



Coachella Valley Water District

Strategic Plan

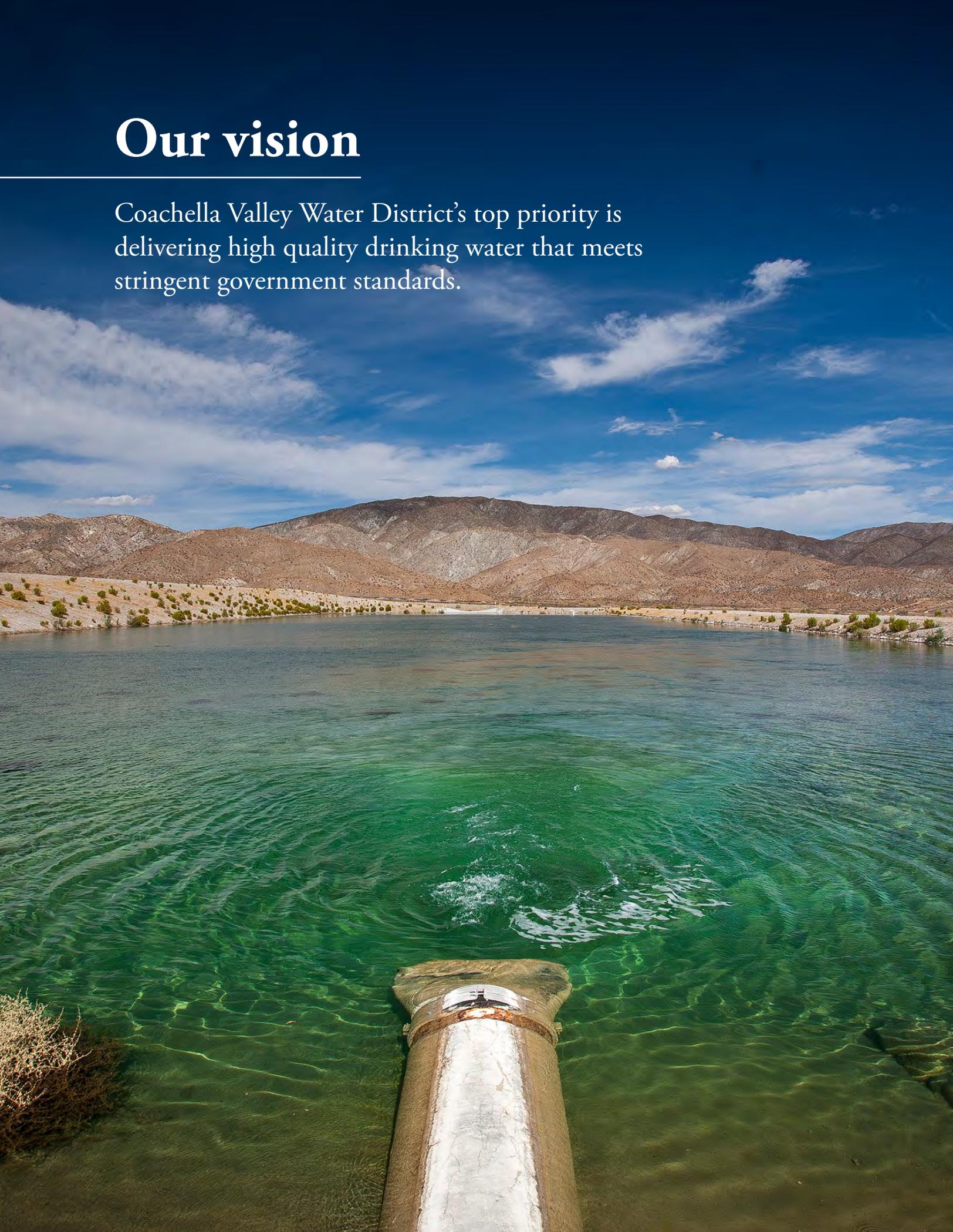
Adopted 2015



Flowing Forward

Our vision

Coachella Valley Water District's top priority is delivering high quality drinking water that meets stringent government standards.





