



Five-Year Strategic Plan

2024-2028



February 2024

Marin Water is California’s first municipal water district. Since its chartering in 1912, the District has provided clean, reliable water for customers in central and southern Marin County. Today, the District delivers drinking water to more than 190,000 people and manages more than 18,000 acres of land on the Mount Tamalpais Watershed, where most of its local water is sourced.

Severe drought in 2020-2022, followed by an unusually wet winter highlighted the challenges associated with providing reliable water supplies and stewarding watershed lands while navigating the impacts of climate change. In addition, the pandemic stressed the District by limiting in-person contact, a critical component for developing staff and building community partnerships.

The Board of Directors responded to these challenges by initiating a comprehensive assessment of water supply alternatives and approving a strategic rate adjustment to build water supply reliability, rehabilitate aging infrastructure, continue watershed restoration and invest in staff development.

With these foundational elements in place, the Board of Directors undertook a strategic planning process to ensure the organization is most effective in carrying out its mission, even in the face of uncertainty. This process brought District staff and leadership teams together to update Marin Water’s mission, vision and values, shape recommendations and map strategic goals and specific objectives that will help to guide the organization throughout the next half decade. These elements were reviewed and discussed at eight board meetings from September 2023 through February 2024. To gather input that guided development of the plan recommendations, the strategic planning team conducted staff interviews, workshops and cross-functional work group meetings.

The collaborative approach to the strategic planning process fostered valuable alignment on the goals to be achieved and the productive working partnerships necessary to achieve them. These efforts will enhance the District’s ability to deliver high-quality, reliable water to customers, protect and restore the watershed and maintain an organizational culture that inspires a love of coming to work.

We are pleased to share this strategic plan, which is intended to be a living document that evolves as objectives are achieved and as circumstances change.

Board of Directors

Matthew Samson, Division I, Vice President
 Monty Schmitt, Division II
 Ranjiv Khush, Division III, President
 Jed Smith, Division IV
 Larry Russell, Division V

General Manager

Ben Horenstein

Table of Contents

04 - Mission

05 - Vision

06 - Values

07 - Goals

08 - Reliable Water Supply

11 - Resilient Water System

14 - Watershed Stewardship

17 - Fiscal Responsibility

19 - Organizational Excellence

22 - Progress Reporting



Water watershed Maintenance team member makes an equipment delivery by boat for a trail repair project on the Mt. Tam Watershed.

Mission

Marin Water manages the lands, water, and facilities in our trust to provide reliable, high-quality water and adapt and sustain these precious resources for the future.

Vision

Marin Water is a leader in water and natural resource management and addressing the complexities of a changing environment.



A Marin Water senior ecologist/botanist leads a nature walk with community members on the Mt. Tam Watershed.

Values

Marin Water is dedicated to serving customers and the community by upholding our core values.



Marin Water Operations staff perform emergency underground pipeline repairs.

HEALTH AND SAFETY. We are committed to the health and safety of our colleagues and community.

STEWARDSHIP. We recognize the essential connection between people and natural resources and manage our lands and facilities for sustained benefits now and in the future.

INNOVATION. We strive for excellence and innovation in managing water and watersheds.

EFFICIENCY AND RESPONSIVENESS. We value efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and timely service in our work with customers and communities.

ACCOUNTABILITY. We operate with the highest levels of individual and organizational accountability to each other and the community.

RESPECT. We maintain a welcoming environment that embraces differences and offers respect, dignity, and fairness for all people and partners.

LISTENING AND LEARNING. We enhance ourselves and the organization by listening to others, reflecting on our performance, sharing knowledge with others, and making informed decisions.

ONE WATER. We work together to anticipate the challenges ahead and achieve our mission.

Goals

The following five goals provide the focus for how we will go about aiming to fulfill our mission. Under each goal and outlined on the pages that follow, there are five-year objectives, each with associated action items that we will work to achieve by 2028.

1 – Reliable Water Supply

Provide a high quality, reliable and resilient water supply now and for the future.

2 – Resilient Water System

Invest in and maintain a resilient water system through effective infrastructure management and planning.

3 – Watershed Stewardship

Protect and manage Marin Water lands for the long-term benefits for the community and the environment.

4 – Fiscal Responsibility

Judiciously manage customer revenue and other financial resources for operating, maintaining and upgrading the water system today and in preparation for the future.

5 – Organizational Excellence

Support and sustain an innovative organization that lives by its values, leads by example, delivers valued benefits for its customers and is regarded as an employer of choice.

GOAL 1

Reliable Water Supply

Provide a high quality, reliable and resilient water supply now and for the future.

