

Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority

Strategic Plan



2007

Adopted by FCAA Board of Directors:
November 20, 2007

Message from the Executive Director

In December 2004, the Board of Directors of the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority adopted its first Strategic Plan to provide the groundwork for the Authority's continuing evolution, guiding our strategic investments, and focusing on our strategic goals. Since the adoption of the plan in 2004, the Authority has completed or made measurable progress on the initiatives and stated goals. We are a public utility which provides water services that includes the production and distribution of drinking water, the collection and treatment of wastewater, and the production and distribution of reclaimed water.

However, as the needs of the community, our employees, and the environment continue to change and become increasingly complex, dynamic, and challenging, it is important to review our strategies on a regular basis to ensure they continue to provide a solid foundation for the delivery of cost-effective, reliable water services.

In 2007, while many of our initial strategic goals remain the same, some additional goals and initiatives have been added. This plan is the product of strategic priorities and overall direction established by our Board of Directors, with input from a diverse cross section of FKAA staff.

In addition to updating the Strategic Plan, in order to meet the challenges ahead, we constantly re-examine and improve our processes, procedures and business practices to ensure that we move forward efficiently and effectively in putting these plans into action. We also look for opportunities to maximize the effectiveness of our resources and funding.

Through this process, we have worked to establish a business culture that is value-driven, empowers our employees, and clearly defines and enables success. Our values permeate the culture and become evident to the public as the characteristics we exhibit while conducting our day-to-day business. The Strategic Plan serves as the foundation for annual work plans and provides guidance to employees as they contribute to the Authority's mission and vision on a daily basis. Performance measures are used to track progress and employees' performance plans and performance-based evaluations have been aligned with the strategic goals and initiatives.

But it takes more than plans and money to meet our goals. It takes people ... and we have the best! The Authority is working more strategically to ensure that our team of professionals has the skills and leadership abilities to serve the Keys communities, now and well into the future.

The reason we are here is to provide a vital service in the delivery of water services, and this Strategic Plan will ensure that we stay focused on that very basic – and very vital – responsibility. The Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority looks forward to continuing to provide outstanding customer service as we further our quest to become renowned for our use of innovative technology and the highest quality water services delivered as efficiently as possible.

*James Reynolds, P.E., Executive Director
Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority*

About the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority

The Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority (FKAA) was created in 1937 by Special Legislation of the State of Florida. The FKAA is the sole provider of potable water for all of the residents of the Florida Keys and currently serves more than 80,000 residents within Monroe County. Potable water is transported to the Florida Keys through a 130-mile transmission pipeline with over 650 miles of distribution pipelines that deliver water directly to our customers. In 1998 and 2002, the Authority's Enabling Legislation was amended to redefine the primary purposes of the Authority to include collecting, treating, and disposing of wastewater in unincorporated areas of the Florida Keys as environmental concerns regarding near shore water quality issues in Monroe County became a growing priority. Recently, the Authority initiated the production and distribution of reclaimed water within two of our wastewater districts.

The FKAA is governed by a five-member Board of Directors who are appointed by the Governor of the State of Florida. The members represent each of the five County Commission districts and are appointed from areas corresponding with the district boundaries. The Governor appoints the members for staggered 4-year terms. The FKAA Board of Directors is a policy making Board and its powers and duties include the right to negotiate and establish employee compensation; enter into contracts; prosecute and defend lawsuits; build, operate and maintain water production and distribution facilities, along with wastewater collection, treatment and disposal facilities; and in general, do all those things included in the operation of a water and wastewater utility.

The Board of Directors directly employs the Executive Director, its representative, whose duty it is to carry out the plans and policies directed by the Board. The Executive Director is supported by a Deputy Executive Director, and a number of Department and Assistant Department Directors who further facilitate the implementation of the plans and policies of the Board.

