



# Water Sustainability



# Goals for today



## Topics

- Met Council's role in the region and in Water Sustainability
- MAWSAC and MAWSAC TAC
- Subregional Planning Efforts
- Current and Proposed Sustainability Projects/Planning Efforts

# Metropolitan Council overview

The Metropolitan Council is the regional **policy-making body, planning agency, and provider of essential services** for the Twin Cities metropolitan region.

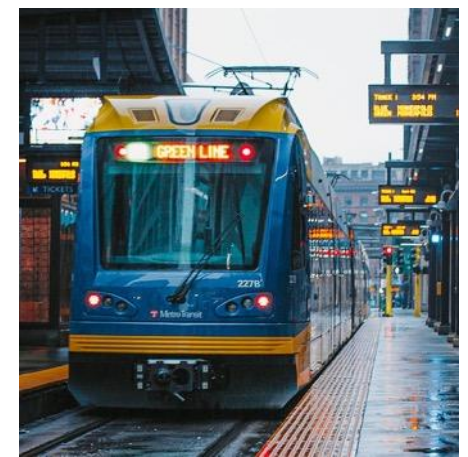
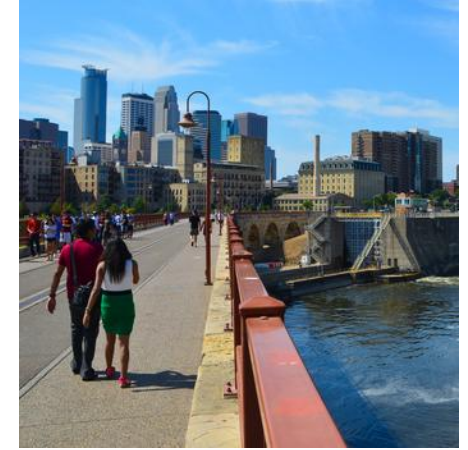


The Council's mission is to foster efficient and economic growth for a prosperous region.

# Met Council's role

## Clean water for future generations

- The Met Council works with partners and local governments to undertake water planning in the region
- The Met Council convenes, engages, collaborates, and builds solutions with our communities, stakeholders, and other partners.
- Our water supply planning and work is primarily funded by Clean Water Funds
- The Met Council has a role in reviewing and commenting on Environmental Reviews
- The Met Council coordinates growth and development in the region through our comprehensive planning process
- The Met Council is not a direct water supplier, but we have a planning and technical guidance role in water supply issues
- The Met Council does not permit or regulate water usage



# Metropolitan area water sustainability support

- All people have access to clean, safe, affordable water and wastewater services.
- All water and wastewater systems have sufficient funding to provide affordable services.
- All communities share in the economic, social, and environmental benefits of investment in water systems.



**Maximize use of existing infrastructure**



**Offset demand with efficiency and conservation**



**Balance multiple water sources to meet demand**



**Align agency directions**



**Recognize uncertainty and minimize risk**



**Maintain groundwater levels**



**Prevent groundwater contamination spread**



**Protect surface water flows**

# Guided by the diverse perspectives of MAWSAC and TAC members

## Metro Area Water Supply Advisory Committee (MAWSAC) - 473.1565

- Metro Council Chair or designee is committee Chair
- Appointments from State Agencies:
  - Agriculture
  - Health
  - Natural Resources
  - Pollution Control Agency
- Appointment from:
  - Minneapolis Water Department
  - St. Paul Regional Water Services
- Governor Appointed Members:
  - Representatives from 2 metro counties and cities for the other 5 metro counties
  - Representatives from Wright, Sherburne, Isanti and Chisago Counties

## Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

15 Members appointed by MAWSAC

- Majority of members represent single-city and multi-city public water supply systems
- Experts in water resources analysis and modeling
- Hydrology
- Engineering, planning, design, and construction of water systems or water systems finance

Summary, full report, and other committee work on MAWSAC's webpage:

<https://metrocouncil.org/Council-Meetings/Committees/Water-Supply-Advisory-Committee.aspx>

