# Sustainability Plan Progress Report

## Goleta Water District Sustainability Plan

## 2025-2026







GOLETA WATER DISTRICT

# District Mission

*To provide a reliable supply of quality water at the most reasonable cost to the present and future customers within the Goleta Water District.*




## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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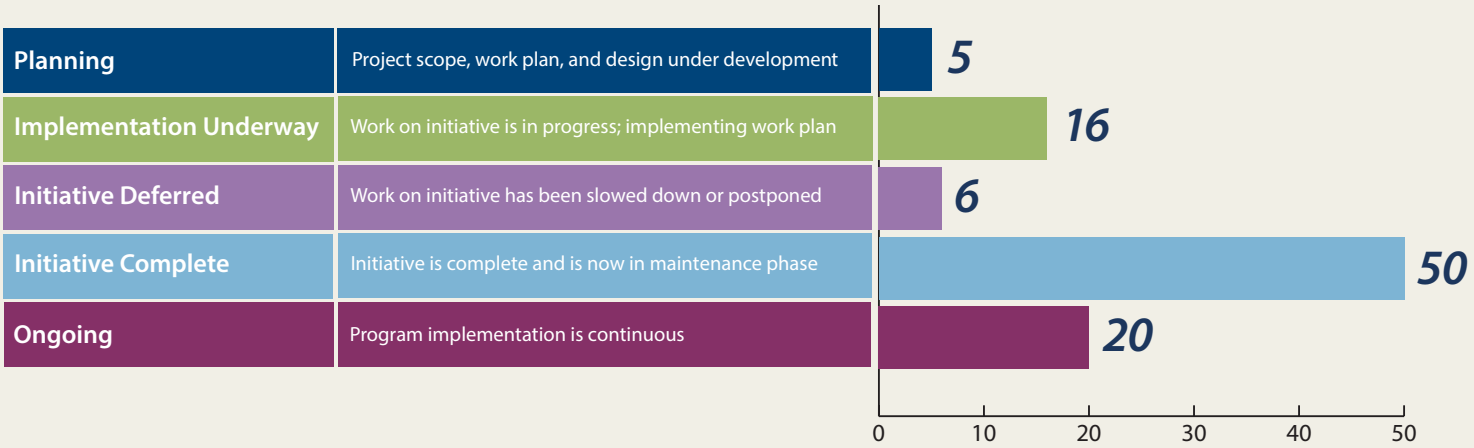
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***Sustainability** is commonly defined as the responsible management of economic, environmental, and social resources to meet the needs of present and future generations.*

## Initiative Implementation Progress Status Overview

The bar graph below provides a snapshot of the 97 Goleta Water District Sustainability Plan initiatives in each stage of progress.*




*A comprehensive list of the initiatives that have been included in the 2025-2026 Sustainability Plan and their relative status is provided on pages 30-33.

# INTRODUCTION

## INVESTING IN RESILIENCY

FY 2025-26 marked the first year of the Goleta Water District's (District) new five-year Financial Plan and ambitious 2025-30 Infrastructure Improvement Plan (IIP), with progress made on several once-in-a-generation projects. Despite unanticipated tariffs and increased contractor costs, the District delivered an impressive $19 million in capital investments this fiscal year, as originally budgeted. The most significant of these projects included the drilling of the second new well in more than 40 years and completing significant portions of the critical Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system upgrade.

In response to tariff-related cost increases and inflation driven by the turbulent global economic environment, the District pursued alternative funding strategies to make rates go further. These efforts included seeking ultra-low-interest rate financing through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loan Program for six projects totaling nearly $21.25 million, with an additional $3.75 million in grant funding. Using grants, strategic low-cost financing, and significantly expanded in-house capabilities allows the District to make critical investments more cost effectively and maximize the value of customer investment in the system. Taken together, these efforts represent more than business as usual – they reflect a fundamental shift in how the District approaches investment, cost management, and long-term sustainability.

In the year ahead, the District will continue the critical work of upgrading pipelines, pumps, and treatment facilities, while advancing projects that reduce energy use and operating costs and support the Board's Net Zero Initiative. Installation of more than 1,800 high-efficiency solar panels at three District facilities is currently underway, and staff will self-install two in-pipe hydroturbines to generate renewable energy from the water distribution system. At the same time, the District will continue working to deliver an ambitious capital program amid tariff uncertainty, inflationary cost increases, and shifting policy and funding priorities at all levels of government. Remaining adaptable, flexible, and resilient will be essential to managing these challenges while continuing to invest in reliable infrastructure, control costs, and deliver long-term value to the Goleta Valley.



**The District's commitment to sustainability is evident in every project it undertakes, from advancing new technology to implementing innovative solutions that secure the Goleta Valley's water future.**

## Plan Organization

- ***Introduction*** reflects on the District's progress implementing the Sustainability Plan, including highlights of sustainable outcomes from initiatives implemented over the last year.
- ***Guiding Principles*** describes how the three original Guiding Principles have taken on new meaning in a changing service delivery environment, and identifies District strategies for producing outcomes consistent with the Principles going forward.
- ***Strategic Investment Across the District*** illustrates how District initiatives produce sustainable benefits, including annual performance highlights from previously established initiatives, and new initiatives planned or underway. This section is organized under three distinct service delivery categories:

    1. **Customer Service and Business Operations**
    2. **Administration Buildings and Fleet Management**
    3. **Water Supply, Treatment, and Distribution System**

- ***Progress at a Glance*** provides a summary of all District Sustainability initiatives, organized by service delivery category, as well as the Guiding Principle(s) with which initiative outcomes align (i.e., economic, environmental, social).

# 2025-2026 HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE



**Cyber Security Improvements –** The District continued strengthening its cybersecurity in FY 2025-26. Proactive security measures and system isolation protocols were implemented to protect the Geographic Information System (GIS) from external threats and reduce vulnerabilities, which required the District to redevelop several operational workflows. The District also deployed a managed detection and response solution to enhance threat monitoring, detection, and incident response capabilities. Additional security controls included improved email security and filtering, tighter system integration, and a comprehensive review of administrative access to District servers to further reduce cybersecurity risks. Together, these improvements strengthen the security and resilience of the District's technology systems, protect critical information, and help support reliable and uninterrupted water operations.

**Headquarters Roof Replacements –** Completed replacement of the District Headquarters roof using high-performance shingles designed to reflect more of the sun's rays and reduce heat absorption. The new roofing helps keep the building cooler and reduce energy costs while meeting California's Cool Roof requirements. The shingles also provide enhanced fire and impact resistance, supporting a durable, long-lasting roofing system. This investment improves the sustainability and resilience of District facilities by increasing energy efficiency and reducing long-term maintenance needs.



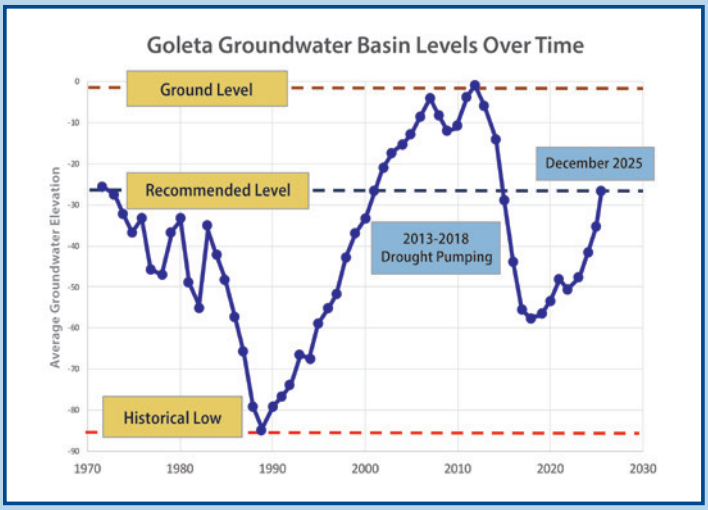


**Ongoing SCADA Implementation –** Continued a once-in-a generation modernization of the District's Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system, the "central nervous system" of water operations, that provides operators with real-time data from treatment facilities, reservoirs, wells, pump stations, and other field sites to monitor and control water production and delivery around the clock. During FY 2025-26, the District transitioned the Corona del Mar Water Treatment Plant (CDMWTP) and more than half of the District's remote facilities to the new system. The upgrade strengthens system reliability and gives operators better tools to identify changing conditions, respond to operational needs, and optimize water delivery. Improved data and automation also increase efficiency, conserve resources, and reduce labor and operational costs, supporting sustainable infrastructure management and reliable water service for current and future customers.

