

Business Item

Environment Committee



Committee Meeting Date: January 28, 2025

For the Metropolitan Council: February 12, 2025

Business Item: 2025-3-JT

Advance the 2050 Water Policy Plan for Council Final Adoption

District(s), Member(s): All Council Members
Policy/Legal Reference: Minn Stat. § 473
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Division/Department: Environmental Services

Proposed Action

The Environment Committee recommends to the Metropolitan Council to accept the public comment report for the 2050 Water Policy Plan and adopt the 2050 Water Policy Plan as a component of the Imagine 2050.

Background

The Metropolitan Council is required by Minnesota Statute 473 to create a long-range plan to establish the vision, values, goals, and actions to guide the growth and development of the Twin Cities metro region. This includes a plan focused on the water resources (Minn. Stat. § 473.157), the regional wastewater treatment system (Minn. Stat. § 473.146), and water supply planning (Minn. Stat. § 473.1565) for the seven-county region. The drafted regional planning document, Imagine 2050, sets cross-cutting goals and expectations that apply to and are supported by policy plans – the Transportation Policy Plan, the Regional Parks Plan, the Regional Housing Plan, and the Water Policy Plan.

The 2050 Water Policy Plan is an integrated plan that is dedicated to ensuring sustainable water resources of the region. It provides a framework of addressing current and future water concerns through three distinct components – water policies, the Metro Area Water Supply Plan, and the Wastewater System Plan. This cycle, policy makers decided to include these components as one document to support water planning, management, and utility operations collectively, as water is interconnected flows through and across the natural and built environments. The policies and actions included in this plan will influence the Met Council's and local water planning and operations over the next decade to foster partnerships, collaboration, and shared action to achieve our desired outcomes.

Met Council staff have been engaging with policy makers and stakeholders to create this content since early 2020, starting with our policy research project. This process has allowed us to explore areas of concern and identify approaches and actions to address them at the regional level. Met

Council staff carried out a robust stakeholder engagement process throughout the development of the 2050 Water Policy Plan policy development in 2023-2024, resulting in over 500 comments which allowed for co-creation and directly informed the Draft 2050 Water Policy Plan.

Advisory Committees

In addition to the robust stakeholder engagement, the Water Policy Plan had four formal advisory committees working with Met Council staff in the development of content:

- Metropolitan Council Environment Committee
- Metro Area Water Supply Advisory Committee (MAWSAC)
- Metro Area Water Supply Advisory Committee Technical Advisory Committee (MAWSAC-TAC)
- Water Advisory Committee

These groups were composed of policy makers, state agency staff, local water utility and public works staff, watershed administrators, and industry water professionals. They all provided insight and guidance throughout the plan's development.

MAWSAC holds an additional responsibility in the approval body for the Metro Area Water Supply Plan. On December 11, 2024, they approved the 2050 Metro Area Water Supply Plan for adoption and implementation.

Attachments

Attached to this business item are two versions of the Water Policy Plan.

1. **Imagine 2050_WPP_Final_Clean.pdf** - this is the plan in its entirety without any of our edits redlined. This is the version that we will be asking you to recommend to the full Council.
2. **Imagine 2050 – Final WPP Public Comment Summary.pdf** - this report documents the comments received during the Public Comment Period and the Met Council's responses.
3. **Imagine 2050_WPP_Policies_Final_Redline.pdf** - this contains the edits to the WPP policies and the appendices of the plan.
3. **Imagine 2050_WPP_SystPlan_Final_Redline.pdf** - this contains the edits to the System Plan.
4. **Imagine 2050_WPP_MWSP_Final_Redline.pdf** - this contains the edits to the Metro Area Water Supply Plan which has already been recommended for adoption by the Metro Area Water Supply Advisory Committee.

Small Business Inclusion

There are no direct impacts to small businesses with the proposed action.

