



MINNEHAHA CREEK
WATERSHED DISTRICT
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Land & Water Partnership Initiative

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #2 Summary

November 10, 2022 | 1:00 – 3:00 PM

MCWD Office – 15320 Minnetonka Blvd, Minnetonka

Meeting 1 Recap

- Becky Christopher, MCWD Policy Planning Manager, summarized the key takeaways from Meeting 1 and revisited the TAC workplan.
- The TAC workplan covers three key areas with the aim of creating better systems to support partnership and integration of land use and water planning. The first is vetting the proposed Land & Water Partnership (LWP) program. The second is vetting proposed improvements to the Permitting Program to make it more partnership oriented. The third is building sustainable connections for ongoing collaboration.
- It was reinforced that the scope of the rule revision is focused on bringing the rules into compliance with new MS4 requirements, improving customer service, and promoting partnership by making the rules clearer and more streamlined. It was also noted that there will be time dedicated in Meeting 3 to hear from TAC members about other rule changes that should be considered.

Land & Water Partnership (LWP) Program Scope

- Kate Moran, MCWD Policy Planning Coordinator, re-introduced the LWP program's purpose and goals. The program is being designed with the intent of cultivating MCWD's partnership approach across the entire watershed by providing resources to support well-coordinated, high-impact projects that align with MCWD's goals and priorities. The goals of the program are to:
 - Increase early coordination and integration of land use and water planning
 - Leverage opportunities created through land use change to improve water resources
 - Provide service and value to communities across the watershed
- In MCWD's 2017 Watershed Management Plan, the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) includes opportunity-driven projects in each subwatershed for reducing stormwater runoff volume and nutrient loading to impaired waters. Under this framework, the LWP program will provide a process for partner projects to be identified, evaluated, and integrated into the MCWD's CIP to receive technical and funding support. In contrast to a grant program, this approach is intended to promote early coordination and integrated planning.
- MCWD began operating the LWP program in a pilot phase in 2021 to inform program design. The TAC's input in Meeting 2 will be used to refine program elements, and draft guidance

documents will be brought back for TAC review at a later meeting. From there, the program will be finalized for adoption in 2023.

- The proposed program’s scope includes the following under its eligibility, services, and evaluation criteria:
 - Eligibility: To maintain focus on high-impact projects, the program is targeted toward:
 - Partners: Public and private partners with the capacity to lead implementation
 - Projects: Structural projects that provide significant water quality and/or flood storage benefits
 - Services: The proposed program will focus on two service categories: technical and financial support.
 - Support may be provided for all phases of the project from concept development through construction with funding up to 75% for water resource elements, including watershed assessments, concept development, feasibility studies, and design/construction.
 - While the program is generally designed to have MCWD serving in a supporting role, requests for the MCWD to lead can be considered as capacity allows.
 - Evaluation Criteria: The packet for TAC [Meeting 2](#) included a summary table of the proposed evaluation criteria and scoring. The three categories for evaluation are resource need and priority, project benefit and cost effectiveness, and capacity and coordination. The evaluation criteria and scoring approach are intended to strike a balance of providing transparency without being overly rigid or prescriptive.
- *Discussion 1*: The TAC split into two groups and provided input the on following questions:
 - Is there a project example (past or future) from your city/organization for which you would consider leveraging this program? Why or why not?
 - Is it clear what types of projects and partners are eligible under the program? Are there suggestions to improve clarity?
 - Do the evaluation criteria strike the right balance between transparency and flexibility? Are there suggestions to improve clarity or effectiveness of the proposed criteria?

LWP Program Process

- The TAC also reviewed the program process, including the schedule and submittal requirements. Additional details on the proposed schedule and submittal requirements can be found in the [Meeting 2 packet](#).
 - Schedule: The proposed schedule for public partners is designed to align with MCWD’s annual CIP and budget process. There are two key submittal deadlines within the project concept and feasibility phases.

