



Title: Adoption of the 2024 Strategic Action Plan

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Introduction:

This memorandum overviews the 2024 Strategic Action Plan, and its development process, in preparation for adoption.

2024 Strategic Action Plan Purpose:

At its core, the Strategic Plan guides MCWD's collective efforts as an organization toward its mission, as it:

- Maintains Direction – defines priorities, aligning actions and resources with our vision, mission, and values
- Adapts to Change – allows for adjustment mid-ten-year plan cycle, based on the dynamic world around us
- Promotes Alignment – ensures alignment, and that we remain working toward common objectives
- Drives Performance – facilitates continuous improvement through clear goals, monitoring, and evaluation
- Facilitates Communications – supports clarity of purpose and priorities to internal/external stakeholders

2024 Strategic Action Plan Process:

After almost five years of effort, implementing the prior strategic plan to realign the organization around a vision of [Balanced Urban Ecology](#), between 2021 and 2022, the MCWD Board of Managers and Staff undertook processes to:

1. Extract insights and [Principles of Success](#) from MCWD's history to guide MCWD in the future
2. Conduct a status assessment of progress on strategic priorities since 2018
3. Crystalize MCWD's transparent, idea-meritocratic culture into a set of Core Values
4. Vision areas of organizational focus and priority for the next five years leading to the 2027 Plan

2024 Strategic Action Plan Overview:

Through a series of visioning workshops, the Board and Staff identified the following 5-Year Areas of Strategic Focus:

1. Expand Our Portfolio of High-Impact Capital projects
Deliver projects that measurably enhance the watershed and enrich communities
2. Develop Meaningful Climate Action Policy for the Watershed
Engage communities in creating evidence-based flood management strategies
3. Cultivate Strategic Partnerships to Create Shared Value
Strengthen collaborative relationships with partners whose goals align with our mission
4. Enhance Data-Driven Decision Making
Use data to inform everyday decisions, shape outreach, and build trust
5. Invest in People and Organizational Culture
Strategically expand our team, nurture professional growth, and foster a culture of excellence

Information and feedback gathered through Board, CAC, and Staff workshops have been assembled by staff into an Objective and Key Result (OKR) framework and incorporated into the Final Draft 2024 Strategic Action Plan (Attached).

2024 Strategic Action Plan Review Process:

- Following initial visioning, the Board reviewed and discussed the identified 5-Year Areas of Strategic Focus in 2023
- The Preliminary Draft Strategic Action Plan was reviewed at the February 22, 2024, Policy and Planning Committee
- The Citizens Advisory Committee reviewed the Preliminary Draft Strategic Action Plan on March 20, 2024
- Staff workshopped the Draft Strategic Action Plan, during an Annual Retreat on April 12, 2024
- A refined Draft Strategic Action Plan was discussed at the May 23, 2024, Board Meeting

Feedback from these points of organizational engagement have been integrated into the Draft Strategic Action Plan.

August 8, 2024, Board Meeting:

At the August 8, 2024, Board Meeting, staff will provide an overview of the Strategic Action Plan for consideration for final adoption by the Board of Managers.

Supporting documents:

- Draft 2024 Strategic Action Plan



RESOLUTION

Resolution number: 24-038

Title: Adoption of the 2024 Strategic Action Plan

WHEREAS, to continue delivering outstanding results while honoring its partners, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) Board of Managers has committed to a cycle of strategic planning – to serve as an organizational blueprint to address future challenges with foresight while seizing opportunities for lasting environmental, social, and economic prosperity; and

WHEREAS, MCWD’s previous strategic plan cycle was completed in 2017 to realign the organization, its priorities, programs, and people around a vision of A Balanced Urban Ecology; and

WHEREAS, After over five years of effort, between 2021 and 2022, the MCWD Board of Managers and staff began preparing for this cycle of strategic planning by engaging in a process to:

- Extract insights and principles of success from MCWD’s history to guide future work
- Conduct a status assessment of progress on strategic priorities since 2018
- Crystalize MCWD’s transparent, idea-meritocratic culture into a set of core values

WHEREAS, Building on that foundation, through the middle of 2023, the MCWD Board of Managers and staff participated in a series of workshops to map areas of organizational focus and priority for the next five years leading to the 2027 Watershed Management Plan; and

WHEREAS, The results of these workshops were synthesized into a Draft Strategic Action Plan, which identifies areas of focus and the associated objectives and key results, including:

1. Expand Our Portfolio of High-Impact Capital projects
2. Develop Meaningful Climate Action Policy for the Watershed
3. Cultivate Strategic Partnerships to Create Shared Value
4. Enhance Data-Driven Decision Making
5. Invest in People and Organizational Culture

WHEREAS, The MCWD Board of Managers, staff, and CAC have reviewed the Draft Strategic Action Plan throughout 2024, providing feedback that has been incorporated into the attached 2024 Strategic Action Plan;

WHEREAS, The MCWD Board of Managers finds that the 2024 Strategic Action Plan will guide and support MCWD’s collective efforts as an organization toward its mission by maintaining direction, supporting adaptation to change, promoting alignment, driving performance, and facilitating clarity and communications;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby adopts the 2024 Strategic Action Plan, and directs the District Administrator to implement and routinely report on progress.

Resolution Number 24-038 was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____. Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___ abstentions.

