

# Minutes of the MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL 2050 WATER RESOURCE POLICY PLAN (WRPP) UPDATE ADVISORY GROUP

Friday, December 10, 2021 | 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. | Teams

## ATTENDANCE

Bryan Bear, Phil Belfiori, Bryan Dodds, Bruce Elder, Charles Howley, Laura Jester, Jennifer Levitt, Steve Lillehaug, Mark Maloney, Russ Matthys, Richard McCoy, Paul Moline, Pat Shea, Vanessa Strong, Nick Tomczik, Bruce Westby

### *Staff*

Anna Bessel, Kyle Colvin (co-lead), Ali Elhassan, Jen Kostrzewski (facilitator), Sam Paske (sponsor), Judy Sventek (co-lead), Tessa Wegenke (recorder)

### *Guests*

Maureen Hoffman, Mike Lund, Emily Resseger, Lanya Ross, Emily Steinweg

### *Absent Members (and alternate)*

Scott Anderson, Tim Kelly, Joe Kohlman, James Wisker

## 9:00 WELCOME AND ICE BREAKER

Jen welcomed the group, reminding the team that they agreed to have their meetings recorded; these videos will only live on the Team site and not be available to the public.

She gave an overview on the intention of the meeting and flow of the work. She encouraged team members to raise their hands or to post questions in the chat. As an icebreaker, the team was asked to provide a one-word adjective to describe the waters of the metro in 2050. “Clean,” “plentiful,” “abundant,” and other hopeful words appeared in the Mentimeter exercise.

## 9:10 UPDATE ON PRIORITY WATERS PROJECT

Emily Resseger has been leading a project, the Metropolitan Council’s Priority Waters Project; she wanted to update the team on this work. This list builds on the work of the 2015 Priorities Lakes List and is a tool to enable the Council to most effectively make decisions and distribute funding.

The list was developed to anticipate future needs. Goals of the new list are to: add priority rivers and streams, be used for resource decisions, be a key lens for policies and activities in the 2050 Water Resources Policy Plan and offer insights to other organizations.

Emily noted that the Council is taking a broader approach to prioritize waters. To create this list her team used a data driven approach using regional datasets. They scored the waterbodies using seven categories: drinking water protection, recreation and tourism, healthy habitat, tranquil connection, equity, industry and utility, and science and education. Waters qualify for the list based on the combination of their top overall category scores. The list will also include two sub lists: lakes and rivers/streams.

Emily plans to send a revised draft list for review in January to the team members. Stakeholders will be able to give feedback with a form on the website or by emailing Emily at [Emily.Resseger@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:Emily.Resseger@metc.state.mn.us)

### Questions/discussions:

- One page handout says the list was picked by staff. Consider striking that to say based on datasets.
- Utility benefits include waters used for industrial water supply such as for cooling, or waters that receive wastewater for dilution, or transportation (barging).
- Clearly state that it is two sub-lists at the top of informational one-page handout.
- What is the council’s role in funding improvements to surface and groundwater? List is looking forward, previously had funding for stormwater. If funding becomes available again, the list would be one criterion in consideration. Plan to work with livable communities’ staff to include priority waters list with their grant criteria.

- Recommend Council include data on waters that are critical for volume management and flooding protection. Council removed flood protection early on. Didn't know how to model datasets to fit into criteria. Missing important data on many lakes in the region. Would like to hear ideas on how to do this.
- Local watershed following requirements from Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) require inclusion of priority waters. Would like to see more connection between what BWSR asks of watersheds to prioritize, and what MCES has prioritized, with this list. Council tried to create list that can work in tandem with what BWSR requires. BWSR focuses on what is already impaired, believe some things can get be lost. Council list is broader than just water quality.

## 9:20 INTRODUCTION TO NEW ISSUES/IDEAS FOR WRPP

Kyle gave an overview of draft policy areas for 2050 WRPP, which include:

- water quality,
- rural water concerns,
- water availability, access, and use,
- wastewater issues,
- source water protection and vulnerable areas.

Policy areas were identified through internal brainstorming and input from customers and external stakeholders. The team was informed that we are in need of feedback from the group to determine if we are missing anything, whether we should remove anything, and who else we should be considered to incorporate into the conversation.

