



Operations Committee Special Meeting  
Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 1:00 PM  
Valley Sanitary District  
45-500 Van Buren Street, Indio, CA 92201

\*\*\*\*\*SPECIAL NOTICE – VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE\*\*\*\*\*

Pursuant to the Governor’s Executive Order N-25-20 issued on March 4, 2020 and N-29-20 issued on March 18, 2020; the Operations Committee special meeting will be conducted remotely through Zoom. **Members of the public wanting to participate in the open session of the meeting may do so via the following Zoom registration link: <https://zoom.us/j/91289197366?pwd=OWd1M0ZuNVNrMXpuVnpzd2tKZWJsUT09>** Meeting ID: 912 8919 7366 or by calling 669-900-9128 . Members of the public wanting to address the Board, either during public comment or for a specific agenda item, or both, are requested to send an email notification no later than 12:30 p.m. on the day of the meeting to the Valley Sanitary District’s Clerk of the Board at [hgould@valley-sanitary.org](mailto:hgould@valley-sanitary.org).

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

- 1.1. Roll Call
- 1.2. Pledge of Allegiance

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

*This is the time set aside for public comment on any item not appearing on the agenda. Please notify the Secretary in advance of the meeting if you wish to speak on a non-hearing item.*

**3. DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS**

- 3.1. Review the Draft Succession Plan and Provide Direction to Staff 3 - 15
- [3.1 Staff Report Succession Plan.pdf](#) 
- [3.1 Attachment A Draft VSD Succession Plan.pdf](#) 
- 3.2. Review the Draft Brand & Image Use Policy and Provide Direction to Staff 16 - 18
- [3.2 Staff Report Brand and Image Use Policy.pdf](#) 
- [3.2 Attachment A Brand and Image Use Policy.pdf](#) 

**4. FUTURE MEETING ITEMS**

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

Pursuant to the Brown Act, items may not be added to this agenda unless the Secretary to the Board has at least 72 hours advance notice prior to the time and date posted on this notice.



**Valley Sanitary District  
Operations Committee  
March 16, 2021**

**TO:** Operations Committee  
**FROM:** Beverli A. Marshall, General Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Review the Draft Succession Plan and Provide Direction

<input type="checkbox"/> Board Action	<input type="checkbox"/> New Budget Approval	<input type="checkbox"/> Contract Award
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board Information	<input type="checkbox"/> Existing FY Approved Budget	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed Session

**Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to discuss the draft succession plan and potential budget and staffing implications.

**Strategic Plan Compliance**

This item complies with VSD Strategic Plan Objective 1.2: Improve preparation for both unexpected events and planned succession of all key positions.

**Fiscal Impact**

The total fiscal impact of this Plan depends on the timing and phasing of implementation. The estimated fiscal impact for Fiscal Year 2021/22 is \$450,000.

**Background**

The Strategic Plan, adopted by the Board in April 2020 and reaffirmed by the Board in November, identified staffing as the District’s greatest strength and one of the biggest challenges faced by the District. The Board asked staff to develop a succession plan to address retirements, recruitment, and retention issues and to prepare for regulatory changes.

The attached draft Succession Plan addresses the following key components.

1. Risk Assessment
2. Needs Assessment
3. Match Strategies to Risks
4. Develop Individual Plans for Key Positions
5. Align Policies to Support the Plan
6. Anticipate and Address Barriers
7. Monitor, Review, and Update the Plan

Based on the risk assessment, one quarter of VSD's positions are identified as highly critical and two-fifths are moderately critical. Of all employees, over one quarter can retire within five years and nearly half can retire within 10 years. In addition, four employees are likely to leave for reasons other than retirement.

The combination of these risks places the District at very high risk for vacancies. This is in addition to the staffing needs that have already been identified in the 2019 staffing analysis.

There are six key recommendations in the Plan to address both the succession and staffing needs of the District.

