



DENVER WATER STRATEGIC PLAN



Denver Water's Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan lays the foundation for Denver Water's future by establishing our vision, defining our core values, and outlining our mission, strategic perspectives, goals and priorities. It is an enduring document, characterizing an organization that will evolve to meet the ever-changing circumstances and challenges of tomorrow.

Above all, this Strategic Plan will inform our decisions, guide our actions, and inspire us to build on the legacy of what our predecessors created for our customers so Denver Water will continue to be capable of meeting the needs of future generations.

To accomplish this result, this plan must be more than words on paper — it must be internalized, systemized and made real every day, in everything we do.

Our Vision

Denver Water aspires to be the best water utility in the nation.

Since 1918, the employees of Denver Water have sustained a world-class metropolitan area with a semi-arid climate at the base of the Rocky Mountains. We manage a resource essential to human life, a resource necessary for economic development and one that creates beauty and recreational opportunities. Yet we depend on complex and fragile natural systems that are affected both by people and by events beyond our control.

Our responsibility is to provide — in perpetuity and without fail — a reliable, high-quality and affordable supply of water for our customers. But that responsibility will be ever more complicated and unpredictable.

We face known challenges that include population growth; increasingly interdependent regional economies; climate change; increased competition for water resources; security threats; changing economic, regulatory and political environments; an evolving workforce; and the need to protect our watersheds and the natural environment.

We also must be prepared to adapt to unforeseen trends and events that can be sudden and transformational. Meeting these challenges requires us to broaden our view beyond the scope of traditional water utility planning. We must build awareness that our system is more than its infrastructure — it also includes the watersheds and river systems that provide the source of our supply, and the communities and interests with whom we interact.

Water is a scarce resource, and we must continue our commitment to its most efficient use and reuse. We must be creative in how we manage its development, collection, storage, treatment and distribution. And we must maintain our financial strength while delivering cost-effective, reliable and responsive service to our customers. Many of Denver Water's facilities were developed nearly 100 years ago and, while well-constructed, must be maintained, upgraded and replaced in accordance with engineering and technological innovations and evolving government regulation.

More than ever before, we must lead regional, statewide, river basin and national initiatives to further the security of our water supply. We must collaborate with the City and County of Denver, neighboring municipalities and the business community to help shape a vibrant metropolitan area, and work with Colorado's agricultural and environmental communities, Western Slope interests, and local, state and federal agencies to develop regional, statewide and national strategies for sustainable water supply development and management.

We will manage Denver Water and our water supply — and we will interact with the land, water resources and communities we affect — in ways that provide the best possible results for our customers, our neighbors and the environment.



We will create a workplace environment and maintain a workforce focused on our vision of becoming the best water utility in the nation. To achieve that vision, we will possess three principal characteristics:

