

COACHELLA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

2020-2021

STRATEGIC PLAN



ADOPTED 2020



YourWater
is our promise



Flowing Forward

Coachella Valley Water District

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Cástulo R. Estrada, vice-president

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General Manager

Jim Barrett



Your Water
is our promise





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Our Mission



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





Message from the General Manager

2020 has been a challenging year for many, Coachella Valley Water District included. The global pandemic has changed the way many of us operate, but CVWD has remained committed to providing our community with essential services during this time. Though our Strategic Planning efforts began before the pandemic, we have not allowed the situation to dissuade us from moving forward with our initiatives.

Strategic planning is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide an organization, what it does, and why. Now, more than ever, we want to move forward with the intentions we have outlined through our planning.

The intent of Strategic Planning is understanding that some organizational decisions and actions take precedence over others. Determining which rise to higher levels of prioritization is done through this focused and deliberative action. That action leads to successful implementation of projects and programs that benefit our customers and ultimately our organization.

Strategic Planning efforts help to guide the District's leadership and staff as we strive to meet the water-related needs of our community. We took a break in 2019-2020 to allow staff, management and the Board of Directors to refresh and with the hope that we could return to the process with a new outlook. This year's plan builds upon the progress we have made through Strategic Planning since 2014 and created an opportunity for new ideas.

Development of the Strategic Plan was a collaborative and transparent process that included elected members of the Board of Directors and employees representing every department within the District. Under the guidance of a professional strategic planning firm, this group met for two day-long workshops that were open to the public.

During the workshops, 29 initiatives were proposed, evaluated and discussed. Through a prioritization process, which evaluated the feasibility and return of each, 19 initiatives were selected and are outlined on pages 20-28

This document reviews the 2018-2019 plan's accomplishments and outlines this year's expectations. It is a plan for today and for the future. Your Water is Our Promise.

Sincerely,

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

Jim Barrett
General Manager

Coachella Valley Water District at a glance



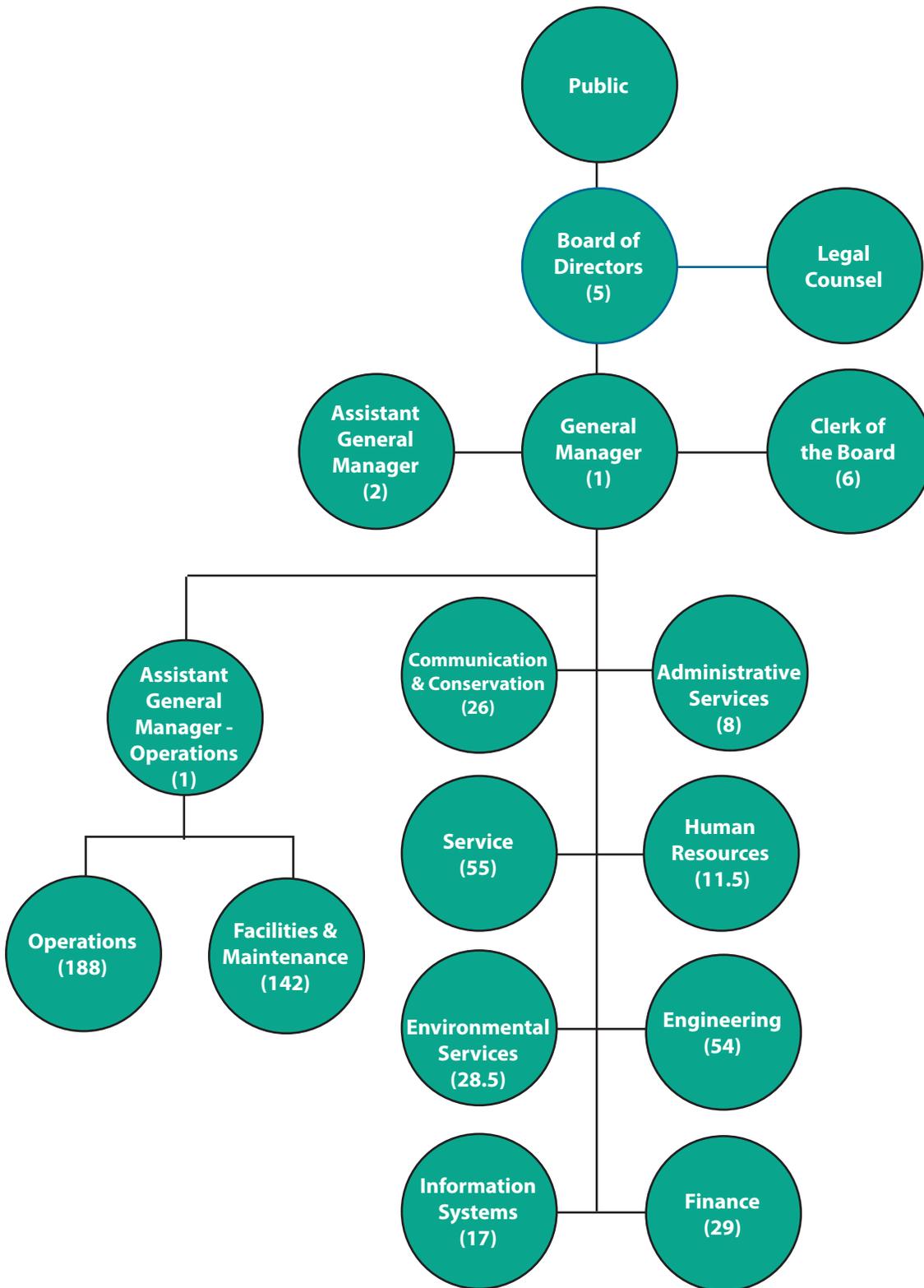
Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) is a special district established in 1918 by the state legislature and governed by a five-member Board of Directors elected to four-year terms by District voters.

