

2015



COACHELLA VALLEY
MOSQUITO & VECTOR
CONTROL DISTRICT
STRATEGIC PLAN

COACHELLA VALLEY MOSQUITO & VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2014

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**COACHELLA VALLEY MOSQUITO & VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT
STRATEGIC PLAN 2015**

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**A MESSAGE FROM THE
PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER**

OCTOBER 29, 2014

Dear Stakeholders, Trustees, and Staff,

Organizations that want to survive and prosper must respond to challenges that both the environment and the economy present. Typically, organizations experience long periods of incremental changes, and intermittently, they encounter times of rapid and necessary adjustments. To remain an effective organization, it is essential that the *Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District* continues planning and acting strategically.

Throughout its 87-year history, this District has been constantly changing and updating its operations. Strategic planning ensures that residents of the Coachella Valley will continue receiving professional services and excellent protection from eye gnats, red imported fire ants, mosquitoes, and vector-borne diseases.

This strategic plan addresses key issues and provides guidelines for meeting the District's professional, ethical, and legal obligations successfully. The plan provides a disciplined effort to produce directions and actions that will shape and guide future District decisions and operations. Since this is a living document, periodic reviews, progress evaluations, and updates will be necessary.

Credit for the development of this new strategic plan goes to District employees, the Executive Committee, the Board of Trustees, and Strategic Workshop Coordinator, Dr. Chuck Beesley. Diligent efforts from staff and trustees, under the guidance of Dr. Beesley resulted in a new strategic plan for the next three to five years.

Doug Walker,
Board President

Branka B. Lothrop, Ph.D.,
General Manager

HISTORY

The Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District (District) was formed in 1928 to combat eye gnats. Initial efforts were directed towards control through pesticide applications. With the development of pesticide resistance the District collaborated with the University of California to develop more sophisticated methods of surveillance and control which continue to this day. The construction of the Coachella Valley Canal in 1949 brought an abundance of water resulting in excessive irrigation runoff, mosquito production, mosquito-borne disease transmission, and the expansion of the District to include mosquito control in the early 1950s. With the growth and development of the Coachella Valley during the ensuing years the District broadened to a full vector control agency and relocated to its current facilities in 2001. In 2005, the District added the Red Imported Fire Ant program in response to the establishment of this imported public health pest. In 2006, the District completed a Bio-Control Facility, and in 2014 added more laboratory space to accommodate arbovirus testing, and to once again reinforce the District's early commitment to research and apply the latest integrated methods to control mosquitoes. The District has continued to steadily expand and improve programs in response to community growth and development and the introduction of new vectors and/or vector-borne diseases.

Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District



BACKGROUND

The District's last Strategic Plan (Plan) was developed in 2011 and has been utilized as a Board/Management tool to successfully govern and prioritize District activities. The board was very satisfied with the development of this Plan and again contracted with *Special District Consulting* to conduct a Strategic Planning Workshop. The workshop was held with the Board of Trustees, Management, and representative employees on October 18, 2014, at the District's administrative office, 43-420 Trader Place, Indio, California. This report reflects the items and agreements identified at the workshop.