- *Project Concept:* April 1: Deadline to request technical or financial assistance for feasibility work. Funding is available as early as July/August for this work.
 - *Project Feasibility:* February 1: Deadline to request financial assistance for project design/construction. Decisions on funding requests are made in June.
 - *Project Implementation:* Project Completion: Costs are reimbursed per funding agreement.
- Submittals: At each of these milestones, the program will require submittals. For the Project Concept deadline, applicants will submit their vision or idea for the project as well as the general context. For the Project Feasibility deadline, the program will require a feasibility study to provide confidence in the project benefits and costs.
- *Discussion 2:* After a brief overview of the schedule and submittal requirements, the TAC split into two groups to discuss the following questions:
 - How might MCWD and public partners utilize this program’s process to identify projects to partner on together?
 - How might the proposed schedule align with your budget and project planning processes?
 - From your project planning perspective, are the required LWP program submittals reasonable and attainable?

Discussion Summary

- Key takeaways from the two discussions highlighted areas for clarification and refinement of program eligibility and evaluation criteria, general comfort with the proposed schedule and submittal requirements, and ideas to improve identification of partnership opportunities.
 - Program eligibility and evaluation criteria:
 - TAC members requested additional clarification and guidance regarding the scale of project benefit that the program is targeting, including terms like significant, measurable, regional, and high-impact. Members also requested additional clarity around how priority level (criterion A2) will be determined and the considerations that go into it.
 - There were questions regarding MCWD’s priorities related to flood storage. MCWD staff explained that the District is seeking to support projects that create flood storage without transferring flood risk to others. The District will be engaging its communities in discussions about climate action planning starting in 2023, which will further inform goals and priorities for flood storage projects.
 - TAC members noted that some of the smaller cities may have a harder time finding high-impact projects that would be eligible under the program. It was discussed that District assistance with concept development and feasibility assessment may be useful in these cases to identify project opportunities.

- It was requested that MCWD score an example project(s) and share it with the TAC at a future meeting to help demonstrate how the criteria will be applied.
 - Schedule and submittals:
 - Both groups expressed comfort with the proposed schedule and submittal requirements. It was noted that the schedule generally aligns well with city CIP/budget processes and grant timelines.
 - MCWD staff noted that the proposed schedule is designed for public partners, and there is the flexibility to expedite the review and approval process for private development projects down to a 2-3 month window.
 - TAC members expressed support for the inclusion of funding and technical resources for project concept and feasibility, as it facilitates early coordination and promotes continued engagement through project implementation.
 - Opportunity identification:
 - TAC members expressed that they see a lot of potential to partner on private development projects and asked how the private sector will be engaged under the program. MCWD staff explained that the District is planning for direct outreach/marketing as well as seeking ways to partner with cities on opportunity identification during private development review. The group discussed the benefit of developing clear priorities and a shared approach for screening private development opportunities. These topics will be discussed further at an upcoming TAC meeting.
 - Annual meetings were noted as a useful practice and a way to review upcoming projects and identify partnership opportunities.
 - There was a suggestion for MCWD to host an annual open house ahead of CIP distribution as a way to identify partnership opportunities and share project ideas across communities (project-palooza).

Next Steps

- TAC members were invited to provide additional input on the discussion questions through a survey that would be sent following the meeting.
- The input gathered in this TAC meeting, and through the survey, will be used to inform development of draft guidance documents which will be shared at a later TAC meeting. As requested, MCWD staff will also score example projects to demonstrate how the evaluation criteria will be applied.
- The December TAC meeting will focus on the scope of permitting program improvements and rule changes.

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Photo credit: Ernesto Ruiz

Land & Water Partnership Initiative

TAC Meeting #2

Agenda

- Recap of Meeting 1
- Land & Water Partnership Program Scope
- Break
- Land & Water Partnership Program Process
- Wrap-up and Next Steps



