



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

MEMO

To: BCWMC Commissioners and Alternate Commissioners
From: Laura Jester, Administrator
Date: March 11, 2020

RE: Proposed Minor Plan Amendment

Recommendation: Initiate a minor plan amendment process to add three projects to the CIP and update wetland management policies. Set a public hearing for May 21, 2020.

Background: Staff proposes two types of revisions to the 2015 Bassett Creek Watershed Management Plan – amending the CIP and revising wetland policies. I received confirmation from MN Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) staff that these revisions would constitute a minor plan amendment. The process for a minor amendment includes:

- The BCWMC will send copies of the proposed minor plan amendment to the affected local cities, the Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County (if the amendment is a minor amendment to the BCWMC capital improvement program), and the state review agencies for review and comment. (30-day comment period)
- The BCWMC will hold a public meeting to explain the amendments and publish a legal notice of the meeting twice, at least 7 days and 14 days before the date of the meeting. The BCWMC will also provide mailed notice of the public meeting to the city clerk of each member city. The notice will be mailed not less than 45 days before the public meeting.
- If the proposed amendment is a minor amendment to the BCWMC capital improvement program, Hennepin County must approve the minor amendment.

Proposed Amendments:

1. Add three CIP Projects to Table 5-3

If the Commission approves the TAC's recommendations (Item 5C) to include the following projects on the 5-year CIP, then Table 5-3 (in [Section 5.0](#)) of the watershed management plan will need to be amended.

- 2021 Cost share purchase of high efficiency street sweeper: \$75,000
- 2026 Crane Lake Chloride Reduction Project at Ridgedale Mall: \$300,000
- 2026 Plymouth Creek Restoration Project Old Rockford Rd. to Vicksburg Ln.: \$500,000

2. Update Section [4.2.6 Wetland Management Policies](#)

Staff recommends some changes to wetland management policies because the Minnesota Rapid Assessment Method (MnRAM) assessment protocol is no longer supported by BWSR. Unfortunately, a new wetland assessment tool has not been developed. These revisions offer cities flexibility in managing wetlands. The proposed changes are shown as tracked below.

Policy 65. The BCWMC requires member cities to inventory, classify and determine the functions and values of wetlands, either through a comprehensive wetland management plan or as required by the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA).

Member cities shall maintain a database of wetland functions and values assessment results. The BCWMC encourages member cities to complete comprehensive wetland management plans as part of their local water management plan or as an implementation task identified in their local water management plan. Completed comprehensive wetland management plans shall be submitted to the BCWMC for review and comment.

Policy 66. The BCWMC requires member cities to develop and implement wetland protection ordinances that consider the results of wetland functions and values assessments, and are based on comprehensive wetland management plans, if available. For wetlands classified as Preserve or Manage 1 (or comparable classification if BWSR's Minnesota Rapid Assessment Method (MnRAM) is not used), member cities shall implement standards for bounce, inundation, and runoff control that are similar to ~~BWSR guidance~~MnRAM; member cities are encouraged to apply standards for other wetland classifications.

Policy 67. The BCWMC ~~adopts-recommends that cities use~~ the Minnesota Rapid Assessment Method (MnRAM) (or similar) ~~as the~~ wetland assessment method and ~~the~~ wetland management classification system. Member cities are encouraged to use ~~MnRAM-such a method~~ for all wetland assessment and classification, but are not required to perform reassessments ~~using the MnRAM~~ for wetlands already assessed.

Policy 68. Member cities shall maintain and enforce buffer requirements for projects containing more than one acre of new or redeveloped impervious area. Average minimum buffer widths are required according to the MnRAM classification (or similar classification system):

- An average of 75 feet and minimum of 50 feet from the edge of wetlands classified as Preserve (or comparable classification if BWSR's MnRAM is not used)
- An average of 50 feet and minimum of 30 feet from the edge of wetlands classified as Manage 1 (or comparable classification if BWSR's MnRAM is not used)
- An average of 25 feet and minimum of 15 feet from the edge of wetlands classified as Manage 2 or 3. (or comparable classification if BWSR's MnRAM is not used)

Allowable land uses and vegetative criteria for buffers are specified in the BCWMC's Requirements for Development and Redevelopment (BCWMC, 2015, as amended). Member cities may allow exemptions for public recreational facilities parallel to the shoreline (e.g. trails) up to 20 feet in width, with that width being added to the required buffer width.

Policy 72. The BCWMC requires that member cities annually inspect wetlands classified as Preserve (or comparable classification if MnRAM not used) for terrestrial and emergent aquatic invasive vegetation, such as buckthorn and purple loosestrife, and attempt to control or treat invasive species, where feasible.