34-420 Trader Place, Indio, CA 92201

WORKSHOP – OCTOBER 18, 2014



President Walker – Welcome Address



General Manager Dr. Lothrop and Coordinator Dr. Beesley



Working Groups

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

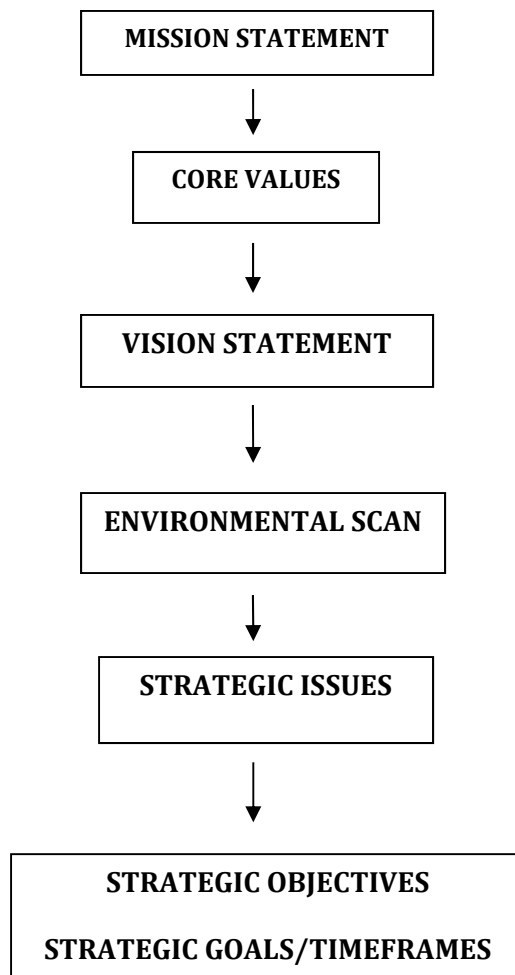
Strategic planning assumes that an organization will be responsive to local and/or regional growth and development and perhaps even other events which may require temporary or long term changes in services provided and/or actual service delivery. A Strategic Plan provides the framework for decision-making over a three-to-five year period. It is a consensus-based approach based on a review of current conditions versus reasonably foreseeable events and determining whether current policies and programs are sufficient to meet these foreseeable challenges.

A Strategic Plan is based on identifying known or anticipated strategic issues that may affect services and/or service delivery. These strategic issues are then incorporated into Board/Management planning, decision-making, program monitoring, and performance measurements. The Strategic Plan process is achieved through discussions on the following inter-related subjects, as described below:

DEFINITIONS

- **Mission Statement:** Expresses the organization's purpose and value to the community it serves. All activities within the District should be related to supporting the Mission Statement.
- **Core Values:** Core Values represent the underlying principles in the District's culture. They establish the Board's expectations and values and represent the basic elements of how we conduct business. They are the practices we use (or should be using) every day in everything we do and should provide a foundation for governance and management of the District.
- **Vision Statement:** Describes foreseeable programs and their potential impact. It provides a sense of priorities and direction during uncertain times and is utilized as a framework for planning and decision-making.
- **Environmental Scan:** Entails a review of the District's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats/concerns which may affect the District's abilities to provide services and/or require changes or modifications to services.

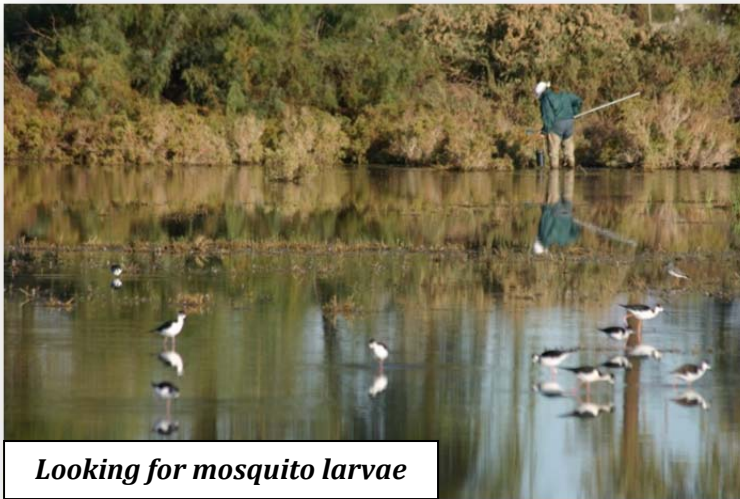
- **Strategic Issues:** Identifiable functions or events that may impact the District’s ability to provide services, or require modifications or changes to service delivery. These issues can play a key role in governance, management, and operational planning.
- **Strategic Objectives:** Identifiable approaches or methods to addressing specific strategic issues. This may include short term, long term, focused, or broad-brushed approaches.
- **Strategic Goals:** Specific actions, timeframes necessary for the completion of the goals. It is expected that periodic progress reports will be submitted by those responsible for completing the goals.
- **Relationships:** The following flow chart describes the descending order of these strategic steps:



MISSION STATEMENT, CORE VALUES & VISION STATEMENT

MISSION STATEMENT

“We are dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for our community by providing effective and environmentally sound vector control and disease prevention programs.”



