



# Overview of Outcomes from Subregional Water Supply Engagement

A community-led effort to ensure the updated Metro Area Water Supply Plan and Water Policy Plan support local water supply planning needs



# Presentation overview

Quick recap on purpose and approach

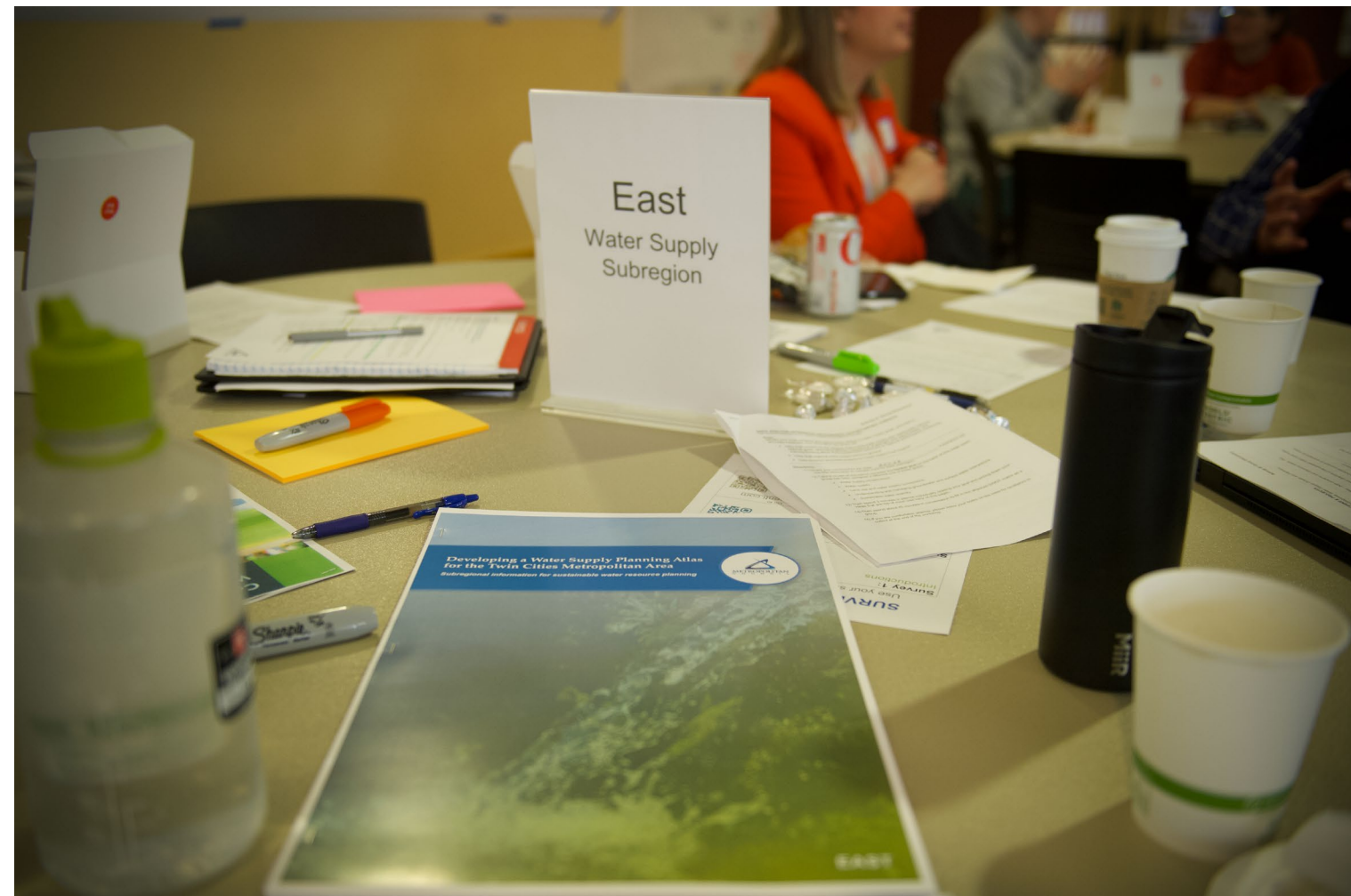
Who participated

Shared vision concepts

Focus areas

Implementation

Feedback



# Purpose of this effort

To build shared understanding of the following at a subregional level:

