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## **LCA's Strategic Plan – Overview**

-  Brief history
-  Our project goals
-  Gathering valuable feedback
-  Creating clarity for our future... Mission, Vision, Values
-  Setting the course for success... The Plan!

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## Brief History & Evolution of LCA

- County of Lehigh had an economic development strategy in 1966
- LCA's Focus: Regional view, low rates, financial strength, entrepreneurial
- LCA as "early adopter" of quality improvement programs
- Strategic Planning (every 5-7 years) developed by and for the staff
- **Allentown System Lease brings fundamental change in 2013**

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### LCA's Transformation: 2013-2021

- Employee base grows (4X)
- Debt burden grows (10X)
- Key leaders retire
- Board of Directors expands
- Customer needs change
- Political interest in LCA grows
- Infrastructure ages
- Growth pressure continues
- Climate changes
- LCA transforms!

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## Our Goals for Strategic Planning

- Recognize LCA evolution & changing world around us
- Understand our new role in meeting the community's needs
- Clarify our mission and vision for the future
- Inspire our employees
- Help the community understand who we are
- Define the resources needed to achieve our goals



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## Helping Hands for a New Approach



**Melissa Elliott** APR

**PROJECT DIRECTOR/LEAD FACILITATOR**  
Vice President



**Catherine Carter**

**PROJECT MANAGER/CO-FACILITATOR**  
Manager



**Ben Kittelson**

**STAFF CONSULTANT**  
Consultant

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## Gathering Valuable Input

- **Board of Directors** – Interviews and subcommittees
- **LCA Leadership Team** – Interviews and workshops
- **Employees** – Survey and focus groups
- **Key Stakeholders** – 17 individual interviews



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## Your Input Helps Shape the Plan!



### Aspirations

Become a regional leader  
Engage with the community & municipalities  
Continuous improvement  
Employee development & empowerment  
Proactive infrastructure management



### Strengths

Dedicated, skilled employees  
High-quality service  
Organizational adaptability  
Infrastructure planning / forward thinking  
Strong financial management  
Operational excellence



### Critical Issues

Wastewater capacity challenges  
Recruiting & training new employees and leaders  
Aging infrastructure  
Integration of service areas and operations  
Increasing adoption of new technology  
Responsiveness to customer expectations



### Opportunities

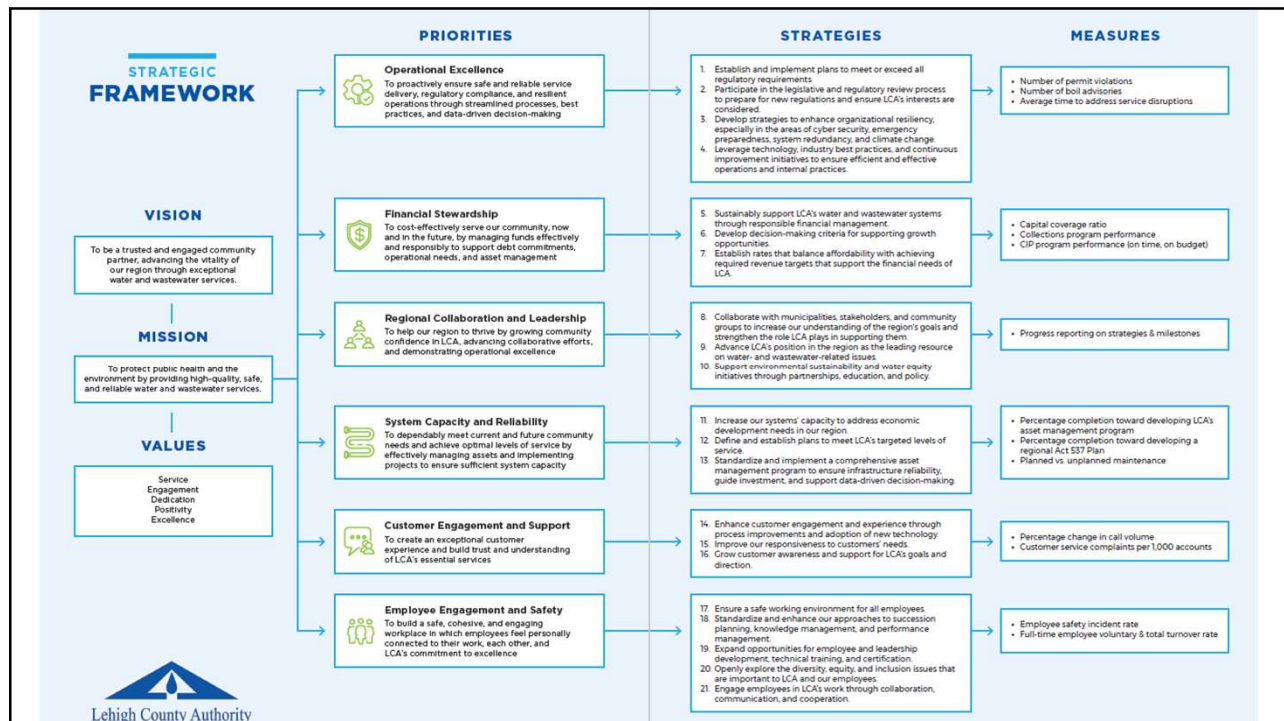
Develop regional service approaches  
Leverage technology to increase efficiency and automation  
Employee and leadership development  
Plan for population & industrial growth  
Community outreach and education about LCA's work

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# LCA Strategic Plan: 2022-2027

- Mission, Vision, Values
- Priorities
- Strategies & Planned Work
- Measures


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## Mission

Who is Lehigh County Authority? Why do we exist?

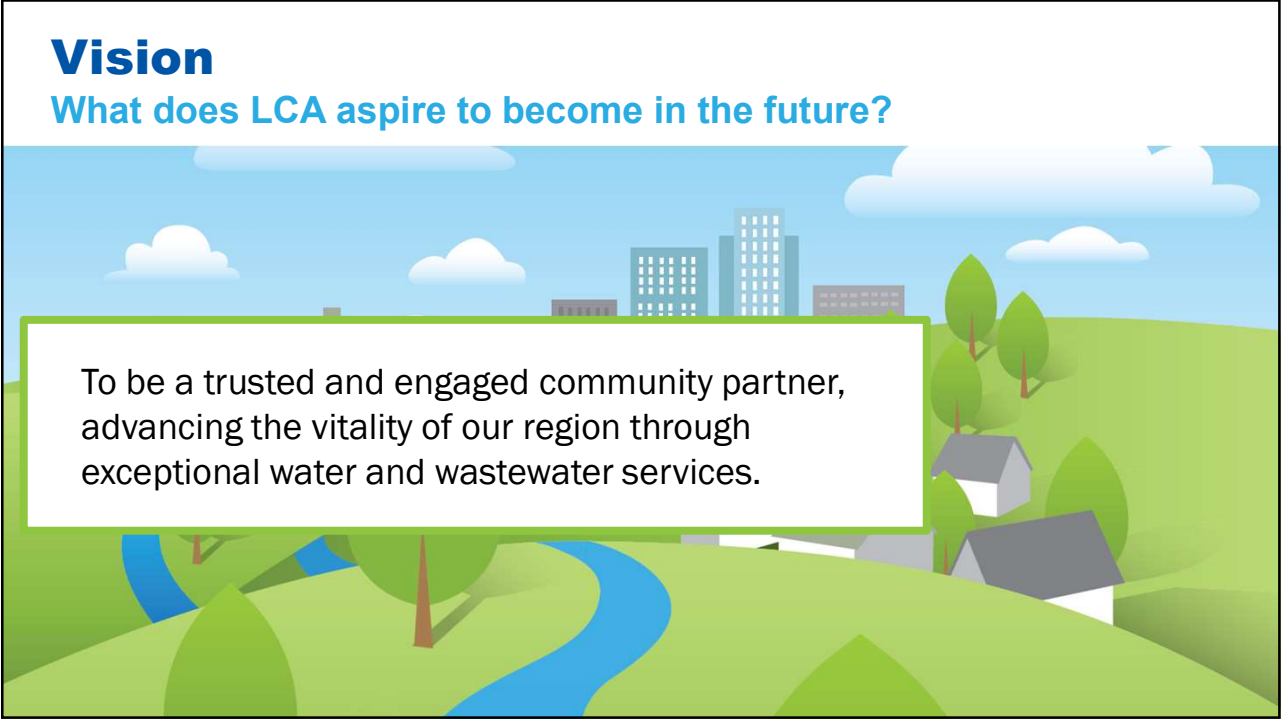


To protect public health and the environment by providing high-quality, safe, and reliable water and wastewater services.

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## Vision

What does LCA aspire to become in the future?



To be a trusted and engaged community partner, advancing the vitality of our region through exceptional water and wastewater services.

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# Values

What beliefs and behaviors drive our actions and decisions?

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## LCA's Values

- **Service** – We take pride in our role as public servants. We focus on serving our customers and each other.



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## LCA's Values

- **Engagement** – We enjoy learning, exploring new ideas, solving problems, and embracing changes that support continuous improvement.



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## LCA's Values

- **Dedication** – We give our best effort every day and seek ways to contribute to achieving LCA's goals.



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## LCA's Values

- **Positivity** – We face challenges with optimism and foster trust, teamwork, and collaboration.



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## LCA's Values

- **Excellence** – We strive to make LCA the best utility it can be.



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## The Plan!

*Setting the course for success*

- Priorities
- Strategies
- Actions
- Measures

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## Our Priorities



### Regional Collaboration and Leadership

To help our region to thrive by growing community confidence in LCA, advancing collaborative efforts, and demonstrating operational excellence

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## Regional Collaboration and Leadership

### LCA plays a vital role in our community!

Our strategies will focus on:

- **Building relationships** – How can we help the municipalities we serve?
- **Sharing our story** – We can play a key role in helping the region succeed!
- **Joining the region's crucial conversations** on environmental sustainability & water affordability.

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## Regional Collaboration and Leadership

### Key initiatives in 2022

- Municipal outreach & listening
- Clarify LCA's capabilities
- Community partnerships
- Environmental sustainability & watershed monitoring goals
- Employee volunteer network

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## Our Priorities



### Operational Excellence

To proactively ensure safe and reliable service delivery, regulatory compliance, and resilient operations through streamlined processes, best practices, and data-driven decision-making

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## Operational Excellence

Ensuring safe and reliable service for all customers!

Our strategies will focus on:

- **Process improvement** will help our team learn and grow continually!
- **Regulatory compliance** for all systems, now and in the future.
- **Leveraging technology and data** to support decision-making and process control.
- **Improving our response** when things do go wrong.

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## Operational Excellence

### Key initiatives in 2022

- Small systems compliance review and planning
- Evaluate and update operating procedures
- Transition all maintenance items into digital systems
- Suburban Division technology upgrades
- Large diameter valve maintenance program

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Lehigh County Authority

## Our Priorities



### Customer Engagement and Support

To create an exceptional customer experience and build trust and understanding of LCA's essential services

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## Customer Engagement and Support

### Making our customers' experience with us even better!

Our strategies will focus on:

- **Process improvement** will help our team learn and grow continually!
- **Responsiveness** – Faster, more accurate, proactive service.
- **Building awareness** so customers understand and support LCA's goals.

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## Customer Engagement and Support

### Key initiatives in 2022

- Defining LCA metrics for customer service excellence
- Technology enhancements & team training
- Improved customer “self service” tools
- Updated after-hours service protocols
- Website enhancements for increased customer education
- Create sewer system customer education program

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## Our Priorities



### System Capacity and Reliability

To dependably meet current and future community needs and achieve optimal levels of service by effectively managing assets and implementing projects to ensure sufficient system capacity

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## System Capacity and Reliability

Thoughtful planning for our region's future!

Our strategies will focus on:

- **Wastewater capacity** – Develop plans to meet the region's needs.
- **Water capacity** – Enhance our supplies and systems to address future customer demands.
- **Managing our assets** using comprehensive approach to lower overall costs to our customers!

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## System Capacity and Reliability

### Key initiatives in 2022

- Critical deadlines for regional Act 537 Plan
- Suburban Division water supply study
- Asset management goals & staffing needs
- Standardize LCA's master planning approach

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## Our Priorities



### Financial Stewardship

To cost-effectively serve our community, now and in the future, by managing funds effectively and responsibly to support debt commitments, operational needs, and asset management

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## Financial Stewardship

Carefully manage rising costs to benefit the community!

Our strategies will focus on:

- **Process improvement** will help our team learn and grow continually!
- **Finding balance** between revenue needs and customer affordability.
- **Considering growth opportunities** in a standard and thoughtful way.

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## Financial Stewardship

Key initiatives for 2022

- **Evaluate long-term viability of financial system (MUNIS)**
- Enhanced financial management tools
- Increase focus on collections program
- Pursue alternative funding sources for projects
- Develop concepts for additional sources of revenue

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## Our Priorities



### Employee Engagement and Safety

To build a safe, cohesive, and engaging workplace in which employees feel personally connected to their work, each other, and LCA's commitment to excellence

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## Employee Engagement and Safety

### Supporting and celebrating our dedicated workforce!

Our strategies will focus on:

- **Safety** – Ensure a safe working environment for all employees.
- **Process improvement** will help our team learn and grow continually!
- **Learning** – Expand opportunities for employees to learn and grow.
- **Creating a supportive workplace** by exploring diversity and inclusion.
- **Engaging employees** in LCA's work that is so vital to the community!

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## **Employee Engagement and Safety**

### **Key initiatives for 2022**

#### **Safety**

- Improve accident and root cause analysis processes
- Safety communications plan
- Develop safety training program for existing and new employees
- Safety policy audit & updates
- Establish more robust safety metrics

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## **Employee Engagement and Safety**

### **Key initiatives for 2022**

#### **Employee Engagement**

- Standardize onboarding for new hires and new supervisors
- Mentoring program
- Internal training on critical topics

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## LCA Priorities: 2022-2027

Interconnected & Tied to LCA's Mission & Vision!

### Our Mission:

To protect public health and the environment by providing high-quality, safe, and reliable water and wastewater services.



Regional Collaboration and Leadership



Customer Engagement and Support



Operational Excellence



System Capacity and Reliability



Financial Stewardship



Employee Engagement and Safety

### Our Vision:

To be a trusted and engaged community partner, advancing the vitality of our region through exceptional water and wastewater services.

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## How will we stay focused?

It's a big plan with a lot of important goals and activities!

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## Metrics to illustrate progress

### ✓ Reporting on 2022 Milestones

- Asset management program development
- Water & sewer capacity projects
- Process efficiency improvements

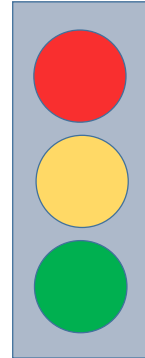
### ✓ Reduction of reportable employee safety incidents

### ✓ Capital program management (on time / on budget)

### ✓ Planned vs. unplanned maintenance

### ✓ Other metrics:

- Monthly financial reporting
- Regulatory compliance
- Customer responsiveness
- Employee turnover



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## Communication

- Board of Directors
- Stakeholders
- Municipalities
- Customers

## Teamwork!

- LCA Strategy Teams
- Department Goals
- Employee Town Hall Meetings



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## Lehigh County Authority's Inspiration

### **Our Mission:**

To protect public health and the environment by providing high-quality, safe, and reliable water and wastewater services.

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## Thank you!



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