

# Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water (CAMP4W)

Environmental Listening Session – March 25, 2024  
Summary

**Prepared for**

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

**Prepared By**

Kearns & West

## 1) CAMP4W Environmental Listening Session – Overview

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) conducted the fifth quarterly Environmental Listening Session for the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water (CAMP4W) on March 25, 2024, from 3:00-4:30 pm. Approximately 25 people participated in the session, which was conducted virtually. The presentation slides are provided in Appendix A.

The objectives for this session were to:

- Continue the Listening Session process of soliciting input from environmental stakeholders to inform the CAMP4W process.
- Give updates on CAMP4W.
- Present the CAMP4W climate decision-making framework and time-bound targets.
- Listen and discuss stakeholders' perspectives on the time-bound targets for community equity.

The following sections summarize the session, including the comments, questions, ideas, and perspectives shared by the participants.

## 2) Introduction

Liz Crosson, Chief Sustainability, Resilience and Innovation Officer at Metropolitan, welcomed attendees to the virtual meeting and expressed appreciation for their participation. She then introduced Adel Hagekhalil, General Manager at Metropolitan, who thanked participants for continuing to engage in the process for CAMP4W. He described Metropolitan's actions to plan for the future, including consideration of adapting to climate change and climate whiplash. Next, he highlighted the collaborative work being done by the Metropolitan Board of Directors and the CAMP4W Task Force. Hagekhalil then touched on Metropolitan's examination of business models to balance needed investments and affordability. He thanked attendees for participating in the Listening Sessions.

Joan Isaacson, facilitator from Kearns & West, reviewed the meeting agenda and as a way to check-in, she asked participants to share responses in the chat to the question, "What is a project you're working on this spring?" Participant responses included green schools, green streets, clean water programs, and water conservation.

## 3) Project Overview

Crosson provided an overview of CAMP4W and the planning process and described how the project covers a variety of topics related to climate action planning. Crosson noted that CAMP4W emerged from a desire from leadership to make sure that Metropolitan comprehensively included climate in everything being done at Metropolitan. Crosson highlighted that CAMP4W integrates water resources planning, infrastructure development, climate adaptation, and finance planning into one interconnected process (slide 7). She shared that the session's purpose was to solicit input on time-bound targets related to community equity.

Crosson then overviewed high-level objectives for CAMP4W, noting the two broad categories of water supply reliability and financial sustainability (slide 8). Crosson added that the types of programs and projects being evaluated through the Climate Decision-Making Framework are not only new sources of water, but also efficiency programs, landscape transformation programs, and wetlands restoration, among others.

Crosson then reviewed the Climate Decision-Making Framework, noting Time-Bound Targets, evaluative criteria and project scoring, and investment decisions. She noted that there will be additional considerations beyond those shared in the upcoming Year One Report. Crosson then presented an overview of the time-bound targets and explained that they would be used to evaluate and identify

projects and investment decisions, along with the evaluative criteria. Crosson responded to a question from the chat asking who would score the projects/programs. She noted that the Metropolitan team is still exploring different concepts and ideas when it comes to the scoring methodology.

Crosson presented the proposed set of 10 time-bound targets for the Year One Report (slide 12). She added that there are resource-based targets and policy-based targets. Crosson explained that ensuring equitable supply reliability for all member agencies is an important target for Metropolitan as an agency. Additional time-bound targets under consideration were presented, with participants asked to focus on community equity, considering investments in underserved communities, affordability measures, and the process for meaningful community engagement (slide 13).

Crosson then introduced Adrian Hightower, Sustainability and Resilience Manager at Metropolitan. Hightower defined community equity, described the engagement process – including the four water affordability panels – and shared major themes identified through these conversations that are helping to inform and define equity and affordability. Hightower highlighted the following major themes from this process (slide 14).

- Leveraging non-rate revenues
- Collaboration and information sharing
- Investment in education and outreach
- Statewide and federal advocacy
- Policy and program innovation

He highlighted the influence of previous Environmental Listening Sessions on current work and the importance of transparency in defining equity. Hightower added that the discussion in this session would focus on gathering input for time-bound targets for equity – measurable community equity goals – which will inform the overall adaptive management strategy.