Context and current conditions

Definition of success

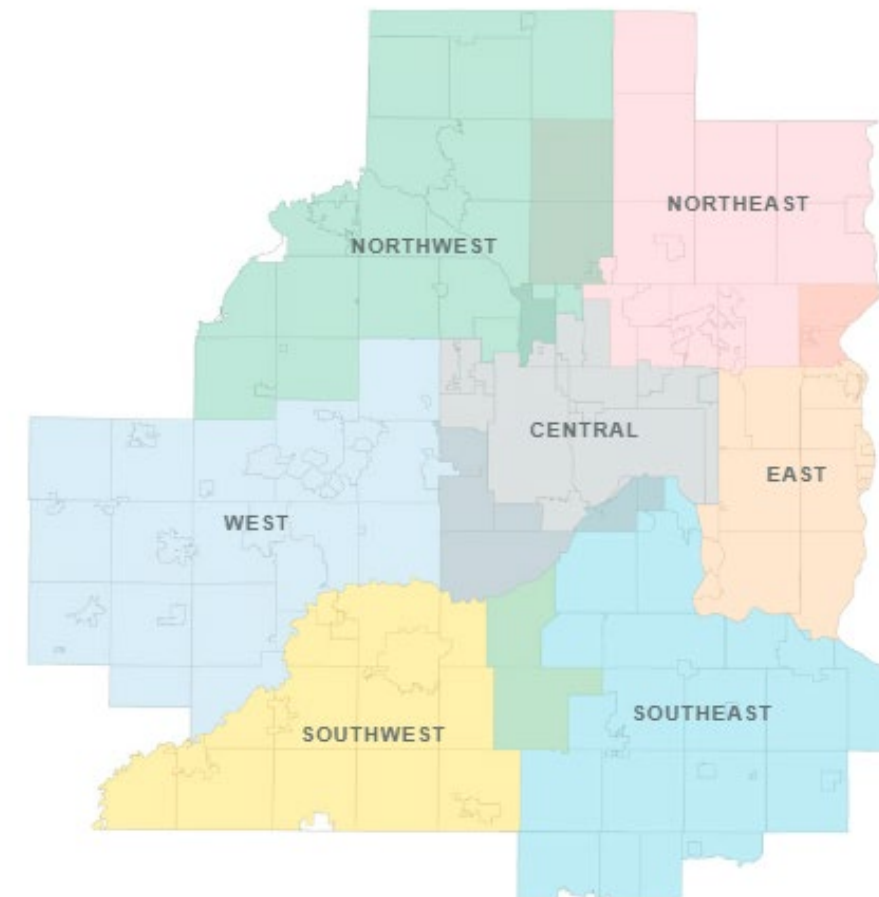
Issues and barriers

Strategies to address them

- Practices
- Policies
- Partnerships

Timeline/sequencing