Contents

Message from the General Manager.....	2
Coachella Valley Water District at a Glance.....	4
Organizational Structure.....	5
Boundary Map.....	6
Community Profile.....	7
What is a Strategic Plan?.....	8
External Issues.....	9
CVWD's Strategic Goals.....	10
Strategic Initiatives 2014-15.....	11-14
Strategic Initiatives 2015-16.....	15-23

Message from the General Manager



In June 2015, the Coachella Valley Water District's Board of Directors adopted its second five-year Strategic Plan. Strategic planning is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide an organization, what it does and why. It is a plan for today and for the future.

The 2015-16 Strategic Plan presented here builds upon the important process started last year that helped define the District's priorities. This year's plan identifies 29 Strategic Initiatives, which are the projects that will help us achieve the plan's overall goals.

Development of the Strategic Plan was a collaborative internal process that included a core group of 48 employees representing every department within the District and two rotating Board members who met for three separate workshops. Originally, 42 initiatives were proposed and evaluated based on importance and whether they were measurable, realistic and provided a high return on investment. These were then prioritized into the final 29 Strategic Initiatives outlined in this document.

The focus of this document is on the current year, but it also looks to the future. Strategic planning implies that some organizational decisions and actions are more important than others are, and that much of the strategy lies in making the tough decisions about what is most important to achieving organizational success.

The final product will shape future decisions and help us meet the water-related needs of the community for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Barrett". The signature is stylized and written over a light gray rectangular background.

Jim Barrett,
General Manager

Our Mission

To meet the water-related needs of the people through dedicated employees, providing high quality water at a reasonable cost.



Coachella Valley Water District at a glance

Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD, District) is a special district established in 1918 by the state legislature and governed by a five-member Board of Directors elected to four-year terms by District voters.

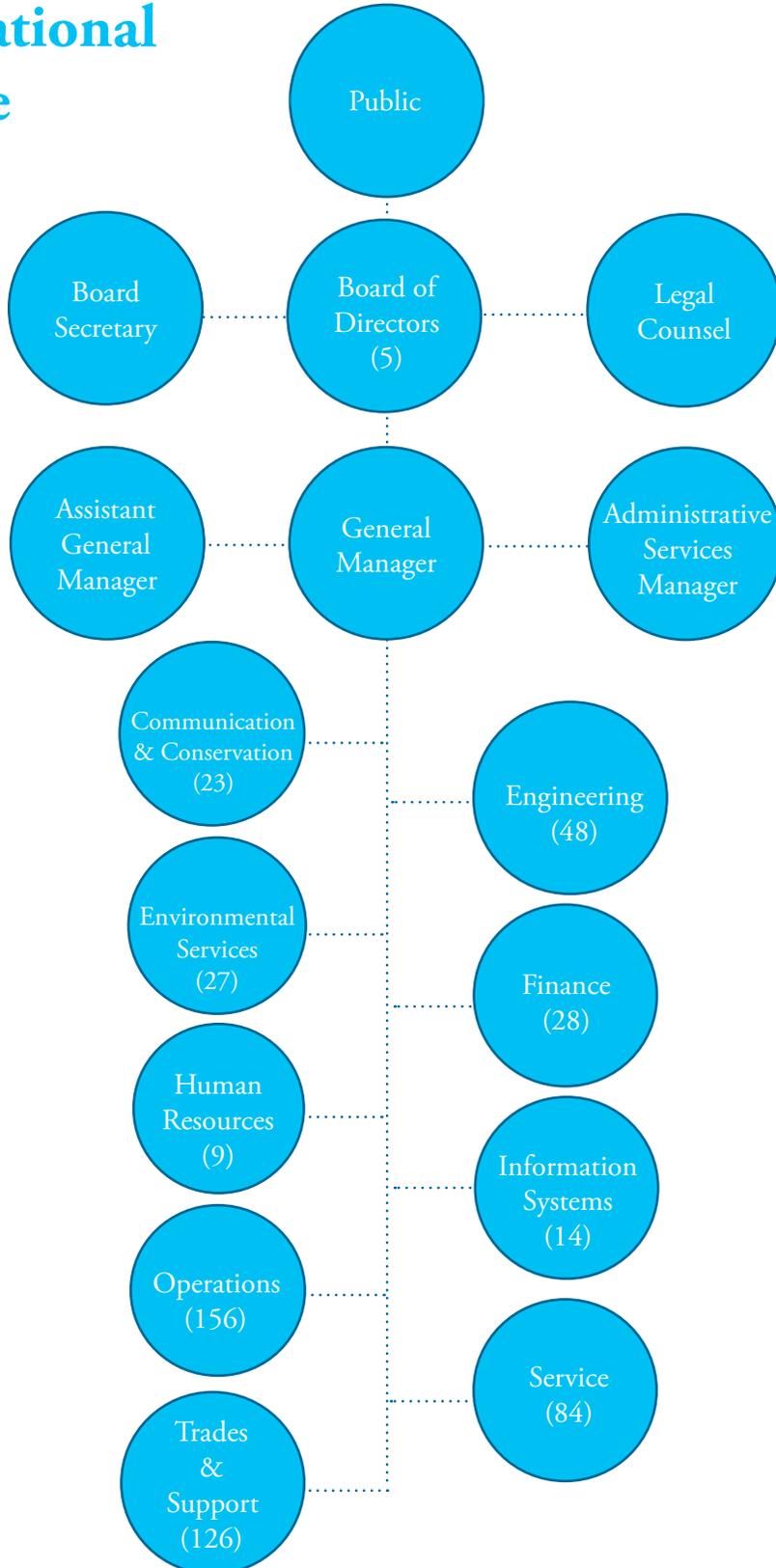
Today, CVWD has grown into a multi-faceted agency with approximately 500 employees helping to provide a variety of water-related utility services to more than 350,000 people in the Coachella Valley.