Looking for mosquito larvae



Raising mosquitofish

CORE VALUES

- Protecting the public from vector-borne disease transmission;
- Ensuring professional delivery of services;
- Maintaining high ethical standards and open communications;
- Being environmentally conscientious;
- Having efficient, effective, responsive operations;
- Maintaining a professional, technical and skilled staff;
- Having financial stability;
- Continually seeking ways and methods to distribute information to the public;
- Providing science-based control programs; and
- Collaborating with outside research institutions/performing relevant research and development to enhance our capabilities.

VISION STATEMENT

“We will continue to deliver integrated vector control services utilizing the latest best management practices.”



Coachella Valley

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

An environmental scan entails a review of the District's perceived strengths and weaknesses versus potential opportunities, concerns, or threats to its abilities to deliver effective, efficient services. Recognized strengths and potential weaknesses are listed below followed by foreseeable outside influences that have the potential to greatly impact or change service delivery capability.

STRENGTHS

- Expanded laboratory with enhanced capabilities;
- Powerful, professional staff;
- Financial stability;
- Collaboration with other agencies;
- Good reputation;
- Responsive programs;
- Research collaboration and productivity;
- Technical capabilities; and
- Information utilization and sharing.

WEAKNESSES

- Internal communication;
- Decision-making;
- Implementation; and
- Finding ways to work smarter.

FORESEEABLE CHANGES TO IMPACT SERVICE DELIVERY

- Changes to the Salton Sea;
- Introduction of new vector-borne diseases;
- Transition from rural to urban habitats;
- Arrival of new vectors;
- Continued regulatory limitations;
- Increased community outreach;
- Increased service request/complaints;
- Increased need for and support of research; and
- Earthquakes or other natural disruptions.

STRATEGIC ISSUES

Strategic Issues and objectives clarify the District's understanding and expectations of the Board and Management's priorities and actions over a three-to-five year time frame. They are a by-product of the Mission Statement, influenced by the Core Values, and provide a focus or direction in order to achieve the stated Vision. It was agreed there was a need to increase the number of Strategic Issues and reprioritize them to reflect progress made over the past three years and foreseeable challenges ahead. The following nine issues were identified to play a critical, significant role in future Board/Management decision-making, enabling continued program improvements and ensuring continued progress toward a successful Vision over the course of the next three to five years.

The nine Strategic Issues are listed in order of importance, followed by discussions on specific objectives, strategies, and specific goals, all of which are presented in Appendix A.

1. Financial Management;
2. Operations;
3. Information/GIS Technology;
4. Human Resources;
5. External Relations;
6. Research and Development;
7. Community Outreach;
8. Capital Improvements; and
9. Board Governance.

1. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT



Board of Trustees meeting



*Certificate of Achievement
for Excellence in
Financial Reporting 2008-
2013*

OBJECTIVE: To be ethical, fiscally responsible, and law abiding in the stewardship of public funds to achieve the District's Mission.

STRATEGY: Maintain a complete tracking and reporting system to account for all present and future financial activities.