 Secretary Date: August 8, 2024



MINNEHAHA CREEK

QUALITY OF WATER



WATERSHED DISTRICT

QUALITY OF LIFE

2024 – 2028

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

[FINAL DRAFT]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	3
PURPOSE	3
STRATEGIC PLANNING CASCADE	3
PROCESS	4
VISION, MISSION, GOALS, STRATEGY, PRINCIPLES, CULTURE	4
5-YEAR AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS.....	8
1. Expand Our Portfolio of High-Impact Capital Projects.....	9
<i>Deliver projects that measurably enhance the watershed and enrich communities.....</i>	<i>9</i>
2. Develop Meaningful Climate Action Policy for the Watershed.....	10
<i>Engage communities in creating evidenced-based flood management strategies.....</i>	<i>10</i>
3. Cultivate Strategic Partnerships to Create Shared Value.....	11
<i>Strengthen collaborative relationships with partners whose goals align with our mission.....</i>	<i>11</i>
4. Enhance Data-Driven Decision Making	12
<i>Use data to inform everyday decisions, shape outreach, and build trust.....</i>	<i>12</i>
5. Invest in People and Organizational Culture	13
<i>Strategically expand our team, nurture professional growth, and foster a culture of excellence</i>	<i>13</i>
IMPLEMENTATION TABLES	14

INTRODUCTION

The Minnehaha Creek watershed is a vital ecological hub that defines a region and has been cherished by communities for generations. From the rural and developing upper watershed, to the waters of Lake Minnetonka, the communities along Minnehaha Creek, and the urban neighborhoods of Minneapolis, the watershed's diverse ecosystems sustain life, leisure, and livelihoods for the people and wildlife that call the area home.

As stewards, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) recognizes the intricate interplay between these natural ecosystems and the built environment, and the need to carefully chart a course that continues to enhance the watershed and enrich communities for future generations.

To continue delivering outstanding results while honoring its partners, the MCWD Board of Managers has committed to a cycle of strategic planning – to serve as an organizational blueprint to address future challenges with foresight while seizing opportunities for lasting environmental, social, and economic prosperity.

PURPOSE

This strategic plan guides the collective efforts of the MCWD team towards achieving a resilient, thriving watershed, by serving the following purposes:

- **Maintains Direction** – defines priorities, aligning actions and resources with our vision, mission, and values
- **Adapts to Change** – allows for adjustment mid-ten-year plan cycle, based on the dynamic world around us
- **Promotes Alignment** – ensures alignment, and that we remain working towards common objectives
- **Drives Performance** – facilitates continuous improvement through clear goals, monitoring, and evaluation
- **Facilitates Communications** – supports clarity of purpose and priorities to internal/external stakeholders

STRATEGIC PLANNING CASCADE

MCWD's 2024-2028 Strategic Action Plan fits inside the following cascade, underneath the overarching organizational framework and the ten-year watershed planning cycles. This Plan sets three-to-five-year Objectives and Key Results (OKR), which guides one-to-two-year workplans and include initiative level detail such as key milestones, timeline, budget, and staffing.

Strategic Organizational Framework

- MCWD Vision; Mission; Goals; Principles; Culture

10-Year Watershed Plan

- 10-Year Theme; Policy Environment; Capital Improvement Plan; Programmatic Direction

5-Year Strategic Direction

- Areas of Strategic Focus; Portfolio of Objectives; Key Results and Initiatives

2-Year Workplan Details

- Breakdown of Initiatives to Achieve Key Results; Milestones and Timelines; Budget and Staff Needs

PROCESS

MCWD's previous strategic plan cycle was completed in 2017 to realign the organization, its priorities, programs and people, around a vision of [A Balanced Urban Ecology](#). After almost five years of effort, between 2021 and 2022, in preparation for this strategic plan cycle, the MCWD Board of Managers and Staff engaged in a processes to:

1. Extract insights and [principles of success](#) from MCWD's history that will guide us in the future (Appendix A)
2. Conduct a status assessment of progress on strategic priorities since 2018 (Appendix B)
3. Crystalize MCWD's transparent, idea-meritocratic culture into a set of Core Values (Appendix C)

Building on this foundation, through the middle of 2023, the MCWD Board of Managers and Staff participated in a series of workshops to brainstorm areas of organizational focus and priority for the next five-years leading to the 2027 Plan, and the associated Objectives and Key Results.

This Plan reflects initial review and discussion by MCWD Board Committee in February 2024, refinement and work-planning from the April 2024 All-Staff Retreat, and discussion by the MCWD Board in May 2024.

VISION, MISSION, GOALS, STRATEGY, PRINCIPLES, CULTURE

The following sections set the strategic frame of Vision, Mission, Goals, Strategy, Principles, and Culture as depicted in Figure 1. Following are the Five-Year Areas of Strategic Focus, and the associated Objectives and Key Results.

