



METRO
WATER
RECOVERY®



2025 YEAR
IN REVIEW

POWERED BY PEOPLE
Defined by Excellence



Welcome Message

Our mission is to protect the region's health and environment by cleaning water and recovering resources. Our work is built on a foundation of excellence.

To us, integrating excellence means:

Commitment to Quality:

Delivering high standards while continually improving efficiency, safety, and results.

Innovation and Continuous Learning:

Advancing performance through new ideas, technology, and best practices.

Accountability and Ownership:

Taking pride in our work and the shared impact on our community and environment.

Collaboration and Integrity:

Working transparently and respectfully to build trust within our team and community.

By embedding a culture of excellence into everything we do—from plant operations to community engagement—we not only meet today's challenges, but also set the standard for the future of clean water. The work we do is critical for more than 2 million people in our 817-square-mile service area and the 65 cities and local sanitation districts within the counties of Adams, Arapahoe, Denver, Douglas, Jefferson, and Weld we proudly serve.

While the 2025 Year in Review celebrates a year of success, our work continues, and so does our pursuit of excellence. It is a tremendous responsibility to uphold the mission of Metro Water Recovery (Metro) and we meet this responsibility with dedication, innovation, and diligence.

On behalf of our Board of Directors and dedicated employees, we hope this report conveys our steadfast commitment to excellence in pursuit of our mission.



Sarah Niyork
Board Chair



William J. "Mickey" Conway
Chief Executive Officer

Board Members in 2025

Curt Aldstadt, Westminster

Mike Barrett, Crestview

Cody Berg, Applewood

Clint Blackhurst, Brighton

Travis Bogan, Denver

Nadine Caldwell, Aurora

John Chavez, Berkeley

Jolon Clark, Denver**

David Councilman, Pleasant View

Deborah Crisp, East Lakewood

Clark Davenport, Northwest Lakewood

James DeHerrera, Aurora

Joe Drew, Wheat Ridge

Mary Gearhart, Denver

Joan Iler, Westridge

Andrew Johnston, Denver*

Janet Kieler, Denver

Craig Kocian, Arvada

Laura Kroeger, Lakewood

Bob LeGare, Aurora

Marena Lertch, Aurora

Martin Majors, Fruitdale

George Mazzotti, Jr., North Washington

Charlie Miller, Fort Lupton

Jamie Miller, North Table Mountain

Sarah Niyork, South Adams County

Jason O'Shea, Thornton**

Cat Olukotun, Aurora**

Josh Redman, Thornton

Thomas Roode, Denver

Robert Roth, Aurora*

Greg Sekera, Lakewood

Delbert Smith, Bancroft-Clover

Peter Spanberger, Denver

Mary Beth Susman, Denver

Dennis Towndrow, North Pecos

Scott Twombly, Thornton*

Dominic Vessa, Arvada**

Johnny Watson, Aurora**

Don Wick, Arvada*

Jennifer Williams, Denver

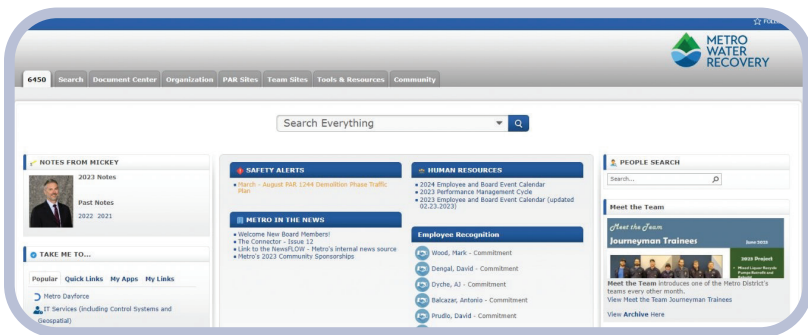
Ronald Younger, Denver

*retired during 2025; **joined during 2025

How Metro Reimagined its Digital Future

2025 was a milestone year for two major projects that revamped Metro’s digital infrastructure: the upgrade to a modern intranet called MetroNet and a revamped Asset Management (AM) Program that now utilizes NEXGEN, a computerized maintenance management system and asset management planning tool.