# 2025-2026 HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE

**2025 Urban Water Management Plan Update –** Completed the required five-year update to the District's Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), including the Water Shortage Contingency Plan. The UWMP evaluates projected water demand, available supplies, conservation, and the District's ability to meet customer needs through 2050 under normal and drought conditions, while accounting for climate change and future community needs. The plans support sustainable water management by balancing future supplies and demand, promoting efficient water use, and ensuring the District is prepared to respond to drought and other potential challenges to water supply reliability.




**Goleta Groundwater Basin Levels –** The Goleta Groundwater Basin, a critical drought buffer for the community, has recovered to levels not seen in more than a decade. Recent USGS measurements indicate the basin has fully recovered from the last drought, surpassing 1972 groundwater levels for the first time since 2011. Three significantly wet winters have supported this recovery and created opportunities to store water for future droughts. The District is one of the few California water agencies permitted to actively recharge its groundwater basin through injection. The graph on the left shows groundwater level changes dating back to 1972, with a sharp decline in levels during the most recent drought and recovery beginning in 2019.

**Minimizing Costs and Making Rates Go Further –** Because the District is funded entirely by customer rates rather than tax revenue, controlling costs and maximizing the value of every dollar is essential. In FY 2025-26 the District saved more than $1.1 million by completing work in-house, reusing or reconfiguring materials, and identifying cost-effective approaches to capital projects. The District also actively pursued outside funding to reduce the cost of critical infrastructure investments, securing placement on the fundable list for $21.25 million in ultra-low-interest Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) loans for six projects, along with a $3.75 million grant for the Mariposa Well Treatment System. Staff further reduced costs by completing the necessary technical, financial, and environmental reports necessary for three of the six projects in-house, helping maximize customer dollars and minimize pressure on rates.



# Guiding Principles

The District's Sustainability Guiding Principles are a central component of upholding the District's mission to provide a reliable supply of quality water at the most reasonable cost to present and future customers. Developed to embrace the three components of sustainability – economic, environmental, and social – the guiding principles provide the foundation for actions that support a sustainable service delivery model. Even as the District faces new challenges and opportunities in an evolving service delivery environment, key initiatives that put the Guiding Principles into action will help the District continue to achieve outcomes that provide economic, environmental, and social benefits.

## Economic Principle

### Enhanced value creation and service reliability for District customers

The District's water service delivery and daily decision-making will consider sustainable approaches that create value for District customers now and into the future. Strategic infrastructure investments, cost-effective business operations, and water supply management can help ensure the highest level of reliable service.

## Environmental Principle

### Resource stewardship, adaptability, independence, and emergency preparedness

The District will position itself for greater independence and emergency preparedness by reducing reliance on external inputs including electricity, natural gas, and petroleum-based fuels, while simultaneously increasing reliance on locally controlled sources of water. These actions will help protect the District from impacts associated with global climate change, local weather extremes, and other hazards, and will help the District move toward carbon neutrality.

## Social Principle

### Healthy communities and productive work environments

As a provider of a lifeline resource, the District will support healthy communities through the provision of quality water to the public and a governance structure that supports civic involvement and public transparency. Additionally, daily actions and work environments will consider the enhancement, productivity, and safety of the District workforce while making positive contributions to the well-being of the community.

# How it Works







## *Strategies for producing outcomes consistent with the Economic Guiding Principle include:*

- Create pathways for alternative revenue sources and funding streams.
- Maintain, rehabilitate, and improve infrastructure and processes at the Corona del Mar Water Treatment Plant (CDMWTP).
- Target critical investment in the groundwater basin and well infrastructure.
- Mitigate water supply risks, preserve potable supplies, and seek out alternative sources of local water supplies.
- Implement programs that minimize water loss, maximize accounting of water use, and keep pace with technological advances.

## *Strategies for producing outcomes consistent with the Environmental Guiding Principle include:*

- Maintain, replace, and improve the efficiency of the District's water distribution system and mechanical equipment.
- Improve the sustainability of the District fleet and heavy equipment.
- Minimize the environmental impacts of District administrative operations through employee education, building retrofits, and other property improvements.
- Explore and invest in renewable energy installations, including solar and hydropower.
- Ensure the District's preparedness for natural disasters and other unplanned emergencies.

## *Strategies for producing outcomes consistent with the Social Guiding Principle include:*

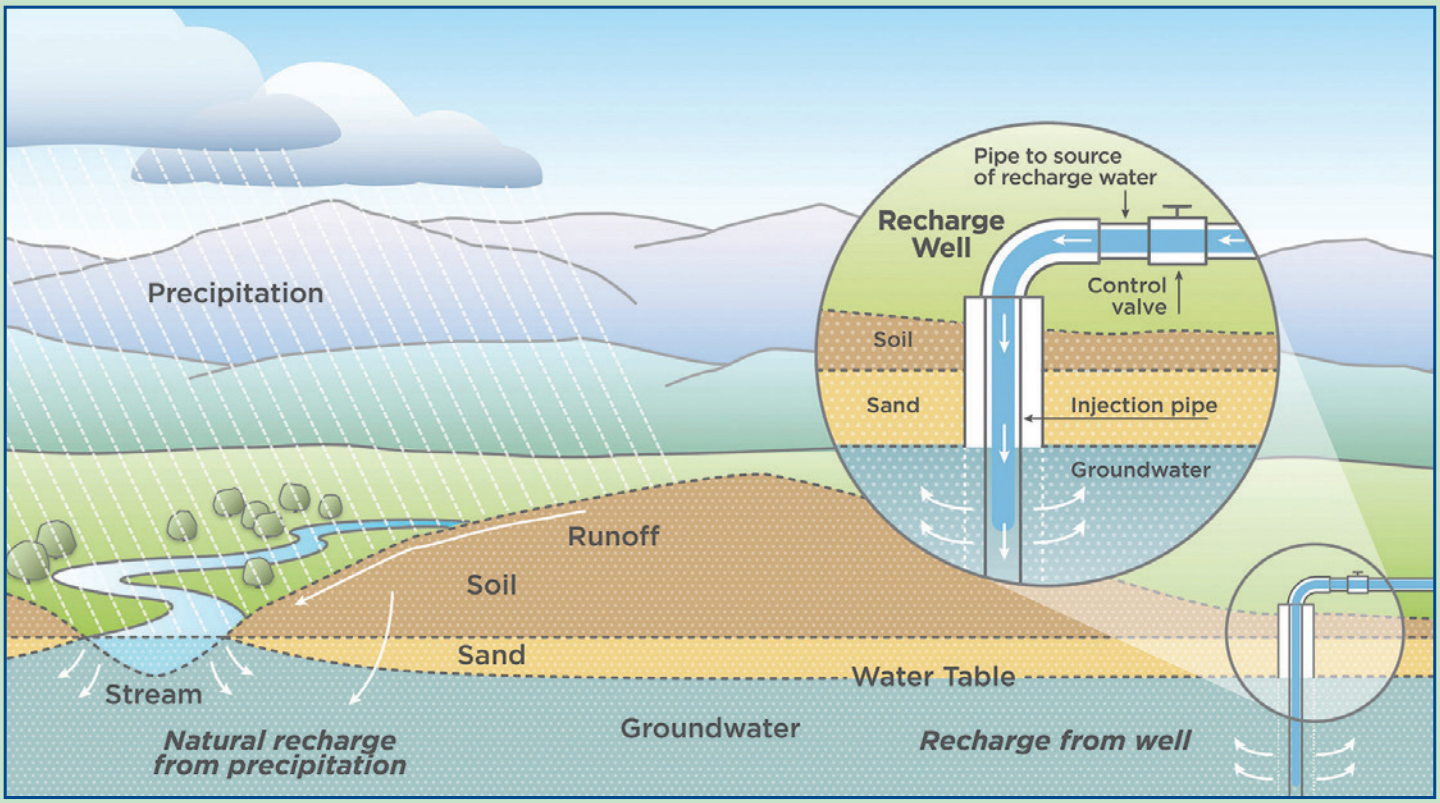
- Ensure the ongoing delivery of safe, clean water supplies to protect the health and safety of the community.
- Maintain community education and public engagement.
- Offer a suite of rebate and incentive programs to promote water conservation by District customers.
- Enhance the safety, well-being, and productivity of the District workforce.
- Continuously enhance customer service and provide customers with convenient ways to interact with the District.

