

A black and white photograph of a water treatment plant. The image shows a complex network of large pipes, metal walkways, and industrial machinery. Bright sunlight streams in from large windows, creating a high-contrast scene with strong shadows and bright highlights. The overall atmosphere is industrial and clean.

**METRO WATER
SERVICES**
Nashville and
Davidson County

STRATEGIC PLAN 2016

CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

INTRODUCTION

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Community Profile

Industry Trends and Local Context

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Vision

Mission

Values

Priorities

Goals and Strategies

Strategic Framework

COMMUNICATION

IMPLEMENTATION



PROTECTING THE NASHVILLE METROPOLITAN REGION'S HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

by providing safe drinking water, treating wastewater, and managing stormwater has always been the very reason for Metro Water Services' existence. Now, technology and other advances have provided us with new ways to tackle infrastructure and environmental challenges, to become a more resilient utility overall.

Achieving this mission requires the operation of a complex business enterprise that includes:

- A supportive Mayor and Metropolitan Council
- A team of committed employees
- Sufficient financial resources
- Extensive, modern, and well maintained infrastructure
- Efficient operations
- Satisfied customers

To meet these efforts, Metro Water Services has developed a new strategic plan to help it pursue a well-defined, positive future for all our constituencies. This plan is described and presented in this document.

I would like to express the organization's appreciation for the support and contributions of many people who helped us develop this plan including:

- External stakeholders who provided input, including Metro

Government, large users, and wholesale customers

- Management and employees who provided input, developed the plan, and will ultimately implement the plan

Recognizing the contributions of senior management and employees who have contributed to positioning Metro Water Services as one of the finest water sector organizations in the country, I believe this plan will build on our strong foundation. Working as a cohesive team, Metro Water Services is committed to continuing as a leading utility that enhances our community's quality of life.

SCOTT POTTER, PE

METRO WATER SERVICES DIRECTOR

INTROD

In January 2016, Metro Water Services (MWS) initiated an organizational assessment and strategic planning process to assess the utility's current performance, create an organizational vision, and develop a framework for guiding the utility toward achieving that vision.

**THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
PRESENTED IN THIS DOCUMENT
WILL GUIDE INVESTMENT AND
ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES AND
PROVIDE A STRUCTURE TO ASSURE
THAT LONG-TERM GOALS AND
STRATEGIES ARE ACHIEVED.**



UCTION





MWS' strategic planning process commenced by conducting an organizational assessment process to understand:

- The presence of best practices at MWS, as identified in the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Effective Utility Management (EUM) initiative;
- Current performance and organizational targets around each of EUM's Ten Attributes of an Effectively Managed Utility;
- Priority areas for additional organizational effort and improvements; and,
- How MWS performs relative to industry benchmarks and other organizations that have undergone similar exercises.

The results of the organizational assessment are documented in the "Effective Utility Management Assessment", dated June, 2016.

The results of the assessment were used as inputs to the strategic planning process, which was designed to assure:

- A shared vision of MWS' ultimate goals. Organizations driven by clear purposes and shared values have a greater capacity to succeed.
- A common understanding of the available resources, the environment, and the principles upon which strategies will be based.
- Acceptance of the direction and urgency of the strategic and operating plans, which will be integrated into the manner in which MWS is operated on a day-to-day basis.

To achieve the conditions for success, the MWS strategic planning process involved input from a broad group of internal and external stakeholders, deep involvement of more than 60 employees in the assessment process, and consistent communications of MWS' vision, mission and overall strategic plan, both internally and externally. Major elements of the process included:

Stakeholder Input

Input was obtained from members of the Metro Nashville government, employees, large customers, and wholesale customers through a combination of interviews, an online employee survey with 170 responses, and ten separate EUM Attribute Teams, each of which focused on assessing MWS performance in a different area.

Foundation Workshop

A Core Strategic Planning Team (Core Team), consisting of members of MWS' senior management group and process owners, met to consider the stakeholder input and to draft the organization's Vision, Values, Mission, and Priorities.

