Imagine 2050: Water Policy Plan Outline

The Water Policy Plan (formerly the Water Resources Policy Plan) is part of the Metropolitan Council's decadal Regional Development Guide (RDG) and sets regional policies to ensure the prosperous and economical growth of the Twin Cities metropolitan region. As a part of the RDG, the Water Policy Plan will connect with and define how the regional vision, values, and goals apply to the Metropolitan Council's water planning and regional wastewater services.

Imagine 2050 is the RDG under development and is scheduled to be adopted by the Met Council by the end of 2024. The current values in this guide are:

Equity	We value the people and communities of our region. Our region is economically and culturally vibrant. We also recognize, however, the harm and disparities that injustices, including racism, have created.
Leadership	We value those in our region who inspire and motivate others for positive change. Our region is known for its civic engagement. We need broad and inclusive leadership to help confront the significant challenges we face around equity, climate change, safety, and other pressing issues. To maximize the potential of our region and its communities, we turn to leadership that is diverse, collaborative, culturally competent, and innovative. We encourage this kind of leadership across all sectors including business, government, non-profit, and education.
Accountability	We value being effective in our work and achieving measurable outcomes. Our region is known for its research, initiatives, and collaborations. We must be open to criticism and clearly understand when we are not achieving results or have harmed communities. We recognize that we can maximize our effectiveness by being in partnership with others. We will also be transparent and flexible so that we can change course when needed.
Stewardship	We value our region's resources. Our resources include our natural, economic, and financial resources as well as our infrastructure. We recognize that these resources may be vulnerable over time to changing conditions, including from climate change. We must design our systems and allocate our resources in ways that can be sustained over time and support the needs of future generations.

Additionally, *Imagine 2050* contains cross-cutting regional goals. Collectively, these goals describe and support an overall vision for the region and set the policy agenda for the subsequent chapters (Transportation, Parks, Water Resources, and Housing Policy Plans).

Imagine 2050 Crosscutting Regional Goals	
Our Region is Equitable and Inclusive	Racial inequities and injustices experienced by historically marginalized communities have been eliminated; and all residents and newcomers feel welcome, included, and empowered.
Our Communities are Healthy and Safe	All our region's residents live healthy, productive, and rewarding lives with a sense of security, dignity, and wellbeing.
Our Region is Dynamic and Resilient	Our region meets the opportunities and challenges faced by our communities and economy including issues of choice, access, and affordability.
We Lead on Addressing Climate Change	We have mitigated greenhouse gas emissions and have adapted to ensure that our communities and systems are resilient to climate impacts.
We Protect and Restore Natural Systems	We protect, integrate, and restore natural systems to protect habitat and ensure a high quality of life for the people of our region.

Water Policy Plan

The Water Policy Plan contains Policies, Commitments, Objectives, and Actions that carry the Met Council's regional values and cross-cutting goals through the areas of water planning and wastewater collection and treatment services. Additionally, the Metro Area Water Supply Plan and the Regional Wastewater System Plan provide more detailed information and actions to help implement regional policies locally.

Environmental Services' service commitments of Partner, Plan, and Provide frame regional policy actions in the 2050 Water Policy Plan. They are the cornerstones of Environmental Services' mission and concisely describe our internal and regional obligations to our partners, city and townships, businesses, industries, colleagues, and most importantly, to the residents of the metro region.

Imagine 2050: Proposed Water Policy Plan Commitments	
Partner	ES partners with national, regional, and local organizations and experts to work towards water sustainability, climate resilience, and equitable water outcomes.
Plan	ES collaboratively develops plans to protect, enhance, restore, and sustainably manage the region's water resources.
Provide	ES provides essential water planning services to the entire region and wastewater treatment and collection services to 111 communities.