Today, CVWD has grown into a multi-faceted agency with nearly 569 employees working to provide a variety of water-related utility services to more than 300,000 people in the Coachella Valley.

The primary fields of service are:

- 1 Domestic/drinking water treatment and distribution to approximately 108,000 homes and businesses. All of the drinking water supplied by CVWD comes from the groundwater basin.
- 2 Irrigation water importation and distribution. The 123-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 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 four different facilities in the Coachella Valley. At two of the locations, the effort is collaborative with Desert Water Agency (DWA).
- 6 Regional stormwater and flood protection. The District protects nearly 600 square miles from flooding through a system that includes 16 stormwater protection channels.

Organizational Structure



Note: Numbers within the chart reflect actual staffing levels as of June 30, 2020.

Community profile



The Coachella 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 and surrounded by scenic, rugged mountains along most of its length.

The Valley is located within the Colorado Desert, a subdivision of the Sonoran Desert, with average daily highs ranging from 71 to 107 degrees and average nightly lows from 44 to 80 degrees. Most of the nearly 3.5 inches of annual rain received falls in December through February with some rainfall also being received in August as monsoonal weather patterns move in from the south.

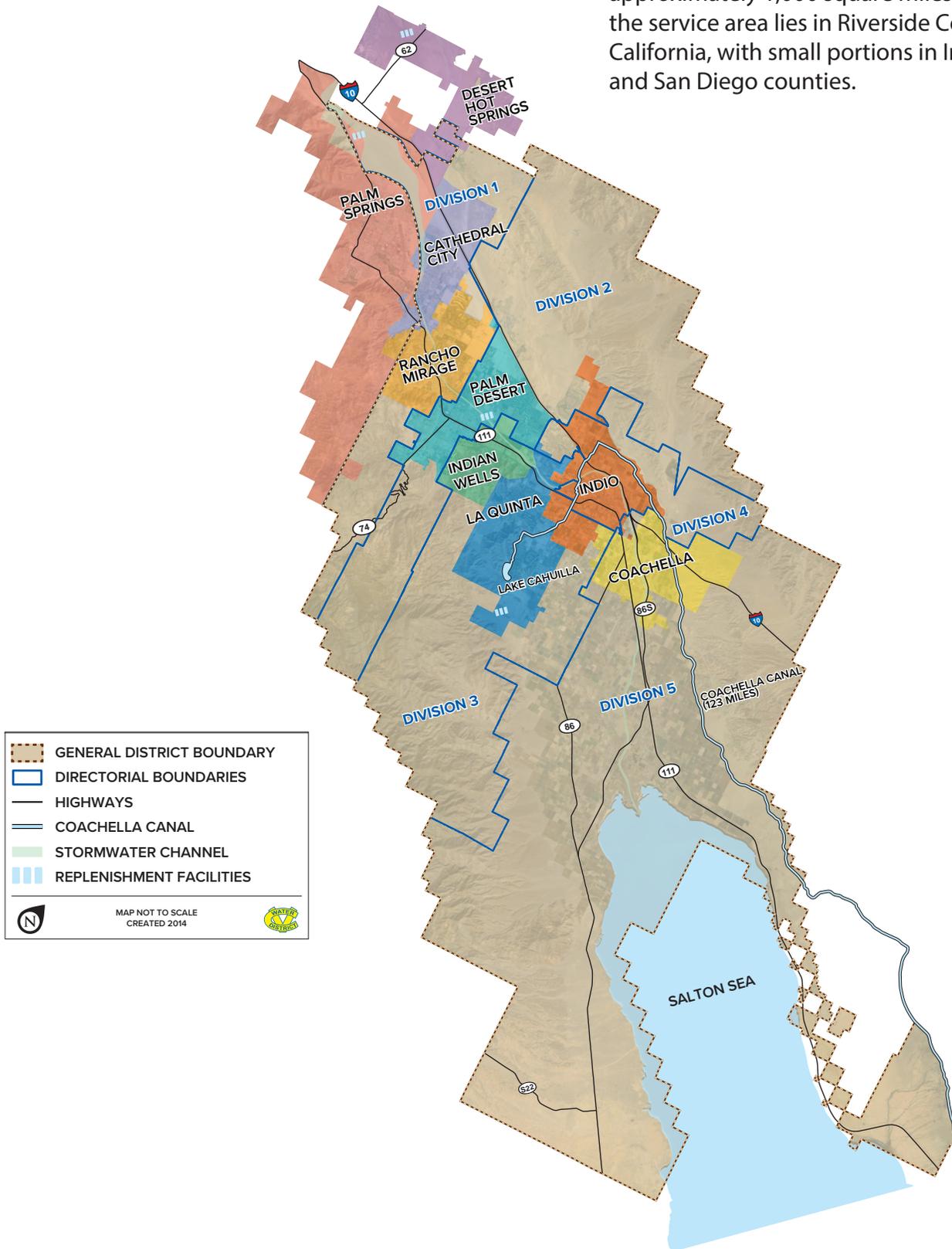
Elevations on the Valley floor range from 1,600 feet at the northwest end of the Valley, to 250 feet below sea level at the southeast end of the Valley.

The Valley's year-round population is approximately 364,987 (California Department of Finance, 2017) but this figure increases significantly during the months of November through May with an influx of "snowbirds" escaping the cold winters of Canada, the Pacific Northwest, and the Northeastern United States. When taking seasonal population into account, CVWD serves approximately 300,000 customers.

The Valley is recognized as the golf, tennis and polo capital of the West. It plays host to many internationally known recreational sports, music events and attractions that support tourism and the local economy. Additionally, the Coachella Valley is home to an agricultural industry that employs approximately 12,000 people and produces nearly a billion dollars in agricultural products each year.

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.



	GENERAL DISTRICT BOUNDARY
	DIRECTORIAL BOUNDARIES
	HIGHWAYS
	COACHELLA CANAL
	STORMWATER CHANNEL
	REPLENISHMENT FACILITIES

MAP NOT TO SCALE
CREATED 2014



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 achieving its goals. Strategic planning is intended to help decision makers identify initiatives, evaluate priorities, and then put action plans in place to guide an organization.

The strategic goals were identified and considered 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, reflects 2016 revisions.