Priority Teams Formation

Seven multidisciplinary teams of employees were established to develop qualitative statements, key objectives, and potential strategies for the top seven priorities of the organization. Priority Team roles included:

- Priority Champions, who acted as liaisons between the Core Team and senior management,

provided support, and ensured appropriate resource availability for the team

- Priority Team Members, who were three or four management-level employees representing various functions across the organization

Strategy Workshop

The Priority Teams presented their work to the Core Team, which made preliminary decisions concerning the goals and strategies to be included in the final plan.

Core Team Review

After documentation of the Strategy Workshop results, the Core Team met again to review and revise, as necessary, the elements of the MWS' strategic plan.

The Core Team believes that the input of the Priority Teams and the EUM Attribute Teams was critical to the success of the strategic planning effort.





ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Community Profile

Nashville Metro Water Services is a department of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County (Metro Government) that provides service to more than 176,000 water accounts and 189,000 wastewater accounts through two water treatment plants and three wastewater treatment plants. MWS serves the City of Nashville and Davidson County, as well as portions of Rutherford and Williamson Counties.

The City of Nashville is the capital of the State of Tennessee, and is located on the Cumberland River in the north central part of the state. According to the US Census Bureau, the consolidated city-county experienced an 8.5% increase in population from 2010 (603,505) to 2015 (654,610). Metro Government is comprised of a Mayor, Vice-Mayor, and a 40-member Metropolitan Council, with five members having been elected at large and 35 having been elected from single-member districts. The median household income in the City is \$46,758, which is lower than the national median (\$53,482), but higher than the Tennessee median (\$44,621). In addition, the City of Nashville has a relatively low rate of persons living in poverty (19.2%).

The largest employers in the City are Vanderbilt University and Medical Center, followed by the Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County Government and Public Schools, the State of Tennessee, and the federal government. Additionally, as the “home of country music,” Nashville is a major music recording and production center, with the Big Four record labels, as well as numerous independent labels having offices in the city, as well the headquarters for Gibson guitars and the Grand Ole Opry. Real estate is a major driver for the City’s economy – as of October 2015, the City has more than \$2 billion in real estate development projects underway or projected to start in 2016.

METRO WATER SERVICES’ OPERATING ENVIRONMENT WAS DOCUMENTED THROUGH:

Information analysis of the demographics and other external influences (Community Profile)

Considerations of key industry trends and their potential impact on MWS

**TO ACHIEVE CONTINUED SUCCESS,
MWS MUST ADDRESS SEVERAL NATIONAL
OF PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE C
UPDATE AND IMPLEMENT ITS STRATEGIC**



NAL AND STATE-WIDE TRENDS

ORGANIZATION AS IT WORKS TO

IC PLAN.

INDUSTRY TRENDS & LOCAL CONTEXT

The services provided by Metro Water Services are central to assuring a sustained vitality of the service area. To achieve continued success, MWS must address several national and state-wide trends of particular significance for the organization as it implements its strategic plan. These include meeting future regulatory requirements, changes in usage patterns, and growing concerns about the impact of global climate change. These, and other challenges, must be considered to adequately plan for the organization's future.

Key trends, expectations for the future and potential MWS responses, many of which are embodied in the strategic plan and/or will be addressed in implementation plans, are presented on the following pages.



TREND 1

Population

THE CURRENT SITUATION

MWS' service area population is increasing, as is its population density. According to some estimates, 80 people move to Nashville each day, which tends to represent a younger population with increased technology expectations. Additionally, the Nashville area is increasingly home to more new Americans, who require different types of outreach and engagement activities. The Nashville-Davidson area population is growing significantly more quickly than that of the State of Tennessee.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE:

- Relationship to neighboring communities and utility districts may be impacted as demand increases
- More attention and focus on stormwater management will be necessary

POTENTIAL MWS RESPONSES:

- Emphasize planning, including MWS' Master Plan, the communication plan, and regional planning efforts
- Increase interdisciplinary project scopes where possible, and more flexibility on solution development
- Expand stakeholder involvement in project

TREND 2

The Political Environment

THE CURRENT SITUATION

With a large Metropolitan Council and two-year terms, long-term planning can be challenging for MWS. The recently elected Mayor has been actively involved in MWS activities, and this year's Metropolitan Council has many newly elected members. The Mayor's Office and Metropolitan Council has increasing interest in detailed project information and the MWS leadership team has increased its interaction with its governing body.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE:

- More involvement from the governing bodies
- More transparency and instantaneous communication
- Increased engagement and awareness of all stakeholders

POTENTIAL MWS RESPONSES:

- Focus on a timely and consistent response, as well as education
- Expand communication channels and develop additional opportunities to engage stakeholders
- Remain accessible, transparent and collaborative

TREND 3

Regulations

THE CURRENT SITUATION

While MWS has been in full compliance with regulatory requirements, it is anticipated that regulations will increase over time and substantial resources may be required to remain in continuous compliance. Changes in national regulatory administrations typically result in changes at the local level. Current events, like the lead contamination in Flint, MI, increase and impact regulations as well.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE:

- Continued and changing regulatory challenges
- Changes will likely have significant cost implications
- Changes necessitated by regulation will require careful planning and implementation in terms of processes, equipment, funding, timelines, etc., however it is hard to know in advance what new regulations will be

POTENTIAL MWS RESPONSES:

- Predict and take actions appropriately
- Work to anticipate the next level of treatment and build that into treatment and design
- Participate in national and state agencies and organizations to keep a pulse on evolving regulatory compliance requirements

TREND 4

Workforce Issues

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Like many utilities, MWS has had some difficulty recruiting and retaining well qualified employees in some positions, and generational differences are driving change in the working environment. The average age among MWS staff is 49 and rising, and transferring knowledge has been easier than transferring wisdom and system-specific expertise. Additionally, MWS is sometimes seen as a training ground for other utilities, especially at the operational level, which impacts long-term employee retention.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE:

- Transfer of knowledge is key, on a continuous basis
- Because of population increases and changing regulations, operational processes change, and knowledge needs to evolve in response
- MWS has very limited ability to offer incentives, flexible scheduling, or work from home options
- Private industry competition is going to continue to increase

POTENTIAL MWS RESPONSES:

- Develop career paths and additional strategies to recruit and retain well qualified employees
- Provide additional training

**WHILE MWS HAS BEEN IN
FULL COMPLIANCE WITH
REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS,
IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT
REGULATIONS WILL INCREASE
OVER TIME AND SUBSTANTIAL
RESOURCES MAY BE
REQUIRED TO REMAIN IN
CONTINUOUS COMPLIANCE.**



TREND 5

Technology

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Technology has improved customer service options, and there is a growing customer desire to access information from mobile devices. Evolving technology is increasing the ability to more quickly receive and analyze customer information and to respond more quickly. Technology advancements are also allowing MWS to utilize remote monitoring of key processes and facilities. Technology systems integration will be a continued focus in the years ahead.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE:

- Increases in demand for additional technology and access for customers to MWS data
- Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) used to facilitate information sharing on usage, with the next step being to use it to plan infrastructure

POTENTIAL MWS RESPONSES:

- Continue to provide paths for customers to meet their needs electronically
- Recruit people who understand systems (social media, AMI) and the internal/external needs around technology deployment

TREND 6

Total Water Management

THE CURRENT SITUATION

MWS participates with the state to set water treatment, conveyance and reuse policy. Water resource adequacy is not presently an issue for MWS. The current MWS funding model presents challenges for joint projects between water/wastewater, and stormwater. The respective watershed stakeholders operate somewhat independently; with water quality interests being the most integrated. While there is consciousness of the idea of a single watershed organization, full integration is still a challenge, due to different funding, organization, regulations, etc.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE:

- More of the “One Water” push is likely at national, regional, and local levels
- The current administration supports collaboration between different service entities, and other local jurisdictions