#### 4) Discussion Session on Time-Bound Targets for Community Equity

Isaacson explained to participants that the next section of the meeting would be a group discussion focusing on time-bound targets for community equity. She shared three questions for discussion of community equity (slide 16):

- What dimensions of community equity should be considered in time-bound targets for CAMP4W?
- What kinds of time-bound targets for community equity have you seen successfully employed by other agencies?
- What are your ideas for assessing and weighing regional benefits and local infrastructure effects?

#### Discussion

The following section summarizes input from individual participants for the first three questions. Due to time constraints, participants were encouraged to share their responses to Question 4 through the project email address.

#### Question 1: What dimensions of community equity should be considered in time-bound targets for CAMP4W?

- Green space, but it really depends on which community we are talking about. There is a need for a localized needs assessment for each community [dependent] along with cross-community topics like green space.
- Social-cultural implications of changes. Examples can include lawn removal efforts that can have cultural implications in their neighborhoods for residents who see things like lawns as social indicators.

- Many dimensions to community equity; most interested in affordability. From a customer perspective, all costs are going up; rising costs have implications across the board. Further examination of resilience is needed, including the question of whose future we are planning for and if those people will be able to afford that water. There is a need to deeply consider cost and financial impacts in the business model and how those costs get translated to customers.
- Rate affordability and affordable rate structure; Metropolitan can be proactive in providing support to member agencies with affordable rate structures. There is the opposite of equity, with some member agencies getting more dollars per capita than other member agencies. The challenge is that Metropolitan cannot provide different programs, rates, and supplies to water districts serving low-income communities. Technical assistance by Metropolitan is really important to help address some of these concerns across member agencies. Direct installation programs focused on low-income communities are also important to consider, given the success of these programs.
- Hightower shared that there are discussions regarding rate reform. These discussions are happening as part of the panel discussions being held by Metropolitan.
- Perhaps we should think about lawns differently because of their potential benefit for carbon sequestration.
- Improve water in public locations; unhoused people have a hard time accessing drinking water and water for bathing. For example, when showers were cut off at the beach during the drought, access to basic hygiene was erased for many people. Can we have freestanding showers for folks?
- Affordability is more than just rates.
- Important to consider what Metropolitan is offering to communities and getting from them. How can Metropolitan support more community gardens and co-op spaces? Can there be more rebates for these kinds of programs? What are other equitable ways to create revenue?
- To make affordable gardens, providing access to one's own graywater could be a game changer for low- and moderate-income communities.
- Strategic outreach communication planning and implementation; bringing clear and reasonable water conversations to the public through agency collaborations.
- As per Accelerate Resilience LA's extensive research, capturing rainwater off of roofs into cisterns would also give low- and moderate-income communities access to low- or no-cost water for gardening.
- Explore the affordability benefits from neighborhood water efficiency programs implemented by community-based organizations, as the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) did so effectively in the past.
- Concerned by water agencies' sudden concern about the "Human Right to Water" and affordability. This came up at the recent State Water Resources Control Board's hearings last week. Economic development can be provided through efficiency programs and so many other good things will follow.
- Seems like the same discussion regarding equity and rates is happening again. Are communities sufficiently represented in these meeting spaces?
- Homeowner associations are struggling with climate disasters and insurance. Can Metropolitan provide assistance to them for turf replacement, toilets, leaks, and filling in pools for those interested? These could be a new revenue stream.
- Co-funding incentive programs with other regional partners like stormwater agencies could be beneficial.
- Use debt financing for conservation programs. Places conservation on the same footing as other investments.

**Question 2: What kinds of time-bound targets for community equity have you seen successfully employed by other agencies?**