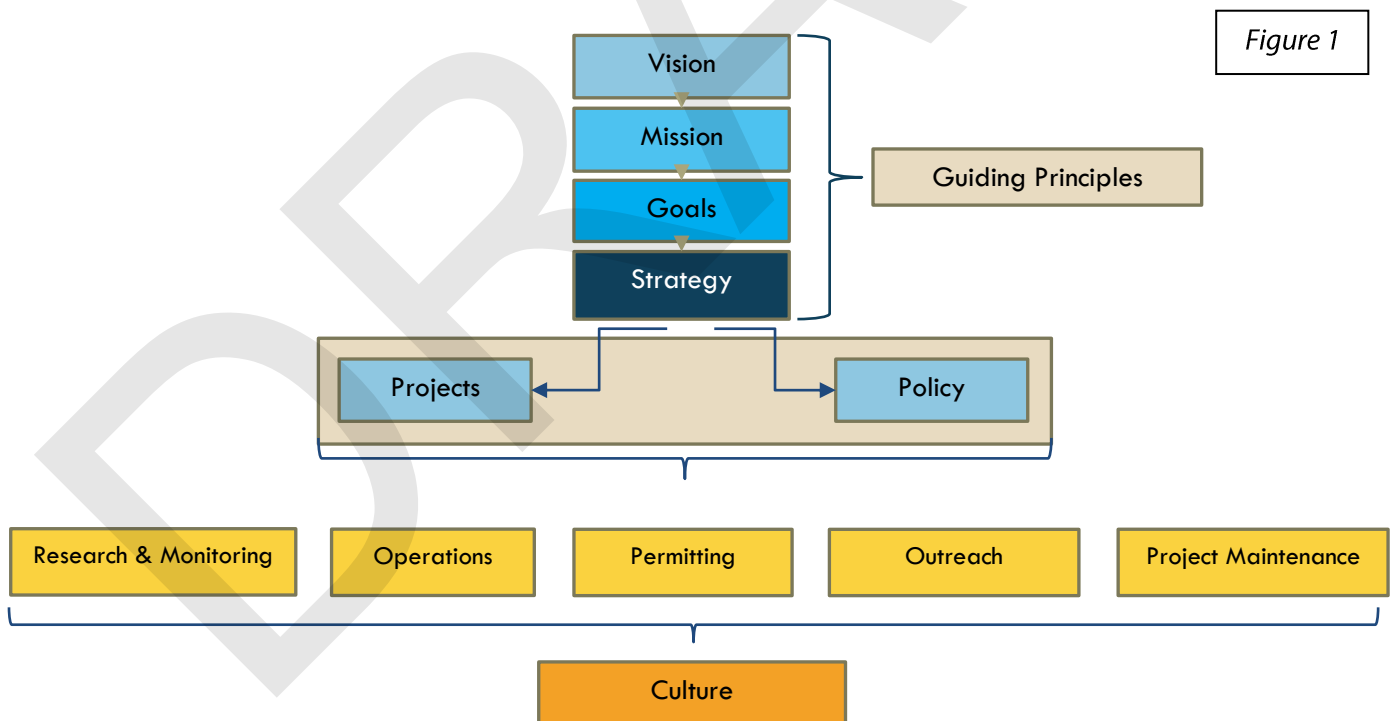


Figure 1

Vision

A landscape of vibrant communities where the balance of natural and built environments create value and enjoyment.

Mission

To collaborate with public and private partners to protect and improve land and water for future generations.

Goals

Water Quality

To preserve and improve the quality and surface and ground waters

Water Quantity

To manage the volume of stormwater to minimize impacts of land use change on surface and ground waters

Ecological Integrity

To restore, maintain and improve the health of ecological systems

Thriving Communities

To promote and enhance the value of water resources in creating successful, sustainable communities

Strategy

MCWD's overarching organizational strategy, [A Balanced Urban Ecology](#), recognizes the inextricable link between the natural and built environments – between land and water. It emphasizes integration and partnership between MCWD and the public and private actors in the land use planning community.

MCWD's focus within this strategy is (1) Building high-impact projects that measurably benefit the watershed; and (2) Developing policy at the intersection of land and water planning to foster partnerships and influence development's impact on the watershed. This approach is supported by aligning programs and operations, including evidenced based decision making and outreach and engagement to cultivate watershed partners.

Principles

MCWD's guiding principles are below. Historical principles and core values are listed on the following pages:

Partnership

We seek to understand others' goals so we can meaningfully integrate and add broader community value

Innovation

We are flexible and creative in our approach and strive for continuous improvement

Excellence

We commit to work that achieves outstanding results and honors our partners

Sound Science

We are a trusted source of scientific data and analyses that provide the foundation for wise decisions

Service

We are responsive and accountable to our communities and careful stewards of public funds

MCWD HISTORIC PRINCIPLES

Broader principles, distilled from research and analysis of MCWD's historic key events, are summarized below.

1. *Know where you came from, and what is central to your identity*
 - a. *Flood mitigation is central to MCWD's mission, identity, and relationships*
 - b. *Gray's Bay Dam will always be a part of the conversation*
 - c. *Balanced Urban Ecology is the heart of MCWD's approach to watershed management*
2. *Devoting time and effort to vision and focused execution produces results*
 - a. *A clear vision is contagiously energizing*
 - b. *Success demands focus*
 - c. *Bold, creative, flexible, and integrated thinking are required*
 - d. *The success of bold visions demands an accurate accounting of risk*
 - e. *Verify that the desired results are being achieved, and learn from your mistakes*
3. *Rely on sound science to make credible, results-based decisions, and build trust*
 - a. *Value is delivered through science-based understanding that reveals practical solutions*
 - b. *Trust in MCWD has been built on sound science and partnership*
 - c. *A deep understanding of watershed hydrology is vital to MCWD's mission and credibility*
4. *Partnerships are a difference making ingredient in MCWD's continued success*
 - a. *Science is essential, but on its own is insufficient*
 - b. *Land use partnerships are essential, and Balanced Urban Ecology principles support them*
 - c. *Partnerships require clear messaging and strategic engagement with leaders, staff, and community*
 - d. *Partnerships can be challenging, time consuming, and require patience and persistence*
 - e. *Partnership is a process, not a posture*
5. *Statutory powers provide important authority, which must be used judiciously*
 - a. *Earning mutual respect can require speaking up or drawing a line*
 - b. *Lonely decisions rooted only in authority may create long-lasting consequences*
 - c. *With careful balance, MCWD can be perceived as a regulator and a partner*
6. *The Board sets the direction, bar, and tone of the organization*
 - a. *Leadership, excellence, and accountability flow from the Board*
 - b. *The Board of Managers has the authority to manage, but excels when it governs*
 - c. *To be successful, there must be a strong marriage between staff and Board*
7. *Success is driven by people, so get the people and culture right*
 - a. *People matter and hiring wrong is costly*
 - b. *People should be continuously developed, evaluated, and held accountable*
 - c. *Innovation and quality decisions comes from properly assessing the merit of all ideas*
 - d. *Trust in transparency*

MCWD CULTURE - CORE VALUES

Transparency

Transparency brings issues to the surface, the good, bad, and ugly, and it allows the organization to draw on the talents and insights of all its members to solve them. An open, honest, and authentic environment builds the trust essential for meaningful relationships, and teams are more powerful than individuals.

