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**Title:** Greenway Listening Session

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**Purpose:** At the February 11, 2021 Operations and Programs Committee (OPC) meeting, staff and the 325 Blake Road project consultant HDR will lead a listening session focused on the Board of Managers' vision for the future of the Minnehaha Creek Greenway and how best to integrate new projects to fulfill that vision.

**Background:** Since 2009, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) has been working with the Cities of Hopkins and St. Louis Park, as well as other private and public partners, on a series of projects to restore a historically degraded stretch of Minnehaha Creek and provide public access through trails and open space to these newly restored areas. Collectively, this series of projects has culminated in the creation of the Minnehaha Creek Greenway (Greenway). In 2011, MCWD purchased the 325 Blake Road site with the goal of incorporating it as a key piece of the Greenway and took a significant step towards realizing this goal by selecting HDR as MCWD's design consultant for the 325 Blake Road project at its December 3, 2020 Board of Managers meeting. HDR will assist MCWD with integrating the 325 Blake Road site into the overall Greenway through the addition of trails, riparian restoration, open space, and regional stormwater treatment, while balancing the potential for a private development component. This work will also tie in the remaining Cottageville Park parcel and adjacent Creek parcels to ensure a cohesive Greenway design. A project kick-off meeting was held in January, 2021 and the early stages of information gathering are currently underway.

**Summary:** An early step outlined in HDR's scope of work is to gather input from the MCWD Board of Managers through a facilitated listening session. This listening session will take place at the February 11, 2021 OPC meeting and will focus on teasing out the common threads, as well as any differences, in the Managers' visions for the Greenway and how the design of the 325 Blake Road site fits into these overarching visions. The thoughts, opinions, and discussion generated at this listening session will be combined with information gathered at similar listening sessions with other stakeholders and interested parties to understand where there is significant overlap in the vision for the Greenway and where there are potential conflicts that need to be addressed through the upcoming scenario planning process.

High-level guiding questions will be distributed to the Board prior to the OPC meeting.