

Land & Water Partnership Initiative

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #1 Summary

October 5, 2022 | 1:00 – 3:00 PM
MCWD Office – 15320 Minnetonka Blvd, Minnetonka

Initiative Purpose and TAC Work Plan

- During the icebreaker, TAC members were asked, “what comes to mind when you think about partnership in your work”. Answers included: coordination, new ideas, needs being met, developing solutions to complex problems, mutual benefits, common goals, efficiency, creativity, pumpkin pie, funding, collaboration, relationships, sharing ideas/roles/expertise, making projects better, increased effectiveness, impact and results, and more fun.
- Becky Christopher, MCWD Policy Planning Manager, shared the purpose for the Land & Water Partnership Initiative, which is to create systems to support partnership and integration of water and land use planning.
- In 2014, MCWD adopted its [Balanced Urban Ecology](#) policy which recognizes the relationship between the natural and built environments and the potential, through integrated planning, to create projects that provide a triple bottom line of economic, community, and environmental benefits. MCWD’s 2017 [Watershed Management Plan](#) built off this approach with three principles: Partnership (aligning goals, plans, and investments for mutual benefit), Focus (concentrating on high-impact projects that provide regional benefit), and Flexibility (being responsive and adaptive) which we use to guide our work today.
- The work plan for the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) includes:
 - Vetting the proposed Land & Water Partnership (LWP) Program which will provide technical and financial support for partner-led projects that provide significant water resource benefit.
 - Vetting proposed improvements to the Permitting Program to make it more partnership-oriented by streamlining process and rules, aligning with MS4 standards, and promoting early coordination.
 - Co-developing an approach for ongoing coordination and collaboration.
- A series of six meetings is proposed to cover these topics but can be adjusted or added to, as needed, based on the TAC’s discussions.
 - In response to TAC questions about time allocated to discuss rule revisions, it was explained that the scope of the proposed rule changes is quite limited and focused on (1) making required changes to align with state MS4 requirements and (2) changes to improve customer service (e.g., clarity, efficiency, flexibility).

Partnership Examples and Discussion

- To provide more context for MCWD’s partnership approach, Christopher stepped through some specific examples of how partnerships have started in past work and the benefits that resulted.

Partnerships have come from coordination on community development, infrastructure improvement, park enhancement and private development.

- The Wasserman Lake Preserve (Victoria) and Cottageville Park Expansion (Hopkins) are examples of projects that came from aligning community development goals with water resource goals and resulted in partnerships that provided increased greenspace, water quality improvements, reduced crime (Cottageville), and more.
 - The District partnered with the City of Plymouth on an infrastructure improvement project by contributing funding for the retrofit of a stormwater pond at Maple Creek Park, enhancing water quality in Gleason Lake.
 - Arden Park (Edina) was an example of how MCWD can work with municipalities on park improvement projects. At Arden Park, what began as coordination on a bridge replacement grew into a partnership to restore the creek, manage stormwater, improve creek access, and enhance park structures for the community.
 - Both the Mader Wetland Restoration (Minnetrista) and the Methodist Hospital Re-meander (St. Louis Park) are examples of partnership on private development projects. At the Mader Wetland, MCWD worked with the landowner and City to develop a concept that resulted in a 42-acre wetland/buffer restoration and bank as well as four additional lots. The Methodist Hospital Re-meander, which started as a permitting conversation, became a multi-dimensional project that restored a stretch of the creek, mitigated flooding, and added a boardwalk for staff, patient, and community enjoyment.
- The TAC split into small groups to discuss the following questions:
 - What potential value do you see in partnering with MCWD?
 - Where can partnerships come from?
 - What will it take to make it successful?
 - Key takeaways from the small group discussions included:
 - The value in partnership can take the form of funding, technical assistance, fewer barriers, reducing redundancy, increased capacity, and support through credibility and conflict resolution.
 - Partnerships opportunities can be difficult to identify, but they can come from infrastructure projects, water assessments (water quality and water quantity), model development, on-site meetings, brainstorming at quarterly/annual meetings, early and frequent coordination, funding needs, and strong relationships.
 - Successful partnerships take flexibility, early coordination, funding, shared priorities, rule alignment, multi-agency support, regular communication, time and effort, and built trust.

