



🏠 **Location:** Executive Boardroom

📅 **Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2023

🕒 **Time:** 9:00 am

- Robin Barnes
- Tamika Duplessis
- Lynes “Poco” Sloss
- Maurice Sholas
- Janet Howard

## Strategy Committee Meeting Agenda

### I. Roll Call

### II. Presentation Item

- a) Strategic Communications in 2023 – Grace Birch, Christy Harowski, Tyler Antrup

### III. Discussion Item

- a) Master Planning Updates – Tyler Antrup

### IV. Public Comment

### V. Adjournment

# STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

Strategy Committee  
March 7, 2023



# COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT PLAN





# Communication Department Plan

SWBNO's Communications Department has a departmental strategic plan that covers initiatives from 2023 – 2025.

## Communication Department Functions

- Internal Employee Communications
- Customer Communication
- Media Relations
- Key Stakeholder Engagement
- Social & Digital Communications
- Crisis Communications
- Community Outreach
- SWBNO Identity Management

Communications Department Plan	
2023 - 2025	
Responsible Officer	Communications Director
Responsible Office	COM – Communications
Issuance Date:	TBD
Effective Date:	TBD
Last Review Date:	September 29, 2022
Scope:	The policies in this document apply to all classified and unclassified SWBNO employees

Contact: Communications Department

Email: [media@swbno.org](mailto:media@swbno.org)

Phone #: (504) 585-5524



# STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT

	Objective 1 Earn trust and improve morale among SWBNO staff and leadership	Objective 2 Establish SWBNO as a timely, trustworthy source of information	Objective 3 Improve reputation and build trust within community
Strategy 1 Grow and fully develop Communications Department			
Tactic 1 Fill Communications Department vacancies; onboard and train new staff			
Tactic 2 Educate SWBNO managers and contractors/vendors about Communications protocols and enforce them			
Tactic 3 Continue to develop and implement initiative-specific communication plans			
Tactic 4 Establish departmental protocols to ensure quality and efficiency			
Strategy 2 Improve internal communications and cross-departmental collaboration			
Tactic 1 Facilitate internal events with employees, executive leaders, and Board members			
Tactic 2 Participate in monthly coordination meetings with Customer Service Department			
Tactic 3 Identify internal influencers to train as message ambassadors			
Tactic 4 Provide staff with branded templates, identity guidelines, and training on usage			
Strategy 3 Elevate external communication efforts			
Tactic 1 Host and participate in more in-person and in-neighborhood customer engagement			
Tactic 2 Develop, distribute, and utilize resources regarding SWBNO processes and programs			
Tactic 3 Work with IT to update swbno.org to improve navigation, content, accessibility, and usability			
Tactic 4 Craft and deliver tailored messaging for various external audiences			
Strategy 4 Expand media relations efforts			
Tactic 1 Offer media training to the Leadership Team and select department spokespeople			
Tactic 2 Actively pitch more success stories			
Tactic 3 Proactively develop a high-level content calendar			
Tactic 4 Educate management about crisis communication protocol and host annual roundtable			

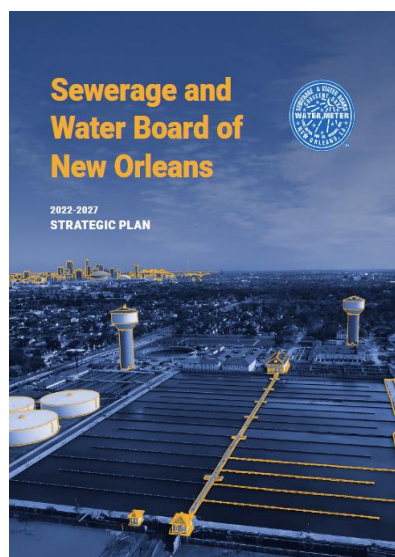


# STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT

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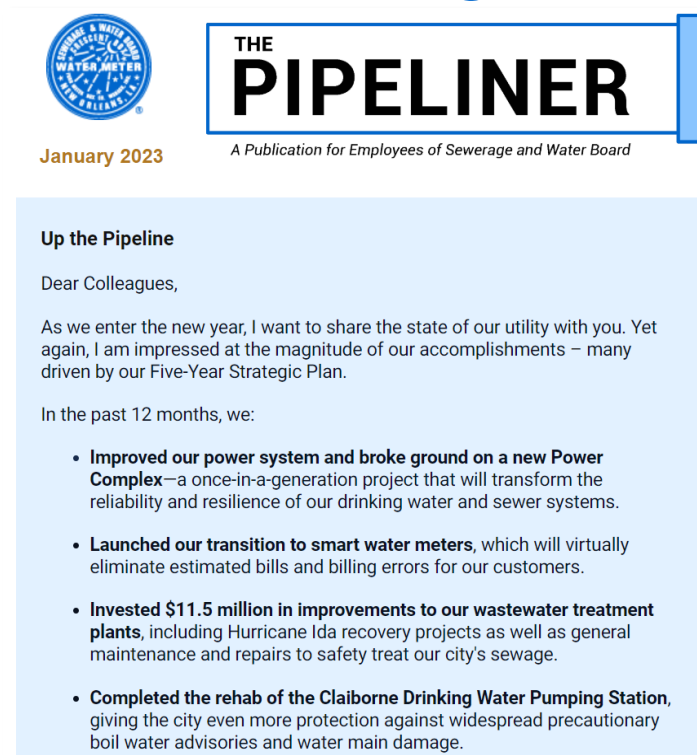