Recognizing the Need for Change

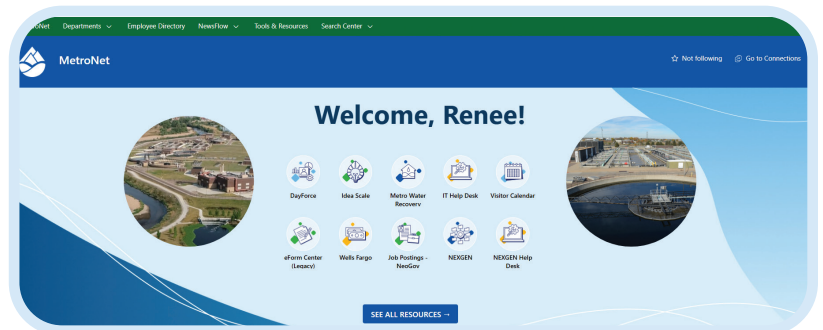


Metro’s intranet site prior to the MetroNet upgrade.

Jack Hennes (Communications Specialist Sr.) uses the new MetroNet.



“The organization gradually transitioned away from 6450.”
Pete Hulsey,
Senior IT Enterprise Architect Manager



The new MetroNet is modern and designed for employees to find resources quickly and easily.

Metro’s legacy intranet, known internally as “6450,” served Metro since 2015. A decade later, it was struggling to keep pace with how people actually worked.

“The organization gradually transitioned away from 6450,” Pete Hulsey, Senior IT Enterprise Architect Manager, reflected. Employees had begun shifting toward cloud tools and collaboration platforms, but the structure was not unified. Content was scattered across siloed SharePoint sites, workflows were aging, and forms were increasingly difficult to maintain.

Metro’s asset management tools were facing similar challenges. The organization relied on older versions of Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) software that struggled to integrate with newer systems or receive regular updates. Asset data was inconsistent, naming conventions varied, and critical information lived in disconnected applications.

Building Something New Together

Steering committees brought employees together to share what worked, what did not work, and what they wished their tools could do. “I never wanted it to be my project,” Hulsey added. “You tell us what you want to do, and we’ll tell you whether we can.”

That philosophy guided the implementation of MetroNet and NEXGEN.

Each project took roughly two years from concept to launch. Each required deep technical work, long meetings, and difficult conversations about changing processes. “There’s going to be a certain amount of pain to get there,” Perry Holland, Director of Comprehensive Planning, shared as the NEXGEN project was nearing completion. “But we’ll be better on the other side.”

Cleaning Up the Past to Power the Future

Before NEXGEN, asset data was fragmented and inconsistent. Some assets were not even in the system while others lacked preventive maintenance schedules or standardized naming.

“We had a bit of a mess with our assets,” Holland admitted. “We took a mess, cleaned it up, and then put it into NEXGEN.”

That cleanup was significant and is ongoing, but it also created a unified system connecting asset data and documentation, GIS, work orders, mobile tools, and third-party systems into a single experience.



Metro’s NEXTPERTS, who are power-users trained to support their respective teams.



Employees participate in user acceptance testing.

MetroNet and NEXGEN represent more than software improvements. They are investments in adaptability, collaboration, and long-term resilience. They are proof that infrastructure is not only pipes, pumps, and facilities; it is also data, systems, and the digital pathways that keep an organization moving forward.

OUR PEOPLE



Operations Challenge Fosters Growth and Leadership

Operations Challenge (Ops Challenge) represents more than a competition: it is a celebration of skill, teamwork, and pride. At Metro, Ops Challenge is a shared pursuit bringing employees together across disciplines, departments, and facilities. While Metro’s Ops Challenge teams—Elevated Ops and Double Duty—brought back first and third-place trophies, respectively, from this year’s Division I competition at the Water Environment Federation’s Technical Exhibition and Conference (WEFTEC), our proud competitors understand that the value of their work extends far beyond the score card.



Metro’s Ops Challenge teams celebrate their success at WEFTEC.