Issues of concern

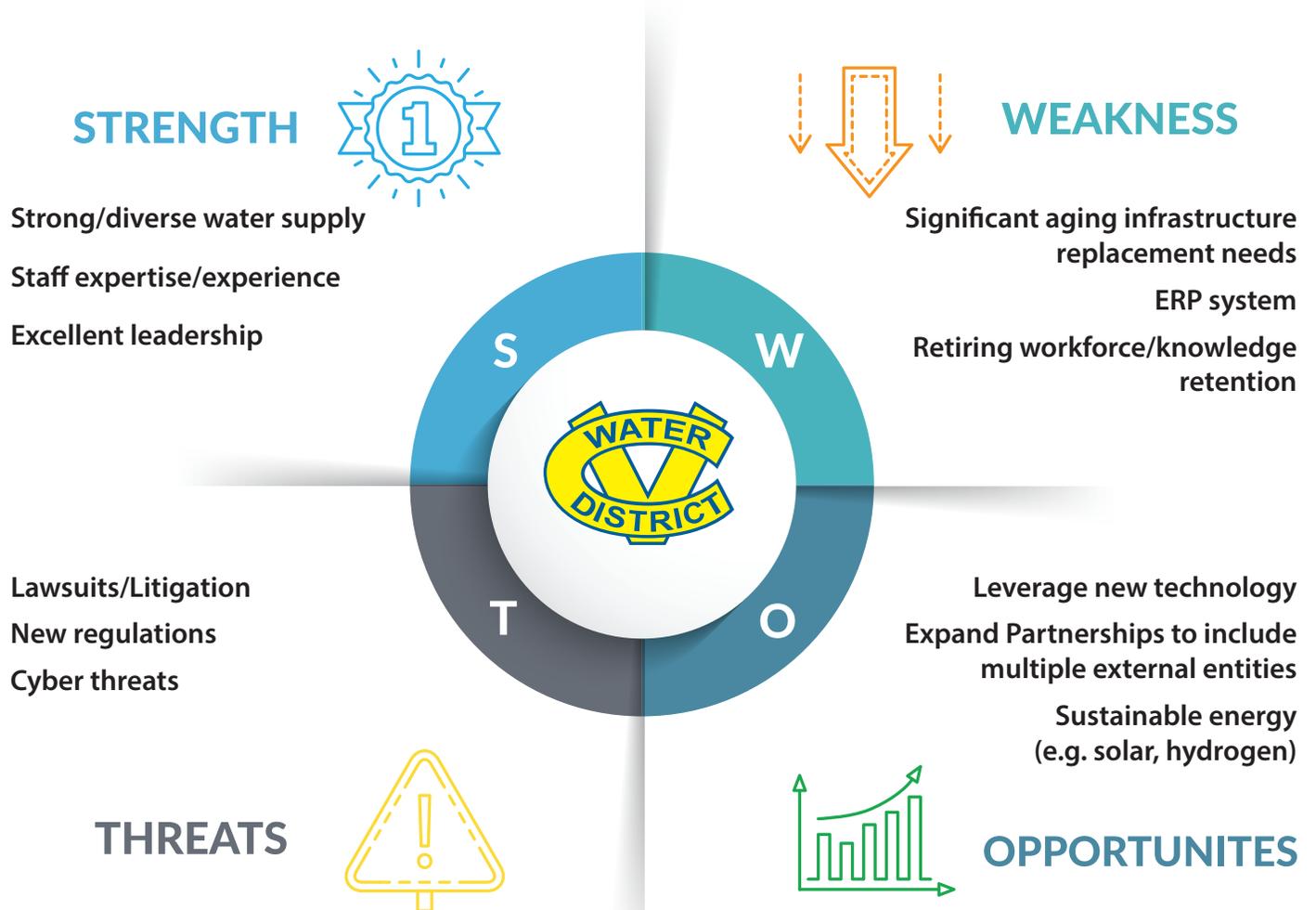


Current and emerging issues of concern are a key factor in developing the Strategic Goals. By identifying these issues and pairing them with the Effective Utility Management (EUM) attributes as a reference point, the District can better set priorities. Some of the issues at this time include:

- 1 Through the foresight of our predecessors in the Valley, CVWD is one of only two California water agencies that holds water rights to both the Colorado River and the State Water Project. However, droughts within California and the Colorado River basin are stark reminders of how vulnerable imported water supplies are to the forces of nature, and that these supplies need to be protected and optimally used. (Water Resource Sustainability).
- 2 Although the bulk of the District's domestic water system is relatively new, ongoing repairs and replacement projects are required. The Coachella Canal irrigation system is nearing 70 years old, with many of the 485 miles of underground irrigation lines 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 Strategy & Performance).
- 3 CVWD must address the operating and capital needs of the service area while maintaining reasonable rates for services. The District must carefully balance responding to rising costs with maintaining affordable rates. (Financial Stability).
- 4 As science continues to improve the ability to detect minute levels of constituents, water quality regulations are becoming more and more challenging to agencies like CVWD. CVWD and others continue to advocate for sound science to analyze the potential health impacts of constituents as well as economic analysis of the treatment options. (Water Quality and Environmental Leadership).
- 5 Within CVWD's boundary, there are small water systems that are not connected to CVWD's domestic water supply. These systems struggle with water quality and water reliability. CVWD formed the Disadvantaged Communities Infrastructure Task Force, whose mission is to secure access to safe affordable drinking water, wastewater and flood control services in historically disadvantaged Coachella Valley regions through strategic planning, funding procurement, needs assessment, and reporting – all in collaboration with community members and stakeholders. The task force is gathering necessary data and applying for grant funding to consolidate these systems with CVWD's. (Community Sustainability and Infrastructure Strategy & Performance).
- 6 On November 27, 2017 the Supreme Court of the United States denied a request by CVWD and Desert Water Agency to review the legality in the ruling in favor of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians suit against the water districts. The suit claims senior reserved groundwater rights and seeks to permanently stop the water districts from withdrawing groundwater from the aquifer in the western Coachella Valley, and replenishing the aquifer without treating the water first. The second phase of this lawsuit, deciding whether the Tribe owns storage space within the groundwater basins, is currently underway. (Water Resource Sustainability).
- 7 On April 7, 2017, Gov. Jerry Brown declared the 2014 statewide drought emergency over but put into place long-term conservation goals. Because the Valley is located in a desert, by definition, drought is normal and CVWD has a long history of 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. One of CVWD's key tools for groundwater sustainability, in addition to conservation, is imported water for groundwater replenishment and source substitution. (Water Resource Sustainability and Community Sustainability).
- 8 CVWD's service area covers a wide demographic of customers, and as such, providing opportunities to obtain their input on various water-related issues is important to the continued success of the District. CVWD offers different venues to educate our customers and stakeholders and also to obtain their input, including Board meetings, tours, events with CVWD-staffed booths, and stakeholder meetings. CVWD staff looks for new ways provide information to the community, and to also obtain their input. (Stakeholder Engagement).
- 9 Similar to other utilities, CVWD is confronting an aging workforce. Approximately 100 people have retired from CVWD in the last five years and more employees are eligible to retire in the next five years. A continuing focus on knowledge transfer, recruitment, and retention is critical to ensure an educated and skilled workforce is available to provide reliable water-related services to our customers. (Workforce Development).

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis was performed by staff and board members to analyze the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats across the District. Many themes and topics were raised during the analysis but the top three from each section were chosen. The final results of the analysis helped to develop the District's initiatives for 2020-2021.



Budgeting



Budget allowances are a critical component in the development of a Strategic Plan. In an effort to allow for greater budgetary planning the Strategic Planning process was paused for 2019-20 fiscal year. The brief hiatus also allowed the District to fully complete initiatives from the last five years of planning.

The Strategic Planning Process was resumed in January 2020, to allow departments to include funding for Strategic Initiatives in the upcoming budget. A \$376 million budget was approved on June 9, 2020 for the 2020-21 fiscal year.

The 2020-21 Strategic Planning process was successful in generating 29 distinct projects. Realizing the timing and budgetary constraints for the 2020-21 fiscal year, 19 projects rose to the top of the priority list, and are presented on pages 20-28 of this document. The other 10 projects have been retained, and will be revisited in the future.

Pages 13-19 of this document show fiscal year 2018-19 strategic initiatives/projects and respective accomplishments. When a project was not completed during the fiscal year, a note indicates its carryover status.



CVWD's Strategic Goals



The District considered external issues and internal challenges before identifying and committing to the strategic goals below. These goals cover six areas of focus and are designed to move the District forward in executing its mission. However, there are some differences between the goals identified in fiscal year 2018-19 and fiscal year 2020-21. The District revised its previous goals during the 2020 strategic planning workshops to better align with its mission, current issues and the changing environment. All EUM attributes remain the same.

Exceptional Customer Service and Stakeholder Engagement

CVWD will provide exceptional customer service and collaborative stakeholder engagement.