Proposed Water Policy Plan Table of Contents Summary

Introduction	Shares the purpose of the regional plan and describes the components of the Water Policy Plan – • Water policies • WW System plan • Water Supply Plan • Local plan requirements
Regional Development Guide connection to water	This section connects the regional vision, values, and goals to water in the region's natural and built environments. We will reference community water values studies and water's inherent value to ecosystems, economic, community, and public health.
Principles, Goals & Roles	This section defines integrated water planning and identifies the roles and responsibilities of the various water sector players (state agencies, tribal governments, watershed organizations, city/township staff, etc.). It states our statutory authorities and explains why integrated water planning at the regional level is foundational to the region's growth, prosperity, and sustainability. It will describe Environmental Services' current regional water framework and underscore the importance of planning, partnering, and providing services at the local, regional, state, tribal, and federal levels. It also will commit our organization to a triple bottom line (social, environmental, economic), not solely economic outcomes. Lastly, this section will define the various aspects of regional water planning through the comprehensive planning process. It will describe the stages of plan development, desired regional objectives, metrics, and the explanations of completeness, conformance, consistency, plan departures, and incompleteness.
Regional Water Context	This section will highlight how water arrives and moves through the region, identifies users, uses, and how water returns to the environment after use. Here, we can provide additional context for water and water

	services connections with social, economic, equity, and public and ecosystem health outcomes.
Problem Identification	This section will share current and future concerns, risks, and opportunities for the region's waters, water service providers, and water users regional water context. Examples include: • Climate Change • Source Water Protection • Population growth & land use change • Contaminants of concern • Water reuse
Policies and actions	This section describes regional water policies and the example actions to be taken by the Council and local communities to achieve our desired 2050 outcomes. They will be measurable so that we can track our successes. It will clearly state our local water (surface water, water supply, sewer) plan requirements and our review templates.
Wastewater System Plan	This is a current snapshot of the regional wastewater system and our capital investment program. It highlights and addresses future conditions (like population growth) and concerns (regulatory strategy) for the regional system.
Metro Area Water Supply Plan	This section includes the regional water supply plan. The plan provides an overview of current conditions, challenges, risks, and opportunities aimed at ensuring the sustainability of water supplies and water supplier services. This version will have subregional approaches to help align regional policies and outcomes with local actions and needs. This portion of the plan will need to be approved by the Metro Area Water Supply Advisory Committee.
Appendices	• Wastewater data tables • Long-term wastewater service area map • Long-term capital investment plan

	• Priority Waters Lists & maps • Supporting data sources • Local plan requirements • Summary of all policies and actions • Definitions

Proposed Water Objectives

The table below outlines proposed objectives and policy areas for the 2050 Water Policy Plan. The presence of icons indicates the need for diverse strategies that connect the many water planning and management arenas that ES staff work in.

SUSTAINABLE WATERS: Ensure clean, abundant waters for current and future regional needs.

We see the connections between drinking water, water resources, and wastewater and strive to integrate our work and management to serve the region and its water to meet the needs of current and future generations. Environmental Services employs numerous strategies to achieve sustainable waters objectives including convening partners, new monitoring and wastewater treatment technologies, conservation efforts, and planning and technical assistance. We work with and support our partners to achieve the goal of clean, abundant waters.

CLIMATE: Create climate-resilient water sources, ecosystems, and water infrastructure through mitigation, innovative design, and adaptive planning.

The region is already experiencing the impacts of climate change. Our winters are warming, the frequency and intensity of storm events have shifted from historical record, and we are projected to experience more extreme heat and drought events. We support work to enhance resilience to help communities adapt to these changes. In partnership with the State of Minnesota and local communities, we work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt our practices to protect the infrastructure investments of the region and better understand the impacts to both surface and groundwater, to protect both water supply and our high-water quality.

INFRASTRUCTURE: Maximize water infrastructure investments and identify future investment opportunities that result in benefits at multiple scales.

