3/15/23 Workshop Summary

Subregional Water Supply Groups and Partners

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

April 2023 Lanya Ross metrocouncil.org

Workshop Goals and Outcomes

Goals

Local water leaders share collective insights, information and advice.

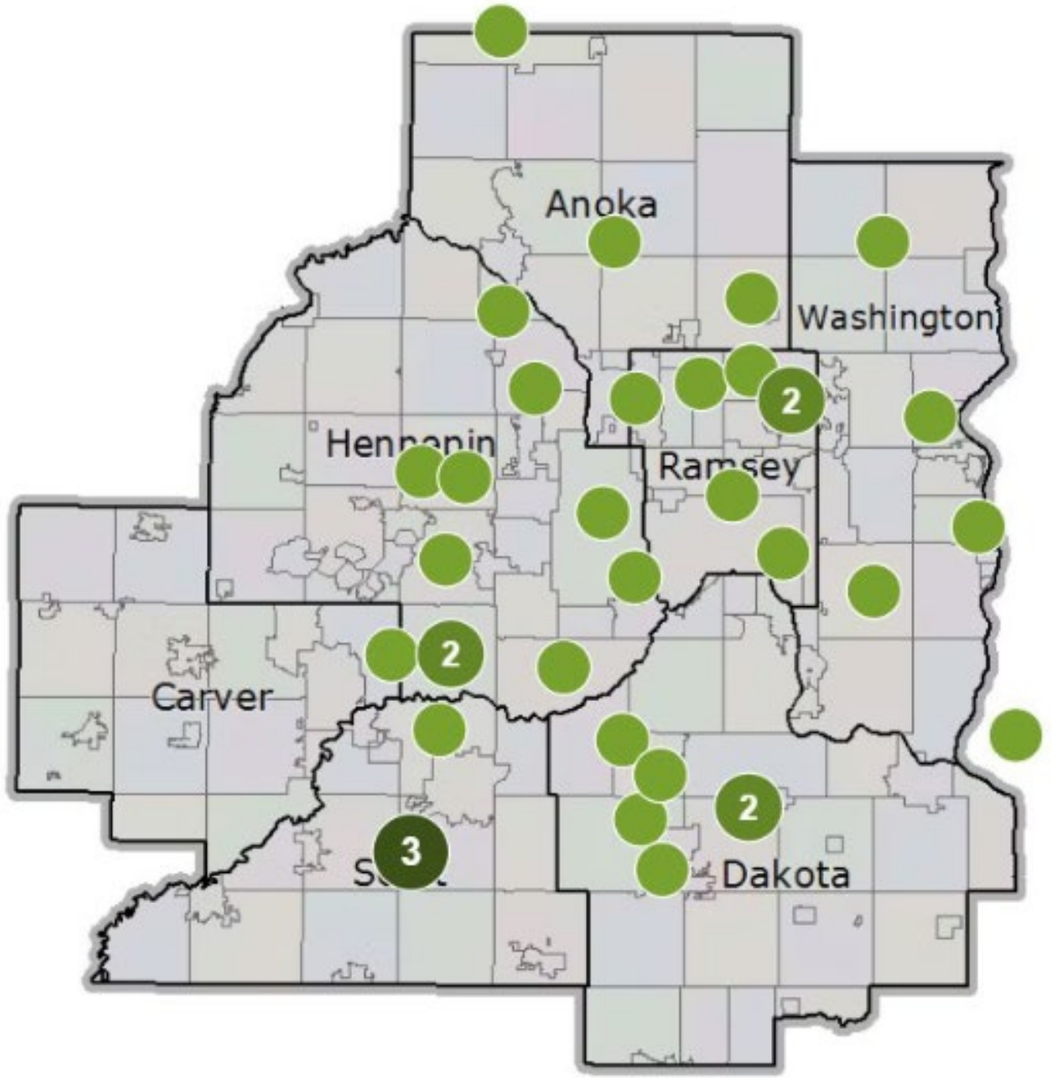
MAWSAC, TAC, and Met Council listen.