The FKAA serves a diverse and active stakeholder community including other government agencies and our individual customers and community organizations. FKAA continues to work collaboratively with each of these entities to ensure that we understand and address their concerns and that we tailor our services to meet their needs. In doing so, FKAA remains committed to providing safe water and managing wastewater in an environmentally sound, cost-effective manner, striving to continuously improve service to our customers while planning for sustainable solutions in meeting our community's future needs.

Vision

The Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority is a nationally renowned utility with outstanding customer service; dedicated, professional and highly skilled employees; is committed to protection of the unique and sensitive Keys environment, and for delivering the highest quality water services in the most cost effective manner.

Mission

The Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority provides reliable water services to the residents and visitors of the Florida Keys in the most cost effective manner while providing quality workmanship. We continuously strive to deliver an outstanding product, maintain excellent customer service, and protect the environment.

Values

To achieve our mission, the Authority is committed to the following values:

- Customer satisfaction
- Excellent water quality
- Community involvement
- Strong working relationships with municipal, county, state and federal government agencies
- Employee development, communication and career growth
- Well-maintained, reliable, and secure systems
- Financial stability
- Cost effective services
- Protection of environmental resources

Guiding Principles

In providing the highest quality water services to our customers, we follow these guiding principles in our daily operations:

Customer Focused: We anticipate and respond to the needs and interests of our customers, visitors to the Keys, and local, state and federal governments.

Efficient: We work in an efficient and cost-effective manner, applying innovation that provides the best value for our customers with the lowest impact on our environment.

Performance-Based: We retain a highly skilled and well trained workforce to achieve excellent results, measured against best industry practices.

Cooperative: We work as partners, using the strengths, skills, and knowledge of all team members, including other local, regional and national stakeholders, to continue to serve as community leaders.

Employee Oriented: We value the input and contributions of our employees, empowering them with training and technology necessary to be highly effective and successful in their service to the customer.

Safe: We believe no job is so important and no service so urgent that we cannot perform our work safely.

Environmental Stewards: We recognize our responsibilities to act as stewards of natural resources.

Integrity: We provide services in an honest and fair manner.

Strategic Goals, Initiatives, and Implementation Strategies

Our Strategic Goals define what we seek to accomplish to fulfill FKAA’s Vision. They reflect the unique challenges that the FKAA faces as a provider of water services for the Florida Keys. These Goals simultaneously address infrastructure needs, opportunities to enhance customer services, and responsibilities for stewardship of our environmental resources.

- A. Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)
- B. Customer Service and Community Presence
- C. Quality Staff
- D. Safe, secure and reliable system
- E. Efficiency, Optimization and Sustainability
- F. Future Water Supplies

Our approach to accomplishing these goals is framed by the institutional and legal position as a Special District of the State of Florida. We have assessed these conditions and developed our strategic plan based on the following strategic initiatives that will allow us to meet our goals. The following outline identifies specific initiatives that have been developed and implemented to ensure that strategic goals are achieved.

A. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP)

1. Ensure financial efficiency of the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) delivery
 - a. Update financial plan annually
 - (1) Account for full cost approach, including operations and maintenance costs to ensure sufficient long term funding
 - (2) Benchmark the cost of outsourced design management services
 - (3) Conduct value engineering and/or life cycle costs analysis for large projects
 - (4) Consider alternative procurement/construction methods for Capital Improvement Plan projects

- (5) Pre-qualify contractors for eligibility to bid
- (6) Purchase owner-furnished equipment

- b. Staff development and training for the Capital Improvement Plan
 - (1) Develop Enterprise System construction management training module
 - (2) Develop staffing plan, identify staff and train staff to aid in delivery of Capital Improvement Plan, including training on program elements
 - (3) Identify in-house crews for new and replacement pipeline work, emergency repairs and quick action for small to medium sized projects

- c. Complete comprehensive study of underground infrastructure to assess condition and replacement needs

- d. Secure land and initiate permitting process for construction of Capital Improvement Plan projects
 - (1) Partner with other agencies to improve efficiency and reduce cost for land acquisition

- e. Establish real-time scheduling for project and Capital Improvement Plan status
 - (1) Develop interactive Capital Improvement Plan scheduler to manage project status
 - (2) Produce tracking report for Capital Improvement Plan to monitor project progress

