Wastewater Treatment

Recycled Water

Energy Production

Biosolids Reuse

Delta Diablo

TRANSFORMING WASTEWATER TO RESOURCES



2026 Workplace Culture Assessment

Board of Directors Meeting

November 12, 2026

Project Steps

- Meetings with management and labor representatives prior to survey
- Raftelis drafted and reviewed survey questions with same groups
- Survey opened to respondents
- Raftelis conducted six focus groups with employees on key themes from survey
- Raftelis finalized survey analysis and recommendations
- Raftelis facilitated workshop with management and bargaining group representatives to review results together and begin to discuss steps on implementation
- Presentation at staff meeting
- Presentation at Board

About the Survey Results

- 66 responses received from 70 employees
  - 94% response rate
- Responses collected online from May through June 2026
- Most questions use a rating scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree
- Open-ended responses summarized by theme
- Facilitated six on-site focus groups

Respondent Demographics

50%

Resource Recovery Services (33)

62%

Staff level / individual contributors (41)

48%

3 to less than 11 years tenure (32)

47%

Identified as men (31)

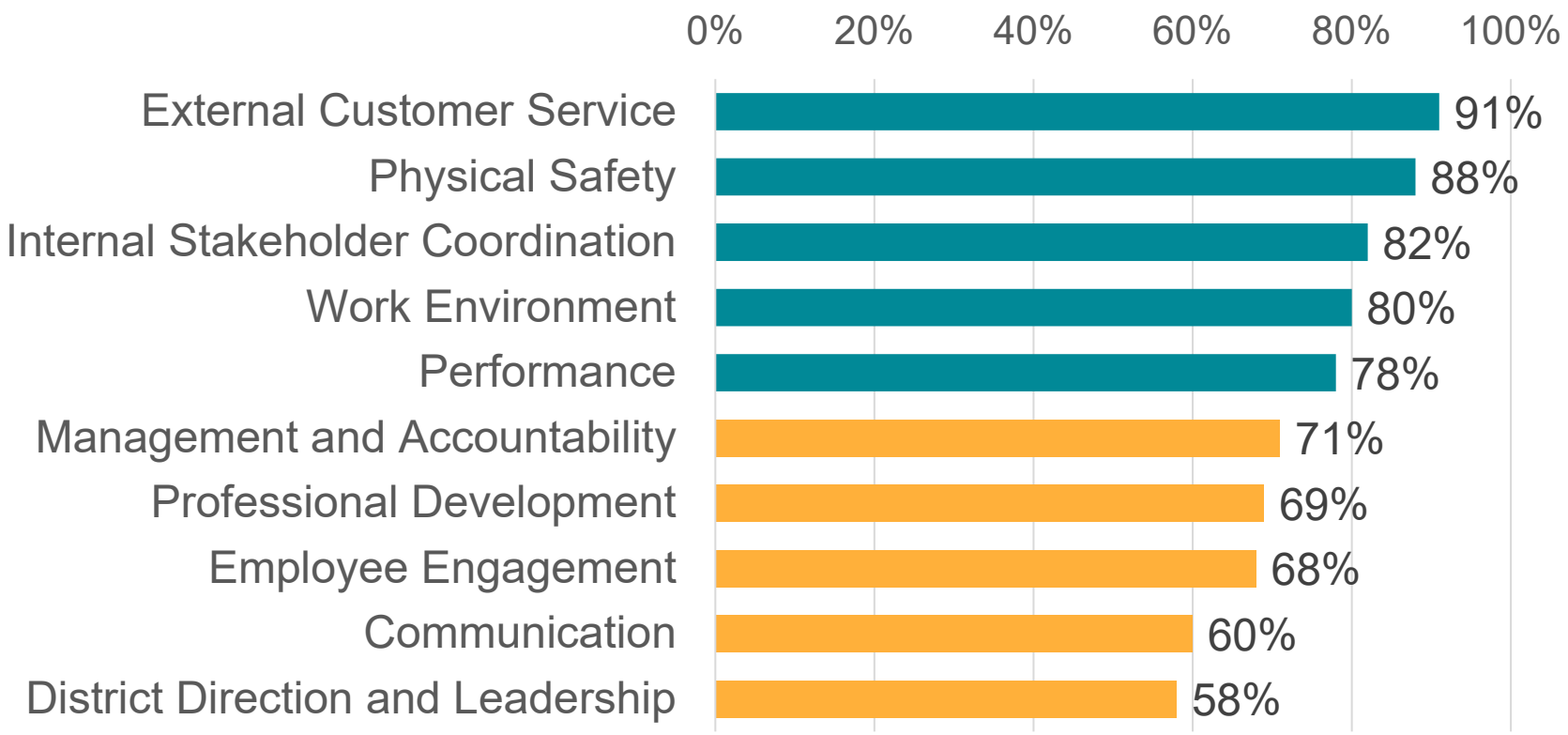
23%

White, not Hispanic (15); 17% two or more races (11)

- **66 total responses.** Other departments: Business Services 11%, Engineering Services 6%, Administration 5%.
- Managers, supervisors, and executives together made up 13% of responses (8).
- Demographic questions were optional: no-response rates ranged from 26% (position, tenure) to 42% (race/ethnicity).

Results by Category

Overall Agreement by Category



District Direction and Leadership – 58% Overall

SURVEY RESULTS

Statement	Agreement
I understand how my job supports Delta Diablo's mission and vision.	94%
I have a clear understanding of the mission for Delta Diablo.	88%
I feel respected by my direct supervisor.	85%
I have a clear understanding of the vision for Delta Diablo.	83%
I feel respected by my Department Director.	80%
Employees are treated fairly regardless of background, role, or work group.	37%
The ET communicates/acts showing all employees should be treated fairly.	34%
The ET is clearly committed to the future of the organization.	31%