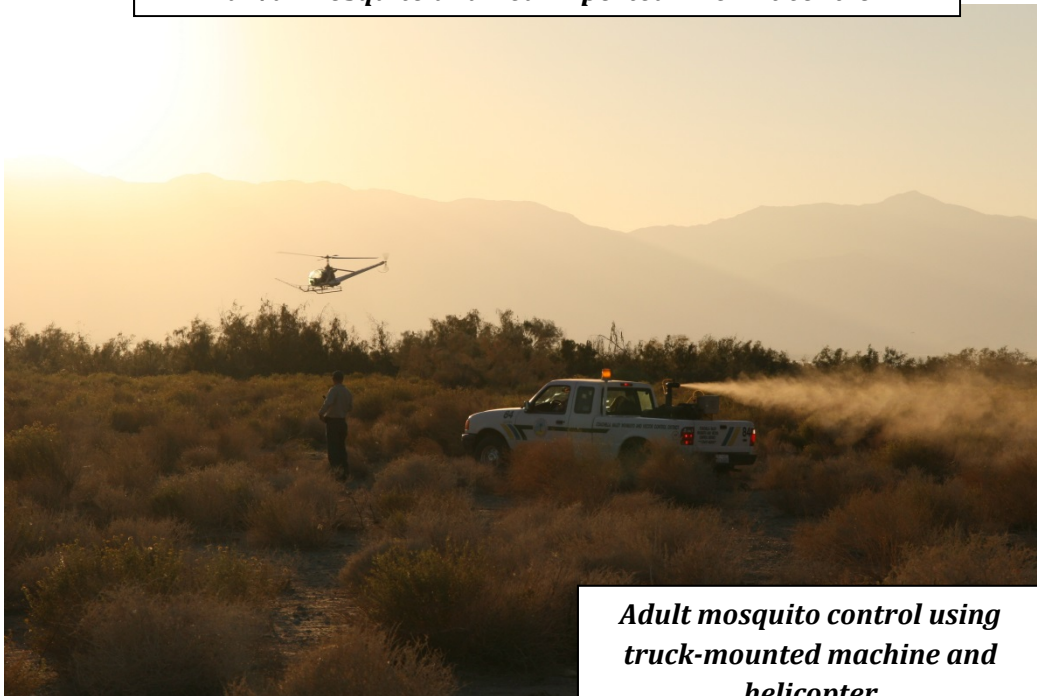
GOALS:

- 1.1** Revise the Reserve Policy to include committed obligations. This should be completed by March 2015.
- 1.2** Modify the Benefit Assessment Policy by establishing financial triggers to be utilized when changing the amount or value of the Assessments. This should be completed by May 2015.

2. OPERATIONS



Larval mosquito and Red Imported Fire Ant control



*Adult mosquito control using
truck-mounted machine and
helicopter*

OBJECTIVE: Suppress vector and nuisance species through effective control and public contact.

STRATEGY: Achieve effective integrated surveillance, control, and assessment through collaboration, safety, and the value of employee roles.

GOALS:

- 2.1 Conduct annual Integrated Vector Management (IVM) assessments of all lab and operational activities to assess perceived programmatic strengths and weaknesses and incorporate findings during IVM planning. The first annual report will be completed by January 2015.
- 2.2 Develop and implement an IVM work plan that will identify surveillance, mosquito, RIFA, and quality control objectives. To be completed by March 2015. This will initiate projects and evaluations in 2016 to support efficient operational zone restructuring and workflow, which should be completed by January 2017.
- 2.3 Develop an invasive species response plan to identify and prepare for surveillance and control strategies of potential invasive vectors and vector-borne diseases. This will be conducted annually beginning in December 2015.

3. INFORMATION/GIS TECHNOLOGY



Using innovative technology to track mosquito breeding sites and RIFA colonies

OBJECTIVE: Provide innovative technologies to support all District Operations and staff.

STRATEGY: Provide secure, reliable and accessible systems that can be seamlessly shared internally and externally in order to drive operational objectives.

GOALS:

- 3.1 Create IT/GIS Policies and Procedures guide for employees to ensure the professional use of electronic communications. This will be completed by December 2015 and conducted annually in June.
- 3.2 Create an IT/GIS Steering Committee to help improve communication among users and ensure IT/GIS resources are used to achieve the best outcome. This will be completed in December 2016 and reviewed annually in June.
- 3.3 Determine District direction on GIS technologies and create a five-year plan for District GIS technologies by September 2015.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES/RISK MANAGEMENT



District Staff

OBJECTIVE: Recruit, develop, and retain a professional, high quality, motivated workforce.

STRATEGY: Provide competitive compensation, a safe and dignified work environment, and educational and advancement opportunities by incorporating best management practices.

GOALS:

- 4.1 Develop and conduct employee satisfaction surveys every three years. The next survey will be conducted in 2017.
- 4.2 Recruit, develop, and retain a professional high quality, healthy workforce. A report will be presented annually beginning in January 2016.
- 4.3 Develop and implement succession planning programs to identify and prepare qualified employees for promotional opportunities. A report will be presented annually beginning December 2016.

5. EXTERNAL RELATIONS



Working with agencies to improve vector control

OBJECTIVE: Strengthen the community's and public agency's awareness and appreciation of the District's impact in regard to public health and lifestyle.