- *Be honest and authentic, even when it is hard, and expect the same from others.*
- *Do not hold critical opinions to yourself or in the shadows. Speak up and own it.*
- *Be enthusiastically open and invite critique. Remember, clear and direct feedback is a kindness.*

Collaboration

Collaboration is essential to our idea meritocracy, and, coupled with transparency, ensure all ideas are surfaced and then the best ones advanced. Our work is best when others are involved and the strongest ideas come from stress testing, or “red teaming” for weakness and blind spots. Effective collaboration combines and draws on our unique strengths to bring a more complete and rich perspective to the work.

- *Understand what you need from others, and when. Have a clear path to engage. Get and stay in sync.*
- *Ideas must be stress tested and for the strongest decision making. Pay attention to reasoning.*
- *Inexperienced people can have great ideas, sometimes better than people with experience. Test them.*

Leadership

Leaders build trust and take people to places they would not have been gone on their own. We trust leaders when we see them acting selflessly, in the interest of the mission and team. Leadership is not defined by position. Leadership is not management. It’s a choice, to take radical ownership over the organization, the initiative and all the results. Leaders see a need and fill it without being asked.

- *Demonstrate radical ownership over the vision. Wear opportunity goggles. See a need and fill it.*
- *Embrace responsibility. Hold yourself more accountable than others can. Be an inspiring example.*
- *Find the potential in people and have the courage to help them develop it in service of the mission.*

Innovation

Innovators find and solve problems. They cultivate many small insights over time, through deliberate hard work, consistently thinking about a problem and generating a high volume of ideas. They know that innovation is messy, requires collaboration, muddling, and iteration through the transparent exchange of ideas. Innovators know change is hard, takes time, requires grit, and they leverage the team to accomplish more than they could alone.

- *Step back often and evaluate what is or isn’t working. Spot problems that need solving.*
- *Make time to write down as many insights and ideas as possible. Approach innovation as a practice.*
- *Share, build and stress test your ideas with others through collaboration.*

Grit

Nothing worth doing in life is easy. This is why we find inspiration in those who do the hard things, in the face of insurmountable odds. Below the surface of neatly packaged success lies struggle, doubt, time, effort, criticism, disappointment, and failure – that has been met in equal parts with courage, discipline, hard work, passion and perseverance, and the help of others. This is grit.

- *Find the joy and satisfaction in the journey more than the destination. Celebrate the little wins.*
- *Find a purpose or passion in the work, and don’t quit. When the going gets tough, enlist help.*
- *Embrace discomfort and stress, as these are signals that personal and professional growth is happening.*

5-YEAR AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS

The areas outlined below represent MCWD's core areas of strategic focus for the coming five years.

Delivering measurable benefit to the watershed by building high-impact projects while shaping meaningful climate action policy, supported by data-driven decision making, strong partnerships in the community, and a Board-Staff-CAC team engaged in a shared pursuit of excellence.

1. Expand Our Portfolio of High-Impact Capital Projects

Deliver projects that measurably enhance the watershed and enrich communities

2. Develop Meaningful Climate Action Policy for the Watershed

Engage communities in creating evidence-based flood management strategies

3. Cultivate Strategic Partnerships to Create Shared Value

Strengthen collaborative relationships with partners whose goals align with our mission

4. Enhance Data-Driven Decision Making

Use data to inform everyday decisions, shape outreach, and build trust

5. Invest in People and Organizational Culture

Strategically expand our team, nurture professional growth, and foster a culture of excellence

An Integrated Approach to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Just as it integrates land use and water, MCWD also recognizes that to deliver on its vision and bring value to all, it must understand the composition of its communities and meaningfully integrate a diverse set of perspectives into its planning and decision making. Doing so will deliver projects that improve the environment and economy, but also benefit people – by addressing historic and systemic inequities within the watershed.

That is why MCWD is committed to advancing efforts of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) by (1) understanding the diversity and composition of its member communities, and their respective issues and needs; (2) identifying disparities and acting to promote equity by delivering watershed solutions that benefit everyone; and (3) creating opportunities for meaningful inclusion of communities and individuals into MCWD's work.

MCWD's work on DEI is integrated throughout its areas of strategic focus – externally into MCWD's data-driven planning, outreach and engagement, and project development, and internally into its human resources systems.