Introduction to the Land & Water Partnership (LWP) Program

- Kate Moran, MCWD Policy Planning Coordinator, described the purpose and goals of the LWP program before explaining the proposed scope and structure of the program. The program is intended to provide a framework for scaling the MCWD's partnership approach watershed-wide. The three goals of the LWP program are to increase early coordination and integrated

planning, improve water resources, and provide service and value to communities. MCWD is currently operating a pilot LWP program to test the proposed scope, structure, and process.

- The program scope is focused on supporting the development and implementation of projects that will measurably improve water resources. Eligible applicants include public partners, private developers or landowners, and other organizations with the capacity to lead project implementation. The TAC process aims to gather insight from the public sector, but MCWD will engage private developers as well.
- MCWD’s 2017 Watershed Management Plan includes “opportunity-driven” projects to address nutrient impairments throughout the watershed. The LWP program will provide a process for partner-led projects to be integrated into the District’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to receive financial and technical support. This integrated CIP approach ensures a transparent review and approval process, strengthens the connection between land use and water planning, and promotes well-coordinated and high-impact projects that provide regional benefit.
- The proposed services provided through the LWP program are technical and financial support for concept development, feasibility, and implementation with up to 75% funding of water resource elements of the project.
- Moran noted that the next TAC meeting would include a deeper dive into the program’s process, including the program schedule, submittal requirements, and the evaluation criteria. She then opened the floor to questions on the LWP program scope and structure.
 - There were a few questions to clarify the scale of funding available through the LWP program. Christopher explained that there is currently no funding limit for the program as a whole, but that the District will consider project submittals through its annual CIP and budget development process, and the total funding will likely vary year-to-year based on the opportunities presented. Funding would be awarded on a reimbursement basis. The proposed process and schedule will also allow MCWD and its partners to pursue state or other grants to leverage additional funding.
- Moran closed her section with a Mentimeter activity to gather real-time feedback to inform the next meeting. The prompts included:
 - Define the purpose of the Land & Water Partnership (LWP) program.
 - What elements are most important for the LWP to achieve its goals?
 - How might you use this program?
 - What parts of the program are you most curious about?

Wrap-up and Next Steps

- Meeting 2 is scheduled for November 10th and will focus on review of the proposed structure and process for the LWP program.
- Christopher also noted that the watershed-based implementation funding from BWSR is available. She will send an email with a request for project proposals as well as any interested city representatives to participate in the process.

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Land & Water Partnership Initiative

TAC Meeting #1

Agenda

- Introductions
- Initiative purpose and work plan
- Partnership examples and discussion
- Break
- Introduction to the Land & Water Partnership Program
- Wrap-up



Introductions

Please share your:

- Name, role, organization
- Favorite candy
- Answer to the question:
What comes to mind when you think about partnership in your work?



Purpose of the Land & Water Partnership Initiative

Create systems to support partnership and integration of land use and water planning



In Pursuit of a Balanced Urban Ecology

- Healthy natural systems support thriving communities
- Changes on the landscape impact water resources and present opportunities
- Partnership and integrated planning can produce a triple bottom line



2017 Watershed Management Plan

Guiding principles:



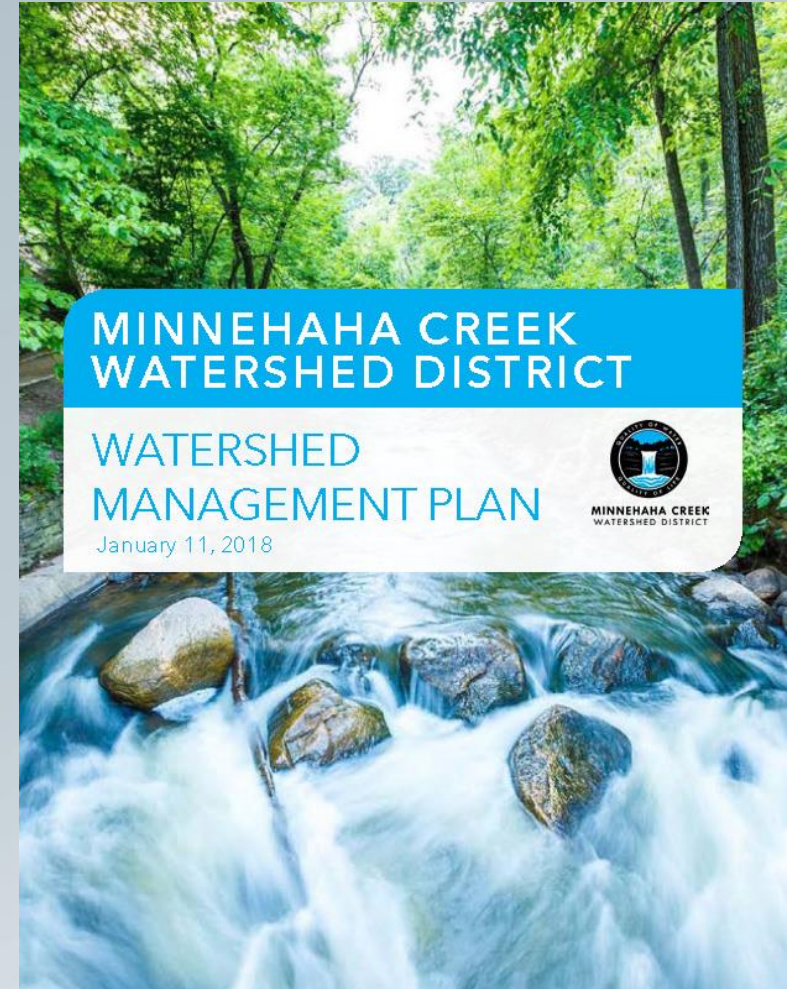
Partnership



Focus



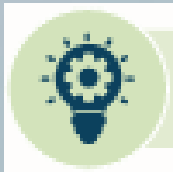
Flexibility



TAC Work Plan



Vetting the new Land & Water Partnership Program



Optimizing the Permitting Experience



Building Sustainable Connections for Ongoing Collaboration

Partnership Opportunities

- Community development
- Infrastructure improvements
- Park improvements
- Private development

Partnership Opportunities

- **Community development**
- Infrastructure improvements
- Park improvements
- Private development



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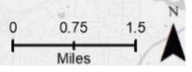
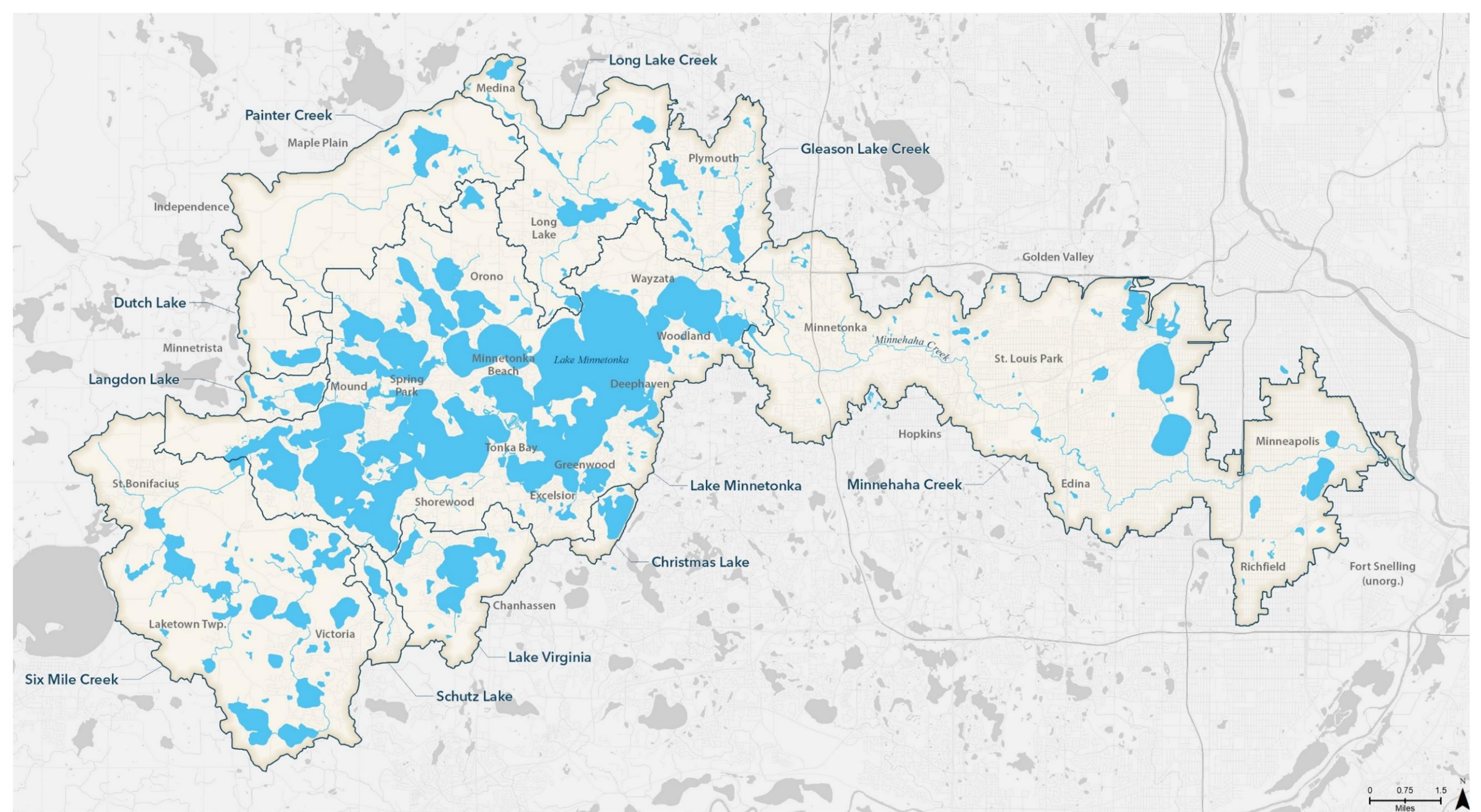