B. CUSTOMER SERVICE AND COMMUNITY PRESENCE

- 1. Enhance customer service
 - a. Provide on-line customer self-service and account management
 - b. Complete Automated Meter Reading (AMR) installation

- c. Establish process and database to track and analyze customer communications
2. Develop customer service awareness and information seeking survey to establish baseline, track trends and implement focused public information programs
3. Develop ongoing customer awareness and education program
 - a. Recognize water quality, taste, safety, value, and affordability
 - b. Schedule plant tours
 - c. Provide education on drought conditions and water supply
 - d. Prepare Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) sheet for all employees
 - e. Institute a customer ambassador program for all employees to give them the requisite knowledge to provide excellent customer service.
4. Develop rate-specific communication strategy to build understanding and support for new rates needed to fund required infrastructure
5. Explore enterprise opportunities to create value, income and community recognition
 - a. Evaluate opportunities to read service meters and bill for other utilities
 - b. Evaluate bottled water production capability, including product give-away and/or sales plan
6. Promote community involvement by employees participating in service organizations

C. QUALITY STAFF

1. Develop strategic staff plan
 - a. Identify retirement timeline and identify replacement hires
 - b. Develop succession plan to ensure future staffing and leadership needs are met
 - c. Revisit re-organization plan for effectiveness and staff needs

2. Develop and implement strategic recruiting strategy
 - a. Partner with Florida Keys Community College or other educational facilities to provide employee training and staff recruiting
 - b. Establish recruiting message for all job postings and recruiting material that establishes the Authority's social, environmental and economic relevance
 - c. Evaluate pay for performance method of compensation to aid in employee retention and recruiting
 - d. Budget relocation fees and other financial incentives to attract employees
 - e. Provide internships for local schools
 - f. Participate in career fairs
 - g. Benchmark Fortune 500 "Best Places to Work" companies for possible implementation of selected workplace practices
 - h. Compare current benefits package with other progressive utilities and other employers in the Keys, and with employee expectations

3. Staff communication and recognition
 - a. Enhance employee orientation program
 - b. Develop and implement internal communications strategy
 - c. Develop meaningful reward and recognition programs for employees who do good work separate from annual salary increases and proposed pay for performance

- d. Develop employee networking and mentoring program
 - e. Continue quarterly employee meetings; increase face time with executive staff
4. Create an employee development program that provides clear path for progression and ensures that qualified employees have opportunities for advancement
 - a. Develop internal, qualified trainers throughout service area to reduce travel time
 - b. Institute employee development course to be offered at regular intervals throughout the company to provide awareness of roles, responsibilities and corporate structure
 - c. Continue implementation of leadership training program for new managers to be delivered at regular intervals
 - d. Define alternative career paths to allow for progression for employees that do not seek the management career path
 - e. Provide cross-functional and team training to improve efficiency, provide opportunity and build skill redundancy
5. Conduct employee survey to identify needs and expectations so that above strategies are effective
6. Realign the Human Resources Division to the Executive Office to provide visibility and to ensure the integration of vision, mission, values and culture throughout the Authority
 - a. Prepare a written charter establishing the division's role
 - b. Develop departmental goals that align with those of HR
7. Implement new work flow processes for the Human Resources Division consistent with enterprise-wide software
 - a. Expand employee self-service capabilities and redefine the department workflows to allow managers to be goal oriented rather than task oriented

- b. Create interdepartmental teams that contribute to common goals and set benchmarks for evaluation