# Fully Recharged

## Storing Water in the Ground for Drought and Emergencies

In FY 2025-26, the Goleta Groundwater Basin, a critical local source of supply for the community, recovered to levels not seen in more than a decade. Basin measurements confirm that levels are now above the critical 1972 levels established in the Wright Judgment that set the legal framework for basin management. The Goleta Water District has one of the oldest Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) programs in the state and is one of the few California water agencies permitted to actively recharge its groundwater basin through injection. Lake Cachuma has spilled three times in the last four years, allowing the District to reduce groundwater pumping and inject 2,365 acre-feet (AF) (770 million gallons) of surface water since 2023 through the ASR program, helping to replenish underground water supplies for use during droughts or other emergencies.

## What is Groundwater Recharge?




Groundwater basins are naturally recharged through rainfall, surface water infiltration, and seepage from adjacent soils and rock formations. Groundwater injection enhances natural recharge while maximizing use of available supplies.




# Strategic Investment Across the District

## Key Initiatives

Meeting short-term production targets and long-term sustainability goals requires strategically balanced investment in all areas of District service delivery. As a water provider, an obvious focus and investment priority is the **water supply, treatment, and distribution system** that delivers water to over 87,000 people in the Goleta Valley. In addition to water supplies, smart investments are made across all categories of District operations, from its daily **business operations and customer service** to the long-term maintenance of its **administration buildings and fleet** of vehicles and heavy equipment. The pages that follow provide summaries of initiatives the District is undertaking that fit within the framework of the Sustainability Plan, as well as notable outcomes from existing initiatives that align with the Guiding Principles. Looking ahead, new projects and ongoing activities associated with existing initiatives will provide improvements needed to meet new regulatory requirements, while offering economic benefits in the form of reduced energy costs, minimizing impacts to natural resources, and supporting a healthy community.

# Customer Service and Business Operations

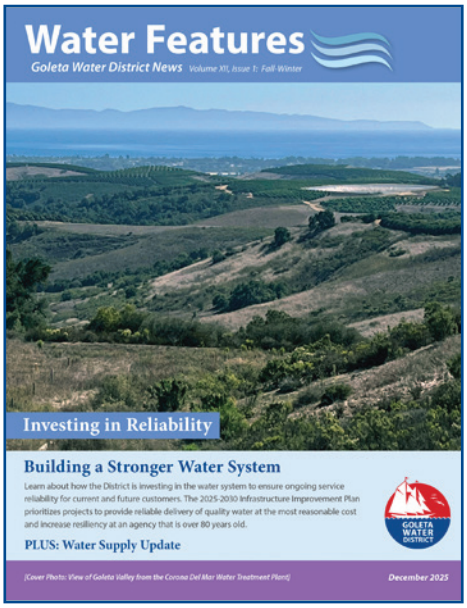
This category incorporates sustainability into everyday operations, policy development, and decision-making, presenting opportunities to reduce costs and inefficiencies, streamline operations, and increase revenue. The following summaries highlight the sustainable outcomes associated with District customer service and business operations activities, organized by the central project benefits that are consistent with the Sustainability Guiding Principles.

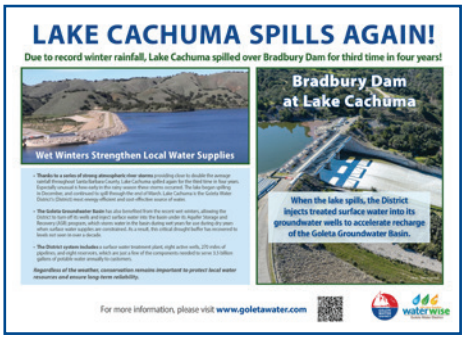
## Annual Performance Highlights

### *ENCOURAGED COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT*

- The District's user-friendly website continued to serve as an important resource for customers, with over 135,000 page views in the last year. Employment, Online Customer Service and Payment Portal, Doing Business, Agendas and Minutes, Documents, and Conservation were ranked as the most popular items.
- District staff engaged with more than 3,000 customers and community members at outreach events, including the Goleta Lemon Festival, City of Goleta Public Works Week, and Earth Day Festival. These events provided opportunities for direct community engagement and education on local water supplies, conservation, Lake Cachuma, District sustainability initiatives, and other water-related topics through interactive activities, educational materials, and visual displays.
- Reached nearly 69,800 District customers and residents with the Fall/Winter 2025 and Spring/Summer 2026 Newsletters via mailboxes, email, the District website, and social media accounts, providing timely information on water supplies, conservation, District projects and programs, and other resources that help customers make informed decisions about water use and stay connected with District activities.
- Developed and mailed targeted lawn removal outreach to commercial and landscape irrigation customers who will be subject to nonfunctional turf bans under state regulations in the coming years. Additional outreach will be conducted in the year ahead as the new requirements are phased in beginning in January 2027.
- Produced public notices and site signage for various District infrastructure improvement projects, including construction and rehabilitation work at Hope Well and Mariposa Well. This level of outreach ensures surrounding residents and businesses are informed of District construction work and potential impacts to the surrounding area.






# Customer Service and Business Operations

## CREATED PATHWAYS FOR ALTERNATIVE REVENUE SOURCES AND FUNDING STREAMS

- Applied for $21.25 million in Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loans, having completed the necessary technical, financial, and environmental reports to fund six major capital projects, with in-house design of three projects. The District was informed that all of its projects made the fundable list, including a $3.75 million emerging contaminants grant for the new Mariposa Well Treatment System.

- Received a bond rating upgrade from S&P Global, raising the District's rating from A+ to AA-. The upgrade reflects the District's strengthened financial position and enables the District to borrow at lower interest rates, effectively spreading the costs of replacing aging infrastructure over time, minimizing the pressure on rates while increasing financial sustainability and operational resiliency for the future.

## IMPLEMENTED CONSERVATION AS A CA WAY OF LIFE REGULATIONS

- For the second consecutive reporting period, the District's actual water use was below its calculated Urban Water Use Objective (UWUO). The District once again met the UWUO with ease, with actual use 23% below the objective, reflecting the high level of water-use efficiency already achieved by District customers and the community's continued commitment to conservation.

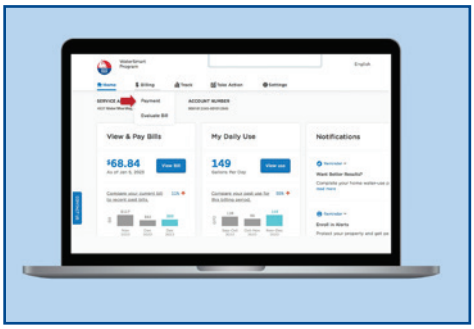
- Completed classifications for all 994 Commercial, Industrial, and Institutional (CII) customer accounts, achieving a 100% classification rate approximately one year ahead of the July 1, 2027 regulatory deadline. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) requires that each CII account be classified into one of 22 categories based upon its majority water use by July 1, 2027. A 95% classification rate must be maintained annually thereafter. Existing customer records did not include the necessary information to complete this review, so staff were required to research work order histories; property records; Geographic Information System (GIS) records; county assessor parcel and land use data; and online resources such as maps and street view images for each individual account. This significant undertaking required substantial staff resources but provides the District with a more complete understanding of CII water use, supporting regulatory compliance and more informed, targeted water-use efficiency efforts in the future.