Resources needed to sustain effort towards success over time



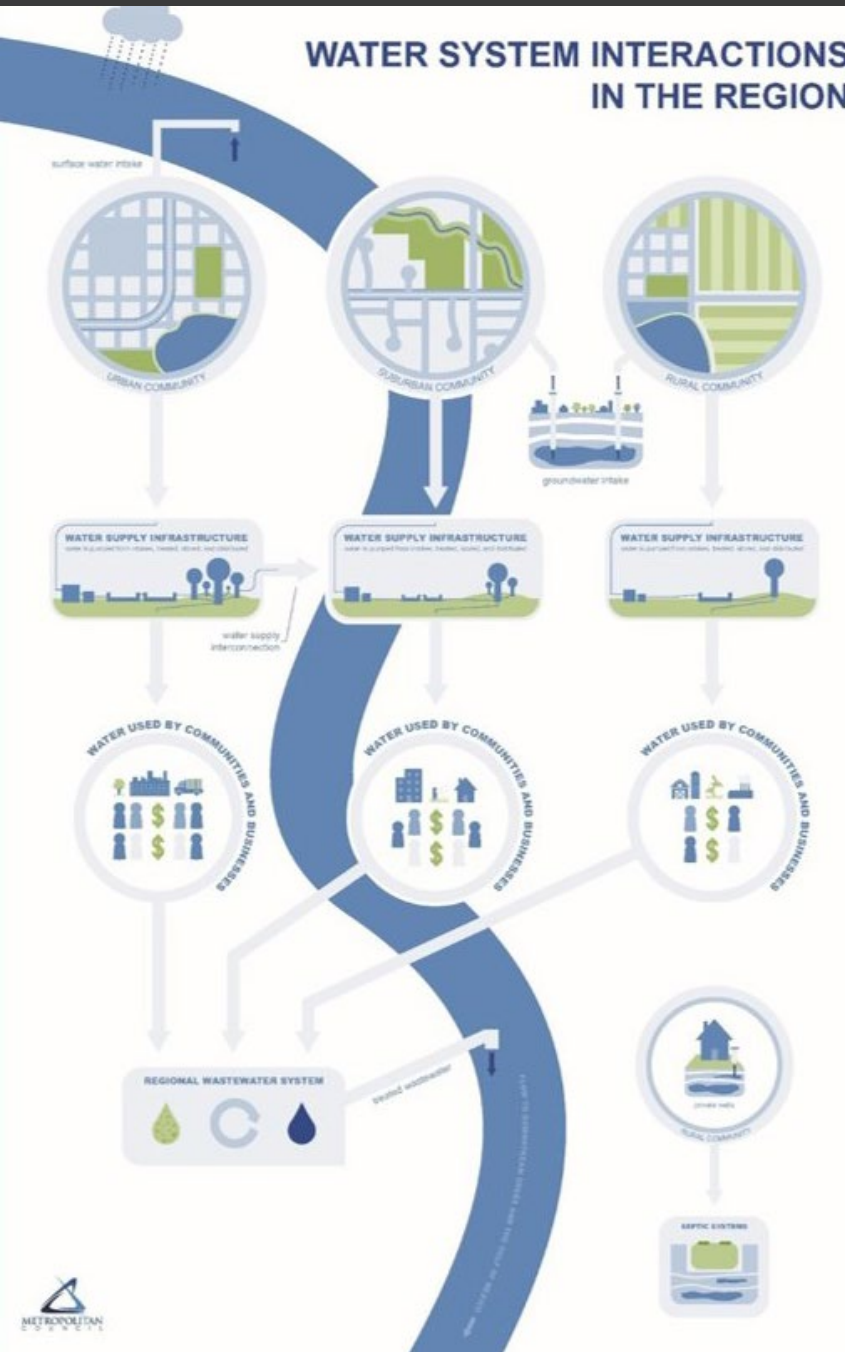
# Using the input

*"Asking a question is a promise to do something with the answer."*