- Los Angeles County’s Our County sustainability plan could be a reference.
- Crosson added that this is the first time that Metropolitan has focused on time-bound targets and how to consider these when developing strategies and programs.
- Justice40 and Measure W resource allocation provide a large set percentage of resources to community equity. The Ocean Protection Council did a \$9.5M grant program for environmental justice and water quality in low-income communities, but these are examples on the resource side, not on the performance or outcome side.
- Are there lessons from (former Los Angeles Board of Water and Power Commissioner) Bill Funderburk’s efforts at LADWP?
- Targets for training cohorts and workforce development could be considered.
- Metropolitan can and should take a lead on workforce development. Setting an outdoor conservation target and what skills are needed to build and maintain them is key. Set overarching criteria on what is needed to create a skilled, green workforce.
- One good example could be the City of Santa Monica, which helped folks make landscape changes, with the City supporting those changes through install programs.
- SB 535 Disadvantaged Communities could be a good reference.
- Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Workgroup could be a good reference and resource: [mywaterquality.ca.gov/monitoring\\_council/jedi\\_workgroup/](https://mywaterquality.ca.gov/monitoring_council/jedi_workgroup/)
- The Santa Monica grant program puts more water conservation projects across their city per year than any other program. Essentially, this would be upping the amount that Metropolitan already offers for garden do-over rebates.
- An important question is how we build a workforce. We need to be thinking about new kinds of work in the water sector. In terms of equity, it seems that creating new onramps to skills and real jobs would be a huge benefit. How else do we create a community that can afford to live in SoCal?
- Outdoor water use (landscapes) is a gateway to water management, land management, pollution prevention, and much more.
- Ecosystem function should be a priority.
- There are questions and challenges in defining direct benefits, including establishing percentages that help designate the impact and thinking about the difference between indirect benefits and direct benefits in disadvantaged communities when it comes to project selection.
- DC/Maryland Public Works is piloting several good stormwater-management-oriented workforce trainings that are gig-worker-oriented and are making inroads in disadvantaged communities (DACs); creating onramps to training, jobs, and higher education.
- Examining the LADWP Community Partnership Grant Program could be beneficial, as it could help understand the type of applications being submitted, how these programs are selected, and their success rates.
- Local, distributed nature-based stormwater and enhanced conservation projects bring a myriad of benefits to communities. Finding out what the communities need and then helping those communities retrofit their own landscapes (via rebates or direct installation) is critical.

**Question 3: What are your ideas for assessing and weighing regional benefits and local infrastructure effects?**

Crosson added that the Metropolitan is considering how to account for environmental co-benefits as part of evaluative criteria.

- LADWP has a biodiversity working group that could be a good reference given their involvement and progressive approach towards biodiversity topics.
- Measure W environmental justice and community-based organizations expressed challenges at a workshop a month ago that the process of application and capacity of many environmental justice groups don't match. Groups like Amigos de los Ríos invested a huge amount of time to get two of the four grants that went to environmental justice groups. When LADWP had support from above and the community-based organizations organized, federal money from the Bureau of Reclamation went through Metropolitan. All of the community-based organizations worked cooperatively and regionally.
- Need to assess environmental co-benefits, but many of them are very difficult to quantify. UCLA's Sustainable LA Grand Challenge had the same issue. Some aspects are easier to quantify, while others remain challenging, making the analysis tough. Even the economic benefits of the program can be tough to quantify, so what often happens is that a list of co-benefits for a project or action is added without any real quantification.
- Because we have unclear quantification of the value of open spaces or other natural co-benefits, it does not invalidate their importance; it just indicates that we need to better integrate the real value of these things into our funding and thinking processes.

**5) Reflections from Project Team**

Crosson and Liji Thomas, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer at Metropolitan, highlighted overarching themes and topics they heard during the discussion. The following topics are listed below in alphabetical order.

- **AB 218** – Should not be a barrier to advancing equity efforts.
- **Access to Public Water and Public Locations** – Consider the unhoused population's access to water.
- **Community Engagement** – Voices from the community need to be part of the process and decision-making.
- **Cultural Implication of Change** – Cultural implications should be considered when implementing specific changes such as lawn removals.
- **Equity Metrics** – Develop and track equity metrics, potentially examining similar programs from other agencies.
- **Holistic Programs** – Need to take a holistic approach when it comes to program implementation.
- **Multi-benefits** – Process to measure and quantify multi-benefit projects.
- **Revenue** – Other ways to raise revenue, not just through property taxes and raising rates.
- **Specific Community Needs** – Cannot approach issues with a one-size-fits-all approach.
- **Technical Assistance** – Policies and initiatives that Metropolitan can pursue, including technical assistance for member agencies and sub-agencies.
- **Workforce Development and Training Cohorts** – Programs can be onramps to skills and real jobs.

