



CHARLOTTE'S JOURNEY TO


ONE WATER



CHARLOTTE
WATER

Charlotte-Mecklenburg
STORM
WATER
Services

Purpose of This Journey to One Water Outline



All successful journeys begin with a map that serves to guide the traveler to their destination.

This Journey to One Water Outline is Charlotte's map to a One Water future, showing how to bring employees together, how employees will communicate about the One Water vision they are working toward, and how the community they serve will benefit from Charlotte One Water. Like a map, this outline lays out an approach with mile markers that note the journey's path.

This outline is not a detailed itinerary of the Journey to One Water, although that document is envisioned as the next step. This companion document will lay out operational strategies and tactics that will see the Journey to One Water through to completion.

CHARLOTTE'S WATER STORY

The journey of water through our community *is enduring.*

A raindrop falls on the sidewalk. It unites with other drops and makes its way to the storm drain to join the waterways that make where we live so attractive. Water pulled from our rivers and lakes becomes the bathwater for a newborn and the source for your next latte at the neighborhood coffee shop. Drains carry the water we no longer need to become clean again and complete the cycle that renews us.

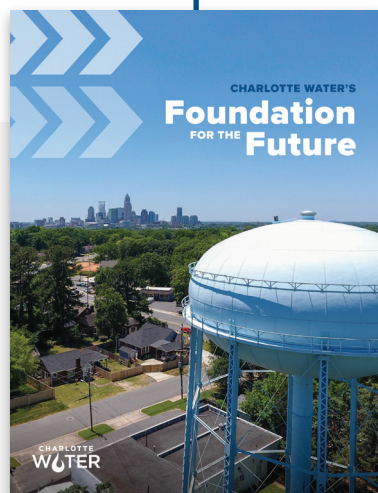
Water connects us all, and it is perhaps the one service that touches every person in our region, which is why our commitment to equity is so critical.

Charlotte is on a journey that mirrors that of the water we manage, supply, clean, direct, and provide. Our Journey to One Water recognizes that all water has value, and the value of water is created by the people that provide water services—stormwater, wastewater, and drinking water. We are the critical foundation for our thriving neighborhoods, our economic advances, and the vitality we feel as we paddle or play in our rivers or recreate on our lakes.

The City of Charlotte and Charlotte Water have determined that Charlotte's future will be a One Water future. This decision is significant and goes well beyond a new organizational chart that brings together the City of Charlotte Storm Water Services and Charlotte Water.

The decision to unify all water services under a One Water umbrella is based on the similar missions and values that each organization holds. Within that decision was the vision that together these organizations could benefit people living in the Charlotte region in a more effective, efficient, and inclusive way than they could if they remained independent.

ONE WATER



At its core, our Journey to One Water will enhance the customer experience, develop stronger community partnerships, and create efficiencies.

These One Water goals are driven by the strategies and measures within the strategic plans.

Within the water industry, One Water is defined as an approach to managing all water in an integrated, inclusive, and sustainable manner.

Our community's Journey to One Water will be unique to the region we serve, but it is founded on the principles reflected here.

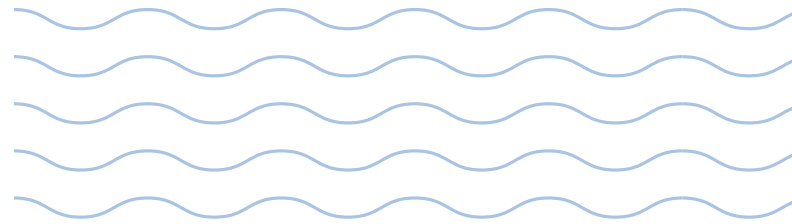


Our Focus

One Water has largely been visionary, and not yet operationalized beyond a combined leadership team and purchasing functions and the transition of the 200-person Storm Water Services department to the Charlotte Water organizational chart. Employees are aware of the change and know that this effort is led by Charlotte Water's leadership and supported by city leaders, but what it means in terms of operational impacts is not understood yet.

Together, Charlotte Water and Storm Water Services will need to talk about the Journey to One Water in a way that elicits buy-in from employees, stakeholders, and partners so that they can support the potential for operational opportunities in the future. The Journey to One Water will align with our residents' expectations for efficient, equitable water services.

More than anything, leadership and employees need a common vocabulary to talk about One Water and what it will mean for the people that rely on us for all water services. At its core, our Journey to One Water will enhance the customer experience, develop stronger community partnerships, and create efficiencies.



