



# STRATEGIC PLAN: **ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**

Implementation: January 1 - December 31, 2025



# STRATEGIC DIRECTION

## Vision

To be a leader, an innovative clean water partner, and a great place to work.

## Mission

To protect the region's health and environment by cleaning water and recovering resources.

## Values



### EXCELLENCE

Continuously improving ourselves and our organization



### COLLABORATION

Sharing expertise, building partnerships, and innovating together to achieve our mission



### INCLUSION

Fostering an environment where all are welcome, valued, and respected



### INTEGRITY

Doing the right thing for the environment, our organization, and our people



# KEY RESULTS BY FOCUS AREA

## FOCUS AREAS

Each of Metro's three Pillars has two Focus Areas and associated desired results.



### Engagement and Outreach

- Improved understanding of community environmental, financial, and social priorities.
- Increased community awareness of Metro's value and resources.
- Cultivated community partnerships to discuss concerns, educate stakeholders, and promote mutual understanding.

### Water Partnerships

- Fostered effective relationships with connectors, elected officials, and regulators at all levels.
- Established foundation for addressing long-term regional water and environmental priorities.

### Employee Engagement and Growth

- Enhanced reputation as a top employer with a clear value proposition.
- Fostered engaged, empowered, and well-equipped staff.
- Provided tailored training to support employees' growth.
- Increased the diversity of our talent pool for Metro positions.
- Promoted intentional inclusion and collaboration in decision-making processes.
- Established clear organizational norms.

### Resource Optimization

- Increased the value of Metro's finite resources through innovation.
- Invested strategically to enhance Metro's position as the utility of the future.
- Maintained responsible and transparent financial management.

### Sustainability

- Defined internal sustainability objectives and implemented sustainable practices.
- Proactively engaged in regional environmental issues.
- Prioritized environmental impact analysis in project decisions.

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# IMPLEMENTATION

## APPROACH

Metro Water Recovery identified key results that could be achieved within each of its Pillars and Focus Areas. Each subsequent year, Metro will select projects aligning to Focus Areas with the highest potential to positively impact and move the organization toward achieving its desired results.

This report highlights each selected project, describing its impact, major milestones, resource needs, timeline, and ownership within the organization. To implement the projects, existing organizational processes for project management, such as including Metro Water Recovery's Phase Gates process, will be leveraged.

The projects highlighted in this report are not all inclusive of the work Metro Water Recovery is doing to achieve the desired results of each Focus Area. Additional projects and metrics are featured on Metro's website, <https://www.metrowaterrecovery.com/about-us/strategic-plan/>.



# Our People

Metro Water Recovery is a leader in attracting, developing, and engaging top talent who work together to foster an inclusive, professional, and productive work environment.

**Project:** Conduct an inclusion audit of Metro Water Recovery's current activities and develop a roadmap for future activities

**Focus Area:** Inclusion

**Key Result:** Clear organizational norms and expectations

**Project Impact:** TBD

**Executive Sponsor:** Mickey Conway – Chief Executive Officer

**Project Lead:** Colleen Dempsey – Chief Human Resources Officer

**Key Milestones:**

Action Items	Estimated Completion
<i>Post Statement of Interest and Qualifications</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Get approval of Business Case</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Select Consultant</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Conduct Audit</i>	<i>February 2025</i>
<i>Prioritize initiatives and actions</i>	<i>May 2025</i>

# Our People



Employee Engagement: 2024 Total Worker Health Fair



Employee Engagement: 2024 WEFTEC Operations Challenge – Double Duty



Employee Engagement: 2024 Employee River Clean-up



## Our Work

Metro Water Recovery delivers high-quality services by continuously innovating and investing in our processes while upholding the highest standards of safety, financial stewardship, and environmental sustainability.

**Project:** Asset Management (AM) Implementation

**Focus Area:** Resource Optimization

**Key Result:** Maintained responsible and transparent financial management

**Project Impact:** AM allows Metro Water Recovery to accomplish its mission through efficient management of its assets. By taking a proactive approach, AM enables Metro to focus efforts on maintaining the right assets at the right time. This significantly reduces the need for corrective maintenance.