## 9:30 BRAINSTORM IDEAS FOR NEW ISSUES

Jen noted that more functionalities in Mural will be opened up to the group in future meetings, and walked the team through the expectations for the Mural exercise to brainstorm what could be added to the issues list to consider at we develop our 2050 Water Resource Policy Plan. All comments and Main Challenges Identified can also be found in the appendix with Mural Images (see page 6).

## Challenge area discussions

### WATER QUALITY

#### GOAL

Ensure clean, usable water – which is vital for life and regional prosperity – now and for future generations. Clean water to support safe and reliable drinking water sources, ecosystem health, aquatic life, and recreation.

#### MAIN CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED

- **Chloride:** softeners, snow and ice control, centralized water softening
- **Nitrates:** drinking levels, irrigation/drainage tiles, fertilizers
- **Phosphorus:** eutrophication, fertilizers
- **Perfluorooctanesulfonic Acid (PFOS)/Perfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS):** groundwater contamination
- **Microplastics:** size
- **Pharmaceuticals:** endocrine disruption
- **Climate Change:** harmful algal blooms (HABs), temperature
- Additions:
  - **Turbidity/Sediments**
  - **Illegal dumping**
  - **Volume – connected to water quality**
  - **Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)**
  - **Bacteria impairments- stormwater and wastewater infrastructure**
  - **Higher levels of manganese in drinking water - quality of groundwater becoming more challenged. Could be due to low levels of groundwater in aquifer**
  - **Arsenic**
  - **Pesticides**

- Other considerations:
  - Do we want to separate into Point Source and Non-Point Source? (E.g. effluent from wastewater treatment plant vs surface runoff)
  - Education is a challenge and a solution which is currently not mentioned in any areas
  - Add: Volume

## WASTEWATER CHALLENGES

### GOAL

Ensure wastewater services protect human health and the environment. The region needs reliable wastewater collection and treatment services to protect public health, safety, and the environment. Infrastructure and services need to accommodate future growth, foster economic prosperity, and maintain affordable rates and quality service for the region.

### MAIN CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED

- **Reconveyance policy:** Currently, it can be difficult to know when this policy initiates. When there has been a reconveyance, current owner has upgraded or provided infrastructure that has been at acceptable level before reconveyance; we should start there before considering reconveyance. Reconveyance seems to be in good faith between Met Council and local governmental units
- **Private Inflow/Infiltration:** Lack of funding for private improvement. Private homes are a source, with the issue not always the service lines but often problem inside the homes, Technology improvements: specific to metering, Sump disconnect management. Discharge icing over roads/sidewalks. Currently there is not any Met Council coordination to handle this requirement.
- **Vector Waste Disposal:** Support from Met Council for new dumping sites
- **Liquid Waste Receiving**
- **Aging Infrastructure:** Cost, coordination vs people's expectations - need agreement
- **Chlorides**
- **Emerging Contaminants**
- **Regulatory Requirements**
- **Growth Patterns**
- **Climate Change**

## Rural Water Issues

### GOAL

Meet the water needs of rural communities – now and for future generations. Water strategies should preserve and promote the agricultural economy, rural centers, and rural residential lifestyles.

### MAIN CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED

- **Ag Field Practices - Consider changing to Drainage - is really issue (less about field practice more about increased drainage):** Increased drainage and tiles issues; Wetland preservation and restoration; Buffers - struggle to get farmers to maintain when becomes more profitable to farm in them; There is not a lot of state support for adoption of conservation practices, as they focus on reduction not conservation which can have a lot of other local benefits; Can't be all Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
- **Nutrients**
- **Soil Loss**
- **Private Wells:** Disconnect between who is managing well data for the state. There isn't a central agency collecting/organizing data; Private well testing - hard to get people to remember to routinely test
- **Community Water Supply**
- **Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems:** Trouble with smaller developments running the subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) pipes through wetlands, and we cannot do maintenance without excavating wetland; Replacement of SSTS
- **Community Wastewater:** Cluster areas are missed. Areas where not enough land for individual house. As fail want to hookup to regional system
- **Planned Densities**

- **Climate Change**
- Additions
  - **Pesticides**
  - **Wetland Protection**
  - **Drought Mitigation/Irrigation – could potentially go under private wells**
  - **Agency Coordination**

## Water Availability, Access, and Use

### *GOAL*

Ensure our water resources and infrastructure are sustainable and resilient to meet the needs of present and future generations. Water use is planned to maintain sustainable surface water flows and aquifer levels and protect water quality. Where water sources are limited, water access and demands are met in a way that limit negative outcomes to drinking water and recreational resources, as well as ensuring maximizing the water infrastructure, distribution, and treatment systems.

