



**EOCWD**  
**EAST ORANGE COUNTY**  
**WATER DISTRICT**

Approved  
June 21, 2019

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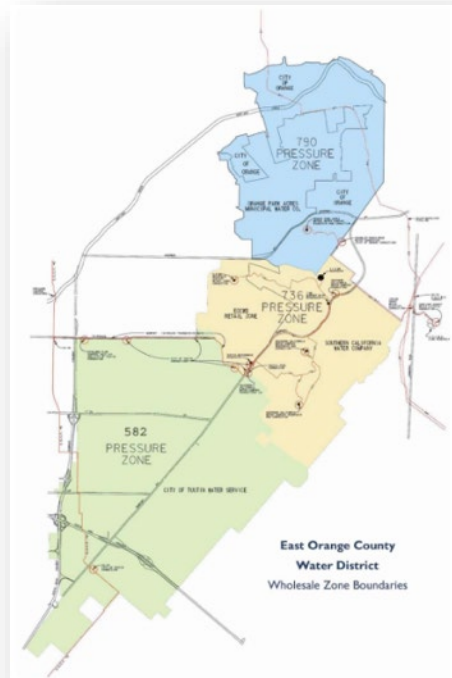
Ed Means, President, Means Consulting LLC

## 2019 FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

### Message from the Board

Welcome to the East Orange County Water District's (EOCWD) 5-Year Strategic Plan. This document is a blueprint for how EOCWD will respond to current challenges and make the best of future opportunities for the benefit of our customers. It confirms our mission and goals as a public agency dedicated to providing high quality water service to approximately 100,000 residents in the EOCWD service area. It outlines the specific goals, strategies, and objectives we will pursue to move us from where we are to where we want to be.

EOCWD is a locally governed, public wholesale and retail water district formed in 1961 encompassing an area of approximately 10,000 acres. It is a member of the Municipal Water District of Orange County, which is a member of the Metropolitan Water District and therefore entitled to receive Colorado River and Northern California imported water. This treated imported water is delivered to a portion of the incorporated areas of the cities of Tustin and Orange and the adjoining unincorporated communities of North Tustin, Lemon Heights, Cowan Heights, Orange Park Acres and Panorama Heights. In addition, in July of 1985, the District assumed the operations of Orange County Water Works District # 8 and became a retail water provider.



On May 11, 2016, the Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission (OCLAFCO) approved EOCWD's application for transfer of the Orange County Sanitation District's (OCSD's) Area 7 Local Sewer System. The actual transfer of the gravity sewer assets was performed on August 1, 2016.

The EOCWD Board of Directors and staff are charting a course for continued success in the future through the development and execution of this Strategic Plan. The Plan defines the vision, mission,



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values, goals and 5-year business strategy for EOCWD. Our commitments to the communities we serve fall into four areas: water and sewer service reliability and infrastructure, community representation and engagement, professional workforce, and financial integrity. These commitments are established as the four goals of the plan. Our Board actions will consistently support these commitments and we will track our progress against this plan, revisiting the plan on a recurring basis to adjust as conditions warrant.

Director Richard Bell, Vice President

Director Douglass S. Davert, President

Director John Dulebohn

Director George Murdoch

Director John L. Sears



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### Message from the General Manager

While our core business has remained constant over time, this plan directs how we will take on the complex issues and challenges we face in the next several years. In developing this Strategic Plan, we focused on four priority areas:

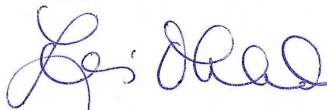
1. Water and sewer service and infrastructure reliability
2. Community representation and engagement
3. Financial integrity
4. Professional workforce

Why these four? These four areas summarize the “big picture” of what we need to do – and do well – so that we achieve our mission to: *“Provide our customers with reliable, high quality water services featuring home town service, fiscal discipline and direct accountability”*.

Why this order? This is a logical order of what we have determined to be the highest priority as a District, however, the priority of individual areas will shift in emphasis over the course of this plan as events dictate.