## ENHANCED CUSTOMER SERVICE AND THE CONVENIENCE OF INTERACTING WITH THE DISTRICT

- Continued to increase customer enrollment in the District's WaterSmart Portal. To date, over 58% of the District's customers are using this internet-based website and payment portal, one of the highest rates of enrollment among water providers using this software.

- As part of customer service and quality control efforts, District staff made 3,123 visits to private properties within the District territory to assist customers with leaks, perform courtesy shutoffs for repairs, repair meter boxes and assemblies, and check meter reads for accuracy.

- Responded to 421 after-hours service calls to investigate various issues within the water systems to maintain continuous service and respond to reported water leaks in a timely manner, thereby minimizing service interruptions. Over 445 water leaks were investigated as a result of the service calls, with roughly half determined to be customer leaks.






# Customer Service and Business Operations

## IMPLEMENTED INCENTIVE PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE CONSERVATION BY DISTRICT CUSTOMERS

- Completed conservation check-ups for various customer classes, including 22 for Single Family Residential, eight for Multi-family Residential, four for Commercial, and two for Agricultural. This included a complimentary analysis of water use on each account, a review of landscaping via aerial imagery, assistance with programming sprinkler timers, and providing a list of personalized water use efficiency suggestions.
- The District's water conservation incentive programs, which help customers save water and money, continued to provide assistance to customers. The District distributed 45 rebates through the Smart Landscape Rebate Program (SLRP) and the Mulch Rebate Program. (Initiative 1.24)
- Customers saved a combined total of nine acre-feet (AF) of water through a combination of billing system outreach and the District's Customer Scorecard Program, which provides near-real-time automated meter reading data for the District's largest customers through the pilot Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Program.







## ENHANCED THE SAFETY, WELL-BEING, AND PRODUCTIVITY OF THE GWD WORKFORCE

- Illustrating its commitment to safe work practices, the District received two Association of California Water Agencies Joint Powers Insurance Authority (ACWA JPIA) President's Special Recognition awards for achieving a low loss ratio in the Property and Liability Insurance programs.
- The District continued implementation of its Wellness Program that serves to incentivize employees to make small changes to improve their health and support a healthy, safe work environment. This year, with the support of grant funding, the District's program encouraged hydration and healthy habits, distributing insulated water bottles customized with the District logo to all employees.


President's Special Recognition Award

The President of the ACWA JPIA Hereby presents Special Recognition Award to

Goleta Water District


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# Customer Service and Business Operations

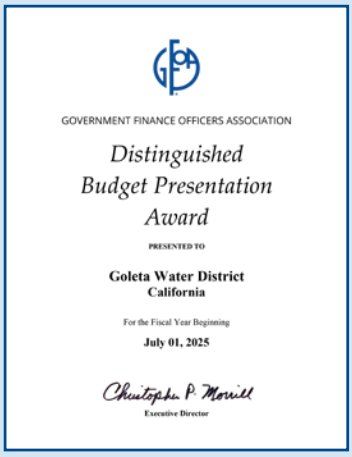


## *ENSURED THE ONGOING DELIVERY OF SAFE, CLEAN WATER SUPPLIES TO THE COMMUNITY*

- Completed a five-year update to the District's Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), including an updated Water Shortage Contingency Plan. The UWMP serves as a general planning document that provides the District Board, managers, and the public with a broad perspective on a number of water supply and demand issues while providing a framework for potential action. Regular updates to the UWMP ensure compliance with State requirements and the sustainability of water supplies into the future under various conditions. (Initiative 1.19)

## *MAINTAINED A GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE THAT SUPPORTS CIVIC INVOLVEMENT AND PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY*

- The District was awarded the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for the second consecutive year, and the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the third consecutive year. The awards recognize the District's 2025-2026 Budget and 2025-2026 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for their commitment to government transparency and responsible financial management.


GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

*Distinguished Budget Presentation Award*

PRESENTED TO

**Goleta Water District**
**California**

For the Fiscal Year Beginning

**July 01, 2025**

Christopher P. Morrill
Executive Director


Government Finance Officers Association

**Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting**

Presented to

**Goleta Water District**
**California**

For its Annual Comprehensive Financial Report
For the Fiscal Year Ended

June 30, 2025

Christopher P. Morrill
Executive Director/CEO




**Building public trust through transparency.**

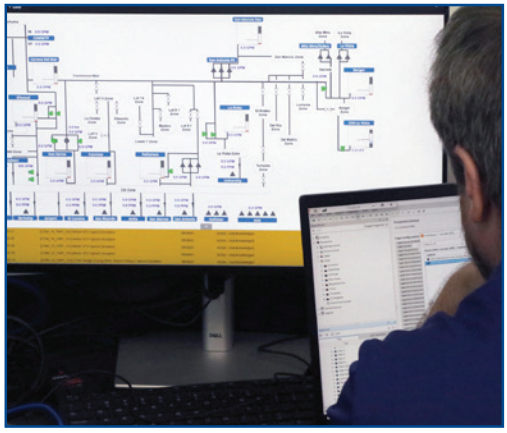
# Customer Service and Business Operations

## *IMPLEMENTED PROGRAMS THAT MAXIMIZE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND KEEP PACE WITH TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES*

The District continued to improve and integrate its technology and software programs. Using the latest technology produces operational savings by allowing employees to work at a high rate of productivity and efficiency while ensuring the accurate maintenance of facility records, billing, and customer information vital to the operation of the District water system and customer service. (Initiative 1.8) Improvements included:

- Completed the migration of the District's financial software, which was antiquated and no longer supported, to a more robust and modern platform. This included working through different phases of the project, from an in-depth business process review to design, configuration, testing, and implementation. The new system went live in July 2026 to coincide with the new fiscal year. Replacing the financial system reduces operational risk, improves efficiency and financial management, and gives the District a more durable platform for managing its resources over time.

- Completed major portions of the once-in-a-generation replacement and upgrade of the District's critical Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system to meet the modern needs of the District operations and allow for integration of future additions. Supporting infrastructure – including servers, networks, and secure remote access configuration and a specialized software platform for real-time monitoring, data analysis, and reporting – was also deployed to improve operational continuity, efficiency, and reliability. SCADA is the technological backbone of the District's system that ensures the reliability of automated treatment processes and monitoring of remote facilities. Once installed, the upgraded system will significantly enhance operational efficiencies and capabilities. (Initiative 1.32)



- Completed replacement of the Board Room Audiovisual (AV) system with modern AV components, control systems, and video monitors. The upgrade replaced equipment that was over ten years old, experiencing significant reliability issues, and had obsolete and failing components. Working components of the old system, including microphones and speakers, were integrated into the new system to lower electronic waste (e-waste) and provide cost savings on the project.




- Implemented remote management tools to improve device health reporting, enable proactive maintenance, and provide centralized support for District computers. Earlier identification of device issues can help extend equipment life, reduce unnecessary replacement, and minimize e-waste while improving the efficiency and reliability of District technology resources.

- Developed and configured a SharePoint-based project management site, establishing a template for department-wide project tracking and collaboration efforts. The new system helps improve overall system efficiency and reliability while streamlining operations.



