



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** MCWD Board of Managers  
**From:** Becky Christopher, Policy Planning Manager  
**Date:** October 22, 2018  
**Re:** Strategic Action Plan

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### **Purpose:**

To present and obtain Board feedback on a revised Strategic Action Plan and begin synchronizing expectations around implementation priorities and timeline.

### **Background:**

On February 9, 2017, the Board adopted the Strategic Alignment Report which established the strategic direction and priorities for each program and the organization as a whole. The Board directed that the strategic priorities be incorporated and implemented through the District's Watershed Management Plan, budget and financial plans, human resources plans, and information technology investment plans.

At the February 9, 2018 Board Retreat and March 22, 2018 PPC Meeting, staff presented a draft Strategic Action Plan as a framework to translate the program directives from the strategic plan into discrete actionable steps with defined timelines and outputs, thereby creating clear expectations and accountability.

Feedback from the Managers included developing a higher level dashboard for Board purposes and organizing the work around outcomes rather than departments. It was also discussed that the proposed timeline may be too aggressive given the level of transition that the organization was undergoing.

The Managers also discussed the use of the Strategic Action Plan in providing focus and alignment for the Policy and Planning Committee (PPC), Operations and Programs Committee (OPC), and Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for the next two-three years.

At the June 28, 2018 and July 26, 2018 PPC Meetings, staff presented a plan for focusing the CAC agenda for 2018-2019 on advising the District in the development of its policy and responsive programs, as part of the broader Strategic Action Plan. This work includes four priority areas: (1) streamlining regulation, (2) developing responsive model, (3) policy mapping, and (4) strategic communications. Staff has been advancing this work with the CAC over the past few months, beginning with preliminary scoping for the Streamlining Regulation initiative. The results of these discussions will be reviewed with the PPC in December.

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Other initiatives that were identified in the Strategic Action Plan have also been advancing over the course of 2018, though progress has not been tracked and communicated in a consistent manner. Staff is now revisiting the Strategic Action Plan to ensure that it provides clear and focused priorities and establishes realistic timelines so it can serve as a meaningful accountability tool for staff and the Board, as intended.

### **October 25, 2018 Meeting:**

At the October 25, 2018 PPC Meeting, staff will present a revised Strategic Action Plan that is intended to meet the following goals:

1. Convert strategic direction into actionable objectives
2. Create project management plans for those actionable objectives
3. Establish a tracking and reporting tool to facilitate organizational communications and accountability

The Strategic Action Plan organizes the work into ten major initiatives, as summarized below:

#### External Policy Initiatives

- **Permitting – Streamlining and Partnerships** - District regulations and processes will be optimized for natural resource protection, simplicity and efficient administration, while developing clear pathways and incentives for partnership.
- **Responsive Model** - To complement the focal geography approach, the District will develop a model for scanning for opportunities, prioritizing opportunities and requests for partnership, and responding with projects and programming. This work may include developing a project priority list and responsive capital improvement program.
- **Influencing Land Use-Water Policy** - Collaborating with local, regional, state and private entities to identify policy and procedural changes that would improve land-use water integration at a MCWD and broader regional scale.
- **Long-range Planning** – Collaborating with local, regional, and state entities to identify long-range planning and data needs to inform the next round of 10-year plan updates (e.g. flood resilience, BMP maintenance, model ordinances).

#### Internal Planning Initiatives

- **Strategic Communications** - Developing a strategic communications plan to guide the District's efforts to influence policy, enhance reputation, and promote early coordination of public and private planning and investments.
- **Project Implementation** – To support the implementation of high impact capital projects, the District must continue to (1) develop its project management framework, prediction of financial and human resource needs, and funding strategy; and (2) enhance program connections and realign work in support of project implementation.
- **Evaluation and Reporting** – Improving the District's ability to measure, evaluate, and communicate about progress toward its goals.

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## Operational Initiatives

- **Human Resources** – Develop a human resources plan and philosophy that identifies and meets the needs of the organization.
- **Information Technology** – Develop a plan for investment in information technology to meet program needs and improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- **Accounting/Finance** – Improve processes and develop policies to support the District’s budgeting, accounting, and financial planning needs.

The Strategic Action Plan is being developed in a program called Smartsheet, which allows users to easily collapse or expand information and produce reports. This will allow staff to use the program to develop a detailed work breakdown for each initiative, including staff assignments, action steps, and schedule. It will also allow the Board to easily review progress at a high level.

Staff will be seeking feedback from the Managers on the following:

- Clarity of goals and priorities
  - Do the strategic initiatives make sense?
  - Is it clear what we’re trying to accomplish?
  - Is anything missing?
- Schedule, pace, and capacity
  - What are the Board’s expected timelines for completion?
  - Is the Board comfortable with the work extending into 2020?
- Reporting and communications
  - What level of detail does the Board wish to see?
  - How does the Board wish to track progress and receive reports?
  - How frequently?

If there are questions in advance of the meeting, please contact: Becky Christopher at (952) 641-4512 or [bchristopher@minnehahacreek.org](mailto:bchristopher@minnehahacreek.org).

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