



## CALAVERAS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT External Relations Committee Meeting

### OUR MISSION

Protect, enhance, and develop Calaveras County's water resources and watersheds to provide safe, reliable, and cost-effective services to our communities.

2021-2026 Strategic Plan, Adopted April 28, 2021, can be viewed at this [link](#)

External Relations Committee  
Monday, June 15, 2026  
1:00 p.m.

Calaveras County Water District  
120 Toma Court  
San Andreas, California 95249

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Administration Office at 209-754-3028. Notification in advance of the meeting will enable CCWD to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. Any documents that are made available to the Board before or at the meeting, not privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure, and related to agenda items, will be made available at CCWD for review by the public.

District Board Meetings are open to in-person attendance by the public and are conducted virtually. The public may participate in the District's Board meeting with the link below. Members of the public who participate in the meeting via teleconference or web conference will be given the opportunity to speak and address the Board, and their comments will be included in the recording of the meeting.

While the District makes efforts to facilitate remote participation, please be aware that remote Teams involvement is offered solely for convenience. In the event of a technological malfunction, the Board can only guarantee the receipt of live comments through in-person attendance. With the exception of a noticed teleconference meeting, the Board retains the right to proceed with the meeting without remote access in case of a malfunction.

### Microsoft Teams meeting

#### Join:

<https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/22522059400796?p=0MR7ebb7jklhalFD2p>

Meeting ID: 225 220 594 007 96

Passcode: 3Tz9qg9U

#### Dial in by phone

[+1 323-647-8603,,264736992#](tel:+13236478603,264736992)

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 264 736 992#

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#### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Jeffrey Robertson, Chair

Scott Ratterman, Director

## **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

### **CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

1. **ROLL CALL**

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**At this time, members of the public may address the Committee on any non-agendized item. The public is encouraged to work through staff to place items on the agenda for consideration. Comments are limited to three minutes per person.**

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

3a Approval of the Minutes from the Committee Meeting held on March 23, 2026

4. **NEW BUSINESS**

4a Student Scholarship Program – 2026 Awards  
(Kelly Gerkenmeyer, External Affairs Manager)

4b\* Customer Impact of the Duplicate Billing Issue  
(Kelly Zanhiser, Director of Administrative Services)

4c Workshop on Potential Billing Changes and Public Input  
(Kelly Gerkenmeyer, External Affairs Manager)

4d\* Committee's Video Production Request  
(Jeffrey Robertson, Director)

4e\* External Affairs Report  
(Kelly Gerkenmeyer, External Affairs Manager)

5.\* **GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS**

6.\* **DIRECTOR COMMENTS OR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

7. **NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING**

- September 21, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**



# AGENDA ITEM

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**CALAVERAS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT  
EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MINUTES  
MARCH 23, 2026**

The following Committee Members were present:

Jeff Robertson                      Director  
Scott Ratterman                     Director

Staff Present:                      Michael Minkler                      General Manager  
                                                 Rebecca Hitchcock                      Clerk to the Board  
                                                 Kelly Gerkensmeyer                      External Affairs Manager  
                                                 Dylan Smith\*                              Information Systems Administrator  
                                                 Kevin Williams\*                            District Engineer  
                                                 Kate Jesus\*                                Human Resources Technician  
                                                 Haley Airola\*                              Engineering Coordinator  
                                                 Andrew Renshaw\*                         Water Resources Manager  
                                                 Jesse Hampton\*                            Plant Operations Manager  
                                                 Tiffany Burke\*                              Operations Administrative Technician

Public Present:                      Jessica Self, UPUD  
                                                 Justin Erickson, Streamline  
                                                 Kyle Harvey,  
                                                 Dana Nichols  
                                                 Dane Wadle

\*Attended the meeting virtually

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**1.        ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m., and Director Robertson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2.        PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment was heard.

**3.        APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

3a        Approval of the Minutes from the Committee Meeting held on October 22, 2024

Director Ratterman moved to approve the Minutes for the meeting of October 22, 2024, and Director Robertson seconded the motion.