**Executive Sponsor:** Sherman Papke – Chief Technical Officer

**Project Lead:** Perry Holland – Director of Comprehensive Planning

**Key Milestones:**

Action Items	Estimated Completion
<i>Develop Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP)</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Evaluate AM tools for the future needs of the SAMP</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Develop SAMP Implementation Strategy</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Cleanup and Integrate Asset Registers in NEXGEN (Enterprise AM Software)</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Complete NEXGEN configurations and integrations</i>	<i>April 2025</i>
<i>Complete NEXGEN staff training and Go-Live</i>	<i>July 2025</i>
<i>Compile remaining asset data and make asset documentation available digitally</i>	<i>December 2025</i>
<i>Finalize the AM Reference Manual and organization of AM Plan Teams (PAR 1405)</i>	<i>June 2026</i>

**For More Information:** [\[click here for last small projects update\]](#)

# Our **Work**



**Resource Optimization:** Asset Management Core Team, representing 75 staff in eight departments



# Our Work

Metro Water Recovery delivers high-quality services by continuously innovating and investing in our processes while upholding the highest standards of safety, financial stewardship, and environmental sustainability.

**Project:** Northern Treatment Plant (NTP) Process Modeling and Advanced Automation (PAR 1430)

**Focus Area:** Resource Optimization

**Key Result:** Invested strategically to enhance Metro Water Recovery's position as the utility of the future

**Project Impact:** The advanced digital technology evaluation and implementation for the NTP will support process optimization efforts with the intent to increase treatment performance, enhance data utilization, and improve plant operability while reducing operating costs. The digital solution will leverage data-driven technologies (e.g., digital twin models) to simulate complex control scenarios and provide recommendations and real-time insight to support operator decision-making. These technologies can be integrated with process modeling software and dashboarding platforms for continuous performance monitoring and automated reporting. With sufficient instrumentation and model calibration, the technology has potential for full automation of process operation, control, and optimization.

**Executive Sponsor:** Liam Cavanaugh – Chief Operating Officer

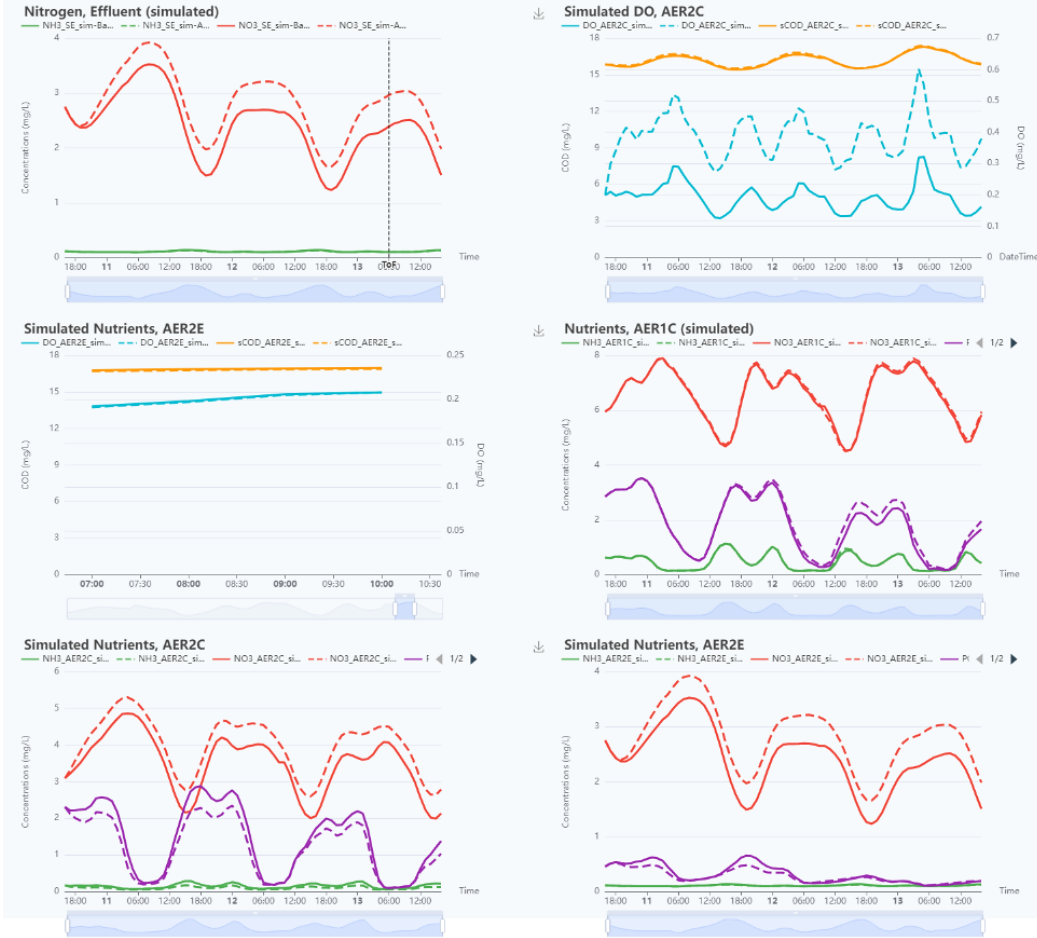
**Project Lead:** Aidan Travers – Staff Engineer