We put significant investment into water infrastructure for stormwater, wastewater, and assistance for local water supply. We work to optimize the existing investments and thoughtfully and responsibly plan future infrastructure to sustain and serve our growing region. We have a responsibility to the region to protect our water resources through

maintaining regional infrastructure and expanding service as necessary with community input.

FUNDING: Sustainably fund local and regional water protection and planning efforts.

We perform critical work and services to the region including water resources and water supply planning and wastewater treatment. This work must be supported now and into the future. We will continue to work to secure funding and grants for our efforts as well as to support local communities in those pursuits through providing grant funds including conservation and inflow and infiltration.

HEALTH: Protect public and ecosystem health to maintain, restore, and enhance a high quality of life across the region.

Through our breadth of services, we will continue to protect public and ecosystem health for the region and those downstream. The protection of these critical resources will allow our region to be successful, support growth, and improve the health and well-being of our residents. Examples of how we work to protect public and ecosystem health include wastewater treatment, water quality monitoring, source water protection, and technical assistance.

EQUITY: Provide equitable water benefits and water services that are accessible and shared amongst all residents and communities.

We work for all residents to have access to clean, safe, and affordable water for drinking, recreation, cultural, and other social or commercial uses. The ecosystem benefits of our abundant and clean natural waters and water service providers are necessary for public health and all communities and people in the region deserve those benefits. We will support vulnerable communities in identifying water service and benefit gaps and provide resources for the work necessary for a more equitable water future for all.

Proposed Water Policies

Topic Area: One Water

The Twin Cities metro region is shaped by the water that moves through it. The 2050 Water Resources Policy Plan, like the 2040 plan before it, is an integrated plan that supports our core mission to operate and manage the regional wastewater system, provide water supply planning, and provide surface water planning and management throughout the region. There is a finite supply of water in the region and it is a shared responsibility for all regional water professionals to take care of the resource for future prosperity.

Integrated Water Policy:

Water planning and management approaches are integrated, cooperative, and holistic.

Desired Outcomes:

- Federal, state, regional, and local water plans and policies align to support sustainable and equitable water outcomes.
- Water planning and management decisions consider risks and impacts across the entire water sector.
- All water organizations work collectively across geographical, political, social, and cultural boundaries to achieve water sustainability in the region.
- The Council conducts long-range planning using a holistic (integrated system) approach that considers the water needs, challenges, and risks for both natural surface and groundwaters, as well as water moving through the built environment (stormwater, water supply, and wastewater).
- Water planning and management roles and responsibilities within the region are clarified and any identified gaps collaboratively addressed.
- The Council supports local and regional water planning efforts through technical expertise and products, collaborative capacity building, and convening.
- The Metropolitan Council will strive to maximize the benefits of clean and plentiful water from regional investments, through coordination among its divisions and across the integrated water cycle.

Connected Objectives:

Example Actions:

PARTNER

- Engage and collaborate with state agencies, tribal governments, watershed organizations, and community water utility providers to amend and update the Council's Water Policy Plan.
- Work within the metro region to address issues that transcend water organization boundaries to prepare water management plans that promote the enhancement and

restoration of local and regional waters (lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, and groundwater).
- Collaborate with federal, tribal, state, and local partners to perform studies that develop information and approaches that enhance the sustainability of water services of the Council and local providers.
- Support educational efforts through partnership opportunities with organizations that further integrated water planning and management.
- The Met Council will partner with the state to help rural communities collaborate around emergency planning and service reliability by identifying community needs and potential service or funding gaps.
- The Council will partner with communities, water agencies, technical experts and residents to identify risks, associated vulnerabilities, and develop solutions.

PLAN

- Support local plan development and regional policy alignment through informed water planning, management, and development decisions.
- Identify and assess current groundwater and surface water conditions, uses and use behaviors, community needs, historical trends, drivers (influencers) of change, risks and system limitations, and estimated future conditions.
- Develop plan requirements that reflect and support addressing local and regional water planning and management challenges.
- Met Council staff will adopt an adaptive management approach ("plan-do-study-check") to ensure our water policies are prioritized, targeted, measurable, and effective at improving the region's water quality and quantity.