The primary fields of service are:

- 1 Domestic/drinking water treatment and distribution to approximately 109,000 homes and businesses. All of the drinking water supplied by Coachella Valley Water District comes from the groundwater basin.
- 2 Irrigation water importation and distribution. The 122-mile Coachella Canal provides Colorado River water to local farmers and golf courses in the eastern Coachella Valley.
- 3 Wastewater collection and treatment. The District owns and operates five wastewater reclamation plants that receive a combined average of 17.5 million gallons of wastewater per day.
- 4 Recycled water distribution. Treated wastewater is distributed to golf courses and other customers for landscape irrigation.
- 5 Groundwater management. CVWD replenishes the groundwater supply at three different facilities in the Coachella Valley. At two of the locations, the effort is collaborative with Desert Water Agency.
- 6 Regional stormwater/flood protection. The District protects nearly 600 square miles from flooding through a system that includes 16 stormwater protection channels.

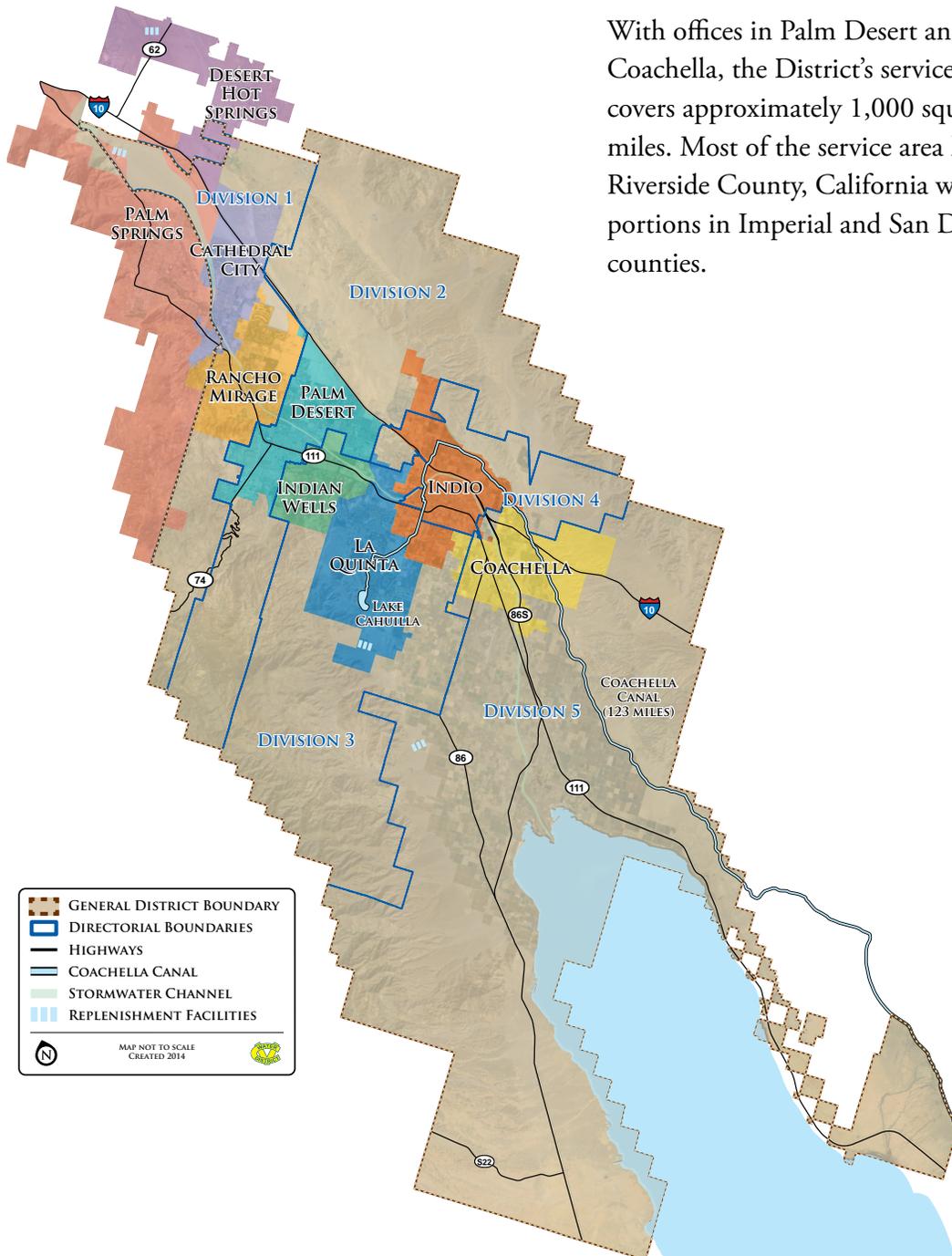


Organizational Structure



Boundary Map

With offices in Palm Desert and Coachella, the District's service area covers approximately 1,000 square miles. Most of the service area lies in Riverside County, California with small portions in Imperial and San Diego counties.



Community profile

The Coachella Valley (Valley) extends approximately 45 miles in Riverside County, southeast from the San Bernardino Mountains to the Salton Sea. The Valley is approximately 15 miles wide along most of its length and surrounded by scenic, rugged mountains. The elevations on the valley floor range from 1,600 feet at the north end of the valley, to 250 feet below sea level at the south end of the valley.

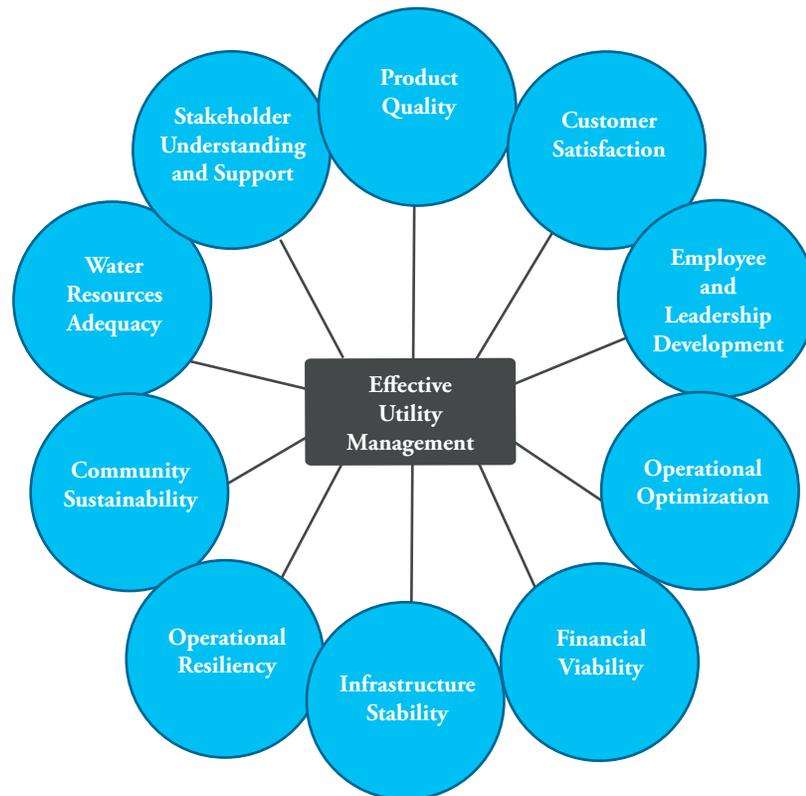
The Valley's year-round population is approximately 350,000, but this figure almost doubles during the months of November through May with the influx of "snowbirds" escaping the cold winters of Canada, the Pacific Northwest, and the Northeastern United States.



