



**Title:** MCWD Strategic Dialogs – Phase 1 Historic Analysis – Draft Principles

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**Purpose:**

At the September 14, 2022, Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting, District counsel Louis Smith will facilitate a discussion with CAC members of draft organizational principles, derived from analysis of the history of Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD or the District). The principles, once finalized later this year, will serve as timeless strategic insights to guide and serve future generations of the MCWD team.

The CAC will be asked to (1) reflect on the major categories of principles, and whether they effectively capture those that might inform the District's ongoing success; and (2) identify specific principles that should be emphasized, areas that may require more clarity, and principles that may be missing.

**Background:**

2022 represents the midpoint of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District's 10-year plan, and is also the 5-year anniversary of the District's 2017 plan for organizational alignment. Approaching this milestone, the Board of Managers expressed a desire to continue strategic preparations for the future, by exploring its past to identify timeless lessons, benchmarking its current position, and refining its mid-term strategic direction and priorities as it tracks towards the 2027 watershed plan.

This work has been broken into three phases of work as follows:

1. Phase 1 – Past – Where have we been and what have we learned?
  - a. A historical analysis to derive insights that underpin MCWD's identity today, and lessons for the future
2. Phase 2 – Present – Where are we now and what needs to be done?
  - a. Status of current priorities, and assessment of what will be required near term to execute (e.g. staffing)
3. Phase 3 – Future – What challenges will we face in the future, and how can we prepare?
  - a. Emerging strategic issues the District wishes to begin preparing for (e.g. climate action)

To support Phase 1, the MCWD Board asked District counsel, Louis Smith, to analyze major chapters in the District's history with the purpose of identifying and memorializing timeless principles that could help guide future generations of the MCWD team to success.

A summary of work to date in this area is provided below, which includes the preliminary drafting of five papers which detail major eras in MCWD's history:

- [March 2021 PPC](#) Kickoff of Phase 1 Strategic Dialogs – Historic Analysis
- [June 2021 OPC](#) White Paper #1, 1967 – 1979: Formation of MCWD and Initial Mandate
- [August 2021 PPC](#) White Paper #2, 1980 – 1992: Establishing Data-Driven Project Planning
- [November 2021 PPC](#) White Paper #3, 1993 – 1999: Acceleration of Capacity, Planning, Implementation
- [March 2022 OPC](#) White Paper #4, 2000 – 2009: A TMDL Approach to Planning and Expanding Programs
- [June 2022, PPC](#) White Paper #5, 2010 – 2020: Focus on Partnerships with the Land Use Community

**September 14, 2022**

At the September 14, 2022, CAC meeting, Mr. Smith will provide a brief summary of MCWD's strategic arc over the last 50 years, as captured in these draft white papers. Mr. Smith and Mr. Wisker will facilitate discussion with the CAC around principles for organizational success, and lessons learned, that have been synthesized from this retrospective and can be carried forward to help guide the District to continued success.

The CAC will be asked to provide their feedback in key areas including:

1. Reflection on the major categories of principles, and whether they effectively capture those that might inform the District's ongoing success; and
2. Identifying specific principles that should be emphasized, areas that may require more clarity, and principles that may be missing.

**Next Steps:**

This feedback will be used to inform and refine the drafting of final principles, which are planned to be brought forward to the Board for adoption in December, as a living document in the organization to provide a resource for onboarding and orientation, to help guide future generations of the MCWD team, and to help inform ongoing organizational planning and decision making.

If there are questions in advance of the meeting, please contact James Wisker at [Jwisker@minnehahacreek.org](mailto:Jwisker@minnehahacreek.org)

**Supporting documents (list attachments):**

- DRAFT MCWD Principles