PROVIDE

- Provide technical and financial assistance to local governments, water suppliers, and other partners on water issues and water management activities.
- Facilitate discussions on regional water issues that transcend community or watershed organization boundaries.
- Provide technical information to watershed organizations, city planners, and local water providers on practices to use and incorporate into their plans that protect water quality and quantity.
- Convene regional discussions to direct and align efforts to support sustainable water resources.

Topic Area: Water and Land Use Change, Dynamic and Resilient Communities

Water issues throughout our region vary and are complex. Climate change, infrastructure, land use, and land use change all impact water quantity and quality and differ across the region. Rural areas may focus on natural resource protection and groundwater recharge for drinking water wells. Urban areas may focus on aging infrastructure and access to water. And some issues or concerns overlap all land use types.

In all areas across the region, the development, redevelopment, and land use changes impact water quality and quantity. We can be thoughtful and proactive about changes on the landscape that impact our region's resource. With local partners, we can implement actions on the

landscape that support local economic development and the health and wellbeing of residents and communities.

Water and Land Use Connections Policy:
As the region grows, the effects of development, redevelopment, and land use changes on water quality, quantity, and utilities are planned for and inform water management approaches and strategies.

Desired Outcomes:

- The quality and quantity of source and recreational waters is protected and restored.
- Natural system, water treatment, and distribution risks and limitations are accounted for and addressed in development and redevelopment planning.
- Current land uses and future changes mitigate negative water outcomes and enhance the benefits of clean and abundant water in all communities.
- Integrated water management, including sustainable water approaches, are made critical parts of land use decisions, planning protocols, and procedures through comprehensive water planning.
- Development and re-development plans consider natural waters and water system sustainability, including potential impacts to public and ecosystem health, as critical parts of land use decisions, planning protocols and procedures to ensure state and regional goals for protection and restoration of regional waters are enhanced.

Connected Objectives:

Example Actions:

PARTNER

- Partner with state, tribal, local, and watershed planners and water utility staff to build a shared understanding and identify strategies that address risks to public and ecosystem health.
- Support preservation of regionally significant ecologic areas as rural areas develop through engaging stakeholders, technical assistance, outreach to local governments, and plan review.
- Support the agriculture certification program and soil health/regenerative agriculture in rural areas through partnerships with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, metro soil and water conservation districts.
- Work with communities, watersheds, agricultural landowners and business, and agency partners to identify, promote, and assess best management practices including the timing, rate, placement, and source of fertilizer, herbicide and pesticide application, healthy soil practices, vegetated buffers to provide vegetated land areas between pollutant sources and surface water bodies and protect groundwater.
- The Met Council will partner with local and regional experts to identify needs and develop tools that help to improve public understanding around contamination, well testing and maintenance, source water protection, and publicly available resources.

PLAN

- Ensure, the protection and restoration of natural, source, and recreational waters, as well as the sustainability of water utility systems, is prioritized in the development and review of comprehensive, local water (surface, supply, and sewer), source water / wellhead protection, and county groundwater, and environmental impact plans.
- Identify and use the latest research to improve and update stormwater infiltration requirements and recommendations around practices, particularly in vulnerable drinking water supply management areas.
- Evaluate how growth and development, urban and rural land uses, and overall land use change impact and influence water supplies and local water needs.

PROVIDE

- Provide resources and tools to promote land use practices and development decisions that enhance water quality and quantity for communities and watersheds across the region.
- Offer grants or other funding opportunities that protect and enhance water quality, quantity, or other water benefits throughout the region.
- Identify and develop tools and resources to better understand pressures on and interconnection of the region's rivers, lakes, streams, and aquifers to help regional, local, and watershed planners and water utility staff make informed water management decisions.
- Implement and promote the use of nature-based, green infrastructure solutions on Met Council properties.
- The Metropolitan Council will analyze the impact of land practices on water quality and quantity, including the vulnerability of source water areas and water supplies.