What is a Strategic Plan?

The Strategic Plan is a tool that defines what is critical to the District's success and the initiatives necessary to guide the District toward its achievement of goals. Strategic planning is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide an organization, what it does and why.

The strategic goals were developed within the framework of Effective Utility Management (EUM), which was developed by the major water and wastewater organizations in the United States. Effective utility management helps water and wastewater utilities select priorities for improvement, based on the unique needs of their communities. The framework addresses operations, infrastructure, customer satisfaction, community welfare, natural resource stewardship, and financial performance.



The 10 attributes of an effectively managed water utility, as developed by leading industry associations.

External Issues

There are several significant issues currently facing the District that influenced the development of the Strategic Goals. The District paired these issues with the EUM attributes (in parenthesis) as a reference point for determining priorities. Among the key external issues are:

- 1** California is experiencing a historic drought that has resulted in state-mandated conservation goals and water-use restriction. Because we live in a desert, we're essentially always in a drought and require effective groundwater management planning to ensure future water supplies. The Coachella Valley Water Management Plan details several strategies and projects to eliminate overdraft of the aquifer, including increased conservation, utilization of recycled and imported water for golf and farm irrigation and continued groundwater replenishment. (Water Resources Adequacy and Community Sustainability)
- 2** Through the foresight of our predecessors in the Valley, CVWD is only one of two California water agencies that hold rights to both the Colorado River and the State Water Project. However, the recent droughts within California and on the Colorado River basin is a stark reminder how vulnerable our imported water supplies are to the forces of nature, and that these supplies need to be protected and optimally used. (Water Resources Adequacy)
- 3** The California Department of Public Health in 2013 announced a new Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for chromium-6 at 10 parts per billion. Complying with the new MCL will have wide-ranging impacts on District operations and infrastructure. A comprehensive study was completed to determine the most cost-effective approach. Design of new treatment facilities is underway with construction expected to start in summer 2016. (Product Quality and Water Resources Adequacy)
- 4** Although the bulk of the domestic water system is relatively new, ongoing repairs and replacement projects are required. The canal irrigation system is 65 years old, with many of the 485 miles of irrigation laterals in need of repair or replacement. The District is the main agency that provides stormwater protection for the Coachella Valley and several areas remain unprotected. (Infrastructure Stability)
- 5** In 2013, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians filed suit against Desert Water Agency (DWA) and the District. The suit claims senior reserved groundwater rights and seeks to permanently stop DWA and the District from (1) withdrawing groundwater from the aquifer in the western Coachella Valley, and (2) replenishing the aquifer without treating the water first. (Water Resources Adequacy)



CVWD's Strategic Goals

The District considered all external issues and internal challenges before identifying and committing to the broad goals below, which are designed to move the District forward in executing its mission. The strategic goals the District has selected to focus on cover six thematic areas:

- 1 Employee/Workforce Development
- 2 Financial Stability
- 3 Water Supply Sustainability
- 4 Exceptional Customer Service
- 5 Water Quality and Environmental Leadership
- 6 Infrastructure Investment and Management

Budgeting

Although the District continues to enjoy a healthy financial condition in 2015-16 (total annual budget of \$329.7 million, divided into \$221.8 million for operating budget and \$108.4 million for capital projects), budgetary constraints were still considered during the Strategic Plan development.

The Strategic Planning process was very successful, generating 42 distinct projects. Realizing the timing and budgetary constraints for fiscal year 2015-16, a total of 29 projects were identified as ones rising to the top of the priority list, and are presented in the following pages. The other 13 projects have been retained, and will be revisited in the future after the completion of the second year of this process.



Action Plan

Strategic Goal 1: Employee Workforce Development

Objective: Maintain competitive salaries and benefits

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Perform Salary and Benefits Survey and update all job descriptions.

Status: Partially completed; carried over to next fiscal year.

Initiative 2: Increase outreach to local colleges and high schools about job opportunities.

