Strategic Planning Communications Plan

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**OUR MISSION**

Provide our community a safe and dependable drinking water supply, enhance our water resources by collecting and treating wastewater, and promote a legacy of responsible economic and environmental stewardship.

**OUR VISION**

To be an outstanding provider of utility services, dedicated to protecting the environment, aspiring to new opportunities and compelled to excel in service to our community.

**OUR VALUES**

**INTEGRITY**

- Dedicated to a standard of values that promotes honesty and openness
- Maintain fair and equitable practices to enhance our professional groups
- Dependable and consistent actions that support meeting our customers’ needs

**CUSTOMER FOCUSED**

- Ensure customer satisfaction by:
  - Providing the highest quality of products and services available at a reasonable cost
  - Understanding and fulfilling our customers’ needs
  - Putting customers’ interests first
  - Seeking and applying innovative approaches to serve our customers

**EMPLOYEE ORIENTED**

- Respect and value our employees by providing:
  - A positive and safe work environment
  - Training and advancement opportunities
  - Rewards and recognition
  - Quality benefits

**ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

- Responsible use and care of water resources and infrastructure
- Provide leadership to maintain the integrity of the watershed and provide public education on environmental issues
- Comply with or exceed mandated state and federal regulations

**INNOVATION**

- Seek out technology and new applications to continuously improve our products and services
- Seek knowledge and technical expertise in pursuit of excellence

**COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP**

- Participate and contribute toward the betterment of our community
- Work with regional entities to achieve common goals
- Active involvement in water/wastewater industry organizations
Columbus Water Works Strategy Teams

1. **Enhance Customer Satisfaction**
   Use effective customer service relationships and approaches to achieve excellence in customer satisfaction.

2. **Strengthen Regional Partnerships**
   Expand CWW influence and increase regional service opportunities.

3. **Leverage Information Technology**
   Provide IT capabilities to realize the benefits of improved organizational effectiveness and efficiency to maximize customer satisfaction.

4. **Optimize Infrastructure Performance**
   Optimize asset functionality, condition and operations to provide our customers with the “Best in Class” utility performance.

5. **Develop Sustainable Workforce**
   Recruit, retain and maintain a workforce that is competent, motivated, diverse and adaptive.

6. **Maintain Financial Stability**
   Use sound financial planning and management, develop revenues and identify potential revenue sources, while effectively controlling operational costs.
Columbus Water Works
Strategic Planning Communications Plan
Calendar Year 2016

Internal Communications:

- Strategic Planning Outlook Calendar
- Strategic Planning Facebook Group Page
- Strategy Team Communications Representatives
- New Employee Orientation
- Strategy Team Member Orientation
- Strategic Planning Departmental Site Visits
- Quarterly Resource Advisory Group Meetings
- Quarterly Strategic Planning Updates to Strategy Team Leaders
- Quarterly Strategic Planning Updates to President and Executive Vice-President
- Bi-monthly Team Leader updates to Senior Staff
- Monthly Departmental Talking Points
- Monthly Benchmark Reports
- Monthly Strategic Planning Reports to President and Executive Vice-President
- Monthly Board of Water Commissioners Reports
- CWW Intranet
  - Strategic Planning Website
  - Departmental Website
- CWW Newsletter
- Five-Year Strategic Planning Brochure

External Communications:

- Internet
- Bill Inserts
- Public Service Announcements
- Open House Events
- Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Press Releases
- New Customer Information Packet
- Stakeholder/Focus Groups
- Door Hanger Program
- CWW Speakers Guild
- Speakers Bureau
- Annual Report
- Comprehensive Annual Financial Report
- Five Year Strategic Plan Brochure
- Community Leaders On-line Survey
INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Strategic Planning Outlook Calendar

The Strategic Planning calendar, accessed via the Microsoft Outlook shared calendars tab, captures and displays strategic planning events and activities from all strategy teams. Team leaders, department managers and Strategic Planning populate the calendar to include events and activities and indicate which strategic goal or objective they support, as appropriate. Team leaders can also see whether their events link or synch with other team activities or meetings.