“You really get a stronger sense of everything that goes into the business of Metro because there’s a lot of different types of expertise.”

Lance Wenholz,
Transmission Operations Supervisor
and coach of Elevated Ops



Left to right: Mickey Conway (CEO), Liam Cavanaugh (Deputy CEO/COO), and Orren West (Director of Maintenance) chat during a break in competition.

Preparing for the competition requires months of practice. Participants push themselves to master complex technical tasks under pressure. Competitors learn the value of patience, precision, and adaptability, recognizing that success depends on trust and communication. Competitors also gain an understanding of how every role—from operators and engineers to lab staff and maintenance professionals—contributes to Metro’s mission.

Many employees describe Ops Challenge as transformative: it deepens their appreciation for the complexity of wastewater treatment, strengthens relationships with colleagues across Metro, and renews their passion for the mission of clean water.

“There’s a lot of camaraderie in this competition. You get to collaborate with people from other utilities across the world which provides an opportunity to understand their challenges and successes. I’m so happy to be a part of it for as long as I’ve been.”

Brenda Adams,
Principal Civil Engineer and coach of Double Duty



Top Three Spots

Rocky Mountain Water Environment Association (RMWEA) Sweeps the Top Three Spots at WEFTEC

2025 marked a milestone for not only Metro’s Ops Challenge teams, but also the region. At this year’s Division I competition at WEFTEC, the City of Westminster’s Sewerside Squad placed second, giving the Rocky Mountain Water Environment Association (RMWEA) a sweep of the top three spots at the international competition. This marked the first time that any region has ever swept the competition.



Josh Malloreoy (Transmission Operations Supervisor) and Jesse Turpin (Operations Supervisor) compete for Elevated Ops at WEFTEC.



Mark Hofmeister (Principal Civil Engineer) competes in the lab event at the Rocky Mountain Rivalry in 2024.



Diego Navarro (Environmental Health and Safety Specialist) and Adrian Quintana (Utility Equipment Operator VI) compete in the lab event at the Rocky Mountain Rivalry.

Hofmeister Named Board Chair Award Winner

Mark Hofmeister, Principal Civil Engineer, was named Metro’s 2025 Board Chair Award Winner – the 14th recipient of the award.

With 15 years of experience at Metro, Mark exemplifies professionalism. He seeks win-win solutions, takes on any assignment, mentors junior staff, and leads without seeking recognition.

The Board Chair Award honors employees who consistently exceed expectations, advance department goals, and foster a positive, collaborative workplace.



Left to right: Andy Nelson (Director of Engineering), Mark Hofmeister (Principal Civil Engineer), and Sarah Niyork (Board Chair).

Metro Honors First Green Belt Recipients



Kisha Ortiz

Transmissions Work Planner Senior

Metro’s Continuous Improvement (CI) Training Program empowers employees to drive meaningful change in their work areas. All staff begin with an introductory CI course that builds a foundation in CI and change management.

From there, employees can pursue optional White, Yellow, and Green Belt certifications, gaining hands-on problem-solving skills that translate into implemented improvements.

The Green Belt course—the program’s capstone—challenges participants to lead a large-scale project over six months. The first two employees to earn their Green Belt Certifications did so this year, marking a major milestone for the program.

Kisha Ortiz, Transmissions Work Planner Senior, earned her Green Belt for a project that sought to improve the accuracy and calibration of connector flow meters. The project has led to faster data validation and improved operational efficiency.



Rich MacAlpine

Laboratory Supervisor

Rich MacAlpine, Laboratory Supervisor, earned his Green Belt for a project that improved the workflow in the sample receiving area in Metro’s laboratory. His project has helped standardize processes and increase clarity of assignments.

Metro Recognizes Retiring Employees

Metro celebrated the retirements of numerous long-tenured employees in 2025. Their impact will continue to be felt for years to come.



Georgina Valadez

IT Infrastructure Analyst,
23 years of service

Georgina Valadez, IT Infrastructure Analyst

With nearly 24 years of service, Georgina's career is defined by adaptability, technical excellence, and unwavering support to Metro's people and systems.