Purpose of the Land & Water Partnership Initiative

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



TAC Work Plan



Vetting the new Land & Water Partnership Program



Optimizing the Permitting Experience

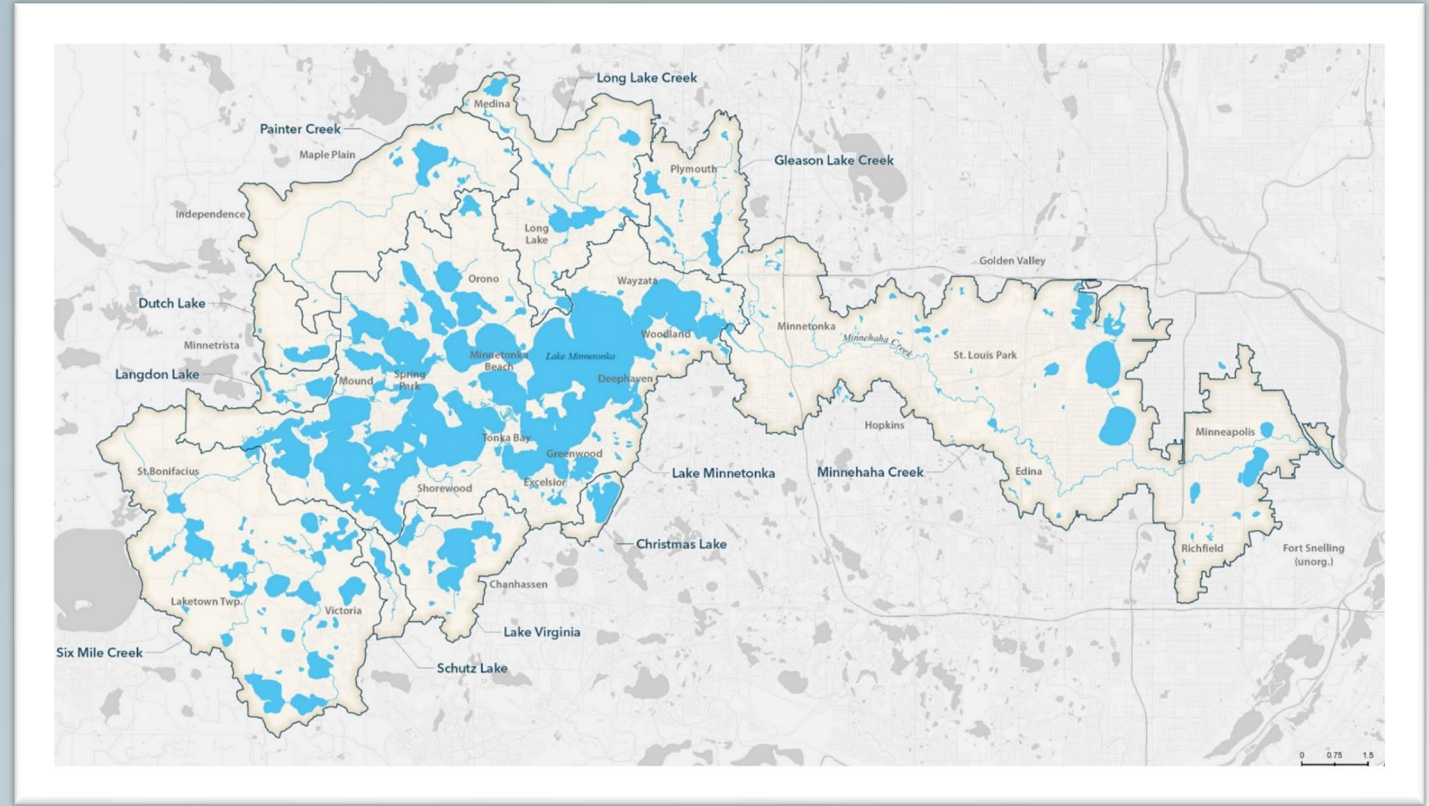
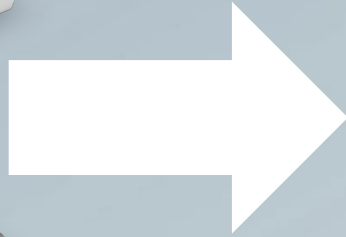


Building Sustainable Connections for Ongoing Collaboration

Partnership Approach

- Value:
 - Funding/technical assistance, fewer barriers, reducing redundancy, increased capacity, conflict resolution
- Opportunity Identification:
 - Infrastructure projects, watershed assessments, quarterly/annual meetings, on-site meetings, early and frequent coordination, strong relationships
- Keys to Success:
 - Flexibility, early coordination, funding, shared priorities, multi-agency support, regular communication, time and effort, trust building