By providing a broad, company-wide overview of strategic events, the calendar facilitates coordinated and comprehensive communication among and by strategy teams.

The calendar also lists other significant local and national conference dates. By bringing visibility to such events, strategy team leaders and members can use this information as platforms for communication initiatives.

Strategic Planning Facebook Group Page

The Strategic Planning Facebook platform allows team members to communicate via e-mail, team messages, and upload links and photos relative to strategic initiatives. Team leaders may also develop team group pages to use as a communication platform to publish and track their projected goals, performance work plans, and strategic activities. Team members can also record if their goals were met, dates activities were transitioned to the operational department, as well as continue to monitor strategic progress. Team members can access the Strategic Planning Facebook group page via personal computer, smartphone or text mobile.

Strategy Team Communications Representatives

Each strategy team may identify an individual to serve as the Communications Point of Contact. Periodically, the Point of Contact will receive e-mails from Strategic Planning regarding training opportunities, upcoming meetings, community information, industry information, etc., for review. This individual will also check the Strategic Planning Facebook group page for updates and other reading material. Working with their respective team leader, the Point of Contact will determine if this information is beneficial for the other strategy team members and then forward, as appropriate. The strategy team leader or other strategy team members may also provide the Point of Contact with team information for their review and dissemination.
New Employee Orientation

The Employee Services Department hosts a New Employee Orientation three times a year for new hires that successfully complete their 120-day introductory period. Topics covered during the orientation include Strategic Planning, Safety and Security, Employee Benefits, Employee Relations, Environmental Compliance, and Community and Corporate Programs.

Strategy Team Member Orientation

Strategic Planning facilitates a Strategy Team Member Orientation event each year. Attendance is not mandatory, but the event is available to all strategy team members. The information shared at the orientation may be beneficial to both new and returning strategy team members. Agenda items include defining strategic planning at CWW; information about each strategy team’s objectives, goals, PWPs and benchmarks; an introduction of all strategy team members, team leaders, assistant team leaders, and advisors; a review of strategy team duties, responsibilities, performance expectations and standards; and a Question & Answer session.

Strategic Planning Departmental Site Visits

Periodically, Strategic Planning will schedule and coordinate departmental site visits with each department and/or section manager. These structured meetings include discussion about:

- CWW’s Strategic Planning initiatives
- The composition of the six strategy teams
- Review of the monthly benchmarks
- Discussion of the improvements and accomplishments as a result of CWW’s Strategic Planning efforts

General information is provided in regards to how each employee contributes to the strategic process, the employee’s value to CWW, and how individual job performance impacts the strategic process.
Quarterly Resource Advisory Group Updates

The Resource Advisory Group (RAG) Quarterly Updates are designed to facilitate the transfer of tacit knowledge and organizational information from senior leadership to members of the strategy teams. The program consists of a 20-minute light breakfast or lunch and social (networking) interaction between strategy team members and senior staff. Following the meal, a member of the Resource Advisory Group makes a presentation which focuses on the alignment of a specific operational department or industry activity with CWW strategic initiatives.

Following the presentation is a Q&A session with members of the strategy teams and senior staff.

2010 Topics
- April “Emerging Trends in Customer Relations” Jim Patterson, CWW Senior Vice President
- July “Strategic Financial Planning” Emory Blount, CWW Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer
- October “Innovative Approaches for Management of Water and Wastewater Systems” Cliff Arnett, CWW Senior Vice President Water Resource Operations, Managed Maintenance, and Security

2011 Topics
- January “Workforce Trends” Gwen Ruff, CWW Vice President Strategic Planning and Employee Services
- April “CWW Capital Improvement Program and Asset Management” Steve Davis, CWW Senior Vice President Engineering and Field Services
- August “Future Trends in Technology” Vic Burchfield, CWW Vice President Information Services
- November “Lessons in Leadership – Cicero’s Surprise” Billy Blanchard, President and CEO, CB&T, Regional CEO, Synovus, Treasurer, Columbus Board of Water Commissioners