Topic Area: Climate Change

Acute and chronic changes to weather patterns, including temperature and precipitation, pose significant risks to the water resources we rely on for drinking, recreation, and economic productivity.

These changes also impact the ability of our regional water utilities and watershed managers to provide essential public health and water management services to the region. Negative impacts threaten the reliability of water infrastructure and service delivery, the predictability of the regulatory environment, and the quality and availability of regional waters resulting in increased costs for service providers and those that they serve.

The Metropolitan Council produced the Climate Action Work Plan to address areas where the Council can act and reduce climate change impacts within the organization. The Climate Action Work Plan's vision is "*to reduce our contributions to greenhouse gas emissions in the region and make our services and facilities resilient to the impacts of climate change."* The Water Policy Plan supports the actions and goals of the Climate Action Work Plan.

We are committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in our wastewater operations and support services. Likewise, through our long-term planning responsibilities, our wastewater and water planning sections can help the region to adapt by providing technical support that helps communities to prepare, build resiliency, and grow sustainably.

Water and Climate Resiliency Policy:

The risks and associated impacts of climate change on water resources, utilities, and infrastructure are proactively addressed, supporting the region's adaptation to current climate related impacts and ever-evolving climate futures.

Desired Outcomes:

- Negative climate impacts on water sources and water infrastructure are reduced and limited, while positive climate impacts are enhanced and promoted.
- Water utilities will reduce and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions produced in the collection and treatment of water supply and treatment through energy efficiency improvements.
- The region is prepared for impacts and associated risks due to climate change and has the tools and resources to adapt and thrive.
- Council and local actions mirror and are in alignment with the Minnesota Climate Action Framework.

Connected Objectives:

Example Actions:

PARTNER

- The Metropolitan Council will prioritize inter-agency collaboration to understand the effectiveness of infiltration as a stormwater management practice, particularly under a range of potential climate futures (high and low water tables).
- The Metropolitan Council will connect, partner, and learn from other water utilities and planning organizations as we take on water and climate challenges.
- The Metropolitan Council will partner with and support academic institutions and other organizations to conduct research to generate metro area-specific climate change information, identify potential risks and benefits, and best understand future climate scenarios based on current science and models.

PLAN

- The Metropolitan Council will consider the climate vulnerabilities and risks within our facilities and operations and reduce the impact of climate on water resources, land management, water planning, and regional wastewater services now and in the future.
- The Metropolitan Council will integrate and center state and regional climate objectives into our wastewater operations and water resources and supply planning within the region.
- Met Council staff will develop internal infrastructure design and placement guidelines based on the latest scientific and engineering knowledge to reduce their climate-risk on longevity.
- The Metropolitan Council will support low impact design and the integration of nature-based solutions into regional development to adapt to projected climate impacts on our land and waters.
- The Metropolitan Council will consider direction from the Climate Action Work Plan when considering climate impacts on I/I.

PROVIDE

- The Metropolitan Council will manage our facilities and land holdings to reduce impervious surfaces, integrate green infrastructure and nature-based solutions within our stormwater management systems, install native plantings where possible, and be a regional leader in climate-focused land management.

Topic Area: Equity

All people should have access to clean and safe water and affordable water and wastewater services. All water and wastewater systems should have sufficient funding to provide affordable services. All communities should share in the economic, social, and environmental benefits of investment in water systems.

Environmental justice and equity concerns in our region regarding water include, but are not limited to, access and impairment of waters for fishing and recreation, access and affordability of clean drinking water, affordability of wastewater treatment, treatment abilities and technologies for contamination in private drinking water wells compared to public drinking water sources, and the impacts to a neighborhood that contains or is near water infrastructure.