Marin Water is responsible for ensuring that clean water is delivered to our customers whenever they may need it. In 2021, this service was threatened when drought conditions threatened to exhaust District water supplies.

Coming out of that experience and understanding that the climate crisis will likely lead to longer and warmer dry periods followed by periods of intense precipitation, Marin Water's Board of Directors adopted a Water Supply Roadmap in February 2023. The Roadmap lays out strategies for drought-proofing the water supply in response to this climate uncertainty. The Roadmap builds on the District's existing water supply as a baseline and identifies and prioritizes water supply projects that will improve the reliability and resiliency of the supply.

In addition, the District recognizes the importance of expanding its industry-leading conservation programs in collaboration with customers to maximize efficient water use. During the drought and in its immediate aftermath, Marin Water customers recorded some of the best water-savings levels in the state. It is vital that the District seek opportunities to build on this momentum as part of the District's water supply portfolio.

This Water Supply Reliability goal captures the District's commitment to manage the existing, high-quality water supply Marin Water customers rely on today and to develop additional water resources to provide a reliable water supply that is resilient to droughts.



Five-Year Objectives

Objective 1 - Reduce Potable Water Use

Reduce water use and water waste by 800 acre feet in the next five years to conserve our resources and ensure we meet or exceed the statewide indoor residential water use target of 47 gallons per capita per day by 2025 and are on track to meet water use objectives established for the District by 2030.

- a. Identify and implement water efficiency concepts and strategies, including those concepts and strategies that target high water users, in the Water Efficiency Master Plan to achieve short-term and long-term goals.
- b. Enhance incentives, education, and outreach to our customers to effectively reduce water use.
- c. Implement the recommendations from the District's water loss control and leak detection program update, using most current industry practices and leveraging innovative technologies.
- d. Participate in and support the development of regulations and legislation that drive water efficiency through participation in industry associations.
- e. Identify opportunities for partnerships in testing new technologies or theories to reduce water use.
- f. Review a range of policy options to further advance water efficiency.

Objective 2 - Augment Existing Water Supply

Fully implement the Strategic Water Supply Roadmap's short-term actions and make progress on long-term, cost-effective projects to meet demand during a four-year drought with no more than 25% mandatory conservation (Water Shortage Contingency Plan Stage 3).

- a. Fully Implement the Strategic Water Supply Roadmap short-term actions to augment the water supply by up to 2,700 acre-feet (AF):
 - Reduce water use and waste by 800 AF.
 - Complete electrification of Soulajule Pump Station - 420 AFY.
 - Complete Phoenix to Bon Tempe pumping - 260 AFY.
 - Complete Optimization of Sonoma Water Supply - 2,000 AFY.
 - Complete Stream release automation.
- b. Implement the Strategic Water Supply Roadmap medium term projects to obtain up to 5,000 AFY of additional water supply and provide an update for achieving the Roadmap longer term goal of 12,000 AFY to 20,000 AFY water supply:
 - Complete feasibility report for brackish desalination and begin next steps.
 - Monitor technological advances in desalination processes and track the development of projects to understand costs and alternate project approaches.
 - Continue to seek funding to offset the cost of recycled water projects and monitor progress on potable reuse projects and technology.
 - Select the preferred Marin-Sonoma Regional Water Conveyance project alternative and begin next steps.
 - Select the preferred Local Storage Improvement project alternative and begin next steps.
 - Provide ongoing progress updates on Roadmap projects.

Objective 3 – Preserve and Enhance Existing Partnerships

Work towards regional approaches to increase the resiliency of our water supply.

- a. Develop partnerships to support recycled water projects.
- b. Renew agreement with Sonoma Water to ensure continued access to supplemental water supply.
- c. Enhance relationships with Sonoma Water and the other cities and agencies that depend on Sonoma Water for water supply to develop and support regional water supply projects.
- d. Seek support from State and Federal agencies for the development of Regional Water Supplies.

Objective 4 – Provide High-Quality Water to Customers

Cost effectively manage our water system to ensure water quality is protected from the source to our customers.

- a. Develop Reservoir Management Plans for Alpine, Bon Tempe, Kent, Nicasio and Soulajule that include water quality objectives and algae management strategies.
- b. Develop improvements to water treatment options for removal of taste and odors in drinking water and other improvements to water quality.
- c. Ensure that the Water Quality lab is accredited to The NEALAC Institute's (TNI) latest accreditation standard for compliance analyses.
- d. Develop and apply lessons learned from other agencies regarding impacts to water quality from wildfires
- e. Participate in the development of regulations that are appropriately protective of public health and the environment through participation with industry groups and associations.



GOAL 2

Resilient Water System

Invest in and maintain a resilient water system through effective infrastructure management and planning.