The ET adjusts and adapts to changing priorities and demands.	29%
I trust the Executive Team.	23%

OPEN-ENDED THEMES

- **34%** Lack of Vision
- **17%** Impacts on Hiring & Retention
- **17%** Negative Work Environment
- **14%** Lack of Respect
- **14%** Poor Communication & Engagement

Communication – 60% Overall

SURVEY RESULTS

Statement	Agreement
My direct supervisor provides information in a timely and transparent manner.	80%
Communication from my Department Director is transparent.	79%
Communication from my direct supervisor is transparent.	79%
Communication from Human Resources is transparent.	79%
My Division involves employees in decisions that affect them.	69%
I am able to provide input on changes that will impact me.	53%
The reasons behind policy decisions are clearly communicated.	36%
The ET provides information in a timely and transparent manner.	31%
Communication throughout the organization is effective.	30%
Communication from the Executive Team is transparent.	28%

OPEN-ENDED THEMES

- **35%** Inconsistency
- **30%** Limited Employee Involvement & Input
- **15%** Poor Timing
- **10%** Lack of Transparency
- **10%** Lack of Trust

Employee Engagement – 68% Overall

SURVEY RESULTS

Statement	Agreement
Doing my job well gives me a sense of personal satisfaction.	97%
I am determined to give my best effort at work each day.	88%
I feel positive and optimistic about what my Division can accomplish.	79%
I am inspired to meet my expectations at work.	76%
I am satisfied with my overall job security.	75%
I would recommend working for Delta Diablo to a friend.	53%
I get excited about going to work.	48%
I am satisfied with the culture of my workplace.	31%

OPEN-ENDED THEMES

- **53%** Low Morale
- **24%** Impacts of Leadership
- **12%** Need for More Collaboration

Professional Development – 69% Overall

SURVEY RESULTS

Statement	Agreement
My direct supervisor encourages me to develop new and critical skills.	85%
I understand my own role regarding my career development.	82%
I see my position as part of a long-term career with Delta Diablo.	79%
Training is available to help me in my professional development.	79%
I receive coaching and mentorship to support my development.	49%
I am satisfied with my opportunities for growth and advancement.	43%