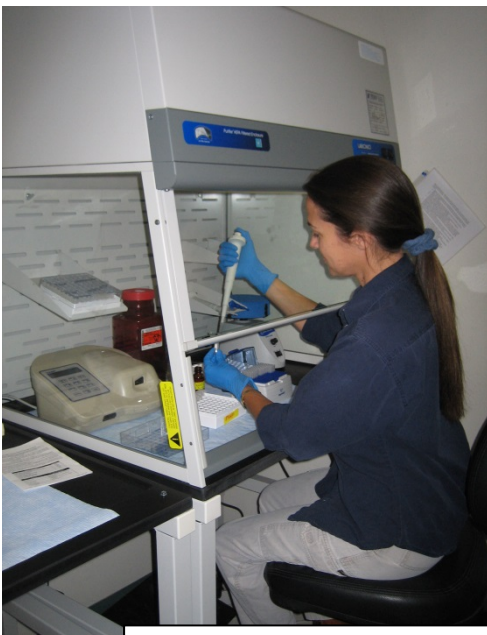
STRATEGY: Develop more effective collaborative relationships with external agencies to improve vector control.

GOALS:

- 5.1 Enhance our collaborative relationships with other governing bodies through the use of formal agreements and joint exercises. An initial report will be developed by January 2016 and reviewed annually thereafter.
 - a) Prepare written documents outlining integrated vector management responsibilities of the District and external governing bodies.
 - b) Encourage cities to adopt mosquito and vector prevention practices into city code.

- c) Establish formalized agreements with 30 golf courses at a rate of 10 per year.
- 5.2 Develop “emergency response plan to vector-borne disease outbreaks” by February 2015 and practice response with necessary agencies beginning October 2015.
- a) Create an operational and communications plan for emergency response to vector-borne disease outbreaks.
 - b) Conduct internal and join external drills to practice response steps.

6. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT



Supporting relevant research – within and outside the District

OBJECTIVE: Support the development, incorporation, and evaluation of control procedures and products that are environmentally sound, cost effective, and science-based.

STRATEGY: Use both internal and external research to ensure the District’s Integrated Vector Management Program is effective, efficient, and responsive.

GOALS:

- 6.1 Identify and maintain strong relationships with external researchers with the goal of improving vector control practices based on up-to-date research. An annual report will be presented in January.
- 6.2 Conduct internal research to enhance operational methods to determine if IVM programs can be improved by researching new methods.
- 6.3 Implement findings of internal and external research to improve IVM programs. Update, and if necessary create, District SOP's, manuals, and guidelines annually to incorporate research findings beginning in February 2015.
- 6.4 Perform a feasibility study regarding the use of District laboratory facilities by outside agencies. This will entail determining administrative, financial, and operational costs for offering testing to other local vector control agencies and researchers. This report will be presented in December 2016.

7. COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Communicating to the public what we do and what they can do

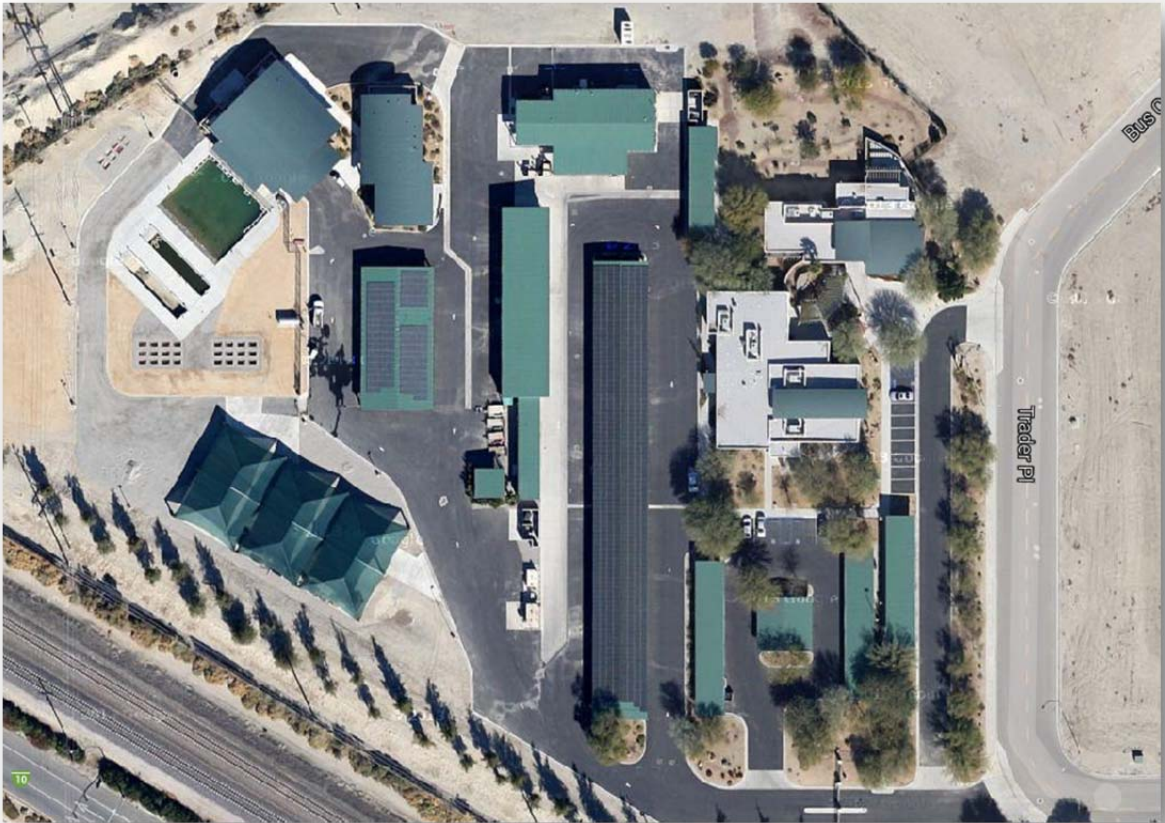
OBJECTIVE: Strengthen resident’s knowledge and awareness of local vectors and vector-borne diseases in order to improve their quality of life and that of their community.

STRATEGY: Enhance current community outreach with better access to both printed and online information on vector awareness and best management practices.

GOALS:

- 7.1 Develop and enhance the District’s online presence to increase awareness and accessibility of our services, educate the public, promote events, and build relationships through social media channels and an improved District website. A report will be presented in January 2016.
- 7.2 Develop content and activities for Coachella Valley students through internships, curriculum, and online resources to create awareness of vector-borne diseases and the importance of “Fight the Bite Together.” A report will be presented December 2016.

8. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS



Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District – 2014



Recently Expended and Enhanced Laboratory facility - 2014

OBJECTIVE: Forecast needs to meet the changing services required to achieve the District's Mission Statement.

STRATEGY: Develop a needs assessment process for capital improvements.

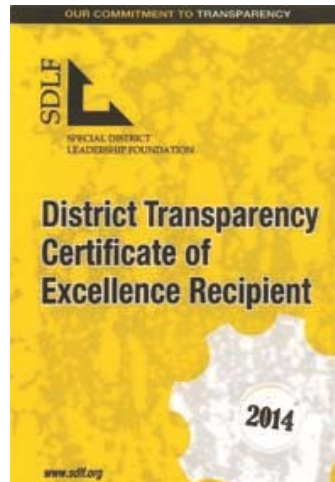
GOALS:

- 8.1** Establish Board policy on undeveloped land to enable a decision about undeveloped property by March 2016.
- 8.2** Determine Board policy on Thermal property which will include a review of maintenance costs of environmentally compromised land to determine whether to retain or sell this site by January 2016.
- 8.3** Establish a Board policy to facilitate fleet replacement planning and decisions by January 2016.

9. BOARD GOVERNANCE



Board of Trustees – 2013-2014



The District received the "District Transparency Certificate of Excellence" in 2014

OBJECTIVE: To have an ethical, knowledgeable and effective Board of Trustees.

STRATEGY: Provide a comprehensive orientation for new Board members and ongoing education and training opportunities for all Trustees in all aspects of the District's business, as well as ensuring regulatory compliance.