Water Quality and Environmental Leadership

CVWD will be good stewards of the environment while providing water services that meet or surpass all regulatory requirements.

Water Supply Optimization

CVWD will optimize the use of existing water resources and programs, and invest in new water supplies as necessary to provide reliable water service.

Infrastructure Investment and Management

CVWD will cost-effectively construct, maintain, and replace infrastructure required to provide reliable water services.

Operational Optimization

CVWD will continuously improve its workforce, systems, facilities, and processes to effectively and innovatively meet the needs of our service area.

Financial Viability

CVWD will manage its financial resources to maintain reasonable rates while reliably meeting the service delivery needs of our customers.



GOAL 1: EMPLOYEE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Objective 2: Succession planning and knowledge management

Initiative 1: Develop and implement Comprehensive Supervisor Safety Management Training Program

Status: Complete

Initiative 2: Develop knowledge transfer program for Succession Planning

Status: New Human Resources Director will incorporate data and information from consultant and build a new Human Resources Development Program, which will incorporate succession planning and knowledge management. This initiative is recommended to be carried over for the fiscal year 2020-21.



GOAL 2: FINANCIAL VIABILITY**Objective 2:** Maintain organizational fiscal health

Initiative 3: Reduce CalPERS unfunded liability.

Status: Complete.

Initiative 4: Establish grant funding management plan.

Status: Complete.

Accomplishments



GOAL 3: WATER SUPPLY SUSTAINABILITY**Objective 2: Eliminate Coachella Valley aquifer overdraft**

Initiative 5: Eliminate Coachella Valley aquifer overdraft by implementing strategies in the 2015 Coachella Valley Water District Imported Water Use Strategy Report.

Status: Complete.

Objective 3: Update and comply with Water Management Plan

Initiative 6: Install wells to expand groundwater monitoring at Thomas E. Levy Groundwater Replenishment Facility.

Status: Complete.

Accomplishments



GOAL 3: WATER SUPPLY SUSTAINABILITY

Objective 4: Protect water supply and optimize usage

Initiative 7: Feasibility study of developing cost effective projects for storage of Colorado River water.

Status: Complete. Final study received. Recommendations to be provided..

Initiative 8: Implement Oasis In-Lieu Recharge Project, Phase 1.

Status: Complete.

Accomplishments



GOAL 4: EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE**Objective 1:** Optimize customer experience

Initiative 9: Implement Advanced Metering Infrastructure pilot project.

Status: Complete.

Initiative 10: Develop plan to address needs and replacement of canal water ordering and billing process.

Status: A needs assessment is recommended to examine the canal water ordering system as part of the customer billing system.

Accomplishments



**GOAL 5: WATER QUALITY &
ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP****Objective 1: Comply with water quality regulations**

Initiative 11: Evaluate and recommend information management systems for effective wastewater operator monitoring and decision making.

Status: Training will carry over into 2020.

Initiative 12: Execute a work plan to prepare the WRP 10 Groundwater Evaluation Technical Report.

Status: Complete.

Objective 2: Perform effective Environmental Resource Management

Initiative 13: Complete feasibility study for Water Treatment Plant Waste Brine Disposal Improvement Project.

Status: Complete.

Objective 3: Optimize Energy Use

Initiative 14: Complete energy audits for WRP Nos. 4 & 7, and develop plans to implement audit recommendations.

Status: Complete.

Accomplishments



**GOAL 6: INFRASTRUCTURE
INVESTMENT & MANAGEMENT****Objective 3: Protect other physical assets**

Initiative 15: Complete improvements within Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel from Avenue 54 to Thermal Drop.

Status: Internal process completed, awaiting external approvals and coordination.

Initiative 16: Implement findings of a well maintenance prioritization plan.

Status: Complete.

Initiative 17: Develop asbestos cement pipe (ACP) replacement strategy.

Status: Complete.

Initiative 18: Design Avenue 66 transmission main to provide redundancy and reliability to Eastern Coachella Valley.

Status: Complete.

Accomplishments



**GOAL 1: EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE
& STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Initiative 1: Disadvantaged communities-focused outreach.

Expectation: Educate stakeholders, opinion leaders, media, policy makers about DAC needs.