• We will be a strategy-driven organization —

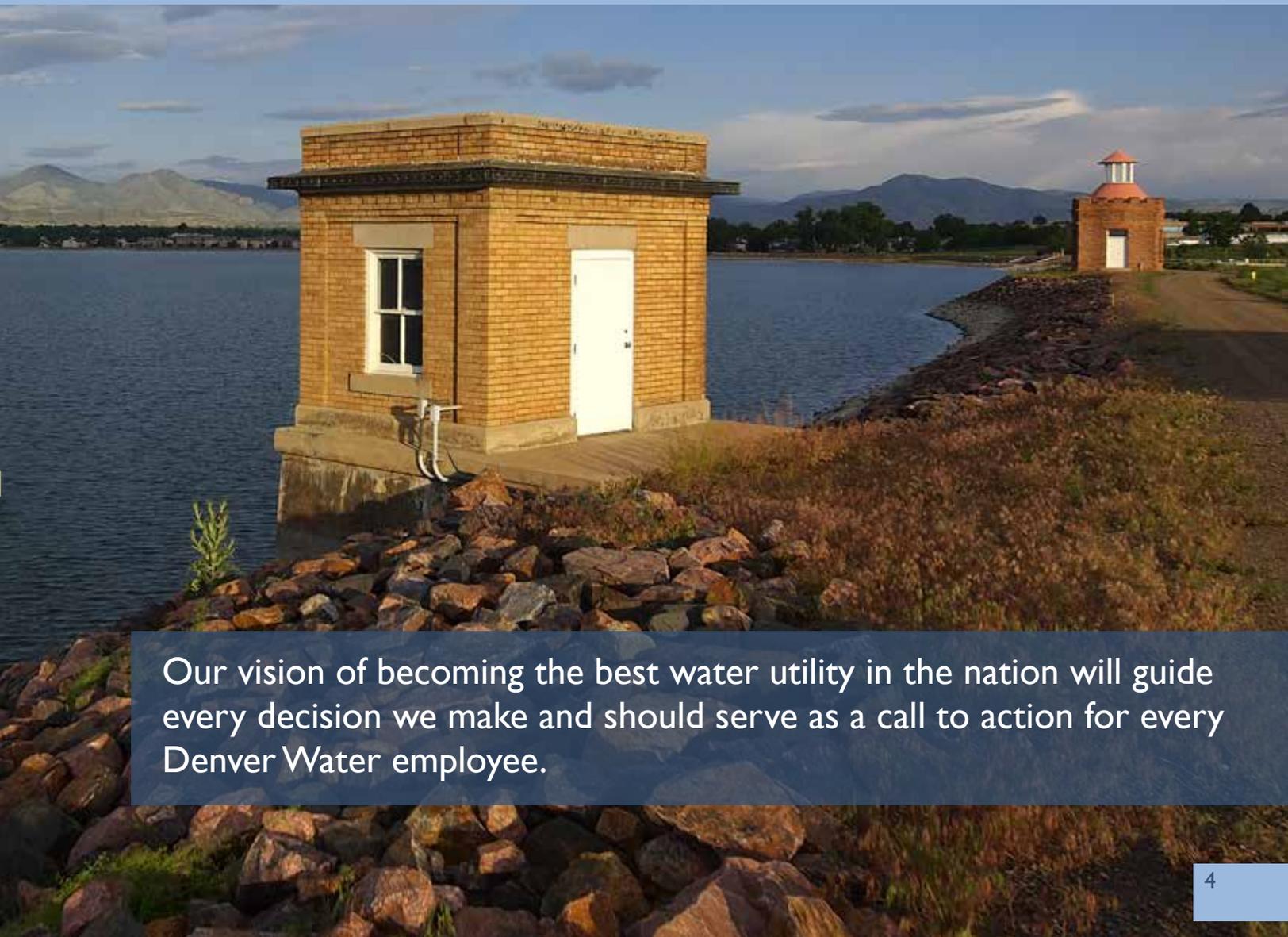
We will focus clearly on accomplishing our most important goals and priorities in ways that reflect our core values.

• We will be nimble and adaptable —

We will have the ability to quickly apply our knowledge to strengthen our system and solve problems.
We will not be afraid to take calculated risks.

• We will be accountable and responsible —

We will continually earn the trust of our customers and the public by doing the right thing.



Our vision of becoming the best water utility in the nation will guide every decision we make and should serve as a call to action for every Denver Water employee.

Our Values

Our values are at the heart of everything we do. They mirror who we are. They inform and inspire our work. They are foundational to reaching our vision.

Our values must be evident in how we treat our customers and external stakeholders, and each other. In short, these values reflect our leadership, and underlie everything we do both as employees and as an organization.

To become the best water utility in the nation, every employee should understand that we expect behaviors that reflect our values. And each of us should be held accountable to these values in what we do and how we treat others.



Our culture is a combination of these values, our experiences, our rich history and our common mission. These values are more than words; they are the aspirations that guide us every day, lead us to the future and provide a measure against which we can hold ourselves accountable.

VISION

We will honor the legacy of Denver Water in doing what those before us have done — free our minds to think of what is possible in the future and not be constrained by what has or has not worked in the past. We recognize that what we do today impacts what we do tomorrow. So, we will anticipate — whether the timeframe is five minutes, five years or five decades. We will take actions to be prepared. We will take initiative. We will not be afraid to take calculated risks. We will be nimble and adaptable.