*DEI initiatives within this plan are denoted with an * on pages 9-13.*

1. Expand Our Portfolio of High-Impact Capital Projects

Deliver projects that measurably enhance the watershed and enrich communities

MINNEHAHA CREEK – LAKE HIAWATHA

Progress to delist Lake Hiawatha; Reduce flooding on Minnehaha Creek; Expand and connect the creek corridor

Complete MCWD's Minnehaha Creek Greenway projects and assess remaining partner-driven opportunities

- Complete 325 Blake Road by 2028, reducing loading downstream by over 300 lbs
- Complete Cottageville Park Phase II by 2027, establishing the Greenway as a regional feature
- Complete Cedar Trail Connection by 2026, completing the connection of the Greenway
- Evaluate opportunity to advance Meadowbrook Golf Course via Three Rivers Park District trail planning
- Evaluate opportunity for public-private partnership at Bremer Bank site, based on developer interest
- Identify potential acquisition priorities to connect Greenway, with city support, by 2025

Forge Minneapolis Partnership, build Phase I projects, and develop long-range plan to guide future

- Approve Cooperative Agreement in 2024, establishing a new governance structure for water planning
- Complete three Minnehaha Creek projects by 2028, achieving 30% reduction in Lake Hiawatha's waste load
- Complete Minneapolis long-range plan by 2027, establishing long-term funding and role clarity
- Identify and initiate feasibility for next phase of projects by 2027

SIX MILE CREEK – HALSTED BAY

Delist Wassermann Lake; Progress to delist Auburn/Turbid/Lundsten/Halsted; Expand nature-based places

Implement projects in queue, partner on Western Growth Area, and advance Halsted Bay planning

- Monitor Wassermann Lake for need for final alum dosing and advance delisting with MPCA by 2026
- Partner with Victoria to complete small area planning for Western Growth Area by mid-2025
- Implement Auburn Wetland Restoration by 2026
- Complete technical, operational, and funding feasibility for Halsted Bay Alum Treatment Facility by mid-2025
- Identify and implement a Turbid-Lundsten Corridor project by 2027

LONG LAKE CREEK – TANAGER BAY

Progress to delist Long Lake and Tanager Bay

Implement first three projects and identify next phase

- Complete County Road 6 Retrofit by end of 2025, reducing loading by 60 lbs
- Partner with Long Lake to implement Holbrook Park project by end of 2026, reducing loading by 40 lbs
- Support private implementation of Holy Name Wetland Bank by 2025, establishing 19 acres of credit
- Enter agreement for first landowner project funding through Land and Water Partnership (LWP) by 2026

PAINTER CREEK – JENNINGS BAY

Progress to delist Jennings Bay

Complete Painter Creek Subwatershed diagnostics and implementation plan for integration into 2027 Plan

2. Develop Meaningful Climate Action Policy for the Watershed

Engage communities in creating evidenced-based flood management strategies

UNDERSTAND AND PREDICT

Expand data collection and analysis to predict future flooding and assess watershed vulnerabilities

Develop tools to predict the impact of climate change on the watershed

- *Expand real-time water level monitoring by 2025*
- *Improve short-term flood forecasting with machine learning by 2026*
- *Conduct greenhouse gas audit of MCWD operations to inform 2026 budget*
- *Build a watershed-wide 2D flood risk model by 2025*
- *Evaluate flood risk, vulnerability, and resilience by 2025**
- *Assess the benefit of various project and policy solutions (e.g. wetland storage) by 2026*

CONVENE AND PLAN

Collaborate with local, regional, and state agencies to develop a cohesive watershed-wide climate strategy

Build partner consensus on project and policy strategies to address the changing climate

- *Develop a flood action plan to guide real-time response to flooding by end of 2024*
- *Initiate climate conversations with agency partners by 2025*
- *Develop climate action roles with community partners by end of 2025*
- *Evaluate flood risk scenarios with partners by mid-2026*
- *Assess project and policy strategies with partners by 2027*
- *Gain partner consensus on MCWD's climate strategies for the 2027 Plan*

IMPLEMENT, MEASURE, AND ADAPT

Coordinate actions with partners for measurable progress and implementation of the 2027 Plan

Deliver the 2027 Plan and implement agreed upon project and policy strategies

- *Assess the climate mitigation and adaptation benefits of MCWD projects by end of 2025*
- *Implement greenhouse gas audit recommendations for MCWD operations starting in 2026*
- *Modernize Gray's Bay Dam operations, linking forecasts, RESNET, and machine learning by 2027*
- *Implement flood action plan successfully during the next major flooding event*
- *Begin 5-year flood mitigation capital improvements in 2027*
- *Adopt new climate action policies by 2028*

3. Cultivate Strategic Partnerships to Create Shared Value

Strengthen collaborative relationships with partners whose goals align with our mission

BUILD COALITIONS OF PARTNERS FOR PRIORITY PROJECTS

Increase awareness to meaningfully engage partners and the public on key projects

Build a coalition of public-private partners that celebrate and maintain the Minnehaha Creek Greenway

- *Conduct celebratory ribbon cutting of 325 Blake and Cedar Trail; organize Greenway walk with partners by 2028*
- *Establish a Greenway coalition, to sustain the vision, activate place, and support ongoing investment*

Advance collaborative water planning in Minneapolis

- *Convene Steering Committee regularly; maintain policymaker alignment; secure sustained funding*
- *Develop a strategy to effectively engage and communicate across partners, public, and media*
- *Establish legislative support for the Minneapolis capital improvement program*
- *Build policymaker, staff, and resident support for MCWD's balanced upstream-downstream approach*

Maintain and expand support for critical projects in Six Mile Creek – Halsted Bay

- *Convene all public partners to ensure support for updated Six Mile Creek– Halsted Bay CIP before 2027*
- *Bring value as a key partner in the sustainable westerly growth of the City of Victoria*
- *Maintain support from Carver County for shared CIP and use of master finance agreement*
- *Implement a strategy to secure local, regional, and legislative support for Halsted Bay Alum Treatment Facility*