POTENTIAL MWS RESPONSES:

- Explore opportunities for a more total water management approach to project management, determinations, and executions
- Work to address funding inequities and set rates more appropriately

TREND 7

Customer Expectations

THE CURRENT SITUATION

The public expects excellent service, which can be challenging to provide with the present funding. Political and economic considerations often place downward pressure on rates and there has not been an increase in water or wastewater rates in ten years. MWS has increased its customer engagement efforts to build customer relationships and trust; however it has also experienced increased customer expectations. Customers expect MWS to investigate all problems that occur, and to share information through an active presence on social media. To some extent, a disconnect exists between the cost of customer service and the customer's expectations.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE:

- Continued technology improvement will lead to more real-time sharing of information
- Rates, both locally and nationally, will increase for the foreseeable future

POTENTIAL MWS RESPONSES:

- Increase collaboration with other service-providing entities
- Educate the community on the value of water and water services
- Implement a responsible and fair rate structure
- Continue to demonstrate infrastructure stewardship

TREND 8

Utility Financial Constraints

THE CURRENT SITUATION

MWS operates as an enterprise fund. The utility's rates are affordable compared to other similar utilities. Rates, rate structure, and connection costs are to ensure optimal recovery of costs. Finally, utility rates can sometimes be associated with taxes, getting caught in the conversation against tax increases.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE:

- Costs continue to increase
- Infrastructure is aging and needs to be replaced appropriately
- Technology advancements are being made that could assist MWS operating even more efficiently

POTENTIAL MWS RESPONSES:

- Conduct rate analyses and propose annual rate adjustments to the Mayor and City Council
- Continue to make a business case to communicate the financial needs of the organization

Energy and the Environment

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Metro Water Services does not currently face any challenges in terms of energy availability, though it does represent a significant portion of the operating budget. An energy management program is in place to reduce costs, with the goal of having no negative impact on the environment.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE:

- Increased push to remove chlorine and other toxic chemicals from the treatment processes
- More stringent regulations

POTENTIAL MWS RESPONSES:

- Continue with energy audits
- Partner with stakeholders
- Remain engaged with state regulators
- Learn and share best practices



Increased Risk Profile

THE CURRENT SITUATION

MWS is at risk for weather events that can compromise water, wastewater, and stormwater quality, service, and infrastructure. Climate variability has increased in recent years, and MWS is susceptible to flooding. MWS' risk profile has increased, including training for weather-related impacts, source protection impacts, and security threats (internal and external). MWS has an on-going vulnerability assessment, and periodically conducts emergency preparedness tabletop exercises with regulatory groups.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE:

- Technology and automation may bring additional risks and exposure points

POTENTIAL MWS RESPONSES:

- Focus on creating more awareness, establishing additional protections, and higher expectations with employees and customers
- Be proactive and predictive, to assist in reacting to new, unanticipated threats





**MWS IS AT RISK
FOR WEATHER EVENTS
THAT CAN COMPROMISE
WATER, WASTEWATER,
AND STORMWATER
QUALITY, SERVICE, AND
INFRASTRUCTURE.**





DIRE

THIS STRATEGIC PLAN SERVES AS A BLUEPRINT FOR FUTURE MWS DECISION MAKING.

Furthermore, this plan provides a structure by which annual reviews can be accomplished to assure that goals and objectives retain their relevance over time. By laying out a course of action, this plan represents a disciplined process for making the fundamental decisions that will shape MWS' future. The Strategic Plan contains the Organization's Vision, Mission Statement, Values, Priorities, Goals, and Strategies. It addresses MWS' current challenges and helps to ensure continued success in operations and the management of resources and assets.

STRATEGIC ACTION

Vision

Ultimately, implementation of this plan will enable MWS to achieve its desired future state as articulated in its Vision, which is:

To continue to be a leading utility that enhances our community's quality of life.