#### 4. **NEW BUSINESS**

- 4a External Relations Committee Scope  
(Scott Ratterman, Director)

**DISCUSSION:** Director Ratterman provided an overview of the Committee's initial objectives and mission. He emphasized his desire for the Committee to address not only external relations with customers but also interactions with outside agencies, highlighting how those partnerships can enhance the District's interests.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** No public comment was heard.

- 4b CSDA Calaveras Chapter Presentation  
Chapter President – Jessica Self, Vice President – Kyle Harvey, Secretary - Dana Nichols and Senior Public Affairs Field Supervisor – Sierra Network, Dane Wadle

**DISCUSSION:** Jessica Self, Kyle Harvey, Dana Nichols, and Dane Wadle discussed the formation of the CSDA Calaveras Chapter, highlighting its mission to unify special districts in Calaveras County for advocacy, collaboration, and resource sharing, with support from the Calaveras County Water District and other local agencies

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** No public comment was heard.

- 4c Department of Justice PDF Accessibility Requirements  
(Kelly Gerkenmeyer, External Affairs Manager and Dallas Madison, Account Manager for Streamline)

**DISCUSSION:** Justin Erickson, assisted by Kelly Gerkenmeyer, informed the committee about updated federal and state mandates regarding website and PDF accessibility. He detailed the associated risks, explained the compliance deadlines, and introduced DocAccess as an automated solution proposed for the District.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Public comment was provided by Jessica Self.

- 4d Calaveras County Water District 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
(Kelly Gerkenmeyer, External Affairs Manager)

**DISCUSSION:** Kelly Gerkenmeyer went over historical records and talked about ways to mark the Calaveras County Water District's 80th anniversary in 2026. The Committee considered partnering with other local water agencies for joint events to showcase regional water history. Celebration ideas included collaborating with other districts, inviting retired staff to participate, and organizing outreach efforts to honor the District's legacy and inform the public.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Public comment was provided by Jessica Self.

- 4e External Affairs Report  
(Kelly Gerkenmeyer, External Affairs Manager)

**DISCUSSION:** Kelly Gerkenmeyer provided an update on recent and upcoming external affairs activities, including public information initiatives, participation in community events, and educational outreach to schools and local organizations.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** No public comment was heard.

**5. GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS**

Michael Minkler indicated that he had no further updates and would reserve his remarks for the next Board meeting.

**6. DIRECTOR COMMENTS OR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Director Robertson requested a 10-minute video explaining CCWD's rates, infrastructure, and comparison to other districts to address community concerns

**7. NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING**

- June 15,2026, at 1:00 p.m.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:34 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Rebecca Hitchcock  
Clerk to the Board



# AGENDA ITEM

4a



# Agenda Item

DATE: June 15, 2026  
TO: Michael Minkler, General Manager  
FROM: Kelly Gerkenmeyer, External Affairs Manager  
SUBJECT: Student Scholarship Program – 2026 Awards

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## **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Discussion regarding the 2026 Student Scholarship Program.

## **SUMMARY:**

The Calaveras County Water District (CCWD), in partnership with East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), offers an annual Student Scholarship Program to support local high school seniors pursuing higher education. This program is designed to promote awareness of water resources, encourage academic achievement, and foster interest in water-related careers and stewardship.

For 2026, CCWD and EBMUD jointly funded four (4) scholarships in the amount of \$500 each, for a total program cost of \$2,000, with costs shared equally between the two agencies.

This year's essay prompt, *"Water Roots: Our Local Source Story - Where does your community's water come from, and why does it matter?"*, encouraged students to explore the origin of their local water supply and reflect on its importance to their community's sustainability, economy, and future.

Submissions demonstrated a strong understanding of regional water systems, watershed connections, and the importance of responsible water management. The program continues to serve as a meaningful outreach effort—connecting students to local water issues while elevating awareness of the District's role in providing safe and reliable water supplies.

