



Title: MCWD Capital Improvement Plan

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Purpose:

To orient the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to the organization's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), review the [2023 CIP](#) and introduce the preliminary 2024 CIP. The 2023 CIP was developed using a modified format, process, and set of project planning tools designed to enhance shared decision making between the Board and staff. These improvements are collectively referred to as the Multi-Year CIP, and having been implemented for the first time, would benefit from review and input from the CAC prior to the 2024 annual cycle.

The May 2023 meeting also aligns well with recent design approvals for the [325 Blake Road Regional Stormwater and Greenway project and the Cottageville Park Phase II effort](#). Staff will seek CAC input on elements of wayfinding and interpretation as part of the CIP discussion, which times well with the recent Board and CAC tour of Cottageville Park.

Summary:

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD or District) is a mission-driven organization that centers its work on the delivery of high-impact capital projects that integrate water and natural resources with the built environment. MCWD has progressively improved its approach to capital project planning through cycles of implementation and deliberate reflection that have increased the sophistication and efficacy of its capital project implementation model.

As an organization that values continuous improvement, 2023 marks an opportunity for MCWD to continue advancing its capital project program. First, the organization's two focal geographies – Minnehaha Creek and Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay – have reached milestones that present a natural point to evaluate the next phase of implementation priorities. Furthermore, the organization continues to align programs and build internal capabilities to best support delivery of high-impact capital projects. Finally, MCWD has reached the halfway point of the [2017 Watershed Management Plan](#) (Plan), providing an opportunity to reflect on our success, renew our focus, and chart the direction of our next 10 year plan (2027).

Each year, as described in MCWD's Plan, MCWD revises and distributes its 10-year CIP to cities and counties for 30-day review and comment. The purpose of this annual process is to allow MCWD to adjust its 10-year CIP based on feasibility analysis of projects described in the Plan, identification of new project opportunities through coordination with land use planning, shifts in District priorities, and assessment of staff and financial capacity. As projects are continually being developed, this process also allows MCWD to provide its stakeholders with a greater level of specificity. The District uses the annual distribution of its CIP to remind its communities of MCWD's implementation approach and its desire to coordinate and align its plans and investments with its member communities.

The 2023 CIP highlights MCWD's new Multi-Year CIP initiative. The purpose of this initiative is threefold: to improve clarity around near-term project initiatives and the time, staff allocation, and resources needed to execute project workplans; to create a framework to better forecast the capital budget and fundraising needs over multiples years; and to improve the effectiveness of the CIP as an external communications tool.

May 17, 2023, Citizen's Advisory Committee

At the May 17, 2023, CAC Meeting, staff will provide a presentation and facilitated discussion to introduce the CAC to the 2023 Multi-Year CIP and the preliminary 2024 Multi-Year CIP. The CAC reviews the CIP annually through the budget

development and review process, and this presentation presents an opportunity to preview the new materials and provide insight into what information may be included in the publicly facing CIP documents.

Staff will also use the opportunity to introduce the draft wayfinding and interpretation components of the 325 Blake Road Regional Stormwater and Greenway project and solicit input from the CAC based on its understanding of the site, the project amenities, and the desired experience of future users of the Minnehaha Creek Greenway.