Our Journey to One Water will follow this approach

1. Create a One Water vision statement
2. Assess both strategic plans and determine areas of synergy that become One Water objectives
3. Using alignment within the strategic plans, identify and prioritize areas of need and opportunities to operationalize the Journey to One Water
4. Seek highly visible focus areas that will align resources, promote equity in service delivery, and better coordinate onsite construction
5. Develop Journey to One Water communication materials to be used with employees and stakeholders
6. Seek input from employees and stakeholders, and revise approach using input
7. Communicate progress along the way and celebrate success as we move forward in our Journey to One Water



We are Connected Through Our Values and Our Culture

Inherently, the Journey to One Water has within it the capacity to bring the various divisions of the two organizations together for a larger purpose in a highly inclusive way. While both organizations have shared values already: regulatory, financial, and governance structures treat water as separate silos based on end-use and quality. One Water is a holistic approach to managing water that rises above the silos these forces have built within our organization.

To bring employees and stakeholders to the table in a collective manner, communication and change management will be key.

Internal Communication and Change Management Strategies

As we progress in the Journey to One Water, we will seek opportunities to test and refine ways to collaborate. We will share progress by ensuring effective communication happens by sharing materials and messages including:

- + Demonstrating areas where collaboration is occurring and has been occurring such as finance, engineering, and capital services delivery.
- + Creation of a One Water Advisory Committee made up of employees from both Charlotte Water and Storm Water Services that will advise on messaging and theme elements of the campaign.
- + Employee focus groups to share materials and key messages and receive input before they are finalized.
- + One-on-one conversations with water, wastewater, and stormwater leaders as we progress to ensure we are in alignment with their vision.
- + Employee survey to establish current level of understanding about One Water and second survey to measure results (could be done with a subset of employees to limit time commitment).
- + Develop a One Water theme, imagery, iconography, and messaging platform.
- + Create employee-voice stories that emphasize the value of the Journey to One Water to individual employees and speak from various water perspectives throughout the organization.

How Success Will Be Defined

- + Percentage of employees reached with a message
- + Percentage of employees that respond as neutral to positive to One Water messaging
- + Qualitative feedback from advisory committee and leadership team
- + Key operational collaboration successes

Internal Communication and Change Management Objectives



Use key employee influencers and stakeholders to help develop messaging and a theme for Charlotte's Journey to One Water.



Inform employees through a common message platform that explains One Water and how employees and the people that rely on water services will benefit from the Journey to One Water.



Provide a One Water theme, imagery, and iconography that can be used internally and externally.



Build employee understanding and support for being part of a One Water organization.

Our Future

As we are preparing to launch our Journey to One Water, it will be time to turn externally to how we communicate and manage change. As One Water is operationalized, various stakeholders will begin to see changes and the customer experience will improve, so preparing for those changes and achieving buy-in is critical.

External Change Management and Communication Strategies

- + Host a joint meeting between the Charlotte Water Advisory Committee and the Storm Water Advisory Committee to encourage input and determine whether future joint meetings are appropriate.
- + Meet with regulators to build understanding of the One Water approach and ways this can be addressed within current or future regulation and legislation.
- + Identify and seek out partnerships that would be advantageous to develop or enhance with collaborating organizations.
- + Enhance our community engagement program committing to transparent, inclusive engagement with the community and stakeholders.
- + Communicate with City Council, City Leadership, and elected officials.
- + Share the Journey to One Water with water sector peers and associations to demonstrate Charlotte's leadership in this space.

How Success Will Be Defined

- + Number of stakeholders reached by outreach efforts
- + Impact of partnership meetings and outreach on One Water operationalization
- + Qualitative feedback from stakeholders and leadership team
- + Quantitative metrics that demonstrate improvement in the areas of construction cost reduction, customer satisfaction with services, and more equitable delivery of service.
- + Recognition of Charlotte's shift to an innovative One Water management approach for the region.

External Communication and Change Management Objectives



Speak with one voice about the Journey of One Water through a unified leadership team.



Understand individual drivers and existing relationships with stakeholders and identify areas that can be enhanced through the Journey to One Water.



Engage critical partners regularly to ensure they are part of the planning process.



Communicate the value proposition for One Water objectives for stakeholders.

CHARLOTTE'S JOURNEY TO

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