1. Staff needs to document work processes and update standard operating procedures while long-term staff are still available to capture their knowledge.
2. Design a training program to transfer knowledge and cross-train staff for redundancy.
3. Address barriers to recruitment and retention, including wages, benefits, and quality of life issues.
4. Add positions to address workload, operational needs, and prepare for regulatory and process changes.
5. Create opportunities for current staff to challenge themselves and prepare for lead and supervisory opportunities.
6. Develop a talent pipeline to increase availability of knowledgeable and qualified applicants.

It will take some time to implement all aspects of this plan, but staff recommends addressing items 1, 3, and 4 starting in Fiscal Year 2021/22 with an object to complete all recommendations within five years.

### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Committee discuss the draft Succession Plan and provide direction to staff.

### **Attachments**

Attachment A: Draft VSD Succession Plan



When trained, skilled employees retire or leave the District, they take knowledge, problem-solving skills, and experience with them. A succession plan is a necessary step for ensuring that VSD continues to thrive even in the event of loss of leadership. A succession plan can help prepare for the future, avoid miscommunication, and make sure that the District's values and goals are upheld.

While some hiring practices and transparency rules of the public sector seem to limit what can be done to prepare for vacancies, there is much that can be done to mitigate the coming wave of retirements and separations and shortage of potential candidates to replace them. This includes:

- Career paths that retain skilled employees and prepare them for promotion
- Leadership development programs to prepare the next generation of managers
- Cooperative programs with local colleges and trade schools to expose potential employees to the profession and prepare them to be successful candidates
- Capturing the knowledge of senior employees in a way that is accessible and transferable, before they walk out the door

VSD is committed to planning for current and future needs of its human resources. It supports this commitment through its vision to provide a healthy work environment, cutting edge equipment, and exceptional training opportunities for staff, its most important asset. Objective 1.2 in its Strategic Plan is: Improve preparation for both unexpected events and planned succession of all key positions. This Plan was developed with this commitment as its foundation.

#### **I. Plan**

Succession planning is most successful when it is done from the point of view of risk assessment and mitigation. This Plan addresses succession planning in seven steps:

Step 1: Perform a risk assessment

Step 2: Perform an assessment of future needs

Step 3: Match strategies to risks

Step 4: Create individual succession plans for key employees

- Step 5: Align organizational policies to support succession planning
- Step 6: Anticipate and address barriers to implementation
- Step 7: Monitor, review and update the plan

**A. Risk Assessment**

Identifying critical positions and competencies is crucial to an effective succession plan. It provides the agency with a full-scale look at how it conducts business, identifies workplace gaps, and allows managers to understand the risks of vacancies in certain areas.

A critical position, if vacant, creates a significant impact within the team, agency, or community. The vacancy would affect things like safety, fiscal responsibility, regulatory compliance, project implementation, responding to customer demands, equipment maintenance, etc. A review of all positions to determine vacancy impact allows the agency to be better prepared when vacancies, both anticipated and unanticipated, occur.

When doing the critical position analysis, managers should focus on each position’s duties and competencies, not the person in the position. The following chart will help determine a position’s criticality level.

<b>LOW CRITICAL POSITION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacancy would cause limited impact</li> <li>• Limited specialized knowledge or skills required</li> <li>• Strong recruitment potential</li> <li>• Competitive compensation package</li> <li>• High likelihood of internal promotion</li> </ul>
<b>MODERATELY CRITICAL POSITION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacancy would cause an impact</li> <li>• Some specialized knowledge or skills required</li> <li>• Challenging recruitment potential</li> <li>• Moderately competitive compensation package</li> <li>• Skill set in demand</li> <li>• Moderate likelihood of internal promotion</li> <li>• Anticipate vacancy within one to five years</li> </ul>
<b>HIGHLY CRITICAL POSITION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacancy would cause a significant impact</li> <li>• Specialized knowledge or skills required</li> <li>• Very challenging recruitment potential</li> <li>• Compensation package is not competitive or there are compression issues</li> <li>• Skill set in high demand</li> <li>• Low/no likelihood of internal promotion</li> <li>• Anticipate vacancy within one to two years</li> </ul>

