



MEMORANDUM

TO: Water Resources Commission

FROM: Thomas M. Byler, Director
Kim Ogren, Manager, Water Resources Development Program

SUBJECT: Agenda Item D, August 17, 2017
Water Resources Commission Meeting

Strategic Planning Update

I. Introduction

During this informational agenda item, the Department will provide the Commission with an update on the Department's ongoing strategic planning efforts.

II. Background

One of the recommendations from the Secretary of State's performance audit last year was for the Department to develop a long-term plan that prioritizes its responsibilities and sets clear measureable goals for water sustainability. The Commission and staff discussed this issue at the January 2017 Commission meeting and agreed to embark on strategic planning over the next year, starting in earnest this spring/summer. In May 2017, the Department presented the initial scope of the effort and tentative approach for creating the strategic planning process (Phase 1) and then developing the strategic plan (Phase 2).

III. Phase 1 Efforts and Outcomes

Since presenting to the Commission in May 2017, the Department hired Olympic Performance, Inc. to help develop the strategic planning process. With the assistance of the consultant, the Department's leadership team worked through an exercise to discuss the reasons for undertaking strategic planning and identify what the team hopes to accomplish and produce as final products at the end of the effort. Department leadership then worked with the consultant to develop a process that would engage the right groups and result in an implementable strategic plan. The subsections below provide an overview of the results of Phase 1 and a proposal for Phase 2.

Why is the Department doing strategic planning?

- Prioritize work – As highlighted in the 2016 Secretary of State’s Audit, the Department has too much to do given current resources and responsibilities. The strategic plan will communicate what the Department intends to accomplish in the next 5 years as well as highlight what the Department does not have the time or resources to do within that timeframe.
- Continue to improve as a positive and productive workplace – The Department hopes to identify what the agency is doing well, opportunities for improvement, and what defines the agency’s culture. Our goal is to continue to improve efficiency and service delivery, while fostering a positive work environment.
- Improve communication – Through strategic planning, the Department hopes to identify practical ways to promote efficient and effective communication, both internally and externally.

What products does the Department want to produce through strategic planning?

- High-level, overview strategic plan – This document would take our existing mission, vision, and goals and then add values, core competencies, and a prioritized list of work to be accomplished in the next five years. The Department’s existing capacity and resources would serve as sideboards for the amount of work that could be done in the 5-year timeframe.
- Detailed strategic plan – This document would take the prioritized list from the high-level plan and identify the tasks, resources, and timing to do the work. This document would also include a way to track the status of the work.
- Work plans – The Department does not anticipate producing work plans through strategic planning, but they may be a next step for certain sections or topics. The workplans will tie closely to the two documents listed above. The groundwater work plan is the first work plan that will be completed after the strategic plan is developed (see Agenda Item E for information on that effort).

How will the Department do strategic planning?

The Department previously reported that it intends to engage staff, the Commission, and stakeholders in the development of the strategic plan. During Phase 1, the Department worked with the consultant to scope out how to provide meaningful opportunities for those groups to engage in strategic planning. Table 1 provides an overview of how these groups will be engaged, what pieces of the plan they will work on, and their role in plan development. The Department will discuss the strategic planning timeline and process at the Commission meeting.

Table 1. Phase 2 Engagement

Group	Area of Involvement	Roles and Forms of Engagement
Department Managers and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department values and core competencies • Employee initiatives • Priorities for 5-year plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm and provide input through cross-functional focus groups and surveys • Provide input on time and resources required for work • Receive updates and provide feedback through all-staff and section meetings, emails, surveys, and other forms of involvement
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities for 5-year plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input on own priorities for consideration • Receive updates and provide feedback through meetings and emails
Department Executive Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities for 5-year plan • Department values and core competencies • Employee initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sort through input provided by groups and make decisions on various items through Executive team work sessions • Develop strategic planning documents
Water Resources Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities for 5-year plan • Department values and core competencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input through Commission meetings and one-on-one meetings with the Director • Review and adopt the overview and detailed strategic plans

IV. Conclusion and Next Steps

The Department recently completed Phase 1 of its 2017-2018 strategic planning efforts. During Phase 1, the Department developed a planning process to ensure that stakeholders, staff and the Commission have opportunities to provide input and help produce an implementable strategic plan.

The Department is currently soliciting proposals for a consultant to assist with carrying out the proposed strategic planning process described above (Phase 2). After selecting a firm, the Department will engage staff, the Commission, and stakeholders to develop the strategic plan. The tentative goal is to have a final strategic plan developed by May; however, our consultant noted that the process may take longer than expected. As a result, the Department will work towards this goal and make adjustments as necessary.

Tom Byler
503-986-0910

Kim Ogren
503-986-0873