January 2022

3-Year Strategic Plan

Kitsap County Public Works
Stormwater Division

> “Water is the driving force of all nature.”
>
> *— LEONARDO DA VINCI*

Executive Summary

Greetings! As the Senior Program Manager of the Kitsap County Public Works Stormwater Division and a Kitsap County resident, I am pleased to present our 3-Year Strategic Plan.

As Leonardo da Vinci noted, "water is the driving force of all nature", and water is what makes Kitsap County such a unique and majestic place to live. With over 250 miles of coastline, numerous salmon-bearing streams, and bounded on both sides by two major waterbodies – Hood Canal and Puget Sound – we are all about water! Unfortunately, as development has increased across the years, so have the challenges wrought by human impacts upon the environment – pollution, flooding, and environmental degradation.

With years of experience and specialized expertise, Kitsap County Stormwater has established itself as a driving force in the stormwater industry. Our well-respected, innovative, and reliable agency provides management of stormwater runoff that reduces local flooding, prevents pollution, and restores natural habitat. These core tenets protect the health of our citizens, the environment, and Kitsap's precious natural waterways, as well as support sustainable development and recreational opportunities. We support these big ideas with our internal goals and core business strategies – maintaining a culture of accountability and fiscal responsibility, encouraging innovation and continual improvement, and supporting and developing a team of dedicated and passionate staff who provide superior customer service to the growing community we serve.

Just as change came to the landscape before us, we know that more changes are yet to come. We embrace those opportunities to continue to grow, learn, improve, and maintain our role as proactive, innovative leaders in stormwater management. This Strategic Plan provides a road map to lead, manage and transform our Division consistent with our mission and goals. The priorities from this plan will guide our daily operations, as well as our annual budgets, assuring that we focus our resources on the areas that lead to achieving our vision.

Our commitment to the tactics outlined in this Plan will support us in moving from insight to action to create the future we envision – for the people we serve, our environment, and ourselves.

Embracing our change, embracing our future – we are Kitsap County Stormwater.

Michelle Perdue
Senior Program Manager
Kitsap County Public Works -Stormwater Division

MISSION

Protect, sustain, enhance, and restore the quality of Kitsap County's surface waters to protect human health, support economic growth and recreational activities, and sustain a healthy natural environment.

VISION

Be a recognized leader in sustainable stormwater management through adapting to environmental change, mitigating human impacts upon our watersheds and treating water as a resource.

VALUES

- Integrity
- Responsive
- Accountable
- Innovative
- Service-driven
- Efficient
- Just, Equitable, Diverse, Accessible & Inclusive

> "Change is never easy...but when people come together for the good of humanity and the earth, we can accomplish great things."
>
> *— DAVID SUZUKI*

How this Plan was Developed

In 2020, the Stormwater Division established a Stormwater Comprehensive Plan and Stormwater Management Action Plan to meet the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. In 2021, our leadership team embarked on a process to design a strategic plan that would chart a course and encompass some of the key goals identified in the comprehensive plan.

This Stormwater Management Strategic Plan is designed to serve as a roadmap for the Division's decision makers to use to put into operation a proactive, compliant, and sustainable stormwater management philosophy. The goals and objectives in this plan guide our annual work plans and illuminate a course that focuses on maintaining compliance and implementing policies that not only protect our precious natural resources but also enhance Kitsap residents' quality of life.

Strategic Planning Team

Michelle Perdue, Senior Program Manager
Shawn Alire, Retrofit and Asset Manager
Steve Downing, Maintenance and Operations Supervisor
Aislin Gallagher, Monitoring and Outreach Manager
Peter Milovich, Kitsap County PEAK Team

Trends Affecting the Division

Trends

The Stormwater Division faces several challenges in the short and long term.

COVID-19

The effects of the global pandemic have been unpredictable and long ranging, from the immediate impact of a complete work shutdown in the early months to challenges with supply chains and staffing. While ripples from this unprecedented event were not completely unexpected, the ways in which they have manifested have been surprising and the tools that we utilize have proven to be less than effective. We are closely tracking the changing environment and are looking forward at other ways to remain resilient and agile in the face of rapidly changing conditions.