Our Opportunity



Partnership

Identify

- Shared goals
- Idea formulation
- Coordination

Evaluate

- Efficiency & effectiveness
- Collaboration

Respond

- Service utilized
- Implement



Outputs

- Impact
- Results
- Solutions to problem(s)
- Everyone's needs are met

Relationships

Land & Water Partnership (LWP) Program

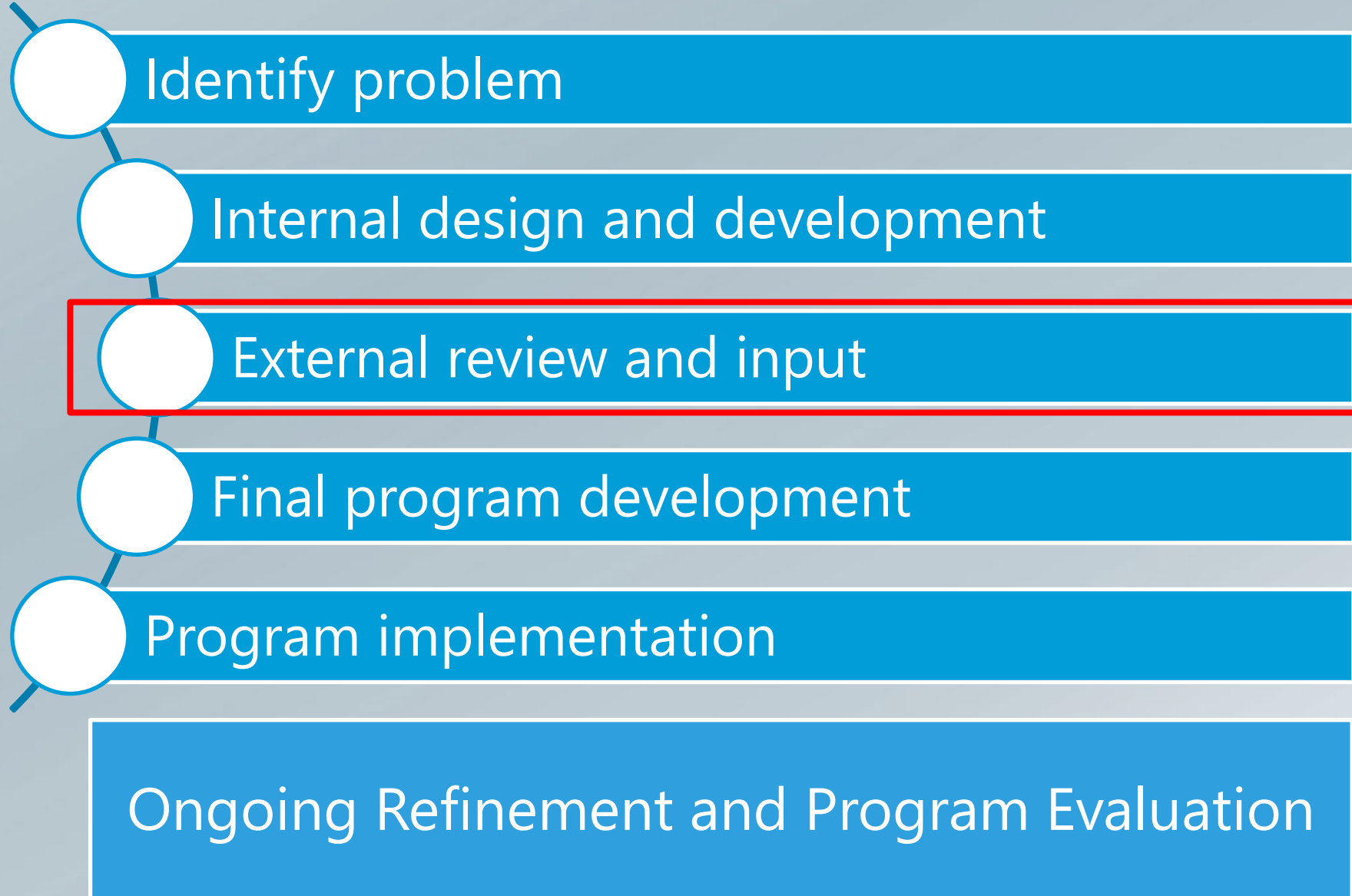
Intent:

- 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 integration of land use and water planning
- Leverage opportunities created through land use change to improve water resources
- Provide service and value to communities across the watershed