The District's network of water infrastructure spans challenging topography and consists of more than 900 miles of pipeline, 130 water storage tanks, 97 pump stations, seven reservoirs and dams and three water treatment plants. Collectively, these components work together 24/7 to allow the District to capture, transport, store, and deliver water to more than 191,000 people. System resilience is achieved through continual investments in infrastructure and the employees who operate the systems.

Maintaining and modernizing this infrastructure – some of it nearing 100 years in service – is central to ensuring system resilience through day-to-day demand, drought, fire, earthquakes and other natural and man-made disasters. Marin Water must renew and replace infrastructure and implement system modernizations by identifying and prioritizing project needs and focusing system investments for the benefit of current and future generations. The four-year rate increase approved in 2023 supports the District's ability to do this work and deliver safe, reliable water to customers. The District's Capital Steering Committee will have an essential role in guiding the prioritization of this work.

While the District implements projects that strengthen the system's ability to withstand disasters and other unknowns, the District's workforce must also be equipped with the skills and training needed to effectively respond to and recover from catastrophic emergencies that may threaten the District's ability to provide water service. In coordination with local and regional partners, instilling the latest best-practice emergency response and recovery methods into team procedures will ensure the District is prepared to safeguard the community's water supply under the most challenging of conditions.



Marin Water engineering staff assess an old pipeline that runs through the Mt. Tam Watershed.

Five-Year Objectives

Objective 1 - Infrastructure Condition Assessment

Strengthen our infrastructure risk assessment process to prioritize investments in the replacement, rehabilitation, and/or repair of infrastructure.

- a. Complete above-ground facility condition assessment.
 - Pump stations: 30 evaluated, 67 remain.
 - Tanks: 99 evaluated, 31 remain.
- b. Review for greater robustness and transparency, the ongoing prioritization process of pipeline replacement jobs through criteria, including assessment of age, leak history, probability and consequence of failure and material type.
- c. Perform condition assessments for large infrastructure such as dams and treatment plants.
- d. Complete Facilities Master Plan assessing workplace infrastructure, including administration building, corporation yard and watershed facilities to identify the needs to be incorporated into the capital planning effort.
- e. Identify above-ground infrastructure hardening needs that provide a greater level of protection against wildfire and incorporate those needs into the capital planning and prioritization efforts.
- f. Identify single points of failure throughout the water system and incorporate those into the capital planning and prioritization efforts.
- g. Review industry standard security measures across the water system and identify needs for improvement and incorporate them into the capital planning and prioritization efforts.
- h. Complete the Water System Master Plan and utilize to identify opportunities to simplify the system by reducing the number of tanks and pump stations.

Objective 2 - Capital Planning

Collaborate with the Capital Steering Committee to identify infrastructure projects evaluated through the condition assessment process and establish an associated timeline to implement the projects based on the projected capital budget.

- a. Incorporate data from “Objective 1 – Infrastructure Condition Assessment,” along with other District planning efforts, into District-wide capital planning to develop infrastructure investment scenarios for 10- and 30-year horizons.
- b. Continue to identify grant opportunities to offset costs borne by ratepayers.
- c. Evaluate bond funding opportunities for large projects that provide generational value.

Objective 3 - Capital Project Delivery

Incorporate innovative processes and staffing solutions into our execution of future infrastructure projects to maximize the use of staff time, reduce costs and streamline implementation of an increased capital project workload.

- a. Assess resource needs to meet the increased capital improvement program, including leveraging District staff with support from external engineering consultant firms.
- b. Establish on-call contract(s) to provide expedited repairs on projects too large for District crews but too small for standard design, bid and build workflows.
- c. Execute on-call contracts with engineering firms to streamline consulting work without having to execute multiple contracts for the same type of work, i.e., geotechnical and electrical engineering.
- d. Review and update necessary sections of the District’s contract specifications to the most current industry standards.
- e. Explore the opportunity for innovative approaches to project implementation, including design-build options for larger capital projects.
- f. Continue working with local municipalities to achieve a more cost-effective approach to paving restoration requirements.

Objective 4 - Operations and Maintenance

Evaluate our operations and maintenance program to ensure staff has the knowledge and skill sets to efficiently operate and maintain our system.

- a. In recognition of a significant staff turnover in Operations, develop a focused training plan for the Division to ensure effective operation and maintenance of our system.
- b. Establish standard operating procedures to support training and provide for transfer of institutional knowledge.
- c. Encourage staff involvement in industry associations to provide learning opportunities.
- d. Review the organizational structure of Operations, including classifications, to ensure the most effective utilization of District resources.
- e. Identify opportunities to implement technological advancements in equipment and practices to improve efficiencies.

