



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
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DATE: November 14, 2017

TO: Comprehensive Planning Committee

FROM: Josh William, PED staff

RE: 2040 Comprehensive Plan Water Resources Chapter

BACKGROUND

What is the Comprehensive Plan?

The Comprehensive Plan is Saint Paul's "blueprint" for guiding development for the next 20 years. It addresses city-wide physical development, and contains chapters on Land Use, Transportation, Parks and Recreation, Housing, Historic Preservation and Water Resources. While the policy focus is on physical development, the Plan's core values, goals and policies reflect an understanding that how we arrange the physical elements of our city – streets, parks, housing, public infrastructure – impacts and is impacted by the people in our city. The current update of the Comprehensive Plan also has several overarching issues integrated into each chapter, including racial and social equity, aging in community, community/public health, economic development, sustainability/resiliency and urban design. The policies contained in the Comprehensive Plan are based on Saint Paul's core values; history; community priorities; and emerging social, economic and environmental trends.

Legal Framework

The state Metropolitan Land Planning Act requires that every municipality and other local government in the seven-county metropolitan region have a Comprehensive Plan, and that it be updated every 10 years consistent with the Metropolitan Council's regional plan and system plans for transportation, parks and water. (Note: In Saint Paul, several other plans beyond the six city-wide chapters have been adopted periodically as addenda to the Comprehensive Plan, including the *Central Corridor Development Strategy*, station area plans, master plans, area plans and district plans. These documents are not required by the Metropolitan Council to be updated every 10 years; they are updated as needed at any time.) The guiding regional document for this update of Saint Paul's Comprehensive Plan is *Thrive MSP 2040*. The Metropolitan Council also has a Housing Policy Plan that is not required by statute, but provides guidance to municipalities as they prepare their own Housing chapters. The mandated planning time frame for this update of the Comprehensive Plan is 2040.

In addition to *Thrive MSP 2040*, the City's update of the Comprehensive Plan must respond to regional growth projections in population, housing units and employment. The following projections have been established for Saint Paul to 2040: an increase of 40,000 residents, 20,000 households and 30,000 jobs. We have to show how we will accomplish this growth, as well as how our local policies will implement regional policies. In its review, the Metropolitan Council also considers our Comprehensive Plan's compatibility with the plans of neighboring municipalities and agencies with jurisdiction in Saint Paul (e.g. watershed districts, Ramsey County, MnDOT). Saint Paul is designated as an "Urban Center" in *Thrive MSP 2040*.

Planning Commission Role in Review and Adoption

One of the core responsibilities of the Planning Commission is to oversee the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, and to recommend it to the City Council for adoption. Once the City Council has adopted the Plan, it is sent to the Metropolitan Council for final approval. For three chapters – Transportation, Parks & Recreation and Historic Preservation – a Planning Commission committee or other City commission will also review the relevant draft chapter and forward a recommendation to the Planning Commission. A public hearing on the complete draft Comprehensive Plan will be held at the Planning Commission and likely at the City Council prior to adoption. The role of the Planning Commission is to ensure that the chapters of the Comprehensive Plan respond to our regional mandate for growth, maintain a city-wide perspective, are consistent with one another and reflect the city's core values.

2010 WATER RESOURCES CHAPTER

The Water Resources Chapter in the Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2010, identified three broad strategies: (1) Ensure a Safe and Affordable Water Supply System, (2) Reduce Pollutant Loads to Water Bodies, and (3) Operate and Maintain a Cost Effective Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure. These three strategies correspond to the three required elements of the plan: a water supply plan, a surface water management plan, and a sanitary sewer system plan. The chapter includes 19 policies related to water supply, 29 related to surface water, and 9 related to sanitary sewer.

While ambitious in scope, the specificity of the policies in the chapter in some cases outstripped the City's ability to effectively implement those policies. In addition, the current plan could have better leveraged the substantial effort that goes into development of the City's required Water Supply Plan and Local Surface Water Management Plan. These documents are required by State law and address the required Comprehensive Plan elements related to water supply and surface water management. Moreover, they include specific implementation language that has been well-vetted by appropriate City staff, and has undergone review by local watershed districts and management organizations, as well as jurisdictional State agencies.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Extensive community engagement – far more than in a typical process – has been undertaken to set the community vision and priorities for the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, and to identify issues to address within it. The engagement approach has been to reach as many people as possible; be genuine about the role of engagement; and be representative by race, age and

geography. Major engagement kicked off in May 2016 with three broadly-advertised open house events, and continued throughout 2016 into 2017 with attendance at community festivals, pop-up meetings in public locations, district council meetings, City department meetings, policymaker interviews, radio interviews on WEQY (Voice of the East Side) and KMOJ (The People's Station), Open Saint Paul online input, and discussions with experts and advocacy organizations. As of this writing, staff has spoken with over 2300 people at 67 events, generating over 4,000 comments. At least one event was held and at least 25 people were engaged in each of Saint Paul's 17 planning districts, with an average of three events and 100 people per district. During the big engagement push of May-September 2016, the over 800 people of color engaged represented approximately 50% of the total participants, compared to a city-wide population proportion of 40% (in 2010). The age of participants was also mostly representative of the city-wide population, if somewhat older.