# Customer Service and Business Operations



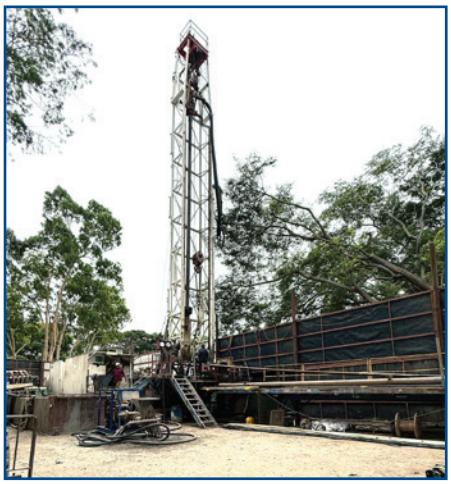

**In recognition of its outstanding fiscal management, the District received a bond rating upgrade from A+ to AA-, strengthening its ability to secure lower-cost financing for future infrastructure needs.**

# Project Spotlight

## *Ultra-Low-Interest Rate Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Loans*

The District continues to pursue alternative financial and funding opportunities, including the California Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF), to support long-term investment in critical infrastructure. Drinking Water SRF provides access to ultra-low-interest loans that allow the District to advance needed improvements while spreading costs over the useful life of the infrastructure. This approach helps minimize pressure on rates by spreading project costs across current and future generations of customers who will benefit from reliable and resilient water service.

The District submitted four Drinking Water SRF applications totaling $25 million to support six projects included in the District's 2025-30 Infrastructure Improvement Plan (IIP). All four applications were included on the State's funding list, with execution of the funding agreements expected by Spring 2027. Current Drinking Water SRF loan rates are 2.1%, well below market rates, providing an opportunity to access extremely low rate financing for these critical infrastructure investments.



**Secured placement on the fundable list for the Mariposa Well Treatment System for both a Drinking Water SRF loan and Emerging Contaminants grant.**



**Pursued low-interest Drinking Water SRF loans to advance critical infrastructure projects while reducing long-term financing costs.**



**Secured placement on the Drinking Water SRF fundable list for the Corona Reservoir Rehabilitation Project to support critical infrastructure investment.**

### *Sustainable Outcomes and Benefits:*

Ultra-low-interest Drinking Water SRF financing reduces the long-term costs associated with infrastructure improvements and allows project costs to be spread more equitably across current and future customers.

The Drinking Water SRF-funded projects support investing in a more efficient, reliable, and resilient system, helping the District maintain access to water resources, strengthen infrastructure, and adapt to changing water supply and operating conditions.

Investing in reliable, resilient infrastructure supports water service for the community while providing safer, more efficient facilities. Financing improvements over their useful lives also helps to distribute costs across the generations of customers who benefit from them.

# Looking Ahead

**Ongoing activities associated with existing initiatives that are scheduled for the year ahead include:**

## *CUSTOMER INFORMATION SYSTEM SOFTWARE UPGRADE*

The District is upgrading its Advanced Utility Systems (AUS) Customer Relationship Management system, also known as CIS Infinity Systems (or CIS), which supports customer water service requests, billing, and payments. The transition from the current unsupported Version 3 to Version 5 will provide enhanced security, reliability, automation, and operational efficiency through a modern browser-based platform. The upgrade will also introduce a new Service Order module that enables a fully paperless work order process, reducing paper use and waste while streamlining workflows and improving coordination between Customer Service and field operations. This investment in digital infrastructure will help the District reduce administrative resources, improve operational efficiency, and advance more sustainable day-to-day practices.

# Administration Buildings and Fleet Management

This category incorporates sustainability considerations into District investments and initiatives to increase the financial predictability of operating and maintaining District-owned buildings, facilities, and heavy equipment. The following summaries highlight the sustainable outcomes associated with District administration buildings and fleet management activities, organized by the central project benefits that are consistent with the Sustainability Guiding Principles.

## Annual Performance Highlights

### *MINIMIZED THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF DISTRICT OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES*

- Received delivery of and initiated construction and installation of more than 1,800 high-efficiency solar panels across three District-owned facilities, including rooftop and carport solar at the District's headquarters, Ellwood Reservoir, and the Corona del Mar Water Treatment Plant (CDMWTP). The project is a key component of the District's Net Zero Initiative and will help offset rising energy costs by generating enough electricity to offset approximately 60% of the District's annual electricity consumption while providing increased resiliency with the District's battery storage system. (Initiative 2.10)



- Added one additional electric pickup truck to the District vehicle fleet, resulting in increased utilization of electric vehicles (EV) compared to gasoline and diesel vehicles. EVs save on fuel and maintenance costs while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions and supporting compliance with California Air Resources Board (CARB) rules. This year's electric vehicle acquisition completed the transition of the primary light vehicle fleet to all-electric bringing the EV fleet total to 37, saving 16,000 gallons of gasoline per year and preventing 140 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions. (Initiative 2.5)



- Upgraded additional lighting to LEDs at CDMWTP, reducing electricity use and related costs.

### *PROVIDED HEALTHY WORK ENVIRONMENTS FOR DISTRICT STAFF*

- Began the design of a new replacement Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system at CDMWTP that is expected to cut annual energy costs while providing a comfortable working environment for staff. (Initiative 2.4)

### *ENHANCED THE SAFETY, WELL-BEING, AND PRODUCTIVITY OF THE GWD WORKFORCE*

- Began design for replacement of the aging HVAC system at the CDMWTP. The previous system experienced recurring malfunctions that contributed to computer failures from overheating and hot temperatures for building occupants. The new energy-efficient HVAC system will maintain appropriate temperatures for critical equipment and staff, helping protect and extend the useful life of the new Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system and other technology essential to treatment plant operations. By reducing energy use, protecting infrastructure investments, and improving operational reliability, the project supports the District's long-term sustainability goals.

### *EXPLORED AND INVESTED IN RENEWABLE ENERGY INSTALLATIONS*

- Completed preliminary designs for microturbines at two District facilities that will capture energy from water flowing through the District's gravity-fed distribution system to generate renewable electricity. Once installed, the microturbines are expected to generate up to 515,000 kilowatt-hours (kWh) annually, or nearly one-third of the electricity expected from the District's solar project currently under construction. By recovering energy already present within the water distribution system, the project will generate renewable electricity, offset rising energy costs, create a potential new revenue source, and reduce carbon emissions. (Initiative 2.19 and 3.1)

# Administration Buildings and Fleet Management



**Building and facility upgrades improve workplace safety, efficiency, and functionality. Improvements throughout District facilities, such as the new Meter Shop, provide more functional and efficient spaces to support daily operations.**

# Project Spotlight

## *Solar Installations*

The District is taking a significant step toward its Net Zero Initiative with the installation of solar energy systems at three District facilities. Construction began in June 2026 at District Headquarters, where rooftop and carport solar panels are being installed at the headquarters buildings and operations yard. Solar systems are also being installed at Ellwood Reservoir and the Corona del Mar Water Treatment Plant (CDMWTP).

Across the three facilities, approximately 1,800 high-efficiency solar panels will provide a new source of clean, renewable energy to help power District operations. Once operational, the systems are expected to offset nearly 60% of the District's annual electricity consumption, reducing reliance on purchased electricity while helping control long-term energy costs. The project represents a significant investment in modernizing District facilities and advancing the District's commitment to sustainable resource management.




**Advancing the District's Net Zero Initiative through renewable energy investments at three District facilities.**



**Installing approximately 1,800 high-efficiency solar panels to offset nearly 60% of the District's annual electricity use.**

### *Sustainable Outcomes and Benefits:*

Generating clean, renewable energy at District facilities will offset nearly 60% of the District's annual electricity consumption, reducing reliance on purchased electricity and supporting progress toward the District's net-zero energy goal.

Projected electricity savings of $22.7 million to $37.1 million over 25 years will help control long-term operating costs and reduce exposure to future electricity rate increases, supporting affordability for current and future customers.

Generating more of the energy needed for District operations on-site supports the long-term sustainability of essential water service, while reduced energy costs help protect customers from rising operating expenses and support affordability over time.