### *MAIN CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED*

- **Groundwater/Surface Water Interaction:** Cost/complexity of modeling and monitoring of groundwater can become stopper due to cost and energy to understand geology and flow. Never have enough info/data
- **Groundwater Drawdown:** Aquifer storage recharge (ASR), Conservation and reducing summer peak use
- **Contamination:** Infiltration restrictions (Drinking Water Supply Management Areas (DWSMAs)) and how they are coordinated
- **Infrastructure Costs**
- **Water Value Judgements**
- **Equitable Access**
- **Population Growth**
- **Planned Densities**
- **Climate Change**
- Additions
  - **Agency interaction/clarity**
  - **Shared data**
  - **Water Reuse**
  - **Shipping/transportation of groundwater out of metro and state**
  - **Use of (protected) surface water for augmentation when restrictions on irrigation**
- Other considerations
  - Reuse (wastewater and stormwater) - from past plan, keep conversation going

## Source Water Protection & Vulnerable Areas

### *GOAL*

Protect areas of land that contribute to water supply to ensure safe, sustainable, and sufficient drinking water for the region. Public water suppliers, land use planners and developers, watershed management organizations, business owners/managers, residents, and others need to improve understanding and collaboration to protect water supply sources, particularly where source water protection areas extend beyond any one jurisdiction's boundaries.

### *MAIN CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED*

- **Overlapping jurisdictions**
- **Contaminant Mitigation/Reduction**
- **Legacy Contaminants**
- **Emerging Contaminants**
- **Security (Physical & Cyber)**

- **Infrastructure**
- **Climate Change**
- Other considerations:
  - Most topics can be separated into quality and availability/quantity. There is the sentiment that we are not accomplishing anything if it's land protection because we can typically do better when we look at the land. "Protection" to me means keep what is there. Perhaps land use could be changed to improve in this area.
  - Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) already covering this. Leading west metro water protection plan. No need to duplicate work efforts - feels redundant
  - Challenging one to do. Highlights issue well, but will be interested to see what strategies will be developed to be effective in this area

Other Issues Areas

- **Reuse/all types of reuse – gray water and stormwater**
- **Climate change – flooding concerns, surprised not a large sticky**
- **Agency coordination across all areas**

Who else should we engage?

- **Other state agencies**
- **Metro planning groups**

**10:55 NEXT STEPS**

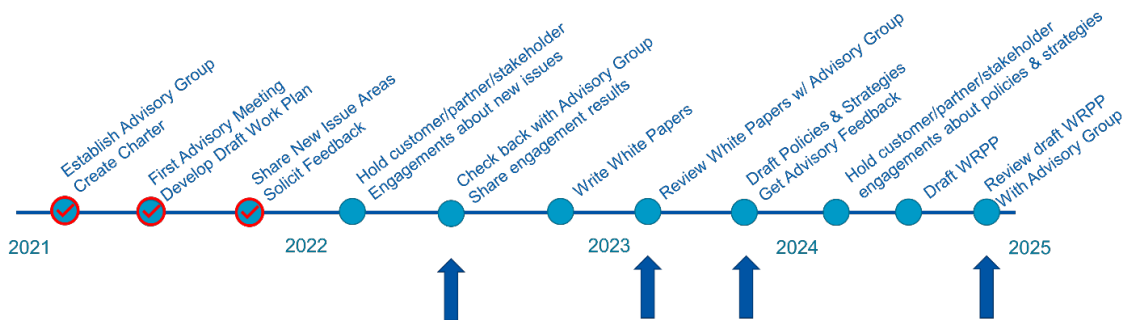
Council staff

- Incorporate brainstormed input into WRPP new issues for framing for future engagements
- Get additional feedback from suggested stakeholder groups
- Draft a 2022 workplan and share it with the advisory group
- Send out a meeting poll and/or meeting invite for next meeting
- Send out materials before next meeting for members to review

Members

- Contact us if you think of any additional input about the WRPP new issues
- Try to access the Microsoft Teams site to access documents
- Review materials before next meeting