RESPECT

We will listen to, honor and value each other, our customers, our stakeholders, our environment, and the assets, equipment and tools we use. We will take time to thank each other and acknowledge the importance of work done by others. We will earn respect by acknowledging and validating the rich and diverse experiences and backgrounds of others and by always acting in a fair, thoughtful and non-judgmental manner.

INTEGRITY

In all our endeavors we will act in the public interest with honesty, candor and high ethical standards. Our word is our bond — there are no hidden agendas. We will be accountable for our successes as well as our failures. Our credibility will foster trust.

EXCELLENCE

Our ability to deliver on our mission requires consistent high-quality service every single day, and also work that will last for decades. Therefore, in all we do every day, there is only one standard: to perform as individuals and as teams to be the best in every aspect of our operations. We will do so with creativity, courage and adaptability consistent with our Vision.

PASSION

We are focused on mastering our craft and offering superior value to our customers. We will do so with energy, commitment, positive attitude, continuous improvement, exceeding expectations, pride in our work, and openness to new ideas, opportunities and direction.

Our Mission



Denver Water will be a responsible steward of the resources, assets and natural environments entrusted to us in order to provide a high-quality water supply, a resilient and reliable system, and excellent customer service.

Strategic Perspectives

WE WILL MEET OUR MISSION BY FOCUSING ON FOUR STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVES:

- **CUSTOMER:**
Assure that we have satisfied and supportive customers.
- **FINANCIAL:**
Maintain a financially-strong and stable organization.
- **ORGANIZATIONAL:**
Build an effective, efficient and strategically driven organization.
- **EXTERNAL:**
Establish strategically effective relationships and reputation.



Customer Perspective

Desired Outcome — Satisfied and supportive customers



An excellent collection, treatment and delivery system

- :: Reliable infrastructure
- :: All drinking and recycled water regulations are met or surpassed
- :: Margins of safety and security in system operations that ensure resiliency
- :: Watersheds are protected

A customer-centric approach at all levels of the organization

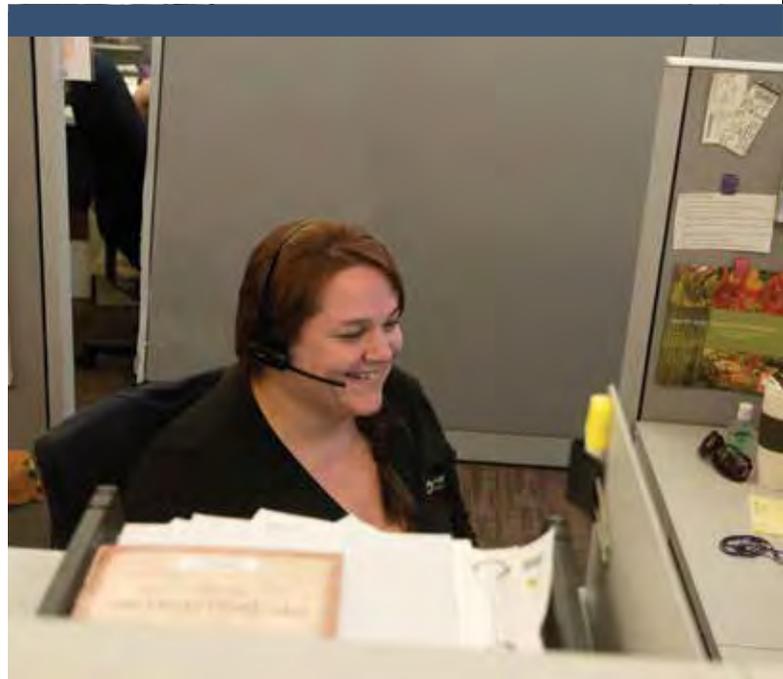
- :: Outstanding customer service
- :: Customer and stakeholder interaction that is open, honest, effective and productive
- :: Strong relationships with our distributors
- :: Awareness of customer affordability issues
- :: Effective customer communication and education
- :: Address rate equity issues among customer classes, including the rationale for any differences
- :: Current research and knowledge about our customers and their water needs and habits

Meet future water needs of our customers

- :: Diverse, flexible and resilient supply sources
- :: Visionary, adaptable, long-range planning approach
- :: Appropriate margins of safety including a drought plan and strategic water reserve
- :: Participation in cooperative/collaborative regional projects

Efficient water use and conservation

- :: Water conservation and other demand-management techniques integral to our future
- :: Educated and engaged customers are partners in the wise use of water
- :: A water-efficient system
- :: Lead by example in our water-usage practices



Financial Perspective

Desired Outcome – A financially strong and stable organization

Excellent short and long-term financial health

- :: Rates and fees evaluated annually to maintain fiscal health, comply with the City Charter, and provide good value for customers
- :: Sound financial performance targets and cash reserves
- :: Optimize funding sources

Maintain the public's trust by spending money wisely

- :: Strong financial governance and controls
- :: Develop a “spend only what you need” culture
- :: Timely and transparent financial reporting to customers

Budgeting and spending driven by strategic priorities

- :: A budget process that aligns spending with strategic priorities to drive and control spending
- :: Employees are engaged in the budgeting and spending processes with timely and accurate reporting at the appropriate levels



Organizational Perspective

Desired Outcome – An effective, efficient and strategically driven organization



Leadership that maintains a strategic focus and strengthens management practices at all levels

- :: A close working relationship between the Board and Executive Team founded on clarity about their respective governance roles and responsibilities
- :: An Executive Team focused on leading and managing the organization while ensuring that their divisions perform highly
- :: Leadership at multiple levels that is capable of and accountable for achieving the Board's goals
- :: A managerial environment that empowers and supports decision making at appropriate levels
- :: Clear internal management and accountability that strategically align policies, procedures, priorities, projects and implementation
- :: Awareness and information sharing about best practices that may improve performance

A collaborative, healthy, highly capable, motivated workforce

- :: Every employee understands, and is prepared to perform, his/her individual role in fulfilling the mission and enhancing Denver Water's reputation
- :: Human resource capabilities and actions that are strategically aligned to attract, grow and retain the needed talent and skills
- :: A work culture that respects the expertise in each department while encouraging greater cross-departmental collaboration, teamwork and decision making
- :: Excellent employee communication and a clear, smooth information flow throughout the organization
- :: An employee base that strengthens Denver Water through its diversity
- :: A work environment that enhances employee well-being by promoting safety and health in all we do





A flexible organization, capable of adapting to future challenges and opportunities

- :: An organizational structure that advances our strategic goals and is adaptable to changing work demands
- :: A workforce that is multi-talented, adaptable to changing work demands, and efficient in how we perform our work
- :: An easy-to-use knowledge and information-sharing capability

Business processes and assets that increase our efficiency and effectiveness

- :: Cost-effective asset, operational and resource management
- :: Appropriate technologies that enhance our ability to achieve Denver Water's business objectives
- :: Appropriate consistency in business processes and policies across the organization

Be environmentally responsible in delivering on our mission

- :: Conduct business in a manner that reflects our role as a responsible manager of natural resources, is sustainable and respects the environment
- :: System management that respects the multiple uses of our resources
- :: Proactive management of our properties to improve our operations and the areas around them

Appropriate risk management for our system and operations

- :: A structured approach to assess and appropriately mitigate and prepare for risks related to disasters, data, infrastructure and public safety
- :: Employees understand their individual responsibility to help minimize risk



External Perspective

Desired Outcome – Strategically effective relationships and reputation

An excellent reputation

- :: Define our brand reputation and manage our actions to achieve it
- :: Demonstrated adherence to ethics and public accountability
- :: A strategic approach to our organizational and individual involvement in civic, community, state and national organizations
- :: Strengthen our issues-management process