The Met Council is committed to address water equity issues within our organization and support our partners in the region to do the same. Conversations with marginalized communities and reparative relationship efforts need to be had to better understand where they are occurring, what existing policies may still be exacerbating them, and how to best to remedy the injustice. All Minnesotans have the basic human right to access clean water.

Equitable Water Outcomes Policy:

Regional water benefits and water services are accessible and shared amongst all residents and communities.

Desired Outcomes:

- All residents have access to clean, safe, and affordable water for drinking, recreation, cultural, and other social or commercial uses.
- The public and ecosystem health benefits of abundant and clean natural waters and water service providers are fully realized in all communities in the region.
- Water service and benefit gaps are prioritized and addressed in vulnerable populations and communities.
- Historically underrepresented and marginalized populations are involved in water planning conversations and decisions.

Connected Objectives:

Example Actions:

PARTNER

- Engage with residents and other local and regional partners to understand local perspectives and regional water values and identify services and benefit gaps.

- Partner with groups and organizations who promote water equity and connect residents with water services and benefits.
- Consult and partner with tribal nations and communities to build trust through shared knowledge and experiences, collaborate on solutions, and work together to bring indigenous values, perspectives, and experiences forward, to ensure the sustainable and equitable water outcomes for the region.
- Work with Council Members to promote and support environmental justice in the region.
- Environmental Services will partner with other Met Council divisions on equity efforts that overlap regional systems. Potential projects to explore:
    - Regional Parks: Pilot projects involving monitoring in waters in certain parks/ Create signage about blue green algae/ Information about safe swimming
    - Transit: Pilot projects that increase access to Regional Priority Waters, create signage about waters
    - Community Development & Housing: Pilot projects that promote low flow fixtures and green infrastructure in disadvantaged communities without causing housing affordability concerns and environmental gentrification.

PLAN

- All water infrastructure, drinking, storm, and wastewater, investments are planned for by prioritizing environmental justice approaches that promote equitable public and ecosystem health outcomes and undue past harms.

PROVIDE

- Met Council staff will convene and listen to community members who have water equity and environmental justice concerns or experiences. We will work together to try to alleviate imbalances that cause injustices and strengthen our relationship and build trust in our organization and the water services we and our partner organizations provide.
- Provide resources that inform and support equitable water outcomes.

Topic Area: Sustainable Uses and Resilient Water Systems, Water Energy Nexus

Sustainable water resources are a necessary component of a growing, prosperous Twin Cities metro region. While water is abundant across the region, the factors below are just a few of the many factors that may compromise the future availability and quality of our water resources:

- Contamination
- Increased demand for drinking water
- Regulatory usage limits
- Climate change

Water conservation is one lever that can extend the water supply into the future and may defer expensive capital investments that may be needed to continue supplying a growing region. The Met Council values the investments made internally on water infrastructure as well as the investments made by our partners in the region.

Benefits of reducing water consumption include reduced stress on our water sources (surface and groundwater) that may allow for more growth and development in the regions and less water sent to the wastewater treatment plants which means lower bills to our customer communities.

Technology that increases water efficiency gets better every day and the Met Council will support the research, collaboration, and implementation of these technologies to protect the region's valuable resource.

Water Conservation and Efficient Use Policy:

The use, treatment, and distribution of water in the region is efficient so that resources are conserved, current investments are optimized, and public and ecosystem health are protected.

Desired Outcomes:

- Efficient use and water conservation practices are prioritized and invested in at the local and regional level to help optimize infrastructure investments.
- The water needs of all cities, townships, and residents across the metro are met now and for future generations.
- The Council explores and supports community efforts to adopt technologies that increase the efficient use of water and reduce energy consumption.

Connected Objectives:

Example Actions:

PARTNER

- The Metropolitan Council will work with partners to support efforts that encourage residents, businesses, and water utilities to incorporate new technology and behaviors, where feasible, as a means of achieving water sustainability and energy efficiency in the region.
- Promote customer engagement efforts to increase water conservation to extend the life expectancies for critical water infrastructure components.
- Work with water supply service providers and agency partners to identify significant water users that could be targeted for water quantity reductions, conservation, and reuse where applicable.