Program Development Process



Program Elements



Program Scope

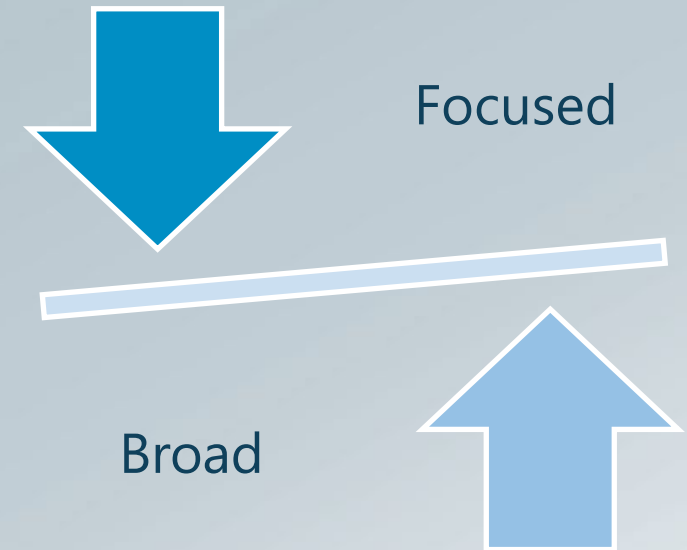
- Eligibility
- Services
- Evaluation Criteria

Program Process

- Schedule
- Submittal Requirements

Scope Objectives

- Focus on high-impact projects
- Leverage capable partners
- Build a clear process
- Maintain flexibility and creativity



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

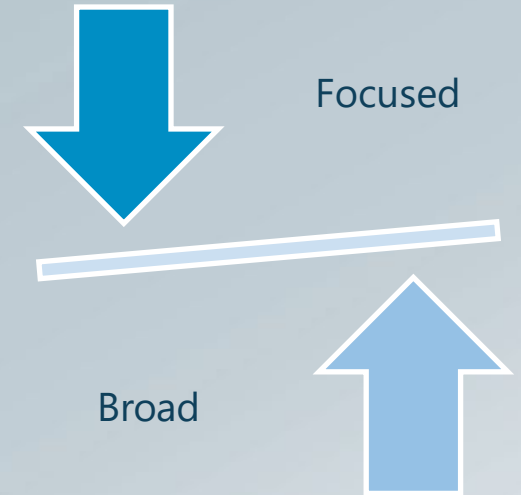
Eligibility

Partners:

- Public: state, regional, or local agency
- Private: developers/landowners
- Capacity to lead implementation

Projects:

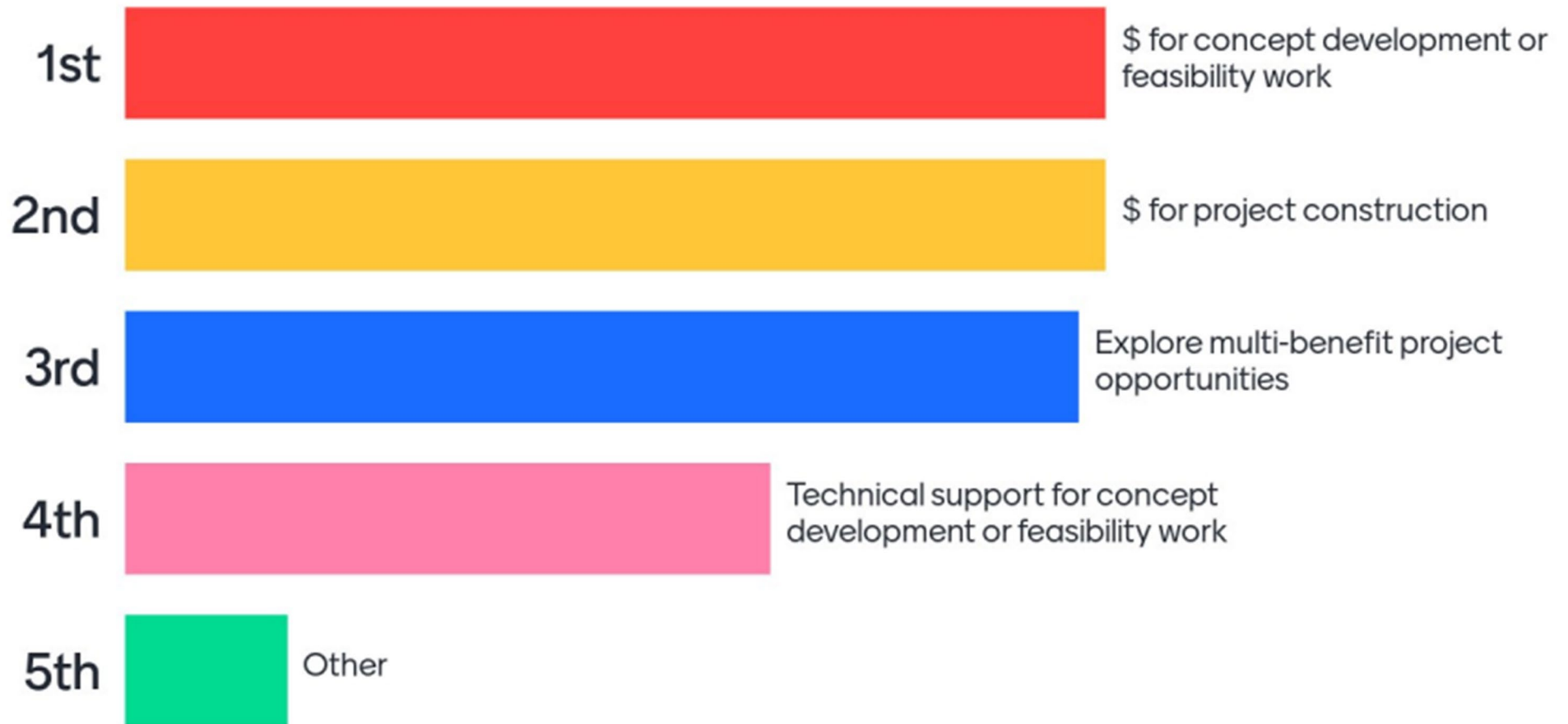
- Structural projects
- Provide measurable water quality and/or flood storage benefits



Services

- Service Types:
 - Technical and financial
 - Concept development through construction
 - Funds up to 75% for project elements focused on water resources benefit
- Role:
 - Support broader set of projects across watershed

How might you use this program?



Evaluation Criteria

Resource Need and
Priority
(25 points)

**Water Resource
Issue(s)**

(15 points)

Priority Level

(10 points)

Project Benefits and
Cost Effectiveness
(50 points)

Primary Benefits
(30 points)

Secondary Benefits

(10 points)

**Project
Effectiveness**

(10 points)

Capacity and
Coordination
(25 points)

**Early and Effective
Coordination**
(15 points)

**Capacity and
Commitment**

(10 points)

Evaluation Criteria

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Capacity and
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(25 points)

**Early and Effective
Coordination**
(15 points)

**Capacity and
Commitment**

(10 points)

Group Discussion

- Is there a project example (past or future) from your city/organization for which you would consider leveraging this program?
 - Why or why not?
- Is it clear what types of projects and partners are eligible under the program?
 - Are there suggestions to improve clarity?
- Do the evaluation criteria strike the right balance between transparency and flexibility?
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Group Break: Find some of your favorite candy!