Outcomes

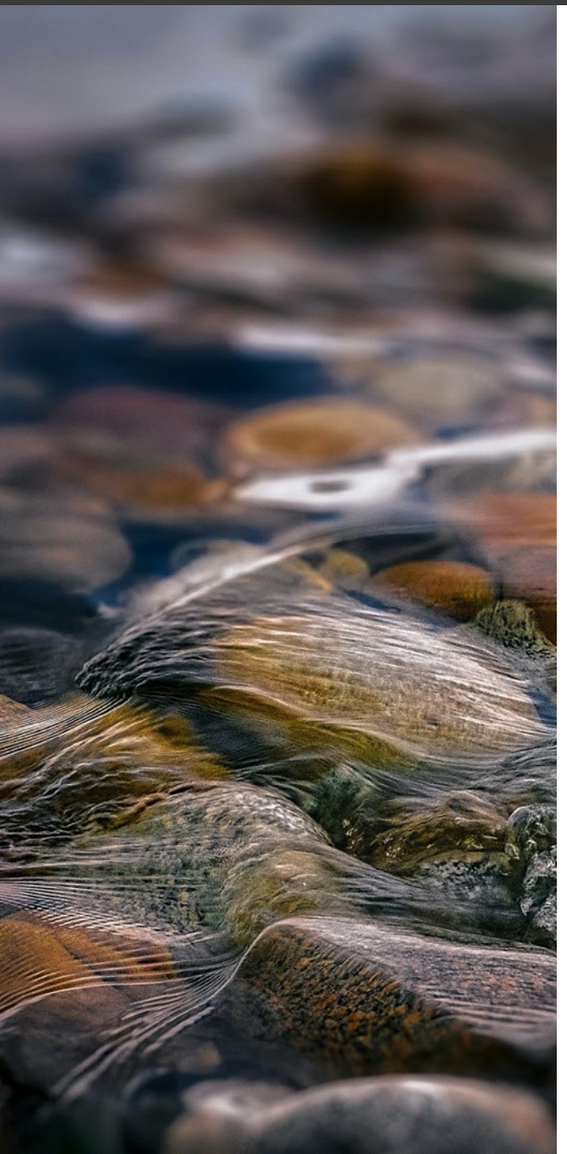
1. Good conversations and connections among colleagues
2. Shared concerns
3. Project ideas to work on as a subregional groups, and what support would be helpful
4. Clear next steps for regional plan updates

Participation

- Over 50 attendees
- Information shared by:
  - DNR
  - MDH
  - Met Council
  - University of Minnesota
- Over 60% participation in surveys
- Dozens of individual notes shared with Council staff

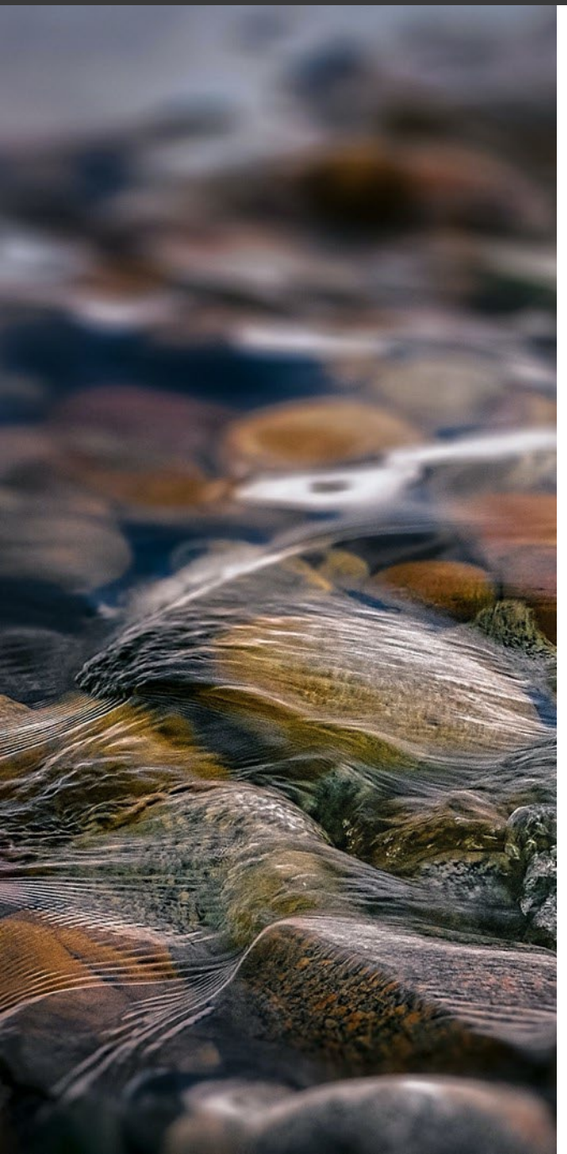


How Met Council is Using Input



- Drafting content for the updated metro area water supply plan
- Informing regional water policy, particularly how policies connect to subregional water supply priorities
- Helping prioritize proposed projects for Clean Water Fund support
- Shaping approach to subregional engagement in 2023-2024

Input on Regional Goal: Land Use and Water Supply



Examples

What does success look like?

- The ability to access water when needed; everyone has water
- Land use that protects recharge areas