Mission

The Mission describes the organization's purpose and role within the service area. After carefully considering these factors, the Core Team stated MWS' Mission as:

We supply, treat, manage, and protect our water resources in a sustainable manner for the benefit of all who live, work, and play in our community.

Values

Values articulate MWS' deeply held beliefs, norms, and qualities, which drive day-to-day activities. These values include:

Public Health: *Protecting our community by creating a water, wastewater and stormwater environment that meets or exceeds state and federal regulations.*

Safety: *Providing our employees with a safe and proper working environment while ensuring our customers' safety in all that we do.*

Excellence: *Providing the highest quality products and services to meet the needs of our fellow employees, neighbors and community.*

Integrity: *Earning, maintaining and being worthy of our customers' and each other's trust by continuously doing the right thing.*

PRIORITIES

Priorities represent the most important issues that must be addressed to achieve the desired future. Metro Water Services' Priorities were driven primarily by the factors that are most critical to the organization's future success (critical success factors). Each of these priorities is equally important and contributes to MWS' future success as a leading utility that enhances the community's quality of life.

PRODUCT QUALITY



To meet or exceed customer and regulatory standards for water, wastewater, and stormwater services.

MWS is committed to maintaining and enhancing the long-term health of its community and environment by meeting or surpassing all regulatory requirements when providing high quality water, wastewater, and stormwater services.

CUSTOMER SERVICE



To create a culture of exceptional service focused on understanding, meeting, and exceeding the needs of our customers.

MWS communicates with customers and shows genuine interest in solving their problems with superior service and products that fulfill needs and provide lasting value.

OPERATIONAL RESILIENCY & OPTIMIZATION



To operate in a manner that ensures safe and reliable water services, with the ability to restore service and recover from any threat.

MWS recognizes the importance of making the most of its human, natural, and financial resources. MWS' commitment to reliability, safety, and efficiency incorporates innovative solutions from across the organization and the industry.

INFRASTRUCTURE STABILITY



To ensure service reliability through responsible infrastructure investment and proactive maintenance.

MWS is proud of its work on existing infrastructure systems and the new infrastructure under construction. A continued focus on developing and maintaining a sustainable infrastructure that will meet customer needs now and in the future is critical to success.

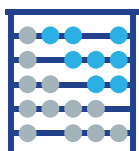
STAKEHOLDER UNDERSTANDING & SUPPORT



To protect and increase community confidence in MWS through effective communication and engagement.

MWS has a commitment to maintaining a level of quality, performance, and value that will earn stakeholders' continued loyalty and respect. Demonstrating this value requires strong, consistent communication through a variety of mediums.

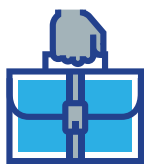
FINANCIAL VIABILITY



To be financially sound, now and in the future.

Operating a utility is a resource-intensive endeavor, which depends on appropriate operating and capital funding. MWS is an enterprise fund of the Metro government, and is committed to utilizing its financial resources in a strategic and efficient manner.

EMPLOYEE & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



To recruit, develop, and retain a well-qualified, collaborative, highly engaged team of employees.

A high performing workforce requires high performing individuals. Accordingly, MWS will attract, retain, motivate, manage, and reward exceptional employees who make significant contributions to its success.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goals are the measures of accomplishment for each Priority; they state what will be accomplished and when it will be completed. Strategies are the approaches to be used in order to achieve the goals. These critical elements of the strategic plan, as well as the Vision, Values, Mission, and Priorities, are presented on the strategic framework.

STRATEGIC framework

VISION

Continue to be a leading utility that enhances our community's quality of life.

VALUES

Public Health
Safety
Excellence
Integrity

MISSION

We supply, treat, manage, and protect our water resources in a sustainable manner for the benefit of all who live, work, and play in our community.

PRIORITIES

PRODUCT QUALITY

To meet or exceed customer and regulatory standards for water, wastewater, and stormwater services.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

To create a culture of exceptional service, focused on understanding, meeting, and exceeding the needs of our customers.

