

Environment Committee

Meeting date: May 12, 2015

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of May 20, 2015

Subject: Authorize Staff to Send the Final 2040 Water Resources Policy Plan and Public Hearing Report for the Water Resources Policy Plan to Full Council for Approval

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: Water Resources Policy Plan

Staff Prepared/Presented: Judy Sventek, 651-602-1156

Division/Department: MCES c/o Leisa Thompson, 651-602-8101

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve the public hearing report for the 2040 Water Resources Policy Plan (WRPP); and adopt the 2040 Water Resources Policy Plan.

Background

The *Water Resources Policy Plan* directs its attention to both the quantity and quality of our water resources. It includes policies and strategies to ensure a sufficient, sustainable water supply and to manage surface water runoff and our wastewater systems to protect water quality.

The overall theme of this policy plan is to move the Council toward more integration of our roles in wastewater, water supply, and surface water planning. For the Council, it means leading by example and working across agency divisions to promote water sustainability. The Council will work with partners to identify emerging issues and challenges for the region as we work together on solutions in order to promote a more sustainable region. Only through cooperation and collaboration can the region expect to manage its water resources in a sustainable way aimed at:

- Providing an adequate water supply for the region,
- Promoting and implementing best management practices aimed at protecting the quality and quantity of our resources,
- Providing efficient and cost effective wastewater services to the region,
- Efficiently addressing nonpoint and point sources pollution issues and solutions, and,
- Assessing and monitoring of lakes, rivers, and streams so that we can adequately manage, protect and restore these valued resources.

Rationale

The Council has prepared this Policy Plan under state law (Minn. Stat. 473.145) directing it to prepare a metropolitan development guide that includes a plan for the region's wastewater collection and treatment system, along with supporting policies, goals, standards, and maps. The Policy Plan is also prepared in response to Minn. Stat. 473.157 requiring the Council to adopt a water resources plan and federal requirements for a regional management plan to address pollution from point sources (such as treatment plant discharges) and nonpoint sources (such as stormwater runoff).

When adopted by the Council, this Policy Plan will replace the current plan adopted in May 2005 with amendments in 2006 and 2010.

Funding

None

Known Support / Opposition

MCES held a formal public hearing on March 10, 2015. One entity testified at the hearing and 21 letters representing 24 entities were received as part of the formal public review process. Council staff responded to the 166 comments received. Many of the comments were supportive of the plan, many required minor language clarifications and changes and a few required major changes to language in the plan. These changes were made and have addressed concerns raised during the formal public review process.