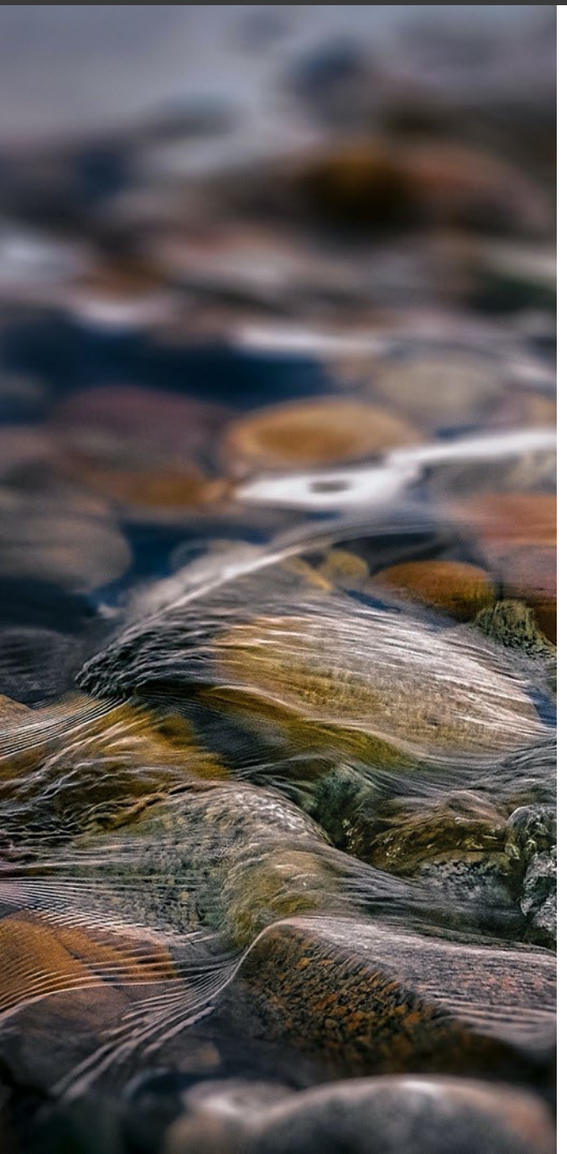
How could progress be tracked?

- Records to track infrastructure upgrades
- Timely physical plan development with realistic timelines

What should be done to be successful?

- Continue to fund water conservation and reuse projects
- Be involved in any land use planning from the beginning

Input on Regional Goal: Water Supply Infrastructure



Examples

What does success look like?

- Proactive versus reactive planning for aging infrastructure
- Coordination on projects, purchasing, policies, enforcement

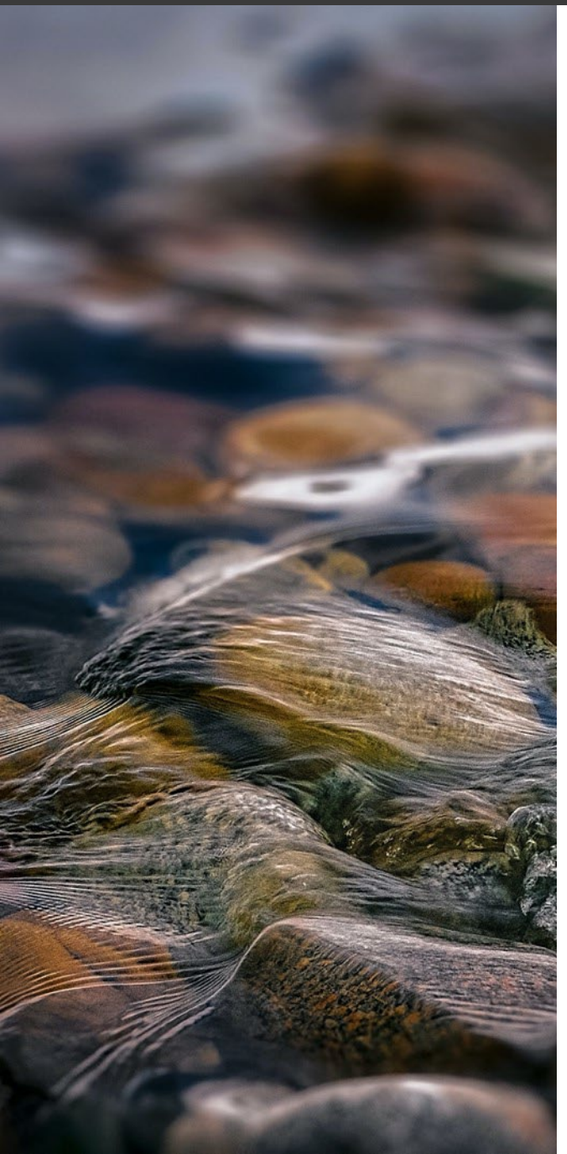
How could progress be tracked?

- Annually review costs (example: $/gallons produced)
- Age of installation vs. pipe material

What should be done to be successful?

- Open and inclusive process for addressing emerging contaminants
- Coordinated efforts for legislative efforts and funding

Input on Regional Goal: Sustainable Water Quantity



Examples

What does success look like?