**Next Steps: Process Timeline**



# APPENDIX: MURAL IMAGES

## 2050 WRPP Issues & Challenges

### Issue Area: Water Quality

**GOAL:**  
Provide clean, usable water – water is vital for human, ecological prosperity – low cost for future generations. Clean water supports agriculture, municipal drinking water sources, recreation, health, equates for economic vitality.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Chloride: Chloride from road salting, wastewater treatment, and other sources. **Chloride from road salting**
- Nitrates: From agricultural fertilizers and manure. **From agricultural fertilizers and manure**
- Phosphorus: From agricultural fertilizers and manure. **From agricultural fertilizers and manure**
- PROS/PFAS: From industrial and consumer products. **From industrial and consumer products**
- Microplastics: From consumer products and litter. **From consumer products and litter**
- Pharmaceuticals: From household and industrial sources. **From household and industrial sources**
- Climate Change: Impacts on water quality through temperature increases and precipitation changes. **Impacts on water quality through temperature increases and precipitation changes**
- Nonpoint Source Pollution: From agricultural and urban runoff. **From agricultural and urban runoff**
- Point Source Pollution: From industrial and municipal wastewater treatment plants. **From industrial and municipal wastewater treatment plants**

### Issue Area: Wastewater Challenges

**GOAL:**  
Protect wastewater sources from human health and the environment. The region needs reliable wastewater collection and treatment services to protect public health, safety, and the environment. Infrastructure and services need to accommodate future growth, foster economic prosperity, and maintain affordable rates and quality service for the region.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Reconveyance Policy: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Private Infrastructure: From public to private. **From public to private**
- Wastewater Disposal: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Aging Infrastructure: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Chlorides: From road salting. **From road salting**
- Regulatory Requirements: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Growth Patterns: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Climate Change: Impacts on wastewater treatment. **Impacts on wastewater treatment**
- Emerging Contaminants: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Liquid Waste Recycling: From local to regional. **From local to regional**

### Issue Area: Rural Water Issues

**GOAL:**  
Meet the water needs of rural communities – now and for future generations. Water strategies should preserve and promote the agricultural economy, rural centers, and rural recreational benefits.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Private Wells: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Subsurface Services: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Community Wastewater: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Planned Densities: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Climate Change: Impacts on rural water resources. **Impacts on rural water resources**
- Soil Loss: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Nutrients: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Community Water Supply: From local to regional. **From local to regional**

Labels	Plus (What you liked)	Delta (What you wished were different)
Jon rocket		
Like the platform		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear visible to all participants (some Team members did not have access)</li> <li>Additional time in break out sessions to discuss as subgroups</li> </ul>

### Issue Area: Water Availability, Access, Use

**GOAL:**  
Provide our water users and infrastructure a sustainable and resilient way to meet the needs of present and future generations. Water use is planned to ensure sufficient surface water flows and aquifer recharge to protect water quality. Where water sources are limited, water access and use are planned in a way that is equitable to users to ensure water and related resources as well as equity, including the rural population, distributed across water systems.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Groundwater/Surface Water Interaction: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- GW Drawdown: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Contamination: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Infrastructure Costs: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Water Value Judgments: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Equitable Access: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Population Growth: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Planned Densities: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Climate Change: Impacts on water availability. **Impacts on water availability**
- Security (Physical & Cyber): From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Water Use: From local to regional. **From local to regional**

### Issue Area: Source Water Protection & Vulnerable Areas

**GOAL:**  
Protect areas of land that contribute to water supply to ensure safe, sustainable, and sufficient drinking water for the region. Public water suppliers, state agencies and developers, watershed managers, landowners, business owners, farmers, and residents, and others need to increase stewardship and collaboration to protect water supply sources, particularly where source water protection zones exist beyond any one jurisdiction's boundaries.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Overlapping Jurisdictions: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Contaminant Mitigation/Reduction: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Legacy Contaminants: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Emerging Contaminants: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Security (Physical & Cyber): From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Infrastructure: From local to regional. **From local to regional**
- Climate Change: Impacts on source water protection. **Impacts on source water protection**

### Other Issue Areas

- Rural water supply and stormwater
- Climate Change flooding concerns surge and not a large sticky
- Agency coordination across all areas