Establish and maintain support for the implementation of the Long Lake Creek Roadmap

- *Obtain and maintain support for individual projects and the Long Lake Creek Roadmap in 2024*
- *Develop cycle of engagement with city councils and planning commissions*
- *Implement a targeted strategy to generate new LWP projects in the subwatershed by 2025*

Develop and implement an engagement strategy for Painter Creek – Jennings Bay Roadmap

FOSTER COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND INCLUSION

Be a trusted source of facts and solutions

Strategically engage a cross-section of public-private audiences to build trust and support

- *Engage partners to build broad investment in climate action and the 2027 Plan**
- *Expand LWP outreach to land use community to increase project participation*
- *Build an engagement framework using demographic information and an equity lens, to ensure inclusion**

ENSURE POSITIVE PERMITTING EXPERIENCES

Serve as a resource, partner, and leader within the land use planning community

Cultivate positive relationships with the land use community through clear, proactive, value-added service

- *Develop a program of cyclically engaging municipal staff and the private development community*
- *Implement new outreach strategies, protocol, and training for permitting processes*
- *Routinely monitor and report on stakeholder perspectives and program outcomes*

4. Enhance Data-Driven Decision Making

Use data to inform everyday decisions, shape outreach, and build trust

IMPLEMENT DATA COLLECTION AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Implement technology systems to eliminate data silos and enable seamless data capture, storage, and use

Finish deploying technology solutions that align programs with MCWD's mission

- *Build geospatial inventory of all capital projects to guide maintenance and support communications*
- *Implement a system to track, measure, and report outreach and engagement actions and outcomes*

BUILD A DATA-DRIVEN CULTURE

Foster data literacy and integration

Create an environment where all data is accessible, understandable, and actionable

- *Establish a technology and data governance framework by 2025, to enhance access and management*
- *Implement staff education and engagement to build capacity and increase data literacy by 2025*
- *Create collaborative cross program workgroups to:*
 - *Discuss data utilization challenges*
 - *Drive workflow improvements*
 - *Build organizational agility*
- *Establish specialized data story teams to:*
 - *Deliver impactful narratives supported by data insights*
 - *Drive organizational understanding and action*

CREATE TOOLS FOR UNDERSTANDING THE WATERSHED AND OPERATIONS

Unlock data insights that support high-quality decision making

Realize the investments in technology and a data-driven culture to drive next generation planning

- *Develop tools (e.g. 2D Model) to understand climate dynamics and inform planning around:*
 - *Flood risk exposure, vulnerability, resilience, and project and policy strategies*
- *Implement subwatershed diagnostics for initiatives in key areas of Minneapolis and Painter-Jennings*
- *Create an equity lens, integrating spatial demographic and watershed data, to inform MCWD planning**
- *Establish clear, measurable goals for watershed health and community well-being to guide 2027 Plan**
- *Create integrated work planning system to track/report initiative budget, timeline, and staff allocation*
- *Build a framework for monitoring project efficacy for troubleshooting and communications*
- *Collaborate with partners to refresh foundational datasets (e.g. wetland, floodplain, stream, etc.)*
- *Develop regular reports of permitting data to better understand the impact of regulatory policy*
- *Develop regular reports of relationship data to understand the outcomes of outreach strategies*

5. Invest in People and Organizational Culture

Strategically expand our team, nurture professional growth, and foster a culture of excellence

STRATEGICALLY EXPAND OUR TEAM

Build capacity to shape the future

Strategically expand organizational capability, to drive sustainable growth in watershed outcomes

- *Develop a recruitment strategy that broadens, deepens, and diversifies the talent pipeline**
- *Achieve full team capacity within 24 months across key functional areas*
- *Board and staff leadership regularly assess resource allocation and organizational alignment*
- *Develop succession strategies and plans for critical organizational roles*

NURTURE PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Ignite potential and fuel the development of the team

Empower individuals to reach their full potential through continuous learning and development

- *Develop and implement an organizational onboarding and socialization model by 2025**
- *Identify key skills and competencies for each work area and provide comprehensive positional training*
- *Enhance use of StrengthsFinder, etc., to promote self-awareness and coach growth and collaboration**
- *Tailor development plans for each employee based on role, goals, and MCWD priorities**
- *Implement workplace education and training for DEI**
- *Refine MCWD Career Ladder to facilitate growth, with clear paths, criteria, and regular feedback*
- *Routinely benchmark compensation to ensure market competitiveness*
- *Provide salary growth and promotion based on merit, demonstrated contributions, and results*
- *Establish a leadership development program to:**
 - *Provide training and experiential learning opportunities to develop practical leadership skills*
 - *Pair emerging leaders with mentors or coaches to provide guidance, support, and career advice*

FOSTER A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE

Promote excellence in every endeavor

Create a culture that inspires everyone to take pride in their work and strive for excellence in everything they do

- *Ensure transparent leadership that upholds the idea-meritocracy and high standards of excellence*
- *Embed MCWD Values into daily life and use them to assess performance of initiatives and people*
- *Cultivate strong relationships, open communication, and a sense of belonging for Board, Staff, and CAC**
- *Actively engage, involve, and support employee participation in MCWD initiatives and decisions**
- *Develop programs to foster collaboration and learning across teams*
- *Host regular retreats to promote team building, strategic alignment, and a strong culture*
- *Continuously refine performance management systems for real time, quarterly, and 360 annual feedback*
- *Recognize, celebrate, and reward outstanding performance, while maintaining personal accountability*

IMPLEMENTATION TABLES

Tables to be inserted breaking down the Objectives and Key Results on preceding pages

