

MEMORANDUM

To: Planning and Policy Committee
From: Renae Clark, MCWD Planner / Project Manager
CC: James Wisker, MCWD Director of Planning
Date: January 19, 2016
Re: Permit Program Strategic Planning

Purpose:

As presented for Committee in May 2015 and outlined the Permitting Program 2016 Work Plan, the Permitting Program has identified three operational priorities which include: 1.) Efficient administration of rules, 2.) Effective field monitoring and compliance, 3.) Proactively achieving greater natural resource outcomes than can be achieved through reactive regulation alone through planning, new policy initiatives and partnerships. Staff will provide an overview and briefing on the development of Permitting Program frameworks and protocol to advance this strategic direction of the program.

Background:

As part of the organizational Self-Assessment for the Comprehensive Plan update on May 21, 2015 staff facilitated a discussion with the Planning and Policy Committee which included a proposal for how to strategically align the resources of the Permitting Program to support the organizational direction outlined within the Balanced Urban Ecology policy and the District's watershed implementation model "Two Track Approach" for the 2017 Comprehensive Plan. Reflecting on the recent program success through partnerships, that include the Mader wetland bank in Minnetrista and a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Victoria which brings the District into development planning early in the process as examples, staff presented the three Program operational priorities as noted above. The third represents a new area of focus for the Program. The 2016 Permitting Program Work Plan goes into further detail on the program's potential to achieve a greater degree of resource protection than would be obtained through just reactive implementation of District Rules.

Since the adoption of 2016 Work Plans, Planning and Permitting staff has been working with Legal Counsel to operationalize the partnership approach within the Permitting Program through the following:

- identifying the needed processes and documentation frameworks that must be in place to ensure forthright, fundamental program implementation
- protocol for exploring and advancing partnership opportunities
- staff structure to support the framework of the program's three operational priorities.

Next Steps:

Following the January 21 PPC Meeting, staff and Legal Counsel will coordinate to create process and protocol to establish a legal risk management framework and established processes that can be clearly communicated and consistently implemented.