GOALS:

- 9.1** Implement a Trustee Orientation Plan to ensure governmental compliance and Trustee familiarity with the District's role in the community. This plan will be completed by March 2016 and conducted annually as appropriate.
- 9.2** Conduct a workshop for Trustees to familiarize them with the District Mission, activities, and messaging. This will assist them in knowing how to effectively represent the District during encounters with city officials and the public. The workshop will be conducted annually beginning in May 2016.

STRATEGIC ISSUES, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES & GOALS

2015-2018

STRATEGIC ISSUES, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES & GOALS		WHO	PRODUCT	WHEN
1. Financial Management Objective: To be ethical, fiscally responsible, and law abiding in the stewardship of public funds to achieve the District’s mission. Strategy: To maintain a complete tracking and reporting system to account for all present and future financial activities.				
1.1	Revise Reserve Policy Goal: revise policy to include committed obligations	Mgmt./BOD	Board Policy	March 2015
1.2	Benefit Assessment Policy based on Reserve Level Goal: establish financial triggers affecting the value of assessment	Mgmt./BOD	Board Policy	May 2015
2. Operations Objective: Suppress vector and nuisance species through effective control and public contact. Strategy: Achieve effective integrated surveillance, control, and assessment through collaboration, safety, and the value of employee roles.				
2.1	Conduct annual IVM assessment of all lab and operations activities Goal: Assess perceived programmatic strengths and weaknesses and incorporate findings during IVM planning	Mgmt./Sup	Survey Report	Annually January 2015
2.2	Develop and implement an IVM work plan that will identify surveillance, mosquito, RIFA, and quality control objectives Goal: Implement projects and evaluations that support efficient operational zone restructuring and workflow	Mgmt./Sup/ Prof/Techs/ IT	Project Plan Zone Re-Structure Evaluation Report	March 2015 March 2016 January 2017

STRATEGIC ISSUES, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES & GOALS		Who	Product	When
2.3	<p>Develop an invasive species response plan</p> <p>Goal: Identify and prepare for surveillance and control strategies of potential invasive vectors and vector-borne diseases</p>	Mgmt./Sup/Prof	Guidelines	<p>Annually</p> <p>December 2015</p>
<p>3. IT/GIS Strategy</p> <p>Objective: Provide innovative technologies to support all District Operations and staff.</p> <p>Strategy: Provide secure, reliable, and accessible information systems that can be seamlessly shared internally and externally in order to drive operational objectives.</p>				
3.1	<p>Create IT/GIS Policies and Procedure guide for employees</p> <p>Goal: Professional use of electronic communications</p>	HR/IT	PP Guideline	<p>Annually – June</p> <p>December 2015</p>
3.2	<p>Create an IT/GIS Steering Committee</p> <p>Goal: Help to improve communication among users and ensure IT/GIS resources are used to achieve the best outcome</p>	IT/GIS	Guidelines	<p>Annually – June</p> <p>December 2016</p>
3.3	<p>District direction on GIS technologies</p> <p>Goal: Create a five-year plan for District GIS technologies</p>	Mgmt./Staff/BOT	Report	September 2015
<p>4. Human Resources</p> <p>Objective: To recruit, develop, and retain, a professional, high quality, motivated workforce.</p> <p>Strategy: Provide competitive compensation, a safe and dignified work environment, and educational and advancement opportunities by incorporating best management practices.</p>				
4.1	<p>Develop and conduct employee satisfaction surveys every three years</p> <p>Goal: Improve district culture</p>	Mgmt.	Survey	<p>Every 3 yrs.</p> <p>2017</p>
4.2	<p>Recruit, develop, and retain a professional, high quality, healthy workforce.</p> <p>Goal: Support and promote motivated employees</p>	HR/Mgmt.	Report	<p>Annually</p> <p>January 2016</p>