OPEN-ENDED THEMES

- 38% Limited Advancement Opportunities
- 31% Barriers to Development
- 13% Unfair Promotion Process
- 13% General Positive Feedback
- 13% Unequal Opportunities

Management and Accountability – 71% Overall

SURVEY RESULTS

Statement	Agreement
My direct supervisor and I have a good working relationship.	92%
My direct supervisor celebrates accomplishments with employees.	92%
My direct supervisor holds me accountable for high yet realistic goals.	88%
My direct supervisor treats employees fairly and respectfully.	87%
My direct supervisor does their best to help me succeed at work.	84%
The ET supports employees who do the right thing.	43%
The ET holds underperforming employees accountable.	40%
Delta Diablo applies policies and procedures fairly to all employees.	37%

OPEN-ENDED THEMES

- **37%** Uneven Accountability
- **21%** Favoritism
- **21%** Positive Relationship with Direct Supervisor
- **16%** Lack of Respect
- **16%** Inefficient Decision-Making

Performance – 78% Overall

SURVEY RESULTS

Statement	Agreement
My direct supervisor encourages me to develop new and critical skills.	85%
I understand my own role regarding my career development.	82%
I see my position as part of a long-term career with Delta Diablo.	79%
Training is available to help me in my professional development.	79%
I receive coaching and mentorship to support my development.	49%
I am satisfied with my opportunities for growth and advancement.	43%

OPEN-ENDED THEMES

- 38% Limited Advancement Opportunities
- 31% Barriers to Development
- 13% Unfair Promotion Process
- 13% General Positive Feedback
- 13% Unequal Opportunities

Work Environment – 80% Overall

SURVEY RESULTS

Statement	Agreement
My coworkers and I have a good working relationship.	89%
My coworkers treat people with different backgrounds fairly.	86%
My Division has high standards and ethics.	85%
People I work with use respectful, sensitive, and courteous language.	85%
My Division creates a welcoming workplace.	84%
I feel comfortable sharing my ideas, opinions, and beliefs.	77%
People with different ideas are valued among my coworkers.	75%
My workplace supports a positive work-life balance.	74%
Employees in my Division are willing to take on new tasks.	74%
My physical workspace helps me get my work done effectively.	60%

OPEN-ENDED THEMES

- **30%** Disconnect Between Work Group and ET
- **17%** Negative Overall Culture
- **9%** Need for Better Equipment/Workspace
- **9%** Lack of Teamwork
- **9%** General Positive Feedback

Work Environment – Strategic Values

SURVEY RESULTS

Statement	Agreement
Serve as responsible stewards of valuable public resources.	77%
Maintain public trust through excellent customer service and transparency.	71%
Foster a collaborative, team-based work culture.	69%
Communicate with integrity to inspire trust and camaraderie.	68%
Ensure a positive, safe, equitable, diverse, and inclusive work environment.	67%
Embrace and manage change to support innovative approaches.	67%
Actively seek opportunities to build a learning culture.	66%
Reinforce accountability and ownership.	66%
Model an open, proactive approach to resolving key issues.	60%

Internal Stakeholder Coordination – 82% Overall

SURVEY RESULTS

Statement	Agreement
I go above and beyond to address internal stakeholder needs.	100%
My Division interacts with internal stakeholders respectfully.	93%
My supervisor communicates importance of internal coordination.	87%
My Division responds quickly to internal stakeholder needs.	85%
I feel respected by internal stakeholders.	84%
Coordination with other Divisions is a high priority.	82%
I feel free to take independent action for stakeholder needs.	82%
My Division receives effective support from other Divisions.	70%
Internal division coordination is a high priority of Delta Diablo.	57%

OPEN-ENDED THEMES

- **31%** Organizational Barriers
- **19%** Inefficient Processes
- **19%** General Positive Feedback
- **13%** Siloed Divisions
- **13%** Inadequate Staffing Levels