OPERATIONAL RESILIENCY AND OPTIMIZATION

To operate in a manner that ensures safe and reliable water services, with the ability to restore service and recover from any threat.

INFRASTRUCTURE STABILITY

To ensure service reliability through responsible infrastructure investment and proactive maintenance.

STAKEHOLDER UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT

To protect and increase community confidence in MWS through effective communication and engagement.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

To be financially sound, now and in the future.

EMPLOYEE AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

To recruit, develop and retain a well-qualified, collaborative, and highly engaged team of employees.

GOALS

1. Continue to comply with all regulations on an ongoing basis.
2. Receive annual awards for Facilities and Operations by 2017 and thereafter.
3. Work to de-list 100% of eligible streams from the 303(d) List on a biennial basis.
4. Reduce water, wastewater, and stormwater quality complaints by 10% by 2021.

1. First responder in route, on average, to unplanned service interruptions within 60 minutes at least 90% of the time by 2019.
2. Reduce the percent of unplanned service interruptions lasting longer than 4 hours (post utility location activity) to 20% annually by 2021.
3. Maintain billing accuracy per 10,000 bills generated of greater than or equal to 99.8%.
4. Establish and conduct customer satisfaction surveys biennially, with first survey completed by 2018.

1. Decrease five year running average of Injuries on Duty by 10% by 2020.
2. Implement 10% of the number of long-term redundancy strategies identified in the Distribution System Optimization Plan by 2021.
3. Implement 100% of the high priority recommendations in the All Hazards Response Plan and Emergency Response Plan by 2021.
4. Decrease Total O&M Costs of Potable Water Service by 5% and Total O&M Costs of Wastewater Services by 5% by 2021.
5. Inspect 50 % of all water quality stormwater SCMs on private property for best management practices by 2021.

1. Reduce the hours of corrective maintenance per length of pipe for linear water/sewer assets by 1% annually through 2021.
2. Reduce the hours of corrective maintenance per system demand for vertical water/sewer assets by 1% annually through 2021.
3. Decrease the five year running average of stormwater annual maintenance service requests by 5% by 2020.
4. Increase to and maintain a 0.5% renewal/rehab rate for water mains and a 1% renewal/rehab rate for sewer mains.
5. Reduce SSOs per 100 miles of sewer collection piping to a maximum of 1.3 overflows/100 miles of pipe on an ongoing basis.

1. Set a baseline for each stakeholder group by 2018 to increase positive awareness of MWS.
2. Increase opportunities for meaningful engagement of stakeholders by 10% annually.
3. Create and publish an Annual Report for the reporting period of FY2018 and thereafter.
4. Increase the positive media coverage instances related to MWS annually.

1. Achieve and maintain an all-in debt service coverage ratio of 1.7 by 2021.
2. Maintain affordable combined water, wastewater, and stormwater rates as a percentage of Median Household Income.
3. Achieve and maintain 365 days cash on hand by 2021
4. Maintain an annual E&R fund (cash) at 100% of operating expenses.
5. Maintain or improve Aa3 AA bond rating by 2021.

1. Increase the percent of positions filled within the target time-to-hire to 75% by 2021.
2. Increase the number of positions that have a formalized training plan for the probationary period to 45 (out of current 93) by 2021.
3. Increase the percentage of employees who have completed the designated skills development plan for their functional area or an individual development plan to 50% by 2021.
4. Increase employee satisfaction levels to a minimum of 70% by 2021.
5. Increase MWS retention rate of high performing employees to a minimum of 75% by 2020.

STRATEGIES

1. Optimize technology and processes to enable operational performance above compliance requirements.
2. Investigate and address system distribution water quality issues.
3. Continue to implement the Consent Decree program.
4. Proactively monitor impending regulations.
5. Continue to utilize long range planning to address growth.
6. Enhance, maintain, and coordinate MWS water resource protection and oversight programs.