DRAFT

Expand Our Portfolio of High-Impact Capital Projects

Priority	Initiative	Action	Lead	Deadline	Status
Minnehaha Creek - Lake Hiawatha <i>Progress to delist Lake Hiawatha; Reduce flooding on Minnehaha Creek; Expand and connect the creek corridor</i>	Complete MCWD's Minnehaha Creek Greenway projects and assess remaining partner-driven opportunities	Complete 325 Blake Road	Project Planning	2028	In Progress
		Complete Cottageville Park Phase II	Project Planning	2027	In Progress
		Complete Cedar Trail Connection	Project Planning	2026	In Progress
		Evaluate Meadowbrook Golf Course opportunities	Project Planning	2027	Not Started
		Evaluate Bremer Bank site opportunities	Project Planning	2027	Not Started
		Identify potential Greenway acquisition priorities	Project Planning	2025	In Progress
	Forge Minneapolis Partnership, build Phase I projects, and develop long-range plan to guide future	Approve Cooperative Agreement	Project Planning	2024	Complete
		Complete three Minnehaha Creek Phase I projects	Project Planning	2028	In Progress
		Complete Minneapolis long-range plan	Project Planning	2027	In Progress
		Identify & initiate feasibility for next phase of projects	Project Planning	2027	In Progress

<p>Six Mile Creek - Halsted Bay</p> <p><i>Delist Wassermann Lake; Progress to delist Auburn/Turbid/Lundsten/Halsted; Expand nature-based places</i></p>	<p>Implement projects in queue, partner on Western Growth Area, and advance Halsted Bay planning</p>	Monitor Wassermann Lake to advance delisting & determine additional treatment needs	R&M	2026	In Progress
		Complete small area planning for Western Growth Area	Project Planning	mid-2025	In Progress
		Complete Auburn Wetland Restoration	Project Planning	2026	In Progress
		Complete feasibility for Halsted Bay Alum Treatment Facility	Project Planning	mid-2025	Not Started
		Identify & complete a Turbid-Lundsten Corridor project	Project Planning	2027	Not Started
<p>Long Lake Creek - Tanager Bay</p> <p><i>Progress to delist Long Lake and Tanager Bay</i></p>	<p>Implement first three projects and identify next phase</p>	Complete County Road 6 Retrofit	Project Planning	2025	In Progress
		Complete Holbrook Park project	Project Planning	2026	In Progress
		Support completion of the Holy Name Wetland Bank	Policy Planning	2025	In Progress
		Enter into agreement for first landowner project funding through LWP program	Policy Planning	2026	In Progress
<p>Painter Creek - Jennings Bay</p> <p><i>Progress to delist Jennings Bay</i></p>	<p>Complete Painter Creek Subwatershed diagnostics and implementation plan</p>	Integrate findings in 2027 Plan	R&M	2027	Not Started

Develop Meaningful Climate Action Policy for the Watershed

Priority	Initiative	Action	Lead	Deadline	Status
Understand & Predict <i>Expand data collection and analysis to predict future flooding and assess watershed vulnerabilities</i>	Develop tools to predict the impact of climate change on the watershed	Expand RESNET water level monitoring	R&M	2025	Complete
		Use machine learning to improve short-term flood forecasting	R&M	2026	In Progress
		Conduct greenhouse gas audit of MCWD operations	Operations	2025	Not Started
		Build watershed-wide 2D model	R&M	2025	In Progress
		Evaluate flood risk, vulnerability & resilience	R&M	2025	In Progress
		Assess benefits of various project & policy solutions	R&M	2026	Not Started
Convene & Plan <i>Collaborate with local, regional, and state agencies to develop a cohesive watershed-wide climate strategy</i>	Build partner consensus on project and policy strategies to address the changing climate	Develop flood action plan	Policy Planning	2024	In Progress
		Initiate climate conversations with partners	Policy Planning	2025	In Progress
		Develop climate action roles with partners	Policy Planning	2025	Not Started
		Evaluate flood risk scenarios with partners	Policy Planning	mid-2026	Not Started

<p>Implement, Measure & Adapt</p> <p><i>Coordinate actions with partners for measurable progress and implementation of the 2027 Plan</i></p>	<p>Deliver the 2027 Plan and implement agreed upon project and policy strategies</p>	Assess project & policy strategies with partners	Policy Planning	2027	Not Started
		Gain partner consensus on MCWD's climate strategies	Policy Planning	2027	Not Started
		Assess MCWD projects' climate mitigation & adaptation benefits	Policy Planning	2025	In Progress
		Complete greenhouse gas audit recommendations	Operations	2026	Not Started
		Modernize dam operations	R&M	2027	In Progress
		Implement flood action plan	PMLM	TBD (next flooding event)	Not Started
		Begin 5-year flood mitigation capital improvements	Project Planning	2027	Not Started
		Adopt new climate action policies	Policy Planning	2028	Not Started