## 6) Next Steps

Isaacson thanked participants for their input and reminded them that notes had been taken during the discussion and would be shared in a summary. Crosson described the next steps and provided information on upcoming CAMP4W Joint Task Force meetings (slide 18). She then highlighted additional opportunities to participate in the CAMP4W process, including the opportunity to provide comments on the time-bound targets (slide 19). Crosson thanked the participants for their engagement and closed the meeting.

## **Appendix A**

Listening Session PowerPoint Presentation





# Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water

Environmental Listening Session

March 25, 2024



**CAMP4W**  
Climate Adaptation  
Master Plan for Water

# Today's Agenda

1. Updates on Metropolitan's Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water
2. Addressing Community Equity in Time-Bound Targets
3. Roundtable Discussion and Input
4. Reflections from Project Team
5. Wrap Up

Questions,  
Discussion,  
and Input

Please use the chat or raise your hand

# Introductions

On the count of three...Type into chat:

# Introductions

On the count of three...Type into chat:  
**What is a project that you're working  
on this spring?**



# CAMP4W

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Climate Adaptation  
Master Plan for Water

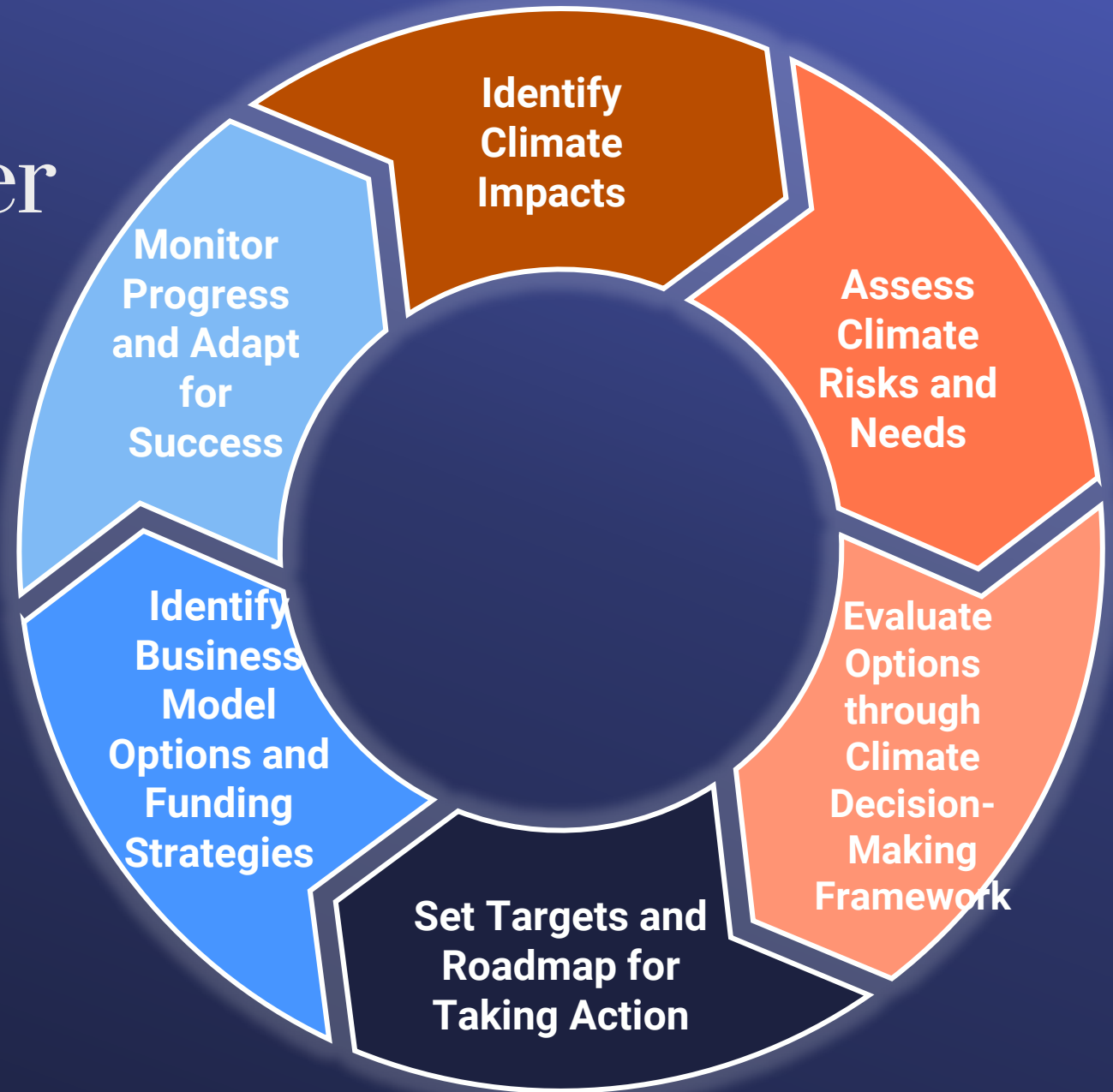
# Climate Adaptation Master Plan For Water

A comprehensive, adaptive planning process

The CAMP4W integrates

- water resources planning
- infrastructure development
- climate adaptation
- finance planning

into one interconnected process.



# CAMP4W Objectives

## WATER SUPPLY RELIABILITY



Increasing Water Efficiency



Expanding Water Supply Portfolio



Regional Water Banking & Storage



Improving Access to Water Delivery Systems



Increasing System Resilience

## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY



Maintaining Affordable Water Rates



Sound Investments



Project Cost-Sharing



Regional Partnerships



# Climate Decision-Making Framework

Programs and projects will be evaluated through the Climate Decision-Making Framework

Progress could be measured against Time-bound Targets



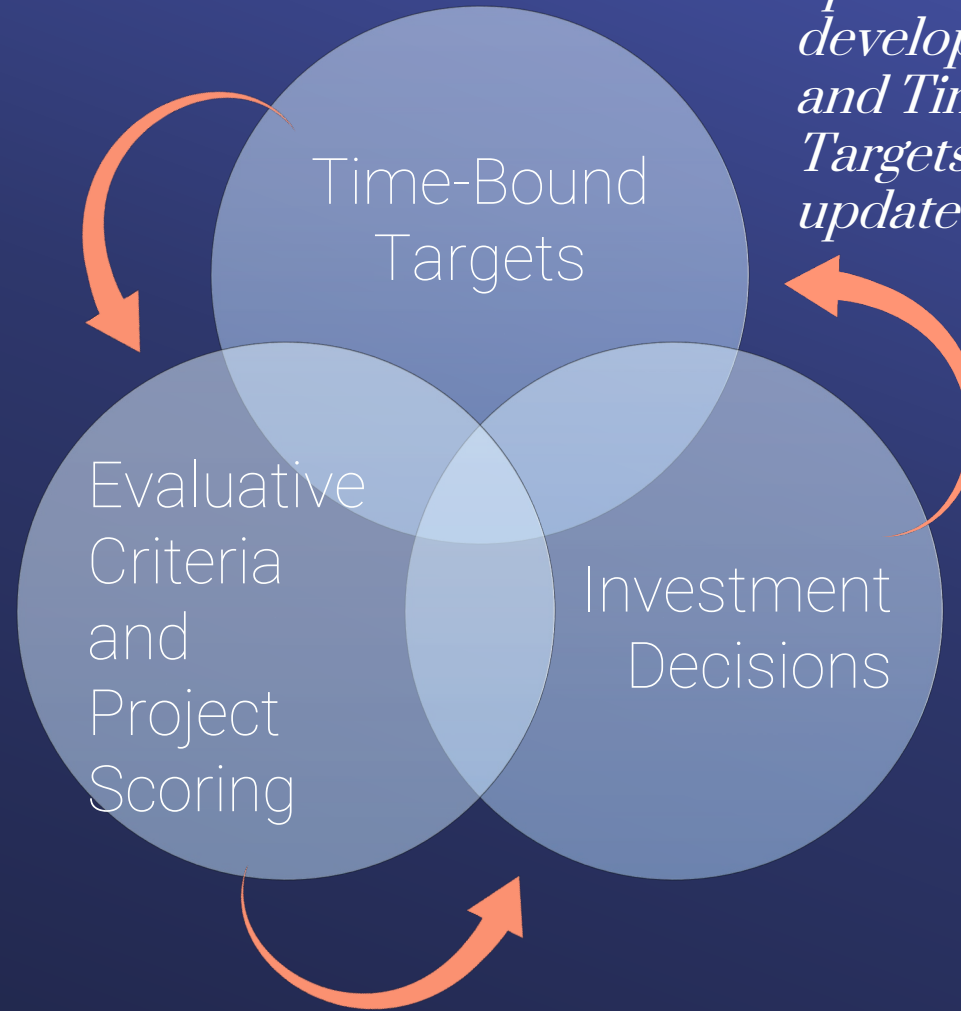
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# Climate Decision Making Framework

Integrated Elements:  
*Time-Bound Targets,  
Evaluative Criteria and  
Investment Decisions  
function together*



*Time-Bound  
Targets guide  
project  
development  
and inform  
scoring of  
projects*



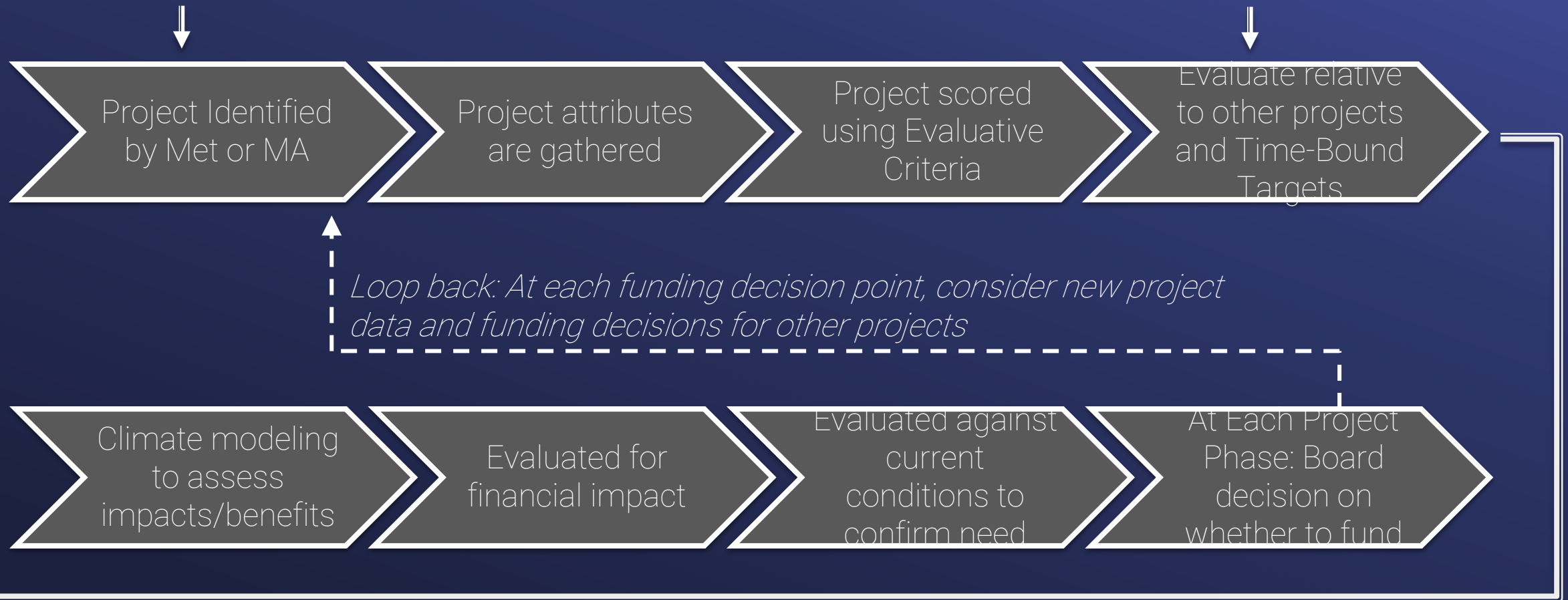
*Adaptive Management:  
update resource  
development needs  
and Time-Bound  
Targets based on  
updated projections*

*Scores and Time-Bound Targets inform decision-making*

# Role of Time-Bound Targets in the Climate Decision-Making Framework

*Identify projects/ programs that address Time-Bound Targets*

*Compare project/ program to other "go" projects to ensure portfolio of projects will not exceed/conflict with Time-Bound Targets*



# Proposed Set of 10 Time-Bound Targets for April 2024 Year One Report



## Resource-Based Targets

Core Supply

Flex Supply

Storage

## Policy-Based Targets

Assist in Maintaining Existing and Under Construction Local Agency Supply

Equitable Supply Reliability

Regional Water Use Efficiency

Water Use Efficiency (used to offset Core Supply need)

Average Regional Gallons Per Capita Per Day (GPCD)

Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Flexible Water Management (Under Surplus Conditions)

# Additional Time-Bound Targets Under Consideration

- **Community Equity:** Focus on investing in underserved communities, affordability measures and providing meaningful community engagement.
- **New Local Supply:** Targets around local and member agency supply and/or program development.
- **Water Quality:** Ensuring research, innovation, and progress in addressing emerging contaminants of concern and new regulatory requirements.
- **Infrastructure Resilience:** Investments necessary to meet growing climate-driven vulnerabilities during and after disruptions.
- **Imported Water Source Resilience:** Investment in protecting source watersheds and existing infrastructure to reduce risks presented by accelerated climate change.
- **Ecosystem Health:** Measurable improvements to natural systems that provide value, resilience and regulatory benefits to water supplies.



# Addressing Community Equity in the Time-Bound Targets

**Community Equity:** Investing in underserved communities, affordability measures and providing meaningful community engagement.

- Four Water Affordability Panels conducted in Metropolitan's Equity, Inclusion, and Affordability Board Committee in 2023
- 19 panelists representing community-based organizations, academic institutions, trade organizations, regulators, utilities, and water agencies

## Major Themes

- Leveraging non-rate revenues
- Collaboration and information sharing
- Investment in education and outreach
- Statewide and federal advocacy
- Policy and program innovation



# Addressing Community Equity in the Time-Bound Targets

**Community Equity:** Investing in underserved communities, affordability measures and providing meaningful community engagement.

Metropolitan's Special Service District Authorization Act,  
Sec. 130(c) and Sec. 134.

**Your Input Needed!**

**Measurable Community Equity goals** that will inform and be informed by CAMP4W's adaptive management strategy



Discussion  
Session on  
Time-Bound  
Targets for  
Community  
Equity

- 1) What dimensions of community equity should be considered in Time-Bound Targets for CAMP4W?
- 2) What kinds of Time-Bound Targets for community equity have you seen successfully employed by other agencies?
- 3) What are your ideas for assessing and weighing regional benefits and local infrastructure effects?
- 4) If time: What is one top priority for Metropolitan to consider in the Time-Bound Targets?



Discussion  
Session on  
**Community  
Equity** and  
Time-Bound  
Targets

Reflections from Project Team

# Task Force Meeting Schedule

Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water

## Next Steps for Task Force

March 27 9:30-12:30	CAMP4W Task Force (LTRPPBM Subcommittee)	Draft Year One Progress Report (Exec Summary, Purpose and Need, Climate Decision-Making Framework, Developing Adaptation Strategies)
April 9 10:30 am	Finance and Asset Management Committee	Draft Year One Progress Report (Info Item)
April 23 11:30 am	Equity, Inclusion and Affordability Committee	Report on Water Affordability Panels and Recommended Actions
April 24 9:30-12:30	CAMP4W Task Force (LTRPPBM Subcommittee)	Draft Year One Progress Report (Business Model and Affordability, Policies, Partnerships, Adaptive Management)
May 13/14	Finance and Asset Management Committee	Draft Year One Progress Report (Action Item)



CAMP4W Task Force Meetings (LTRPPBM Subcommittee) are currently scheduled for the fourth Wednesday, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm throughout 2024.

# Bring Community Perspectives to CAMP4W Process

- **Share** informational resources with colleagues and community members
- **Review** the draft Year 1 Report and provide comments by May 3, 2024
- **Comment** on Community Equity within Time-Bound targets
- **Participate** in quarterly listening sessions and engagement events



[www.mwdh2o.com/camp4w](http://www.mwdh2o.com/camp4w)  
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# CAMP4W

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Climate Adaptation  
Master Plan for Water

Thank you!

For more information, visit our project website:

[www.mwdh2o.com/camp4w](http://www.mwdh2o.com/camp4w)

