Thrive MSP 2040

WATER RESOURCES POLICY PLAN

2040

Water Resources Policy Plan Summary

SUMMARY

Water: An essential regional resource

Water resources have sustained the people of this region for many centuries, and wise planning now can ensure a water-rich future for generations to come. The key is building region-wide support that brings people and organizations together working toward common goals.

In partnership with local communities, watershed management organizations, and other stakeholders, the Council developed the *2040 Water Resources Policy Plan*. Policies and strategies in the plan work towards achieving outcomes identified in *Thrive MSP 2040*, the region's overall development framework for the seven-county Twin Cities metro area. These outcomes include prosperity, livability, equity, sustainability, and stewardship.

Council's role in water resources

The Council provides wastewater services to municipal and industrial customers at competitive rates, fostering a favorable economic environment for growth and development. The Council promotes sustainable water resources through its planning and technical assistance for surface water and water supply. These activities help to ensure the region has adequate water quality and supply to support:

- economic development
- drinking water needs
- quality of life for all residents
- tourism

Integrating water planning

The overall theme of the Water Resources Policy Plan is to move further toward integrating planning for wastewater, water supply, and surface water management. The challenges of water supply, water quality issues, and environmental stewardship need strategies that look at the whole water picture and consider how efforts in one area could benefit the other. For example, an integrated approach sees treated wastewater effluent and stormwater as resources for irrigation and use in industrial processes.

Ensuring prosperity and livability

Water resources have strategic importance in achieving economic growth, competitiveness, and high quality of life. The Council's regional strategy balances the demands of growth with the protection and management of our lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, and groundwater.

Achieving equity

The plan supports the Council's uniform rates for all wastewater customers. The Council provides equal access to the affordable wastewater systems for customers within the metropolitan urban service area.

Supporting sustainability and stewardship

Sustainable water resources means having adequate high quality groundwater and surface water resources to support the region's growing water supply needs and its unique and intricate ecosystems. And it means managing our resources in a way that ensures water availability for current and future generations.

> *"Water is sustainable when the use does not harm ecosystems, degrade water quality or compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."*

Working with our partners

The Council is committed to collaborating with our partners, including federal, state, local, and regional agencies and organizations to promote the long-term sustainability of the region's water resources for surface and groundwater quality and quantity, and wastewater collection and treatment.

- With the help of citizen and organizational partners, the Council monitors the water quality of more than 150 lakes, 21 streams, and 21 sites on the major rivers in the metro area each year.
- In consultation with state agencies, watershed districts, and local governments, we create and maintain an up-to-date regional water supply plan. The plan helps map out water supply trends and options for communities to develop and sustain water supplies.
- We maintain about 600 miles of regional interceptor sewers that collect flow from 5,000 miles of sewers owned by 108 communities. We treat this wastewater—about 250 million gallons a day on average—at eight treatment plants, and return it to the environment in compliance with clean water discharge permits.

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