2012 Topics
- March “Competing for Jobs in a Global Economy” Becca Hardin, Executive Vice President of Economic Development Greater Columbus Georgia Chamber of Commerce, The Valley Partnership
- June “How We Shape the Future by Knowing Our Destination and Planning Our Route” Billy Cobb, CWW Vice President Engineering
- September “Diversity – Bridging the Generational Gap” Jeremy Cummings, CWW, Assistant Superintendent Field Services Wastewater Collections; “Water System Interconnection, Redundancy and Reliability” and “The Smart Water Grid” Tom Horn, CWW Manager Engineering; “Rivers Alive – How We Do It” Adriann Deering, CWW Administrative Assistant to Vice President Engineering; “Ice Pigging” Jason
Martinez, CWW Assistant Superintendent Field Services Fort Benning Wastewater Collections
- December “WEFTEC – A Look at Utility Sustainability” Cliff Arnett, CWW Senior Vice President Division of Water Resource Operations, Managed Maintenance and Water Quality Monitoring; “Energy Neutrality” and “Collection System Management” Billy Cobb, CWW Vice President Engineering; “CWW’s I&I Abatement Program” John Peebles, CWW Vice President Field Services

2013 Topics
- June “What I’ve Learned About Leadership (So Far)” Ed Helton, Executive Director of the Leadership Institute and Client Relations, Cunningham Center for Leadership Development at Columbus State University
- September “Utility of the Future: Rethinking Opportunities” Ken Rubin, Managing Director, Rubin Mallows Worldwide
- December “Oxbow Present and Future” Michael Dentzau, Director, Oxbow Meadows Environmental Learning Center

2014 Topics
- March “The Chattahoochee Re-Imagine Our River” Roger Martin, Executive Director, Chattahoochee River Warden
- June “KCBC Update” Gloria Weston-Smart, Executive Direction, Keep Columbus Beautiful Commission
- September “Leadership” Robert “Bob” Higgins, Jr., PE, President/Chief Executive Officer/Board of Directors, Barge Waggoner Sumner & Cannon, Inc.
- December “Celebrating a ‘Doable City” Betsy Covington, President & CEO, Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley; “MidTown, MidTown, Inc., and the Core Community” Anne King, Executive Director, Midtown, Inc.; “The Creek Walk” Victoria Barrett, CWW GIS Specialist

2015 Topics
- September “Mission Zero – The Interface March Toward Sustainability” Eric R. Nelson, Vice President, Interface Americas
- December “Overview of Apalachicola Chattahoochee Flint Basin” Billy Cobb, CWW SVP Engineering, Field Services, Community Programs; “Overview of Apalachicola Chattahoochee Flint Stakeholders and the Sustainable Water Management Plan” Steve Davis, CWW President; “Sustainable Water Management Plan Implementation” Dr. Carole Rutland, Chair, CWW Board of Water Commissioners

Copies of these presentations are maintained on CWW’s intranet under RAG Presentations on the Strategic Planning internal webpage.
**Quarterly Strategic Planning Updates to Strategy Team Leaders**

Strategic Planning hosts quarterly sessions with all strategy team leaders, as a group, to review team activities, solicit feedback, and communicate information and guidance from the President. Team Leaders also provide input and suggestions for improving the strategic planning process.

**Quarterly Strategic Planning Updates to President and Executive Vice-President**

At a minimum, Strategic Planning meets quarterly with the president and executive vice-president to provide status updates of strategic initiatives, discuss any events or changes, and obtain guidance for future efforts.

**Monthly Departmental Talking Points**

On a monthly basis, Strategic Planning will e-mail “Talking Points” to department managers for use as discussion items during scheduled departmental staff meetings. These Talking Points focus on specific strategic initiatives or strategy team activities.

**Bi-monthly Strategy Team Leader Updates to Senior Staff**

All strategy team leaders meet as a group with senior staff on a bi-monthly schedule to provide a 10-15 minute status update and overview of their respective team’s activities. Team leaders are responsible for providing documentation for approval items to members of senior staff who are not present at the meeting. Strategy team members are encouraged, but not required, to attend the senior staff updates.

In addition, team leaders may request an “ad hoc” meeting with senior staff to present items that may require funding approval, operational guidance or changes to company policy.

