



**South Granville Water And Sewer Authority**

# STRATEGIC PLAN: 2021-2026

Adopted: 9/15/21

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## Strategic Plan Overview

In September 2021, SGWASA marked a milestone with the adoption of the Utility’s first-ever formal Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan guides the South Granville Water and Sewer Authority (SGWASA) as it responds to the evolving utility needs of its stakeholders. SGWASA’s five-year Strategic Plan points the way toward improving the qualities to make SGWASA an outstanding utility. The Strategic Plan articulates areas of strategic focus which target the Utility’s efforts and resources in ways intended to have the greatest impact in the four key focus areas over the life of the Strategic Plan.

## Strategic Plan Purpose

The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to create a shared vision throughout the Utility and to align its efforts to achieve the mission and long-term goals. The shared vision enables all employees to understand the Utility’s destination – “To be a superior utility service provider that contributes to the success of the region.” The alignment of Utility’s resources enables employees to understand the actions required to achieve this standard. These actions are derived from the Objectives contained in this plan, which support the Strategies, Long Term Goals and Mission.

The Strategic Plan will align all the business units’ programs and activities around the vision and mission, and it will enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability in all areas of service delivery. The Strategic Plan will assist with:

- ❖ Ensuring decisions are presented in the context of the larger picture captured in the strategic plan.
- ❖ Developing operational objectives.
- ❖ Providing the Board and management with a communications tool for informing stakeholders about SGWASA’s purpose, direction, and progress.
- ❖ Promoting forward-thinking.

## Strategic Plan Outcomes

SGWASA’s Board of Directors provides the vision and leadership for the Utility’s strategic planning efforts. The Strategic Plan’s four key focus areas reflect the chief components that support the current and future identity and character of the Utility. The Strategic Plan contains utility-wide objectives and initiatives needed to support the four key focus areas.

Under the leadership of SGWASA’s Executive Director, employees will direct resources and work efforts toward meeting and supporting the Strategic Plan’s objectives and initiatives, based on the priority timelines in place. A key component in achieving the objectives and initiatives within the timelines established, relies heavily on the funding of Strategic Plan initiatives.

## Strategic Plan Financing/Funding

Strategic planning is the process of identifying where you want you want to be in the future and then outlining the steps to get there. However, you can't get where you want to go unless you have the financial resources to execute your vision. Financial planning is the process of connecting your financial operations with your big picture strategy.

## Strategic Plan Review Cycle

As the utility business environment is constantly changing due to many factors, including economic pressures, customer service demands, community growth, and increased regulatory issues, just to name a few, a Strategic Plan should not be considered a static document. A Strategic Plan should be considered a dynamic document, thus reflecting modifications in goals and related objectives to meet the ever-changing business environment. Therefore, it is important to establish a strategic plan review cycle.

The minimum Strategic Plan review cycle suggested for SGWASA is annually. Furthermore, the Strategic Plan review period should be well in advance of the next fiscal year's budget preparation, which normally starts in December/January. Therefore, based on these controls, a suggested annual Strategic Review date would be in October, thus providing the Board and the Administration the ability to incorporate any cost-related initiatives related to the Strategic Plan in the next fiscal year budget.

### Summary Strategic Plan Review:

- ❖ Target Review Period: Annually.
- ❖ Target Review Month: October.

## Mission, Vision & Values

### SGWASA's Mission:

Providing quality water and sanitary sewer services to our customers in an efficient, sustainable, and environmentally conscious manner.

### SGWASA's Vision:

SGWASA exists to be a superior utility service provider that contributes to the success of the region.

To achieve our vision, we focus on:

- ❖ Attracting and retaining the best employees
- ❖ Maintaining high satisfaction from customers , employees, and stakeholders.
- ❖ Operational excellence
- ❖ Reliable and regularly scheduled updates to infrastructure
- ❖ Smart growth principles
- ❖ Being environmentally compliant

### SGWASA Embraces the Following Values:

**I**ntegrity - We are honest and ethical in our relationships with our customers, employees, and stakeholders.

**D**iversity - We value workforce diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**E**xcellent Service - We attend to customer and stakeholder needs with courtesy, compassion, timeliness, efficiency, and commitment.