Objective 5 - Energy Planning

Seek opportunities to reduce our carbon footprint and energy costs through infrastructure projects and planning.

- a. Meet or exceed new fleet vehicle regulatory changes including the expansion of the District's fleet to electric vehicles and needed EV charging stations.
- b. Evaluate pump station rehabilitation projects to determine the feasibility of supplementing prime power with alternative energy and compare it with system efficiency upgrades to determine life-cycle cost savings.
- c. Engage in discussion with the Board on carbon neutrality to establish appropriate goals, policies, and direction.
- d. Review and evaluate the application of micro-turbine technology where applicable as an energy recovery and cost-saving option.
- e. Evaluate renewable power opportunities throughout the District.

Objective 6 - Emergency Response Readiness

Plan and prepare for emergencies to ensure the District can maintain critical operations through fire, floods, earthquakes and other catastrophic events and effectively manage the disaster recovery process.

- a. Update our emergency response plan to reflect current needs, priorities and threats.
- b. Conduct a minimum of two annual tabletop exercises involving the District's Emergency Operations Center to ensure emergency readiness.
- c. Conduct yearly reviews of the District's dam Emergency Action Plans for each of the seven dams and coordinate tabletop exercises with the Marin County Office of Emergency Services and other stakeholders every five years to ensure District and local first responders are familiar with the dam EAPs.
- d. Participate in emergency preparedness trainings in coordination with Marin County Office of Emergency Services on countywide emergency response scenarios.
- e. Establish FEMA-compliant contracts for engineering and construction services that are ready to be executed following an emergency.
- f. Continue to assess and identify opportunities to reduce risk throughout the District.

GOAL 3

Watershed Stewardship

Protect and manage Marin Water lands for the long-term benefit of the community and the environment.

Marin Water's 19,800 acres of watershed lands provide 75% of the District's water supply and support the region's rich biodiversity.

This Watershed Stewardship Goal encapsulates our dedication to multifaceted initiatives that span environmental stewardship, wildfire resiliency, watershed restoration, the enhancement of watershed facilities and the support for education and recreation, which connects the community to its watershed lands.



Wildland fire-trained staff of Marin Water conduct a pile burning on the Mt. Tam Watershed. Pile burning is one of several types of vegetation management treatments used by the District.

Five-Year Objectives

Objective 1 - Creek Restoration

Strive to protect and restore watershed lands and improve upland habitat and streams to establish a resilient landscape that can help buffer against climate-induced risks and ensure thriving populations of threatened and endangered species within Lagunitas Creek.

- a. Implement 13 restoration sites as part of the Lagunitas Creek Watershed Enhancement Plan in collaboration with State Parks, funding partners, and resource agencies to enhance critical habitat and geomorphic processes that are needed to sustain threatened and endangered species.
- b. In alignment with the Lagunitas Creek Stewardship Plan (LCSP), complete annual fisheries lifecycle monitoring and habitat enhancement effectiveness monitoring; coordinate with the Lagunitas Technical Advisory Committee and regional monitoring efforts to update the LCSP.
- c. Integrate new monitoring technology by expanding a network of Passive Integrated Transponder Antenna to improve fisheries monitoring data.
- d. Provide technical expertise to support regional restoration planning efforts for Walker Creek and other watersheds within District boundaries; participate in technical conferences, regional working groups and collaborative research efforts to share restoration methods and fisheries monitoring data.

Objective 2 - Watershed Resiliency to Wildfire

Continue implementing multi-benefit restoration treatments to maintain a resilient watershed by scaling up the Biodiversity, Fire, and Fuels Integrated Plan (BFFIP) and One Tam Forest Health Strategy.

- a. Maintain effective partnerships between watershed rangers and local, regional and state emergency response agencies to ensure strong interagency collaboration that supports emergency response and mitigation strategies.
- b. Sustain organizational capacity to increase the pace and scale of the BFFIP and enhance forest restoration, protect water infrastructure, manage invasive plants and achieve wildfire risk reduction.
- c. Advance strategic partnerships for regional resiliency planning and collaboration to secure funding for stewardship activities outlined in the BFFIP and as part of other long-term watershed restoration efforts.
- d. Support workforce development through the Ranger Trainee Program and by working in partnership with California Conservation Corps, California Conservation Corps North Bay, AmeriCorps Programs and other regional natural resources and wildfire training efforts.
- e. Replace aging wildland firefighting and vegetation management equipment to ensure the District has the operational capabilities for emergency response and watershed forest restoration and fuel reduction.

Objective 3 - Stewardship

Advance stewardship and climate adaptation strategies through technical studies and regional partnerships, and through enriching volunteer programs, provide opportunities for the community to contribute to preserving our water supply, protecting biodiversity and caring for our shared natural resources.

