

INTRODUCTION TO STRATEGIC PLANNING

1. Why should the District build a strategic plan at this time?

The time is excellent to build a strategic plan. The lake is full. Many of the District's stakeholders are interested in its future direction and goals. There is a window of opportunity for these stakeholders to help shape the future of the District.

The District has a long-term interest in providing the best possible service and at the lowest cost. At the same time, the District will be entering a future that has much uncertainty and risk. It will have to adapt to changing and unforeseen conditions. The District will need a framework for making many complex business decisions over the next decade.

If the District had a strategic plan ten years ago, the recent water supply crisis would have been anticipated and plans would have been in place to mitigate it.

2. What is the purpose of the District's strategic plan?

It describes where the District wants to be in the future and ways of getting there. This strategic plan provides guidance and direction for making future business decisions, allocating resources, and evaluating success. It is the result of significant dialogue among key players about the intended future of the District.

The District's strategic plan will also give guidance to other District plans that are more narrow in scope. This strategic plan will help align these plans with the needs and long-term priorities of the District. These plans include: Capital Improvement Plan, Urban Water Management Plan, Water Facilities Master Plan, Wastewater Facilities Master Plan, Recycled Water, Groundwater Monitoring and Management Plan, Watershed Management Plan, and Water Demand and Supply Report.

3. What is not in this strategic plan?

This strategic plan is not a prediction of the future. This plan anticipates an uncertain future and provide flexible responses to emerging events.

This strategic plan is not a blue print. It is a compass that gives the District a direction to pursue. It is also a calendar that indicates when the District's goals and initiatives intend to be accomplished.

The strategic planning process was not a box of tricks, nor a bundle of techniques. The plan was constructed through analytical thinking, collaborative decision-making, and commitment of the participants to action. It was a complex and challenging process.

4. Who was involved in building this plan?

The planning process was intended to be transparent. It was important to the Board that the community and District employees have ownership of the contents of the plan. Therefore, numerous workshops for the community and District employees provided opportunity for them to give input and guidance about the future of the District. The Board and District management then built the final strategic plan through joint workshops. The chief role of the facilitator was to gain input from all key stakeholders, to support the dialogue among the plan's decision-makers, and to maintain records of decisions that were made.