skittles

heath bar

sour patch kids

twizzlers

bit o honey

smarties

twix

reverse

almond joy

dark chocolate

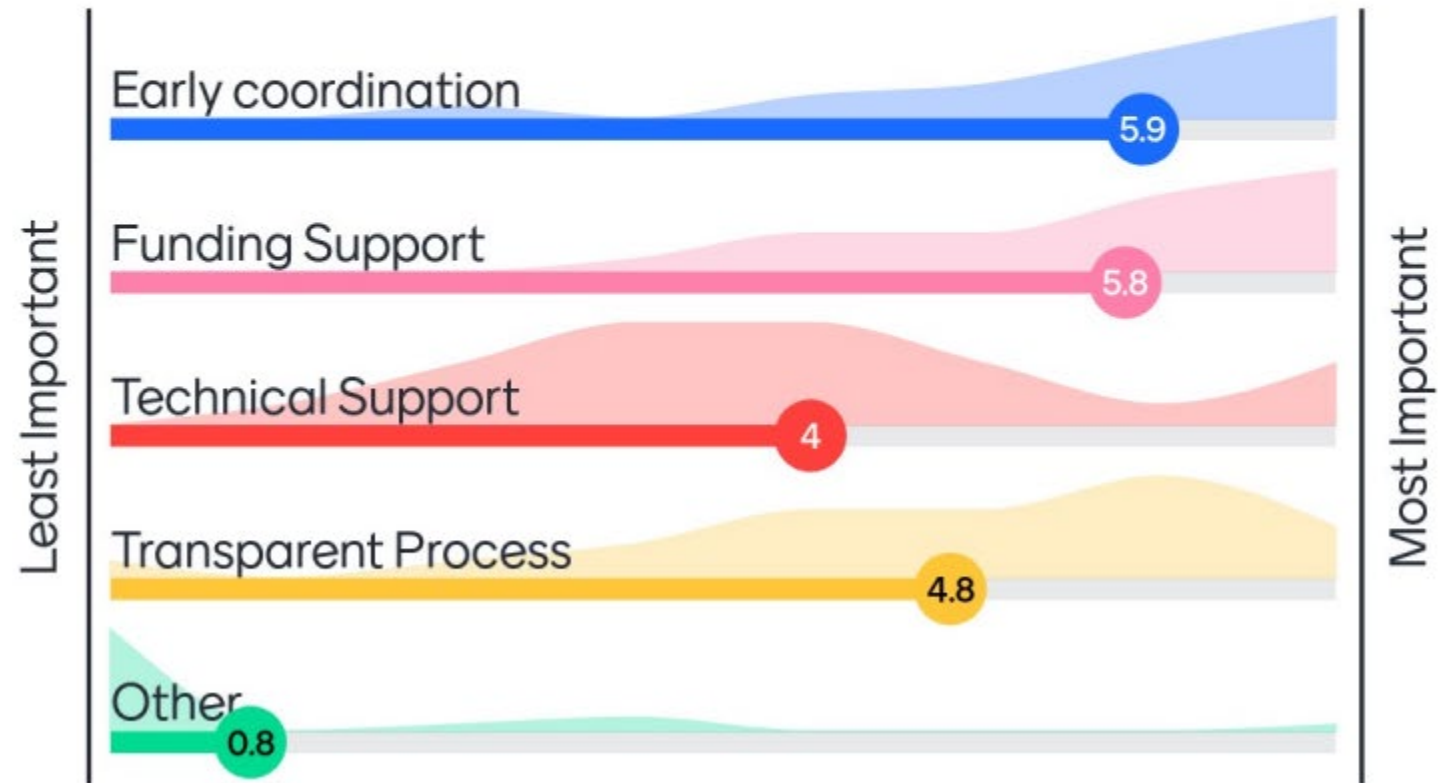
peanut butter cups

reeses

butterfinger

reese

What do you think is most important for LWP to achieve its purpose and goals?