Physical Safety – 86% Overall

SURVEY RESULTS

Statement	Agreement
PPE is replaced, as needed, in a timely manner.	93%
I believe that my safety is a priority for my direct supervisor.	91%
I have been trained on how to safely use equipment.	90%
Delta Diablo ensures that I have all proper PPE.	88%
I feel empowered to report job site irregularities.	88%
I feel safe at my workplace.	87%
I am never asked to do things in an unsafe manner.	85%
I feel informed about possible safety hazards.	85%
Delta Diablo treats security or safety concerns with high urgency.	78%
Safety incidents are investigated and addressed quickly.	76%

OPEN-ENDED THEMES

- **23%** High Priority
- **23%** Ineffective Trainings & Policies
- **15%** Safety Manager Capacity
- **15%** Lack of Urgency

External Customer Service – 91% Overall

SURVEY RESULTS

Statement	Agreement
I go above and beyond to address customers' needs.	100%
My Division responds quickly to customer needs.	96%
My Division interacts with customers in a friendly manner.	96%
Customer service is a high priority in my Division.	96%
My Division coordinates with other Divisions for timely service.	95%
I feel respected by my external customers.	94%
Services are provided consistently and fairly.	91%
My direct supervisor communicates importance of customer service.	90%
My Division can interact with customers in their preferred language.	84%
Customer service is a high priority of Delta Diablo.	84%
I feel free to take independent action to meet customer needs.	76%

OPEN-ENDED THEMES

29% High Priority

29% Potential for Improved Interactions

Differences in Demographic Groups

Group (overall agreement)	Notably lower (red)	Notably higher (green)
Department: Business Services 69%, Resource Recovery 73%	Business Services, Mgmt. and Accountability 55% (vs. 75%)	None flagged
Position: Division Managers 70%, Staff 73%	Division Managers, Mgmt. and Accountability 46% (vs. 75%) and Communication 45% (vs. 61%)	Division Managers, Employee Engagement 78% (vs. 67%)
Tenure: under 3 yrs 83%, 3 to 6 yrs 70%, 6 to 11 yrs 76%, 11+ yrs 66%	11+ yrs: Direction and Leadership 41%, Communication 46%, Engagement 48%, Performance 68% 3 to 6 yrs: Mgmt. and Accountability 60%	Under 3 yrs: highest in six categories, incl. Performance 95% and Prof. Development 90% 6 to 11 yrs: Mgmt. and Accountability 83%
Gender: Women 68%, Men 78%	Women, Mgmt. and Accountability 55% (vs. 80%)	None flagged
Race: White 84%, Non-White 71%	Non-White lower in most categories	White higher in six categories, largest in Direction and Leadership (76% vs. 54%) and Engagement (87% vs. 66%)

Focus Group Themes

- Appreciate co-workers and team relationships
- Take pride in their workplace
- Support Directors and managers involvement in decisions
- Recognition of institutional knowledge and expertise
- Balance capital between high-profile projects and infrastructure maintenance
- Employees desire more consistent and frequent communication
- Prioritize fairness, equity, and respect for everyone
- Concerned that promotional practices are not transparent and equitable

Key Driver Analysis

What is a Key Driver Analysis?

- Identifies the impact of each aspect on employee morale and engagement
- Improving some areas will have a greater impact than others
- Focuses resources on changes that maximize impact
- Examines correlation between Employee Engagement agreement and other categories
- Higher regression coefficient = larger impact on engagement

Statements with Strongest Relationship to Employee Engagement

14 survey statements grouped by correlation coefficient with engagement

Strongest drivers (1.0+)	**3**	Welcoming Division, transparent Director communication, timely Division Manager information
Moderate drivers (0.70–0.99)	**3**	Psychological safety to share ideas, trust in Director, customer service priority
Supporting drivers (under 0.70)	**8**	Coordination, safety, accountability, mission, role clarity, autonomy, supervisor trust

Key Driver Analysis Summary

Based on these results, a highly-engaged District employee would:

- Trust leaders at all levels
- Feel welcomed, comfortable, and safe at work
- Receive clear communication from leadership
- Collaborate across the District
- Value high-quality customer service
- Be empowered to execute their role
- See work aligned with mission and vision
- Believe all employees are held accountable