Small Group Discussion

- What potential value do you see in partnering with MCWD?
- Where can partnership opportunities come from?
- What will it take to make it successful?

Integrated Planning and Partnership





Land & Water Partnership (LWP) Program

Intent:

- Cultivate MCWD's partnership approach watershed-wide
 - Provide resources to well-coordinated, high-impact projects
 - Continue to align with MCWD's goals and priorities



Goals:

- Increase early coordination and integrated planning
- Improve water resources
- Provide service and value to communities



LWP Program Elements



Scope and Structure

- Scope and Eligibility
- Funding Mechanism
- Services

Program Process

- Schedule
- Submittal Requirements
- Evaluation Criteria

Scope and Eligibility

Scope:

- Development and implementation of capital projects that measurably improve water resources

Eligibility:

- Public partners
- Private developers/landowners
- Capacity to lead capital project implementation

TAC Process:

- Focus on public partners

Integrated CIP Approach

- 2017 WMP's "opportunity-driven" projects
- Benefits include:
 - Transparent process for partner-led projects
 - Strengthens the connection between land use and water planning
 - Promotes well-coordinated and high-impact projects at a regional-scale

Services

- Provide technical and financial support for project concept, feasibility, and implementation
- Examples of technical and/or financial service includes:
 - ✓ Watershed assessments
 - ✓ Concept development
 - ✓ Feasibility studies
 - ✓ Construction (project implementation cost)
- ✓ **Funds up to 75%** to water resource elements

LWP Program Elements



Scope and Structure

- Scope and Eligibility
- Funding Mechanism
- Services

Program Process

- Schedule
- Submittal Requirements
- Evaluation Criteria

Wrap-Up and Next Steps

- Meeting summary to be shared with next meeting packet
- Future meetings proposed for Thursdays 1:00-3:00
- TAC Meeting 2 – November 10
 - Land & Water Partnership Program process and requirements
- Upcoming Watershed-Based Implementation Funding email request

Watershed-Based Implementation Funding Program

- Funding and timeline:
 - \$418,140 for Minnehaha Creek watershed 2023-2025 implementation
- Eligible plans:
 - MCWD Watershed Management Plan, Carver County Groundwater Plan
- Eligible entities:
 - MCWD, counties, SWCDs, cities
- Convene meeting members:
 - MCWD, Hennepin County, Carver County, Carver SWCD, up to 2 city reps
- Next steps:
 - MCWD will send a request for any project proposals and interested city reps, then schedule convene meeting

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Thank you

Questions?