Nine themes and priorities emerged from the community engagement. In December 2016 and January 2017, staff sent an e-blast of the preliminary themes and priorities, and posted them in 81 strategically-selected "third places" (gathering spaces like coffee shops, libraries, and community centers) to invite feedback. Seventy-one comments were received, mostly confirming the themes and priorities, with the most commonly-suggested additions relating to climate change resiliency and adaptation. Responding to this feedback, "sustainability" was added to create a modified final list of nine themes:

- **Livability, equity and sustainability.** When we asked about regional themes established by the Metropolitan Council, a majority said livability and equity are the most important for Saint Paul. Further public input established sustainability as also being vitally important. Other regional themes to be incorporated into the updated Comprehensive Plan include prosperity and stewardship.
- **Parks and open space.** Parks and open space, from Como Park to Swede Hollow to the Mississippi River to local playgrounds, were consistently identified throughout the city as cherished places that we should preserve and enhance.
- **Sense of community.** Many people identified social connections, diversity and their neighborhood's character – whether "vibrant" or "quiet" – as key advantages of living in Saint Paul.
- **Public safety.** People want to be and feel safe in their communities, and to have positive relationships with police officers. Strategic investment and thoughtful design can improve public safety. While this issue goes beyond typical development policies covered in the Plan, other ways to meaningfully incorporate this deep concern will be explored.
- **Road safety for pedestrians and bicycles.** Pedestrian safety at crossings and improved facilities were frequently identified as issues, as were bicycle facility improvements and safety.
- **Invest in people.** Whether job training or programming at recreation centers (especially for youth), people identified this as an important issue for Saint Paul. Many commented that these investments pay dividends for livability, prosperity and public safety.
- **Jobs.** People said we need more and better jobs to allow people to provide for their families and lift up the entire community.

- **Quality affordable housing.** People said we need more affordable housing, and that existing housing must be well-maintained.
- **Saint Paul is full of opportunity sites.** The range of “places with potential” identified was astounding, including major projects like Snelling-Midway (soccer stadium area) and the Ford site; large geographies like “the East Side,” “the Green Line” or “the riverfront;” commercial corridors like White Bear Avenue or Selby Avenue; and individual sites throughout the city. People said there are gems throughout the city, ready for (re)discovery and investment.

In addition to the overall themes and priorities, staff sorted through the engagement input to identify public priorities relevant to the content areas of the Water Resources Chapter:

- Water conservation
- Water quality
- Climate change preparedness
- Stormwater management

Staff is currently in the process of sharing draft Water Resources Chapter policies with watershed district partners (Capital Region Watershed District, Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District and the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization), and will incorporate any feedback into a subsequent draft of the chapter.

WATER RESOURCES CHAPTER PROCESS

Unlike other chapters, community input having strong relevance to the Water Resources Chapter was quite limited, and not very specific. While the process for developing draft policy language took place in the context of the Thrive 2040 Principles and Outcomes and the themes and priorities identified through community outreach and engagement, it also relied on internal staff working group discussions, building on and leveraging existing plan content, and addressing required elements. Some ways in which this was achieved are:

- 2010 Water Resources Chapter content reviewed for applicability
- Review of the Local Surface Water Management Plan (LSWMP) as it was developed
- Policy discussions related to stormwater rate control requirements and precipitation patterns
- Water Supply Plan and LSWMP content used to inform policy development
- Documentation of infiltration and inflow (I&I) program

DRAFT CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

The draft Water Resources Chapter is organized around four high-level goals. Much like the 2010 version of the chapter, this organization is a reflection of the content elements and related plans required by State law. The Water Resources Chapter is required to incorporate both the City’s Water Supply Plan (WSP) and Local Surface Water Management Plan (LSWMP). It is also required to include a sanitary sewer element. The former two have been developed by City staff and provided to partner agencies for review, and will be incorporated into the Water Resources Chapter as appendices. The details of the latter are being developed by Planning and Sewer Utility staff, and will also be incorporated into the Water Resources Chapter as an

appendix. However, unlike the 2010 version, the 2040 Water Resources Chapter also seeks a more integrated approach to how we think about, regulate, and manage water. The four high-level goals for the Draft Water Resources Chapter are:

- **Integrated water resource management strategies**
- **A safe, reliable, and sustainable water supply**
- **Excellent surface water quality**
- **Sustainable wastewater conveyance and treatment infrastructure**

NEXT STEPS

The Comprehensive Planning Committee will review this chapter (and all the chapters) before authorizing staff to release the entire draft plan for public comment in early 2018. Upon revising to respond to public comment at that time, staff will then return to the Comprehensive Planning Committee to request that a formal public hearing be set in front of the Planning Commission in April 2018.