Beginning her journey as a Microcomputer Specialist and eventually advancing to IT Infrastructure Analyst, she grew alongside rapidly evolving technology as she tackled complex challenges.

She leaves behind a powerful message for future employees: embrace growth, seize opportunities, and never stop learning.

Rob White, Fleet Maintenance Manager

Rob's career exemplifies dedication and leadership, beginning as a maintenance worker and advancing through five roles to eventually become Fleet Maintenance Manager.

From launching the Resource Recovery and Reuse (RR&R) Department's move to the new RR&R Biosolids and Fleet Services Building to supporting cost-saving programs like the TerraGator rebuild, he consistently combined technical expertise with strategic vision.



Rob White

Fleet Maintenance Manager,
39 years of service

OUR WORK



Innovation That Pays Off

Metro's Technology and Innovation Department (TID) led numerous efforts that not only reduced operating costs while providing a high standard of treatment but also added non-ratepayer revenue to the organization.

Monetized biogas attributes, grants, and chemical savings have reduced costs while optimizing treatment to meet permits.

Peracetic Acid Dosing Leads to Cost Savings

Peracetic acid (PAA) is a chemical used for final disinfection at the Robert W. Hite Treatment Facility (RWHTF).

Due to rising costs, TID and Operations developed new approaches to optimize dosing and save on chemical costs, which decreased chemical costs by approximately \$100,000 over two months.

PAA analyzers for real-time dosing control in both the North and South disinfection systems were also integrated.



New PAA dosing bins at RWHTF.

Cost Savings by the Numbers



\$390k

Grants



\$8.3 million

Monetized biogas attributes



\$919k

Combined potential annual chemical cost savings

Biogas Monetization Generates Millions



Metro registered its biogas production as a sustainable, traceable fuel under the European Union's International Sustainability and Carbon Certification.

Metro's digesters produce biogas with "environmental attributes" that can be monetized to support decarbonization goals.

Since project initiation in October 2023 through June 2025, Metro has received \$8.3 million from 1.2 million British thermal units of recovered biogas while simultaneously supporting international climate goals.

Magnesium Chloride Optimization Reduces Operating Costs

Metro spends more than \$10 million annually on necessary treatment chemicals.

Approximately \$3.4 million of that is allocated to centrifuge dewatering polymer and magnesium chloride ($MgCl_2$) for phosphorous recovery.

After leading a study on $MgCl_2$, Metro operated between 2023 to May 2025 at a magnesium dose of about 50 mg/L to efficiently precipitate phosphorous and minimize chemical use.

Polymer demand dropped by 30% during this period, resulting in an estimated potential annual savings of \$419,000. This $MgCl_2$ setpoint, however, resulted in increased nuisance struvite production. Additional optimization efforts are therefore currently ongoing that aim to optimize chemical and maintenance costs.



Metro's MagPrex™ phosphorous recovery reactor at RWHTF.

Metro Expands Network Through Historic Tie-Ins

When construction of the Second Creek Interceptor was completed in 2024, the newly built 17.5-mile interceptor allowed multiple jurisdictions to connect their flows to the Northern Treatment Plant (NTP) via gravity. The City of Aurora, City and County of Denver, and Denver International Airport were the first to connect.



Second Creek pipeline construction.

South Adams County Ties into Second Creek Interceptor

South Adams County Water and Sanitation District made history in 2025 by connecting to Metro’s system at two locations – a 10-inch line near 88th Avenue and Tower Road and a 36-inch line at Henderson Road and 124th Avenue.

The connections enabled the decommissioning of a major lift station and added approximately 2 million gallons per day (MGD) to the interceptor system.



A pipe is lowered into place during construction.

Fort Lupton Connects to South Platte Interceptor

Separate from Second Creek connections, the City of Fort Lupton connected with the South Platte Interceptor, just south of NTP.

Fort Lupton plans to decommission their treatment facility and pump their flows about 8 miles south to the new connection.

While a permanent force main is under construction, NTP is already receiving the city’s flows via bypass pumping.



Pipes await their placement during the project. All images courtesy of Garney Construction.