Status: Completed and ongoing.

Objective: Succession planning and knowledge management

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Develop succession planning strategy.

Status: Partially completed; carried over to next fiscal year.

Initiative 2: Create an Internal Education/Training Program for District and departmental levels.

Status: Completed.

Initiative 3: Restore internal suggestion box so employees of every level can make recommendations to improve processes and procedures.

Status: Completed and ongoing.

Strategic Goal 2: Financial Stability

Objective: Follow industry-recognized rate making practice

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Complete Cost of Service Study for irrigation rates and replenishment assessment charges (RAC).

Status: Carried over to next fiscal year.

Initiative 2: Complete Cost of Service Study for domestic water and sanitation.

Status: Carried over to next fiscal year.

Objective: Maintain organizational fiscal health

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Pre-fund Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) and CalPERS.

Status: Partially completed; carried over to next fiscal year.

Initiative 2: Obtain Bond Rating.

Status: Partially completed; carried over to next fiscal year.

Strategic Goal 2: Financial Stability (Continued)

Objective: Ensure integrity and transparency of financial process

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Develop financial policies to protect the District's long-term financial health.

Status: Carried over to next fiscal year.

Initiative 2: Develop internal control policies to ensure reasonable safeguards of the District's assets.

Status: Carried over to next fiscal year.

Strategic Goal 3: Water Supply Sustainability

Objective: Enact more aggressive conservation

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Plan and implement a golf course turf rebate program that includes a tiered rate analysis and establishes water budgets to assist golf courses in reducing water use.

Status: Completed and ongoing.

Objective: Expand non-potable water program

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Continue current golf course conversion to non-potable use and implement the Board-approved plan.

Status: Completed and ongoing.

Initiative 2: Produce a Non-potable Water Master Plan to identify golf courses to be connected to nonpotable system in the future.

Status: Carried over to next fiscal year.

Objective: Update and comply with Water Master Plan

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Develop imported water-use strategy to identify groundwater source substitution projects.

Status: Partially completed; carried over to next fiscal year.

Objective: Protect water supply and optimize usage

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Complete water supply implementation strategies study to consider alternative source of domestic water.

Status: Completed.

Action Plan

Strategic Goal 4: Exceptional Customer Service

Objective: Optimize customer experience

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Redesign www.cvwd.org website for improved customer navigation.

Status: Completed.

Initiative 2: Install call recording software for customer service training purposes.

Status: Completed.

Initiative 3: Install co-browsing software to allow customer service representatives to better assist customers having difficulty with the website.

Status: Completed.

Objective: Improve internal communications

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Hold interdepartmental meetings with employees, directors, and general manager to share important information.

Status: Completed and ongoing.

Objective: Obtain customer feedback and input

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Engage customers through customer satisfaction surveys to explore opportunities for enhanced service and programs.

Status: Completed and ongoing.

Strategic Goal 5: Water Quality & Environmental Leadership

Objective: Comply with water quality regulations

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Develop and implement an agricultural discharge compliance plan to ensure compliance with state requirements.

Status: Completed

Initiative 2: Obtain revised water quality permit provisions for Waste Water Reclamation Plant 10.

Status: Carried over to next fiscal year.

Objective: Perform effective environmental resource management

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Complete and Submit Salt and Nutrient Management Plan to the State, as required for all groundwater basins under The State Water Resources Control Board's Recycled Water Policy.

Status: Completed.

Strategic Goal 5: Water Quality & Environmental Leadership (Continued)

Objective: Perform effective environmental resource management (cont'd)

Initiative 2: Complete and implement a comprehensive Operations and Maintenance Manual to protect biological resources on CVWD conservation lands.

Status: Completed.

Objective: Optimize energy usage

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Complete an Alternative Energy Feasibility Study and rank alternative energy projects that can reduce energy costs and add to overall community sustainability.

Status: Carried over to next fiscal year.

Strategic Goal 6: Infrastructure Investment and Management

Objective: Develop Asset Management, Capital Improvement Program and Preventive Maintenance programs

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Implement an Asset Management Program.

Status: Partially completed; carried over to next fiscal year.

Initiative 2: Develop Asset Management Policy and recommend computerized maintenance management system software.

Status: Partially completed; carried over to next fiscal year.

