2050 Water Policy Plan Update

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Regional Development Guide Structure

Values
Core beliefs that guide how we work toward our vision

Vision
What we want to achieve for the region

Goals
Desired end states for the region, to successfully achieve the vision

Objectives
Achievable results that advance regional goals through areas of Council responsibility

Policies
Intent and approach to achieve objectives (expectations for both Council and partners)

Actions
Policies are implemented through specific actions by the Council and partners
Water Policy Plan (WPP)

Plan Purpose

- Met Council is developing the 2050 Water Policy Plan, which focuses on ensuring sustainable water resources in the region. It is a part of and informed by the Regional Development Guide.

- The WPP provides a framework for integrative water planning (wastewater, water supply, and water resources) the Metro Area Water Supply Plan, and the Wastewater System Plan.

- It contains water policies, strategies, and actions for both the Met Council and our 180+ local governments within the seven-county region.

- WPP policies will commit the Council to take action in the areas of long-range visioning and planning, regional system investments, facility management, technical assistance, research and assessment, and partnerships.
Water Policy Plan Engagement
Technical Advisory Groups

- Environment Committee
- Met Council Committee of the Whole
- Water Advisory Group (WAG)
- Metro Area Water Supply Advisory Committee (MAWSAC)
- Technical Advisory Committee (MAWSAC-TAC)
Draft Water Policy Plan Content
Water Policy Plan

Draft Table of Contents

• Introduction
• Regional Development
  Guide connection to water
• Principles, goals, and roles
• Regional water context
• Problem identification
• Policies & actions
• Regional wastewater system
  plan
• Metro area water supply plan
• Appendices

Plans are nothing.
Planning is everything.”

~ Dwight D. Eisenhower
Draft WPP objectives

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

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

INVESTMENTS: Optimize regional water protection, planning, and infrastructure investments.

EQUITY: Water benefits and services are accessible and shared amongst all residents and communities.
The Met Council partners with national, regional, and local organizations and experts to work towards water sustainability, climate resilience, and equitable water outcomes.

The Met Council collaboratively develops plans to protect, enhance, restore, and sustainably manage the region’s water resources.

The Met Council provides essential water planning services to the entire region and wastewater treatment and collection services to 111 communities.
Draft Policy Topics

1. Integrated Water
2. Water Equity
3. Water Monitoring, Data, and Assessment
4. Climate Change Resilience
5. Water-Centered Growth and Development
6. Regional Wastewater Service Area
7. Conservation and Sustainability
8. Water Reuse
9. Pollution Prevention and Contaminant Management
10. Regional Wastewater Operation and Finance
11. Inflow and Infiltration
12. Water Sector Workforce Development
Integrated Water Policy

Water planning, management, and operation approaches are collaborative and span the natural and built water cycle.

**PARTNER**

Convene and facilitate discussions that support sustainable waters and delve into regional water issues that transcend community or watershed organization boundaries.

**PLAN**

Provide local plan timing, requirements, and guidance to align regional and local efforts in water planning, management, and development decisions.

**PROVIDE**

Provide technical information to watershed organizations, city planners, and local water providers on practices to use and incorporate into their operations or planning efforts that protect water quality and quantity.
Climate Change Resilience
Water Policy

The impacts of climate change on natural waters and the built water environment are proactively addressed to minimize impacts to public and ecosystem health and ensure the benefits of clean and plentiful water are protected and available for current and future generations.

**PARTNER**
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 better understand future climate scenarios based on current science and models.

**PLAN**
Assess the climate vulnerabilities and risks within Met Council 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.

**PROVIDE**
Manage and renovate 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.
Water-Centered Growth and Development Policy

As the region grows, the effects of development, redevelopment and land use changes on water utilities and natural waters are planned for and inform management approaches that protect public and ecosystem health and ensure the benefits of clean and plentiful water are protected, restored, and enhanced across all communities.

**PARTNER**

Foster preservation of regionally significant ecologic areas as rural areas develop through engaging stakeholders, technical assistance, outreach to local governments, and plan review.

**PLAN**

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**

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.
Draft Wastewater System Plan
Statutory References

Metropolitan System Plans - Contents

Minnesota State Statute - Chapter 473:

• Population, employment, household forecasts by region
• Goals, objectives and priorities, system description, staging, Capital Improvements, funding source description.
• Issues, needs, and opportunities for system
• Policies to effectuate Council's goals, objectives and priorities
• Fiscal implications of Council's plan
• Relationship of System Plan to local comprehensive plans
The System Plan is:

- 20-year vision as to how regional wastewater service will be provided
  - Wastewater flow projections
  - Projected capital needs
  - Current and future service areas
- What local comprehensive sewer plan updates and amendments are compared against. *Plan modifications are required if non-conforming:*
  - System impact to / System departure from
- Updated every 10-years based on local comprehensive plan content which was approved by the Council
- Includes long-term (post 20-year) vision for how regional wastewater service will be provided
System Plan Contents

20-Year Planning

• High Level System Overview
  • Assets
  • Population, households, employment forecasts
  • Wastewater flow projections

• Regional Resource Recovery Facilities
  • Capacity (current and ultimate)
  • Treatment requirements