Four scholarship recipients were selected based on the quality, originality, and depth of their essays. Copies of the winning essays are included as attachments to this report.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES:**

**CE-01** Instill a districtwide culture that fosters positive customer experiences.

**CE-04** Engage customers and educate on District's achievements through local venues and outreach.

**CE-05** Connect with our County residents and businesses by engaging with them regularly at local events, press releases, news stations, and communications that highlight how the District is serving them.

**PI-12** Educate and engage our communities about the District's commitment to healthy watersheds and forests.

**PP-03** Create a recognizable presence in the County through thought leadership and rebranding.

**PP-07** Increase District recognition and expand partnerships' engagement through community events and outreach opportunities.

**EO-01** Develop a District that our customers value and our Board and staff are proud to serve through a recognizable and respected brand.

**EO-04** Ensure proactive succession planning to leverage our sustaining staff knowledge and integrate the next generation to inspire stability and innovation.

## **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

The total cost of the 2026 scholarship program was \$2,000. CCWD's share is \$1,000.

*Attachments: Student Scholarship Essay's  
Bret Harte High School Thank You Letter*

FULL NAME OF APPLICANT: Brayden Bowersox

## CALAVERAS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT ESSAY

Please write an answer to the following prompt:  
Where does your community's water come from, and why does it matter?

With the falling of each unique snowflake and life-giving drop of rain, Calaveras County (and neighboring Alpine County) receives another blessing. Those blessings include opportunities to ski in Bear Valley, kayak on New Spicer Meadow Reservoir, swim in White Pines Lake, fish the North Fork Stanislaus River, drink pristine water, grow fresh tomatoes in our gardens, and power our homes with renewable hydropower. According to UNESCO, approximately 50 percent of the world's population experiences severe water scarcity for at least part of the year, but not the residents of Calaveras County ([unesco.org](http://unesco.org)). We are blessed to live in an upper watershed of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, which normally receives plenty of snow in the winter. According to the National Weather Service, Ebbetts Pass (Tamarack, CA) even holds United States snowfall records, recognized as receiving the most snow in a calendar month (390 inches or approximately 32.5 feet) in January 1911, and for having the greatest measured snow depth on the ground (451 inches or approximately 37.6 feet) in March 1911 ([weather.gov](http://weather.gov)).

Yet, despite the abundance of rain and snow we receive most winters, it is not uncommon for Calaveras County to receive little to no precipitation for 4 to 6 months each summer and fall, which is exactly the time of year when a cold drink of clean water is most appreciated. Luckily, however, not only are we blessed by Mother Nature, but we have also been set up by the forward thinking, strategic planning, and wise investment of those who came before us. Without the reservoirs which were built to store the water we receive in the winter, our summer kayaking and swimming would not be possible, our agriculture would die, we would not have as much electricity for our homes, and we certainly wouldn't have what I consider to be the best drinking water in

the world. I am extremely grateful for the reservoirs and water infrastructure we have, and I am inspired to pursue a career in engineering so I can bring similar blessings to future generations.

This is why it is important to understand where our water comes from: we cannot just assume it will always be there. Water is a wonderful blessing and a precious resource, but water systems require development, investment, and a dedicated workforce to manage it. The water I used to take a shower this morning is a blessing from God, but it is also a labor of love from CCWD, and I am grateful that they built New Spicer Meadows Reservoir to store the water until I needed it, filtered and chlorinated it at Hunters Water Treatment Plant, and installed and maintained the miles of water pipelines which delivered it my door, so that I could not only be blessed and inspired, but also clean and hydrated.

CCWD's mission is "to protect, enhance, and develop Calaveras County's water resources and watersheds to provide safe, reliable, and cost-effective services to our communities" (ccwd.org). I am a product of one of those communities. Growing up in this watershed, I have been surrounded by the beauty of our upper lakes, refreshed by our remote swimming holes, and privileged to see the inner works of our water infrastructure. Just like water, which feels the pull of gravity, I am being drawn to college, but the water that has been a huge part of my life will continue to dictate my future.