1. Each position should be examined based on the above risks and assigned a criticality level.

Chart 1 reflects the distribution of positions into one of the three criticality levels. Based on the assignment criteria, one quarter (24%) of VSD’s

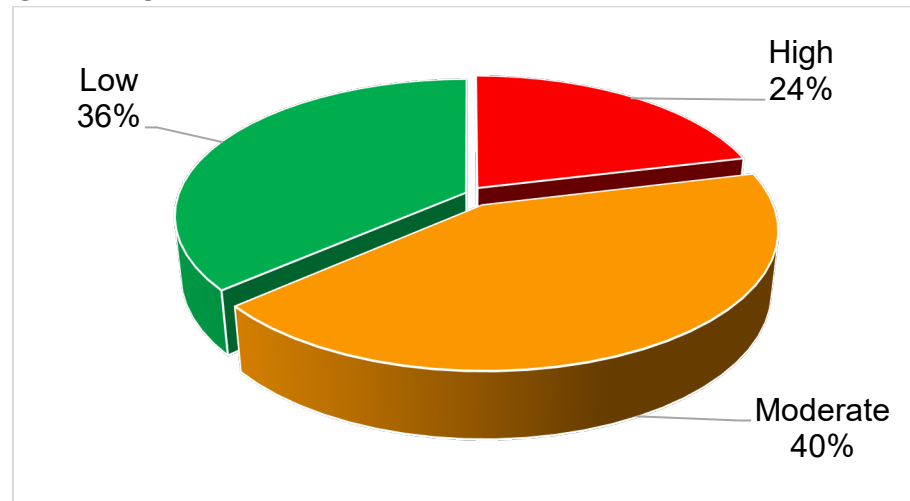
positions are identified as **highly critical**. The following are the top three reasons for positions being assigned to this category.

- Vacancy would cause a significant impact
- Specialized knowledge or skills required
- Compensation package is not competitive resulting in challenging recruitment potential

Two-fifths (40%) are **moderately critical**. The following are the top three reasons for positions being assigned to this category.

- Vacancy would cause an impact
- Some specialized knowledge or skills required
- Moderately competitive compensation package resulting in challenging recruitment potential

Chart 1: Critical Position Distribution



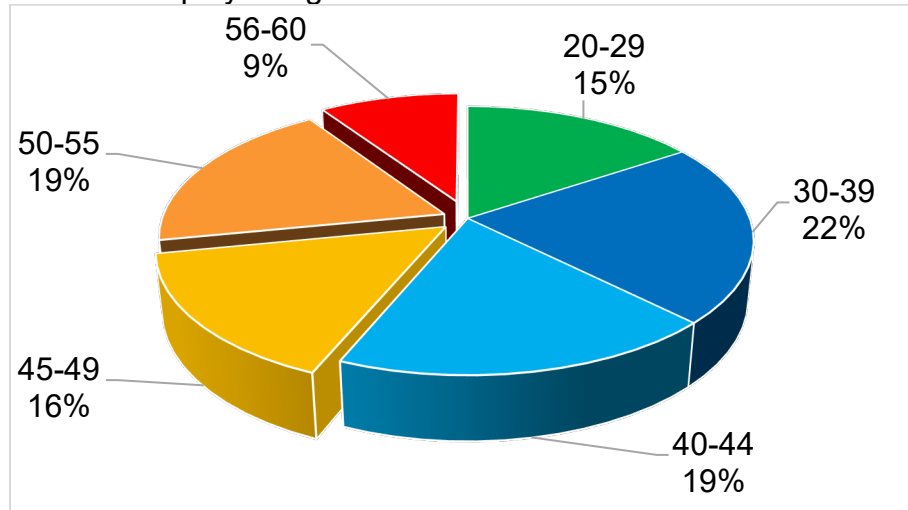
2. Each employee's status should be examined to determine the following.