**A**ccountability - We are responsible to our customers and to each other.

**L**isten - We actively listen to our customers, employees, and stakeholders to better serve the needs of our communities.

**S**afety - We incorporate safe work practices to ensure the safety and welfare of our customers and employees.

## Strategic Plan Focus Areas - General

SGWASA's Strategic Plan centers on four primary focus areas. These focus areas include:

### Focus Area 1: Safe, Reliable and Sustainable Water System

- ❖ Maintaining quality water services by supporting and funding operating and capital components while pursuing partnerships and other regional opportunities when available.

### Focus Area 2: Reliable and Sustainable Sanitary Sewer System

- ❖ Maintaining quality sanitary sewer services by supporting and funding operating and capital components while pursuing partnerships and other regional opportunities when available.

### Focus Area 3: Organizational Excellence

- ❖ Maintaining a high-performance organization that is responsive to the needs of its stakeholders and provides a level of service that aligns with customer expectations.

### Focus Area 4: Environmental Character

- ❖ Promoting, protecting, and enhancing a healthy and sustainable natural environment.

## Focus Area #1 – Safe, Reliable and Sustainable Water System

<b>Focus Area #1</b>	<b>Safe, Reliable and Sustainable Water System</b>
Maintaining quality water services by supporting and funding operating and capital components while pursuing partnerships and other regional opportunities when available.	

### Focus Area #1: Key Strategic Objectives & Initiatives

- Focus Area #1-Objective #1: Ensure excellent water is provided to all Authority customers and is regularly validated by a quality review program.**

Initiative(s)	Priority
1.1. Identify areas where water quality does not meet State standards, and develop appropriate resolution plans, inclusive of both operational and capital requirements.	Highest: Start/Finish within 1 year
1.2. Develop a Master Technology Plan to enhance water system operations.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years

- Focus Area #1-Objective #2: Provide for upgrades and ongoing maintenance of the water system infrastructure through regular assessments of capital assets and inclusion of needed projects in the Authority’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).**

Initiative(s)	Priority
2.1. Initiate, and then perform at regular intervals, an Asset Condition Assessment on the water system infrastructure.	Highest: Start/Finish within 1 year
2.2. Develop a short-term (0-10 years) Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), including the funding scenarios, and a long-term (10-30 years) CIP for the water system.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years
2.3. Research and make decisions on emergency back-up water resources and explore other regional partnerships for water usage or emergency situations.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years

**3. Focus Area #1-Objective #3: Seek appropriate growth and expansion of the water system to meet customer and stakeholder needs and support economic development.**

Initiative(s)	Priority
3.1. Analyze revenues and expense impacts related to proposed system expansion opportunities.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years

**4. Focus Area #1-Objective #4: Enhance financial and operational components of the water system to support capital investments and efficient operations.**

Initiative(s)	Priority
4.1. Initiate, and then perform at regular intervals, a rate study that supports all system expenses and considers other changes to improve rate equity.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years
4.2. Research and pursue available funding options through Federal, State of NC and other sources to minimize the financial impacts to customers from additional investments to the system.	Highest: Start/Finish within 1 year

## Focus Area #2 – Reliable and Sustainable Sanitary Sewer System

<b>Focus Area #2</b>	<b>Reliable and Sustainable Sanitary Sewer System</b>
Maintaining quality sanitary sewer services by supporting and funding operating and capital components while pursuing partnerships and other regional opportunities when available.	

### Key Strategic Objectives & Initiatives

- Focus Area #2-Objective #1: Provide for upgrades and ongoing maintenance of the sewer system infrastructure through regular assessments of capital assets and the inclusion of needed projects in the Authority’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).**

Initiative(s)	Priority
1.1. Initiate and then perform at regular intervals, an Asset Condition Assessment on the sanitary sewer system.	Highest: Start/Finish within 1 year
1.2. Develop a Master Technology Plan to enhance a reliable and sustainable sanitary sewer system operation.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years
1.3. Develop a regular program to test sewer lines for Infiltration & Inflow (I&I) issues and allocate budget resources to remediate the problems.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years

- Focus Area #2-Objective #2: Seek appropriate growth and expansion of the sanitary sewer system to meet customer and stakeholder needs and support economic development.**