# Focus on Internal Strategic Communications



## Strategic Plan Implementation

- Quarterly working group meetings
- Tracking metrics



## The Pipeliner: Internal E-News

- Launched after Hurricane Ida
- Monthly Updates released after each Board of Directors meeting



## Smart Meter Launch

- Vendor implementation ongoing
- Ramping up community education



# Connection with the Community

In 2022 we hosted...

**65**

**Community  
Meetings and Events**

**52**

**Stakeholder  
Conversations**

**10**

**Classes for Teachers  
and Professionals**

**9**

**Customer Advisory  
Committee Meetings**



Hosted the  
**Largest**  
Water Industry Conference  
in North America



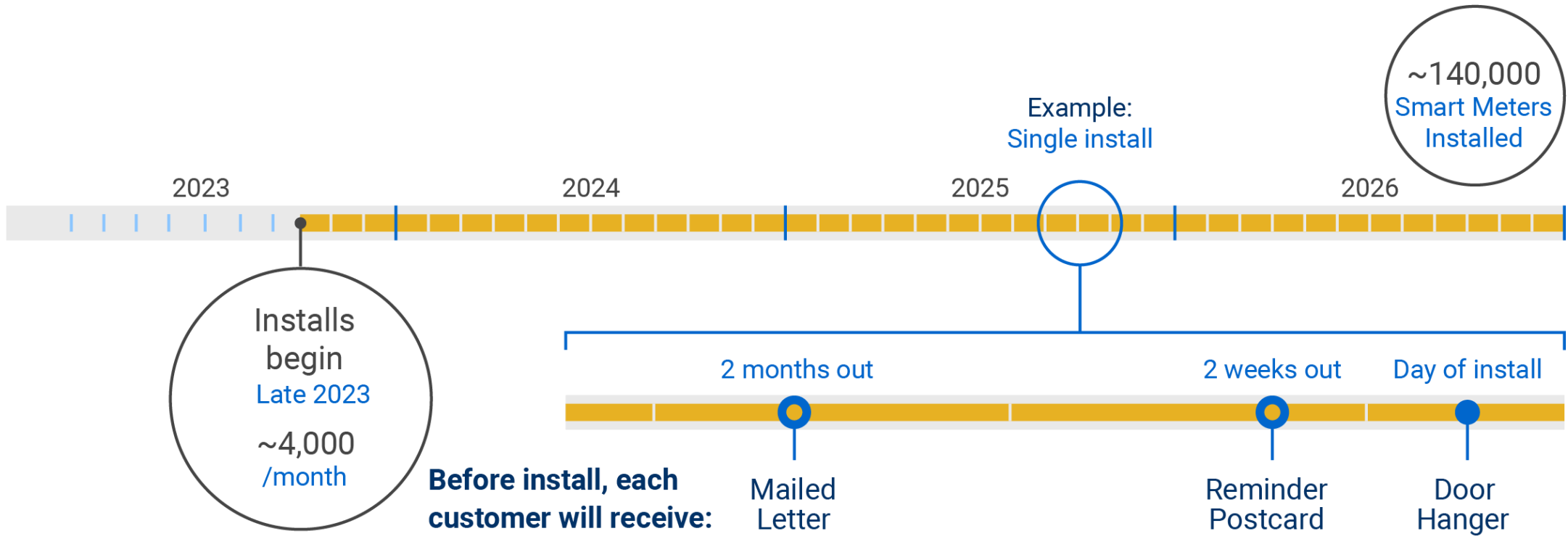


# 2023 Major Initiatives

- Financial Stability Employee Meetings Jan. 31 – Feb. 3
- Implement utility “identity” standards
- Smart Metering communications
- Roadworks Joint Infrastructure + Transmission Main Notification process improvements
- Hire 3 new employees for Comms Team
- PFAS Communications Plan
- Lead Line Replacement Communications Plan
- Finalize crisis communication standard operating procedures (e.g., boil water advisories, major floods)
- Update and refresh SWBNO website
- Collaborate with the City’s Neighborhood Engagement office on outreach efforts
- Implement proactive social media calendar
- Annual Water Quality Report