- Likelihood of retirement

*Eligibility to retire within one, five, and 10 years based on age.*

Chart 2 shows the age distribution of current employees. The District is facing a potential loss of over one-quarter (28%) of its employees within five years, and nearly half (44%) within 10 years, due to retirement.

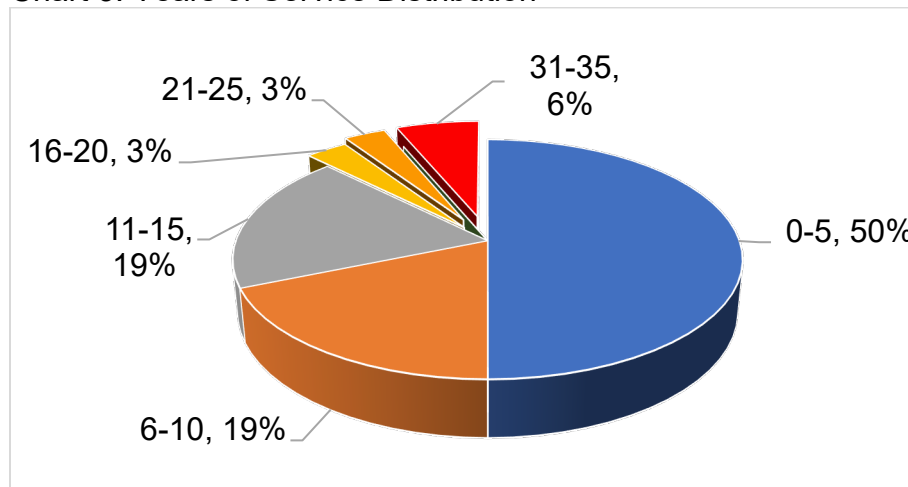
Chart 2: Employee Age Distribution



*Eligibility to retire within one, five, and 10 years based on years of service.*

Chart 3 illustrates the distribution of current employees by years of service. Half (50%) of current employees have been with the District for five years or less. An additional one-fifth (19%) have six to 10 years of service. This demonstrates that the District has a workforce that is newly hired or less experienced with VSD functions and equipment.

Chart 3: Years of Service Distribution



Typically, public agency employees work 20 years before retiring. Three (10%) of VSD employees have achieved that milestone with one more reaching it within three years.

*How many employees in critical positions are eligible to retire within 10 years?*



Of the District's eight **highly critical** positions, three (38%) are likely to retire within five years. An additional two **highly critical** positions (25%) will likely become vacant within 10 years due to retirements. The result is that five (63%) of the District's eight **highly critical** positions will likely retire within 10 years.

- Likelihood of voluntary resignation

*Leave due to lack of promotional opportunities*

*Leave due to role dissatisfaction or high demand for skillsets*

*Leave due to better compensation or quality of life elsewhere*

Of the employees not eligible for retirement within 10 years and who have not reached the 20-year milestone, four (13%) are likely to leave voluntarily within five years. Of these, one is in a **highly critical** position, making the total loss of highly critical positions at six out of eight (75%) within the next five to 10 years.

#### **B. Needs Assessment**

In addition to the risks discussed above, various other conditions and circumstances should be assessed to determine if new or different positions or additional staffing is needed.

1. Evaluate needs to cover key positions for various expected and unexpected events.
  - Older and more tenured staff typically accrue vacation leave faster and are likely to have higher vacation and sick leave balances.
  - Short-term planned (coverage during vacation or planned sick leave) and unplanned (illness, family emergencies, emergency projects) events
  - Long-term planned (maternity leave, promotions) or unplanned (voluntary resignations, lengthy recruitments) events

Due to the age and longevity of staff in critical positions, the District is at **high risk** for staffing shortages from both short-term expected (vacation) and unexpected (family emergencies) events. Due to below-market wage rates and lack of promotional opportunities for several key classifications, the District is at **very high risk** for vacancies due to voluntary resignations and lengthy recruitments.