Opportunity Areas

Opportunity Areas for Improvement

Based on these results, the District can maximize culture improvements by focusing on:

1. Decision Making
2. Respect
3. Communication and Engagement
4. Accountability



OA: Decision Making

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Actions
1	**Strengthen decision-making frameworks at the director and manager level to support ownership, efficiency, and accountability.**	Update the approval purchasing threshold for directors, managers, and supervisors to provide efficiency and autonomy.
		Provide leadership training at all levels to establish a common expectation for leadership style and autonomy consistent with each employee's role.
		Develop a new performance appraisal template that aligns with leadership training and ensures that performance appraisals are consistently administered.



OA: Decision Making (continued)

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Actions
2	**Create continuous avenues for two-way dialogue so employees can contribute their operational expertise and stay connected to organizational priorities.**	Conduct regularly scheduled all-hands meetings providing a safe space to foster question-and-answer style dialog.



OA: Respect

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Actions
3	**Strengthen leadership engagement across the organization to foster a learning-based culture.**	Conduct safety and operational job walks to provide an opportunity for professional and personal staff engagement with leadership.
		Conduct regularly scheduled all-hands meetings providing a safe space that fosters question-and-answer style dialog.
		Conduct all-hands department meetings with a learning focus.



OA: Respect (continued)

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Actions
4	**Conduct stay interviews to gain insights on what retains strong talent.**	Conduct stay interviews with a standard list of questions for staff at various tenure levels (5/10/15 years).
		Hold appreciation events to recognize and celebrate employee achievements.



OA: Respect (continued)

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Actions
5	**Continue strengthening workplace policies that support an inclusive and welcome environment at all levels.**	Update personnel policies to reflect current MOU requirements and business practices and regularly review policies to ensure continued legal compliance.
		Update “other” policies (travel, purchasing, etc.) with a focus on improving workplace efficiency and clarity.
		Provide policy and procedure training to all staff.



OA: Communication and Engagement

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Actions
6	**Expand regular communication channels and cross-departmental touchpoints.**	Establish a communications framework to allow for timely and effective dissemination of information to staff.
		Develop a newsletter or other marketing material that is regularly published to staff and focuses on District activities and staff highlights.
		Identify multiple pathways to communicate to staff, leveraging technology, with regularly updated relevant information.



OA: Accountability

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Actions
7	**Enhance transparency (when legally applicable) and consistency in hiring and promotional processes.**	Update HR policies and procedures to ensure consistency.
		Explain the hiring process and metrics in detail at an all-hands meeting, allowing for Q&A.



OA: Accountability (continued)

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Actions
8	**Reinforce a "one organization" mindset by promoting a shared responsibility in meeting customer needs and protecting the environment.**	Develop messaging and actions that reinforce the "one organization" concept to break down information silos by providing transparency, training, and multiple pathways for staff to safely express their opinions.



OA: Accountability (continued)

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Tasks
9	**Continue refining the performance evaluation process to ensure alignment with organizational goals and priorities.**	Clearly define the District's goals and priorities, including mission and vision, and communicate them to staff to ensure understanding and alignment. Evaluate employee performance on a regular and timely basis with a section in the evaluation form to recognize achievements and accolades. Consider the use of 360 input in the review process.



OA: Accountability (continued)

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Actions
10	**Enhance infrastructure and preventative maintenance planning and implementation.**	Enhance collaboration among divisions by including O&M staff on project teams who are empowered to engage in project-level decisions throughout the project lifecycle.
		Communicate back to O&M staff the process and rationale for infrastructure decisions.



OA: Accountability (continued)

Rec. No.	Recommendation	Actions
11	**Support a thoughtful and inclusive process for identifying leadership qualities that align with the organization's long-term goals.**	Define the District's long-term goals and provide leadership that supports those goals.



Next Steps

- Review and discuss report findings and recommendations; Consider approving some or all of the recommendations and directing staff to proceed with implementation
- Consider directing staff to negotiate a contract extension with Rafetlis to assist the District with implementation of the report recommendations, subject to any modifications to the report directed by the Board

