

**Public Works and Utilities Division
WATER DEPARTMENT**

STRATEGIC PLAN

June 15, 2007

Mission Statement: Consistently deliver water of high quality and value combined with excellent customer service and ample fire protection capacity.

Key Customers: All City of Spokane citizens, regional citizens, and visitors who utilize City water with emphasis on those individuals and entities that pay City water bills.

Definition of Products/Services:

Provide potable water and fire flow water that meets all regulatory standards to all appropriate locations within the water system retail service area and to wholesale and emergency inter-tie customers in the least costly most efficient manner possible. These products/services are defined as follows:

1. Provide for continuous proactive water quality monitoring so that all users can be assured of receiving healthy and safe water for their use.
2. Provide for customer inquiries, service, and appointment times in a timely, efficient, and professional manner.
3. Provide timely annual maintenance and testing for over 6000 fire hydrants so that customers can be assured of adequate fire protection
4. Provide for timely annual maintenance and testing for over 13,000 valves so that citizens can be assured the water system can be shut down in a timely manner during emergencies to minimize property damage and other issues.
5. Operate the systems 99 water pumps, 5 hydroelectric generators, and 34 reservoirs in the most energy efficient manner possible to minimize rate costs to the customers.
6. Provide for the capability to make system repairs rapidly and safely to minimize system damage, property damage, and customer inconvenience.
7. Provide for the quickest most cost effective meter reading practical for efficient and accurate billing service to customers.
8. Using a state of the art test bench keep customer meters accurate and in good working order.
9. Provide for timely connection for new customers to promote economic growth.
10. Provide for rapid developer plan review and system hydraulic model runs to promote economic growth.
11. Provide timely construction support services to contractors building new water infrastructure needed for continued economic growth.

12. Maintain necessary compliance with Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Chapter 246-290 for Water Systems and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) License for Hydroelectric Project No. 3074-WA., plus many codes and standards for maintaining the health of the water system.

Strategic Analysis – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT):

Strengths

- Clean safe water
- Good customer service
- Excellent and skillful employees
- Sound fiscal condition
- Robust system design with best possible fire rating
- Good infrastructure renewal program

Weaknesses

- Many employees close to retirement including all foreperson and higher positions with exception of the Water System Engineer position
- Lack of strong recruitment/training program to fill above retirement void
- Need better maintenance management and preventative maintenance programs
- Lack of sufficient staffing to accomplish the above
- Behind in residential meter replacements

Opportunities

- Employee recruitment/training campaign
- Improved education/certification programs for newer employees
- Protect the region's water resources with continually improving stewardship programs
- Develop better maintenance management and preventative maintenance programs
- Customer surveys for better customer feed back

Threats

- Security/Terrorism issues
- Contamination of the water supply/aquifer
- Unrealistic cuts in staff

Key Success Factors (KSF):

- Always provide citizens healthy/safe water with no incidents of contamination
- The system operates as intended during fire emergencies and the best possible fire bureau rating is always maintained.

Goals and Strategies:

GOAL #1 Take actions needed in 2007 toward the implementation of a Computerized Maintenance Management System as recommended in the Matrix Report (Mayor's Priority for Customer Service) (Water Department recommendation 4(1.1) page 20-21, Bucket #2) (SWOT –Weakness/Opportunity)

Strategies

- Meet with MIS and Accountant Groups to determine compatibility issues that need to be dealt with.
- Develop a standardized record keeping system based on work flow activities.
- Centralize information to a relational database structure.
- Develop a simple user interface to access the work flow information.

GOAL #2 Improve the monitoring, evaluation, and management of the distribution piping system water quality. (Mayor's Priority for Quality of Life) (SWOT – Strength and Opportunity)

Strategies

- Develop an expanded water quality data base for each one of the 22 pressure zones within the water system.
- Develop expanded parameters for testing within the water system particularly in the systems 34 reservoirs and in dead end lines.
- Use the new water quality data from 1 and 2 above to determine optimum operational standards for flushing programs, reservoir levels, and addressing opportunities to eliminate dead end lines as soon as possible by looping the water system.
- Develop isolation zones for emergency or contamination events.

GOAL #3 Develop a training program for replacement of supervisors and skilled journey level positions due to many impending retirements over the next five years. (Mayor's Priority for Customer Service) (SWOT-Weakness/Opportunity)

Strategies

- Improve record keeping in each individual employees file for training received and future training needs.
- Implement a financial incentive program for employees that will be filling in behind retirements to improve their water system operation skills through studying for and passing Washington State Department of Health certification programs for various water system operation skills.
- Require employees to attend applicable American Water Works Association training programs.
- Implement expanded in house training programs provided by management.
- Develop a mentorship program of retired Supervisors.

GOAL #4 Accelerate efforts to increase pumping efficiency and capacity to continue to accommodate economic growth while conserving energy. (Mayor's Priority for Economic Development) (SWOT – Opportunity)

Strategies

- Establish an improved system wide program to evaluate existing pumps and motors.
- Purchase necessary testing equipment.
- Quantify proposed power savings goals so that results have a measure to compare to.
- Work with Avista to determine best program for energy saving grants from them.

GOAL #5 Increase preventative maintenance program measures for fire hydrants as recommended in the Matrix Report (Mayor's Priority for Customer Service) (Water Department recommendation 3(1.8) pages 20-13 & 20-14, Bucket 2) (SWOT – Weakness/Opportunity)

Strategies

- Establish new standards for inspections by the fire department
- Strive for 34 or more hydrant inspections and minor maintenance repairs per crew per week.

GOAL #6 Develop a more structured residential meter replacement program as recommended in the Matrix Report. (Mayor's Priority for Customer Service) (Water Department recommendation 4(1.2) page 20-22, Bucket 2) (SWOT – Weakness/Opportunity)

Strategies

- Test a representative number of composite meters to determine accuracy at 10, 15, and 20 year intervals.
- Based on data from (1) above develop targeted meters to replace
- Reorganize existing staff to begin implementation of replacement program.

GOAL #7 For operational engineering staff implement Project Management Body of Knowledge guidelines principals as recommended in the Matrix Report. (Mayor's Priority for Customer Service) (Water Department recommendation 3(3) page 20-19, Bucket #2) (SWOT – Weakness /Opportunity)

Strategies

- Review and compare the very extensive Project Management Institute guidelines as recommended by Matrix versus the American Water Works Association guidelines more typically used in the water industry.
- Based on the above review determine which guidelines or mixture of guidelines are best suited for the operational engineering in the Water Department.