Staffing

Workforce retention and recruitment is a major challenge to our industry, leading to lost time and cost in rehiring and training new employees, interruptions in our core services, and effects on staff morale. We must evolve with the changes in this environment, or the organization will not thrive. Our Division is currently feeling these effects – staff attrition, increased competition for candidates, long vacancies, chronically short-staffed teams, and by extension, weary team members at substantial risk for burnout.

In the short term, we are taking measures to gain a better understanding of the root causes of these challenges so that we can make improvements, strengthen our workplace culture, improve engagement, and remain competitive in today's marketplace.

Aging infrastructure

During the last major building boom in Kitsap County in the 1980's, miles of pipe and hundreds of facilities were added to the County's asset inventory. These assets are now nearing the end of their lifespan, and few have currently been replaced. We do not have a comprehensive asset management plan to determine

how these replacements will be prioritized or achieved. Some of this work may be able to be done internally, but much of it may need to be contracted out due to size and complexity. These projects can be costly and time consuming, and the current materials and labor shortage may affect contract pricing. In the short term, we are prioritizing developing a plan to describe the scope of the work and the plan for moving forward.

Emerging pollutants of concern

In addition to known pollutants such as metals, oils, nutrients, and trash, new pollutants of concern that are transported by stormwater continue to emerge as significant challenges to water quality. In the past few years, 6PPDq, a chemical in tire breakdown products, was discovered to be a significant cause of Coho salmon pre-spawn mortality. This substance and a list of other 'chemicals of emerging concern' (CEC) have entered the public consciousness as well as the discussions of stormwater managers about how to reduce these pollutants in our urban runoff. It is likely that at least a few of these CEC will enter the regulatory environment in years to come and require additional measures by our Division to address their effects. We are monitoring this emerging research and participating in discussions between stakeholders (jurisdictions, regulatory agencies, and environmental advocates) about potential measures to come.

Materials shortages and supply chain challenges

Another factor in the list of effects exacerbated by COVID, materials shortage and supply chain challenges have emerged in the past year as significant impediments to our projects and processes. These shortages have impacted our ability to obtain equipment, operating supplies, and building materials and have driven up prices on available stock. Over the short term, we need to identify new sources for key materials, build in longer lead times, budget for increases in cost, prioritize work based on availability, take advantage of temporary purchasing opportunities or stockpile frequently used materials where we can. In the longer term, we may need to evaluate how we do work and whether we can switch to new products, suppliers, or ordering schedules to offset some of these effects.

Climate change and increased severe weather events

Climate change effects are just beginning to visualize. As demonstrated by climate change models, Kitsap County can anticipate sea level rise impacts to built-out areas as well as to stormwater infrastructure in some locations, leading to local flooding and system failure. Severe weather events, including frequency, duration and impact of storms and higher temperatures have and will continue to increase. We are beginning to explore what these changes mean for our operations and levels of service, but more studies will be necessary to create a robust climate change resiliency plan.

Who We Are

Team

The Stormwater Division has 37 positions that span a wide range of areas of expertise, from professional and technical staff to field operations crews. Together, this group forms a powerful ensemble that provides the Division the proficiency and capability to make Kitsap County one of the principal players in the stormwater management arena.

The Stormwater Division operates within four quadrants:

Administration

The administrative section is led by the Senior Program Manager and supported by an administrative assistant. Administration oversees operations of all employees, establishes and implements our Strategic Plan, ensures compliance with all federal, state and local regulations including the County's Municipal Stormwater NPDES permit, manages the Stormwater Capital Facilities Plan, and divisional construction and operations budget.

Asset Management

The asset management section is led by the Retrofit and Asset Manager, who oversees three teams of professional staff. These teams are responsible for activities to inspect public, private and commercial stormwater facilities and ensure their function, respond to public inquiries and complaints, maintain a database that tracks all stormwater assets, coordinate the rehabilitation and replacement of exhausted or failing assets, and design necessary system retrofit projects.

