data Hub, aiming for 100% of critical asset management related strategic objectives. • Aim for 100% of priority service levels and performance measures tracked in Asset Management performance dashboard. • Aim to align 100% of initiatives with one or more performance measure(s). • Ensure dashboard is used to foster collaboration across departments for annual resource allocation planning, aiming for 100% of relevant stakeholders.

3 Objective: Prioritize asset improvements and operations and maintenance (O&M).

Milestones	• Allocate capital and operating expenses in terms of total expenses to the assets and balance lifecycle costs to revamp asset investment portfolio. • Utilize digital technology to improve access to financial and data metrics for operations and maintenance teams. • In collaboration with the Optimizing Operations team, improve asset management investment forecasts and prioritization by implementing prescriptive analytics. • In collaboration with the Optimizing Operations team, leverage digital technologies to improve real time operational and capital improvement decisions. • Use system data to develop and implement proactive and preventive asset maintenance practices. • Complete revised asset risk framework that can be used to prioritize maintenance and investments. • Initiate actions to update future fiscal year Asset Management Plans.
Measures	• Successfully implement and measure effectiveness of predictive analytics tools in the asset management system, targeting reduction in unexpected asset failures by 30%. • Monitor number of preventive maintenance activity forecasts in the MMIS, aiming for the top 25 most critical Asset Types at WSSC Water's ten most critical facilities. • Estimate labor and direct costs for routine preventive maintenance activities of the top 25 most critical Asset Type(s) and track actual expenditures. Utilize data to adjust estimates, targeting a 75% reduction in discrepancies between estimates and actual expenditures. • Establish 10-year financial projections to reflect estimates of capital and operating funding needs, aiming for 100% of critical infrastructure and at least 50% of all assets.

4 **Objective:** Implement condition assessments for all asset classes to develop system roadmaps.

Milestones	• Develop a holistic condition assessment (CA) program execution plan to inform how CA protocols are created, updated, applied and tracked. • Define high confidence CA protocols by asset type. • Prioritize execution of CA activities. • Establish the foundations for Reliability Centered Maintenance (RCM) and develop a roadmap to initiate and roll-out RCM implementation.
Measures	• Update, establish and track percentage of new CA protocols each year by asset type, targeting 100% completion for all asset types. • Track confidence levels of applied Asset Type CA protocols and use data to adjust confidence levels as needed. • Track implementation of RCM, aiming for application at the five most critical facilities within one year of developing the roadmaps.

Objectives and Results
Digital Transformation

1 **Objective:** Sustain a comprehensive cyber resilience program to protect our people, assets, critical operations and the environment.

Milestones	• As part of the Disaster Recovery (DR) Program, successfully complete annual testing for the DR Plan consistent with Recovery Time Objective (RTO) and Recovery Point Objective (RPO) goals. • Comply with industry based best practices, regulations and standards for water and wastewater cyber protections.
Measures	• Achieve 90% compliance with annual cyber awareness training within 30 days of launch. • Monitor outages resulting from cyber security incidents, targeting zero significant or sustained outages. • Track completion status of Center for Internet Security (CIS) Risk Assessment Management, aiming for 90%+ coverage. • Sustain CIS 8.0 percentage target of 90% compliant.

2 **Objective:** Support and enhance a culture of continuous learning to improve the adoption of innovative technologies and techniques.

Milestones	• Establish a framework for identification, assessment and implementation of new solutions. • Develop comprehensive communications and change management plans for the introduction of all major initiatives. • In collaboration with the Workforce Development & Culture team, document essential skills and associated skills gaps to support Smart One Water. • In collaboration with the Workforce Development & Culture and Optimizing Operations teams, develop training to leverage existing digital technologies as tools for continuous improvement.
Measures	• Measure the adoption rate of new technology, targeting a minimum of 10% achieved within three months of deployment, 30% at six months, and 75% within one year of implementation. • Monitor updates to inventory of licenses and certifications, aiming for 100% completion and utilize data to identify gaps in current job plans. • Assess engagement in identifying innovative technologies and techniques for continuous improvement, aiming for 100% of departments engaged.

3 **Objective:** Provide universal access to data and information to improve decision making, organizational efficiency and service.

Milestones	• Identify opportunities to leverage digital twin technology and prioritize initiatives. • Develop a data governance approach to support prioritized initiatives. • Establish process to review, evaluate and prioritize requests for adding datasets to the Water Data Hub, including publishing a data dictionary. • Leverage machine learning, artificial intelligence and other technology to aid in decision making and implement and support this technology in an ethical manner. • Complete an initial proof of concept for the Water Data Hub, focused on Work Order data.
Measures	• Add at least one new data source to the Water Data Hub per quarter. • Monitor and report Water Data Hub usage rate per month. • Train at least one Power BI advanced user in each department. • Aim for 100% compliance with data governance policies across all departments.

Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

1 **Objective:** Infuse JEDI into the culture of WSSC Water.

Milestones	• Create and launch a JEDI Advisory Council (JEDIAC) to establish standards and mechanisms that support JEDI strategies across the Commission. • Establish accountability standards and mechanisms and establish priorities for first year of JEDIAC. • Conduct JEDI assessments to understand Commission-wide needs. • Launch company-wide mandatory JEDI training.
Measures	• Track participation and departmental representation in JEDIAC, with at least 15 members from a cross-section of the organization and two members from senior leadership team (SLT) or appropriate SLT designee. • Monitor completion rate of baseline JEDI training offerings, targeting 100% employee completion within the first year it is launched. • Track completion of updated training, targeting 100% employee completion of updated training once every two years.

2 **Objective:** Ensure career growth opportunities for Team H_2O are done so in a manner that promotes a more equitable and inclusive workplace.

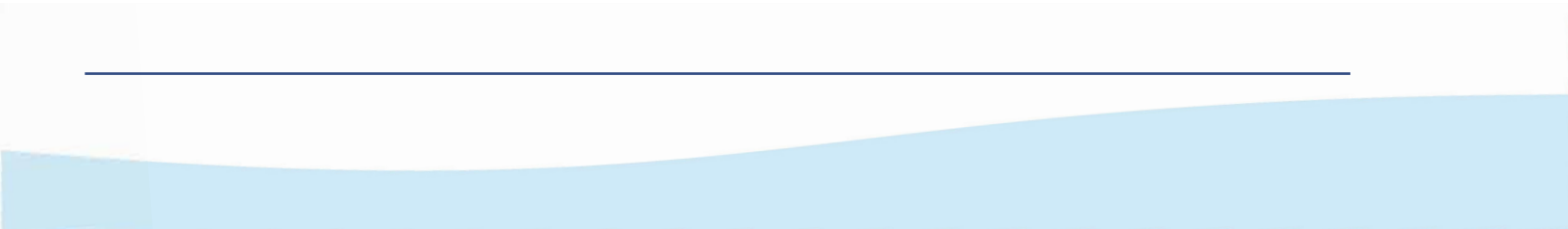| Milestones	• Review proposed career pathing, succession planning and promotional opportunities in collaboration with the Workforce Development & Culture team to ensure they are equitable and inclusive. • Ensure the establishment of an equitable and inclusive career development training program that outlines promotion pathways. • Enhance the Percipio platform and create opportunities for career development via peer shadowing. • Launch survey soliciting feedback from employees about trainings they are seeking. • Establish Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) to provide internal support and enhance internal networking opportunities.
Measures	• Track the number of ERGs established and launched, with a minimum of three established within the first year. • Measure engagement and participation in ERGs, targeting at least 10% growth within one year of launch. • Annually track increase in participation in career development training.

3 Objective: Continue efforts to increase contracting equity and diversify our supplier portfolio.

Milestones	• Establish a semi-annual Supplier Training Series to educate suppliers on best practices for doing business with WSSC Water. • Increase community and vendor engagement with diverse businesses. • Establish an Emerging Prime Program to increase contracting with small businesses.
Measures	• Annually track and report contract awards and spending with number of Minority- and/or Women-Owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) firms receiving payment and contract awards from WSSC Water. • Track attendance and feedback from the Supplier Training Series to measure engagement and effectiveness. • Measure the growth in contracts awarded to small businesses through the Emerging Prime Program annually.

4 Objective: Utilize environmental justice considerations to prioritize and optimize infrastructure investments and policy-making.

Milestones	• Continue the development and implementation of an environmental justice scoring system to identify historically marginalized communities. • Assess and develop an approach for assisting overburdened communities that host infrastructure, thereby supporting their ability to thrive. • Develop a standard methodology for prioritization of capital projects and other operational efforts to better align investments in disadvantaged communities. • Review and assess the outcomes and results of the capital projects prioritization, revising the approach and methodology as needed. • Implement training in cultural awareness to best serve all communities. • Leverage existing networks, interagency connections and partnerships, including those with regional utilities, to provide communication mechanisms to cultivate relationships between county and community organization liaisons.
Measures	• Annually assess rate of impact on disadvantaged communities as a result of scoring system. • Annually assess actual dollars spent in disadvantaged communities on capital projects. • Track percentage of customer service personnel that have completed cultural awareness customer service training, aiming for 100% completion. • Increase customer satisfaction scores as a result of cultural awareness training as measured by customer surveys.

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