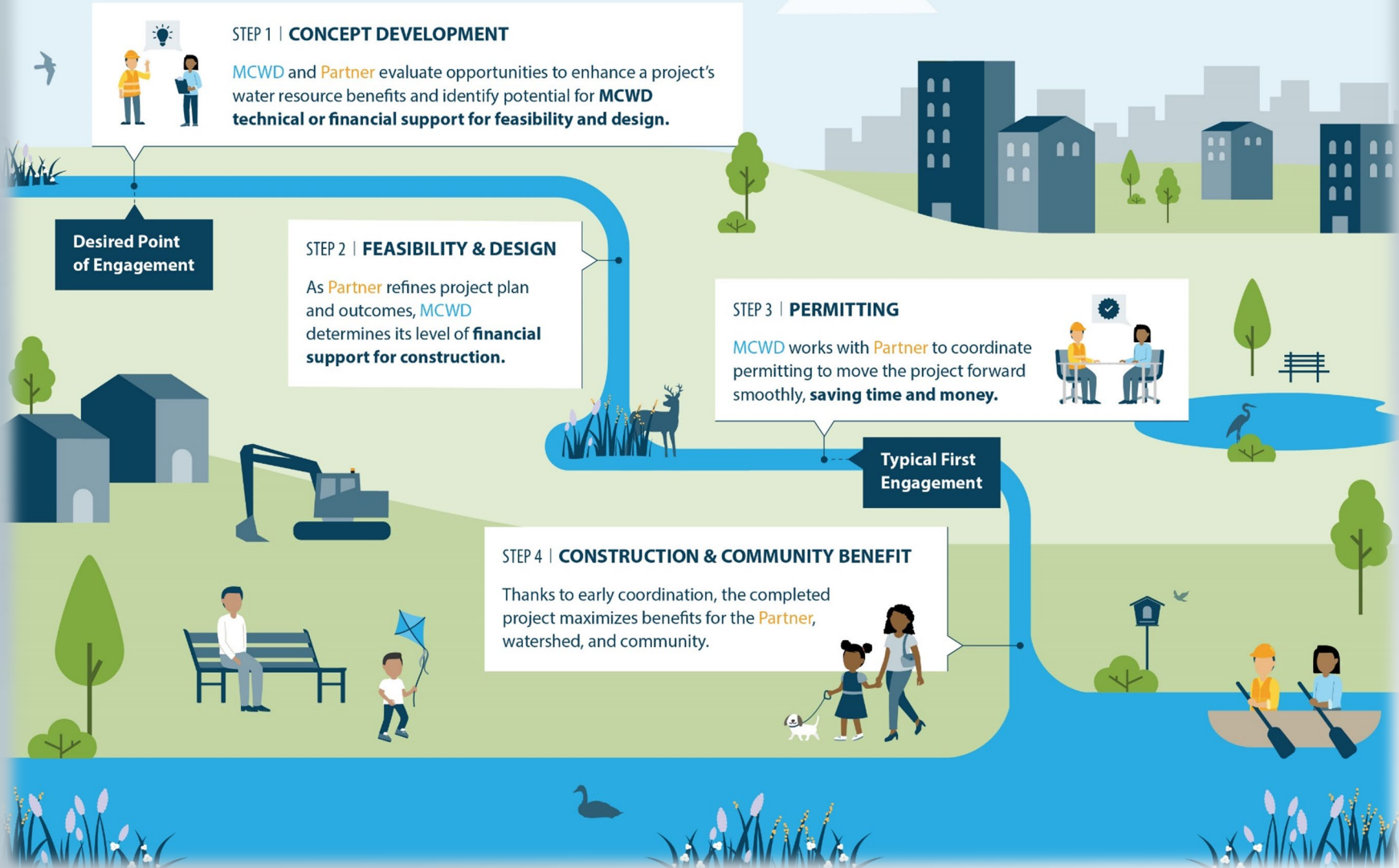


THE BENEFITS OF EARLY COORDINATION

For public agencies and private developers alike, engaging MCWD as a partner early in the planning process allows for us to add value to projects in a variety of ways.



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LWP Program Elements

Program Scope

- Eligibility
- Services
- Evaluation Criteria



Program Process

- Schedule
- Submittal Requirements



Process Objectives

- Align schedule with MCWD's CIP and budget process
- Allow for efficient program day to day operation
- Provide clarity and certainty to partners
- Ensure reasonableness of requirements and schedule

Schedule



Schedule

Concept (Year 1)

April 1: Request assistance for feasibility work

Feasibility (Year 2)

February 1: Request financial support for implementation

Implementation (Year 3+)

Project completion:
Costs are reimbursed per funding agreement

Submittal Requirements

Project Concept (Year 1):

- Vision or idea
- General context

Project Feasibility (Year 2):

- General context
- Feasibility study
 - Show benefits

LWP Program Elements



Program Scope

- Eligibility
- Services
- Evaluation Criteria



Program Process

- Schedule
- Submittal Requirements



Group Discussion

- How might MCWD and public partners utilize this program's process to identify projects to partner on together?
- How might the proposed schedule align with your budget and project planning processes?
- From your project planning perspective, are the required LWP program submittals reasonable and attainable?

Report Out from Breakout Groups

- L&WP program scope – eligibility, services, evaluation criteria
- L&WP program process – schedule and submittal requirements

Next Steps

- Additional input on today's discussion of L&WP program:
 - Leave post-its with questions on your way out the door
 - Email request for any additional input on discussion questions
- Meeting summary and slides to be shared with next meeting packet
- TAC Meeting 3 – December 8
 - Permitting Program – proposed program improvements and rule changes
- Review of draft guidance for L&WP program in meeting 4 or 5

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Thank you!

Questions?