

MEMORANDUM

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To: MCWD Board of Managers
From: James Wisker, Director of Planning
Date: January 29, 2015
Re: January 22, 2015 Planning and Policy Committee Report

The January 22, 2015 Planning and Policy Committee reviewed and discussed the approved framework for the 2017 Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan (Plan).

The Committee reviewed the focus of the Plan being on improving the District’s implementation model by aligning policy and programs internally across departments and externally with potential public and private partners.

The Committee reviewed the major theme of improving implementation effectiveness and service delivery through partnerships, focus and flexibility. Corollaries included emphasis on the interdependence of the natural and built environments, and the social and economic value of watershed projects and programs (*Balanced Urban Ecology*).

Implementation based policy topics identified for Plan development discussion included:

- A framework of policies and programs that support the 2 track approach of focal geographies, complemented by a District wide model for responsiveness;
- Strategies to continue improving the integration of the District’s work with land-use planning;
- Opportunities to improve service delivery by streamlining and aligning the state mandated MS4 framework between the MCWD and its partner MS4s;
- Mapping, evaluating and identifying opportunities for improved consistency in ordinances and BMPs across local government units and MCWD (e.g. street sweeping);
- Funding strategies that integrate the timing and sources of investment to augment ad valorem sources;
- Program and policy implications of a broader ecosystem focus across the watershed, founded on the Ecosystem Evaluation Program.

The Committee discussed that this list would not be static and could be informed by processes such as the upcoming *Self Assessment*.

36 The Committee also reviewed select technically based policy topics. It was explained that these
37 topics were identified due to their potential for broad implication to the District in areas of
38 operations, strategic objectives, or implementation roles:
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- 40 • How will climate change adaptation thinking shape District planning, operations and its
41 role in co-planning with LGUs;
42
- 43 • Stream baseflow and the implications for long term strategic visions for Minnehaha
44 Creek and other priority corridors;
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- 46 • What is the role for MCWD in Chloride management?;
47
- 48 • Stormwater BMP operation and maintenance. Opportunities for water quality
49 improvement by addressing legacy infrastructure under fragmented ownership and
50 maintenance.

51 The Committee then reviewed the approved external process, utilizing a Technical Advisory
52 Committee meeting bi-monthly, a Policy Advisory Committee meeting quarterly, the Citizen
53 Advisory Committee discussing as needed, and the Six Mile Steering Committee meeting
54 quarterly and representing a potential subset of the Comprehensive Plan committees.
55

56 Staff outlined that for conceptual purposes the process could be broken into three discrete
57 phases:

- 58 • Phase 1 – obtain foundational support for the process and major themes, including the 2
59 track approach;
60
- 61 • Phase 2 – plan development. Committees and staff will focus on discussing and framing
62 directional policy with regards to implementation and select technical issues;
63
- 64 • Phase 3 – review and approval. 60-day review, 90- day review, public hearings and plan
65 approval.
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67 Subsequently the Committee discussed the need to rapidly define the appointment process for
68 each advisory committee. The Committee also repeatedly emphasized the importance of robust
69 and multifaceted communication throughout the Comprehensive Planning effort. Specifically,
70 the Committee recommended additional attention be paid by staff on developing clear and
71 consistent messaging for staff and the Board who would be communicating across a broad suite
72 of interested parties.
73

74 Noting the pending “kick-off” meeting scheduled for February 18, the Committee recommended
75 Planning staff work closely with the Communications Director, Planning Director and pertinent
76 consultants to ensure adequate attendance by external staff and policy makers. Further it was
77 suggested that attention be paid towards the overall design of the “kick-off” meeting to provide

78 both an informative and enjoyable meeting structure that offered clarity of message for the
79 District and its proposed Plan update.

80
81 Staff then outlined the workload associated with managing the Plan development and the
82 associated committee structure. Given the current priorities occupying Planning and Project staff
83 it was suggested that a temporary position spanning the development of the Plan may be
84 advisable. It was highlighted that such a position could analyze and research policy, facilitate
85 database development with a consultant, and assist in communications management and
86 administrative tasks such as agenda drafting, listserv correspondence, website content, literature
87 development and the drafting/distribution of meeting minutes. Staff noted that consulting this
88 work would be more expensive than hiring a temporary employee, and informed the Committee
89 that the 2015 Comprehensive Plan budget was planned to absorb such administrative costs.

90
91 After discussion the Committee made the following recommendation for consideration by the
92 Board of Managers at the January 29, 2015 Meeting:

- 93 • Direct the District Administrator to work with the Planning Director and Operations
94 Director, in consultation with Springsted Inc., to develop a position profile, salary range,
95 employment term and posting for a Comprehensive Planning Assistant, within the
96 established 2015 Comprehensive Planning budget.

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98 The Committee then requested staff provide a presentation at the January 29, 2015 meeting of
99 the Board of Managers to complement the Committee's report to the full Board.

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101 The Committee Meeting adjourned at 9PM.

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103 Respectfully submitted,

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105 James Wisker
106 Director of Planning and Projects

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