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**Title:** Stakeholder Relations and Outreach Program Direction

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**Purpose:**

At the August 14, 2025, Operations and Programs Committee (OPC) meeting, staff will provide a report on the progress of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District's (MCWD or District) Outreach Program, summarizing key findings from recent relationship management discussions and how these findings will inform program strategy and direction.

**Background:**

On February 27, 2020, the Board of Managers formally adopted the [Strategic Direction for MCWD Outreach](#) to align the program with the District's Balanced Urban Ecology philosophy, re-focusing Outreach resources and activities to build relationships that support capital project implementation and promote integration between land use and water planning. The Strategic Direction transitioned the program from broad-based awareness and education activities toward targeted, context-specific outreach with land-use decision-makers.

2025 Committee Discussions:

At the [February 27, 2025](#), and [March 27, 2025](#), Policy and Planning Committee (PPC) meetings, Outreach staff facilitated discussions with the Committee to reflect on the program's implementation progress under the 2020 Strategic Direction and identify challenges and opportunities related to MCWD's relationship management activities.

Members expressed strong support for the District's focus on relationship-building, recognizing its role in advancing capital projects and policy initiatives through trusted community and intergovernmental partnerships. However, members also noted the challenge of measuring the success of these efforts, given the limited data and often intangible nature of relationship capital. While quantitatively measuring the success of MCWD's outreach approach and relationship-building activities is challenging, members affirmed the importance of continuing to build strong relationship capital to advance the District's mission.

**Key insights from Committee discussions included:**

- Relationships are a key commodity for the success of MCWD projects and initiatives.
- MCWD manages a large volume and a diversity of relationships, requiring considerable time and capacity.
- Relationship management activities often go unseen, as they can be organic and difficult to track or measure.
- Relational context is valuable in building and maintaining strong relationships with key partners.
- Transitioning relationship management to new staff teams will support organizational growth and resilience.
- Cultivating a strong, trusted reputation is a central component of relationship-building.

**August 14, 2025, OPC Meeting:**

At the August 14, 2025, OPC meeting, staff will report on how these insights are informing the direction of the Outreach Program and solicit feedback from the Committee.