2. Consider short- and long-term projects and assignments that can affect workload and working conditions.

Based on the current budgeted positions, the District is likely to have a lack of adequate and appropriate staffing to manage and support the complex and crucial projects identified in the 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan while meeting required functions.

3. Consider new or changing skills needed to meet future service demands and changing regulatory requirements.

- Changes in mandated permit requirements
- Technology and equipment changes
- Voluntary upgrades to tertiary or recycled water
- Growth and expansion
- Training and professional development

With the plant expansion project, there will be a need for additional staff to assist during the project and maintain the additional equipment once the project is complete.

To implement the strategies identified in this Plan, additional staffing is needed to allow for cross-training, professional development, and development or updating of standard operating procedures (SOPs) and desk manuals.

*C. Match Strategies to Risks*

For each high-risk position, management should identify potential strategies based on the identified risks and the critical tasks included in that position. Strategies should focus on one or more of the following goals.

- Preparing current staff for promotion
- Preparing to train a newly hired or promoted employee
- Covering critical tasks in the short-term
- Preparing to recruit for this position

The following is a list of strategies to be implemented to address identified risks.

1. Employees in critical positions eligible for retirement

- Document and test work process through (SOPs), process maps, desk manuals, etc.
- Cross-train employees in critical skills and give them experience by rotating work or making temporary assignments.

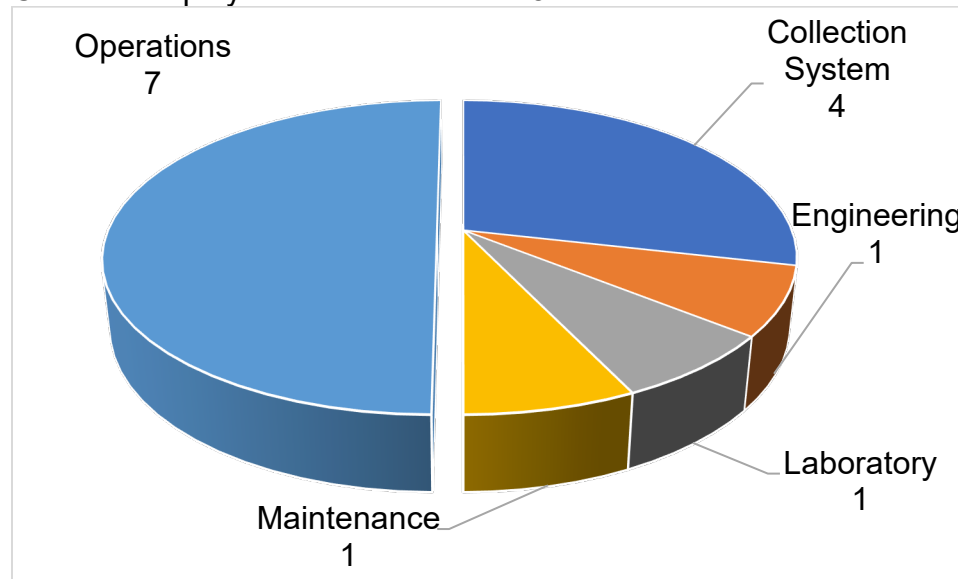
2. High percentage of employees in key positions eligible to retire

- Capture knowledge of experienced employees.
- Design training program to transfer knowledge.
- Overlap outgoing employees with newly hired employees for several months to allow time for training.
- Update job descriptions and recruitment materials.

3. High percentage of employees in key positions likely to leave for reasons other than retirement

Chart 4 demonstrates employee turnover within the past five years. These are employees whose time with the District was five years or less who left for reasons other than retirement. This high rate of turnover, especially in Operations and the Collection System, places an additional burden on the other staff because of the constant need to train the newly hired replacements while maintaining their regular workload.