Meeting notes from the Senior Staff Updates are provided via e-mail to all employees who have a valid CWW e-mail account. Department managers are asked to share this information with personnel in their respective departments who do not have access to e-mail.

Strategic Planning may meet with senior staff, as needed or requested, to provide additional updates, progress reports, etc.
Monthly Benchmark Reporting

For FY 2015/2016 CWW identified 30 benchmarks which are designed to track our performance in specific areas with regards to our six strategies. These benchmarks, or performance indicators, are the tools we use to determine if we are achieving our objectives and moving in the right direction.

For monthly reporting purposes, Strategic Planning prepares a document which depicts a historical graph for each benchmark. This document is provided via e-mail to all employees who have a valid CWW e-mail account. Department managers are asked to print and post this information on departmental bulletin boards.

Monthly Strategic Planning Reports to President and Executive Vice-President

Strategic Planning provides a written report regarding strategy team activities and initiatives to the president and executive vice-president on a monthly basis. Strategic Planning coordinates with each team leader to identify and compile the information presented in the report.

Strategy Team Meetings

Strategy team leaders schedule periodic or regular meetings with members of their strategy team in order to share strategic information, assign projects, and review team activities. Notes from these meetings are provided to Strategic Planning.

Strategic Planning will, as scheduling permits, attend all of the scheduled strategy team meetings.

Monthly Board of Water Commissioners Reports

On a monthly basis, Strategic Planning includes a summary report of strategic activities to be included in the board report for the Board of Water Commissioners.

For 2016, the Board of Water Commissioners includes the following five members:

1. Karl Douglass, Chair
2. Reynolds Bickerstaff, Treasurer
3. Becky Rumer
4. Sanders Griffith
5. Mayor Teresa Tomlinson
The Board meets on the second Monday of each month at 1:30 p.m. in the Chattahoochee Room at CWW’s Main Office location.

**CWW Strategic Planning Intranet Website**

Strategic Planning maintains a departmental website, *Strategic Planning*, on the CWW Intranet. Information regarding monthly benchmarks, team activities and strategic training presentations are posted.

**CWW Quarterly Newsletter**

The CWW Quarterly Newsletter, “Chattahoochee Chit Chat”, is developed by a newsletter committee, which is managed by the Communications Department. Communications will edit, produce and distribute the newsletter. Hard copies are provided to department managers and an electronic copy is provided to all CWW employees who have a valid CWW e-mail account.

Each issue of the newsletter will feature an article on Strategic Planning, strategy team accomplishments, or information about strategy team membership.

**Five-Year Strategic Plan Brochure FY 2013 - 2017**

This document, developed by Strategic Planning, provides a summary overview of the six strategy teams, their goals and objectives, and how these elements align with the “Ten Attributes of Effectively Managed Water Sector Utilities.”
EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

CWW Website and Social Media Efforts

For FY 2010/2011, Strategy Team #1 completed an evaluation of the current CWW website and submitted a list of recommendations for improvements to senior staff for approval. These recommendations were approved and this action item has been assigned to the Communications Department for implementation. A website committee was formed to assist the Communications Manager with this project, which was completed in May 2011.

Information on the CWW website (www.cwwga.org) is managed by the Communications Department. The CWW website is one of the avenues in which CWW communicates with our customers and stakeholders.

Bill Inserts

The Communications Department is responsible for developing the monthly informational inserts included in our customers’ water bills. These bill inserts are designed to educate our customers on important organizational and environmental information, products, or services. Each year, the monthly topics are developed by the communications staff and approved by the president. The Bill Insert Program was implemented in 2001 and continues to be an effective platform for communicating with our customers.

Public Service Announcements

The Communications Department is responsible for developing periodic Public Service Announcements (PSA) for television or radio use. These PSAs typically complement the monthly bill inserts, but may be adjusted to address current issues or topics.
Open House Events

As approved by the president, each year, CWW hosts an open house event in recognition of either:

1. Drinking Water Week (May), held at the North Columbus Water Resource Facility located on River Road, or
2. Clean Water Week (October), held at the South Columbus Water Resource Facility located on South Lumpkin Road.

