



Bassett Creek Watershed Management

MEMO

To: BCWMC Commissioners and Alternate Commissioners
From: Laura Jester, Administrator
Date: November 9, 2021

RE: Review Draft Schedule and Consider Directing Staff to Develop Scope for 2025 Watershed Plan Development

Commission Engineers and I have met twice to begin drafting a framework and potential schedule for developing the 2025 Watershed Management Plan. The attached draft schedule starts with stakeholder engagement to learn what's important to various residents and communities across the watershed. It also includes time to complete inventories, assessments, and analyses that may be needed to help direct and focus future work. And, it includes time for commissioners and TAC members to consider and discuss some new or complicated issues like chloride management, linear project standards, CIP implementation, a broader education program, etc. Taking into consideration all of this new background information, the Commission would then set measurable goals and develop policies and actions to meet the goals. Finally, the schedule includes time for writing the plan and moving it through the review process to adoption in fall 2025.

There's a lot of work ahead - so it's time to get started.

Recommendation: Direct the Commission Engineer and Administrator to draft a scope and cost proposal for developing the 2025 Watershed Management Plan for consideration at the December or January Commission meeting.

If you agree that development of a proposal/scope is appropriate, Commission direction is needed on a couple items:

1. **Public engagement** is an important activity to gather input on what residents and communities think about the water resources in their community and what they view as the most pressing issues. However, public engagement takes time! Below are some ideas on different levels of engagement for you to consider. This is by no means a complete list of outreach activities; we just need to gage your desired level of effort to help us draft an appropriate scope.
 - a. Low Level – minimal time and effort developing new materials and gathering input from residents and communities
 - i. Public “kick-off” meeting (required under MN Rules 8410)
 - ii. Online survey
 - iii. Newspaper and city/neighborhood newsletter articles requesting input
 - iv. Social media posts requesting input
 - v. Outreach at 1 – 3 events (farmers markets, festivals, etc.)

- b. Medium Level – development of new materials and higher level of engagement and outreach into various cities and diverse communities
 - i. All activities listed in “a”
 - ii. Additional services to increase accessibility at public kick-off meeting (e.g., childcare)
 - iii. Outreach at 4 – 8 events (farmers markets, festivals, etc.). The larger number of outreach events would allow us to target multiple areas in the watershed (cities, subwatersheds, etc.).
 - iv. Discussions with various communities held as part of existing meetings or as separate meetings arranged specific to the Plan (city commissions, Minneapolis neighborhood associations, lake associations, diverse communities)
- c. High Level – significant time and effort spent developing new materials and reaching out to all communities
 - i. All activities listed in “a” and “b” above
 - ii. Professional design of new graphics and materials to highlight the Plan’s development and compel audiences to get involved
 - iii. Professionally facilitated discussions at meetings and events with cities, groups, and diverse communities

Question 1: Which level feels like the right fit for the Commission?

Question 2: Will commissioners/alternates commit to assisting with outreach efforts – particularly at events like farmers markets and festivals? If every commissioner or alternate commits to volunteering at one event, more input could be gathered for a lower cost.

- 2. **Administrator Time** – The Administrative Services Committee will meet soon to perform staff evaluations and to discuss my contract. There are many pieces of the Plan development process that will require my time including guiding the whole process, engaging with stakeholders, coordinating and facilitating plan committee meetings, and doing much of the actual plan writing. The scope that staff develops (if given direction to do so) will include estimates for my time, along with commission engineers’ time and others, as needed.

Question: Is there consensus that it is appropriate for my updated contract to include additional hours (during the Plan development years) to account for the added time that will be needed to guide and assist with Plan development?