Additional maps related to the chapter will be drafted in 2017 and presented to the Comprehensive Planning Committee for review at a later date. The plan document is anticipated to be before the City Council in June 2018 for a public hearing and adoption.

Attachments

1. Draft Water Chapter Policies
2. Draft Water Chapter Outline

Outline of 2040 Water Resources Chapter

Intro

Purpose statement

Goals

Policies (by Goal)

Figures

(Implementation)

Appendices

A: Wastewater

- Table: HH/Emp forecasts (10yr increments) served by sewer, ISTS, community systems
- Map: Existing SS system (lift stations, planned and existing connects to MCES), WWTPs, Municipal Interconnections
- Table: Capacity and Design Flows for Trunk Sewers and Lift Stations; assignments of 2040 growth (HH and Emp) by MCES Interceptor
- I&I Goals, Policies, Strategies:
 - Link to/copy of ordinances prohibiting and requiring disconnect of rain leaders, foundation drains/sump pumps
 - Summary of programs/activities related to private system I&I
 - Extent/significance and source of current I&I
 - Analysis of costs for remediating I&I
 - I&I Implementation Plan:
 - Strategies
 - Priorities
 - Scheduling
 - Finance Mechanisms
- Describe management program for SSTs (community and individual)
- Map: All existing SSTs (community and individual), identify non-conforming/problem SSTs
- Describe policies for allowing new community SSTs

B: LSWMP

- Statement of Intent

- Statement regarding amendment of plan
- LWSMP and Appendices

C: Water Supply Plan

- Statement of Intent
- Statement regarding amendment of plan
- WSP and Appendices

Goals for 2040 Water Resources Chapter

Integrated water resource management strategies

A safe, reliable, and sustainable water supply

Excellent surface water quality

Sustainable wastewater conveyance and treatment infrastructure

Integrated water resource management strategies

- WR-1. Utilize rain as a resource to achieve multiple benefits when managing stormwater, such as harvesting water for irrigation or flushing.
- WR-2. Work with development partners to support application of district green stormwater approaches .
- WR-3. Promote visible green infrastructure landscape features, such as rain gardens and tree trenches. *[sidebar on Shared, Stacked, Green Infrastructure or similar]*
- WR-4. Advance municipal policy and financing solutions to support district green stormwater infrastructure.
- WR-5. Advocate for expanded water reuse capacity, including through support for code and policy changes to make water reuse cheaper and easier.
- WR-6. Leverage urban forestry and stormwater runoff initiatives to increase resiliency.
- WR-7. Support regional efforts to address groundwater usage and recharge.

A safe, reliable, and sustainable water supply

- WR-8. Continue education and conservation measures identified in the 2016 Water Supply Plan to increase efficiency and reduce water demand.
- WR-9. Work with partners to update and implement Saint Paul's Wellhead Protection and Source Water Protection plans.
- WR-10. Fund the strategic capital projects outlined in the 2016 Water Supply Plan and 2016-2018 Saint Paul Regional Water Services Strategic Plan.
- WR-11. Maintain emergency response readiness.

Excellent surface water quality

- WR-12. Collaborate with partner agencies on water quality improvement efforts, including capital projects and programming.
- WR-13. Educate the public on urban water quality issues and stormwater best management practices.
- WR-14. Work with partners to address known surface water quality impairments as outlined in the Saint Paul Local Surface Water Management Plan (LSWMP).
- WR-15. Acknowledge and respond to changing precipitation patterns and ensure adequacy of existing stormwater management regulations.

- WR-16. Utilize best management practices for “good housekeeping,” including snow removal, street sweeping and facility maintenance.
- WR-17. Encourage the use of Minimal Impact Design Standards (MIDS) for new development in the City of Saint Paul. [*sidebar on MIDS*]
- WR-18. Maintain existing gray stormwater infrastructure and incorporate or upgrade pollution-reduction features such as SAFL Baffles as opportunities arise.

Sustainable wastewater conveyance and treatment infrastructure

- WR-19. Continue Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) identification and correction efforts for municipal sanitary conveyance systems and connecting private infrastructure. [*sidebar on I&I*]
- WR-20. Encourage Metropolitan Council efforts to identify and correct I&I on Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES)-owned facilities in Saint Paul and those in surrounding communities that impact MCES infrastructure serving Saint Paul.
- WR-21. Reduce reliance on individual sewage treatment systems where financially feasible.*
- WR-22. Continue to reduce non-compliant ISTS and ensure maintenance of compliant systems.*
- WR-23. Prohibit new ISTSs and/or community treatment systems where public sanitary conveyance infrastructure is available.*
- WR-24. Plan for adequate municipal conveyance infrastructure and support adequate metropolitan system capacity to serve more intensive redevelopment in appropriate locations.

* Additional research is needed on state requirements and compatibility of these policies with existing/proposed land use policies.