## Sources Used:

- <https://www.unesco.org/reports/wcdr/en/2024>
- [https://www.weather.gov/abr/This\\_Day\\_in\\_Weather\\_History\\_Jan\\_31](https://www.weather.gov/abr/This_Day_in_Weather_History_Jan_31)
- <https://www.ccd.org/strategic-plan>

## Water Roots: Our Local Source Story

Water is one of the most important things in any community, and Valley Springs relies heavily on it. The availability and quality of our water can directly impact our health, economy, and environment. However, not everyone that lives in Calaveras county gets their water from the same water source. While some residents rely on the convenience of city water, other people, like myself, depend on private wells. Furthermore, Valley Springs' agricultural area relies heavily on access to reliable water sources for irrigation and livestock.

For many individuals in Valley Springs, the Calaveras County Water District (CCWD) provides treated surface water. This water originates from the Sierra Nevada snowpack, which flows into reservoirs like Lake Camanche. CCWD then treats and distributes this water through a network of pipes to neighborhoods and businesses. This system offers the advantage of consistent quality monitoring and treatment, ensuring that Valley Springs residents receive water that meets strict safety standards. However, this convenience requires its users to pay monthly fees that reflect the cost of treatment, infrastructure maintenance, and future improvements.

In contrast, those of us who rely on private wells are directly connected to the groundwater beneath Valley Springs. Our wells tap into aquifers, which gives our water more nutrients than city water. Rainwater filters through the soil and replenishes their aquifers, but the amount of time it takes to refill can vary depending on how much it rains and land use. Well owners are usually responsible for the maintenance and testing of their water supply. This includes regular checks for contaminants like bacteria, nitrates, and arsenic, which can naturally occur in groundwater or as a result from human activities. You might think that obtaining your water from a well is cost-effective, but instead of paying for a water bill, you have to pay for the electricity to pump the water. Additionally, a downside of owning a well is that if you leave any water running without knowing, it could possibly drain your entire well. This has occurred many

## Water Roots: Our Local Source Story

times to my family and we must pay for potable water to refill our well. Therefore, while private wells offer a direct connection to groundwater and potential cost savings, they also come with responsibilities and potential drawbacks that city water systems do not.

Beyond residential use, water is essential for Calaveras' agricultural activities. Our local farms and ranches depend on water for irrigating crops, watering livestock, and maintaining overall operations. The availability and affordability of water directly impacts the viability of these agricultural businesses, which contribute significantly to our local economy and community. Both surface water and groundwater sources are utilized for agricultural purposes, making it crucial to manage these resources sustainably.

The differences between city water and well water in Calaveras county highlight the importance of responsible water management for our entire community. Relying too much on city water can strain reservoir levels, especially during droughts. Similarly, excessive groundwater pumping can drain aquifers, leading to lower water tables, potential land sinking, and increase the cost of pumping water, impacting both domestic wells and agricultural operations. Contamination of either surface or groundwater sources can have far-reaching consequences, affecting both our health and the environment, as well as the productivity of our agriculture. Therefore, it is important for Valley Springs to take on an extensive approach to water resource management that considers the needs of all residents and the long-term sustainability of our water sources.

When it comes to Calaveras County, we are fortunate to get our water from both surface water like rivers and reservoirs as well as groundwater. We have key sources like the Calaveras, Mokelumne, and Stanislaus Rivers collecting the Sierra Nevada runoff to give all residents sufficient water. On top of this we also store our water in reservoirs like New Hogan Lake and McKays Reservoir; managed by dams for supply. Rivers are more vulnerable to pollution or drought while groundwater can be more stable but limited. All of the bodies of water are managed by the Calaveras County Water District (CCWD) using dams and treatment plants to ensure the water is safe for consumption. Taking too much water from one specific area can harm ecosystems and the wildlife living in those areas. Our community is a focal point of agriculture, making it important for us to have high amounts of sufficient water for livestock and gardens. Clean water for livestock is crucial for animal health, preventing diseases like algae poisoning and giardia. Ranchers' goals are to ensure optimal production like meat, milk, eggs, and other crops; having clean water helps increase the rate of success for their businesses.