- Allowing development but meeting water use goals
- Have information at the right time when investment decisions are made

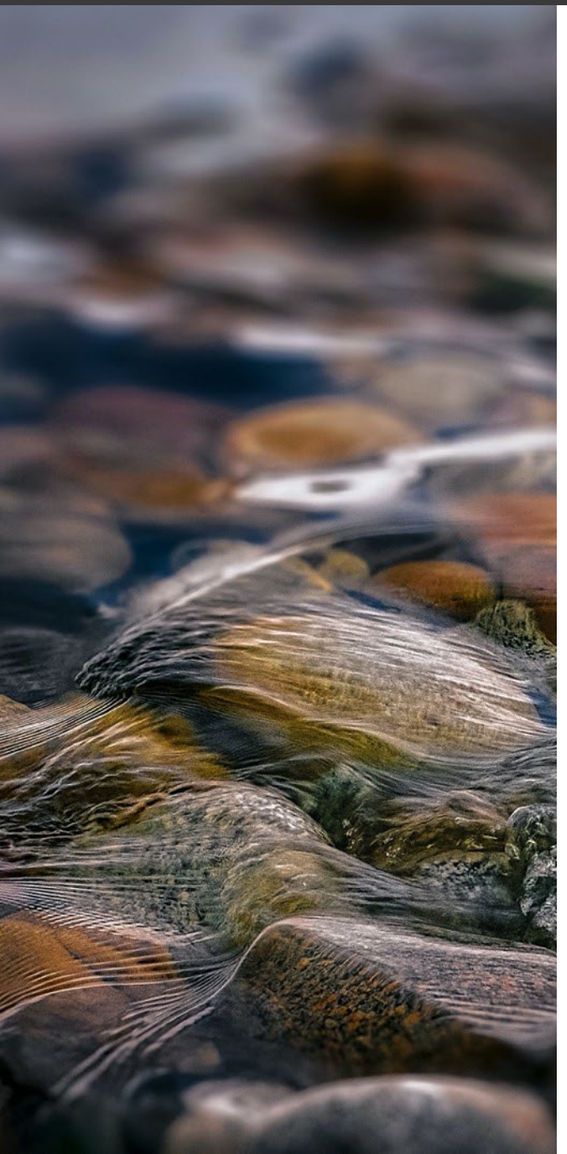
How could progress be tracked?

- Quantifying infiltration achievements/recharge achievements to withdrawals
- Actual use vs. modeled sustainable use

What should be done to be successful?

- Grants for reuse
- Use of social norms (example: comparative use amongst residents)

Input on Regional Goal: Water Quality



Examples

What does success look like?

- Safe clean water sources are available and abundant
- Treatment for private wells is affordable

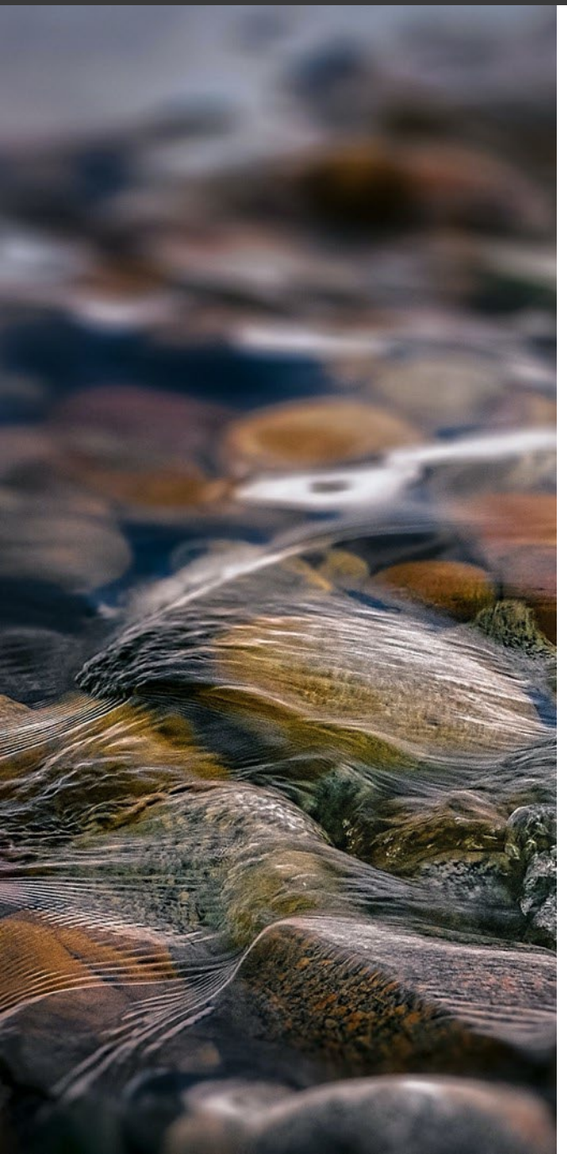
How could progress be tracked?

- Length of time for cleanup
- Identification of priority pollutants at subregion and local levels

What should be done to be successful?

- Regional investment in clean up
- Prevent contamination from moving

Input on Regional Goal: Understanding GW-SW Interactions



Examples

What does success look like?