# Looking Ahead

**Ongoing activities associated with existing initiatives that are scheduled for the year ahead include:**

### *NEXT GENERATION ELECTRIFICATION*

With the successful transition of much of the District's light-duty fleet to electric vehicles, the next phase of fleet electrification will focus on larger vehicles and heavy equipment as viable electric options become available. Potential replacements include one-ton trucks, backhoes, dump trucks, and box trucks, including equipment that must be phased out in the coming years to comply with air quality regulations. The District has also identified the need for dedicated fast-charging infrastructure within the Operations Yard to safely and efficiently support larger electric vehicles and equipment. Expanding electrification to the District's heavy-duty fleet will help reduce operating emissions and long-term reliance on fossil fuels while supporting compliance with evolving air-quality requirements.

### *NET ZERO INITIATIVE: HYDROTURBINE INSTALLATIONS*

The District will self-install and commission two new microturbines that will harness the energy of water flowing through the District's gravity-fed distribution system to generate clean, renewable energy, helping offset electricity usage from the grid. The microturbines will provide an innovative opportunity to recover energy from existing water infrastructure while supporting the District's commitment to sustainability. Combined electricity cost savings from the two facilities are estimated to range from approximately $3.5 million to $6.7 million over 30 years. In addition to reducing long-term energy costs, the project will help decrease reliance on grid electricity and advance the District's net-zero energy goals by integrating renewable energy generation directly into its water system.

**With rising energy prices, the economic case for District sustainability initiatives has never been stronger.**



# Water Supply, Treatment, and Distribution System

Initiatives in this category support the core mission of the District. Comprehensive infrastructure planning and investment ensure the ongoing reliability of the distribution and treatment systems. Investment in sustainable infrastructure that is resource efficient, cost-effective, replicates natural hydrology, and can adapt to a changing climate and other conditions provides multiple benefits to the District and its customers.

## Annual Performance Highlights

### *MAINTAINED, REPLACED, AND IMPROVED THE EFFICIENCY OF THE WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM*

- Investigated and replaced 1,841 broken and underreporting water meters with new meters to fully capture water delivered to customers. The replacements recover lost revenue associated with aging manual meters that tend to under-record water usage over time, and support responsible management of District water and financial resources. The new meters are the same ones that will be used for the widespread meter replacement under the District's Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) project and whose installation will occur in FY 2027-2028. (Initiative 3.10)

- Adopted ductile iron as the District standard for new potable water projects, eliminating the use of plastic pipe and supporting a more sustainable and resilient water distribution system. Ductile iron provides a long service life, high recycled content, and is fully recyclable at the end of its useful life. The material also provides greater resistance to wildfire heat than plastic piping and eliminates plastic pipe walls as a potential source of microplastics in drinking water.

### *ENSURED THE ONGOING DELIVERY OF SAFE, CLEAN WATER SUPPLIES TO THE COMMUNITY*

- Began construction of pumping and treatment systems for the new Hope Well, the District's first new well in more than 40 years, including in-house installation of the pipeline that will move water from the well to the treatment facilities. Hope Well will share the upgraded treatment systems with the existing San Marcos Well, providing cost savings while also preserving usable space in the District Operations Yard. (Initiative 3.26)

- Completed drilling and construction of the new Mariposa Well, the District's second new well, and initiated design of treatment and pumping systems. This is the District's deepest groundwater well and will be one of the two highest producers, improving access to and reliability of local groundwater supplies. (Initiative 3.25)

### *STRENGTHENED PREPAREDNESS FOR NATURAL DISASTERS AND OTHER UNPLANNED EMERGENCIES*

- Completed the necessary building upgrades to harden the District's facilities against wildfires. These upgrades included the removal of weeds, replacing fencing, painting pipework, and other maintenance at numerous above-ground pressure-reducing facilities. Regular maintenance protects and extends the useful life of District infrastructure while improving the appearance of facilities and reducing impacts to neighboring properties. Vegetation management and maintenance of defensible space in fire-prone areas also reduce fire risk and strengthen the safety and resilience of critical infrastructure. (Initiative 3.9)

### *ENHANCED SYSTEM-WIDE RELIABILITY AND SAFETY*

- Enhanced community fire protection and system resilience by replacing 78 poorly aging or functioning fire hydrants and repairing 394 aging fire hydrants. Proactive maintenance and replacement help ensure emergency responders have reliable access to the water pressure and flow rates needed for firefighting while extending the useful life of the District's 1,520 hydrants.

- Implemented proactive security measures to strengthen the District's Geographic Information System (GIS) against external threats, ultimately improving overall system reliability and safety measures.

# Water Supply, Treatment, and Distribution System

## IMPLEMENTED PROGRAMS THAT MINIMIZE WATER LOSS AND MAXIMIZE ACCOUNTING OF WATER USE

Under the Valve Replacement Program (Initiative 3.32), maintained and replaced valves for pressure regulation, system isolation, and monitoring on a critical need basis to minimize water outages to customers. Activities this year included:

- Replacing 34 inoperable valves and exercising more than 1,500 valves. This work improves the reliability of water delivery and prevents service interruptions to customers.
- Conducting maintenance on 126 special regulating valves located throughout the distribution system to ensure proper pressure is consistently maintained.

## IMPLEMENTED PROGRAMS THAT MAXIMIZE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND KEEP PACE WITH TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES

- Completed major portions of the once-in-a-generation replacement and upgrade of the District's critical Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system to ensure reliability of automated treatment processes and monitoring of remote facilities. Cutovers to the new system were completed at Corona del Mar Water Treatment Plant (CDMWTP) and more than half of the District's remote facilities, reservoirs, wells, and pump stations, with work expected to be completed in FY 2027-28. (Initiative 1.32)

## MITIGATED WATER SUPPLY RISKS AND PRESERVED POTABLE SUPPLIES

- Negotiated a five-year contract extension for the Cachuma Project Master Contract, preserving access to a key water supply source for the District. Under normal conditions, the majority of the District's water supply is from the Cachuma Project, which the United States Bureau of Reclamation constructed on the Santa Ynez River in the early 1950s. Lake Cachuma is the District's most energy-efficient and cost-effective source of water.
- Continued to monitor Lake Cachuma using satellite imagery, the Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board (COMB) lake monitoring program, and the District sampling program to proactively detect the presence of naturally occurring algal toxins in Lake Cachuma.
- Injected 686 acre-feet (AF) (224 million gallons) of surface water into the groundwater basin to help replenish the aquifer, maximizing the availability and reliability of the District's water resources. The aquifer has been replenished to reach its highest level in 12 years and has now fully recovered from the last drought.

