

Strategic Plan

Cherry Creek Waterworks Improvement District Planning Horizon: 2026–2030

Overview/Purpose of the Plan

This strategic plan establishes a five-year roadmap (2026–2030) for the Improvement District to ensure the reliable delivery of safe drinking water, sustainable infrastructure renewal, and effective fire protection services. During the 2025 Conversion Referendum, the community voted to stand alone as an Improvement District. As a result of this vote, this Strategic Plan will provide the Board of Trustees with a common vision for the district and provide clear priorities and focus for staff. This plan will support a more strategic approach to the financial decisions and ensure our resources align with our priorities.

Vision

To provide safe, reliable water service and effective fire protection while responsibly managing community infrastructure for future generations.

Mission

To provide reliable, high-quality water and fire protection services through strong governance, responsible financial stewardship, and strategic investment in infrastructure, while preserving our autonomy and independence as affirmed by the 2025 Referendum.

Core Values

Public Safety

Protecting residents and property

Stewardship

Responsible management of infrastructure

Transparency

Open and accountable decision-making

Financial Sustainability

Long-term planning for infrastructure renewal

Community Engagement

Meaningful communication with residents and ratepayers

Strategic Pillars

1. Reliable and Safe Water Service
 2. Infrastructure Renewal and Capital Planning
 3. Financial Sustainability and Borrowing Strategy
 4. Effective Fire Protection and Emergency Preparedness
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Risks and Mitigation

Limited Staff Capacity

Mitigation:

- Contract out large project management
- Use technology: digital meter reading, automated billing, and online payment portals reduce manual workload
- Stagger tasks: align billing, meter reading, and project coordination to minimize overlap in peak periods
- Crosstrain staff: all waterboard staff can support customer service, billing and data entry
- Hire for a casual position to be used by both Fire and Water
- Continue to use Fire Department members as casual labour support for waterboard and fire department

Referendum

Mitigation:

- Early public engagement
- Transparent communication
- Community information meetings

Board Governance

Mitigation:

- Achieving quorum for all decisions
- Recording carried motions
- Two trustees to sign on all financial transactions
- All Trustees to be provided with a copy of the current Strategic Plan, Becoming a Trustee Handbook and Improvement District Manual and have them sign an oath stating that they will adhere to these documents
- Post all meeting minutes to our website for public viewing
- Pass an annual Financial Audit

Strategic Pillars and Critical Initiatives

Pillar 1: Reliable and Safe Water Service

Goal: Ensure the delivery of safe drinking water that meets regulatory standards.

Critical Initiatives:

1.1 Construct a Water Treatment Plant

Actions:

- Finalize design
- Finalize Statutory Right of Ways
- Secure borrowing approval
- Tender and award construction
- Commission the facility

Timeline: 2026–2030

KPI: Annual Water licence renewal from Island Health.

1.2 Water Operator Succession Plan/Relationship

Actions:

- One water board employee to complete remaining hours required for EOCP certifications
- One water board employee to write and pass tests required for EOCP certifications
- Employee will continue to work towards WT2 and WD2

Timeline: 2026–2030

KPI: One staff member will achieve Level 1 Water Treatment (WT1) and Water Distribution (WD1) certifications from EOCP.

Pillar 2: Infrastructure Renewal

Goal: Replace aging infrastructure in a planned and financially sustainable manner.

Critical Initiatives:

2.1 Watermain Replacement Program

Actions:

- Continue to prioritize high-risk sections found in assessment
- Implement a phased replacement program
 - Replace 1 section of watermain annually, as identified by water operator

Timeline: 2026-2030

KPI: 1 section of watermain replaced annually.

2.2 Meter Modernization

Actions:

- Evaluate meter infrastructure and rate based on established scale
- Phase meter replacement
- Purchase tablet
- Manually enter all digital meter IDs into our billing software
- Integrate digital reading technology

Timeline: 2026–2027

KPI: Annual water meter replacements (total meters replaced per year).

2.3 Asset Management Plan

Actions:

- Develop a complete infrastructure inventory for water board and fire department
- Assign asset condition and lifecycle costs for water board and fire department
- Implement capital renewal forecasts for water board and fire department

Timeline: 20-year capital plan

KPI: Asset management plan completed for each service and updated and approved annually during the budget review process.

Pillar 3: Financial Sustainability

Goal: Ensure long-term financial stability while funding essential infrastructure.

Critical Initiatives:

3.1 Borrowing Referendum (2026)

Actions:

- Calculate amount needed for the 4-3-2-1 Water Treatment Plant
- Conduct community information campaign
- Hold referendum vote for borrowing for the 4-3-2-1 Water Treatment Plant

Timeline: Late 2026

KPI: In-favour vote for borrowing.

3.2 Rate Stabilization/Reserve Fund Growth

Actions:

- Conduct Water Toll and Parcel Tax rate review annually
- Align rates with infrastructure needs
- Introduce gradual increases if required

Timeline: After 4-3-2-1 Water Treatment Plant implementation

KPI: Operating Ratio (Operating Revenues/Operating Expenses): Measures if the revenue collected covers the cost of running the water utility. A ratio of 1.0 or higher indicates that user fees are fully covering operations, achieving sustainability.

3.3 Micro-Power Generation

Actions:

- Perform feasibility study for a Micro-Power Generation
- Make plans based on results of feasibility study

Timeline: 2026-2027

KPI: Decision to proceed or not is made by mid-2027.

Pillar 4: Fire Protection and Emergency Preparedness

Goal: Provide reliable fire protection and emergency response capacity.

Critical Initiatives:

4.1 Complete Fire Hall Project

Actions:

- Finalize construction
- Achieve occupancy
- Transition equipment and operations

Timeline: 2026

KPI: To complete the transition to new fire hall.

4.2 Strengthen Volunteer Fire Department

Actions:

- On-going recruitment and retention programs
- Training support

Timeline: ongoing; 2026-2030

KPI: The goal is for the department to be at 16 active firefighters, 4 active officers and 2 active chief officers for a total of 22 members at all times.

4.3 Emergency Coordination

Actions:

- Create Wildfire Plan for Cherry Creek
- Maintain Pre-Incident Plans
- Create our own community-based emergency plan
- Coordinate with regional emergency services
- Conduct annual training exercises

Timeline: ongoing

KPI: Emergency response times.

Conclusion

Implementation and Review

This strategic plan will be implemented through:

- Annual work plans
- Annual budget process

The board should conduct a **formal strategic plan review every two years.**