When it comes to residents, having a reliable source of clean water is essential for our overall health and safety. The failure to have clean water could lead to sickness, harmful bacteria, viruses, or even chemicals that we intake. A standard household needs clean water for basic tasks like cooking, drinking, and bathing. The knowledge of the origin of where our water is coming from matters as it dictates how the water is treated, managed for sustainability, protected from pollution, and allocated for the future. Knowing the origin also helps residents have a better understanding of why our county faces hardships like droughts, hard rock geology, over drafted basins, and watershed impacts from wildfires.

For Calaveras County, the hardest multi-faced challenge the CCWD is facing is the need for massive, costly upgrades to aging and underfunded water infrastructure. All while managing limited water resources during climate-driven droughts. These upgrades have brought in a lot of public outcries towards the CCWD. Many residents of our area don't necessarily understand the water rights and legal agreements between sharing water in different regions. It is important for residents of our community to understand all these hardships and rights before sharing their negative opinions on how the CCWD are handling things. Instead of the outbursts of negativity, the community being aware of where our water comes from could help support growth for the CCWD management efforts.

Conserving water is critical since we have faced drastic droughts in the previous years. We are very fortunate in Calaveras County for the volume of reservoirs that we can enjoy and recreate on, and for quality ground water that we can access. Calaveras County functions using the local rivers, reservoirs, and groundwaters but without the knowledge of this, the community will continue to not appreciate and understand the importance of our local, clean water.

FULL NAME OF APPLICANT: Urijah Gish

## CALAVERAS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT ESSAY

Please write an answer to the following prompt:  
Where does your community's water come from, and why does it matter?

Water is the most important natural resource and is essential for life on Earth, yet many people do not stop to think about where it comes from or how we access it. In Copperopolis, California, our water is supplied by the Calaveras County Water District (CCWD). Copperopolis depends on a public water system that primarily uses surface water sources such as rivers and lakes connected to the Stanislaus River. Lake Tulloch is one of the main providers of water for Copperopolis because it is the largest nearby water source. This water is collected, treated, and then delivered to local homes and businesses throughout the area.

The water used in Copperopolis begins as rainfall and snowmelt from the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Once collected by CCWD, it is treated at the Copper Cove Water Treatment Plant to ensure it is safe to drink. Groundwater in the area can contain harmful chemicals and other unreliable factors that may cause health issues, which is why surface water is the most dependable source for the Copperopolis community.

Understanding where Copperopolis' water comes from is important for several reasons. Surface water supplies depend on rainfall and can be severely affected by drought, which is why water conservation is especially important in Copperopolis. The entire community relies on a well-maintained water system that includes treatment plants, pipelines, and other infrastructure to ensure a consistent water supply. Reliable water sources are also critical for community safety and the environment, especially during a recurring theme of frequent wildfires. Without access to a dependable water supply, the community would be at serious risk. My house was a threat to the wildfires that blazed on the Copperopolis mountain, and without the easy water resources, it may not be standing even today. Knowing the source of our water encourages residents to use it wisely.

In conclusion, a reliable water source is extremely important for a community like Copperopolis because we depend on it for daily life, businesses, and emergency situations such as wildfires. Copperopolis' water

comes from surface water managed by the Calaveras County Water District, and understanding where our water comes from helps the community protect this vital resource for the future.



## BRET HARTE UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 7000 · 323 S. Main St. · Angels Camp, California 95221 · (209) 736-8340 · Fax (209) 736-8367  
e-mail: [bhdist@bhuhsd.k12.ca.us](mailto:bhdist@bhuhsd.k12.ca.us)

May 20, 2026

To: Water Roots: Where does your community's water come from, and why does it Matter?