# Smart Metering Communications





# NOW METERS



# NOW METERS

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SWBNO  
SMART METERING  
PROGRAM

## PROGRAM NAME

- Simple and easily recognizable name
- Encourages us and our customers to focus on the **now** rather than dwelling on the past

## LOGO

- Initial smart metering logo as the "O"
- A visual connection to the parent brand
- Signal bars represent the digital and "smart" aspect of the meters
- Paired with a qualifier for clarity

# FINANCIAL STABILITY

Employee Meeting Results





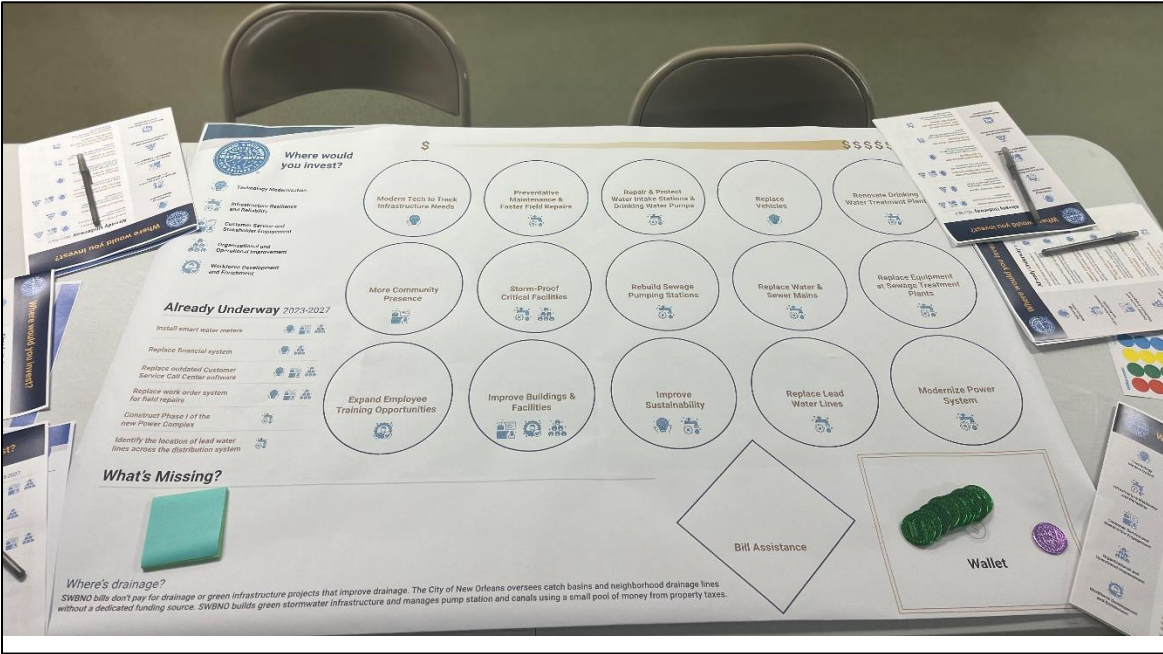
# Four Employee Presentations







# Small-Group Investment & Cost Activity





# Employee Engagement

Date & Time	Venue	Active Participants
<b>Tuesday, January 31, 2023</b> 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.	<b>Carrollton Water Treatment Plant</b> Auditorium	38 <i>(Seven groups)</i>
<b>Wednesday, February 1, 2023</b> 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.	<b>St. Joseph St.</b> Basement	60 <i>(Nine groups)</i>
<b>Thursday, February 2, 2023</b> 7:30 – 8:30 a.m.	<b>Central Yard</b> Annex	51 <i>(Eight groups)</i>
<b>Friday, February 3, 2023</b> 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.	<b>Algiers Water Treatment Plant</b> Break Room	16 <i>(Three groups)</i>
		<b>165 Total Attendees</b> <b><i>(27 groups)</i></b>







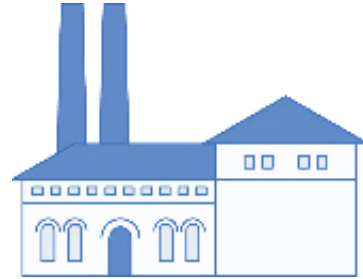
# High Priorities



**Preventative  
Maintenance and  
Faster Field Repairs**  
*(funded in some way by  
67% of groups)*



**Expand Employee  
Training Opportunities**  
*(funded in some way by  
70% of groups)*



**Renovate Drinking  
Water Treatment Plants**  
*(funded in some way by  
58% of groups)*



**Replace Lead  
Water Lines**  
*(funded in some way by  
70% of groups)*



# Willingness to Invest

**93%**

of groups agreed that additional water and sewer revenue was needed for investments.