- Shared source water protection planning across municipal boundaries
- Protection planning by aquifer rather than municipal boundaries

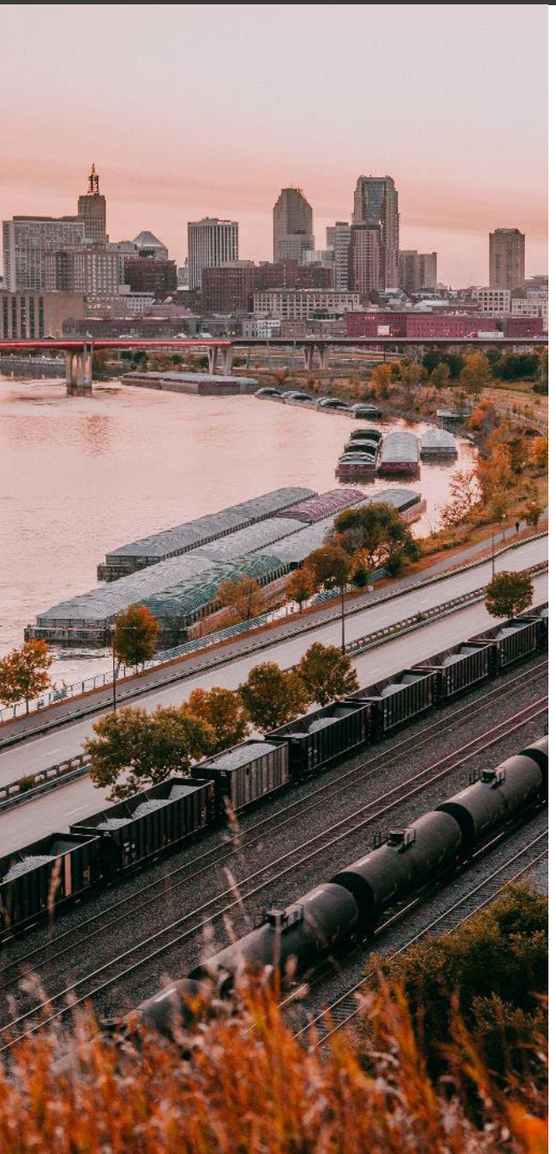
How could progress be tracked?

- Aquifer plans developed
- Action steps implemented

What should be done to be successful?

- Get the land planners from multiple cities engaged in water supply, source water protection
- Educating internal city departments about water - through inclusion and engagement