Estimated Cost: None.

EUMs: Customer Satisfaction, Stakeholder Understanding and Community Sustainability.

Expectations



**GOAL 2: WATER QUALITY &
ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP**

Initiative 2: Develop climate action plan.

Expectation: Ensure better resource stewardship. A climate action plan is required also required for low-cost financing such as State and Federal grants and loans.

Estimated Cost: \$100,000

EUMs: Financial Viability and Community Sustainability.

Initiative 3: Develop co-funded research to evaluate Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) attenuation through Recycled Water Irrigation. Obtain funding approval and assist Water Research Foundation (WRF) to complete consultant contracting process.

Expectation: Provide better understanding for management strategies associated with PFAS control.

Estimated Cost: \$25,000

EUMs: Product Quality, Operational Optimization and Water Resource Sustainability.

Initiative 4: Initiate energy optimization programs at Water Reclamation Plants.

Expectation: Develop energy optimization equipment and processes for reducing energy use at wastewater reclamation plants.

Estimated Cost: \$300,000

EUMs: Operational Optimization and Financial Viability.

GOAL 3: WATER SUPPLY OPTIMIZATION

Initiative 5: Improve agricultural open drain monitoring network infrastructure.

Expectation: Improve drainage flow measurements to aid as modeling inputs.

Estimated Cost: \$100,000

EUMs: Operational Optimization and Infrastructure Strategy & Performance.

Initiative 6: Evaluate and design mid-canal storage.

Expectation: Provide operational flexibility for the delivery of Colorado River Water through the Coachella Canal, and allows for a more efficient utilization of canal water.

Estimated Cost: \$100,000

EUMs: Operational Optimization, Infrastructure Strategy & Performance and Water Resource Sustainability.

Initiative 7: Conduct long-term feasibility study for Whitewater Groundwater Replenishment Master Plan.

Expectation: Examine long-term conveyance improvements from Colorado River Aqueduct to the Whitewater Groundwater Replenishment Facility (including buried pipelines, improvements to hydroelectric generation facility).

Estimated Cost: None.

EUMs: Operational Optimization and Water Resource Sustainability.

GOAL 3: WATER SUPPLY OPTIMIZATION

Initiative 8: Conduct pre-construction activities for Phase II of the Oasis In-Lieu Recharge Project.

Expectation: Improve groundwater levels by advancing the Oasis Project to replenish up to 32,000 acre-feet of Colorado River Water.

Estimated Cost: \$500,000

EUMs: Water Resource Sustainability and Infrastructure Strategy & Performance.

Initiative 9: Expand nonpotable water (NPW) Program.

Expectation: Improve nonpotable water use by increasing storage and pump capacity at Wastewater Reclamation Plant 7.

Estimated Cost: \$400,000

EUMs: Operational Optimization and Water Resource Sustainability.

Expectations



GOAL 4: INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT & MANAGEMENT

Initiative 10: Conduct portable telemetry upgrade study.

Expectation: Improve reliability for telecommunications.

Estimated Cost: \$100,000

EUMs: Operational Optimization and Infrastructure Strategy & Performance.

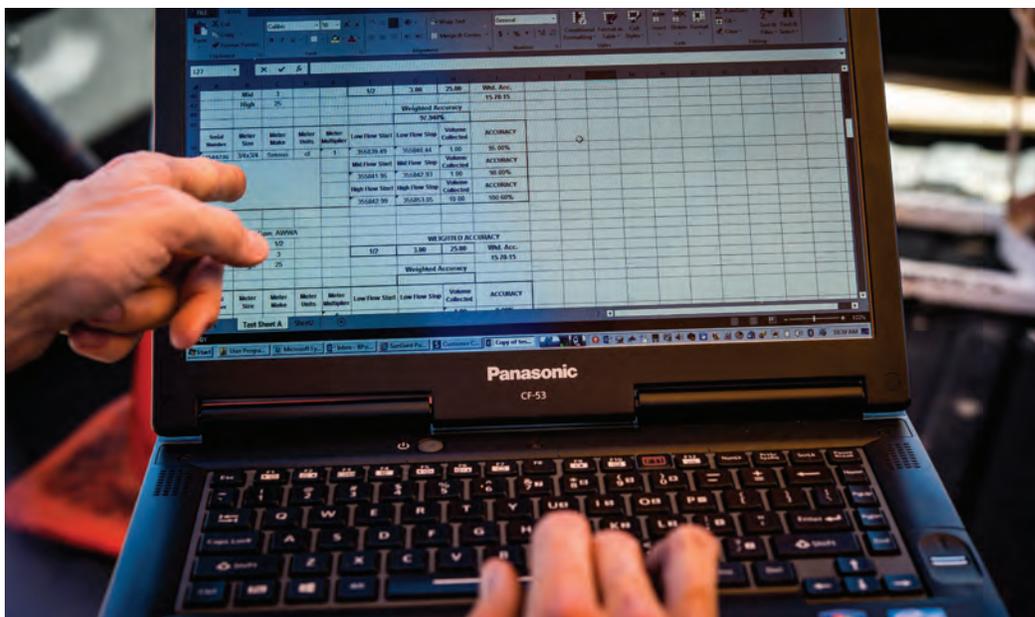
Initiative 11: Install emergency generators at domestic water well sites.