Modernizing a Critical Link

The old Thornton-North Washington Lift Station has delivered flows from the South Thornton Interceptor and two North Washington Street Water and Sanitation District interceptors through a mile long force main to the RWHTF for over 55 years. Constructed in 1967, the station is now corroded and in disrepair.

In partnership with Stantec and PCL Construction, Metro broke ground in September 2022 to build a new South Thornton Lift Station near York Street and 74th Avenue in Denver. Nearing completion, the new facility will improve reliability, redundancy, safety, and maintenance while reducing risk of sewer overflows.

The structure is designed to withstand 100-year flood conditions. Construction required excavation more than 50-feet deep and continuous dewatering due to its location within a floodway near the confluence of Clear Creek and the South Platte River.

The project team poses for a photo during the groundbreaking ceremony for the new lift station.



Metro Board members tour the facility during construction.

A Breakthrough Year at the METROGRO Farm



A combine harvests wheat at the METROGRO Farm.



Jason Zimbelman (METROGRO Farm Administrator) inspects grain while it is being dumped into a conveyor system.

This year marked the second-largest wheat harvest in history at our METROGRO Farm, with an impressive 521,000 bushels produced. The 52,000-acre dryland farm beneficially reuses Class B biosolids known as METROGRO® Cake, turning a resource recovery program into productive agricultural success.

After several difficult seasons marked by drought, excessive rain, delayed harvests, and crop damage from wind, hail, and sawflies, 2025 delivered a long-awaited turnaround. Despite early concerns about limited snowfall, timely rains in April and May strengthened the crop, and sawfly damage declined significantly. Yields reached approximately 40 bushels per acre across 13,000 acres, which is more than double last year's 18 bushels per acre.

This season also brought technological progress. Wi-Fi installation at the grain house, previously unavailable due to the farm's remote location, enabled real-time monitoring of grain bin levels and maintenance alerts.

OUR COMMUNITIES



Building the Next Generation of Clean Water Professionals

Through job shadowing, internships, and an innovative doctoral partnership, Metro works with local high schools and universities to build workforce pathways, expand industry awareness, and provide students with real-world experience that strengthens our organization.

Internships and Job Shadowing Develops the Next Generation

Metro supports future clean water professionals through job shadowing and internship programs that provide high school and college students with hands-on industry experience.

Launched in 2023 through Metro’s partnership with Arvada West High School’s Water Quality Advisory Committee and Career and Technical Education pathway, the program prepares students for careers—including the Class D Operator license—and has hosted about 50 students who learn directly from Metro engineers, operators, scientists, and other staff.



Jordan Parman (Water Quality Scientist Senior) is joined by Arvada West High School students along the South Platte River while sampling for periphyton (attached algae).

PhD Partnership Ushers in New Era of Collaboration

Metro partners with Colorado State University to host doctoral students who conduct long-term research at Metro facilities while earning their PhD and addressing key challenges in the clean water sector.

Metro welcomed its first PhD student, Michael Evans, who is working closely with the Technology and Innovation Department to explore refractory organic nutrients (forms of nitrogen and phosphorus not fully removed through traditional treatment). By integrating university expertise with Metro’s data, facilities, and technical resources, the collaboration creates a unique platform for innovation.

River Cleanup Marks Milestone for Community Engagement

In August, Metro partnered with The Greenway Foundation to co-host a Community Volunteer Day to restore Globeville Landing Park, a vital green space along the South Platte River. The milestone event was Metro’s first river cleanup open to the public.

34 Volunteers—including Metro employees and members from the community—rolled up their sleeves to remove 400 pounds of trash.



Metro employees pose for a photo during the Community Volunteer Day at Globeville Landing Park.



Breana Winters (Community Engagement Specialist) addresses volunteers before the cleanup.



Volunteers collect debris along the banks of the South Platte River.

Metro Co-Hosts Salinity Summit

Salinity levels—also known as total dissolved solids—are rising in Colorado waterways, creating growing challenges for water users and resource managers. Metro partnered with Denver Water and Aurora Water to host the Regional Salinity Summit, bringing stakeholders together to explore collaborative solutions.