• Capital Improvement Program
  • Major projects
  • Regulatory strategies and anticipated treatment needs

• Considerations Guided by WPP
  • Reuse
  • Energy, climate change
  • Regulatory trends

Post 20-Year Planning

• Regional Resource Recovery Facilities (new – Scott Co, Carver Co, NE Metro)

• Interceptor Capacity Projects

• Regulatory Strategies
Long-Term Service Area (LTSA)
Resource Recovery Strategy

Resource Recovery

Current Efforts:
- Water – through wastewater treatment
- Heat/Energy – heat energy and generation from solids incineration and biosolids production
- Biosolids – fertilizer for farmers and community partners
- Reuse – internal applications

Future Work:
- Thermal heat recovery from wastewater effluent
- Solids/Biosolids across region
- Wastewater reuse across region
Region-Wide Improvements

Project Objectives:
• Asset Preservation
• System Expansion
• Quality Improvements

Types of projects:
• Interceptor rehabilitation and new construction
• Lift station and flow metering (new, upgrades, and rehabilitations)
• Resource recovery solids processing improvements
• Resource recovery facilities (new, upgrades, and rehabilitations)
• Regulatory related improvements
Draft Metro Water Supply Plan
Purpose

• Statutorily defined: Minnesota Statute 473.1565
  • Develop a metropolitan area water supply plan that:
    • Provides guidance for local water supply systems and future regional investments
    • Emphasizes conservation, interjurisdictional cooperation, and long-term sustainability
    • Addresses the reliability, security, and cost-effectiveness of the metropolitan area water supply and its local and subregional components
  • Developed in cooperation with (and approved by) MAWSAC and its TAC.
  • The Council must consider the work and recommendations of MAWSAC when it prepares its regional development framework.
Metro Area Water Supply Plan draft content

- **Part 1 Desired Outcomes**
  - Rational approach to regional water supply planning
  - Regional desired outcomes with 2050 water supplies and regional goals in mind

- **Part 2 Regional Commitments**
  - Connection to regional policies in the Water Policy Plan with more detail around water supply-related actions

- **Part 3 Regional Dashboard Measures**
  - Regional summary of information that provides context for water supply planning, describes the current state of sustainable water supply practices, and supports the development of measurable and trackable regional targets

- **Part 4 Subregional Info**
  - Subregional information related to water, land use, and other factors
  - Key water supply issues, risks and opportunities identified by stakeholders
  - Implementation needs (high-level)
MAWSAC-recommended approach

- Subregional focus to reflect nuances across metro
- Integrated perspectives to round out content
- Clear through lines from subregional actions to WPP policies
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
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** (watershed/surface water, water supply, wastewater), Local Planning Assistance staff
Getting the input

Highly participatory process

- Kickoff workshop to co-design approach with local partners
- Worked through relationships for invitations
- Hosted 2-3 workshops in each subregion
  - Brief presentation for grounding
  - Bulk of workshops spent in small group conversation
  - Participants took own notes on generative discussions
- Final, culminating workshop for all subregions
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 (fall and winter 2023-2024)?
# Similarities and differences in focus areas by subregion

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♦ = Priority focus area
* = Incorporated into multiple focus areas as an "implementation consideration"
How has this helped shape the WPP?

Many ways!

• Connection to nearly every policy—reflection of integrated approach
• Addition of the “workforce” policy
• Clarification of language to ensure inclusion/reflection of MAWSAC, TAC, and subregional input
  • Narrative
  • Objectives
  • Actions
• New actions
Connecting regional goals, the WPP, the MWSP, and local water supply plans

**Regional Goal**
We lead on addressing climate change

**Water Policy Plan**

**Objective**
Create climate-resilient water sources, ecosystems, and water infrastructure

**Policy**
Water stewardship and sustainability

**Action**
Support programs that target water and energy conservation practices and implement efficient water and energy use

**Metro Area Water Supply Plan (Regional Implementation & Technical Assistance)**

**Regional approach**
Convene partners to advocate for expanded water use efficiency grant funding across the region

**Subregional approach**
Identify most cost-effective actions for conservation and develop grant programs to incentivize adoption (ex: Northeast)

**Local Water Supply Plan and/or Wellhead Protection Plan (Local Implementation)**

**Local plan content**
Address water conservation and supply and demand reduction measures

**Dashboard Measures**
Water use over time (region, subregion, local)
Council staff have gathered a lot of input on draft objectives, policies and actions.

• What resonates?
• What is missing?

Focus on content for the policy statement, outcomes, and actions.
Provide feedback on sticky notes
Breakout discussion

• What are your first impressions?
• Are we on the right path?
• Should we modify the policies?
• Did we miss an action?

Focus on content for the policy statement, outcomes, and actions.
Provide feedback on sticky notes
WPP Timeline

- Drafting Plan Language and Content
- Engagement and Input
- Document Prep & Actions to Release
- Comment Period
- Revisions
- Adoption & Implementation

Timeline:
- Q4 2023
- Q1 2024
- Q2 2024
- Q3 2024
- Q4 2024
- Q1 2025
Thank you

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