- a. Sustain annual biological monitoring to inform scientific knowledge of the watershed and to support environmental compliance for District operations and long-term planning.
- b. Engage and contribute technical expertise as part of regional research and stewardship efforts through One Tam, TOGETHER Bay Area, the Golden Gate Biosphere Network, the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria and regional research efforts.
- c. Evaluate opportunities for integrating regional restoration and stewardship plan priorities into watershed restoration efforts.
- d. Lead habitat restoration, trail maintenance, environmental education and community science projects and programs that involve community members in improving the health of the watershed.
- e. Advance natural resources interpretation offering to help advance community education and awareness of the watershed's unique biodiversity and water resources.

Objective 4 - Recreation

Manage watershed visitation for water quality protection and to connect visitors to the watershed through recreational opportunities and stewardship initiatives to maintain a welcoming and enriching environment that support visitors.

- a. Complete Watershed Recreation Management Planning Feasibility study to support visitors and protect water resources and biodiversity as an ongoing adaptive management strategy.
- b. Complete the Azalea Hill Trail Restoration Project through enhancement of trail facilities and removal of social trails to restore sensitive habitats.
- c. Evaluate priority roads and trails to inform adaptive management while replacing aging infrastructure to establish a more sustainable trail system with a focus on multi-benefit efforts such as West Peak Restoration and Cataract Trail.
- d. Create nature-based self-guided tours and outreach materials to help educate the community about the watershed's biodiversity, water resources, wildfire issues, and climate change.

Objective 5 - Facilities

Ensure that watershed facilities are operational and well-kept to support four needs: emergency response readiness, water system operations, visitor access for recreational and educational purposes and ongoing environmental restoration efforts within the watershed.

- a. Complete an update to the Roads and Trails Management Plan to integrate modern best management practices and support ongoing maintenance of watershed facilities to protect water quality, support a sustainable road and trails network, preserve biodiversity and provide the community with facilities that support nature-based experiences on the watershed.
- b. Integrate watershed facilities into the facilities planning process to guide key updates to Sky Oaks Headquarters, and maintenance yards and explore opportunities for environmental education spaces and visitor infrastructure.
- c. Maintain existing watershed housing and evaluate opportunities for watershed seasonal employee housing to help remove barriers for early career professionals looking to work in the natural resources field in Marin County.



GOAL 4

Fiscal Responsibility

Judiciously manage customer revenue and other financial resources for operating, maintaining and upgrading the water system today and in preparation for the future.

As a public agency, all revenues received by Marin Water are reinvested into the water system, and customer water rates are the primary source of Marin Water's revenue, providing 95% of the District's funding.

With a relatively small and stable ratepayer base, it is imperative for the District to prioritize financial stability and cost-effective operations to maximize the value of local ratepayer funds.



Marin Water Finance team member

Five-Year Objectives

Objective 1 - Financial stability

Utilize reserves and invest in infrastructure consistently and predictably to minimize the rate impact on customers when unforeseen events occur.

- a. Establish stabilization reserves to mitigate annual revenue fluctuations.
- b. Support the development of a long-term capital improvement program that ensures an appropriate and stable level of investment.
- c. Regularly update fees, rents, and other non-rate revenues to maintain pace with inflation.

Objective 2 - Fair, equitable and proportional rates

Under the legal framework of Proposition 218, continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the rate structure to ensure it produces sufficient revenue while maintaining a balance of affordability and proportionality.

- a. Conduct a connection fee study to fully capture the cost of current and future infrastructure needs.
- b. Evaluate the District's low-income program and identify strategies to ensure qualified customers are enrolled.
- c. As part of the 2027 rate-setting process, conduct a cost-of-service study to ensure charges are proportional and reflective of current demand trends.
- d. Implement a robust outreach plan throughout the 2027 rate-setting process to inform customers about proposed changes.

Objective 3 - Cost-effective business processes

Implement operational practices that increase efficiencies to maximize the value of ratepayer revenues.

- a. Update the enterprise resource planning system (SAP) to streamline routine processes and provide improved data analytics.
- b. Evaluate opportunities to leverage external resources to improve operational efficiencies.
- c. Minimize financing costs by maintaining a high (AA or better) credit quality rating.
- d. Increase the use of online bill payments and electronic payments to reduce banking and printing costs.
- e. Streamline the application process for discount programs and leak adjustments.

Objective 4 – Outside funding to reduce financial impacts on ratepayers

Seek alternative revenue sources to minimize the impact of future rate increases on customers.