The Summit brought together people from government agencies, water utilities, nonprofits, advocacy organizations, and academic institutions to generate collaborative solutions to manage salinity. Participants focused on understanding regional challenges along the Front Range and learning how other areas have approached salinity mitigation.



Janet Kieler (Board Director-City and County of Denver) addresses the audience during a panel at the Salinity Summit.



Mickey Conway (CEO), addresses the audience.

Employee-Driven Art Contest Showcases Mission



Metro employees are joined by community leaders for an informal ribbon-cutting ceremony in front of the wrapped utility cabinet in Edgewater.

Metro’s infrastructure includes numerous above-ground utility cabinets throughout its service area that have weathered years of sun exposure and graffiti. To address this challenge, an employee proposed a creative solution to beautify the boxes.

Michael Carney, Utility Equipment Operator III, submitted the idea through Metro’s Ideas at Work program, launching an employee art contest. Staff were invited to submit original artwork, with the winning design displayed on a utility cabinet at West 26th Avenue and Sheridan Boulevard on the border of Wheat Ridge and Edgewater.

Britta Schmitt, Operations Work Planner, won the contest with her artwork featuring two egrets. Her design was installed as a vinyl wrap in September and includes a QR code directing viewers to Metro’s website to learn more about its work and environmental stewardship.

“Now that the vinyl wrap has been installed, the project team is monitoring the pilot cabinet to assess the wrap’s ability to reduce graffiti and increase awareness of Metro’s work.”

Breana Winters,
Community Engagement Specialist



A contractor applies the vinyl wrap to the utility cabinet.



The completed and wrapped cabinet showing Schmitt’s artwork.

Community Survey Highlights Progress

Building on a 2022 survey that identified gaps in brand awareness, Metro partnered with Corona Insights to conduct another community survey with the goal of assessing progress and to better understand community values, priorities, and knowledge of Metro’s work.

The bilingual (English and Spanish) survey was distributed to a random sample of 15,000 residents across our service area and received 693 responses.



Left to right: Anne Marie Boger (Community Engagement Liaison), Scott Pruett (community member), and Breana Winters (Community Engagement Specialist) pose for a photo during the Deer Trail Rodeo.

Key takeaways:



Brand Awareness

15% (2022) » 18% (2025)