**Key Milestones:**

Action Items	Estimated Completion
<i>Establish goals and success criteria for advanced digital technologies</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Conduct market review through independent research and vendor meetings to further understand state of the industry and refine desired scope of services for potential digital technology provider(s)</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Procure the preferred digital technology provider and an Owner's Advisor to support the implementation of the digital solution(s)</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Refine the implementation roadmap with a detailed workplan and clearly defined criteria for project success</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Collaborate with internal and external stakeholders and subject matter experts to implement the digital solution</i>	<i>December 2024</i>
<i>Evaluate performance against success criteria and provide recommendations for future plant-wide implementation and/or expanded capabilities</i>	<i>June 2025</i>

**For More Information:** [\[click here for 2023 Fall Board Workshop presentation\]](#)

# Our Work



**NTP Process Modeling and Advanced Automation:** The NTP TwinPlant is designed to run custom operational scenarios which provide a comparison against baseline operation. The figure above shows the output of one such scenario, simulating how an increase in the dissolved oxygen in a BioReactor zone is projected to impact nutrients throughout the BioReactor zones.



# Our Work

Metro Water Recovery delivers high-quality services by continuously innovating and investing in our processes while upholding the highest standards of safety, financial stewardship, and environmental sustainability.

**Project:** Energy and Greenhouse Gas Management Program

**Focus Area:** Sustainability

**Key Result:** Prioritized environmental impact analysis in project decisions

**Project Impact:** Energy expenditure comprises a significant portion of Metro Water Recovery's annual operational budget. A systematic evaluation of energy efficiency measures is the first step to mitigating future energy costs. At the same time, rate payers, neighbors, and employees ask for a response to climate realities, along with regulatory developments which call for a responsible long-term strategic plan to secure access to a diversified, reliable energy source portfolio. Metro is in the unique position to recover large amounts of renewable energy resources for its own operation or in collaboration with community partners.

**Executive Sponsor:** Tanja Rauch-Williams – Chief Innovation Officer

**Project Lead:** Energy Manager (pending)

**Key Milestones:**

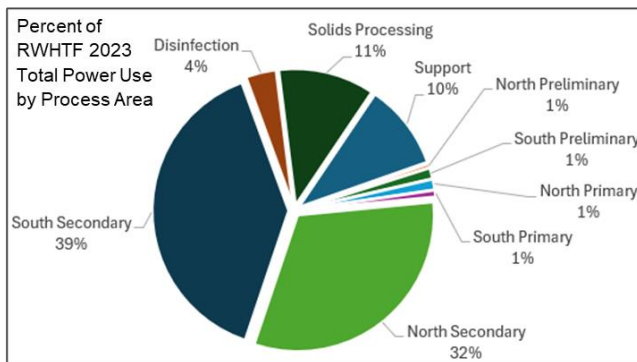
Action Items	Estimated Completion
<i>Compile existing and ongoing Metro-wide energy and greenhouse gas related projects, initiatives, and opportunities and involved staff</i>	Complete
<i>Develop "Energy Manager" job description for Metro</i>	Complete
<i>Conduct candidate search and interviews</i>	Ongoing
<i>Develop Energy Program Management work plan focused on large-scale heat recovery opportunities for Metro</i>	December 2024
<i>Support the implementation of the City of Denver and Xcel Energy's (Xcel) pilot system to decarbonize Xcel's steam district energy system with heat recovery</i>	Ongoing
<i>Facilitate organizational alignment related to energy efficiency, renewable energy, and greenhouse gas reduction objectives and strategies</i>	January 2025
<i>Support Metro's resources with external Energy Program Manager. Bring consultant(s) under contract.</i>	Ongoing, February 2025
<i>Assess achievable goals (i.e. energy efficiency, energy source diversification, reliability and resilience, air and greenhouse gas emission reduction)</i>	April 2025
<i>Compile, analyze, and visualize key energy metrics, build onto 2019 Energy Management Initiative</i>	June 2025
<i>Develop tactical workplan to implement energy and greenhouse gas related organizational goals and clearly defined criteria for project success</i>	September 2025

**For More Information:** [\[click here for the list of energy initiatives\]](#)

# Our Work



**Energy and GHG Management:** Wastewater Process Staff Engineer Nohemi Almaraz, is the technical lead for a pilot to use advanced aeration control for increased energy efficient air flows to the aeration basins.



**Energy and GHG Management:** Metro spends about \$7 million per year on electricity. Tracking the amount of electricity used by process area is fundamental to benchmarking, tracking, and improving efficiency measures.