Expectation: Improve operational reliability for domestic water system.

Estimated Cost: \$450,000

EUMs: Operational Optimization and Infrastructure Strategy & Performance.

Expectations



**GOAL 4: INFRASTRUCTURE
INVESTMENT & MANAGEMENT**

Initiative 12: Implement Phase I of surge tank protection project and eliminate program at domestic water booster station sites.

Expectation: Improve operational reliability of domestic water well sites.

Estimated Cost: \$300,000

EUMs: Operational Optimization and Infrastructure Strategy & Performance.

Initiative 13: Implement Risk and Resilience Assessment Recommendations, Phase 1.

Expectation: Update the emergency response plan to address identified risks to critical domestic water infrastructure through the design process for projects.

Estimated Cost: None.

EUMs: Operational Optimization and Infrastructure Strategy & Performance and Enterprise Resiliency.

Expectations



GOAL 5: OPERATIONAL OPTIMIZATION*Expectations*

Initiative 14: Optimize Staff Productivity.

Expectation: Implement study to evaluate operational efficiency.

Estimated Cost: None.

EUMs: Employee & Leadership Development and Enterprise Resiliency.

Initiative 15: Implement Computerized Maintenance Management System.

Expectation: Develop full-scale training program for maintenance management with integration plan.

Estimated Cost: \$427,000

EUMs: Operational Optimization and Infrastructure Strategy & Performance.



GOAL 5: OPERATIONAL OPTIMIZATION

Initiative 16: Participate in Partnership for Safe Water Distribution System.

Expectation: Optimize distribution system operations, pressure management, chlorine residual, main breaks for better operational controls.

Estimated Cost: \$1,800

EUMs: Operational Optimization, Infrastructure Strategy & Performance and Enterprise Resiliency.

Initiative 17: Establish Human Resources Development Program (HRDP).

Expectation: Consolidate essential HR policies/procedures to improve data sharing and to create a platform for a consistent employee training program.

Estimated Cost: \$125,000

EUMs: Employee & Leadership Development, Operational Optimization and Performance & Enterprise Resiliency.

Initiative 18: Administer Comprehensive Class and Compensation Study.

Expectation: Simplify job classifications, revise job descriptions, ensure wage scales are up to date with industry standards.

Estimated Cost: \$90,000

EUMs: Employee & Leadership Development and Enterprise Resiliency.

Expectations

GOAL 6: FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Initiative 19: Develop Request for Proposals for Enterprise Resource Planning and Utility Billing.

Expectation: Prepare work/needs assessment for potential replacement of ERP.

Estimated Cost: None

EUMs: Financial Viability and Enterprise Resiliency.



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CVWD EMPLOYEE CREED



I am the Coachella Valley Water District. I will conduct myself with the highest degree of Integrity, Humility, Respect, Competence, Commitment, Honor and Professionalism.

I will at all times conscientiously carry out my duties; and foster diligence in those I work with. I will strive to be proficient, supportive and committed to the welfare of our customers and my co-workers. I will uphold the policies of the District, and honor its mission. I understand that respect and open communication are essential in all of my daily duties.

This is my Creed. I am CVWD!



YourWater
is our promise