Water Quality

The water quality section is led by the Monitoring and Outreach Manager, who oversees three teams of professional staff and the Clean Water Kitsap partnership. Areas of focus include education and outreach, water quality monitoring and illicit discharge detection and elimination. These teams are responsible for activities that evaluate effectiveness of stormwater management actions and assess receiving water quality, detect and address non-stormwater discharges,

including spills and illicit connections, raise public awareness about stormwater pollution sources and facilitate behavior change and promote stormwater programs and projects including school-based education programs.

Maintenance and Operations

The maintenance and operations (M&O) section is led by the Maintenance and Operations Supervisor, who oversees three teams of field staff that work to meet the requirements of the NPDES permit in the area of stormwater system maintenance. These teams are responsible for ensuring the consistent function of all storm facilities including green infrastructure, low-impact development (LID) facilities and traditional infrastructure like pipes and storm drains, providing needed maintenance on a consistent basis, capturing critical performance data about asset condition and activities, and repairing, replacing, or upgrading infrastructure as necessary. The M&O Supervisor also oversees the operations of the County's decant facility at the Central Kitsap Treatment Plant.

Team

Many Hands, One Mission: Clean Water

Kitsap County Stormwater

Focus

3-Year Focus

The Division has a series of four priority goals for the upcoming year underscoring four common themes:

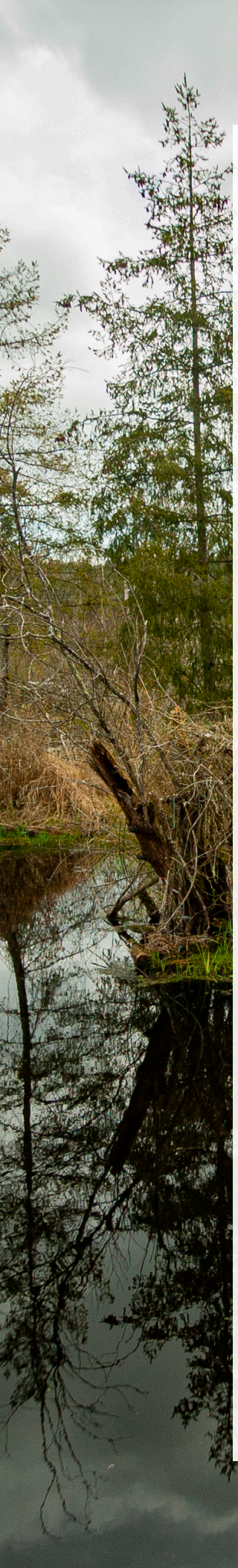
Creating a thriving culture as our workforce and workplace grow and change,

Strengthening and **standardizing** some of our key operational processes,

Demonstrating our commitment to operational **transparency** and fiscal responsibility, and

Positioning ourselves to be agile in response to changing conditions and emerging opportunities.

Focus



3-Year Plan Goals

As each of the priority goals are complete, the remainder of these goals will move up the list for prioritization in future years.

2022

1. **Create a process for construction project intake and prioritization**
2. **Identify and prepare a list of projects that are sufficiently developed in the design process (30% design) to be able to rapidly respond to opportunities**
3. **Identify potential sources of staff burnout and improve workplace balance**
4. **Create an asset management plan**

5. Improve internal communication during the planning phase of projects
6. Strengthen a positive workplace culture
7. Identify staffing needs over the next 3 years
8. Create a long-term strategy for workforce retention and succession planning
9. Identify equipment needs over the next 3 years
10. Identify and maximize information sources for climate change impacts
11. Create and implement a system to identify and plan for possible emergency scenarios
12. Create a long-term strategy for workforce recruitment
13. Identify technology needs over the next 3 years (hardware and software)

2022 Priority Goals

2022

1. Create a simple, standardized process for construction project intake and prioritization

We will develop a simple, comprehensive process to analyze issues and opportunities, move them into actionable projects, and prioritize those that have the most impact. This process will allow us to provide a thorough, unbiased review of all potential projects based on a triple bottom line analysis.