# Water sustainability programs are supported by subregional collaboration

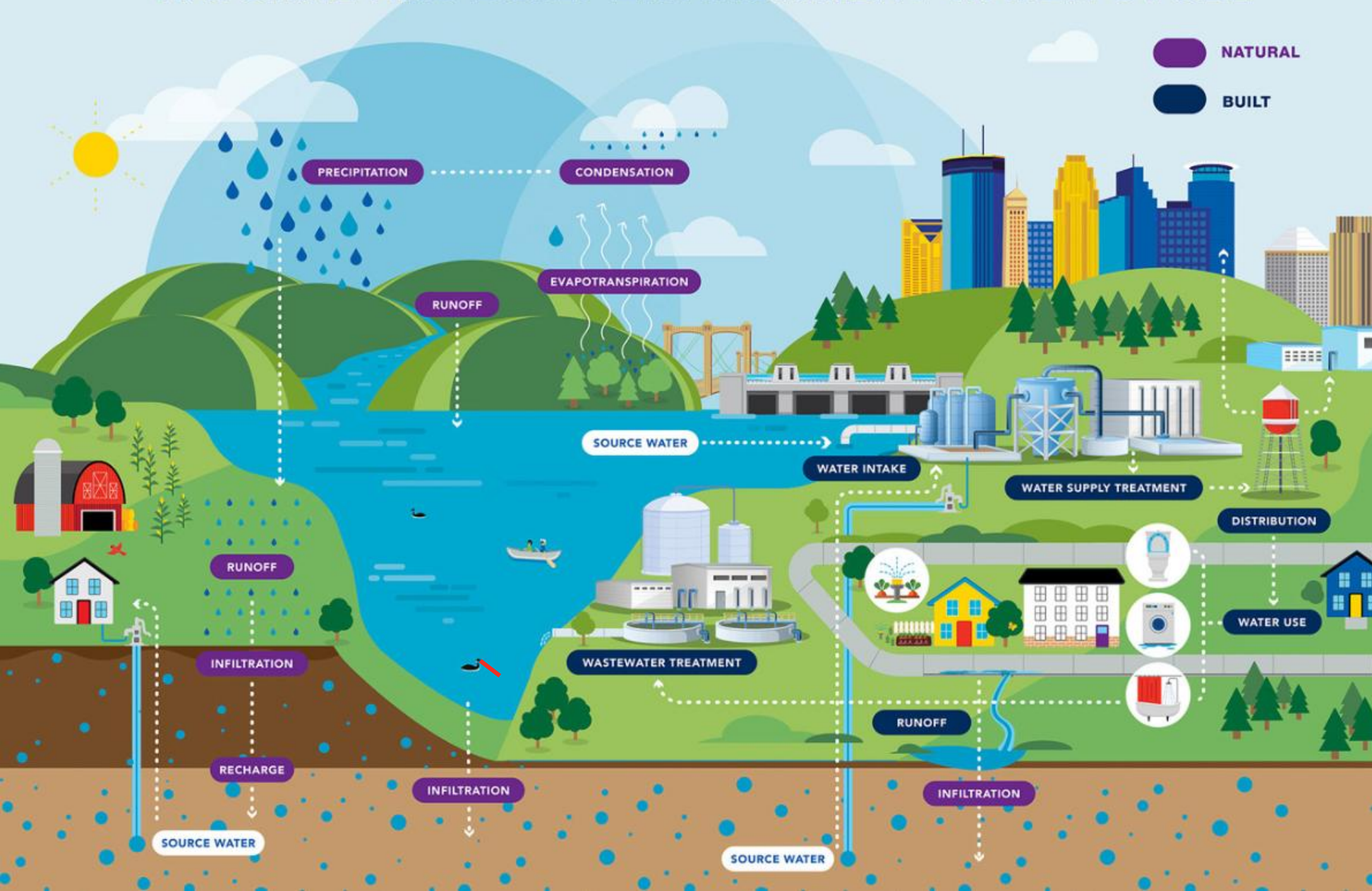
*“Groundwater doesn’t know community boundaries. We can have a greater impact if we work together on water supply sustainability.”*

