Minutes

White Bear Lake Area Comprehensive Plan Work Group

Meeting Date: January 15, 2026 **Time**: 12:30 – 3:30 PM **Location:** Shoreview Community Center
4600 Victoria St. N., Shoreview, MN

Members Present:

- ✓ Bryan Bear, City of Hugo
- ✓ Clark Schroeder, City of Lake Elmo
- ✓ Mike Grochala, City of Lino Lakes
- ✓ Bob Goebel, City of Mahtomedi
- ✓ Craig Schlichting, City of New Brighton
- ✓ Morgan Dawley, City of North St. Paul
- ✓ Shawn Sanders, City of Stillwater
- ✓ Paul Kauppi, City of White Bear Lake
- ✓ Jim Hauth, City of Vadnais Heights
- ✓ Mary Van Milligen, City of Woodbury
- ✓ David Weum, Department of Health
- ✓ Dave Strub, Metropolitan Area Water Supply Advisory Committee
- ✓ Liz Kaufenberg, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- ✓ Will Menkhaus, Saint Paul Regional Water Services
- ✓ Jason Moeckel, Department of Natural Resources
- ✓ Greg Johnson, Metropolitan Council
- ✓ Judy Sventek, Metropolitan Council
- ✓ Sam Paske, Metropolitan Council
- ✓ John Chelbeck, Met Council

Alternate Members Present:

- ✓ Brian Bachmeier, City of Oakdale

Call to Order

Judy Sventek called the meeting of the White Bear Lake Comprehensive Plan Work Group to order at 12:30 p.m.

Agenda Approved

Work Group members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

Information Items and Committee Work

1. Welcome and introductions

   Della Young from Young Environmental welcomed the group and introduced herself as the new facilitator for the work group meetings. New attendees introduced themselves.

2. Project Schedule (Greg Johnson, Met Council)

   Greg Johnson from Met Council provided an update on current studies and upcoming studies and the overall project timeline. A work group member asked how Study 15 gets them closer to reducing groundwater usage by switching North Oaks to Shoreview water through the installing additional wells. Greg responded that the water demand projections for 2050 and ultimate development determined how many future wells are required for each community, and those future wells and their locations (as determined by the communities) were modeled by the DNR with respect to

influencing White Bear Lake in addition to two additional future wells in Shoreview to serve North Oaks. The DNR's groundwater modeling determined that all these future wells could be constructed and pumped to serve ultimate development demands and maintain White Bear Lake surface water elevations at or above 922.0 ft for either the lake augmentation option or the option to switch select communities over to surface water. He added that the goal is to implement a long-term solution to allow the pumping restrictions from the White Bear Lake court order to be repealed to allow communities to construct future wells to serve growth.

3. Study 6 – Wastewater reuse for aquifer injection or direct lake augmentation final report (Chris Larson, SEH)

   Chris Larson from SEH presented updates on the method of reusing treated wastewater and injecting it into the aquifer or directly augmenting White Bear Lake. The study initially looked at treating and augmenting the lake with current wastewater volumes compared to future water use scenarios. An updated analysis was done to compare treatment and augmentation for the future ultimate development wastewater volumes with respect to estimated costs. The work group asked about where a potential future wastewater treatment plant would be located and how much capacity is in the aquifer when doing injections. The study concluded that aquifer injection and augmentation with reuse water is expensive but that lake level improvements are predicted with DNR groundwater modeling, especially with augmentation. There are also significant regulatory hurdles, no obvious capital cost offset, and they would need to collect wastewater samples to do further analysis.

4. Study 9B – Model and evaluate raising White Bear Lake outlet elevation update – (Mat Cox, Kimley-Horn)

   Mat Cox from Kimley-Horn presented a model that evaluated impacts to raising the outlet elevation of White Bear Lake and provided updates on analysis of a secondary outlet option. Mat went over the impact of raising the outlet elevation on nearby easements and properties. Due to challenges with increasing discharge rates, it is not recommended to continue to pursue outlet modifications. The work group members asked for more details about how the easements applied and if there was room for the easements to be purchased and changed. The work group wanted to keep this option on the table for future discussion since it appears to be more cost effective as a partial solution compared to other solutions.

5. Study 11 - Implement/require/encourage non- or less-potable water reuse or potable reuse for irrigation and process water update (Uma Vempati, Kimley-Horn)

   Uma Vempati from Kimley-Horn presented on reusing treated surface water from East Vadnais Lake water for irrigation or process water in White Bear Lake and Vadnais Heights. He provided an update on which tasks they have completed so far, and which were in progress. Uma provided preliminary survey results for responses from prospective customers on their water usage and interest in non-potable service. The work group discussed how to quantify the impact to lake levels by cost, what businesses were included, and what incentives could be provided for customers to switch to non-potable service.

6. Preliminary Financial Model – Preliminary financial model and work group exercise (Ben Crary, Anna Munson, and Fernando Aranda of Hazen and Sawyer, Hazen and Sawyer)

   Hazen and Sawyer presented on their preliminary financial model to assess estimated costs with supply alternatives and the potential impact to rate payers and communities. Before the presentation, some members of the work group shared concerns about the work group exercise due to the questions regarding funding being provided by the 14 communities. Project staff shared that the exercise is to discuss and explore all potential funding options. Work group members shared concern that the legislation does not suggest they explore funding coming from the 14 communities. The work group discussed whether it is helpful to see potential rate impacts or if they would prefer not to put efforts towards that analysis. After discussion, Hazen and Sawyer presented their preliminary financial model and the benchmarks for cost and affordability for the different communities. After the presentation, the work group exercise was modified to ask how they would

like to see recommended infrastructure improvements be financed in general. The work group discussed the feasibility of getting community support around rate changes and preferred funding options. Suggested options include state funding, federal funding, DNR user fees in the area or statewide, local sales tax option, taxing district for benefiting communities, LCCMR grant funding, assessments of lake front owners, and more. After discussion, the project team confirmed that they heard their concerns and would discuss modifications to the financial analysis study.

7. Policy discussion (Judy Sventek, Met Council)
   Judy Sventek from Met Council shared information on what kind of recommendations the work group should be considering to address policy. Potential recommendations include infrastructure recommendations such as converting from groundwater to surface water or lake augmentation, or policy recommendations such as conservation and water use reduction. The work group discussed other potential recommendations such as past policy recommendations that were suggested during the lawsuit or if they would need legal input from the outcomes of the lawsuit.

8. Project Expenditures, questions, and next steps (Judy Sventek, Met Council)
   Judy Sventek from Met Council provided an update on how much of the budget has been allocated for current studies so far.

Next Steps

1. Next meeting: April 16, 2026, from 12:30-3:30 p.m. at Pederson Pavillion, Hugo.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

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