## Our Work

Metro Water Recovery delivers high-quality services by continuously innovating and investing in our processes while upholding the highest standards of safety, financial stewardship, and environmental sustainability.

**Project:** Implement a Framework for the Organization of Employee-Driven Sustainability Practices

**Focus Area:** Sustainability

**Key Result:** Defined internal sustainability objectives and implemented sustainable practices

**Project Impact:** Recent employee surveys and input from Board members have highlighted a desire for Metro Water Recovery to take a systematic approach to continuous improvements towards sustainability practices. This project will create an organizational structure to facilitate the definition of sustainability objectives, identification of organization priorities, data collection and metrics benchmarking, and proposed timelines for the implementation of recommended sustainability initiatives among Metro employees.

**Executive Sponsor:** Tanja Rauch-Williams – Chief Innovation Officer

**Project Lead:** TBD

**Key Milestones:**

Action Items	Estimated Completion
<i>Project scoping</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Collect improvement suggestions from Metro employees</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Evaluate, organize, and classify suggestions</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Conduct facilitated meeting(s) to discuss findings and prioritize with interested Metro employees</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Solicit interested representatives for a Sustainability Committee</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Conduct meetings to formulate a Sustainability Plan summarizing recommended objectives and goals, drivers, key performance indicators, implementation and action plans, and resource requirements</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Summarize recommendations for Metro Leadership consideration</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Prioritize recommendations for implementation starting in 2025</i>	<i>January 2025</i>
<i>Facilitate consensus towards sustainability goals and metrics for Metro</i>	<i>April 2025</i>

**For More Information:** [\[click here for the list of Connector sustainability plans\]](#)



# Our Communities

Metro Water Recovery positively impacts the communities we serve by maintaining strong relationships, communicating effectively, and aligning with our communities' environmental priorities.

**Project:** External Engagement Framework Implementation

**Focus Area:** Outreach and Engagement

**Key Result:** Cultivated community partnerships to discuss concerns, educate stakeholders, and promote mutual understanding

**Project Impact:** Increased community, stakeholder, and cross-sector awareness through consistent engagement actions. Implemented processes for planning, tracking, evaluation, and continuous improvement. Expanded partnerships for community engagement. Increased alignment of external engagement throughout Metro departments. Understanding of regulatory/environmental issues that are a priority for the community.

**Executive Sponsor:** Dawn Ambrosio – Chief Strategy Officer

**Project Lead:** Anne Marie Boger – Community Engagement Liaison

**Key Milestones:**

Action Items	Estimated Completion
<i>Finalize action plan for implementation</i>	<i>February 2025</i>
<i>Create external engagement Metro work group</i>	<i>March 2025</i>
<i>Develop and implement external engagement tracking tool</i>	<i>March 2025</i>
<i>Develop, initiate, and analyze community survey</i>	<i>July 2025</i>
<i>Integrate Community Engagement Specialist into Process</i>	<i>April 2025</i>
<i>Complete external engagement discovery with impacted Metro departments</i>	<i>June 2026</i>
<i>Complete audience gap analysis-based current external engagement work</i>	<i>December 2026</i>
<i>Align external engagement findings with Community Engagement Program</i>	<i>December 2026</i>



# Our Communities

Metro Water Recovery positively impacts the communities we serve by maintaining strong relationships, communicating effectively, and aligning with our communities' environmental priorities.

**Project:** Regional Water Reuse Feasibility Study

**Focus Area:** Water Partnerships

**Key Result:** Established foundation for addressing long-term regional water and environmental priorities

**Project Impact:** This study will facilitate and guide Metro Water Recovery, Denver Water, and Aurora Water through a collaborative conceptual planning process to identify and evaluate potential future regional water reuse solutions. The study will identify strategic planning drivers related to water resource planning, water supply capacity projections, water quality considerations, reuse treatment scheme alternatives and associated infrastructure requirements, and stakeholder involvement in future planning efforts.

**Executive Sponsor:** Liam Cavanaugh – Chief Operating Officer

**Project Lead:** Dan Wcislo – Senior Wastewater Infrastructure Planner

**Key Milestones:**

Action Items	Estimated Completion
<i>Develop draft scope of work</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Develop intergovernmental agreements with Denver Water and Aurora Water</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Develop and issue request for proposals for consultant support</i>	<i>Complete</i>
<i>Define planning drivers and identify regional reuse alternatives</i>	<i>December 2024</i>
<i>Evaluate infrastructure needs and develop cost estimates</i>	<i>July 2025</i>
<i>Develop reuse planning roadmap and finalize study</i>	<i>November 2025</i>

**For More Information:** [\[click here for 2023 Fall Board Workshop presentation\]](#)