**Member of southeast metro water supply work group**



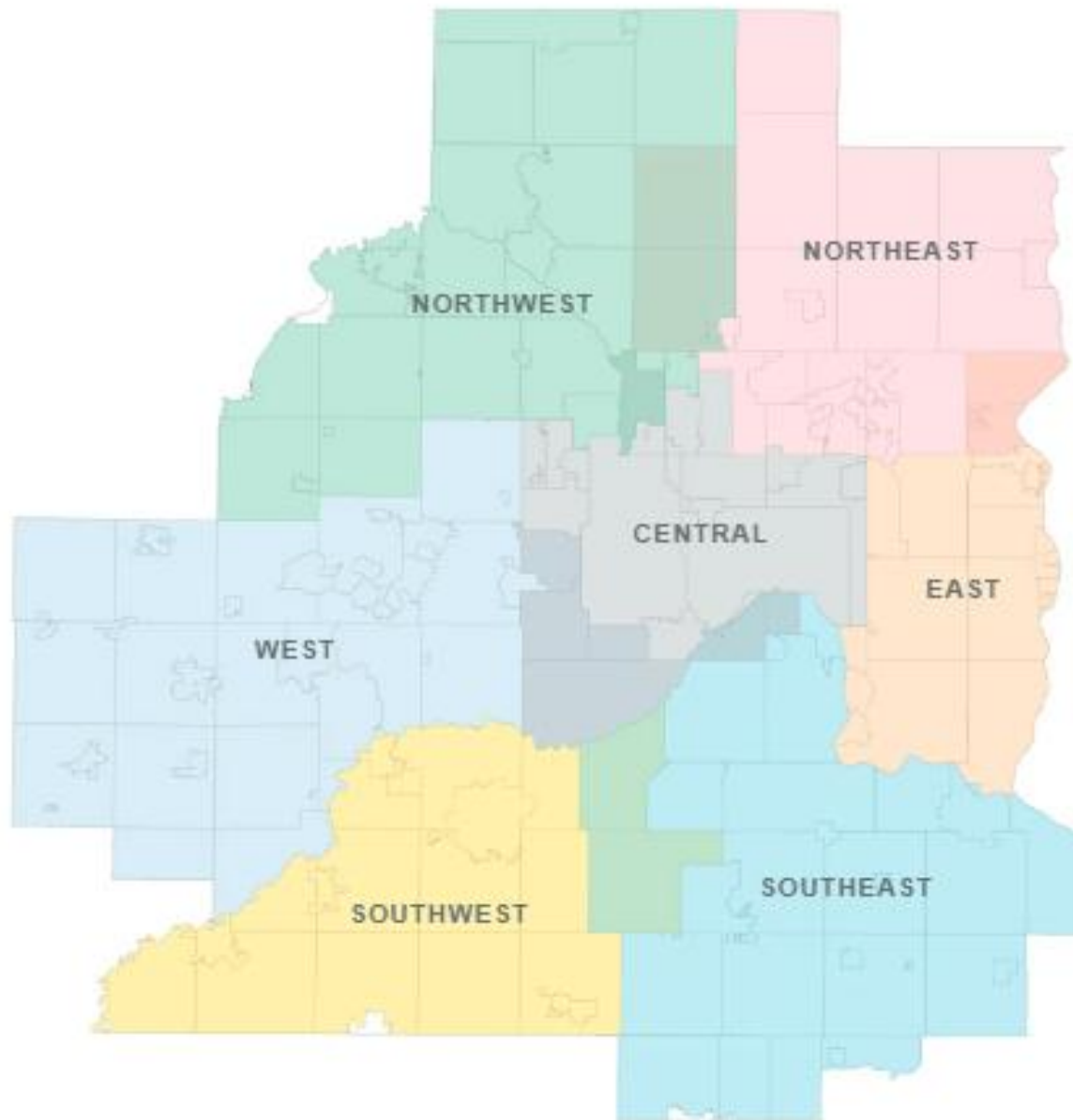
# Water collaboration is necessary

## NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT WATER CYCLE



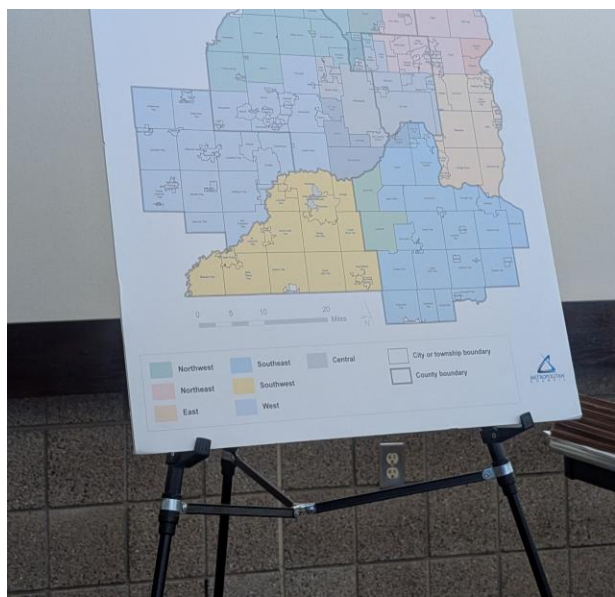
- The natural and built environment are connected, ever-changing, and shaping each other
- What is done on and to land affects water quality, quantity, availability, and services
- Jurisdictions don't align with hydrology. Watershed scale approaches are needed
- Organizations cannot reach a sustainable equitable water future alone