Primary Objectives:

- Review and improve the current project intake and prioritization process
- Create a policy and procedure for the intake and review of potential projects
- Review and update project prioritization materials
- Investigate factors that contribute to project equity

Key Outputs:

- Project Review policy, procedure, and documentation
- Updated Capital Facility Project prioritization matrix
- New Retrofit Project prioritization matrix

Measuring Our Progress and Success:

- Increased percentage of top priority projects that receive funding
- Reduced time to complete annual Capital Facility Project and Retrofit Project lists
- Project prioritization and ranking tools contain an equity metric

2. Identify and prepare a list of projects that are sufficiently developed in the design process to be able to rapidly respond

When funding opportunities arise, we must respond quickly. Having a short list of "partially baked" projects (at least 30% design) helps increase our competitiveness for grant opportunities, which in turn allows us to maximize our budget and move more projects to completion.

Primary Objectives:

- Convene a team to establish schedule for potential project review
- Develop list of projects to move forward into design
- Create process for identifying and reviewing grant possibilities
- Identify baseline point percentage and goal for future scores

Key Outputs:

- "Short list" of projects to move to design
- Grant review and tracking procedure
- Tracking system for grant application performance

Measuring Our Progress and Success:

- Increased average percentage of points received out of total possible for grant submittals
- Increased number of funded grant submittals
- Reduced grant application preparation time

2022

3. Identify factors in the workplace that could lead to staff burnout

Burnout is a known issue, particularly as staff have struggled to manage the prolonged disruption of a pandemic in their work and home lives. Understanding the factors in our workplace that could be contributing to burnout will allow us to find areas where we can help reduce employee stress, allowing our staff to have a better work-life balance and be happy, healthy, and productive.

Primary Objectives:

- Supervisors gauge workplace stress levels and demonstrate open listening to concerns during regular interactions with staff
- Support and encourage the establishment of County-level workplace engagement, stress, and well-being initiatives
- Identify workplace stress factors and implement strategies to address it
- Leadership team demonstrate a culture of work-life balance from the top down
- Supervisors proactively investigate and follow through on issues or concerns

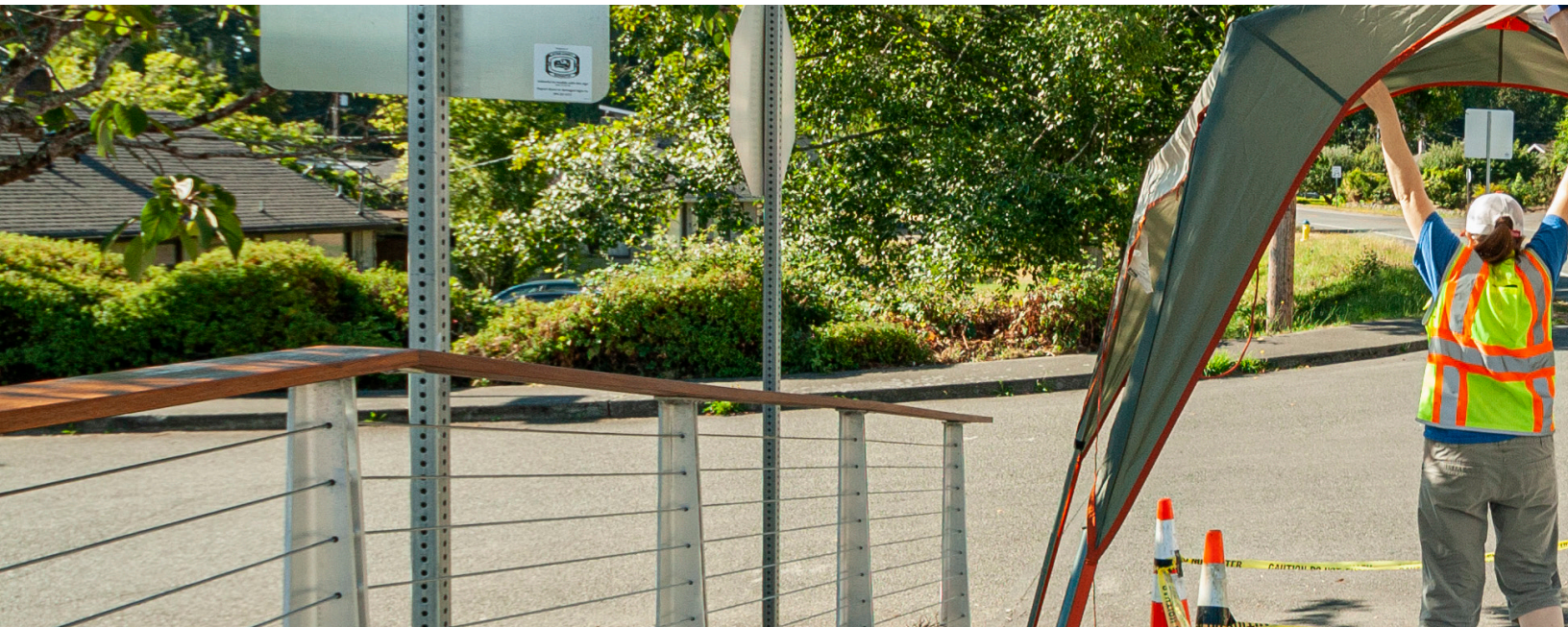
Key Outputs:

- Employee check-ins
- Recurring topic at Leadership meetings
- Strategies for addressing work place stress
- Reduced number of non-emergency messages sent by leadership outside of business hours

Measuring Our Progress and Success:

- All Division employees receive personal check-ins with their supervisor on at least a weekly basis
- A report/list of recommendations for improvement was made, and actions were taken to implement

2022



4. Create a management plan for stormwater assets

The Division manages and maintains many stormwater facilities. A comprehensive Asset Management Plan will help us prioritize the most necessary projects by cataloging assets, identifying performance objectives, completing a life-cycle analysis, identifying appropriate maintenance schedules, and conducting a cost-of-failure analysis of all assets. This plan adopts a proactive versus reactive approach that ensures that critical infrastructure is maintained properly and improved or replaced before failures occur.

Primary Objectives:

- Evaluate existing system and data that tracks information
- Identify baseline for current number of assets that fail prior to repair or replacement
- Create appropriate policies and processes on managing current asset lifecycles
- Complete an asset management risk analysis including long term replacement costs
- Create annual report that includes asset life expectancy and priority plan for upcoming year

Key Outputs:

- Report on the efficiency and accuracy of current system with recommendations
- Appropriate policies and processes for asset management
- Risk analysis including financial assessment
- Asset Management Plan

Measuring Our Progress and Success:

- Policy, procedure, and initial risk analysis is completed
- Asset Management Plan is produced annually