Relationships, trust, and a common path forward, leading to action

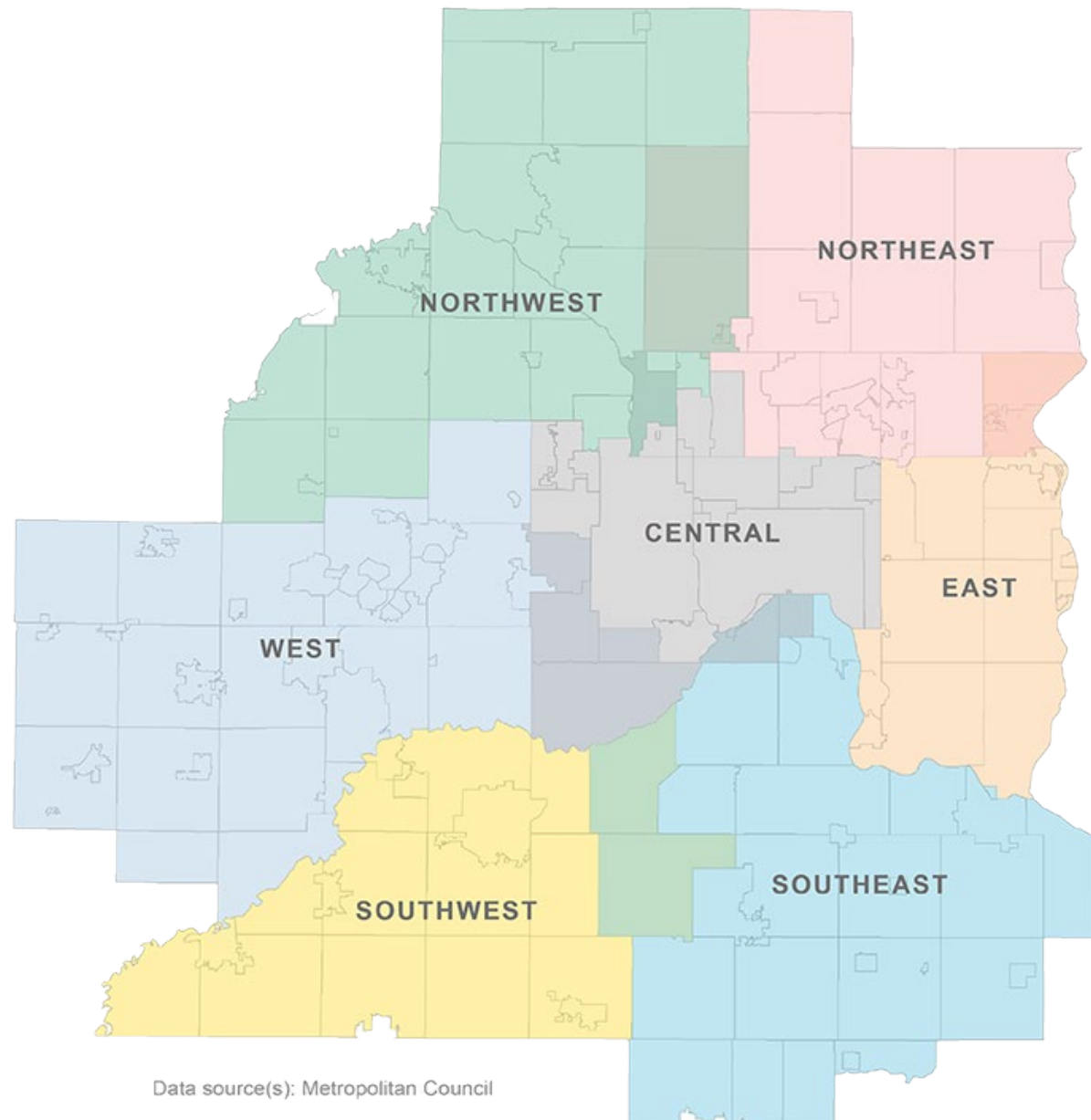
# Integrating perspectives



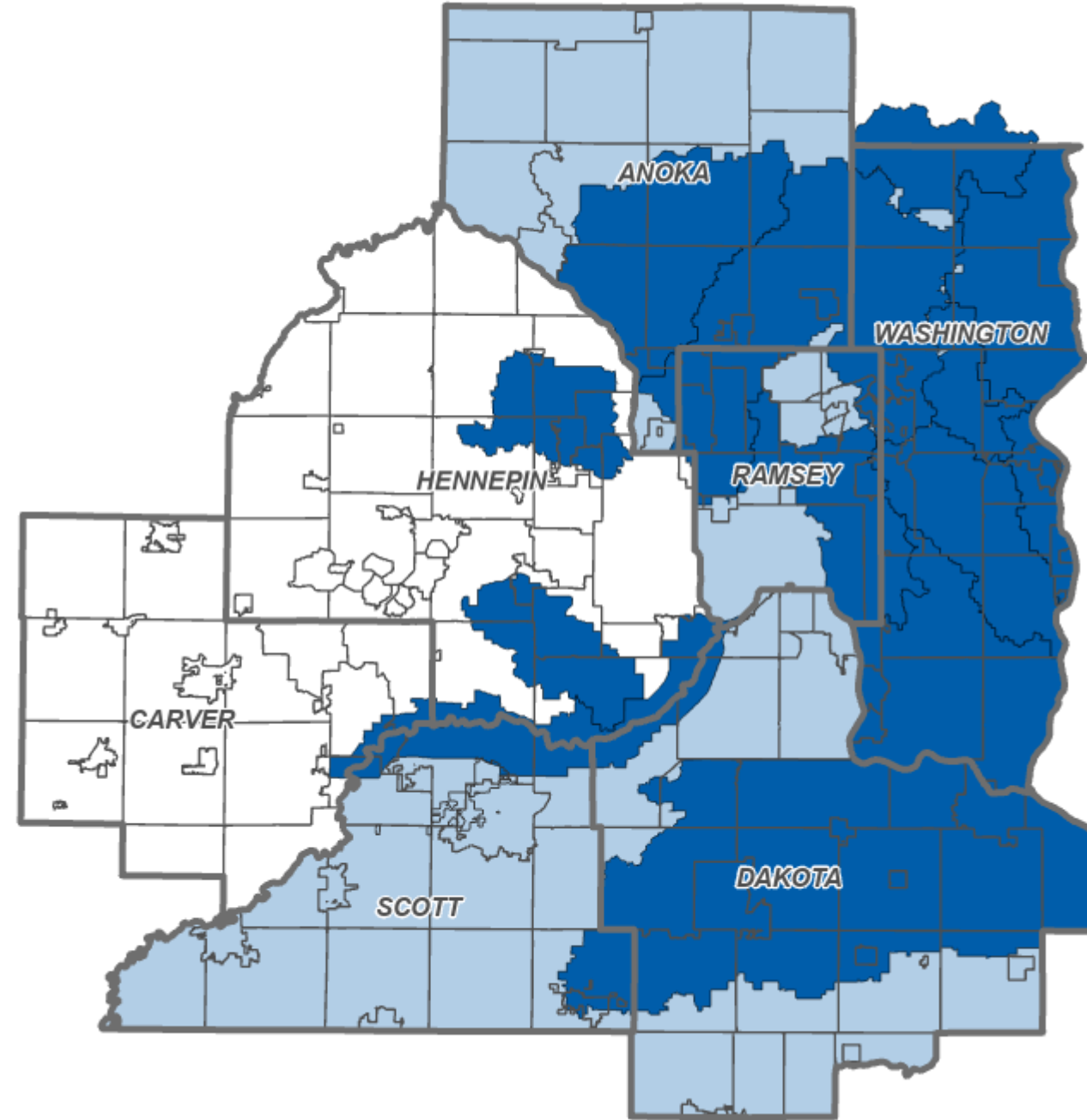
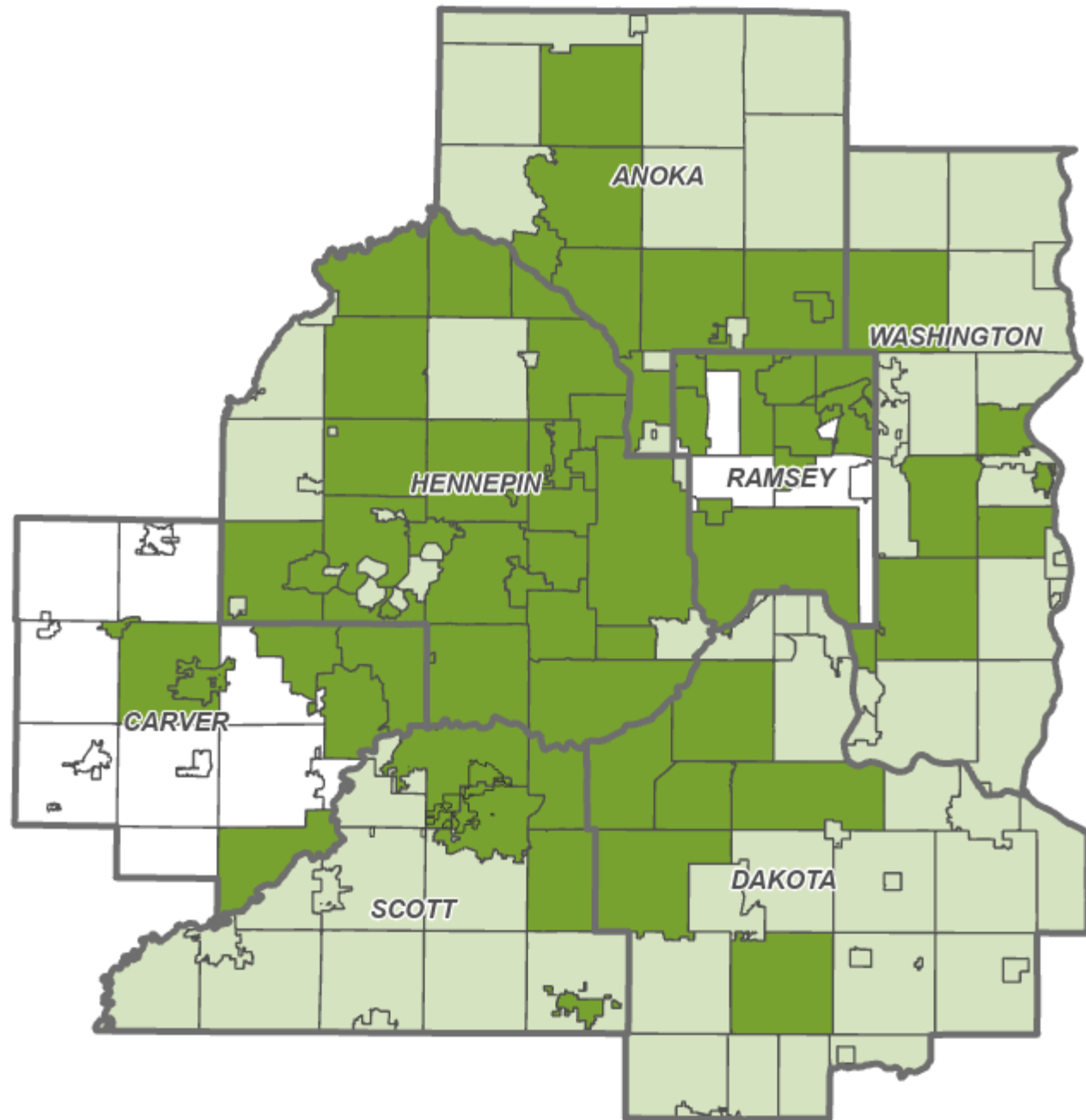
- **Natural system and land use**
  - Watershed Organizations
  - SWCDs and Conservation Districts
  - Community Development and Land Use staff
- **Public water supply**
  - Water supply operators
  - City engineers
  - Public works staff
- **Public health**
  - County staff
  - Staff or organizations supporting private well users
- **Met Council: Water Policy and Planning staff, Community Development staff**

