



STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2028



Prepared For:
**Bedford Regional
Water Authority**

1723 Falling Creek Road
Bedford, VA 24523
www.brwa.com



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Message



A Message from the Board of Directors

The Bedford Regional Water Authority (BRWA) Board of Directors is pleased to present this 2024-2028 Strategic Plan (SP). While celebrating its 10th Anniversary and past accomplishments, the BRWA recognizes what must be accomplished in the future.

In order to make this SP comprehensive and inclusive, the BRWA sought input from a variety of stakeholders.

To gather relevant input from stakeholders we invited our customers to complete a survey, organized a roundtable meeting with both elected and appointed officials, and solicited input from all BRWA employees.

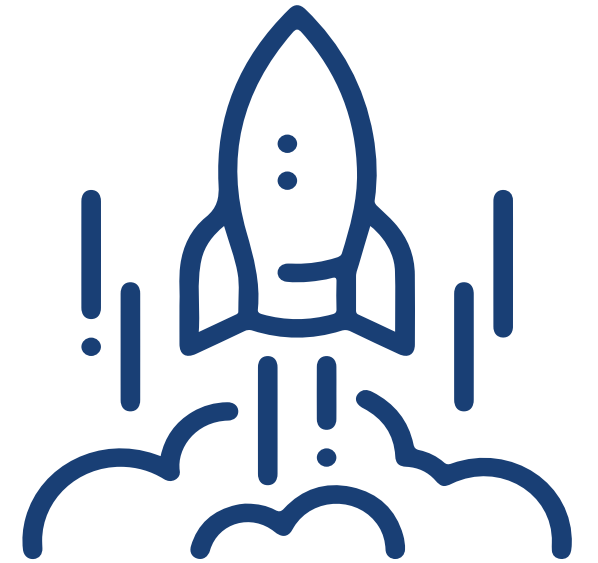
We engaged a consultant to ensure that we did everything possible to guarantee that communications during the development process of the SP were open, transparent, and easily accessible to the public. The result is a well-developed SP that provides the structure necessary to make informed decisions, determine strategic goals, develop actions needed to meet the established Vision and Mission statements, identify opportunities for improvement, and enhance the skills and talents that already make the Authority exceptional.

We invite all stakeholders to reflect on this SP and share any thoughts they may have with the board or BRWA staff. We invite any community member to our monthly meetings, usually held on the third Tuesday.

By: Bob Flynn, Chairman

About BRWA

BRWA began operations in July 2013 as a result of the merger of the City of Bedford Water and Sewer Department and the Bedford County Public Service Authority. The BRWA serves the needs of water and wastewater customers in both the Town of Bedford and Bedford County. Some communities served by the BRWA include Boonsboro, Forest, New London, Montvale, Stewartsville, and communities surrounding Smith Mountain Lake.



1. BRWA serves approximately 15,000 customers in different geographical areas. Each community has a different percentage of customers served. Currently, 60% of our customers are located in the Forest area, 25% in the Town of Bedford, 14% from communities near Smith Mountain Lake, and 1% from the Stewartsville area.
2. BRWA has approximately 431 miles of water pipe and 130 miles of sewer pipe.
3. There is a projected revenue and expenditure of \$19.4 million in the balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.
4. BRWA has a Board of Directors comprised of seven members: five appointed by the Bedford County Board of Supervisors and two appointed by the Bedford Town Council.
5. BRWA consists of several departments and currently offers approximately 92 employee positions.





Vision

Clean Water. Healthy Environment.
Thriving Community.

Mission

To provide high quality water and
wastewater services to the community.

Values

- Collaboration
- Adaptability
- Results
- Enthusiasm

Why this?

Vision means: why our organization exists, a practical picture of the future we want to create during the next five years.

Mission means: what we do each day, and how we work in service to the vision.

Values mean: how we do our work, our expression of what matters most to us as we carry out our work.

Organizations don't plan to fail, they simply fail to plan.

"The best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time."
— Abraham Lincoln

The Strategic Planning Process

Building the Future

We built a SP to define how we intend to achieve our vision for the future and to identify the goals and objectives we believe are necessary to ensure that we meet the water and sewage needs of the communities we serve.

To do that, we must understand the people of the communities we serve, their needs and wishes, and all elements – internal and external – that support or challenge our progress. Those questions are best answered directly from the people about and for whom this plan was written: our customers, staff, and the broader community of partners and future customers. A successful SP is one where all stakeholders not only understand, but work with us to ensure its completion. To that end, we:

Built understanding through surveys, focus groups, and roundtables;

Built alignment through common creation of vision, mission, and values;

Built direction by bringing our vision to life and creating measurable goals;

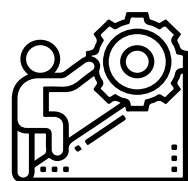
Built action through thoughtful, immersive, and milestone-driven plans; and

Built support by integrating the plan elements into the budget and sharing with stakeholders.



The Big Picture

It all comes back to water.



According to the data collected from our surveys, roundtables, and employee input, our stakeholders agree - water is the most valuable resource:

- to our economy;
- to our health; and
- to our sense of community.

With that, this SP is designed to support community and economic growth by preserving and conserving a safe and adequate water supply, including the infrastructure necessary to distribute this valuable resource.



Care of Water & Water Resources

We care for our community by caring for its water resources. That includes ensuring the very best quality in water and wastewater treatment. We are committed to providing excellent care of water resources, ensuring we never let up on our commitment to zero pollutants. Ensuring this resource remains available and viable for future generations requires deliberate planning and intentional support from our community.



