



Strategic Business Plan

Transforming Wastewater to Resources

Board Approved
March 2021

Our Mission

Protect public health and the environment in our communities by providing wastewater resource recovery services of exceptional quality and value.

About Delta Diablo

Delta Diablo is a special district that provides wastewater conveyance and treatment services for over 214,000 residents in Antioch, Pittsburg, and Bay Point.

The District treats 13 million gallons of wastewater each day with a focus on exemplary regulatory compliance, innovative and sustainable approaches, and sound stewardship of the public's resources and trust.

The District has transformed its Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) into a "water resource recovery facility" by:

- ❖ Producing 6 million gallons of recycled water per day
- ❖ Generating on-site renewable energy to meet over 55% of WWTP power needs
- ❖ Reusing residual biosolids as fertilizer through land application at farm sites
- ❖ Providing household hazardous waste (HHW) collection services
- ❖ Protecting the Delta by providing street sweeping services to remove pollutants that would otherwise enter local stormwater systems

General Manager's Message (March 2021)



Vince De Lange

As a nationally-recognized leader and progressive "Utility of the Future," Delta Diablo (District) is firmly committed to organizational excellence, exemplary regulatory compliance, resource recovery, innovative approaches, sustainable solutions, and community engagement. In achieving our core mission of protecting

public health and the environment, we are focused on providing effective and reliable services, maintaining reasonable rates, and continuing to serve as responsible stewards of the public's resources and trust.

The District faces a suite of challenges that present opportunities for long-term strategic planning and decision making, including:

- Addressing aging infrastructure needs in the District's wastewater collection, conveyance, and treatment systems through increased capital investment
- Meeting long-term regulatory drivers (e.g., nutrient removal requirements, biosolids management) and associated significant increases in future capital and operations and maintenance (O&M) costs
- Navigating a competitive labor market in the wastewater sector and ensuring existing workforce development
- Effectively engaging with the local community and key stakeholders regarding District services, initiatives, and collaboration opportunities
- Implementing prioritized workflow and process enhancements to drive sustained organizational improvements over time

This Strategic Business Plan, coupled with the dedicated leadership of the District's Board of Directors, represents the strategic framework that will guide key decisions, initiatives, and activities at the District.

Strategic Business Plan Update Status

This March 2021 update includes key elements from the last Board-adopted plan (September 2014) with a new "GM's Message" and most recent "Strategic Business Initiatives" from FY19/20. The District intends to complete a major revision to this plan later in 2021.

Board of Directors



Juan Banales

City of Pittsburg
Councilmember



Federal Glover

Contra Costa County Board
of Supervisors



Monica Wilson

City of Antioch
Councilmember



214,000
residents



13 million gallons of
wastewater per day



76 miles of sewer
pipes, force mains



5 pumps stations to
convey wastewater



Wastewater
Treatment Plant



Recycled Water
Facility



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Overview

Delta Diablo's Strategic Business Plan was developed as a broad framework to allow for maximum flexibility and accountability in the strategic planning process. The Strategic Business Plan includes the District's Vision and Mission Statements, Core Values, Strategic Goals and Strategic Focus Areas. Initiatives to achieve the District's Strategic Goals are reviewed and prioritized annually and those recommended to be implemented in the current fiscal year are presented to the Board of Directors with the proposed budget.

Mission

Protect public health and the environment in our communities by providing *wastewater* resource recovery services of exceptional quality and value.

Vision

Delta Diablo will be a national leader in *wastewater* resource recovery.

Core Values

Integrity

- Maintain the highest ethical standards with our customers, partners, and each other
- Honor our commitments
- Treat others fairly and consistently

Teamwork

- Collaborate to achieve a common vision
- Communicate in an open and timely manner
- Celebrate our successes and achievements

Trust

- Inspire confidence through our words and actions
- Promote a positive work environment through honest, transparent, and respectful interactions
- Encourage and embrace diverse points of view



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STRATEGIC GOALS (Original, 2014)

Financial Sustainability

- Serve our customers at the lowest practical long-term cost by operating efficiently and planning effectively
- Identify and pursue opportunities to add beneficial services and expand our customer base
- Maintain prudent reserves and a high bond rating
- Plan for the preservation, replacement, and expansion of District assets

Leadership

- Lead and promote local, regional, and national collaboration to advance wastewater resource recovery
- Develop future leaders
- Nurture a productive and motivated workforce

Operational Excellence

- Produce high quality products and provide services that meet or exceed regulatory requirement, industry standards and customer expectations
- Provide exceptional customer service
- Optimize business and operational practices

Workplace Innovation

- Foster a culture of innovation to improve the environment, benefit our customers and/or advance the industry
- Conserve resources and minimize waste
- Maximize economic resource recovery (energy, water, nutrients, and byproducts)