# Who contributed ideas?

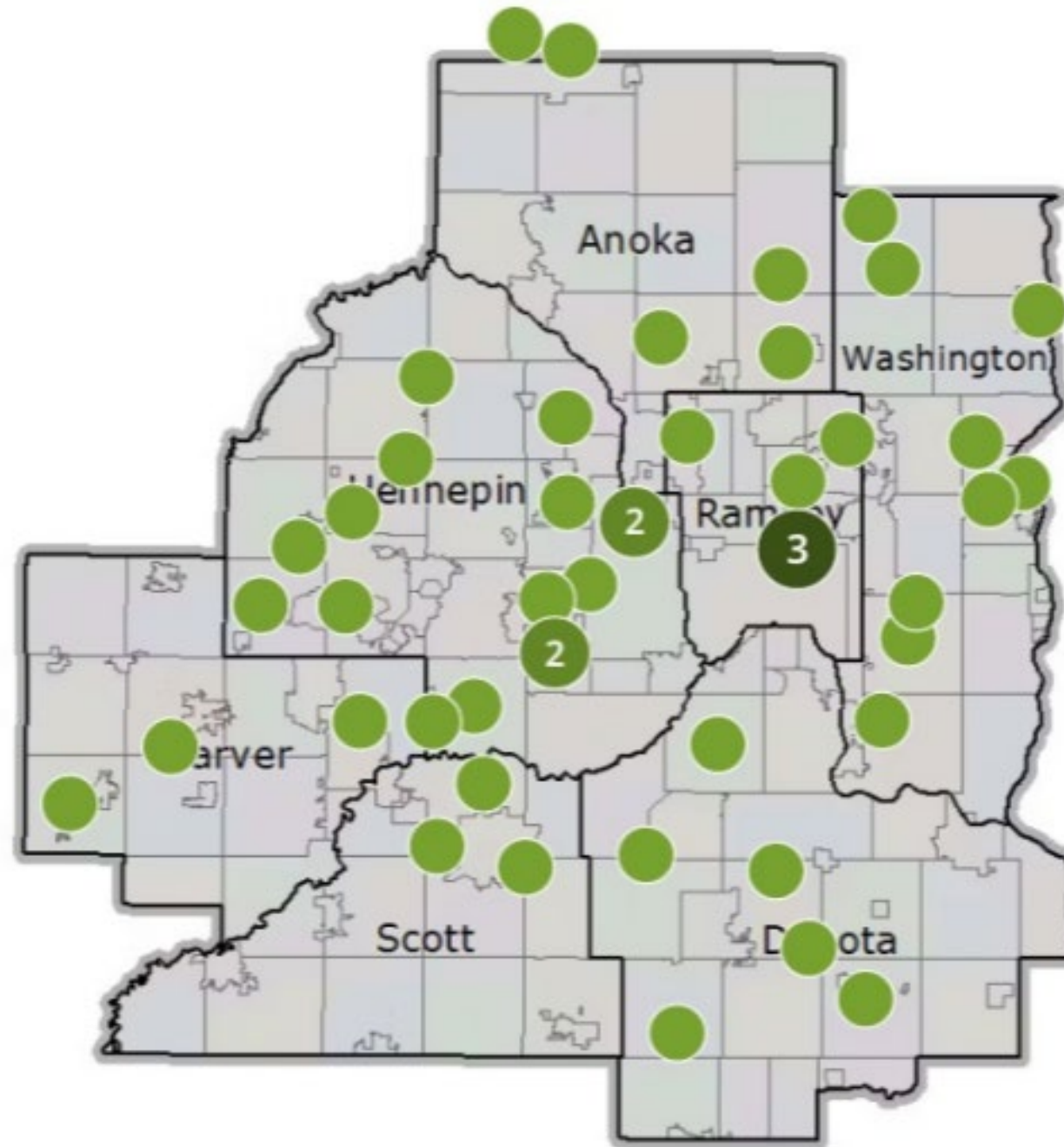
- Overall, around 150 people participated
- 23 engagements over 7 months
- 76 cities and townships represented
- 44 non-community organizations represented:
  - 14 watershed organizations
  - 12 county and county soil water conservation districts
  - 5 state agencies
  - 5 consulting firms
  - 3 private large-volume water users
  - 3 nonprofits/advocacy groups
  - 1 community advisory group member (Washington County Groundwater Plan)
  - 1 tribe
- Included updates to CONDAC, Water Utility Council, and MDH staff working on the Minnesota Drinking Water Plan



# Who contributed ideas in subregional group workshops?



# Who contributed ideas at final regional workshop?





# What's the future you're hoping for? 1/2



- The full range of diverse needs are met because **all voices are heard**
- **Clean, safe water for everyone**—regardless of supply type, community size, or personal income. Emerging contaminants are understood and addressed.
- **Adequate supply**—for people, the economy, the function of local ecosystems, and future generations
  - Regional sustainability
  - Using (and reusing) water wisely
  - Increasing infiltration and recharge
  - Surface water features are not impacted by groundwater withdrawals
- **Growth is responsible** and supported by reliable and adequate supply
- Communities and their water supply are **resilient to the impacts of climate change**
- **Source water is protected**
- Tools and data are available to support **informed decision-making and adaptive management**