# Water policy & planning subregions



**Subregions are a forum for collaboration, tapping into collective expertise, and leveraging resources to address complex challenges by:**

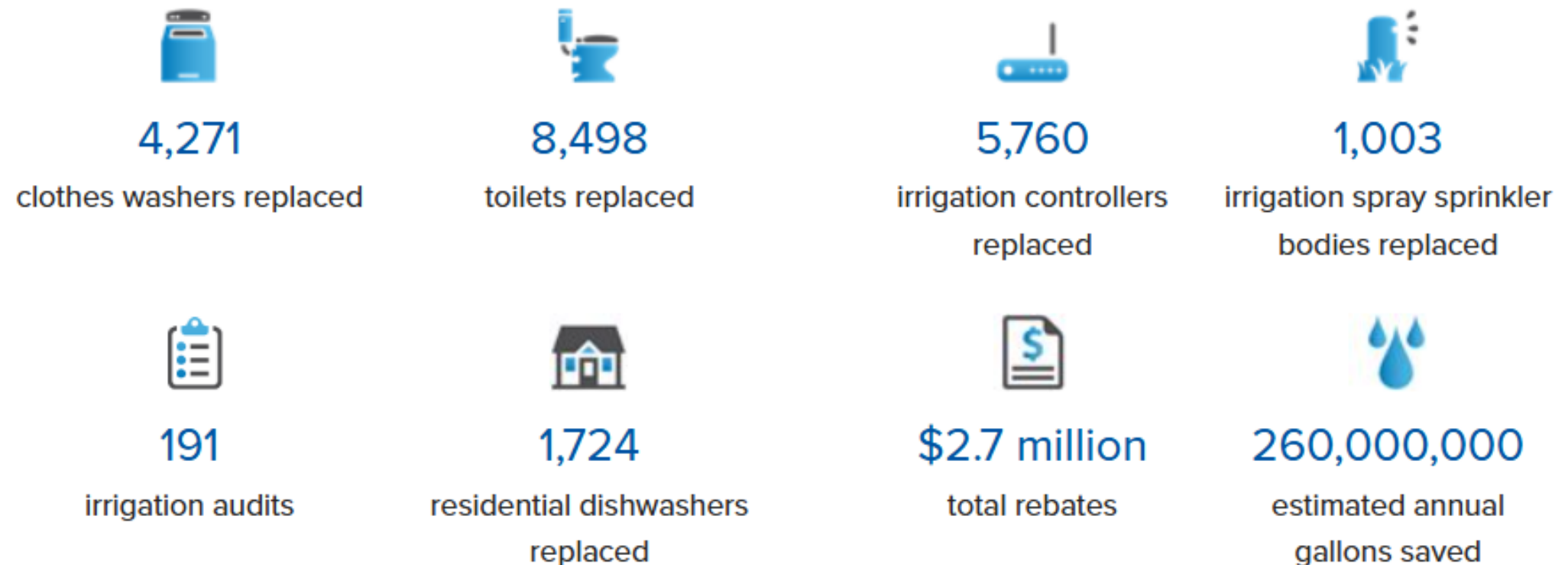
- Hosting inclusive and diverse audiences (land use planners, water planners, water associations, climate planners, etc.)
- Identifying challenges, needs, concerns
- Co-creating solutions and collective action
- Guiding regional policy formation and implementation



# Met Council water sustainability programs and projects

**Clean Water Fund appropriation of \$1.4m for FY26-27 allows the Met Council to provide grants to assist metro area municipalities to implement water demand reduction and efficiency measures**