Community Sentiment

Mostly positive or neutral



Community Priorities

Water issues rank higher than other societal concerns



Communication

Metro’s channels align well with community preferences



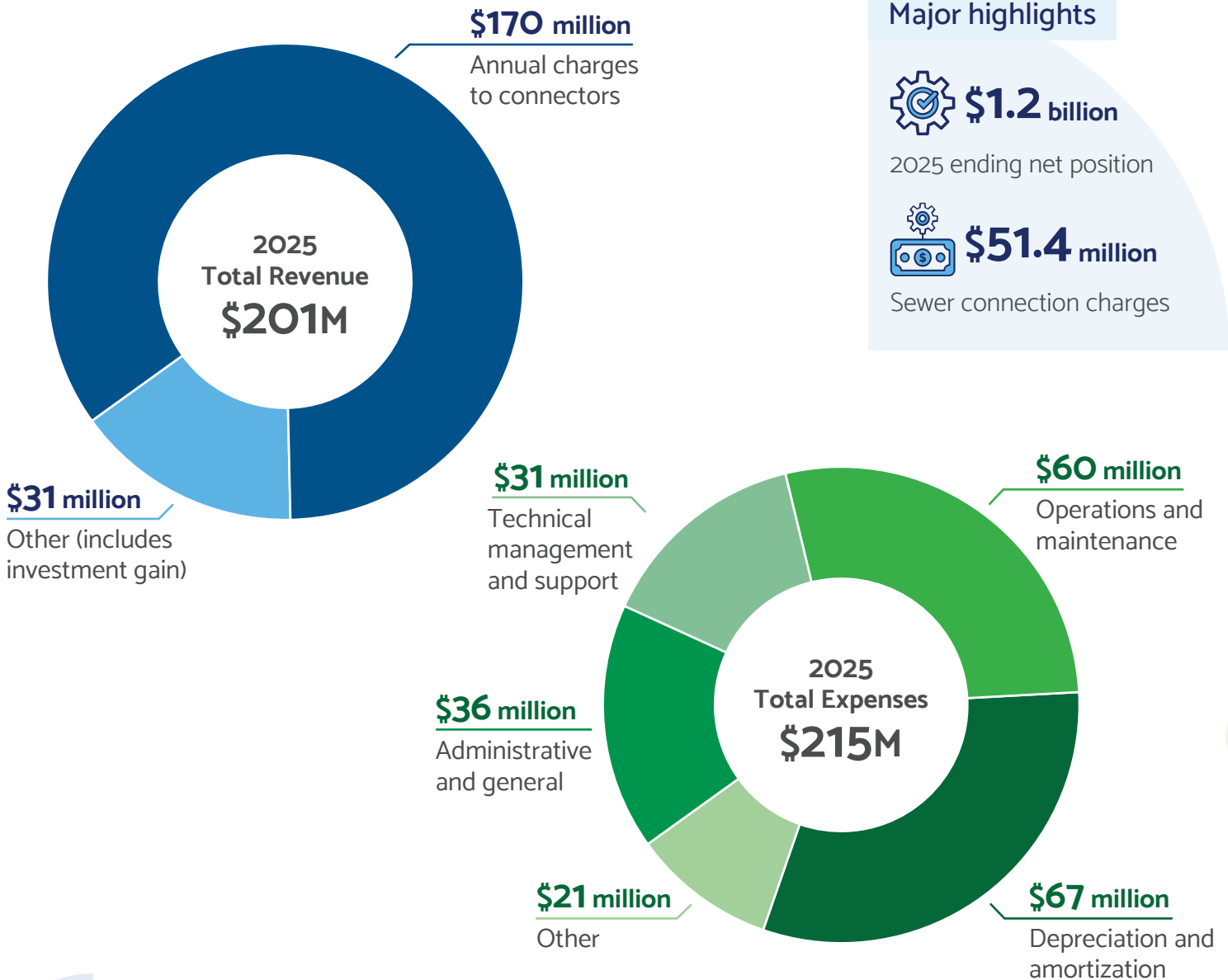
Anne Marie Boger (left) interacts with local Girl Scouts during a community event.

Looking ahead, Metro will expand bilingual education, strengthen community partnerships and sponsorships, and pursue targeted outreach to build brand awareness, improve public sentiment, and clarify our role.

Financials Overview

Metro ended the year in a strong financial position. Metro employees continue to optimize resources to keep costs as low as possible despite ongoing economic uncertainty.

To successfully perform our mission, Metro must construct and maintain reliable infrastructure by sustaining current systems, replacing aging assets, and adding new assets to address changing regulatory requirements. To that end, Metro is expected to spend over \$1.3 billion on capital asset replacement and new construction over the next ten years.




Metro’s investments in infrastructure continue to deliver excellence and reliability. One example is the completed construction of the Electrical Transmission Service Substation in 2025. This project delivers a reliable onsite power source to RWHTF to ensure consistent operations.

As Metro plans to spend more than \$1.3 billion on capital assets through 2036, we are planning bond issues in 2026 and 2030. Metro’s long-term debt at year-end was \$517 million, and its credit ratings are excellent: Standard & Poor’s AAA and Moody’s Aa1.

Capital expenditures in 2025

 **\$45 million**
Electrical Transmission Service Substation


 **\$27 million**
RWHTF Biogas Utilization


 **\$10 million**
North Secondary Upgrades


 **\$5 million**
Peracetic Acid Disinfection System


 **\$25 million**
Other Projects

Capital assets

 **\$1.5 billion**
Total net capital assets


 **\$55 million**
Increase in net capital assets


 **\$1.3 billion**
Plant in service

 **\$790 million**
Vehicles and equipment

 **\$214 million**
Construction in progress

 **\$52 million**
Land, land improvements, and water rights

 **\$13.3 million**
Right-to-use equipment

 **\$841 million**
Depreciation and amortization



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