**85%**

of all groups supported an adjustment between \$3 – \$6 a month on the average customer bill.

**52%**

of all groups supported an expanded bill assistance program.

*Groups recommended structures for a bill assistance program.*

# MASTER PLANNING



# Master Planning



## Flashback to 2020, what we learned:

- **Master Planner Role**

Better integrate the planning process and develop a vision for system transformation.

- **Centering the Community's Voice**

Utilize the planning process as an avenue to repair our relationship with our customers and rebuild trust.

- **RFI as a Starting Point**

Approaches and data provided by the experts will be used to form a base of knowledge with which we can educate the community about new concepts and gather informed feedback for future planning.

- **COVID-19 Changed Everything...**

# Master Planning Goals Now

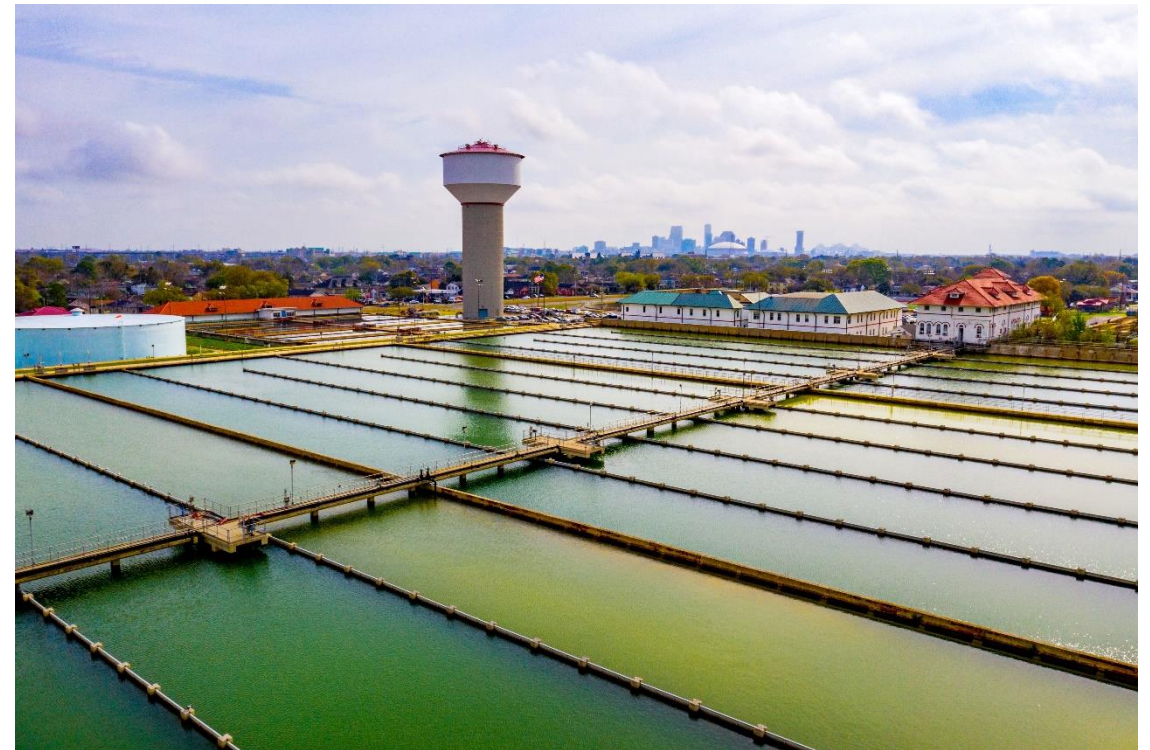
- Rebuild capacity in Engineering/Planning to ensure proper management of consultant work
- Complete technical planning tasks upfront to leverage Federal/State infrastructure funds ASAP
- Integrate community visioning with communications strategy to rebuild trust and prime for future outreach/engagement





# Water Purification Master Plan

- Identified as most emerging need
- Last major renovations:
  - Eastbank – 1959
  - Westbank – 1994
- Emerging regulations (PFAS, etc.)
- Potential funding opportunities





# Water Purification Master Plan

## Scope:

- Assess existing purification processes and suggest improvements or wholesale replacement
- Analyze facilities and provide plans for better utilization of space
- Capital plan for complete renovation of plants including new regulatory requirements

## Timeline:

- Expedited RFP soon
- Kick-off Mid-2023
- 18-Month planning period with interim deliverables to drive progress

# Master Plan Next Steps

- Confirm capacity to continue adding additional planning activities
- Participate in community events to build support
- Slowly roll out plans for:
  - Water Distribution
  - Sewer
  - Wastewater Treatment
  - Drainage/Stormwater





Thank you!