Chart 4: Employee Turnover in Past 5 Years



- Create opportunities for employees to gain experience through more challenging assignments.
  - Offer competitive wages and benefits to retain employees.
  - Implement quality of life programs to retain employees.
4. Additional positions needed to address current workload and changes in regulatory compliance and technology
    - Focus training programs on preparing current employees for promotion through technical and leadership training.
    - Encourage employees to obtain other relevant certifications or higher certification levels.
    - Offer competitive pay and benefits to attract skilled candidates.
  5. Low availability of qualified internal candidates
    - Focus training programs on preparing current employees for promotion through technical and leadership training.
    - Encourage employees to obtain other relevant certifications or higher certification levels.

- Update policies to ensure alignment with training goals.

6. Low availability of qualified external candidates

- Partner with College of the Desert to implement apprenticeship program.
- Participate in job fairs, community outreach events, and professional organizations to reach potential candidates.
- Offer competitive pay and benefits to attract skilled candidates.

*D. Create individual succession plans for key positions*

The data presented above demonstrates that there is a significant gap in experience at the District, which will require a significant commitment to training and professional development of existing employees and the likelihood that key positions will need to be recruited from outside the organization.

Employees who are responsible for critical functions will work with their supervisors to implement a plan to backup critical tasks, develop potential successors to their position, and prepare to hire and train their replacement. The plan activities will be incorporated into the employees' performance goals and the plan updated as necessary to meet changing needs. Attachment B is an example of an individual plan.

*E. Align organizational policies to support succession planning*

In addition to implementing the individual succession plans, the District will make organization-wide improvements that support succession planning.

- Create a system to identify and develop employees that indicate interest in higher positions.
- Formalize leadership development programs to prepare the next generation of managers.
- Create programs and promotional paths that allow the District to hire employees with basic skills and attributes and train them in specific jobs.
- Ensure that HR policies are aligned with staffing goals (education reimbursement, out of class pay, etc.).
- Ensure that job descriptions are current (less than 2 years old).
- Document process and systems by updating SOPs, manuals, as-built drawings etc.

*F. Anticipate and address barriers*

The main barrier to implementing succession plans is lack of time in the workday to do classroom and on-the-job training and to document process and procedures. Increase staff numbers to cover these activities to allow for these important activities and give the Plan the best possibility for success.

*G. Monitor, review and update the plan*

To avoid the possibility of the Plan sitting on a shelf and not being implemented, activities in the individual plans will be incorporated into the monthly coaching sessions. Supervisors will review individual plans at least once each year or whenever the situation changes due to a new hire or promotion. Management will evaluate organizational changes periodically to assess implementation progress and effectiveness.

**Attachment A**

Table 1: Risk Assessment of Existing Positions

Position Title	Years w/ District	Eligible to Retire Now	Eligible to Retire w/in 5 Years	Eligible to Retire w/in 10 Years	Likely to Leave Voluntarily	Highly Critical Position	Moderately Critical Position
Accounting Analyst	7	X					X
Administrative Assistant	2						
Assistant Engineer	4						X
Business Services Manager	<1					X	
Collection System Supervisor	15						X
Collection System Technician I	1						
Collection System Technician I	1						
Collection System Technician II	6						
Collection System Technician II	2						
Development Services Supervisor	24		X				X
Development Services Tech III	6		X				
Electrical/Instrument Supervisor	30	X				X	
Electrical/Instrument Technician I	<1						X
Engineering Services Manager	8		X			X	
Environmental Compliance Tech I	2						X
Facilities Maintenance Supervisor	4				X		X
Facility Operations Manager	17			X		X	
General Manager	1.5		X				X
Human Resources Specialist	11						X
Laboratory & Comp Supervisor	7				X	X	
Laboratory Technician I	<1				X		X
Maintenance Technician I	14			X			