Initiative 3: Implement Preventative Maintenance Management Program

Status: Completed.

Initiative 4: Develop hydraulic model for irrigation distribution system.

Status: Carried over to next fiscal year.

Objective: Irrigation infrastructure repair and replacement

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Perform comprehensive irrigation and drainage inspection of key portions of the District's Canal irrigation system.

Status: Completed.

Objective: Protect other physical assets

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Conduct a corrosion protection system evaluation and implement recommendations to help maintain District infrastructure.

Status: Carried over to next fiscal year.

Employee Workforce Development

Objective: Maintain Competitive Salaries & Benefits

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Develop compensation program to evaluate District's overall salary and benefits package.

Outcome: Create a plan to reward employees for exceptional performance and an evaluation process to provide measurable performance expectations while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Employee and leadership development

Initiative 2: Develop employee reward-recognition program.

Outcome: Implement programs to improve morale and promote employee initiative and empowerment.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Employee and leadership development

Objective: Succession planning & knowledge management

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Develop and implement a career path and leadership development program.

Outcome: Create clear career paths and leadership development to help employees become better prepared for possible career advancement and increase the number of qualified internal candidates for future positions.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Employee and leadership development, operational resiliency

Initiative 2: Develop and implement an intranet collaboration portal.

Outcome: Develop an electronic tool that will improve internal communication between departments and employees.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Employee and leadership development

Financial Stability

Objective: Follow industry-recognized rate making practices

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Conduct a Cost of Service Study for non-potable, developer fees, canal capacity, drought RAC's.

Outcome: Standardize non-potable water fees; include canal capacity fees and canal drought contingency plan.

Estimated Cost: \$143,000

EUMs: Financial viability

Objective: Maintain organizational fiscal health

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Complete bond rating and financial policies.

Outcome: Obtain AA Bond Rating to secure best interest rates for the District.

Estimated Cost: \$72,000

EUMs: Financial viability, operational resiliency

Initiative 2: Establish financial policies.

Outcome: Provide framework for financial and budgeting decisions; provide assurances to bondholders.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Financial viability, operational optimization

Objective: Ensure integrity and transparency of financial process

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Increase stakeholder outreach (internal and external) regarding RAC, domestic, chromium-6, sanitation, etc.

Outcome: Conduct stakeholder education and receive valuable stakeholder input before developing and approving rate increases.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Stakeholder understanding and support

Water Supply
Sustainability

Objective: Enact more aggressive conservation

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Expand District's Golf Water Conservation Program.

Outcome: Explore funding opportunities to implement golf course rebate program for projects such as turf removal, lake liner replacement, and nozzle replacement.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Water resources adequacy

Initiative 2: Create a new Agriculture Water Conservation program.

Outcome: Form an agricultural water advisory group to provide valuable input on development of a program to assist agricultural water users in reducing water use.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Water resources adequacy, operational resiliency

Initiative 3: Expand Domestic Water Conservation Program (includes complying with Governor's mandate).

Outcome: Develop process for improved staff oversight and tracking related to water-use mandates and water waste reports.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Water resources adequacy, community sustainability

Objective: Expand non-potable water program

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: File State Wastewater Change Petition to utilize waste Water Reclamation Plant No. 4 effluent for non-potable uses.

Outcome: Obtain State approval to change waste Water Reclamation Plant No. 4 waste water discharge to help increase recycled water use and groundwater conservation.

Estimated Cost: \$10,000

EUMs: Water resources adequacy, community sustainability

Water Supply Sustainability (cont'd)

Objective: Update and comply with Water Management Plan

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Develop drought contingency plan for Colorado River water.

Outcome: Develop a Board-approved plan to address availability and drought conditions that will help guide future water management decisions.

Estimated Cost: \$10,000

EUMs: Water resources adequacy, community sustainability, operational resiliency

Initiative 2: Perform agency coordination and planning to comply with Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).

Outcome: Plan and coordinate CVWD's timely compliance with SGMA, including submittal of an alternative groundwater sustainability plan to the State by January 1, 2017.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Water resources adequacy, community sustainability, operational resiliency



Exceptional Customer
Service

Objective: Optimize Customer Experience

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Create mass notification system to be able to inform customers in a timely manner.

Outcome: Implement software and processes for notifying customers of major events (boil water alerts, drought updates, conservation tips, rate adjustments).