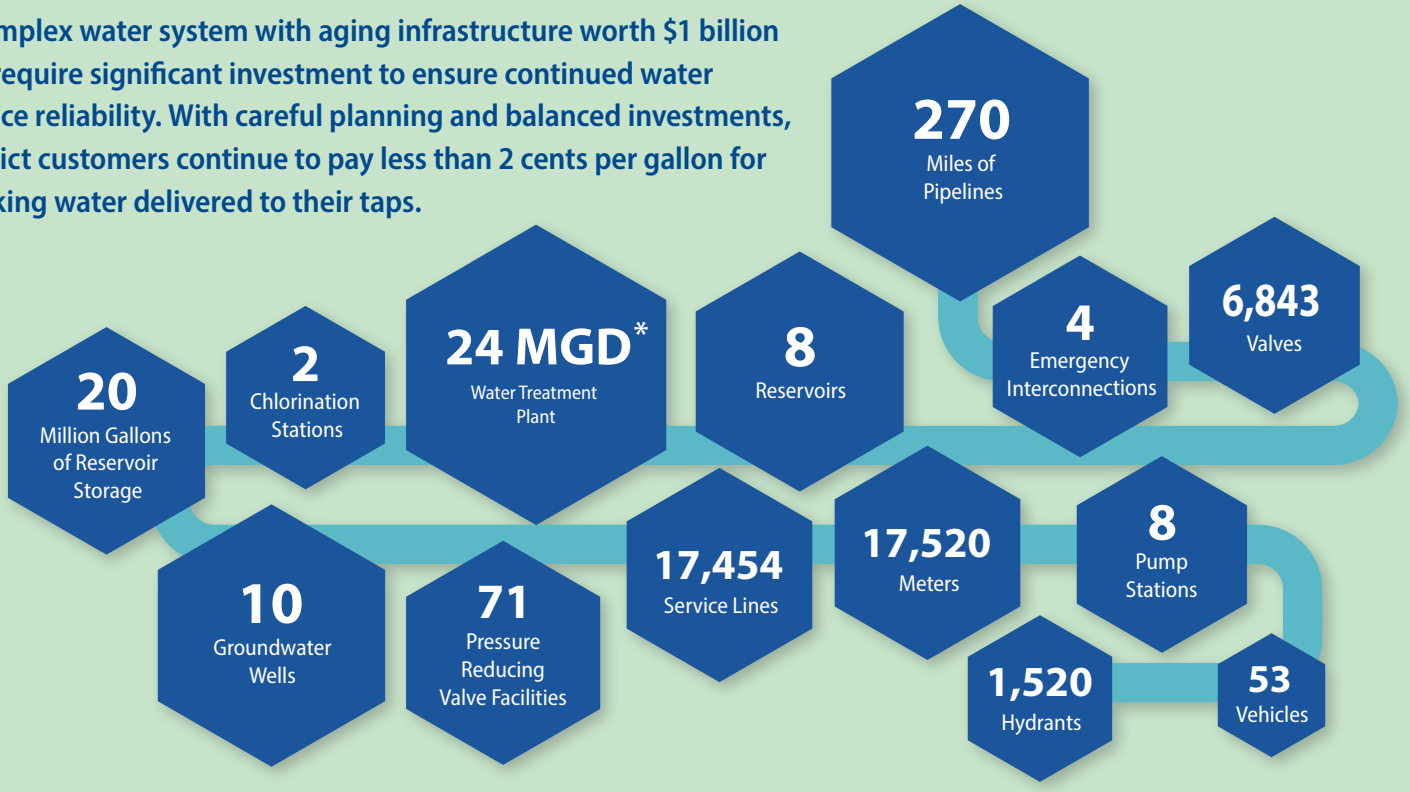




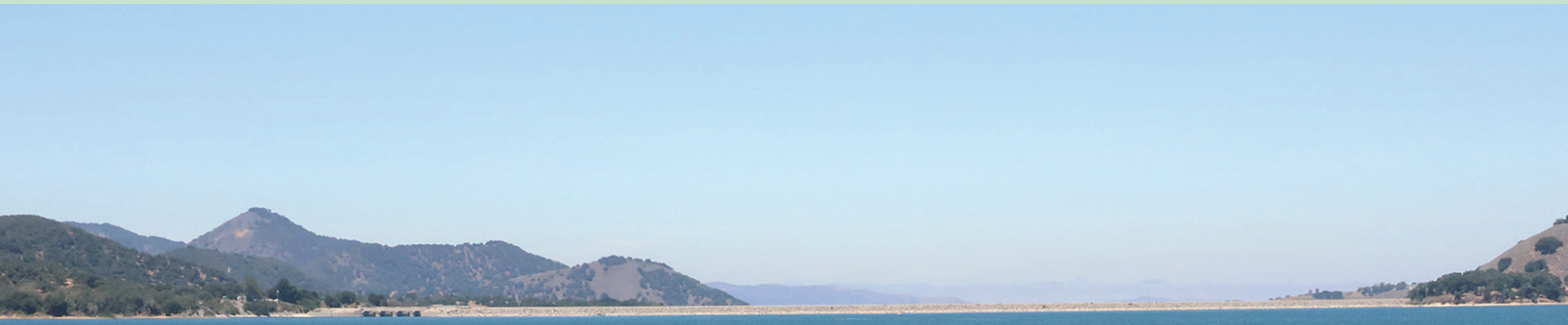


# Water Supply, Treatment, and Distribution System

**A complex water system with aging infrastructure worth $1 billion will require significant investment to ensure continued water service reliability. With careful planning and balanced investments, District customers continue to pay less than 2 cents per gallon for drinking water delivered to their taps.**




**Million Gallons per Day*



**The Cachuma Project Master Contract has been extended for another five years, preserving access to the District's primary water supply source. Lake Cachuma is the District's most energy-efficient and cost effective source of water.**

# Water Supply, Treatment, and Distribution System



**Incorporating sustainability considerations into District investments and initiatives increases the financial predictability of operating and maintaining District-owned buildings, facilities, and heavy equipment.**

# Project Spotlight

## *New Groundwater Wells*

As the District enters its eighth decade, it is implementing an ambitious Infrastructure Improvement Plan (IIP) to strengthen the reliability, sustainability, and resilience of the community's water supply. A key part of this effort is the construction of two new groundwater wells: Hope Well and Mariposa Well.

Hope Well is the District's first new well in more than 40 years and will help replace capacity in an aging well field experiencing declining production. The project was partially grant-funded, helping reduce costs to customers. Following installation of a pipeline and treatment system, Hope Well is expected to begin producing water for the community by the end of 2027. Once operational, this well will support more efficient pumping and maintenance while expanding the District's ability to recharge the Goleta Groundwater Basin (Basin).

Construction of the District's second new well, Mariposa Well, is complete, with its treatment system currently in design and included among the projects proposed for Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) financing. Once operational, Mariposa will be the District's deepest well, improving access to stored groundwater and providing additional capacity to recharge the Basin when water supplies are available.

Together, the Hope and Mariposa Wells will provide greater flexibility to store water in the Basin when supplies are available and access that stored groundwater during dry periods and other supply constraints, supporting sustainable management of the Basin and strengthening the reliability of the community's water supply for decades to come.



**Hope Well is the District's first new well in over 40 years and will begin producing water in 2026.**



**Mariposa Well will be District's deepest groundwater well and one of the two highest producers.**

### *Sustainable Outcomes and Benefits:*

Grant funding for Hope Well and proposed ultra-low-interest financing for Mariposa Well will help reduce project costs and overall impacts to customer rates. The new wells will also replace aging infrastructure and support more efficient pumping, operation, and maintenance over the long term.

The two new wells expand the District's ability to recharge and strategically manage its groundwater supplies, supporting the long-term health and sustainable use of the Basin. Locating Hope Well at the District Headquarters also reduces the need for a new well site and allows it to share treatment infrastructure with the existing San Marcos Well.

Hope and Mariposa Wells strengthen water supply reliability and drought resilience by providing greater access to locally stored groundwater when other supplies are limited. New treatment systems will also help ensure the District can continue providing customers with a reliable, high-quality water supply.

# Looking Ahead

### *ADVANCED METERING INFRASTRUCTURE*

The District will initiate the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Project in FY 2026-27 to modernize its metering system by retrofitting or replacing existing meters with technology capable of providing near-real-time water use information. The project will address aging meters that increasingly under-register water use while improving the accuracy and availability of water-use data. In addition to replacing meters, the project will install new transmitters, meter box lids, communications infrastructure, and a Meter Data Management System to remotely collect and manage water usage information. AMI will provide additional benefits including automated meter reading, early leak detection, improved system integration, and greater operational efficiency. Implementation is anticipated to begin with communications network installation in October 2026, followed by meter installation beginning in 2027 and full system integration and testing expected to continue through early 2029. The AMI project is anticipated to recover $30 million to $40 million in revenue over 20 years that is associated with under-registered usage.