- a. Pursue Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) funding for water storage improvement projects.
- b. Prudently utilize bond funding to spread infrastructure funding costs over time.
- c. Develop and secure grants from state and federal agencies to increase the District's capacity to advance key initiatives.
- d. Obtain Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) program loans to maximize financial flexibility for projects with longer construction cycles.
- e. Leverage regional partnerships to increase state and federal funding opportunities.

Objective 5 - Financial transparency

Maintain transparency in all aspects of financial operations.

- a. Improve online tools for customers to understand their bill.
- b. Conduct bi-annual reviews of fiscal policies.
- c. Publish quarterly financial summaries.
- d. Conduct regular internal and external financial audits.
- e. Communicate to customers about successful grant applications the District's investments in infrastructure, water supply roadmap efforts and watershed restoration milestones to highlight how revenues are allocated.

GOAL 5

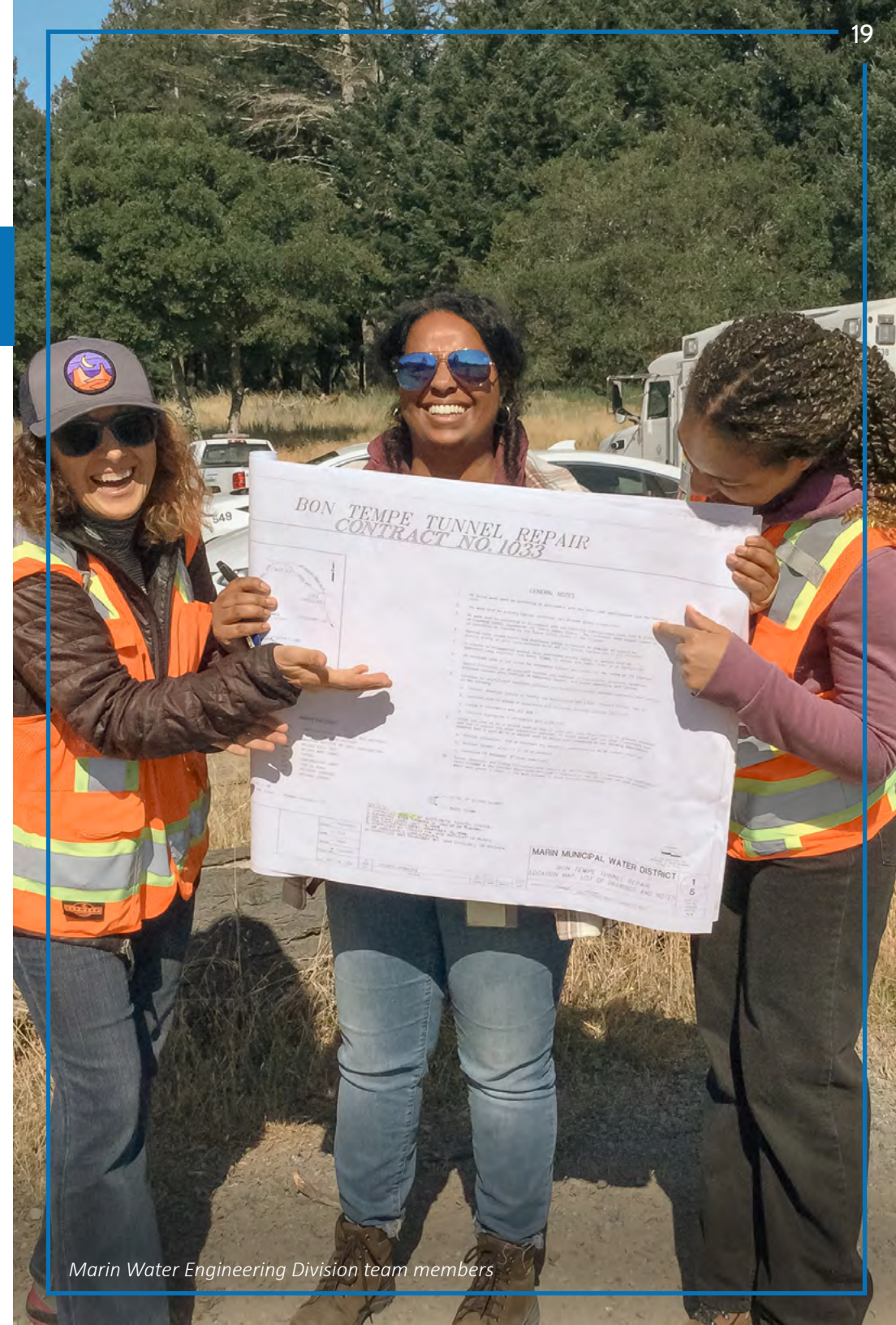
Organizational Excellence

Support and sustain an innovative organization that lives by its values, leads by example, delivers valued benefits for its customers, and is regarded as an employer of choice.