PLAN

- The State and Council Climate Action Work Plans inform and direct Council operations.
- Identify and evaluate the economic and technical feasibility of best practices that enhance groundwater recharge and make the best use of reclaimed wastewater and stormwater while protecting source water quality.
- Invest in nonpoint-source pollution control when the cost and long-term benefits are favorable compared to further upgrading wastewater treatment.

PROVIDE

- Continue to support programs targeting water and energy conservation practices and implementation of efficient water and energy use like the Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP) to assist local businesses, residents, and communities.
- Support ongoing research to direct residents and developers to identify alternatives to using drinking water supplies for lawn watering, install low maintenance turf or now mow and native landscapes that reduce outdoor water use, lessen water demands, and promote climate resiliency.

Topic Area: Natural and engineered water system tracking and evaluation

Data is critical to make informed decisions. Among other reasons, data helps us understand surface water and groundwater conditions, see trends and patterns in water quality, and support water supply partners in providing water for their population.

Environmental Services proudly served the region through the COVID-19 pandemic by tracking the concentration of viral material in the wastewater at the Metro Plant. This partnership gave scientists and public health officials another resource to guide public health decisions and was informative to the region. If the need arises, we are committed to offering our technical expertise and services with other public entities.

Through efforts of monitoring the water quality of the region's lakes, rivers and streams, monitoring wastewater effluent, the Priority Water List, and other efforts, we value the impact data can have on improving water to support human and environmental health and will continue to provide and understand the data to help the region meet its water quality, sustainability, and human health and aquatic life goals.

Water Monitoring, Data, and Assessment Policy:

Natural waters and engineered water systems (stormwater, water treatment and distribution systems, reuse systems) in the region are proactively monitored, high quality data is collected and shared, and conditions (past, present, and future) are collaboratively assessed to support environmental and human health.

Desired Outcomes:

- The region is a steward of water, understanding the current status of its waters, whether its quantity or quality, to be prepared for the future.
- The Council and regional partner organizations will monitor the region's surface, groundwaters, and wastewaters to assess current conditions, trends, and assure regulatory compliance.
- The Council conducts studies and supports efforts to measure progress towards achieving sustainable and equitable water goals.
- The Council, in partnership with other organizations, uses its resources to support efforts to provide public health insights, as the need arises.

Connected Objectives:

Example Actions:

PARTNER

- The Metropolitan Council will partner, assist, and support collaborators with the monitoring and assessment of regional priority waters and groundwaters.
- The Metropolitan Council will collaboratively research and gather data and information on the quality, quantity, flow, and connections between the regions surface and groundwaters.
- In partnership with other water professionals, Council staff will complete technical studies to understand regional and sub-regional long-term water supply availability and demand.
- The Met Council will support efforts to investigate if or how Environmental Services can assist in wastewater surveillance in the interest of public health insights, when the need arises and funding is available. The Met Council will continue to partner with public health agencies to remain aware of when the Met Council can provide insights.

PLAN

- Explore and identify data sources to support the understanding of water value and use, especially to increase the effectiveness of the Priority Waters List.
- Support community efforts to identify and evaluate the economic and technical feasibility of water supply approaches and best practices that increase water conservation, enhance groundwater recharge, and make the best use of groundwater, surface water, reclaimed wastewater, and stormwater.

PROVIDE

- The Met Council will continue to provide monitoring data to our partners through our regional database that contains easily accessible water quality, quantity, and other water-related information collected as a part of the Council's monitoring programs.
- The Metropolitan Council will create a database of narratives around the regional waters and water values to understand how different people relate to water and are impacted by policy and planning for city and township, watershed, and regional planners and water utility providers.
- Council staff will provide long-term assessments of the quality and quantity of our regional waters