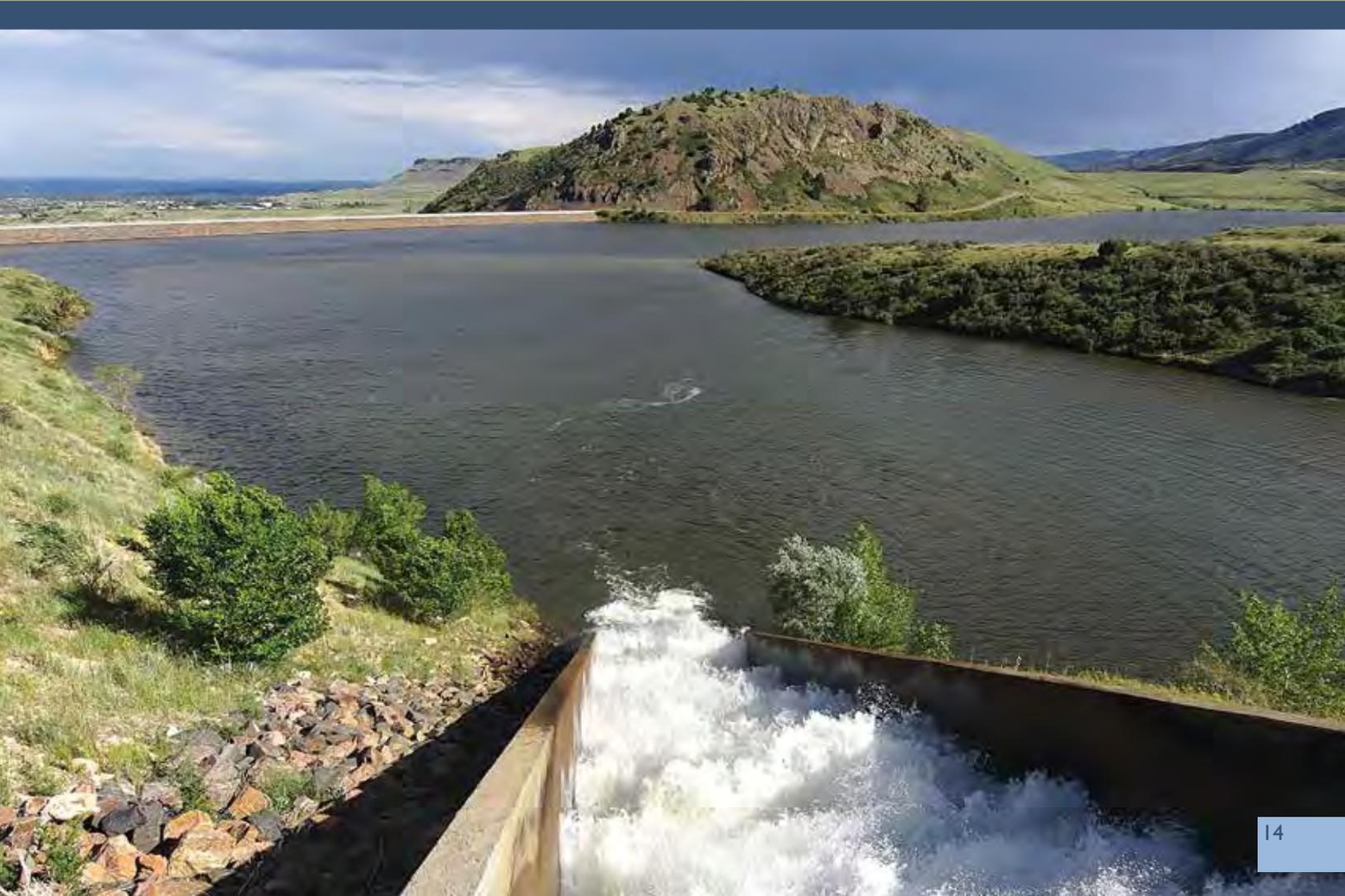
Relationships that are managed to achieve our strategic objectives

- :: A strategic approach to prioritizing and investing in our external relationships
- :: Information of strategic importance is evaluated at appropriate levels of the organization and considered in the decision process
- :: Local businesses are supported as appropriate
- :: Strong and effective relationships with government officials at the local, regional, state and national levels
- :: Close coordination with the City of Denver as a key partner and customer
- :: Strong relations with media – especially in Denver and in areas where we have customers, facilities or watersheds

Play a key role in issues important to our success

- :: Active engagement in forums and organizations that influence Denver Water's central issues
- :: Advocate the interests of Denver Water and our customers in legislative and regulatory matters
- :: Play a leadership role on important issues when it is appropriate and effective







DENVER WATER

denverwater.org

1600 West 12th Ave. • Denver CO, 80204

Phone: 303-628-6000