Initiative(s)	Priority
2.1. Analyze revenue and expense impacts related to proposed system expansion opportunities.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years
2.2. Develop short-term (0-10 years) Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), including the funding scenarios, and a long-term (10-30 years) CIP for the sanitary sewer system.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years

**3. Focus Area #2-Objective #3: Enhance financial and operational components of the sanitary sewer system to support capital investments and efficient operations.**

Initiative(s)	Priority
<p>3.1. Initiate and then perform at regular intervals, a rate study that supports all system expenses and considers other changes to improve rate equity.</p> <p>3.2. Research and pursue available funding options through Federal, State of NC and other sources to minimize the financial impacts to customers from additional investments in the system.</p>	<p>Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years</p> <p>Highest: Start/Finish within 1 year</p>

## Focus Area #3 – Organizational Excellence

Maintaining a high-performance organization that is responsive to the needs of its stakeholders and provides a level of service that aligns with customer expectations.

### Key Strategic Objectives & Initiatives

#### 1. Focus Area #3-Objective 1: Improve and expand communication programs.

Initiative(s)	Priority
1.1. Hire a communications staff person to develop and manage a media program that communicates positive achievements and other information to customers, stakeholders, and the public.	Highest: Start/Finish within 1 year
1.2. Regularly update the Authority’s website and social media platform(s) to provide information on water quality and system compliance components.	Highest: Start/Finish within 1 year
1.3. Regularly communicate information to customers and stakeholders about upcoming and ongoing maintenance and construction activities.	Highest: Start/Finish within 1 year

#### 2. Focus Area #3-Objective #2: Improve internal administrative capabilities.

Initiative(s)	Priority
2.1. Office Systems and Processes: Evaluate internal technology systems and develop plans for regular system updates and additions of new technologies.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years
2.2. Human Resource Investments: Study the Authority’s personnel structure and make recommendations for modifications to align with customer expectations.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years
2.3. Human Resource Investments: Create an enterprise-wide succession plan.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years
2.4. Human Resource Investments: Create personal development plans for all employees.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years
2.5. Customer Care Enhancements: Perform recurring customer satisfaction surveys on system performance and key customer services, tracking and reporting ongoing progress.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years
2.6. Customer Care Enhancements: Develop community outreach programs to educate stakeholders on the functions and activities of the Authority.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years

## Strategic Plan Focus Area #4 – Environmental Character

### Key Strategic Objectives & Initiatives

<b>Focus Area #4</b>	<b>Environmental Character</b>
Promoting, protecting, and enhancing a healthy and sustainable natural environment.	

- 1. Focus Area #4-Objective #1: Ensure that the Authority minimizes environmental impacts by complying with all regulatory standards.**

Initiative(s)	Priority
1.1. Provide regular communications to stakeholders on matters of environmental compliance.	Highest: Start/Finish within 1 year

- 2. Focus Area #4-Objective #2: Promote energy efficiency and greater use of renewable energy, when applicable and cost effective.**

Initiative(s)	Priority
2.1. Perform an energy audit to assess the energy performance of systems, operations, and facilities, identifying opportunities for energy savings.	Medium: Start/Finish within 3 years

- 3. Objective #3: Strengthen the Authority’s service area Emergency Management Plan with respect to protecting the natural environment.**

Initiative(s)	Priority
3.1. Review and update the comprehensive service area emergency management plan and related agreements annually.	Highest: Start/Finish within 1 year
3.2. Perform an in-house tabletop exercise for training and planning on the emergency management program.	Medium: Start/Finish within 3 years

**4. Focus Area #4-Objective #4: Promote responsible contracting and purchasing choices that are environmentally sensitive.**

Initiative(s)	Priority
4.1. Ensure all system improvements meet or exceed environmental and regulatory requirements, while incorporating sustainable practices.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years

**5. Focus Area #4-Objective #5: Reduce our carbon footprint through green initiatives.**

Initiative(s)	Priority
5.1. Partner with service area organizations and schools to provide ongoing educational programs centered on environmental sustainability.	Higher: Start/Finish within 2 years

*(End of Strategic Plan)*