D. SAFE, SECURE AND RELIABLE SYSTEM

1. Develop and perform drills for emergency preparedness plan response strategy
 - a. Vulnerability Assessment, Emergency Response Plan and Hurricane Preparedness meetings should include practice drill sessions as part of the regular emergency preparedness activities
 - b. Perform regular assessment of IT network vulnerability
 - c. Integrate Enterprise System with Emergency Response Plan to utilize tools available in the Enterprise System
 - d. Develop Disaster Recovery Plan including departmental priorities to effectively restore work processes after a disaster
 - e. Assess pipeline security and vulnerability to develop greater contingency planning for emergencies
 - f. Develop partnerships with individuals, vendors, agencies, etc. that will affect ability to restore water supply during a crisis
 - g. Evaluate climate change and system vulnerability from sea-level rise and change in rainfall patterns, which might affect supply availability and water demands
 - h. Regularly evaluate safety practices to assure a safe working environment, including comprehensive utilization of the FCAA Safety Committee.
2. Develop and implement system-wide security plan and procedure
 - a. Develop personnel and facilities security plan
 - b. Identify and pursue State and Federal funds to support FCAA security efforts

3. Review, update and expand Wellfield Monitoring Program to protect integrity of FKAA potable water supply
 - a. Evaluate current wellfield monitoring services provided by DERM for thoroughness and effectiveness
 - b. Identify monitoring program elements which could supplement the wellfield monitoring conducted by DERM
 - c. Evaluate the permitting of properties located within the cone of influence of the Florida City wellfield

Monitor and evaluate proposed sources of contamination and provide regulatory input, as needed. (e.g. expansion of FPLs Turkey Point Nuclear Power Plant and associated groundwater demand)
4. Review and update plans to ensure system reliability
 - a. Expand cathodic protection
 - b. Assess need for additional storage tanks throughout the system
 - c. Assess condition of transmission pipeline for future replacement
 - d. Evaluate opportunities to improve fire flow in areas where the distribution system is being upgraded
 - e. Explore possible interconnects and strategic partnerships with neighboring water utilities for emergency supplies

E. EFFICIENCY, OPTIMIZATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

1. Complete the development and implementation of the Enterprise System and Asset Management program
 - a. Complete the data collection efforts and build upon Geographic Information System and tie into Enterprise System
 - b. Integrate the Preventive Maintenance Program into the Enterprise System
 - c. Include optimization studies as part of the Asset Management Program
2. Develop sustainable strategies

- a. Evaluate LEED™ standards for all FKAA facilities to reduce environmental footprint and meet expected State standards to the extent it is cost effective
- b. Complete energy optimization study and implementation plan for the FKAA
 - (1) Explore use of alternative fuels, including replacement of fleet vehicles with hybrid vehicles
 - (2) Review operating practices and explore use of energy efficient equipment and alternative energy
 - (3) Explore energy recovery strategies, especially in conjunction with desalination facilities

F. FUTURE WATER SUPPLIES

1. Update Water Supply Strategic Plan in 2010, and every 5 years thereafter, with attention to changing population and demographic data
2. Re-evaluate wellfield monitoring program
3. Explore possible interconnects and strategic partnerships with neighboring water utilities for emergency supplies and contracts for sales of excess capacity
4. Fund and implement a cost-effective water conservation program
 - a. Develop Drought Plan, including operating protocol, to establish procedures during restricted water supplies
 - b. Conduct drought-based rate study to ensure revenue sufficiency during drought due to decreased water supplies or decreased water sales
 - c. Identify and evaluate options to subsidize residential/business installations of water efficient systems such as rain catchment systems

and low flow retrofits

5. Expand unaccounted-for water program
 - a. Review procedures to validate revenue and non-revenue loss accounting
 - b. Expand leak detection efforts
 - c. Accelerate AMR program to establish real time data to identify areas of unaccounted-for water loss
6. Develop implementation strategy and continue development of reclaimed water program
 - a. Conduct cost benefit analysis on installation of reclaimed water throughout the service area
 - b. Explore partnerships with Keys wastewater providers to reclaim their wastewater flows
 - c. Develop Reclaimed Water Master Plan
 - d. Develop Rules and Regulations, inclusive of fees and charges, for reclaimed water
7. Evaluate storm water catchment for treatment and introduction into the reclaimed water system and other beneficial reclaim opportunities
8. Evaluate feasibility of converting seawater desalination facility to full-time operational status rather than solely for emergency supply