Estimated Cost: \$20,000

EUMs: Customer satisfaction

Initiative 2: Develop citizen's reporting application.

Outcome: Provide platform for citizens and stakeholders to notify District of infrastructure problems and water waste utilizing an app.

Estimated Cost: \$10,000

EUMs: Customer satisfaction

Objective: Improve Internal Communications

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Develop fact sheets for staff about important topics.

Outcome: Improve internal communications and awareness of the issues facing the District and its customers through fact sheets distributed to employees as needed.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Employee and leadership development, customer satisfaction

Initiative 2: Implement interdepartment tailgate meetings.

Outcome: Improve internal communications and awareness of the issues facing the District and its customers through presentations and meetings.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Employee and leadership development, customer satisfaction

Objective: Obtain Customer Feedback & Input

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Develop targeted customer experience surveys.

Outcome: Develop and conduct customer satisfaction surveys to help CVWD identify policies and procedures in need of improvement.

Estimated Cost: \$50,000

EUMs: Customer satisfaction

Water Quality & Environmental Leadership

Objective: Comply with Water Quality Regulations

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Obtain State approval for Chromium-6 Water Treatment Compliance Plan.

Outcome: Satisfy State drinking water requirements.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Product quality, operational resiliency

Initiative 2: Complete right-of-way acquisition and CEQA-plus document for pipeline to connect Salton City domestic water system to Cove domestic water system.

Outcome: Bring new water source to ID11, improve water quality and quantity.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Stakeholder understanding and support, community sustainability, water resources adequacy, product quality

Objective: Perform Effective Environmental Resource Management

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Submit Garfield Street Constructed Habitat Project Concept Plan.

Outcome: Satisfy phase 1 of CVWD's Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan obligation through providing natural habitat for mitigation.

Estimated Cost: \$670,000

EUMs: Water resources adequacy, community sustainability

Initiative 2: Complete Water Reclamation Plant No. 7 Tamarisk Removal Project.

Outcome: Satisfy CVWD Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan obligation; restores natural habitat; conserves groundwater.

Estimated Cost: \$100,000

Additional FY 16 Funds: \$100,000

EUMs: Water resources adequacy, community sustainability

Water Quality & Environmental Leadership (cont'd)

Objective: Optimize Energy Use

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Complete Alternative Energy Feasibility Study.

Outcome: Identify highest ranked feasible alternative energy projects; provide a path to reduce carbon emissions and energy costs.

Estimated Cost: \$50,000

EUMs: Community sustainability, operational optimization



Infrastructure Investment and Management

Objective: Develop an Asset Management/Capital Improvement Program/
Preventive Maintenance Management program

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Complete asset inventory and condition assessment, and create a Preventive Maintenance Management Program.

Outcome: Development of plan will guide CVWD's asset inventory, accounting, maintenance, management and replacement (recommend Computerized Maintenance Management System software.

Estimated Cost: \$950,000 total; \$500,000 next fiscal year

EUMs: Infrastructure stability, Operational optimization

Objective: Irrigation Infrastructure Repair and Replacement

:: Action Plan ::

Initiative 1: Finish development of hydraulic model for irrigation system.

Outcome: Develop and implement irrigation distribution system hydraulic model for use as a tool to evaluate and design improvements to the irrigation distribution system.

Estimated Cost: \$250,000

EUMs: Infrastructure stability, operational optimization

Initiative 2: Inspect irrigation and drainage system and begin prioritizing results.

Outcome: Perform comprehensive evaluation to provide valuable input for the asset management master plan pilot program.

Estimated Cost: \$200,000

EUMs: Operational resiliency, infrastructure stability

Infrastructure Investment and Management (cont'd)

Objective: Irrigation Infrastructure Repair and Replacement (cont'd)

Initiative 3: Hire a Capital Improvement Project funding strategies and grant writer.

Outcome: Hire an on-call consultant to improve CVWD grant/low interest loan funding opportunities.

Estimated Cost: \$100,000

EUMs: Infrastructure stability, financial viability

Initiative 4: Reduce resource agency obstacles to execute Capital Improvement Projects.

Outcome: Establish legislator and resource agency contacts and develop path to remove obstacles to timely project completion.

Estimated Cost: No additional funding required.

EUMs: Operational resiliency, operational optimization







Coachella Valley Water District

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Stay connected with us!