Marin Water, with 25 departments and nearly 250 employees, is primarily responsible for the delivery of clean and reliable water to more than 191,000 people. Behind that service delivery is a complex water system requiring specialized expertise, modernized technology, efficient operations, and a wide number of customer touchpoints and opportunities for engagement – all of which require the organization to perform at its best.

To perform at its best, staff must understand the key priorities of the organization and feel job satisfaction, so they are inspired to provide excellent service. Trust and respect for the unique skills and experience each employee brings to their role in the organization is also paramount to collaboration, creativity, and efficiency in the delivery of service to customers. There must also be opportunities for knowledge sharing with industry professionals inside and outside the organization to strengthen succession planning and to continue to evolve and implement the latest industry-wide trends and standards into our operations.

This goal represents the District's commitment to delivering best-in-class service to our customers through ongoing organizational improvements, cutting-edge programs and processes and continual development of the most important asset of our water system – our workforce.



Marin Water Engineering Division team members

Five-Year Objectives

Objective 1 – Organizational Culture and Values

Cultivate a meaningful work environment that successfully recruits, retains, and develops an engaged, high-performing, mission- and values-focused team.

- a. Strengthen the employment webpage, job portal, and recruitment advertisement materials to help attract diverse candidates and better promote the Marin Water team and our accomplishments, brand, and culture.
- b. Continue to grow relationships with community-based organizations and explore new partnerships with local colleges and trade schools to connect local community members, particularly those in underserved communities, with our job opportunities.
- c. Redesign and implement a comprehensive and welcoming onboarding process that connects newly hired employees to procedures and District resources that support the employee's success in their role.
- d. Complete diversity, equity, and inclusion training throughout the organization and fold it into the onboarding process to help foster a sense of belonging across the workforce.
- e. Develop a broad-based employee training program that provides continued core leadership training for managers and supervisors, implements a needs assessment and training for technical staff and soft skills for all District staff, and establishes internal career track training that supports career advancement.
- f. Engage staff to evaluate current recognition and appreciation programs, research employer best practices, and refresh the District's employee recognition and appreciation programs.
- g. Ensure integration of staff input into District decision-making through strengthened two-way internal communication strategies that better engage all staff in the business of the District and provide opportunities for employee feedback.
- h. Increase employee engagement and organizational improvement through periodic employee surveys, with the next one to be distributed in 2024, and implement follow-through initiatives.
- i. Maintain a culture of workplace safety through a continuous commitment to safety education, training, compliance, and communication.
- j. Assess and evaluate the District's current work facilities to identify needed upgrades and enhancements to support a safe and productive work environment.

Objective 2 – Customer Experience

Seek opportunities to enhance the customer experience at every touchpoint.

- a. Perform an accessibility audit of the District's public facilities, customer programs, and outreach resources to identify and implement modifications that improve access for all customers.
- b. Deploy internal protocols and tools to strengthen key messaging and brand identity to ensure consistency through every customer interaction.
- c. Establish tools that can be used for expedient, geo-targeted communication to customers impacted by service interruptions due to main breaks or other temporary system shutdowns.
- d. Use customer survey data, census information, water use reports and digital analytics to drive decision-making for customer communication strategies and targeted outreach campaign development for conservation programs.
- e. Broaden customer awareness of our service value and progress on key priorities and initiatives through creative public relations campaigns, interpretive signage, video, point-of-service displays, new technologies, community events, and District volunteer opportunities.
- f. Host open houses and school field trips at the watershed and treatment plant focused on building enthusiasm and interest for careers in the water industry among youth and explore the development of virtual tour options and teaching curricula that can also interactively bring these facilities into the classroom.
- g. Bolster community engagement with the municipalities located within the District's service area to strengthen support from partner agencies for the important work of the District

Objective 3 – Industry Engagement, Growth, and Leadership

Engage with the water industry to seek knowledge and best practices from other professionals and to contribute our expertise and experiences to the field.

- a. Ensure that management and staff participate in industry associations to learn, share, and bring back best practices and innovations to the District for managing water resources, operations, watersheds, finances, human resources, communications, and other core services.
- b. Participate in professional development opportunities, including pursuing association committee seats, presenting on conference panels and seminars, submitting cutting-edge projects and papers for industry awards and assembling teams to compete at regional and statewide industry operations challenges.
- c. Continue to build collaboration and communication with other water districts, key government agencies, stewardship networks and stakeholder organizations.

Objective 4 – Technology, Innovation, and Process Improvements

The District will strengthen efficiencies, business services, and innovation by modernizing essential processes, partnering with others, and investing in strategic technology.