Kelly Gerkenmeyer  
120 Toma Ct.  
San Andreas, CA 95249

**RE: Thank You for Your Donation**

Dear Water Roots: Where does your community's water come from, and why does it Matter?,

On behalf of the students, faculty, and staff of Bret Harte High School, we extend our deepest gratitude for your generous contributions to our scholarship fund. Your unwavering support has made a significant impact on the lives of our students, and we are truly grateful for your commitment to their future success.

Thanks to your incredible generosity, we are thrilled to share that this year, our community has donated over \$250,000 for student scholarships. This remarkable achievement will enable numerous deserving students to pursue their academic dreams and unlock their full potential. Your donations have provided them with opportunities they might not have otherwise had, and we are confident that they will make you proud.

The impact of your donations goes beyond just financial assistance. You have instilled hope, motivation, and a sense of belief in our students. Your support shows them that their community believes in them and is invested in their future. This encouragement is invaluable and will stay with them as they embark on their academic and professional journeys.

We are incredibly proud of the achievements of our students and the dedication of our faculty and staff. Your contributions empower us to provide them with the resources and support they need to succeed. We are committed to ensuring that your donations are used wisely and have the greatest possible impact on our students. We will continue to work hard to provide them with the best possible educational experience and equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in the 21st century.

Thank you once again for your incredible support. Your generosity has made a tremendous difference in the lives of our students, and we are deeply grateful.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Scott Nanik, written in a cursive style.

Scott Nanik, Superintendent  
Bret Harte Union High School District



# AGENDA ITEM

4c



# Agenda Item

DATE: June 15, 2026

TO: Michael Minkler, General Manager

FROM: Kelly Gerkenmeyer, External Affairs Manager

SUBJECT: Discussion regarding Potential Billing Changes and Public Input

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## **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Receive public feedback and Committee input on potential billing changes and provide direction on future outreach and engagement.

## **SUMMARY:**

Staff are exploring potential changes to the District's billing structure to improve transparency and customer budgeting. Concepts under consideration include:

- Separate water and sewer bills
- Changes to billing frequency (e.g., monthly options)
- Alternative billing approaches, including placement of charges on the tax roll

Currently, customers receive combined water and sewer charges on a bimonthly basis. This format can create confusion, as bills may be perceived as a monthly water charge rather than a combined bill covering two services over a two-month period.

Additionally, larger, less frequent bills may present budgeting challenges for some customers. A more consistent billing approach may be particularly beneficial for customers on fixed incomes who prefer predictable and manageable payment amounts.

Given these considerations, public input is a critical first step in evaluating potential changes.

## **DISCUSSION:**

The purpose of this agenda item is to gather early committee and public feedback on potential billing changes prior to the development of any formal proposals. Input received will:

- Identify customer preferences and concerns

- Provide insight into billing frequency and structure
- Help inform future policy discussion and staff recommendations

## **Public Workshop**

**This agenda item will be conducted as a structured public workshop** to provide an opportunity for focused community input, particularly on billing frequency and structure.

The workshop will include:

- A brief staff overview of potential billing alternatives  
Explanation of possible billing frequency options and customer impacts
- An opportunity for public comments and discussion **specific to billing frequency, structure, and customer preferences**

The workshop format is intended to solicit input while maintaining a clear focus on billing-related topics.

## **NEXT STEPS:**

- Compile and review public and Committee input
- Consider other outreach
- Identify key themes and community priorities
- Return to the Committee with a summary of feedback and recommended next steps, including outreach strategies

## **STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES:**

**CE-01** Instill a districtwide culture that fosters positive customer experiences.

**CE-02** Improve communications with customers through the following:

- a. Seeking to understand the customer's point of view to improve District service
- b. Prioritizing responsiveness to phone calls and electronic inquiries
- c. Enhancing access and response times through technology, especially as related to emergency situations

**CE-03** Implement strategies to get customer input (e.g., customer surveys) to inquire about experiences, obtain feedback, understand priorities, and learn preferred communication modes.

**EO-02** Create efficiencies and long-term cost effectiveness through advancing technology and modernizing business practices.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

None at this time.