STRATEGIC ISSUES, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES & GOALS		Who	Product	When
6. Research and Development Objective: Support the development, incorporation, and evaluation of control procedures and products that are environmentally sound, cost effective, and science-based. Strategy: Use both internal and external research to ensure the District’s Integrated Vector Management Program is effective, efficient, and responsive.				
6.1	Identify and maintain strong relationships with external researchers Goal: Improve vector control practices based on up-to-date research	Mgmt./BOT/Sup/Staff	Reports	Annually in January
6.2	Conduct internal research to enhance operational methods Goal: Determine if IVM program can be improved by researching new methods	Mgmt./Sup/Staff	Reports	Ongoing
6.3	Implement findings of internal and external research to improve IVM program Goal: Update and if necessary create District SOPs, manuals, and guidelines annually to incorporate research findings.	Mgmt./Sup	SOPs Manuals Guidelines	Annually in February
6.4	Perform feasibility study regarding the use laboratory facility by outside agencies Goal: Determine administrative, financial, and operating cost for offering testing to other local vector control agencies and researchers	Mgmt./Sup/Staff	Report	December 2016

STRATEGIC ISSUE, OBJECTIVE, STRATEGY & GOALS	WHO	PRODUCT	WHEN	
<p>7. Community Outreach Objective: Strengthen residents’ knowledge and awareness of local vectors and vector-borne diseases in order to improve their quality of life and that of their community. Strategy: Enhance current community outreach with better access to both printed and online information on vector awareness and best management practices.</p>				
7.1	<p>Develop and enhance online presence</p> <p>Goal: Increase awareness and accessibility of our services, educate public, promote events, build relationships through social media channels and improved District website</p>	Mgmt. / PO / IT	Report	January 2016
7.2	<p>Develop content and activities for Coachella Valley students</p> <p>Goal: Provide internships, curriculum, online resources to create awareness of vector-borne diseases and the importance of “Fight the Bite Together”</p>	Mgmt./Sup / Prof/Tech Staff	Report	December 2016
<p>8. Capital Improvement Objective: Forecast needs to meet the changing services required to achieve the District’s mission statement. Strategy: Develop a needs assessment process for capital improvements.</p>				
8.1	<p>Board Policy on Undeveloped Land</p> <p>Goal: Make decision about undeveloped property</p>	Mgmt./BOT	Board Policy	March 2016
8.2	<p>Board Policy on Thermal Property</p> <p>Goal: Keep/sell land, revisit maintenance of environmentally compromised land</p>	Mgmt./BOT	Board Policy	January 2016
8.3	<p>District Direction on Fleet Operations</p> <p>Goal: Establish direction on fleet replacement</p>	Mgmt./BOT	Board Policy	January 2016

STRATEGIC ISSUE, OBJECTIVE, STRATEGY & GOALS		Who	Product	When
9. Board Governance Objective: To have an ethical, knowledgeable, and effective Board of Trustees. Strategy: Provide a comprehensive orientation for new Board members and ongoing education and training opportunities for all Trustees in all aspects of the District’s business, as well as regulatory compliance.				
9.1	Orientation plan implementation Goal: Ensure regulatory compliance and familiarize Trustees with the District’s role in the Community	GM/AA	Trustee Orientation Program	March 2016 Annually
9.2	District message delivery workshop Goal: Ensure Trustees are familiar with District mission, activities, and messaging, and know how to effectively represent the District during encounters with city officials and the public	Mgmt./PO	Workshop	May 2016 Annually

LIST OF ATTENDEES

TRUSTEES

Doug Walker, Board President

Bruce Underwood, Dr. P.H, Vice President

Bito Larson, Secretary

Shelley Kaplan, City of Cathedral City

MANAGEMENT/STAFF

Branka B. Lothrop, Ph.D., General Manager

David l'Anson, M.P.A., M.B.A., A.C.C., Finance Manager

Jeremy Wittie, M.S., Scientific Operations Manager

Anita Jones, Human Resources Manager

Jill Oviatt, M.C.D.M., Public Information Manager

Edward Prendez, IT Manager

Jennifer Henke, M.S., Environmental Biologist

Gregory White, Ph.D., Vector Ecologist

Rodney Chamberlain, Lead Supervisor

Roberta Dieckmann, Field Supervisor

Oldembour Avalos, Field Supervisor

Michael Martinez, Field Supervisor

Geneva Ginn, Lead Technician and CSEA representative

Abby Torres, Administrative Clerk and Teamsters representative

Marko Petrovic, IT/GIS Analyst and Teamsters representative