# Overall Progress at a Glance

| SERVICE CATEGORY #1 - CUSTOMER SERVICE AND BUSINESS OPERATIONS | | |
|---|---|---|
| **REF** | **2012-13 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 1.1 | Integrated Regional Water Management Planning (IRWMP) | Ongoing |
| 1.2 | Conservation | Complete |
| 1.3 | Electronic Billing System | Complete |
| 1.4 | Emergency Response Plan Update | Complete |
| 1.5 | Workplace Safety Program Update | Complete |
| 1.6 | Drought and Water Shortage Contingency Plan | Complete |
| 1.7 | Vendor Management | Complete |
| 1.8 | Technology Improvement and Integration | Ongoing |
| 1.9 | Alternative Revenue Sources | Ongoing |
| 1.10 | Introduction of Lifeline Discount Program | Deferred |
| 1.11 | Tiered Rate Updates | Complete |
| **REF** | **2013-14 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 1.12 | Community Demonstration Garden Outreach | Ongoing |
| 1.13 | Salt and Nutrient Management Plan Scoping | Complete |
| 1.14 | Asset Management Implementation Plan and Pilot Study of the Recycled Water System - Phase I | Complete |
| 1.15 | Coordinated Energy Management | Ongoing |
| **REF** | **2014-15 AND 2015-16 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 1.16 | Drought Supply and Demand Model | Ongoing |
| 1.17 | Groundwater Management Plan Update | Planning |
| 1.18 | Water Supply Management Plan Update | Complete |
| 1.19 | Urban Water Management Plan Update | Complete |
| 1.20 | Drought Outreach Plan | Complete |
| 1.21 | Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Implementation | Ongoing |
| 1.22 | Groundwater Model | Complete |
| 1.23 | Agricultural Water Efficiency Action Plan | Complete |
| 1.24 | Conservation Incentive Programs | Ongoing |
| **REF** | **2016-17 AND 2017-18 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 1.25 | Informing Customers about Water | Underway |
| 1.26 | Employee Wellness Program | Ongoing |
| **REF** | **2018-19 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 1.27 | Web Self-Service Program | Complete |
| 1.28 | Hazard Mitigation Plan | Planning |
| 1.29 | Recycled Water Slough Crossing Alternative Design Study | Complete |
| 1.30 | Worker Safety Electrical Upgrades | Ongoing |
| 1.31 | Customer Service Payment Portal | Complete |
| **REF** | **2019-20 AND 2020-21 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 1.32 | SCADA Upgrades | Underway |
| 1.33 | Electronic Process Migration | Underway |
| 1.34 | District Based Elections | Complete |
| **REF** | **2022-23 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 1.35 | Seismic Vulnerability Assessment | Complete |
| **REF** | **2023-24 INITIATIVES - *NEW*** | **STATUS** |
| 1.36 | Reserve Analysis | Complete |
| 1.37 | Cost of Service Study | Complete |

## SERVICE CATEGORY #2 - ADMINISTRATION BUILDINGS AND FLEET MANAGEMENT

| REF | 2012-13 INITIATIVES | STATUS |
|---|---|---|
| 2.1 | Community Demonstration Garden Restoration and Enhancement | Complete |
| 2.2 | Renewable Energy (Solar) Feasibility and Permitting | Complete |
| 2.3 | Green Business Certification | Deferred |
| 2.4 | Building Envelope Improvements | Ongoing |
| 2.5 | Fleet and Construction Equipment Replacement Program | Ongoing |
| 2.6 | Field Operations | Ongoing |
| 2.7 | Fleet Replacement Study | Complete |
| **REF** | **2013-14 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 2.8 | Edible Garden Project | Complete |
| 2.9 | Lighting Upgrades at Administrative HQ – Phase I | Complete |
| 2.10 | Solar Trellis System at Administrative HQ – Phase I | Underway |
| 2.11 | Stormwater Runoff Improvements Study | Complete |
| **REF** | **2014-15 AND 2015-16 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 2.12 | Leaking Underground Fuel Tank (LUFT) Closure | Complete |
| 2.13 | Stormwater Headquarters Improvements/Master Plan (Phase I) | Complete |
| 2.14 | Board Room Remodel | Complete |
| 2.15 | Recycled Water Hauling Program | Complete |
| **REF** | **2016-17 AND 2017-18 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 2.16 | Vehicle Charging Stations | Underway |
| **REF** | **2018-19 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 2.17 | Leach Field Replacement at CDMWTP | Complete |
| 2.18 | Lighting Upgrades at CDMWTP | Complete |
| **REF** | **2021-22 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 2.19 | Net Zero Initiative | Underway |

## SERVICE CATEGORY #3 - WATER SUPPLY AND SYSTEM INVESTMENT

| REF | 2012-13 INITIATIVES | STATUS |
|---|---|---|
| 3.1 | Hydroelectric Generator Installations | Underway |
| 3.2 | Recycled Water System Booster Station Electrical Upgrades | Complete |
| 3.3 | San Ricardo Well Rehabilitation | Complete |
| 3.4 | WTP Sustainable Wastewater Disposal and Irrigation Study | Complete |
| 3.5 | Grant Application Readiness | Ongoing |
| 3.6 | Goleta Beach Recycled Waterline Relocation | Deferred |
| 3.7 | Infrastructure Improvement Program Evaluation Criteria | Complete |
| 3.8 | Corrosion Protection Program | Ongoing |
| 3.9 | Neighborhood Compatibility of District Facilities | Ongoing |
| 3.10 | Meter Replacement Program | Ongoing |
| **REF** | **2013-14 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 3.11 | San Ricardo Well Site Enhancement | Complete |
| 3.12 | Arc Flash and Electrical Upgrades | Underway |
| 3.13 | Water System Evaluation and Submetering Program – Phase I | Complete |
| 3.14 | Van Horne Reservoir Slope Protection Evaluation | Complete |
| 3.15 | Corona Del Mar WTP Infrastructure Improvement Construction | Underway |
| 3.16 | Hydroelectric Turbine Installation at Patterson Reservoir | Planning |
| 3.17 | Goleta Water District – City of Santa Barbara Interconnect | Deferred |

# Overall Progress at a Glance (continued)

| REF | 2014-15 AND 2015-16 INITIATIVES | STATUS |
|---|---|---|
| 3.18 | San Antonio Well Rehabilitation Project | Complete |
| 3.19 | Berkeley Well Rehabilitation Project | Complete |
| 3.20 | Shirrell Well Rehabilitation Project | Complete |
| 3.21 | Oak Grove Well #2 Rehabilitation Project | Deferred |
| 3.22 | SB Corporation Well Rehabilitation Project | Deferred |
| 3.23 | Hollister Recycled Water Pump Replacement | Complete |
| 3.24 | Emergency Pump Project (Patterson and Edison) | Complete |
| 3.25 | New Replacement Groundwater Well (S.B. Corp Site) | Underway |
| 3.26 | New Replacement Groundwater Well Project (Hope Well) | Underway |
| 3.27 | Monitoring Wells | Planning |
| 3.28 | Injection Wells | Underway |
| **REF** | **2016-17 AND 2017-18 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 3.29 | Booster Pump Station Improvements | Underway |
| 3.30 | Groundwater Treatment Equipment Upgrades | Underway |
| 3.31 | Water Quality Studies | Complete |
| 3.32 | Valve Replacement Program | Ongoing |
| **REF** | **2018-19 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 3.33 | Reservoir Aeration Systems | Complete |
| 3.34 | Surface Water Quality Treatment Technologies | Underway |
| 3.35 | Hollister RW Booster Pump Station Relocation | Planning |
| 3.36 | Transition Main Relocation | Complete |



| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3.37 | Reservoir Reliability Program | Underway |
| 3.38 | Corona Pump Station | Complete |
| 3.39 | Interconnect Component Replacements | Ongoing |
| **REF** | **2019-20 AND 2020-21 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 3.40 | Distribution Main Tie-ins | Complete |
| **REF** | **2021-22 INITIATIVES** | **STATUS** |
| 3.41 | Creek Crossing Pipeline Replacements/Repairs | Ongoing |

# LOOKING FORWARD

**The Sustainability Plan is a living document, and its ability to remain adaptable, flexible, and forward-thinking is a key asset. Ongoing monitoring of the progress of these initiatives will continue so the District can effectively adjust its approach as needed and report on Sustainability Plan implementation results and benefits to the community. Through continued strategic planning, investments, and implementation of best practices, the District will continue to foster a model operation for sustainable service delivery today and well into the future.**









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