Planning Pipelines

►► Infrastructure

Infrastructure refers to resources that support the basic operations of our organization, providing essential support to our care of Bedford's water and the people who rely on it. Infrastructure is often unseen and, as such, is at risk of receiving inadequate attention. The two essential areas of infrastructure focus for this SP are the water piping system and technology resources, two powerful levers in ensuring optimal safety, productivity, and quality of care.

►► Community

Water is a human endeavor. When we care for it well, we have confidence in the quality and safety of our water and enjoy it as part of a thriving community. To that end, we recognize that our relationship with the people we serve is essential to our work. Connecting more meaningfully with our community – including our partners, neighbors, customers, future employees, and the general public – will ensure a broader understanding, respect, and care of our water resources.

►► Workforce

Our staff dedicate their days and nights to caring for our water resources, customers, and community. Just as we must ensure modernized piping and technology infrastructure, we must ensure that our workforce is organized and built for current and future needs and aligned with our SP. We will focus on recruitment, retention, training and licensing, and employee engagement. These efforts will have a powerful impact on our culture, which is the basis for quality, productivity, and adaptability.

Infrastructure

Pipe systems



The Reality

In Bedford County and the Town of Bedford, there is an urgent need to replace outdated pipes. Traditional funding methods cannot accomplish this alone. In addition to impacting customers, this funding gap has implications for our region's economic development. Therefore, several entities must cooperate and collaborate with BRWA. The importance of this issue is widely acknowledged, but the challenges of establishing and implementing a plan require a dedicated team of stakeholders.



Goal 1

Ensure that the pipe system in our service area meets current standards.

Strategies/Objectives

1. Establish a team of stakeholders to support BRWA as it addresses challenges and implements plans for current and future endeavors.
2. BRWA will create a workgroup that includes individuals from the Town of Bedford and Bedford County. This workgroup will address project funding and financing for current and future projects.
 - a. The workgroup will develop a plan to prioritize current and future sub-projects regarding the development and maintenance of the infrastructure.



Technology



The Reality

BRWA has the hardware to support its work in the field and in the office. However, fully accessing, utilizing, and integrating data across departments is challenging.



Goal 2

Leverage technology to automate processes, increase data access, and strengthen data integration across departments.

Strategies/Objectives

1. Develop phased data visualisation program by conducting a proof-of-concept study.
2. Ensure that BRWA is prepared to implement and utilize dashboards.
3. Establish a system to link customer service and finance data.
4. Build a system to layer GIS and asset data to automate regulatory compliance reporting.

Community



The Reality

The community, specifically customers, rate their experience with the BRWA positively. Partnering with our community to care for water resources can enhance this relationship. Public interest and the lack of awareness concerning water and water resources are obstacles.



Goal 3

Educate and engage community members about the conservation, preservation, and use of Bedford County's water resources.

Strategies/Objectives

1. Provide information on the BRWA website that describes the current water resources in Bedford County and how the community can support BRWA's work.
2. Use teams and workgroups named in Goal 1 to foster community connections.
3. Provide an annual summary of the community's current and future challenges concerning the adequate distribution of water and infrastructure maintenance.
4. Provide an annual SP update, specifically, goal completion and current BRWA projects.
5. Link SP updates to a public webpage.
6. Provide an opportunity for the public to attend an informal informational meeting to discuss concerns or suggestions with board members or BRWA staff.



Workforce



The Reality

BRWA takes pride in its employees' engagement and dedication. Contributing to the environment and community gives employees a sense of belonging. However, current needs exceed resources for staffing and training. While collaboration and communication have improved, opportunities exist to fine-tune a culture of connection between departments to ensure a seamless customer experience.



Goal 4

Align staffing with the future needs of the communities served by BRWA and provide adequate training to ensure sustainable employee recruitment and retention.

Strategies/Objectives

1. All departments will generate a professional development plan to ensure that all employees are adequately trained.
2. Create interdepartmental workgroup to access team decision-making and current practices, set priorities, and develop departmental goals.



Conclusion & Acknowledgements

One of the most significant insights the BRWA gained while developing this SP was that we are building this strategy plan from a place of great strength. One substantial and recurring theme gleaned from administering surveys, organizing focus groups, and attending roundtables was that we do what we set out to do daily: provide quality service to everyone.

Creating something new

Fortunately, we have already built strong relationships among our staff and community. These relationships have helped us craft a plan about making something new, pushing ourselves further, and creatively adapting to local needs. This plan is not about significant shifts in direction but about building upon our current strengths. We are ready to get started.

Customer Quote

"They were pleasant, congenial, and courteous at all times. Mike, especially, was good both times at explaining the problems and what needed to be done. He and his crew are a credit to your organization, and we feel fortunate to have their help."

— Taken from a letter written to the BRWA by customer Richard Thomas.

Community

Thank you to our customers who filled out the strategic planning survey; this feedback helped us tremendously and helped shape the external opportunities of this plan.

Staff

Many of our staff members participated in focus group meetings to provide input on the BRWA's internal workings. We appreciate our staff's dedication, professionalism, and constructive input throughout the planning process.

Leadership

The stakeholders roundtable meeting allowed us to learn about the external challenges ("threats") the BRWA must focus on to prepare for the future. We are thankful for the elected officials, appointed officials, and executive staff from the County, Town, and BRWA who participated in this meeting.

Progress

Just as we could not build this plan without you, we cannot complete it without you. Learn more about how you can help by scanning the provided QR code.





Contact Us



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