Total Water Efficiency Grant outcomes through Sept. 30, 2025



# Water Sustainability Program

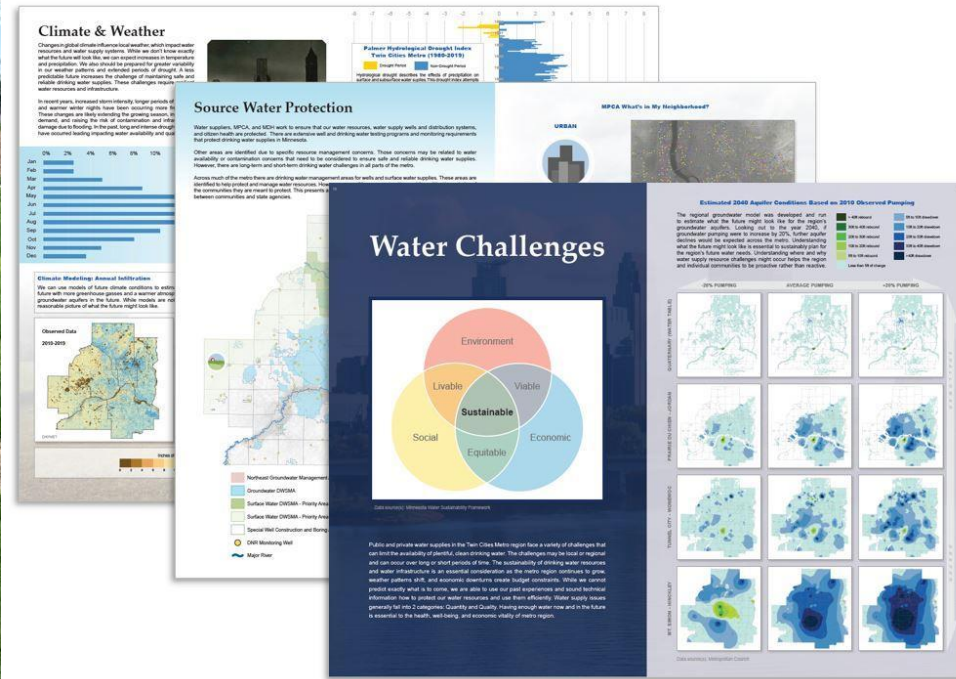


## Clean Water Fund appropriation of \$2.75m for FY26-27

- Identify solutions to link land use with water sustainability
- Balance regional water use between surface, stormwater, wastewater, and groundwater
- Analyze infrastructure needs for reliable water systems
- Support capital and operational cost estimates for planning
- Develop funding and cost-sharing for regional water projects
- Create tools to address climate change impacts on water systems and sustainability
- Promote groundwater protection through stormwater reuse grants



# Water Sustainability Program



## Examples of projects that Clean Water Funds fund:

- [Minnesota Technical Assistance Program \(MnTAP\)](#) is an outreach program at the University of Minnesota that helps Minnesota businesses develop and implement industry-tailored solutions that conserve groundwater, prevent pollution at the source, maximize efficient use of resources, and reduce energy use and costs to improve public health and the environment.
  - The Met Council has funded 53 interns
- Turf Grass Research in partnership with the U of M
- Update Metro Model 4, a modeling tool for sustainable water planning—helping agencies, planners, and communities make informed decisions today that protect water for tomorrow
- Update the Water Supply Planning Atlas



# Water Sustainability Program

## Upcoming technical projects

### Underway:

- Regional Groundwater Metro Model Update
- Regional assessment of aging infrastructure
- PlanIt Programming Regarding Water Supply
- Local water planning handbook guidance related to water supply

### Starting soon:

- Groundwater Elevations Database Coordination with the DNR
- Groundwater- surface water interaction impacts and effects
- Historical water use database

### Identified for future consideration:

- Long-Term Analysis: Groundwater Capacity, Resource Limitation Vulnerability, and Growth
- Long term effects of climate change on water supplies
- Water and wastewater reuse potential
- Potential water impacts from large volume water users
- Guidance for Funding Opportunities to Support Local Plan Implementation



# North and East Metro Comprehensive Plan Project



## **Legislative directive (Minnesota Session Laws, 2023 Regular Session, Chapter 60, Article 1, Section 5(f))**

Develop a comprehensive plan to ensure communities in the White Bear Lake area have access to sufficient drinking water to allow for municipal growth while simultaneously ensuring the sustainability of surface and groundwater resources to supply the needs of future generations.

