ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

We serve 2.6 million people living in 110 communities in the 7 county Metro Area

We treat 250 million gallons of wastewater every day

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) will start work this summer to rehabilitate the existing regional sanitary sewer tunnel along the north side of East Minnehaha Parkway, located under Minnehaha Creek, Hiawatha Avenue and the METRO Blue Line light rail corridor. The sewer tunnel was built in 1935 and needs repair, and regulatory equipment needs to be updated. The existing tunnel is located near Minnehaha Creek and about 1½ miles northwest of Coldwater Spring, a significant cultural and historic resource. This project will preserve the structural integrity of the tunnel and will minimize the risk of failure in this important natural area.

PLAN AMENDMENT APPROVED BY MINNESOTA POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY (MPCA)

MCES previously planned to replace the tunnel, and to start construction in 2018. Due to public concerns, MCES performed additional technical studies to better understand the groundwater flow connected to Coldwater Spring, and determined the existing tunnel should be rehabilitated rather than replaced to avoid potential impacts to Coldwater Spring. An amendment to the construction plans was released for public comment in summer 2018 and submitted to MPCA for approval. MPCA, as delegated by the US Environmental Protection Agency, approved the facility plan amendment and determined the sewer rehabilitation project poses no significant implications for preservation of historic and environmental resources, including Coldwater Spring. MPCA determined that the project is exempt from further Section 106 review requirements.
Construction on the Minnehaha Park Area Regional Sewer Improvements Project is expected to begin September 2019 and be completed in summer 2021. The first activities will include clearing, tree removal and signing. The sewer work will include:

- **Sewer tunnel cleaning.** Crews will use large water jetting equipment to clean existing sewer system.

- **Sewer tunnel rehabilitation.** Crews will rehabilitate the existing pipe by installing a new rigid pipe within the sewer and filling the space between the two pipes with grout. This process creates a new pipe within the existing pipe.

- **Temporary wastewater conveyance pipes and pumps.** In order to divert the wastewater during the work, crews will set up temporary wastewater conveyance pumps and pipes. The pumps will need to run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Most temporary pipes will be aboveground but some will be buried where the pipe crosses a street or trail to minimize traffic disruption.

- **Sewer structures upgrade.** Crews will improve existing underground electrical and regulator vaults.

- **Ventilation shafts.** Two ventilation shafts will be drilled to provide fresh air for worker safety.

**GROUNDWATER MONITORING**

The National Park Service (NPS) will monitor water flows Monday-Friday during construction and will regularly post the monitoring results on their website. There will be excavation of previously disturbed soils above the limestone; however, no excavation into the Platteville Limestone (the underground rock formation that transmits water to Coldwater Spring) or dewatering is required for the rehabilitation project. Modeling shows there will be no impacts to groundwater flow to Coldwater Spring with the rehabilitation project.

**PROJECT COST:**

$25 million

**IMPACTS DURING CONSTRUCTION**

MCES will minimize impacts as much as possible but some impacts may occur from time to time. Advance notice will be provided when impacts are expected:

1. Tree removals
2. Hiawatha Bike Trail closure and detour (see trail detour map below)
3. Parking restrictions on Minnehaha Parkway
4. Lane shifts and temporary Hiawatha Avenue intersection closures
5. Lights, noise, vibrations, odors, and construction vehicle traffic and equipment parking