Maintenance Technician I	<1			X			
Maintenance Technician I	2						
Maintenance Technician III	8	X					
Operations Supervisor	14			X		X	
Operator-in-Training	<1				X		X
Operator-in-Training	<1		X				
WW Operator I	5						X
WW Operator II	30		X				X
WW Operator III	11					X	
WW Operator III	14		X			X	
		3	7	4	4	8	13



**Valley Sanitary District  
Operations Committee  
March 16, 2021**

**TO:** Operations Committee

**FROM:** Beverli A. Marshall, General Manager

**SUBJECT:** Review the Draft Brand & Image Use Policy and Provide Direction

<input type="checkbox"/> Board Action	<input type="checkbox"/> New Budget Approval	<input type="checkbox"/> Contract Award
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board Information	<input type="checkbox"/> Existing FY Approved Budget	<input type="checkbox"/> Closed Session

**Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to discuss the draft Brand & Image Use Policy.

**Strategic Plan Compliance**

This item complies with VSD Strategic Plan Objective 4: Increase Community Understanding and Support.

**Fiscal Impact**

There is no fiscal impact in adopting this policy.

**Background**

The Strategic Plan, adopted by the Board in April 2020 and reaffirmed by the Board in November, identified outreach as one of the four key areas of focus. The Board asked staff to develop a plan to build a brand for the District and to ensure that the public knows it. The first step in this process was to develop a new logo for the District, which was completed and adopted by the Board on March 24, 2020. Staff implemented the new logo and applied it to VSD vehicles, uniforms, hats, business cards, and other District items.

The next step in the rebranding process is to ensure that the VSD brand is used appropriately and reflects positively on the District. With that in mind, staff drafted the attached Brand & Image Use Policy. The purpose of the Policy is to establish and strengthen the VSD brand through a unified message, repetition, and consistency.

**Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Committee discuss the draft Brand & Image Use Policy and provide direction to staff.

**Attachments**

Attachment A: Draft VSD Brand & Image Use Policy





Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_/2020

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish and strengthen the VSD brand through unified messaging, repetition, and consistency.

## II. POLICY

The VSD brand is more than just its logo. It is the perception of the district, its strengths, differentiators, and everything that encompasses how it is described. Ultimately the brand is defined by residents, business owners, and visitors and how they perceive these elements working together. While VSD cannot completely control everyone's opinion, this Policy ensures a greater level of communication success by staying true to these elements to actively influence VSD's reputation.

## III. REQUIREMENTS

### 1. Tagline

Taglines are the cornerstone of a brand and become the main theme of the brand's mission. Taglines differentiate one brand from the others. It should capture the attention of an audience and start a conversation. VSD has adopted the following as its tagline.

*Giving Water Another Chance*  
*Reclaiming Indio One Drop at a Time*  
*Waste to Reuse*  
*Keeping it Local*

### 2. Logo

The adopted logo provides an image that is easily identifiable as VSD. This image is to be used within the established standards and for official VSD business purposes only.

- a. Size: Logo size is important when applying the image to a variety of media. The minimum size is .75" x .75" to ensure legibility and impact.
- b. Use: All collateral materials should include an approved version of the VSD logo. Keeping a consistent look or identity will prevent any confusion among the audience.

- c. Color: The VSD brand should always appear with the following approved colors: PMS 364 and PMS 298. Make sure that the colors appear accurately across different types of media and paper as well as on digitally distributed materials. Please note that the colors shown in this brand book may not match the Pantone® Color Standards.

### 3. Fonts

Euphemia is the approved font for the VSD logo, tag line, and headlines. Arial is the approved font for general text and content. However, Gisha or other sans serif fonts may be used instead for artistic purposes, such as newsletters, marketing, and collateral material. At no time shall a font be used for printed materials that is less than 12 points in size.

Euphemia (Use in VSD logo, tagline, and headlines)

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z  
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Arial (Preferred font for use in printed materials)

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z  
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Gisha (Alternate font for general text and content)

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z  
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0