These events, alternated each year, provide an opportunity to reach out to our customers and provide educational information regarding our operations.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

An initiative of Strategy Team #1, CWW, working with an external consultant, conducts a monthly Customer Satisfaction Survey. This program is a telephone survey whereby 100 respondents are randomly selected from two groups, Callers and Non-callers. There are over 100 questions covering five categories:

- Water Quality
- Customer Service
- Information
- Reliability
- Value/Price

The responses are analyzed and an overall satisfaction score is determined and tracked as part of the monthly benchmark reporting.

Survey results are received by Strategic Planning and shared with senior staff, members of Strategy Team #1, and the Customer Service Manager.

Press Releases

Periodically, the president or executive vice-president may elect to distribute a press release which covers an important topic, is in response to a critical situation, or may be required in the case of sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs). These press releases are developed and disseminated by the Communications Department.
**Stakeholder Interviews**

An initiative of Strategy Team #1, the purpose of stakeholder interviews is to collect valuable input and help formulate strategic planning initiatives, improve overall operations, and enhance customer satisfaction. Conducted every two years, the information is evaluated and analyzed using a SWOT analysis. The results of the stakeholder interviews are shared with members of senior staff, Strategic Planning, and each strategy team.

**Door Hanger Program**

The Door Hanger Program, an initiative of Strategy Team #1, was developed as a way to capture feedback from customers as a result of a specific service call to a residential address. Participating departments at CWW are Meter Maintenance, Field Services, and Water Quality Monitoring.

Customer Service and Meter Maintenance monitor this activity. A designated member of Meter Maintenance maintains the files for all Door Hangers placed, as well as the comments returned to CWW. The customer service manager (or designated representative) reviews all comments to determine if further action is needed. If so, the comment card is forwarded to the appropriate department. A monthly departmental report is provided to Strategic Planning.

**CWW Speakers’ Guild**

The CWW Speakers’ Guild is a program developed by Strategy Team #5. The objective of the program is to assist the Employee Services Department in outreach efforts during career day and job fair functions. In addition to participation of Employee Services staff, a member of the Speakers’ Guild may be called upon to attend a career program to share their successful journey in the water and wastewater industry, to students and potential employee candidates.

The employee services coordinator will provide a listing of scheduled upcoming job fairs or career days to all members of the Speakers’ Guild. Two members, one primary and one alternate, will be selected to attend the career day event, which normally will last from four to six hours.

As a member of the Speakers’ Guild, employees have the opportunity to:

- Broaden their area of expertise and learn the recruitment arena
• Share their job knowledge and experience with others
• Attract young students and potential employment candidates to the water and wastewater industry
• Develop leadership skills

Members of the CWW Speakers’ Guild may also participate in other community outreach programs.

Calendar Year 2015 members of the Speakers’ Guild are: Brookie Tate, Security, Sammy Sears, Meter Maintenance, Raymond Dixon, Managed Maintenance, Ken Mendenhall, Water Quality Monitoring, Morton Reed, Environmental Compliance, Amy Gamble, Water Quality Monitoring, Nick Cummings, Information Technology, Gwen Russell, Administration, and Paula Goble, Strategic Planning.

**Speaker’s Bureau**

Columbus Water Works values the opportunity to share our industry knowledge with the community. The Communications Department has created a document which outlines possible topics and presenters for these topics. If a community group wants to learn more about a different topic, we welcome the opportunity to create a new presentation.

In 2013, Strategy Team 2 developed a list of employees who represent various groups in regional communities. These employees are all volunteers who will serve as promoters of CWW and the Speaker’s Bureau.

**CWW Annual Report**

Effective Calendar Year 2011, information regarding strategic planning initiatives is provided to the Communications Department for inclusion in the CWW annual report.
Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)

Effective with the Fiscal Year ended 2010, information regarding strategic planning initiatives is provided to the Finance Department for inclusion in the CWW CAFR.

New Customer Information Packet

The Customer Service Department provides new customers with a CWW information handbook and a magnet with the eTAP (electronic transfer and payment) information.