- a. Develop and roll out a modern, secure intranet that will provide effective information exchange and collaboration among departments and teams.
- b. Provide an employee self-service function for accessing payroll, timekeeping, and other administrative functions.
- c. Create a program that fosters and incentivizes staff to identify, suggest and use modern processes and technologies to improve workplace efficiency.
- d. Partner with academic institutions to research and solve the most pressing challenges for Marin Water and the water industry, and support the use of the watershed as a research ground for academia, when appropriate.
- e. Strengthen succession planning by identifying and addressing gaps in documented procedures and ensuring an overlap of training for key positions.
- f. Begin conversion to advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) across the service area and develop and launch the associated customer portal to increase customer awareness of water use.
- g. Complete a selection process for upgrading the current enterprise resource planning system (SAP) and implement the upgrade to ensure maximized system use and integration capabilities across various operational functions.
- h. Replace the online customer bill pay system with a new system that improves self-service options for customers.

Progress Reporting

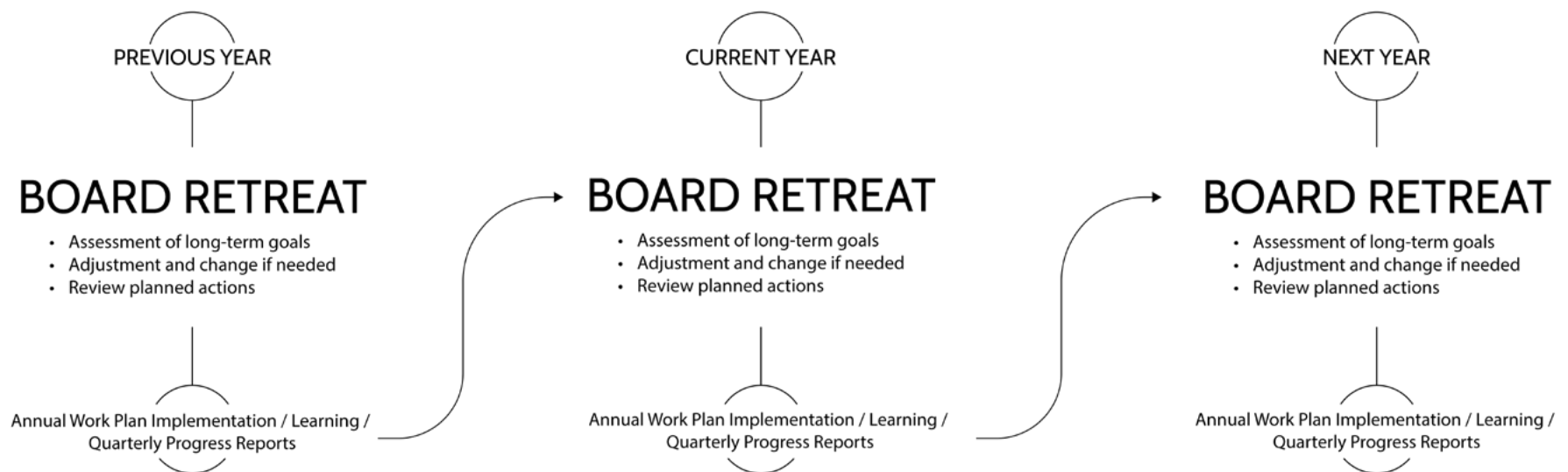
The five strategic goals and 24 objectives set the overall direction and priorities for Marin Water for the next five years into early 2029. These goals and objectives also include 113 actions that represent the best understanding today of the actions needed to advance the goals and objectives. The District expects that new information will be learned as actions are implemented and conditions and circumstances will change and evolve throughout this time. Therefore, the Board of Directors and staff will apply an adaptive management approach for reporting progress and adjusting action plans to advance the goals.

Planning, managing, and reporting for each goal will be accomplished through annual work plans. At the annual Board of Directors retreat held early in each new calendar year, staff will review and report on the following for each goal:

- Progress and accomplishments on the objectives and actions identified.
- Learnings and innovations from the previous year.
- Assessment of the long-term progress toward the goal.
- Adjustments and changes based on progress or changing circumstances.
- Planned actions, resources, and partnerships for the coming year.

Each work plan will be reviewed and discussed with the Board of Directors during the annual retreat to review and confirm overall direction and define the actions, budget, and resources for the next fiscal year.

To provide periodic updates on the progress of annual work plans throughout each year, staff will provide updates to the Board of Directors during regularly scheduled board meetings on a quarterly basis.







**MARIN
WATER**

220 Nellen Ave
Corte Madera, CA 94925