### Who else should we engage?

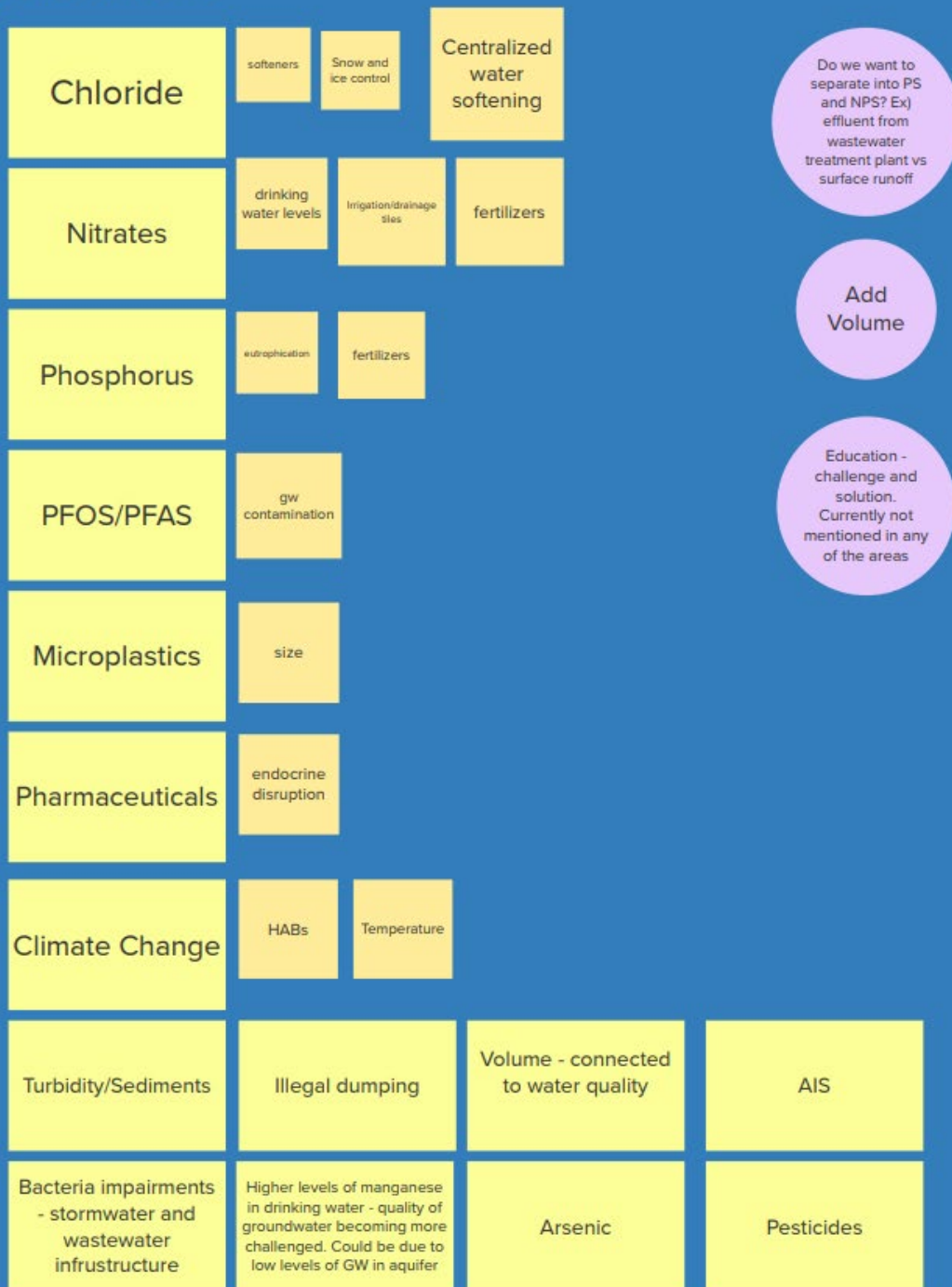
- Other stakeholders
- More Planning Groups

# Issue Area: Water Quality

## GOAL:

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## CHALLENGES:



# Issue Area: Wastewater Challenges

## GOAL:

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## CHALLENGES:





# Issue Area: Rural Water Issues

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## CHALLENGES:

Overlapping Jurisdictions

Contaminant Mitigation/Reduction

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Climate Change  
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Metro Planning Groups