This is the third EOCWD Strategic Plan in an ongoing process. We will continue to periodically review the Strategic Plan in conjunction with our budget process to readjust as changing conditions dictate. With the support of the Board, I am confident this plan will help us achieve the expectations of those we serve in the months and years to come.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Ohlund,  
General Manager

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### Introduction

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Strategic Planning is a structured process to prioritize issues. Due to the reality of finite resources, staff must be focused on the key issues that are critical to its mission.

The planning process enabled the EOCWD board and staff to step back from daily activities and deliberate on ways to achieve the EOCWD mission to “Provide our customers with reliable, high quality water services featuring home town service, fiscal discipline and direct accountability”.

The Strategic Plan was developed under the guidance of the Board of Directors and senior management representing all of the EOCWD’s functions. This team met over a two-month period following the steps in the call out box to the right.

The focus of the staff’s strategic deliberations was the key issues EOCWD will face in the next five-year planning horizon (and beyond). Workshops were held with the Board and the Senior Management staff to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT Analysis) that the plan should consider. A workshop was held with

- *Review background documents*
- *Review current operating environment – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, & threats*
- *Review Vision, Mission, Values and establish Goals*
- *Develop Strategies and Objectives*
- *Develop staffing and resource needs in conjunction with the Annual Budgeting Process*
- *Regularly update the Plan*

the Board of Directors on June 1, 2019 to verify the vision, mission, goals and values statements and review the four goals that set the framework for the strategies and objectives development by the management team. The Board adopted the plan on June 21, 2019.

The five-year Strategic Plan will be implemented and tracked through the Two-Year Budget process. Strategic Plan activities that are not budgeted in the Two-Year Budget (FY’s 2019/2020 and 2020/2021) will be budgeted in later years, subject to Board review and approval.



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### Vision Statement

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Our vision is to:

*“Maintain our community’s high quality of life through provision of valued water and sewer services”*



### Mission Statement

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Our mission is to:

*“Provide our customers with reliable, high quality water and sewer services featuring home town service, fiscal discipline and direct accountability”*

### Values

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EOCWD will embody the following core values in the setting and implementation of its policies and practices:

- Integrity and ethical behavior – EOCWD will consistently adhere to high moral and ethical principles
- Community – EOCWD will cooperatively work together and with stakeholders to further the mission and goals of the organization



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- Customer service – EOCWD will professionally and responsively serve the needs of its customers
- Respect – EOCWD will work with our stakeholders in a respectful, professional, and courteous fashion
- Disciplined (Fiscally and operationally) – EOCWD will be good stewards of the facilities, people, and financial resources entrusted to it
- Creative – EOCWD will encourage and value the introduction of new ideas and methods
- Transparent – EOCWD will engage its stakeholders and interact with them in a fair, open and honest manner

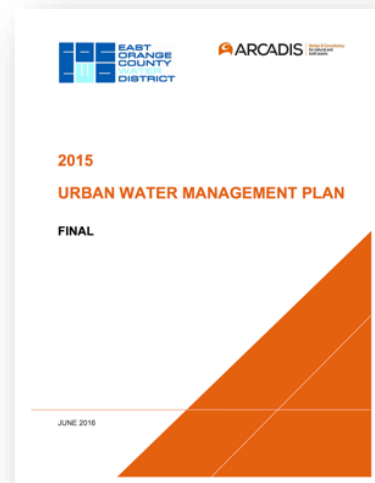


### Goals / Strategies / Objectives

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The Board developed goal areas that represent the key EOCWD commitments to the community it serves.

- **Goal 1: Water and Sewer Service Reliability** – EOCWD will provide safe, reliable, and environmentally-sustainable water and sewer services and infrastructure that meet the needs of the community
- **Goal 2: Community Representation and Engagement** – EOCWD will provide responsive local governance, value and outreach to the communities we serve





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- **Goal 3: Financial Integrity** – EOCWD will manage our financial assets to provide and maintain reliable water and sewer services
- **Goal 4: Professional Workforce** – EOCWD will maintain workforce expertise to ensure service quality, continuity, and reliability

Management and staff have identified specific strategies and measurable objectives for each goal area to ensure the proper actions are taken to fulfill the commitment implicit in the goal area. The strategies and objectives listed below encompass both current and new activities. The implementation of these strategies and objectives will be further detailed through specific memoranda.

### **Goal 1: EOCWD will provide safe, reliable, and environmentally-sustainable water and sewer services and infrastructure that meet the needs of the community**

#### **Strategy 1** – Operate the system to achieve service level standards

- Objective 1      Review service level goals with the Board
- Objective 2      Track service level goals and key performance indicators
- Objective 3      Meet the service level goals
- Objective 4      Operate the system using cost-effective principles

#### **Strategy 2** – Proactively comply with applicable environmental standards

- Objective 1      Provide 100% compliance with Safe Drinking Water Act standards
- Objective 2      Proactively engage in regulatory processes where appropriate
- Objective 3      Manage the sewer collection system to prevent or mitigate spills

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Objective 4 Abandon existing community septic systems and connect to the sewer collection system

Objective 5 Work with wholesale customers to resolve potential water quality issues



### **Strategy 3** – Develop an energy strategy

Objective 1 Implement and track the strategy

### **Strategy 4** – Increase wholesale water sales

Objective 1 Determine appropriate role of water treatment for EOCWD

Objective 2 Refine treatment plant financial and reliability benefits

Objective 3 Provide a decision pathway for board action including budget, grant strategy, and market analysis

### **Strategy 5** – Provide adequate backup supply for groundwater production

Objective 1 Assess required level of reliability

Objective 2 Implement solution

Objective 3 Implement well replacement project

### **Strategy 6** – Conduct planning to ensure reliable and high-quality water supply and implement appropriate policies and infrastructure

Objective 1 Develop an EOCWD Integrated Resources Plan that informs and integrates with the Master Plan

Objective 2 Develop additional appropriate water supplies if/as needed

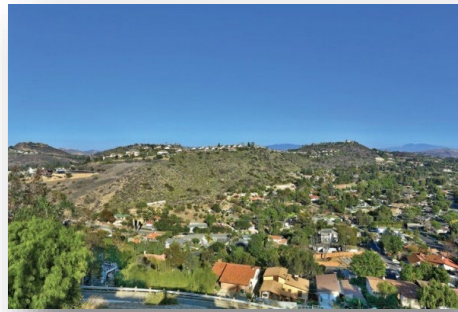
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- Objective 3     Develop a PFAS strategy
- Objective 4     Implement a stormwater plan
- Objective 5     Evaluate opportunities to enhance fire-protection consistent with EOCWD mission

### **Strategy 7** – Maintain active water conservation program

- Objective 1     Implement water conservation projects and programs to reflect the value of water and water service
- Objective 2     Leverage funding through regional, state & federal agencies
- Objective 3     Meet the water conservation requirements of AB1668/SB606 (e.g. enhance meter reading program to reduce outdoor and indoor water use)



### **Strategy 8** – Position EOCWD to respond to emergencies

- Objective 1     Update the emergency response plan
- Objective 2     Evaluate expansion of interconnections
- Objective 3     Procure key equipment (e.g. pumps, motors, large diameter repair clamps, etc.)

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Objective 4 Continue active participation in WEROC

Objective 5 Explore additional mutual aid agreements

Objective 6 Develop a facilities plan for the headquarters, treatment plant/reservoirs, and property recently acquired on N. MacPherson Road



**Strategy 9** – Ensure infrastructure is appropriately developed, designed, constructed, maintained, and replaced

Objective 1 Annually report on the operations and maintenance status of key assets

Objective 2 Report to Board on deferred maintenance and provide solutions

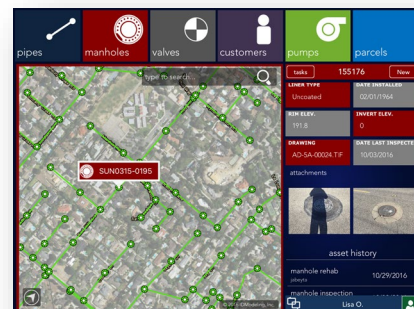
Objective 3 Develop a strategy for well replacement

Objective 4 Work with appropriate agencies to resolve Browning Avenue sewer reliability issues

Objective 5 Develop and implement a meter and valve replacement program

Objective 6 Update the valve exercising program

Objective 7 Update the hydrant program



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- Objective 8 Continue to implement the asset management program (e.g. conduct condition assessment program for District assets)



### **Goal 2: Community Representation and Engagement – EOCWD will provide responsive local governance, value and outreach to the communities we serve**

#### **Strategy 1 – Build alliances to support the interests of EOCWD**

- Objective 1 Implement the Communications Plan
- Objective 2 Work with associations/alliances to address small system challenges
- Objective 3 Work with EOCWD advocates in Sacramento and Washington DC to implement the District's legislative and regulatory policies
- Objective 4 Continue to have the Board actively participate in the governance of regional and state-wide organizations that can help address the community's water and wastewater needs
- Objective 5 Conduct an annual Citizens Advisory Committee meeting.



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### Strategy 2 – Streamline Board deliberations

- Objective 1 Evaluate and ensure there are adequate checks and balances and proper delegation of authority to the GM

### Strategy 3 – Maintain excellent customer service

- Objective 1 Develop measures to assess customer satisfaction
- Objective 2 Measure and report customer satisfaction



## Goal 3: Financial Integrity – EOCWD will manage our financial assets to provide and maintain reliable water and sewer services

### Strategy 1 – Ensure that adequate financial capacity exists to maintain District assets

- Objective 1 Manage within the budget (beyond emergencies)
- Objective 2 Receive an unqualified audit outcome each year
- Objective 3 Evaluate the adequacy of current insurance coverage
- Objective 4 Conduct a water and sewer cost of service study at five-year intervals

### Strategy 2 – Provide mutually beneficial water and wastewater services to area and contiguous utilities

- Objective 1 Examine opportunities for service expansion
- Objective 2 Conduct assessment of annual sewer system cleaning.



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**Strategy 3** – Ensure the District operations are efficient and effective

Objective 1 Track and report progress against selected key performance indicators

Objective 2 Resolve meter discrepancy issues at OC-70

**Strategy 4** – Implement the Strategic Plan

Objective 1 Track and report progress to the Board

**Strategy 5** – Organize and maintain policies

Objective 1 Maintain Board key policies binder and make accessible



### **Goal 4: Professional Workforce – EOCWD will maintain workforce expertise to ensure service quality, continuity, and reliability**

**Strategy 1** – Develop long-term strategy to retain staff

Objective 1 Assess staff morale on a periodic basis

Objective 2 Review and optimize staff recognition events

Objective 3 Engage a consultant to conduct a compensation study for key positions

Objective 4 Develop a succession plan with a focus on management positions

Objective 5 Assess internal capability to assume Operations Manager role

**Strategy 2** – Ensure that technology is appropriately deployed within the District

Objective 1 Develop a technology plan to optimize benefits and address security concerns

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Objective 2      Develop and implement a knowledge management strategy

Objective 3      Develop appropriate protocols for texting and email use



**Strategy 3** – Ensure staff training (including safety) and certifications are adequate to maintain capability

Objective 1      Track training activities

### Next Steps

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The plan is intended to be a living document and will be reviewed and updated annually to remain current. It will be used in planning and budgeting the activities of EOCWD. Formal “action plans” will be developed for some of the key strategies.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been established to measure progress against the Goals of the plan. These include:

1. of breaks per mile of pipeline# of hours customers are out of service
2. # of sewer spills
3. CIP dollars budgeted vs. actual expended
4. Number and nature of complaints
5. Demonstrated rising customer satisfaction (through surveys every few years)
6. Lost time accidents





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### Glossary

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The following key terms are used in this Strategic Plan:

**Action Plan** – a detailed set of tactical actions that will be developed in order for some of the strategies / objectives to be achieved

**Core Values** - non-negotiable standards that the staff and the Board believe in and embody how they will act individually and as an organization

**Goal** - EOCWD's commitment to the community it serves

**Mission** – the primary reason(s) for the existence of the organization

**Objective** - measurable work activity that, when accomplished, will directly lead to the success of the strategy

**Issue** - a problem or opportunity facing the EOCWD

**Strategy** - how an issue is solved to achieve the goal

**Strategic Plan** - a structured plan to drive EOCWD to achieve its goals

**SWOT Analysis** - description of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to identify areas of focus in the Strategic Plan

**Tactic** - specific work activities to accomplish a strategy

**Vision** - what EOCWD aspires to become