Stakeholder Engagement

- Build and sustain effective, positive relationships within our community
- Advocate for regulatory and legislative action consistent with the District's interests
- Partner with local government and the business community to support and enhance economic vibrancy in the region
- Educate our community about our operations and services and promote environmental stewardship



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STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS (Original, 2014)

Advocacy

- Lobby and engage federal/state legislators and administrators for legislation and programs to promote and fund wastewater resource recovery projects, programs, research, and development
- Lead or support resource recovery advocacy efforts through regional, state, and national organizations, including the Western Recycled Water Coalition, Bay Area Biosolids to Energy Coalition, California Association of Sanitation Agencies, the WateReuse Association, and the National Association of Clean Water Agencies
- Build upon resource recovery leadership role as the “go-to” agency for relevant information and analysis

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

- Educate and engage stakeholders to the challenges and opportunities in wastewater resource recovery, promote “Utility of the Future” principles, and contribute toward the betterment of our community
- Partner with academic institutions and non-profits, such as BAYWORKS and Opportunity Junction, to further technical and environmental training and educational programs
- Participate in local and regional economic development efforts, including, but not limited to, the Contra Costa Economic Partnership, East Bay Leadership Council, Industrial Association of Contra Costa County, and the Northern Waterfront Economic Development Initiative
- Engage stakeholders through targeted networking and promotional events
- Maintain and further develop relationships with media sources

Organizational Leadership

- Strengthen the organization through leadership development and implementation of management systems
- Develop and launch leadership training and mentorship program
- Expand database to fully document employee training and professional development
- Expand GIS mapping and asset management capabilities

Resource Recovery

- Pursue opportunities to increase recycled water use and production, recover household hazardous waste, extract the energy from biosolids, and develop and expand sources of renewable energy
- Identify and procure outside funding opportunities for Recycled Water Program expansion in addition to the existing low-interest SRF Loan Program
- Expand pharmaceutical recovery opportunities through retail partnerships
- Pursue recycled water expansion and desalination opportunities through regional water planning efforts
- Host and/or participate in biosolids to energy pilot and demonstration projects
- Begin operation of grease receiving facility to increase biofuel production

Technology and Resource Development

- Advance technology development through partnerships with research institutions, private partners, and other government agencies
- Test or pilot promising emerging technologies for advanced treatment, desalination, renewable energy, and resource recovery
- Participate in resource recovery related research efforts through the Water Environment Research Foundation Leaders Innovation Forum for Technology (WERF-LIFT) and Reinventing the Nation’s Urban Water Infrastructure (ReNUWIt)



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STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN INITIATIVES

Fiscal Year 2019/20

Financial Sustainability

1. Conduct a comprehensive infrastructure condition assessment at the District's Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) to guide prioritized, long-term capital investment.
2. Navigate potential barriers to implementing a large-scale organics co-digestion effort ("East County Bioenergy Project") and explore alternative project models and implementation timelines that bolster project viability.
3. Develop a near-term strategy and timeline to guide financial planning for future nutrient management investment at the WWTP (i.e., Advanced Treatment Fund).
4. Complete a utility "Cost-of-Service Study" to ensure District is recovering its costs via sewer service, recycled water service, and capital facilities capacity charges.

Leadership

1. Provide "change management" training to support development and application of new ideas and approaches to improve the organization.
2. Provide biological wastewater treatment process training (e.g., activated sludge, microscopy, process control model) for Operations/Engineering staff.
3. Develop an improved performance planning and appraisal process to support workforce development and management.

Operational Excellence

1. Initiate implementation of a risk-based Asset Management Program that ensures effective asset performance, reliability, and investment through integrated, robust business processes.
2. Conduct disaster response and recovery exercises to support emergency preparedness and resiliency.
3. Conduct a vulnerability assessment at the WWTP to mitigate the impacts of potential infrastructure, equipment, and operational threats to regulatory compliance and safety.
4. Implement priority "best practice" enhancements to District procurement and purchasing procedures, revise signature authority levels, and conduct associated staff training to ensure effective and efficient business processes.

Workplace Innovation

1. Identify and prioritize opportunities to drive organizational effectiveness and efficiency through expanded use of information technology (IT) as part of the IT Assessment.
2. Evaluate the feasibility of implementing interactive, dynamic capital improvement project summaries via a web-based application.

Stakeholder Engagement

1. Enhance external website content and public information materials, and develop targeted fact sheets (e.g., infrastructure investment, nutrient management, rates/budget) in support of the District's Strategic Communications Plan.
2. Emphasize the increased need for private sector engagement to accelerate development of regional biosolids management facilities through active participation in the Bay Area Biosolids Coalition.