1. Advance utility-wide collaboration and responsibility for customer service.
2. Increase service response to better meet customer expectations.
3. Expand use of electronic transactions.
4. Further utilize AML.
5. Maximize the use of communications channels.
6. Create avenues to solicit customer feedback.

1. Identify needs and establish standing emergency contracts.
2. Adopt sufficient technology to maximize organizational efficiency and automation.
3. Expand the Emergency Response program to include appropriate training for every employee and annual emergency response exercises.
4. Review and evaluate opportunities for organizational structure modifications to optimize efficiency and limit redundancies.
5. Commission a cross-Department team to consider opportunities to increase overall fleet readiness.
6. Provide 24 hours of water service to each water pressure zone during a power outage (generators, reservoirs, etc.)
7. Redefine Injuries on Duty definitions and coordinate with Purchasing for input on Contract selection.
8. Conduct a risk assessment associated with business continuation during operational anomalies (Development Services/Customer Service).

1. Establish a formal asset management plan, including buried and vertical assets, with processes and procedures that are adopted and advocated for by the Department.
2. Utilize 100% of Stormwater capital project funding allocation through identification, inspection, design, and construction.

1. Develop and implement a comprehensive communication and engagement plan for our diverse stakeholders.
2. Advance MWS as a brand and develop a comprehensive, creative marketing campaign.
3. Increase social media interactions and followers annually.

1. Document and uphold Metro Government and Water Services financial policies and controls.
2. Educate stakeholders and advocate for appropriate water, wastewater, and stormwater rates, rate structures, and fees, based on long-and short-term planning.
3. Propose a program of automatic annual rate adjustments.
4. Maintain current and future financial flexibility (reserves, bond ratings, debt, etc.).

1. Develop employee skills, development plans, and target program in support of succession planning.
2. Improve on-boarding, validate performance, and document effectively during an employee's probationary period.
3. Be proactive in recruiting well-qualified employees.
4. Increase the number of functional areas with a formalized training plan.
5. Enhance the employee appreciation and recognition program.
6. Build and sustain internal HR capacity.
7. Establish and provide on-going top down leadership, management, and culture training.
8. Establish timeframes for "target time to hire" by position – recognize not all positions are created equal.

Through this strategic plan, MWS has committed to improving internal and external communications. Effective communication is critical not only for the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan, but also for the overall success of MWS. The issue of communication, which surfaced in the stakeholder input process, cuts across the various strategic goals.

As indicated on the strategic framework, communications will be enhanced through several efforts, including:

- Enhancing use of multi-disciplinary teams to manage issues and projects
- Leveraging the continued contribution of the priority teams convened for the strategic planning effort
- Creating a culture of communication, both internally and externally
- Expanding team building and networking, linking individual contributions to overall organizational success

Overall, enhanced communications will be a major initiative at all levels of MWS to assure employee commitment and to facilitate various teams and individuals working toward the same vision and mission, regardless of which goals or strategies are their primary focus.



COMMUNICATIONS

IMPLEMENTATION

The priorities, goals, and strategies contain a series of initiatives and projects that, when implemented, will move MWS toward achievement of its desired outcomes. Careful attention and focus on strategy implementation is essential to achieving strategic success. Elements of the implementation process for MWS include:

Leverage Priority Teams

The priority teams are knowledgeable, energized and committed to the implementation of the strategies for their respective priorities. They are to be instrumental in the implementation planning and ultimate implementation process. Specifically, they are to:

- Expand membership to include additional subject matter expertise
- Draft implementation plans for each strategy including:
 - Monitor implementation progress
 - Report on implementation progress to the Core Team

Involve Senior Management

During the implementation process, the priority teams, through their respective executive sponsors, are to communicate with senior management concerning issues such as:

- Implementation progress
- Resources required (people, money, equipment, etc.)
- Strategies, which after initial implementation efforts, may require updates
- Achievement of goals

Strategic planning is a way of thinking that guides an analysis of the present and helps create a vision of the future. Metro Water Service has developed a strategic plan that will take time to implement completely; however, it will provide a guide to the organization's long-term strategic success.