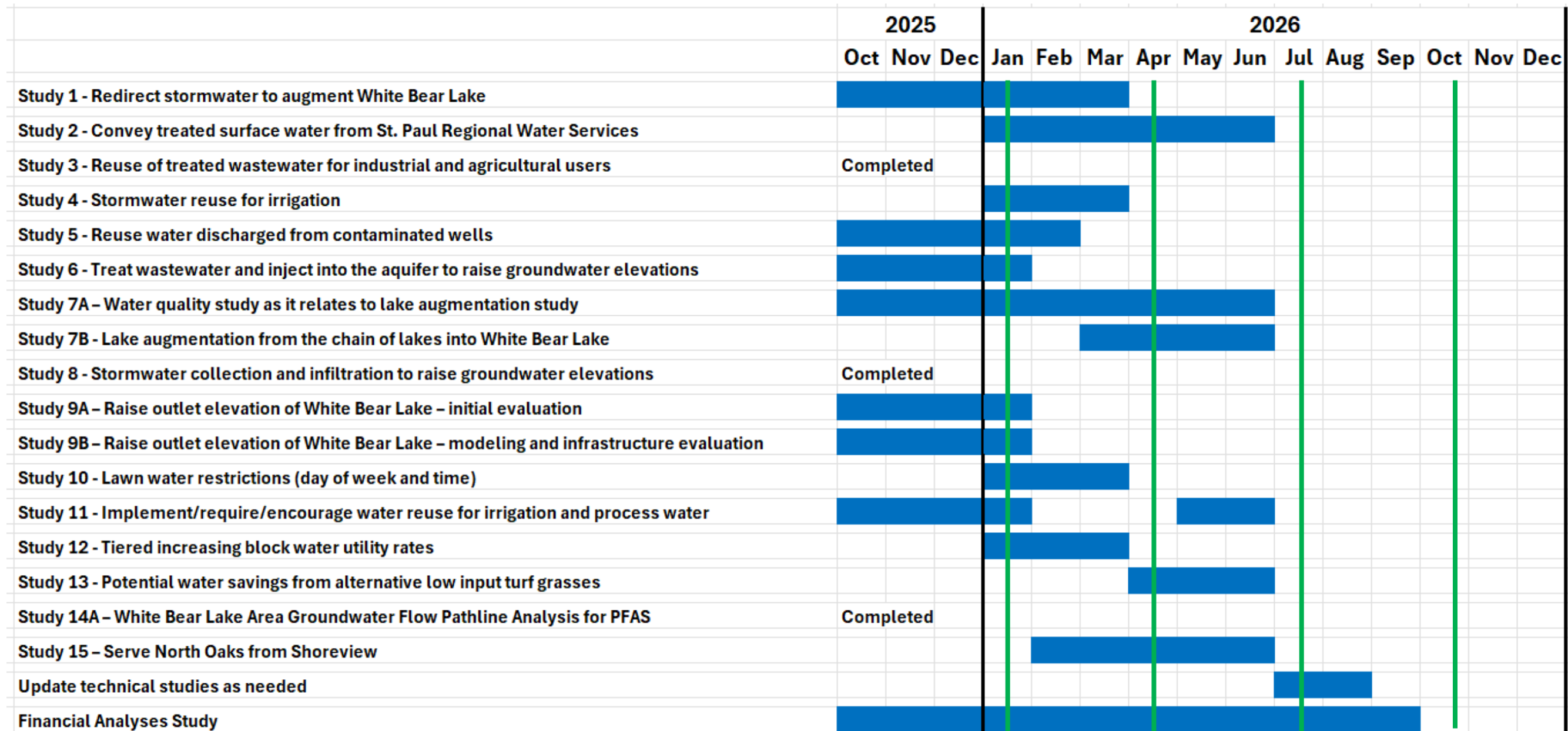
Comprehensive plan will be submitted to the legislature by June 30, 2027.

## **Work Group Membership:**

- Commissioners or designees from DNR, MDH, and MPCA
- Representatives from Metro Area Water Supply Advisory Committee (MAWSAC) and St. Paul Regional Water Services
- Communities of Stillwater, Mahtomedi, Hugo, Lake Elmo, Lino Lakes, North St. Paul, Oakdale, Vadnais Heights, Shoreview, Woodbury, New Brighton, White Bear Lake, White Bear Township, and North Oaks

# North and East Metro projects and schedule

Scheduled work group meeting 





Thank You

**Sam Paske**

Assistant General Manager, Water Planning Services