# What's the future you're hoping for? 2/2



- **Collaborative and proactive approaches** within and across communities
  - Local control and implementation with regional planning and resources
  - One water approaches for integrated water management
  - Organizational structures and policies support collaboration and resource sharing
- The **policy framework is streamlined and improved**
- **Increased state and regional support** for planning and plan implementation
- There is **sufficient funding** for water supply--infrastructure, staff, new treatment needs, etc.
- **Public trust and understanding** are enhanced, and a culture shift around water use has occurred (green lawns no longer king)
- There is **consistency across systems**, including public communications, while acknowledging every city is different

# Similarities and differences in focus areas by subregion

Priority focus area	West	Northwest	Northeast	East	Southeast	Southwest	Central
Water quantity	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Water quality	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆		◆
Coordination and collaboration*	◆	◆	◆	◆	*	◆	*
Growth and demand	◆	◆	◆		◆	*	◆
Asset management	◆	◆			◆		◆
Changing behaviors and norms*	*	*	◆	*	*	◆	◆
Data and tools	◆			*		◆	◆
Workforce*		◆	*	*	◆		◆
Funding*	*	*	◆	*	*	*	*
Climate change*	◆	*	*	*	*		
Affordability	*						◆

# Focus Areas (1 of 11)

## Water quantity

- Conservation and efficiency
- Water reuse
  - Stormwater
  - Gray Water
  - Wastewater
- Recharge
- Alternative sources
- Data

# Focus Areas (2 of 11)

## Water quality

- CECs
- Chloride
- PFAS
- Agriculture
- Data needs
- Implications of new research and requirements
- Private well user support

# Focus Areas (3 of 11)

## Coordination and Collaboration

- Land use development and water supply
- Watershed and water supply
- Within and across State Agencies and Met Council
- Within and across cities
- Vertical coordination and collaboration

# Focus Areas (4 of 11)

## Growth and Demand

- Land use development and water supply
- Water availability
  - Quantity
  - Quality
  - Secondary/alternative supply

# Focus Areas (5 of 11)

## Changing Behaviors and Social Norms

- Shared messaging for education and outreach
- Substantial increase in funding for effective engagement
- Demonstration projects and community leadership
- Relationship-based approaches



# Focus Areas (6 of 11)

## Asset Management

- Database development and management
- Inventory
- Cross-department collaboration
- Planning
- Funding for maintenance, replacement

# Focus Areas (7 of 11)

## Data and Tools

- Increasing access to technical tools and information to support informed decision making
- Providing technical assistance, especially to smaller communities

# Focus Areas (8 of 11)

## Workforce

- Holding onto institutional knowledge through retirements
- Diversifying the workforce
- Creating pathways for newer workers
- Connecting with K-12 to increase interest in water workforce for the next generation

# Focus Areas (9 of 11)

## Funding

- Infrastructure
  - Asset management
  - Treatment upgrades
  - NEW infrastructure
- Staffing
  - Sufficient number
  - Competitive wages
- Workload and programming
  - Education and outreach
  - Collaboration
  - Planning
- Private wells

# Focus Areas (10 of 11)

## Climate Change

- Drought
- Flooding
- Elongated growing season

# Focus Areas (11 of 11)

## Affordability

- Balancing affordability with rates
- Equity and access to clean water
- Supplemental funding to offset expectations/needs for rate revenue
- Grants
- Conservation rates

# Doing the work (1 of 2)

## “Water Supply Plan” involves more than water suppliers

- Communities
  - Water suppliers/operators and city engineers
  - Land use planners and community development staff
- Met Council
- State agencies
- Counties
- Watershed districts and management organizations
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Federal
- Professional organizations
- Academics
- Farmers
- Water drinkers—all of us

# Doing the work (2 of 2)

## Asks of Met Council

- Research
- Technical assistance
- Financial assistance
- Convening for governmental collaboration
  - Agencies
  - Subregions
  - Water supply and land use planning
- Lobbying
- Coordinating messaging (education, workforce)
- Demonstration



# What people are saying

This sounds like us.

It feels like we were listened to.

Hopeful

Optimistic

Appreciated the diversity of perspectives

This is a step in the right direction

We need more opportunities like this

Learned a lot in every conversation

Inspired

Thank you

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