### Draft Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges by Focus Area

*with Customer Panel Feedback Highlighted in Yellow*

#### Customer

**Strengths:**
- Customer trust and pride in SPU’s water quality and SPU/customer environmental efforts *Panel comment: add how dependent we are on customer actions in DWW LOB*
- Customer perception that SPU services linked to quality of life
- Generally high customer satisfaction with SPU services

**Weaknesses:**
- Negative perceptions of rate levels and rate increases
  *Panel comment: tax rates are high; helps create affordability challenges*
- Equity issues with service delivery – perceived value for money spent depends upon neighborhood in which customer lives or works
- Inefficient customer-facing processes

**Opportunities:**
- Proactively identifying and solving the major problem areas for customers
- Expanding communication options: web services, email, texts, ESL services
- Increasing rate/service predictability and transparency

**Challenges:**
- General invisibility of our work
- High percentage of fixed costs coupled with decreasing customer demand, leading to increasing rates

#### Workforce

**Strengths:**
- Employee loyalty to SPU, and pride in SPU services
- Passionate and professional people
- Analytical and strategic thinking abilities of employees

**Weaknesses:**
- Workforce challenges: lack of clear expectations, accountability, and empowerment
- Inadequate succession planning
- Inadequate soft and other skills and training

**Opportunities:**
- Developing a culture that forges teamwork and collaboration
- Improving systems and processes to attract, develop, and retain capable and motivated people
- Improving workplace safety

**Challenges:**
- Cultural norm of avoiding difficult issues
- Working with unions to expand workforce flexibility
- Aging workforce, leading to increased on-the-job injuries and knowledge drain (with retirements) *Panel recommendation: reword this one*

#### Environment

**Strengths:**
- Commitment to environmental compliance & stewardship
- Good relationships with our regulators
- Conservation and recycling programs that lead the nation

**Weaknesses:**
- Lack of clear direction for environment/public health programs not required by regulators

**Opportunities:**
- Improving response to evolving external circumstances (i.e., climate)
- Maintaining strong relationships with regulators

**Challenges:**
- Keeping up with evolving regulatory mandates
- Integrating climate change science into future actions

#### Operations

**Strengths:**
- Sound infrastructure: few service outages; redundant water supply sources *Panel comments: consider SWOC by LOB in OpEx, since it is LOB-dependent; consider using the word “reliable” instead of “sound”.*
- High level of fiscal strength
- Commitment to asset management principles

**Weaknesses:**
- Inefficient and excessive processes
- Lack of effective prioritization of work

**Opportunities:**
- Discovering and implementing efficiency opportunities
- Improving collaboration and integration with other departments and agencies
- Ensuring sound financial practices *Panel comment: this is important to building customer trust*

**Challenges:**
- Insufficient drainage infrastructure in pockets of the City
- Limited influence/control on major cost centers (wastewater treatment; charges from other City departments)
- Other agency projects affecting SPU infrastructure in rights-of-way
- Underperforming infrastructure
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<tr>
<th>FOCUS AREAS/ GOALS</th>
<th>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES WITH CUSTOMER PANEL FEEDBACK</th>
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| Create an easy & engaged (Panel question: do you really want engagement?) customer experience  
**Goal:** We achieve internal and external customer expectations [Panel comment: consider including the concept of affordability in this focus area, as well as OpEx]  | **Easy Customer Experience.** Minimize the amount of customer effort required to interact with SPU (Panel comment - restate in positive way?)  
**Service equity.** Ensure equitable service accessibility  
**Customer Participation.** Create an opportunity to participate (Panel question: what does this mean?)  
**Transparency.** Make SPU transparent to customers and constituents |
| Transform the workforce  
**Goal:** We will have a high performing, engaged workforce focused on business outcomes | **People.** Attract, develop and retain capable and motivated people  
**Place/Safety.** Improve workplace safety. (Panel comment – change “improve to “enhance”? Also edit SWOC re: aging workforce & OJT injuries)  
**Culture.** Grow a culture that forges teamwork and collaboration  
**Systems.** Develop and deploy effective systems and tools to support workforce planning and performance management (Panel comment -if not just IT, then pick different word.) |
| Achieve environmental compliance & stewardship  
**Goal:** We will provide utility services in a way that makes Seattle cleaner, greener, and more healthful [Panel comment: consider including "environmental stewardship" on values list] | **Environment & Health Mandates.** Meet or exceed environmental and public health mandates (Panel comment – not noted here is our flexibility in meeting these mandates)  
**Sustainability.** Conduct all SPU operations in a sustainable way (Panel comment - delete the word “all”?)  
**Partnering.** Partner with stakeholders, public and private entities (Panel question: what is the distinction being made here?) to achieve environmental objectives (Panel question: how does this relate to “mandates” above?)  
**Adaptability.** Anticipate and adapt to changing circumstances  
**Wisdom use of Resources.** Promote conservation and sustainable use of utility services [Panel comment – promote only so much; focus on efficiency & strategy] |
| Achieve operational excellence  
**Goal:** increase value delivered to the customer | **Service quality.** Provide reliable, high quality utility services to all customers  
**Effectiveness & Efficiency.** Spend our customers’ money on the right things and in the best way, accounting for equity, risk, and external drivers  
**Fiscal Strength.** Maintain fiscal strength  
**Fiscal Integrity.** Ensure development and implementation of sound financial practices [Panel comment: specifically call out improving internal controls, maybe stating in as a weakness]  
**Technology & Tools.** Leverage technology and innovation to get the job done  
**Adaptability.** Anticipate and adapt to changing circumstances |