Cultivate Strategic Partnerships to Create Shared Value

Priority	Initiative	Action	Lead	Deadline	Status
<p>Build Coalitions of Partners for Priority Projects</p> <p><i>Increase awareness to meaningfully engage partners and the public on key projects</i></p>	<p>Build a coalition of public-private partners that celebrate and maintain the Minnehaha Creek Greenway</p>	Conduct 325 & Cedar Trail ribbon cutting; organize Greenway walk with partners	Outreach	2028	Not Started
		Establish a Greenway coalition	Outreach	2028	Not Started
	<p>Advance collaborative water planning in Minneapolis</p>	Convene Steering Committee; maintain policymaker alignment; secure sustained funding	Outreach	Ongoing	In Progress
		Develop communications & engagement strategy	Outreach	2025	In Progress
		Establish legislative support	Outreach	Ongoing	In Progress
		Build support for balanced upstream-downstream approach	Outreach	Ongoing	In Progress
	<p>Maintain and expand support for critical projects in Six Mile Creek - Halsted Bay</p>	Convene public partners to ensure support for SMCHB CIP	Outreach	2026	Not Started
		Bring value in Victoria's sustainable westerly growth	Project Planning	2025	In Progress
		Maintain Carver County support	Outreach	Ongoing	In Progress
		Implement support strategy for Halsted Bay Alum Treatment Facility	Outreach	2025	Not Started

	Establish and maintain support for the implementation of the Long Lake Creek Roadmap	Obtain & maintain support for projects / roadmap	Outreach	2024	In Progress
		Develop policymaker engagement cycle	Policy Planning	2024	In Progress
		Implement strategy to generate new LWP projects	Policy Planning	2025	In Progress
	Painter Creek - Jennings Bay Roadmap	Develop & implement engagement strategy	Outreach	2027	Not Started
Foster Community Support & Inclusion <i>Be a trusted source of facts and solutions</i>	Strategically engage a cross-section of public-private audiences to build trust and support	Engage partners for climate action & 2027 Plan investments	Policy Planning	2027	In Progress
		Expand LWP outreach	Outreach	2025	Not Started
		Build engagement framework through an equity lens	Outreach	2025	In Progress
Ensure Positive Permitting Experiences <i>Serve as a resource, partner, and leader within the land use planning community</i>	Cultivate positive relationships with the land use community through clear, proactive, value-added service	Develop stakeholder engagement cycle	Permitting	2025	In Progress
		Implement new outreach strategies, protocol & training	Permitting	2025	In Progress
		Monitor & report engagement	Permitting	Ongoing	In Progress

Enhance Data-Driven Decision Making

Priority	Initiative	Action	Lead	Deadline	Status
Implement Data Collection & Management Systems <i>Implement technology systems to eliminate data silos and enable seamless data capture, storage, and use</i>	Finish deploying technology solutions that align programs with MCWD's mission	Build geospatial inventory of capital projects	GIS/IT	2027	In Progress
		Implement SRM system	Outreach	2025	In Progress
Build a Data-Driven Culture <i>Foster data literacy and integration</i>	Create an environment where all data is accessible, understandable, and actionable	Establish technology & data governance framework	GIS/IT	2025	Not Started
		Increase staff's data literacy	GIS/IT	2025	Not Started
		Create cross program data workgroups	GIS/IT	2027	Not Started
		Establish data story teams	GIS/IT	2027	Not Started

Create Tools for Understanding the Watershed & Operations

Unlock data insights that support high-quality decision making

Realize the investments in technology and a data-driven culture to drive next generation planning

Develop tools to understand climate dynamics	R&M	2027	In Progress
Implement subwatershed diagnostics in key areas	R&M	2027	In Progress
Create an equity lens to inform MCWD planning	Policy Planning	2025	In Progress
Establish goals for watershed health & community well-being	Policy Planning	2027	In Progress
Create work planning system for initiative tracking & reporting	GIS/IT	2027	Not Started
Build framework to monitor project efficacy	GIS/IT	2027	Not Started
Refresh foundational datasets	GIS/IT	2025	Not Started
Develop permitting data reports	Permitting	2025	Not Started
Develop outreach data reports	Outreach	2025	Not Started

Invest in People and Organizational Culture

Priority	Initiative	Action	Lead	Deadline	Status
Strategically Expand Our Team <i>Build capacity to shape the future</i>	Strategically expand organizational capability, to drive sustainable growth in watershed outcomes	Develop recruitment strategy to broaden & diversify talent	Operations	2025	In Progress
		Achieve full team capacity	Operations	2025	In Progress
		Assess resource allocation & organizational alignment	Operations	Ongoing	In Progress
		Develop succession strategies	Operations	2025	In Progress
Nurture Professional Growth <i>Ignite potential and fuel the development of the team</i>	Empower individuals to reach their full potential through continuous learning and development	Develop onboarding & socialization model	Operations	2025	In Progress
		Identify skills & competencies; provide positional training	Operations	2025	In Progress
		Promote self-awareness; coach growth & collaboration	Operations	Ongoing	In Progress
		Create tailored employee development plans	Operations	Ongoing	In Progress
		Implement DEI education & training	Operations	2025	In Progress
		Refine MCWD Career Ladder	Operations	2027	In Progress

	Routinely benchmark compensation	Operations	Ongoing	In Progress	
	Provide salary growth & promotions	Operations	Ongoing	In Progress	
	Establish leadership development program	Operations	2027	Not Started	
<p>Foster a Culture of Excellence</p> <p><i>Promote excellence in every endeavor</i></p>	<p>Create a culture that inspires everyone to take pride in their work and strive for excellence in everything they do</p>	Ensure transparent leadership	Operations	Ongoing	In Progress
		Embed & use MCWD Values	Operations	Ongoing	In Progress
		Cultivate strong relationships, open communication & sense of belonging	Operations	Ongoing	In Progress
		Engage, involve & support employee participation	Operations	Ongoing	In Progress
		Develop programs for collaboration & learning	Operations	2027	In Progress
		Host regular retreats	Operations	Ongoing	In Progress
		Refine performance management systems	Operations	Ongoing	In Progress
		Recognize, celebrate & reward performance; maintain personal accountability	Operations	Ongoing	In Progress