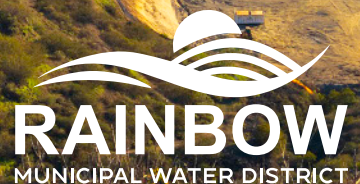




Rainbow Municipal Water District

Strategic Plan

2026-2030





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Board of Directors



DIVISION 1
Director Lisa Hoffman



DIVISION 2
Director Hayden Hamilton



DIVISION 3
Director Greg Irvine



DIVISION 4
Director Patti Townsend-Smith



DIVISION 5
Director Michael Mack



Message from the General Manager

The Rainbow Municipal Water District remains committed to delivering reliable, efficient services that meet the current and future needs of the community. Long-term planning is essential to fulfilling this commitment, enabling the District to proactively address emerging challenges, prioritize investments, and ensure the sustainability and resilience of its services over time.

The Board of Directors of the Rainbow Municipal Water District is pleased to present the 2026 update to the District's Strategic Plan. It represents a comprehensive refresh of the 2020 Strategic Plan and reflects a collaborative effort accomplished through a series of workshops that welcomed input from the public, District staff, and the Board of Directors.

Throughout the strategic planning process, we carefully considered both current and future challenges, including infrastructure needs, limited resources, and the needs of our diverse customer base. This thoughtful approach ensures that the Strategic Plan remains responsive and relevant in an ever-changing environment.

The updated Strategic Plan reaffirms the District's mission, core values, vision for the future, and strategic focus areas. It is designed to anticipate evolving operational, regulatory, environmental, and community needs, while providing clear direction and alignment with Board priorities. In doing so, it establishes measurable outcomes that will guide performance and accountability across the organization.

This Strategic Plan is intended to be a living, practical, and actionable document that will guide the District's efforts over the next five years and beyond. Its goals, objectives, and measurable actions will be integrated into the District's day-to-day operations to ensure meaningful progress and continued success.

We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to this collaborative effort and look forward to carrying this shared momentum forward as we work together for the betterment of the communities we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jake Wiley". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jake Wiley | General Manager

About the District

Since 1953, Rainbow Municipal Water District has provided water and wastewater services to support the growth and well-being of northern San Diego County. Governed by an elected Board of Directors and supported by dedicated, professional staff, the District serves the unincorporated communities of Rainbow and Bonsall, along with portions of Fallbrook, Oceanside, Pala, and Vista. The District focuses on delivering high-quality, reliable services designed to meet the current and future needs of the community.

To serve the community effectively, the District operates and maintains a comprehensive network of water and wastewater infrastructure. Currently importing 100% of its water through the Eastern Metropolitan Water District, the District places a high priority on supply reliability and long-term system efficiency. Daily operations focus on proactive maintenance to stay ahead of issues before they escalate, helping households, businesses, and agricultural customers receive dependable service with minimal interruption.

A major milestone for the District occurred in 2024 with the successful switch in wholesale water suppliers. Driven by a goal to protect customers from unsustainable wholesale water rate increases, this move highlighted the District's commitment to the community. Operating as a small and agile District, Rainbow Water is positioned to respond quickly to local needs and opportunities, and builds trust with the customer base through high-quality operations, well-managed resources, and a genuine commitment to service. By prioritizing responsible resource management and practical innovation, the District helps customers make informed decisions about their water use, ensuring a resilient water supply and serving the community as a trusted partner.

The District has a significant agricultural customer base, serving avocado and citrus groves, nurseries, and other agricultural operations. As the region continues to evolve and residential development increases, the District works to balance the needs of these long-standing farming operations with the evolving demands of households and commercial businesses.



Strategic Planning Process

A strategic plan is more than just a document, it is a critical roadmap for navigating evolving demands, building internal alignment, and demonstrating leadership to employees and stakeholders. This document builds on the successes of the 2020 Strategic Plan, offering an updated framework to guide the utility's efforts over the next five years and beyond.

At its core, the Strategic Plan serves as the vital link between Board priorities and day-to-day operations. When staff members clearly understand what the Board and community values, they can make decisions that actively support those goals. Ultimately, the Plan helps the District provide reliable services, use resources wisely, and prepare for the future.

This strategic planning process was designed to:

- Recognize and build on the successful outcomes of the previous plan
- Address how operational, regulatory, environmental, and community expectations continue to evolve
- Align the District's vision for the future with operational realities and staff capacity
- Provide a practical, actionable guide for resource allocation and decision-making

To ground the Plan in everyday realities, the District conducted an organizational assessment to review current operations and staffing. The findings from this assessment helped inform the development of the Strategic Plan.

The strategic planning process also included several key milestones:

- A kick-off meeting with the District's Management Team to identify goals for the process, understand progress related to the prior plan, and review key trends impacting the industry and organization
- Individual interviews with members of the Board and the Management Team, along with employee focus groups, to identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities for the updated Strategic Plan
- A foundation workshop with members of the Board and the Management Team to develop the updated framework and discuss a shared vision for the District
- An objectives workshop with the Management Team to discuss specific objectives and performance measures in support of each Strategic Focus Area



The resulting Strategic Plan is a straightforward, actionable guide designed to help the District meet tomorrow's needs while continuing to deliver excellent service today.

Strategic Direction

Vision

Cultivating customer confidence and community trust through responsive, efficient, and fiscally sustainable service.

Mission

To help our community grow and thrive by delivering exceptional and cost-effective water and wastewater services.

Values

Integrity: We act with strong ethics, honesty, and accountability, communicating openly and making decisions that build public trust while supporting responsible financial management, regulatory compliance, workplace safety, and resilient operations.