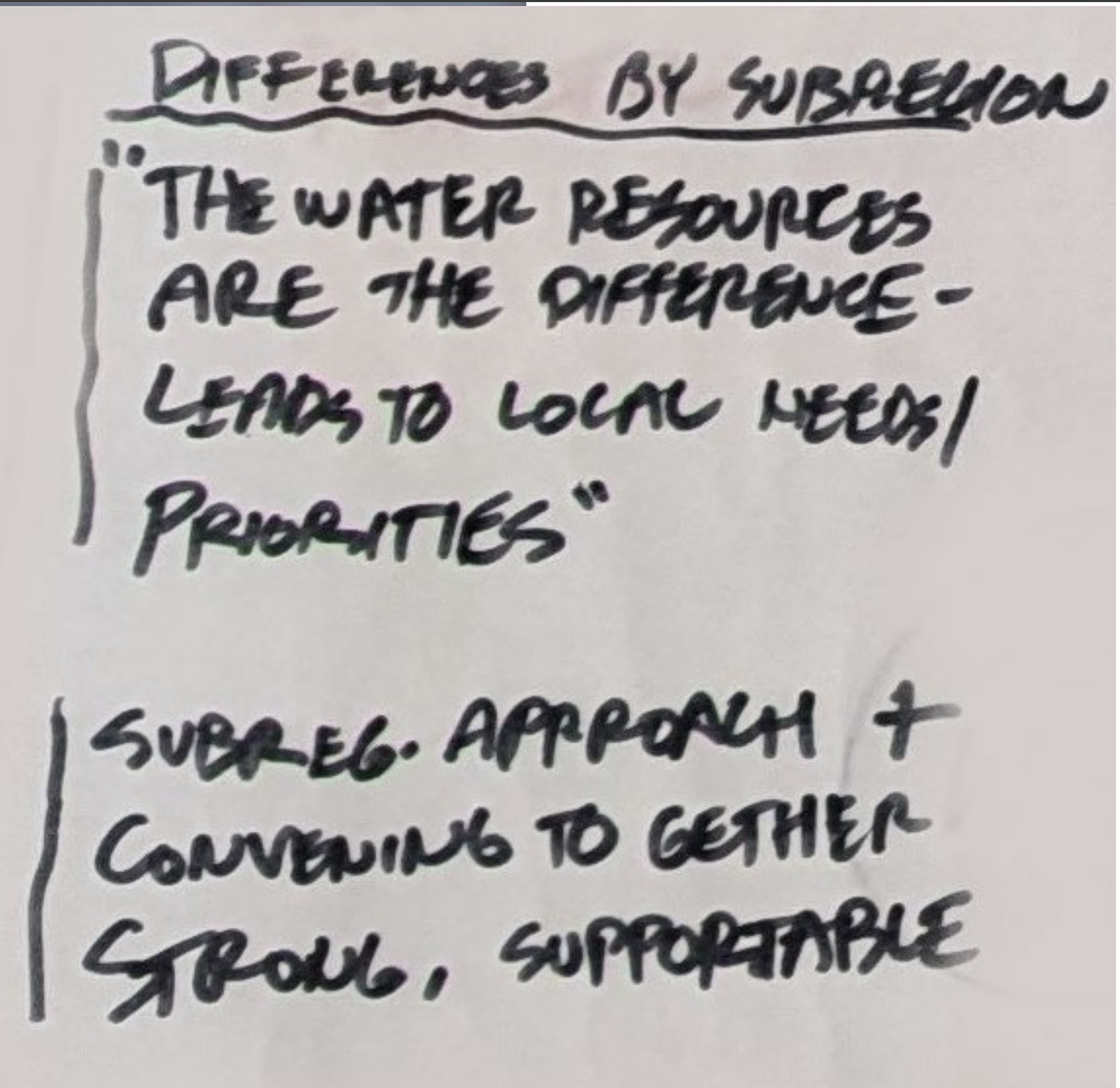
Predictions for the Future



Considerations for long-range planning

- Discussion around possible regional (multi-community) water treatment
- Prepare for labor market challenges – how to attract new workers?
- Prepare for Clean Water Land and Legacy funding changes
- Risk of major energy grid failure
- Pressure to export water to the southwest U.S.
- Chloride in drinking water supply including from home water softeners
- Opportunities for decentralized water supplies
- Water reuse (both stormwater and wastewater)
- Need for consistent messaging across political boundaries
- Artificial intelligence
- For more predictions, see the recent AWWA report on 2050 projections: https://csengineermag.com/awwa-releases-insights-report-from-water-2050-sustainability-think-tank/