2022

Upcoming Goals: Looking Ahead to the Future

Future

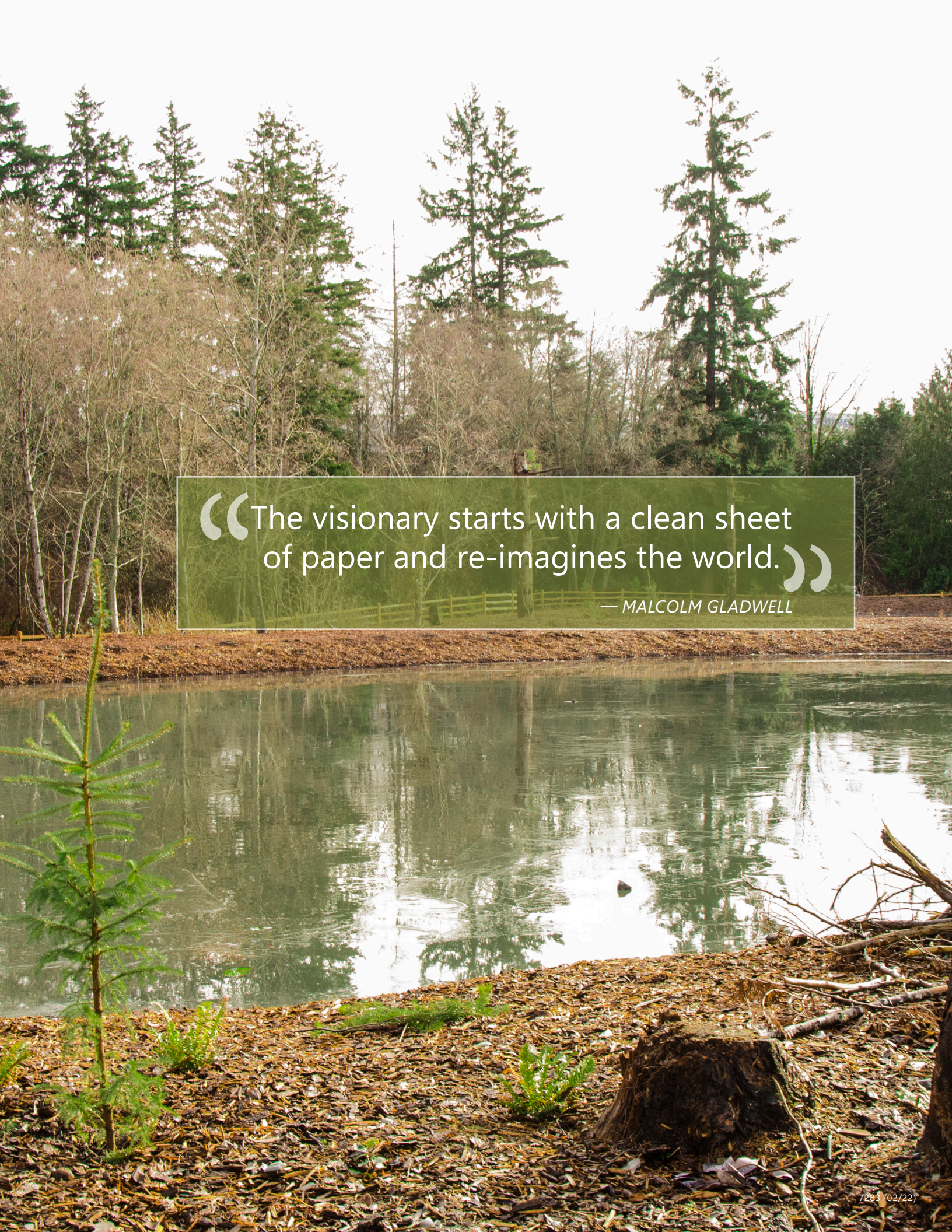
In future years, we intend to:

- Improve internal communication during the planning phase of projects so we can ensure that projects are designed with all critical aspects included to improve our efficiency and effectiveness.
- Identify the current state of the Division's workplace culture, so we can retain existing staff, reduce turnover, improve engagement, and help identify areas where our Division's culture can be strengthened.
- Identify long-term staffing needs over the next 3 years, so we can meet and maintain adequate staffing levels to successfully meet our program objectives and permit requirements.
- Create a long-term strategy for workforce recruitment, retention and succession planning, so we can reduce time spent on rehiring and training, preserve organizational knowledge, and reduce staff turnover.
- Identify long-term heavy equipment needs over the next 3 years, so we can avoid work interruptions due to competition for equipment, ensure that our Division meets regulatory requirements and accommodate for future growth.
- Identify and maximize reliable scientific information sources, so we can define potential local impacts of climate change and create a long-term Stormwater Resilience Plan.
- Create and implement a system to identify and plan for possible emergency scenarios, so we can rapidly respond and mobilize and build community trust in Kitsap County's ability to manage emergencies quickly and efficiently.
- Identify long-term technology needs over the next 3 years (hardware and software) so we can improve accessibility to information and increase productivity and efficiency.

Plan Implementation

Our leadership team will use this plan to guide the development of their own annual work plans. The intersection of these work plans with our overall goals and objectives keep staff connected and accountable to the greater mission and vision of the Division.

This plan is anticipated to operate in concert with the NPDES permit cycle, currently in effect until July 31, 2024 and established for a six-year term. This edition of the Stormwater Management Strategic Plan will be in effect upon adoption with a planned update in 2024. The plan is a living document and may be updated at any time during that period if major edits are necessary.


“The visionary starts with a clean sheet of paper and re-imagines the world.”
— MALCOLM GLADWELL