Professionalism: We treat others with respect, communicate clearly and consistently, and demonstrate the high-quality service, reliability, and customer focus expected of a public agency committed to safety, operational excellence, and continuous improvement.

Responsibility: We carefully steward public resources, follow through on our commitments, and proactively maintain the infrastructure, systems, and safeguards that ensure reliable service delivery, fiscal stability, and long-term community resilience.

Teamwork: We collaborate across departments, with our Board of Directors, customers, and partner agencies to openly share information, solve problems, advance technology and data-driven decisions, and support a culture where everyone contributes to high-quality service.

Innovation: We embrace new ideas, modern tools, and continuous learning, using data, technology, and creative approaches to improve efficiency, strengthen system resilience, enhance customer experience, and drive smarter decisions across the organization.



Strategic Focus Areas



Reliable Infrastructure

Build and sustain a resilient system through proactive infrastructure assessment and maintenance to ensure prioritized reinvestment and long-term service reliability.

Objectives:

- + Execute an infrastructure renewal and replacement program tied to asset criticality and remaining useful life, prioritizing pipeline and valve replacements
- + Implement a proactive, data-informed asset maintenance program
- + Proactively prevent and detect system failures
- + Upgrade the District's headquarters to provide a functional and modern workplace
- + Address aging infrastructure and capacity limitations in the downstream reaches of the wastewater collections system



Enterprise Resilience

Ensure safe and dependable services, mitigate risks and customer impacts, and expand our ability to navigate and recover from threats and disruptions.

Objectives:

- + Audit and improve the District's cyber posture to protect essential services from cyber-attacks and unauthorized access
- + Implement recommendations related to America's Water Infrastructure Act assessment, which requires water systems to evaluate vulnerabilities and develop emergency response plans
- + Update the emergency management and continuity plans to ensure a rapid, coordinated, and transparent response during service disruptions and other local emergencies
- + Explore and obtain alternate water sources to diversify supplies and protect the District's customers from climate and other risks
- + Conduct after-action reviews to drive continuous learning and improvement
- + Monitor and maintain water quality standards that meet or exceed regulatory requirements

Rainbow Water is committed to continuously improving infrastructure to meet the needs of our customers and prepare for water and sewer emergencies.



Sustainable Finances

Responsibly manage District finances with transparency and foresight, implementing creative funding strategies to keep rates stable and predictable, and infrastructure needs funded.

Objectives:

- + Minimize pressure on rate increases by identifying and growing non-rate revenue streams and other cost-savings measures
- + Provide an equitable and sustainable rate structure with multi-year rate planning that supports long-term infrastructure needs, anticipated community growth, and agricultural production
- + Practice transparent, proactive budget management that supports efficient, cost-effective service delivery and is validated by the GFOA Excellence Award annually
- + Clearly communicate financial performance, rate decisions, and budget priorities to build shared understanding and confidence in the District's long-term fiscal health
- + Build and maintain a target reserve fund level that meets the Board's defined targets



Trusted Leadership

Serve as a leader to our community, industry, and workforce by delivering exceptional service, building lasting partnerships, and employing best practices.

Objectives:

- + Strengthen trust by modeling honest, ethical, and accountable leadership at all levels
- + Develop regional and industry strategic partnerships that deliver efficiencies in service and lower costs to our customers
- + Practice consistent, open communication and actions that reflect the District's values and support exceptional, customer-focused service
- + Invest in Board and leadership development, including training and peer networking opportunities, to advance governance best practices and support informed, forward-looking decision making



Exceptional People

Cultivate a high-performance culture that empowers the workforce to grow, collaborate in decisions, and lead from every level to solve complex challenges to support a high level of public service.

Objectives:

- + Maintain a competitive total rewards package that supports recruitment and retention
- + Implement a formalized succession planning process that enhances career pathways and ensures continuity for critical positions
- + Foster a supportive culture where employees are encouraged and provided opportunities to contribute ideas
- + Invest in ongoing training and development that enhances career growth, customer service, and readiness to use modern technology



Purposeful Technology

Harness innovative ideas, modern tools, and integrated systems to detect problems faster, use data to drive decisions, and support efficiency and continuous improvement.

Objectives:

- + Implement integrated systems that enable cross-functional data sharing, including a major upgrade of the District's Enterprise Resources Planning software
- + Deploy technology to improve leak detection and reduce non-revenue water loss
- + Establish a performance metrics framework to track and transparently report on the District's effectiveness in core business areas
- + Identify and pursue measurable efficiencies through equipment, process improvement, and automation to support cost-effective service delivery
- + Equip employees to confidently adopt modern tools and make consistent, data-driven decisions
- + Establish clear data governance standards and systems to ensure accurate, accessible information supports operational planning and decision-making





Proactive Communication

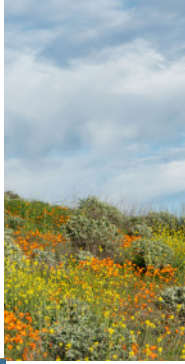
Deliver timely, clear, and accessible information that anticipates needs, strengthens transparency, and builds lasting trust with our community and workforce.

Objectives:

- + Enhance the multi-channel Customer Outreach Program by expanding customer interaction on modern media platforms
- + Build and maintain a communications infrastructure, including emergency notification systems, website updates, and social media protocols, that enables a timely, transparent, and reliable flow of information during both routine operations and emergencies
- + Increase internal communication and cross-departmental information-sharing to strengthen teamwork and support consistent messaging
- + Strengthen customer relationships through targeted engagement opportunities, including community events, educational workshops, and consistent outreach

Rainbow Water collaborates and shares information transparently to inspire stewardship and empower a resilient community and workforce.





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Plan facilitated by