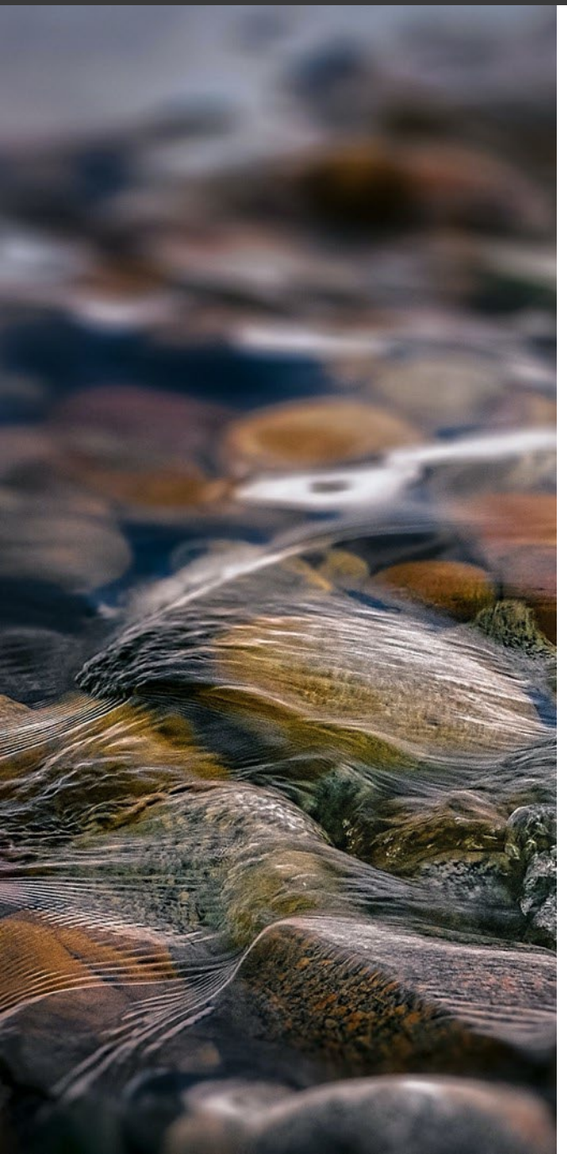
Shared Concerns



Topics to address region-wide

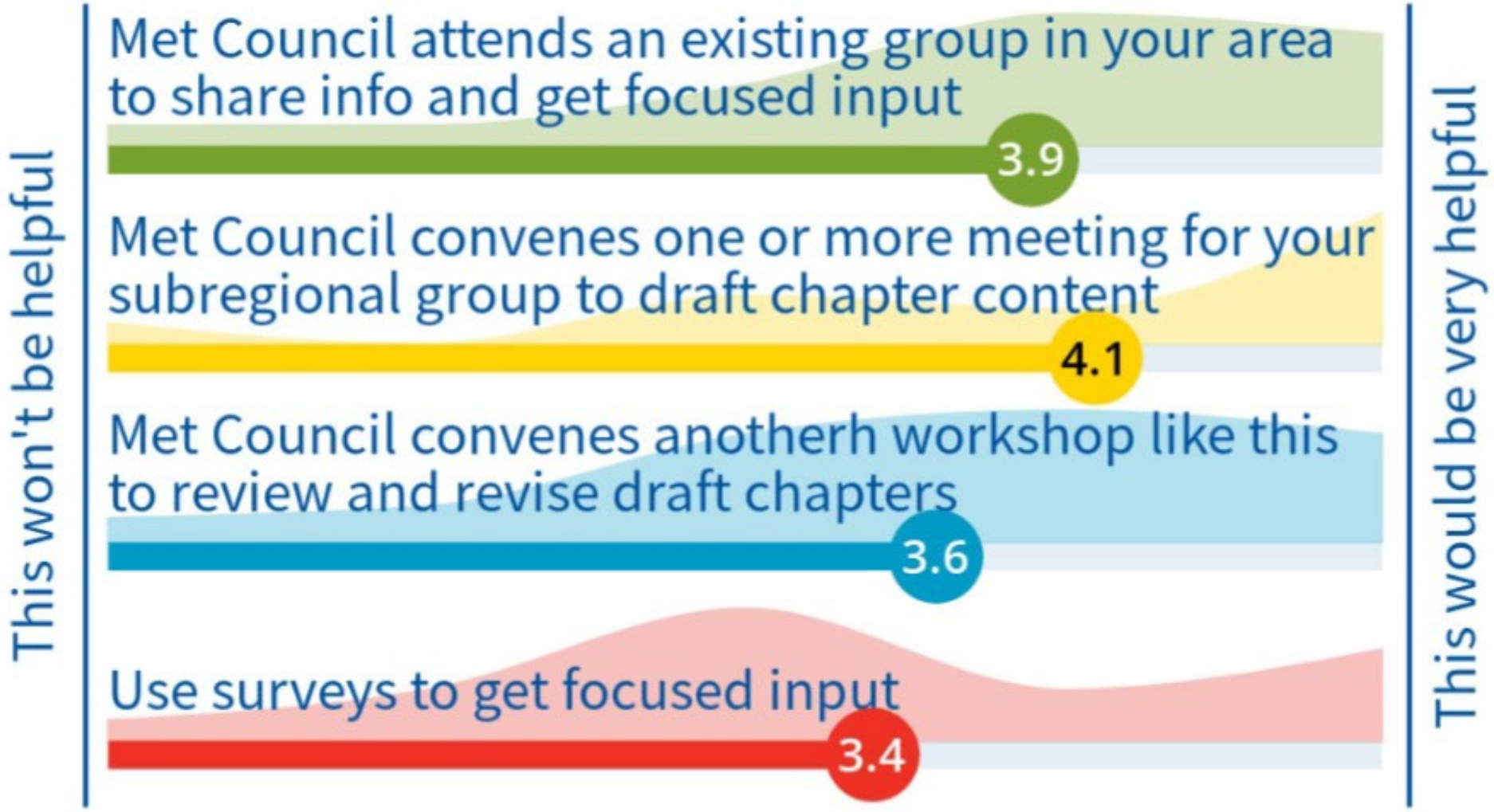
- Money
- Conservation
- Growth
- Climate
- Contamination
- Work force

Examples of Shared Projects of Interest

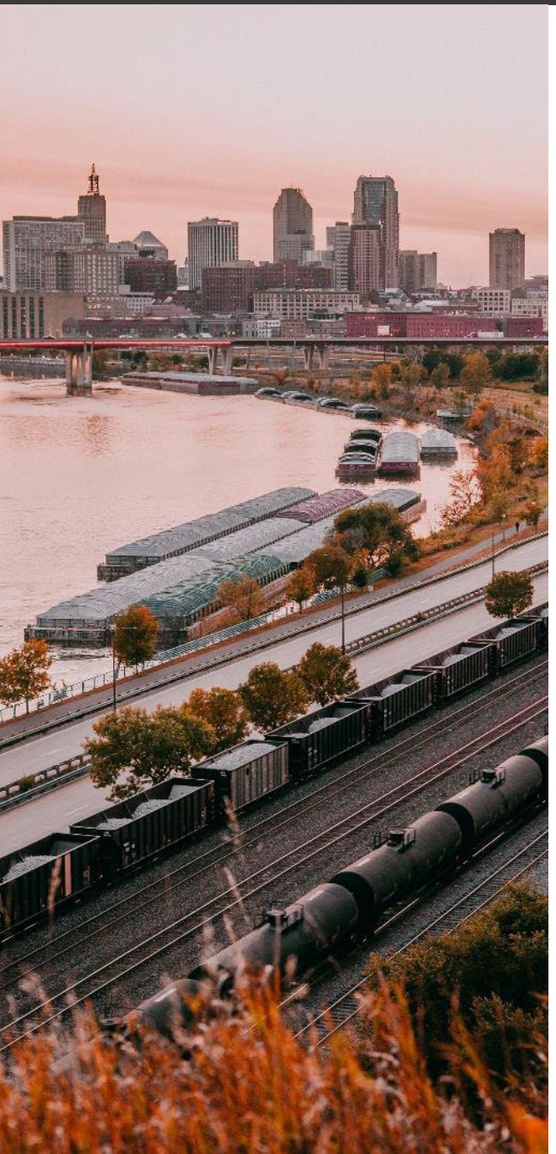


- Support for internal and external outreach and engagement (communication between departments, expanding outreach/education beyond just English and ensuing culturally appropriate concepts and materials, etc.)
- Support for collaboration to share resources for workforce development and water supply redundancy and to coordinate contingency planning, cyber security, emergency power supply, etc.
- Address identified needs during new development planning, including water infrastructure, open space and infiltration opportunities, etc.
- Continued support for conservation projects from Met Council, DNR and provide actual plans to build stormwater ponds/irrigation systems and how to manage them
- Programs utilizing funding available - water efficiency grants, soil health grants (BWSR)
- Renewal of the Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment

Preferences for Engaging Subregions



Next Steps for Subregional Engagement



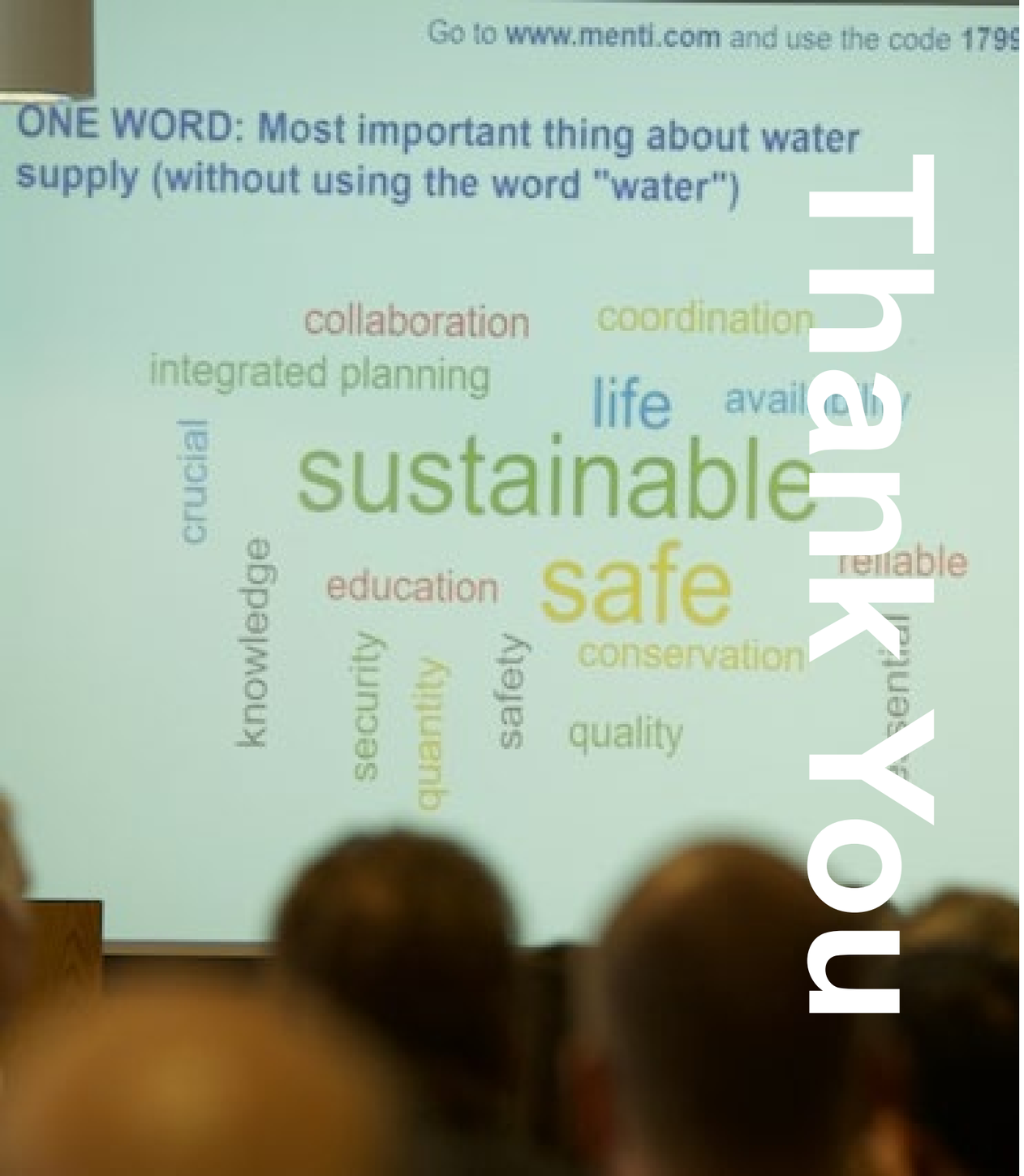
Hearing support for subregional approach

- Council staff will reach out to each subregional water supply work group about engagement preferences in 2023 and 2024.
- Work is expected to vary across the region depending on subregional interests and existing efforts.
- May include focusing on one or more of the water policy research papers, working on subregional content for the metro area water supply plan, and/or other issues that are a priority in each area.

Discussion

TAC feedback:

- Shared concerns between regions
- Shared projects of interest between regions
- Next steps for subregional engagement



Lanya Ross
Environmental Analyst, Water Supply Planning

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL