

elm creek Watershed Management Commission

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
3235 Fernbrook Lane • Plymouth, MN 55447
PH: 763.553.1144 • email: judie@jass.biz
www.elmcreekwatershed.org

June 5, 2024

Representatives

and

Technical Advisory Committee Members
Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission
Hennepin County, Minnesota

The meeting packet for this meeting may be found on the Commission's website:
<http://www.elmcreekwatershed.org/minutes--meeting-packets.html>

Dear Representatives and Members:

A regular meeting of the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission will be held on **Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at 11:30 a.m.** at Plymouth Community Center, 14800 34th Avenue North, Plymouth, MN. This month we will meet in the **Birch Room** on the main level.

During the regular meeting, the Commissioners must adopt its 2025 Operating Budget.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will meet at **10:00**, prior to the regular meeting.

Please email me at judie@jass.biz to confirm whether you or your Alternate will be attending the regular meeting.

Thank you.



Judie A. Anderson

Administrator

JAA:tim

Encls: Meeting Packet

cc:	Alternates	Erik Megow	Diane Spector	James Kujawa	Rebecca Carlson
	TAC Members	Karen Galles	Kris Guentzel	Kevin Ellis	Brian Vlach
	City Clerks	DNR	BWSR	Met Council	MPCA
	Reviewing Agencies			Official Newspaper	

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CHAMPLIN - CORCORAN - DAYTON - MAPLE GROVE - MEDINA - PLYMOUTH - ROGERS

TAC page no. 1

elm creek

Watershed Management Commission

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AGENDA Technical Advisory Committee June 12, 2024 | 10:00 a.m.

1. Call to Order.
 - a. Approve agenda.*
 - b. Approve minutes of last meeting.*
2. 2025 Operating Budget.*
 - a. 2023 YE Fund Balances.*
3. Fourth Generation Plan.*
 - a. Agency Input Summary.*
 - b. Draft Third Generation Self Assessment.*
4. Other Business.
5. Next TAC meeting – _____.
6. Adjournment.

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*in meeting packet
**available at meeting

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Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes | May 8, 2024

I. A meeting of the **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** of the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission was called to order at 11:00 a.m., Wednesday, May 8, 2024, in the Plymouth Community Center, 14800 34th Avenue North, Plymouth, MN, by Vice Chair Ben Scharenbroich.

Present: Heather Nelson, Champlin; Josh Accola, Stantec, Dayton; Rebecca Haug, WSB, Medina; Ben Scharenbroich, Plymouth; Andrew Simmons, Rogers; Diane Spector and Erik Megow, Stantec; Kevin Ellis, Hennepin County Environment and Energy (HCEE); Jen Dullum, BSWR; and Amy Juntunen, JASS. Also present: Doug Baines, Dayton.

Not represented: Corcoran and Maple Grove.

II. Motion by Nelson, second by Simmons to approve the **Agenda** as presented. *Motion carried unanimously.*

III. Motion by Simmons, second by Nelson to approve the **Minutes** of the April 10, 2024, meeting. *Motion carried unanimously.*

IV. **2025 OPERATING BUDGET.*** Included in the meeting packet is Staff's May 2, 2024, memo* outlining a proposed draft budget for 2025.

The proposed budget shown in **Table 1** on pages 4 and 5 of the memo separates the operating expenses from the capital and other non-operating expenses and revenues, which are accounted for separately and which will be reviewed in June. This separation allows you to more clearly determine if member assessments and project review fees are adequately funding operating expenses, or whether you are operating a deficit or surplus. It is analogous to a governmental General Fund budget rather than an all funds, balance sheet style.

The 2025 budget as proposed is a continuation of the programs and activities undertaken in 2024, with some slight modifications. The overall proposed 2025 operating budget is about a \$3,800 decrease over the 2024 budget, mainly due to assumptions about project review costs. However, some budget modifications are proposed:

The budget includes a proposed increase in the administrative budget, which has only been modestly increased in the past several years. In the meantime, there has been an increase in the number of TAC, WBIF and other meetings, and project and grant accounting has grown more complex.

The costs and revenues shown for project reviews in 2025 are based on the revised fee structure and our experience over the last few years. Some of the previous budgets simply brought

forward old numbers, and in some cases overestimated costs and potential revenues. The Commission remained fairly constant at the number of project reviews until last year, with only 30 projects vs. 48-54 in the three previous years. This year Staff is estimating the number at 30-40.

Numbers for TRPD monitoring will be adjusted based on numbers supplied by Brian Vlach earlier this week. Regular monitoring will increase by about \$3,600. USGS bills biannually but expects full payment at time of invoice, thus the erratic expenditure history.

One source of revenue that has, in the past, helped to subsidize the member assessments is investment interest. A combination of higher interest rates and a significant fund balance resulted in significant interest income in past years. As projects are completed and the Commission pays out levy and grant funds for those projects, interest earnings will fall.

The 2025 budget as proposed includes a 4.7% increase in city assessments. There was no increase in 2024. The proposed 2025 budget assumes a \$15,000 contribution from cash reserves. The Commission's Comprehensive Fund Balance Policy requires that the Commission maintain a cash reserve equal to either 50% of annual operating revenues or five months of operating expenses. Using the 2024 budget, that minimum reserve balance would be about \$157,000. According to the annual audit, the Unrestricted Fund Balance at the end of 2022 was \$141,927. However, there was also an unusually high project review fees escrow liability of nearly \$80,000 that had not yet been collected.

While the 2023 year-end balance is still under audit, it appears likely that the Commission currently maintains more than adequate cash reserves, especially since it appears at year end the budget ended with a \$58,000+ surplus due to interest earnings. Staff expect to have updated balance figures at the June meeting.

Table 2 details the proposed member city assessments for 2025 compared to previous years. The 2025 assessments are based on the revised legal boundary. It is not possible to do an apples-to apples comparison of 2024 to 2025 to evaluate the impact of the boundary change on the assessments. Assessments are based on share of taxable market value, and the table shows the taxable market value within each city's share of the watershed for 2024 compared to the 2023 value prior to the boundary change. While there is some variability year to year in market value and that variability is uneven across the cities, it is likely that a good share of the annual change this year was from the boundary revision.

V. PROPOSED MINOR PLAN AMENDMENT.

On April 10, 2024, the Commission initiated a Minor Plan Amendment to the Third Generation Watershed Management Plan, adding two projects to the CIP and revising the cost of one existing project. This proposed revision is set forth in the *Notice of Minor Plan Amendment* included in Staff's May 2, 2024, memo.* The full CIP encompassing the proposed revisions as well as other housekeeping revisions proposed by the cities was included for information. This proposed amendment will be discussed in detail at the Commission meeting following the TAC meeting. After receiving public comment the Commission may consider a resolution adopting a Minor Plan Amendment. As of this date, no comments have been received.

By consensus, the members recommended to the Commission approval of the Minor Plan Amendment as written.

elm creek Watershed Management Commission

TAC Meeting Minutes | May 10, 2024

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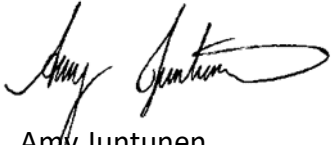
VI. OTHER BUSINESS.

A. WBIF Convene Meeting II is scheduled for Monday, May13, 2024 at 1:00 via Zoom.

B. The next Technical Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for June 12, 2024, at 10:30 a.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Amy Juntunen
Recording Secretary

AAJ:tim

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To: Elm Creek WMO Commissioners/TAC
From: Budget Committee
Date: May 2, 2024
Subject: Proposed 2025 Budget

**Recommended
Commission Action**

Review and discuss. You may move adoption of the proposed 2025 budget with any proposed revisions from the floor or hold over for action at the June 12 meeting.

According to the Joint Powers Agreement, the Commission must on or before June 15 of each year adopt a budget for the coming year. Typically, the Commission considers a preliminary budget in May of each year, either adopting it at the May meeting or holding over action to the June meeting. The budget must be transmitted along with notice of the apportionment of costs to each city by July 1. Member cities then have until August 15 to comment on or raise objections to the budget. If no objections are submitted, the budget proceeds as adopted. If objections are submitted in writing, then the Commission must hold a public hearing to consider modifying the budget or proceeding with no change.

The draft budget is presented to you for your review and discussion. If you are comfortable, you may elect to adopt the budget with any revisions agreed to at the May 8 meeting, or you may hold over approval until the June 12 meeting.

The proposed budget shown in Table 1 separates the operating expenses from the capital and other non-operating expenses and revenues, which are accounted for separately and which will be reviewed in June. This separation allows you to more clearly determine if your assessments and project review fees are adequately funding operating expenses, or whether you are operating a deficit or surplus. It is analogous to a governmental General Fund budget rather than an all funds, balance sheet style.

The 2025 budget as proposed is a continuation of the programs and activities undertaken in 2024, with some slight modifications. Figure 1 shows the proposed operating budget by expenditure category, while Table 1 shows the proposed operating budget by line item. The overall proposed 2025 operating budget is about a \$3,800 decrease over the 2024 budget, mainly due to some assumptions about project review costs. However, some budget modifications are proposed:

1. The budget includes a proposed increase in the administrative budget, which has only been modestly increased in the past several years. In the meantime, there has been an increase in the number of TAC, WBIF, and other meetings and project and grant accounting has grown more complex.
2. The costs and revenues shown for project reviews in 2025 are based on the revised fee structure and our experience over the last few years. Some of the previous budgets simply brought forward old numbers, and in some cases overestimated costs and potential revenues.

3. Some adjustments have been made to individual line items based on past experience and based on the increasing cost of doing business.
4. One source of revenue that has in the past helped to subsidize the member assessments is investment interest. A combination of higher interest rates and a significant fund balance resulted in significant interest income in past years. As projects are completed and the Commission pays out levy and grant funds for those projects, interest earnings will fall.

The 2025 budget as proposed includes a 4.7% increase in city assessments. There was no increase in 2024. The proposed 2025 budget assumes a \$15,000 contribution from cash reserves. The Commission’s Comprehensive Fund Balance Policy requires that the Commission maintain a cash reserve equal to either 50% of annual operating revenues or five months of operating expenses. Using the 2024 budget, that minimum reserve balance would be about \$157,000. According to the annual audit, the Unrestricted Fund Balance at the end of 2022 was \$141,927. However, there was also an unusually high project review fees escrow liability of nearly \$80,000 that had not yet been collected. While the 2023 year-end balance is still under audit, it appears likely that the Commission currently maintains more than adequate cash reserves, especially since it appears at year end the budget ended with a \$58,000+ surplus due to interest earnings. We expect to have updated balance figures at the June meeting.

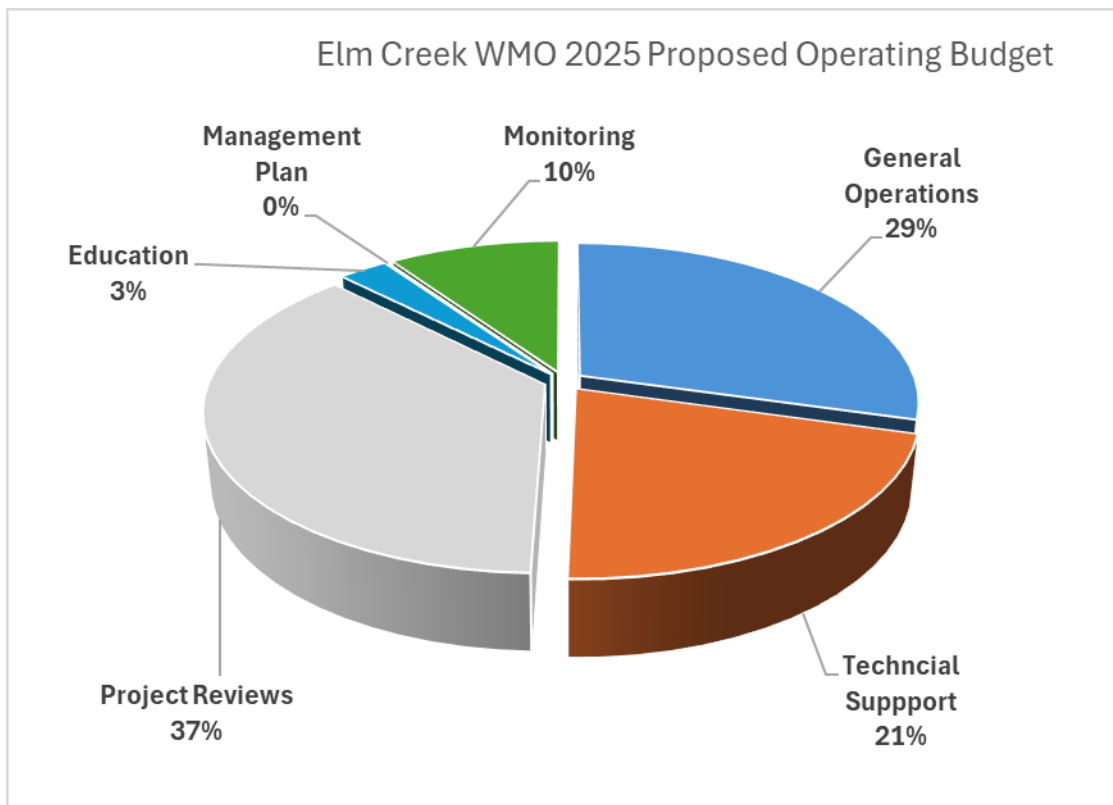


Figure 1. Proposed 2025 operating budget by expenditure category.

City Assessments

Table 2 details the proposed member city assessments for 2025 compared to previous years. The 2025 assessments are based on the revised legal boundary. It is not possible to do an apples-to-apples comparison of 2024 to 2025 to evaluate the impact of the boundary change on the assessments. However, Table 3 may provide some helpful context. There were 1146 acres (600 parcels) that moved out of West Mississippi and into Elm Creek, mostly from Champlin, and only 52 acres that moved from Elm Creek into West Mississippi. Shingle Creek gained 60 acres from Elm Creek, but 627 acres moved from Shingle Creek into Elm Creek, mostly in Plymouth. About 550 acres moved out of Elm Creek into Bassett Creek, mostly from Plymouth. The net impact was an increase in the Elm Creek watershed legal boundary area of almost 0.4 square miles.

Table 3 shows the area by city before and after the boundary change. Note that the percent of watershed area changed slightly, most notably in Champlin, but that is still less than one-half percent.

Assessments are based on share of taxable market value, and the table shows the taxable market value within each city's share of the watershed for 2024 compared to the 2023 value prior to the boundary change. While there is some variability year to year in market value and that variability is uneven across the cities, it is likely that a good share of the annual change this year was from the boundary revision. For example, if 500 of the 600 Champlin parcels that moved from West Miss to Elm were \$400,000 homes, that would increase the overall market value of Champlin's share of the watershed by 500*\$400,000 or \$200,000,000. The actual change between years was \$262,436,800.

Table 3. Area and market value changes before and after legal boundary revision.

City	Area (sq mi)			% of watershed		Taxable market value			% of watershed	
	Old	New	Change	Old	New	Old (2023)	New (2024)	Change	Old	New
Champlin	3.08	3.68	16.3%	2.4%	2.8%	\$898,761,000	\$1,161,197,800	22.6%	4.0%	5.1%
Corcoran	36.06	36.07	0.0%	27.6%	27.5%	1,808,292,200	1,806,478,300	-0.1%	8.0%	8.0%
Dayton	25.17	25.08	-0.4%	19.3%	19.1%	2,031,786,500	2,038,390,200	0.3%	9.0%	9.0%
Maple Grove	26.32	26.06	-1.0%	20.2%	19.9%	10,043,624,100	10,089,589,600	0.5%	44.7%	44.5%
Medina	9.34	9.37	0.3%	7.2%	7.2%	1,680,727,800	1,684,881,900	0.2%	7.5%	7.4%
Plymouth	4.44	4.51	1.6%	3.4%	3.4%	2,671,442,700	2,570,902,100	-3.9%	11.9%	11.3%
Rogers	26.2	26.2	0.0%	20.1%	20.0%	3,339,194,100	3,340,724,100	0.0%	14.9%	14.7%
TOTAL	130.61	130.97				\$22,473,828,400	\$22,692,164,000			

Table 1. Proposed 2025 budget.

Line	Category	2023 Budget	2023 Pre-Audit	2024 Budget	Proposed 2025 Budget
EXPENSES					
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES					
1	Administrative	100,000	117,144	100,000	120,000
2	Grant Writing	0	0	3,000	3,000
3	Website	2,000	1,414	2,000	2,000
4	Legal Services	2,000	589	2,000	2,000
5	Audit	6,500	6,800	7,000	7,200
6	Insurance	4,000	3,551	4,000	4,000
7	Meeting Expense	0	1,753	4,800	6,000
	Subtotal General Operating Expenses	\$114,500	\$131,251	\$122,800	\$144,200
TECHNICAL SUPPORT					
8	Tech support - HCEE	20,000	19,684	22,000	25,000
9	General Technical Services	70,000	89,846	75,000	78,000
	Subtotal Technical Support	\$90,000	\$109,530	\$97,000	\$103,000
PROJECT REVIEWS					
10	Technical Reviews	184,000	107,569	184,000	162,000
11	Administrative Support	16,000	16,173	21,250	20,000
	Subtotal Project Reviews	\$200,000	\$123,742	\$205,250	\$182,000
EDUCATION					
12	Education - City/Citizen Programs	2,000	843	2,000	2,000
13	West Metro Water Alliance	11,500	9,000	11,500	11,500
	Subtotal Education	\$13,500	\$9,843	\$13,500	\$13,500
WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN					
14	Plan Amendments	2,000	580	2,000	500
15	Contribution to 4th Generation Plan	12,500	12,500	12,500	0
	Subtotal Watershed Management Plan	\$14,500	\$13,080	\$14,500	\$500
WATER MONITORING PROGRAMS					
	<i>Stream Monitoring</i>				
16	USGS Site Share	24,000	32,400	12,500	21,520
17	TRPD-Routine Monitoring	10,020	10,020	10,020	10,020
18	Biological Monitoring	4,500	0	0	0
19	DO Longitudinal Survey	2,400	0	2,400	2,400
20	Partnership Biomonitoring	2,000	0	0	0
21	Gauging Station - Electric Bill	440	389	480	480
	Subtotal Stream Monitoring	\$43,360	\$42,809	\$25,400	\$34,420
	<i>Lake Monitoring</i>				
22	CAMP	840	0	840	840
	TRPD				
23	Sentinel Lakes + Additional Lake	10,412	10,412	10,412	10,420
24	Aquatic Vegetation Surveys	1,365	1,365	1,365	1,365
	Subtotal Lake Monitoring	\$12,617	\$11,777	\$12,617	\$12,625
	<i>Other Monitoring</i>				
25	Macroinvertebrate Monitoring-River Watch	0	0	3,000	0

Line	Category	2023 Budget	2023 Pre-Audit	2024 Budget	Proposed 2025 Budget
	Subtotal Other Monitoring	\$0	0	3,000	0
	Subtotal Monitoring Expense	\$55,977	\$54,586	\$41,107	\$47,045
TOTAL GEN OPERATING EXP		\$488,477	\$442,032	\$494,067	\$490,245
REVENUE					
GENERAL OPERATING REVENUE					
26	Membership Dues	250,000	250,000	250,000	261,745
27	Interest Income	500	86,477	10,000	25,000
28	Dividend Income	250	0	0	0
29	From Cash Reserves	0	0	0	15,000
30	TRPD Cooperative Agreement	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500
	Subtotal General Operating Revenue	\$257,250	\$342,977	\$266,500	\$308,245
PROJECT REVIEW REVENUE					
31	Project Review Fees	184,000	139,511	184,000	162,500
32	Nonrefundable Admin	16,000	7,153	21,250	7,500
33	Nonrefundable Tech	17,000	10,905	27,600	12,000
	Subtotal Project Review Revenue	\$217,000	\$157,569	\$232,850	\$182,000
TOTAL GEN OPERATING REVENUE		\$474,250	\$500,546	\$499,350	\$490,245
OPERATING SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT)		(\$14,227)	\$58,514	\$5,283	0

2025 Budget Explanation

Line	Comment
EXPENSES	
1	This line item is to provide administrative support (scheduling, minutes, etc.) for regular Commission and TAC meetings and any other meetings that require support, as well as general administrative duties such as bookkeeping, notices, mailings, and correspondence.
2	The cost of writing grants and doing grant reporting. This separate line item was new in 2024.
3	The annual cost of hosting the Commission’s website and general content updates.
4	The legal cost of reviewing, drafting policies and variances, reviewing contracts and agreements.
5-6	The cost of the required annual financial audit and insurance.
7	The cost of room rental and lunch for the monthly meetings, which has increased when the meetings moved to the Plymouth Community Center.
8	The annual contract cost for education and outreach activities provided by Hennepin County Environment and Energy (HCEE) staff working with landowners to address erosion issues and implement conservation. Public engagement, answering landowner’s general land and water resource management questions, and best management practice (BMP) project development, design, and construction. Proposed to increase from the 2024 contracted amount of \$22,000 to \$25,000.
9	This line item is for general engineering support, including preparation for and attendance at Commission and TAC meetings, general day to day technical and engineering assistance, special projects, the budget and CIP, etc.
10	This line item is for project reviews, review of Local Water Management Plans and Comprehensive Plan amendments and updates, and general inquiries about past and upcoming projects. It is difficult to predict what the expense for a coming year will be, as it is based on the number of project reviews, inquiries, etc. received. The proposed budget is based on an estimated 50 project reviews each year. This expenditure is mostly offset by the project review fees.

Line	Comment
11	This line item is for administrative support of project reviews, including correspondence, tracking, bookkeeping, and invoicing. This expenditure is mostly offset by the project review fees.
12	Ongoing outreach and education costs not undertaken through WMWA.
13	The Commission participates in the West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA), and contributes to funds to support coordinated messaging, workshops, classroom activities, and special projects on a regional basis.
14	The cost of undertaking periodic minor plan amendments, usually to revise the CIP or adjust the development rules and standards. Cost is typically publication costs and staff time to develop the amendment documents.
15	The Commission's 3 rd Generation Plan expires on October 23, 2025. Work on the 4 th Generation Plan has commenced and is expected to be completed in 2025, from funds previously budgeted for this purpose.
16	The Commission jointly funds the operation of the USGS gauging station in Elm Creek Park near Elm Creek Road. This is billed biennially but budgeted annually. The 2025 budget assumes the \$12,500 budget in 2024 will be carried forward to offset the estimated \$34,020 expense.
17-19	The Commission contracts with Three Rivers Park District (TRPD), which provides flow and water quality monitoring at three locations in the watershed. There has been limited biological sampling; the current TMDL review will make recommendations for future sampling. The TRPD contract also includes funding for two longitudinal surveys of dissolved oxygen (DO) in impaired streams, which include taking a sequence of DO readings along points in the stream very early in the morning when DO is at its lowest, from an upstream point to a downstream point of interest. This shows a gradient of DO in the stream.
21	The Commission is responsible for the cost of electricity to the USGS gauging station.
24	Volunteer lake monitoring through the Met Council's Citizen Assisted Monitoring Program (CAMP). One lake is monitored per year.
23-24	The Commission contracts with TRPD to perform water quality monitoring and aquatic vegetation surveys on six lakes per year. The data is summarized in an annual report.
25	Volunteer macroinvertebrate monitoring coordinated by HCEE. The County is reconfiguring the program and we have not been notified whether to budget for this in 2025.
REVENUES	
26	Annual assessments to the member cities to pay the operating expenses of the Commission. Assessments are apportioned based on taxable market value of land within the watershed. Assessments did not increase 2020-2022, went up 5.4% in 2023 and did not increase in 2024. The proposed 2025 apportionment would be a 4.7% increase, compared to the current 3.4% inflation rate.
27	The amount of interest earnings varies based on interest rate and the balance carried by the Commission in its 4M Fund. Even though the interest rate is low, the current balance is substantial.
28	Income received as dividends. In recent years it has not been logged as separate income but has offset the annual insurance costs.
29	Since the Commission currently has a cash reserve in excess of its fund balance policy, it is proposed for 2025 to use some cash reserves to minimize increases in membership dues.
30	The Commission's contract with TRPD includes reimbursement from the Park District to the Commission for the value of services provided.
31	The application fee structure is intended to recover the cost of completing current project reviews. While the fees do not fully fund that activity, they are set and periodically reviewed and adjusted to recover a majority of the cost. It is difficult to predict and budget for project review revenues and fees because it varies based on the economy. This assumes 50 project reviews in 2025.
32	The Commission's project review fee includes a \$250 baseline fee and a nonrefundable fee of 5% of the total review fee to cover the costs of administration.
33	The Commission's project review fee includes a nonrefundable fee of 8% of the total review fee to cover the costs of general technical services.

Table 2. Proposed 2025 member city allocations compared to previous years.

2023	2022 Taxable Market Value	2023 Budget Share		Increase over Prev Year	
		%age	Dollars	%age	Dollars
Champlin	807,005,389	3.942	9,854	0.05	505
Corcoran	1,544,836,780	7.546	18,864	0.05	2,539
Dayton	1,644,909,207	8.034	20,086	0.05	4,573
Maple Grove	9,535,464,544	46.575	116,436	0.05	2,581
Medina	1,515,134,760	7.400	18,501	0.05	96
Plymouth	2,517,439,300	12.296	30,740	0.05	1,486
Rogers	2,908,759,834	14.207	35,519	0.05	921
Totals	20,473,549,814	100.000	250,000	0.00%	12,700
2024	2023 Taxable Market Value	2024 Budget Share		Increase over Prev Year	
		%age	Dollars	%age	Dollars
Champlin	898,761,000	3.999	9,998	0.01	144
Corcoran	1,808,292,200	8.046	20,116	0.07	1,252
Dayton	2,031,786,500	9.041	22,602	0.13	2,516
Maple Grove	10,043,624,100	44.690	111,726	-0.04	-4,711
Medina	1,680,727,800	7.479	18,697	0.01	195
Plymouth	2,671,442,700	11.887	29,717	-0.03	-1,023
Rogers	3,339,194,100	14.858	37,145	0.05	1,627
Totals	22,473,828,400	100.000	250,000	0.00%	0
2025	2024 Taxable Market Value	2025 Budget Share		Increase over Prev Year	
		%age	Dollars	%age	Dollars
Champlin	1,161,197,800	5.117	13,394	0.3397	3,396
Corcoran	1,806,478,300	7.961	20,837	0.0359	721
Dayton	2,038,390,200	8.983	23,512	0.0403	910
Maple Grove	10,089,589,600	44.463	116,379	0.0417	4,654
Medina	1,684,881,900	7.425	19,434	0.0395	738
Plymouth	2,570,902,100	11.329	29,654	-0.0021	-63
Rogers	3,340,724,100	14.722	38,534	0.0374	1,389
Totals	22,692,164,000	100.000	261,745	0.04698	11,745

To: Elm Creek WMO Commissioners/TAC
From: Budget Committee
Date: June 5, 2024
Subject: Final Proposed 2025 Budget

Recommended Commission Action	Review and discuss. Adopt the proposed 2025 budget with any revisions from the floor.
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According to the Joint Powers Agreement, the Commission must on or before June 15 of each year adopt a budget for the coming year. Typically, the Commission considers a preliminary budget in May of each year, either adopting it at the May meeting or holding over action to the June meeting. The budget must be transmitted along with notice of the apportionment of costs to each city by July 1. Member cities then have until August 15 to comment on or raise objections to the budget. If no objections are submitted, the budget proceeds as adopted. If objections are submitted in writing, then the Commission must hold a public hearing to consider modifying the budget or proceeding with no change.

The proposed budget shown in Table 1 reflects discussion at the May 8, 2024 TAC and Commission meetings. It separates the operating expenses from the capital and other non-operating expenses and revenues, which are accounted for separately and which will be reviewed in June. This separation allows you to more clearly determine if your assessments and project review fees are adequately funding operating expenses, or whether you are operating a deficit or surplus. It is analogous to a governmental General Fund budget rather than an all funds, balance sheet style.

The 2025 budget as proposed is a continuation of the programs and activities undertaken in 2024, with some slight modifications. Figure 1 shows the proposed operating budget by expenditure category, while Table 1 shows the proposed operating budget by line item. The final proposed 2025 operating budget is about an \$1,800 increase over the 2024 budget. However, some budget modifications are proposed:

1. Table 1 contains two updates to the May proposed expenses for 2025. First, the lake and stream monitoring costs for 2025 have been updated by Three Rivers Park District. This added about \$3,600 to the proposed budget expense. Second, the West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA) proposes to increase its budget in 2025 from \$44,000 to \$60,000, which increases each partner share to \$15,000. The additional budget reflects the increased Watershed PREP activity as well as potential additional outreach, especially concerning chloride use.
2. The budget includes a proposed increase in the administrative budget, which has only been modestly increased in the past several years. In the meantime, there has been an increase in the number of TAC, WBIF, and other meetings and project and grant accounting has grown more complex. The proposed increase has been reduced \$2,000 from the draft budget shown last month to partially offset the increase in monitoring and education costs.

3. The costs and revenues shown for project reviews in 2025 are based on the revised fee structure and our experience over the last few years. Some of the previous budgets simply brought forward old numbers, and in some cases overestimated costs and potential revenues.
4. Some adjustments have been made to individual line items based on past experience and based on the increasing cost of doing business.
5. One source of revenue that has in the past helped to subsidize the member assessments is investment interest. A combination of higher interest rates and a significant fund balance resulted in significant interest income in past years. As projects are completed and the Commission pays out levy and grant funds for those projects, interest earnings will fall.

The 2025 budget as proposed includes a 5.0% increase in city assessments, compared to the 4.7% increase proposed in the draft budget. There was no increase in 2024. The proposed 2025 budget assumes a \$20,000 contribution from cash reserves, compared to the \$15,000 proposed in the draft budget. The Commission's Comprehensive Fund Balance Policy requires that the Commission maintain a cash reserve equal to either 50% of annual operating revenues or five months of operating expenses.

Using the 2024 budget, that minimum reserve balance would be about \$157,000. According to the annual audit, the Unrestricted Fund Balance at the end of 2022 was \$141,927. However, there was also an unusually high project review fees escrow liability of nearly \$80,000 that had not yet been collected. While the 2023 year-end balance is still under audit, it appears likely that the Commission currently maintains more than adequate cash reserves, especially since it appears at year end the budget ended with a \$58,000+ surplus due to interest earnings. We expect to have updated balance figures at the June meeting.

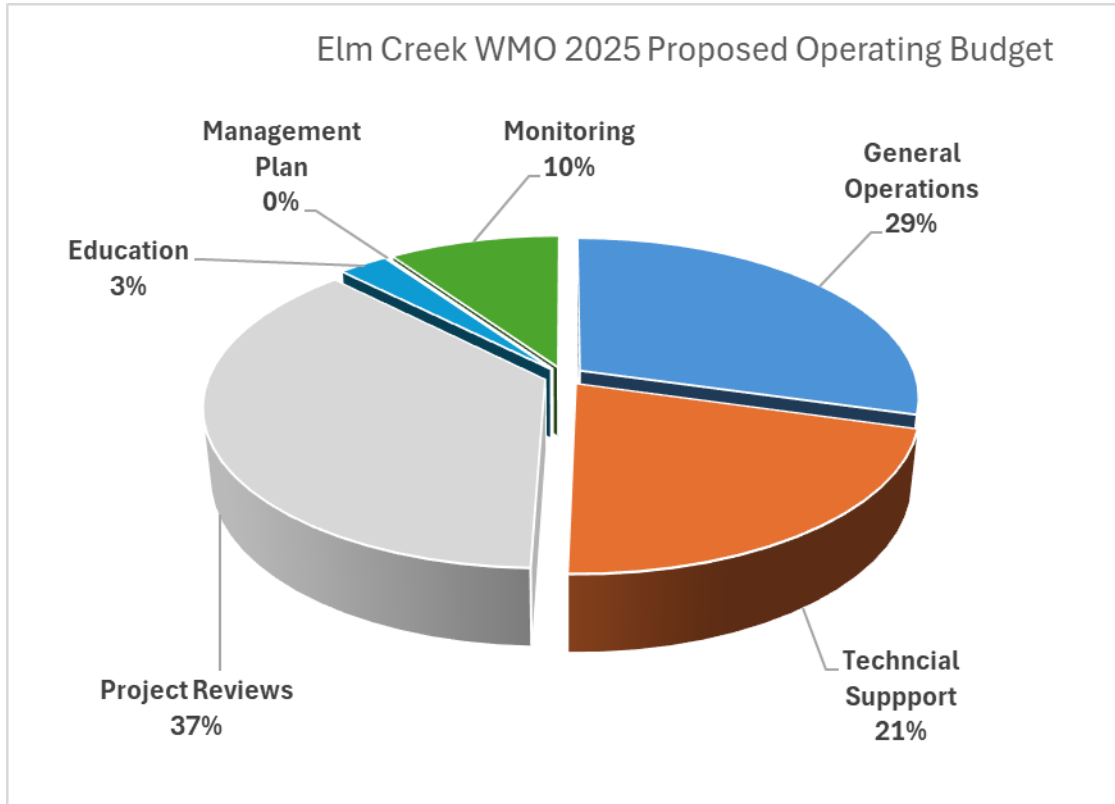


Figure 1. Proposed 2025 operating budget by expenditure category.

City Assessments

Table 2 details the proposed member city assessments for 2025 compared to previous years. The 2025 assessments are based on the revised legal boundary. It is not possible to do an apples-to-apples comparison of 2024 to 2025 to evaluate the impact of the boundary change on the assessments. However, Table 3 may provide some helpful context. There were 1146 acres (600 parcels) that moved out of West Mississippi and into Elm Creek, mostly from Champlin, and only 52 acres that moved from Elm Creek into West Mississippi. Shingle Creek gained 60 acres from Elm Creek, but 627 acres moved from Shingle Creek into Elm Creek, mostly in Plymouth. About 550 acres moved out of Elm Creek into Bassett Creek, mostly from Plymouth. The net impact was an increase in the Elm Creek watershed legal boundary area of almost 0.4 square miles.

Table 3 shows the area by city before and after the boundary change. Note that the percent of watershed area changed slightly, most notably in Champlin, but that is still less than one-half percent.

Assessments are based on share of taxable market value, and the table shows the taxable market value within each city's share of the watershed for 2024 compared to the 2023 value prior to the boundary change. While there is some variability year to year in market value and that variability is uneven across the cities, it is likely that a good share of the annual change this year was from the boundary revision.

Table 3. Area and market value changes before and after legal boundary revision.

City	Area (sq mi)			% of watershed		Taxable market value			% of watershed	
	Old	New	Change	Old	New	Old (2023)	New (2024)	Change	Old	New
Champlin	3.08	3.68	16.3%	2.4%	2.8%	\$898,761,000	\$1,161,197,800	22.6%	4.0%	5.1%
Corcoran	36.06	36.07	0.0%	27.6%	27.5%	1,808,292,200	1,806,478,300	-0.1%	8.0%	8.0%
Dayton	25.17	25.08	-0.4%	19.3%	19.1%	2,031,786,500	2,038,390,200	0.3%	9.0%	9.0%
Maple Grove	26.32	26.06	-1.0%	20.2%	19.9%	10,043,624,100	10,089,589,600	0.5%	44.7%	44.5%
Medina	9.34	9.37	0.3%	7.2%	7.2%	1,680,727,800	1,684,881,900	0.2%	7.5%	7.4%
Plymouth	4.44	4.51	1.6%	3.4%	3.4%	2,671,442,700	2,570,902,100	-3.9%	11.9%	11.3%
Rogers	26.2	26.2	0.0%	20.1%	20.0%	3,339,194,100	3,340,724,100	0.0%	14.9%	14.7%
TOTAL	130.61	130.97				\$22,473,828,400	\$22,692,164,000			

Table 1. Proposed 2025 budget.

Line	Category	2023 Budget	2023 Pre-Audit	2024 Budget	Proposed 2025 Budget
EXPENSES					
GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES					
1	Administrative	100,000	117,144	100,000	118,500
2	Grant Writing	0	0	3,000	3,000
3	Website	2,000	1,414	2,000	2,000
4	Legal Services	2,000	589	2,000	2,000
5	Audit	6,500	6,800	7,000	7,200
6	Insurance	4,000	3,551	4,000	4,000
7	Meeting Expense	0	1,753	4,800	6,000
	Subtotal General Operating Expenses	\$114,500	\$131,251	\$122,800	\$142,700
TECHNICAL SUPPORT					
8	Tech support - HCEE	20,000	19,684	22,000	25,000
9	General Technical Services	70,000	89,846	75,000	78,000
	Subtotal Technical Support	\$90,000	\$109,530	\$97,000	\$103,000
PROJECT REVIEWS					
10	Technical Reviews	184,000	107,569	184,000	162,000
11	Administrative Support	16,000	16,173	21,250	20,000
	Subtotal Project Reviews	\$200,000	\$123,742	\$205,250	\$182,000
EDUCATION					
12	Education - City/Citizen Programs	2,000	843	2,000	2,000
13	West Metro Water Alliance	11,500	9,000	11,500	15,000
	Subtotal Education	\$13,500	\$9,843	\$13,500	\$17,000
WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN					
14	Plan Amendments	2,000	580	2,000	500
15	Contribution to 4th Generation Plan	12,500	12,500	12,500	0
	Subtotal Watershed Management Plan	\$14,500	\$13,080	\$14,500	\$500
WATER MONITORING PROGRAMS					
	<i>Stream Monitoring</i>				
16	USGS Site Share	24,000	32,400	12,500	21,520
17	TRPD-Routine Monitoring	10,020	10,020	10,020	11,730
18	Biological Monitoring	4,500	0	0	0
19	DO Longitudinal Survey	2,400	0	2,400	2,400
20	Partnership Biomonitoring	2,000	0	0	0
21	Gauging Station - Electric Bill	440	389	480	480
	Subtotal Stream Monitoring	\$43,360	\$42,809	\$25,400	\$36,130
	<i>Lake Monitoring</i>				
22	CAMP	840	0	840	840
	TRPD- Routine Monitoring				
23	Sentinel Lakes + Additional Lake	10,412	10,412	10,412	12,360
24	Aquatic Vegetation Surveys	1,365	1,365	1,365	1,365
	Subtotal Lake Monitoring	\$12,617	\$11,777	\$12,617	\$14,565
	<i>Other Monitoring</i>				
25	Macroinvertebrate Monitoring-River Watch	0	0	3,000	0
	Subtotal Other Monitoring	\$0	0	3,000	0

Line	Category	2023 Budget	2023 Pre-Audit	2024 Budget	Proposed 2025 Budget
	Subtotal Monitoring Expense	\$55,977	\$54,586	\$41,107	\$50,695
TOTAL GEN OPERATING EXP		\$488,477	\$442,032	\$494,067	\$495,895
REVENUE					
GENERAL OPERATING REVENUE					
26	Membership Dues	250,000	250,000	250,000	262,395
27	Interest Income	500	86,477	10,000	25,000
28	Dividend Income	250	0	0	0
29	From Cash Reserves	0	0	0	20,000
30	TRPD Cooperative Agreement	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500
	Subtotal General Operating Revenue	\$257,250	\$342,977	\$266,500	\$313,895
PROJECT REVIEW REVENUE					
31	Project Review Fees	184,000	139,511	184,000	162,500
32	Nonrefundable Admin	16,000	7,153	21,250	7,500
33	Nonrefundable Tech	17,000	10,905	27,600	12,000
	Subtotal Project Review Revenue	\$217,000	\$157,569	\$232,850	\$182,000
TOTAL GEN OPERATING REVENUE		\$474,250	\$500,546	\$499,350	\$495,895
OPERATING SURPLUS OR (DEFICIT)		(\$14,227)	\$58,514	\$5,283	\$0

2025 Budget Explanation

Line	Comment
EXPENSES	
1	This line item is to provide administrative support (scheduling, minutes, etc.) for regular Commission and TAC meetings and any other meetings that require support, as well as general administrative duties such as bookkeeping, notices, mailings, and correspondence.
2	The cost of writing grants and doing grant reporting. This separate line item was new in 2024.
3	The annual cost of hosting the Commission’s website and general content updates.
4	The legal cost of reviewing, drafting policies and variances, reviewing contracts and agreements.
5-6	The cost of the required annual financial audit and insurance.
7	The cost of room rental and lunch for the monthly meetings, which has increased when the meetings moved to the Plymouth Community Center.
8	The annual contract cost for education and outreach activities provided by Hennepin County Environment and Energy (HCEE) staff working with landowners to address erosion issues and implement conservation. Public engagement, answering landowner’s general land and water resource management questions, and best management practice (BMP) project development, design, and construction. Proposed to increase from the 2024 contracted amount of \$22,000 to \$25,000.
9	This line item is for general engineering support, including preparation for and attendance at Commission and TAC meetings, general day to day technical and engineering assistance, special projects, the budget and CIP, etc.
10	This line item is for project reviews, review of Local Water Management Plans and Comprehensive Plan amendments and updates, and general inquiries about past and upcoming projects. It is difficult to predict what the expense for a coming year will be, as it is based on the number of project reviews, inquiries, etc. received. The proposed budget is based on an estimated 50 project reviews each year. This expenditure is mostly offset by the project review fees.
11	This line item is for administrative support of project reviews, including correspondence, tracking, bookkeeping, and invoicing. This expenditure is mostly offset by the project review fees.

Line	Comment
12	Ongoing outreach and education costs not undertaken through WMWA.
13	The Commission participates in the West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA), and contributes to funds to support coordinated messaging, workshops, classroom activities, and special projects on a regional basis. Proposed to increase in 2025 to expand efforts at outreach, with a focus on chloride.
14	The cost of undertaking periodic minor plan amendments, usually to revise the CIP or adjust the development rules and standards. Cost is typically publication costs and staff time to develop the amendment documents.
15	The Commission's 3 rd Generation Plan expires on October 23, 2025. Work on the 4 th Generation Plan has commenced and is expected to be completed in 2025, from funds previously budgeted for this purpose.
16	The Commission jointly funds the operation of the USGS gauging station in Elm Creek Park near Elm Creek Road. This is billed biennially but budgeted annually. The 2025 budget assumes the \$12,500 budget in 2024 will be carried forward to offset the estimated \$34,020 expense.
17-19	The Commission contracts with Three Rivers Park District (TRPD), which provides flow and water quality monitoring at three locations in the watershed. There has been limited biological sampling; the current TMDL review will make recommendations for future sampling. The TRPD contract also includes funding for two longitudinal surveys of dissolved oxygen (DO) in impaired streams, which include taking a sequence of DO readings along points in the stream very early in the morning when DO is at its lowest, from an upstream point to a downstream point of interest. This shows a gradient of DO in the stream.
21	The Commission is responsible for the cost of electricity to the USGS gauging station.
24	Volunteer lake monitoring through the Met Council's Citizen Assisted Monitoring Program (CAMP). One lake is monitored per year.
23-24	The Commission contracts with TRPD to perform water quality monitoring and aquatic vegetation surveys on six lakes per year. The data is summarized in an annual report.
25	Volunteer macroinvertebrate monitoring coordinated by HCEE. The County is reconfiguring the program and we have not been notified whether to budget for this in 2025.
REVENUES	
26	Annual assessments to the member cities to pay the operating expenses of the Commission. Assessments are apportioned based on taxable market value of land within the watershed. Assessments did not increase 2020-2022, went up 5.4% in 2023 and did not increase in 2024. The proposed 2025 apportionment would be a 5.0% increase, compared to the current 3.4% inflation rate.
27	The amount of interest earnings varies based on interest rate and the balance carried by the Commission in its 4M Fund. Even though the interest rate is low, the current balance is substantial.
28	Income received as dividends. In recent years it has not been logged as separate income but has offset the annual insurance costs.
29	Since the Commission currently has a cash reserve in excess of its fund balance policy, it is proposed for 2025 to use some cash reserves to minimize increases in membership dues.
30	The Commission's contract with TRPD includes reimbursement from the Park District to the Commission for the value of services provided.
31	The application fee structure is intended to recover the cost of completing current project reviews. While the fees do not fully fund that activity, they are set and periodically reviewed and adjusted to recover a majority of the cost. It is difficult to predict and budget for project review revenues and fees because it varies based on the economy. This assumes 50 project reviews in 2025.
32	The Commission's project review fee includes a \$250 baseline fee and a nonrefundable fee of 5% of the total review fee to cover the costs of administration.
33	The Commission's project review fee includes a nonrefundable fee of 8% of the total review fee to cover the costs of general technical services.

Table 2. Proposed 2025 member city allocations compared to previous years.

2023	2022 Taxable Market Value	2023 Budget Share		Increase over Prev Year	
		%age	Dollars	%age	Dollars
Champlin	807,005,389	3.942	9,854	5.4%	505
Corcoran	1,544,836,780	7.546	18,864	15.5%	2,539
Dayton	1,644,909,207	8.034	20,086	29.5%	4,573
Maple Grove	9,535,464,544	46.575	116,436	2.3%	2,581
Medina	1,515,134,760	7.400	18,501	0.5%	96
Plymouth	2,517,439,300	12.296	30,740	5.1%	1,486
Rogers	2,908,759,834	14.207	35,519	2.7%	921
Totals	20,473,549,814	100.000	250,000	5.35%	12,700
2024	2023 Taxable Market Value	2024 Budget Share		Increase over Prev Year	
		%age	Dollars	%age	Dollars
Champlin	898,761,000	3.999	9,998	1.5%	144
Corcoran	1,808,292,200	8.046	20,116	6.6%	1,252
Dayton	2,031,786,500	9.041	22,602	12.5%	2,516
Maple Grove	10,043,624,100	44.690	111,726	-4.0%	-4,711
Medina	1,680,727,800	7.479	18,697	1.1%	195
Plymouth	2,671,442,700	11.887	29,717	-3.3%	-1,023
Rogers	3,339,194,100	14.858	37,145	4.6%	1,627
Totals	22,473,828,400	100.000	250,000	0%	0
2025	2024 Taxable Market Value	2025 Budget Share		Increase over Prev Year	
		%age	Dollars	%age	Dollars
Champlin	1,161,197,800	5.117	13,427	34.3%	3,429
Corcoran	1,806,478,300	7.961	20,889	3.8%	773
Dayton	2,038,390,200	8.983	23,570	4.3%	969
Maple Grove	10,089,589,600	44.463	116,668	4.4%	4,943
Medina	1,684,881,900	7.425	19,483	4.2%	786
Plymouth	2,570,902,100	11.329	29,728	0.0%	11
Rogers	3,340,724,100	14.722	38,630	4.0%	1,484
Totals	22,692,164,000	100.000	262,395	5.0%	12,395

To: Elm Creek WMO Commissioners/TAC

From: Erik Megow, PE
Diane Spector
Judie Anderson

Date: June 5, 2024

Subject: 2023 Year End Fund Balances

**Recommended
Commission Action**

For review and discussion.

The 2023 audit is still being finalized, but the 2023 preliminary year-end balances for non-operating accounts are the following. We expect to have the

Restricted for Capital Projects

These are funds levied for specific capital projects. The Commission holds these funds until such time as the member cities have completed the work. They then request reimbursement for their costs incurred.

Table 1. Elm Creek funds restricted for capital improvements.

Project	Amount Held
Rogers Fox Creek Creekview Phase 2 (2016)	\$80,206
Rogers Fox Creek Hyacinth Phase 3 (2017)	112,500
Corcoran Downtown Regional Stormwater Pond (2019)	28,013
Livestock Exclusions, Buffers, Stabilizations (2020)	24,884
Agricultural BMPs Cost Share (2020)	53,006
Champlin EC Strm Rest Ph V Hayden Lake Outfall (2021)	159,251
S Fork Rush Creek (2023)	427,975
2023 admin costs for 2024 levy	-334
Account Balance YE 2023	\$885,501

Cost Share Projects

The Commission operates two cost share projects, one for city projects and one for partnership projects on private property.

Table 2. Elm Creek city cost share projects.

Project	Balance
Year End 2023	\$105,234
Encumbrance-Dayton (Dayton Rd)	-50,000
Encumbered Account Balance YE 2023	\$55,234
Levy funds expected 2024	+100,000
2024 Encumbrance-	-
Estimated 2024 available balance	\$155,234

Table 3. Elm Creek partnership cost share projects.

Project	Balance
Year End 2023	\$-52,417
Encumbrance	-0
Encumbered Account Balance YE 2023	\$52,417
Levy funds expected 2024	+50,000
2024 Encumbrance – Fish Lake carp removal	-11,856
Estimated 2024 available balance	\$90,561

Closed Projects Account

The Commission’s Closed Projects Account houses levy funds that exceed final project costs. In addition, on occasion a project is cancelled, and the levy funds are then transferred to this fund. These funds are intended to be used for other capital improvement projects, including the cost of undertaking feasibility studies to preliminarily scope a future project. These funds may also be used to limit future capital levies for new projects.

Table 4. Elm Creek closed project account funds.

Project	Balance
Year End 2022	\$174,335
2018-04 Downs Road Trail Rain Gardens	104
2021-01 Elm Rd Area/Everest Ln Strm Restoration	7,867
Account Balance YE 2023	\$182,306

Other Funds Balances

The Commission has also in past years acted to segregate or assign some of its unrestricted reserves to be held for a specific purpose, for example to fund the 4th Generation Plan. These unassigned funds may continue to be set aside to be used for these purposes or the Commission may elect to unassign the funds and transfer them to Unrestricted Reserves. From time to time the Commission has budget funding for projects or special studies and set that aside in an Assigned For Projects and Studies Account. It has rarely been used, but in 2023 the Commission encumbered just under \$10,000 to provide matching funds for the Watershed-Based Implementation Fund grant supporting the Rush Creek SWA and the North Fork Rush Creek remeandering study.

Table 5. Elm Creek assigned accounts balances. [not updated yet]

Assigned Account	Balance
Fourth Gen Plan (-encumbered March 2024)	\$10,000
Assigned For Projects or Studies YE 2022	\$181,817
-Encumbered 2023: match to WBIF funds	9,468
-Encumbered Nov 2023: TMDL 10 yr review	49,468
Estimated 2023 available balance	\$122,881
-Encumbered March 2024: 4 th Gen Plan	15,000

Unrestricted Reserve [Not updated by auditor yet]

The last category of funds is the Commission’s Unrestricted Reserves, which is cash on hand that has not been designated for a particular use. This helps with monthly cash flow and is a “rainy day reserve” in the event something unusual occurs, or one of the member cities withdraws from the JPA and no longer is contributing its share of expected revenues. The newly adopted policy to maintain a cash reserve equal to either 50% of annual operating revenues or five months of operating expenses. Using the 2022 year-end figures, that minimum reserve balance would be the greater of the amounts in Table 6.

The nearly-final year-end 2022 Unrestricted Balance of \$141,927 is much less than the 2021 year-end balance of \$279,332. A very significant factor in that drop is the increase in the liability for project review fees from \$11,739 in 2021 to \$78,161 in 2022. Those are expenses the Commission has already incurred but for which additional review fee has not yet been collected. That escrow balance will vary from year to year.

Table 6. Unrestricted reserve desirable balance calculation using 2022 year-end amounts. [Not updated by auditor yet for 2023]

Component	Operating Expenses	Operating Revenues
2022 Budget	\$496,371	\$472,371
Less project reviews	188,032	190,442
Net Amount	308,339	285,929
5/12ths of yearly expenses	\$128,475	
50% of yearly revenues		\$141,464
YE 2022 Unrestricted Balance	\$141,927	\$141,927

To: Elm Creek WMO Commissioners
Elm Creek TAC

From: Erik Megow, PE
Diane Spector

Date: June 5, 2024

Subject: Fourth Generation Plan Kickoff

**Recommended
Commission Action**

Review and discuss the material provided and be prepared to offer a critique of past successes and challenges and performance.

Minnesota Rules 8410, which governs Metropolitan Water Management, sets forth the process for undertaking a Metro watershed management plan update and specifies the minimum content of those plans. The process begins with the notification of interested planning parties and a request for information and input into priorities to consider during the planning process.

At your April 2024 meeting you authorized that notification, and we have received input from eight agencies. Attached is a summary of agency submittals for your review. The full submittals, which are quite lengthy, have been posted on the Fourth Gen webpage. Aside from input on Plan topics they include references to useful information and data that may be of interest.

Kick-off Meeting

The June 12, 2024 meeting will be the official “kick off” of the Fourth Generation Plan. At this meeting we will provide a brief review of project schedule and the focal areas you have already identified (see below), discuss the agency input and how it might be incorporated into your Plan, and start the self-assessment process by reviewing the Commission’s success in achieving Third Gen priorities.

To help you with that review we have attached a draft summary of Third Gen actions that will become your self-assessment incorporated into the Plan. The first half of that document is a listing of your actions and achievements, followed by a review of your Third Gen priorities and goals and a staff assessment of your success at achieving those objectives. Following our discussions today we will add any additional comments and information the TAC and Commissioners may have and complete the Assessment of Performance. This section should be an honest examination of the successes and challenges of the last ten years, and how that will inform the Fourth Gen Plan.

Background

Table 1 shows the expected sequence of activities to be undertaken over the next 15 months. The actual plan development process will take about a year, with the final 3 months being the informal and formal review and approval process. As we discussed previously, the Commissions will ask each city to designate an existing citizen advisory commission or the Council to serve as their CAC and Commission staff and the Commissioner/TAC member will meet with each once to facilitate discussion and obtain citizen input. Those meetings are likely to be September-October 2024.

The primary work of completing the plan will focus on the following:

- Conduct a short self-analysis of the effectiveness of the Third Generation Plan, evaluate progress toward goals, and identify areas of success or less than success.
- Review and update as necessary the Goals and Policies established in the Third Generation Plan.
- Review and update as necessary the Rules and Standards and monitoring programs.
- The TAC and Commission have expressed an interest in enhancing the education and outreach programming, and we will spend some time on developing options for you to consider, not only for helping to meet NPDES requirements, but also engaging on other topics of interest.
- Discuss approaches the Commission could consider addressing the impacts of the continued build-out of the watershed, and how to add climate resiliency and sustainability.
- Incorporate summaries of the findings of the TMDL and review process and the subwatershed assessments and other studies completed since the Third Gen Plan was adopted.
- Update the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Implementation Program.
- Forecast future budget needs and financing options.

We would anticipate that four “working meetings” would focus on the following topics:

- 1) Review of progress to date and update vision, goals and policies.
- 2) Identify and discuss options for enhancing education, outreach, and engagement in the watershed.
- 3) Discuss future development, changing precipitation patterns, potential impacts to water resources and infrastructure, and discuss a framework for addressing those impacts.
- 4) Review and discuss the proposed ten-year CIP and Implementation Plan and any special funding considerations that may arise.

Table 1. Estimated schedule of activities.

Activity	2024										2025									
	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	
Approve scope	■																			
Self-assessment	■	■																		
Kickoff Meeting			■																	
Priority setting and initial goal review			■	■																
Review WQ trends and TMDL implementation status	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■												
Review monitoring program			■	■																
Education, communications, and outreach program				■	■	■	■	■												
Rules review						■	■													
Meet with cities							■	■	■											
Sustainability/full development discussion					■	■	■	■	■	■										
CIP and management actions review									■	■	■	■								
Draft plan, available in March/April '25 for informal review			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■							
Revise plan as necessary													■							
60-day formal review														■	■					
Public hearing																■				
BWSR review and approval																	■	■		
Final adoption																			■	

Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission
Fourth Generation Watershed Management Plan Update
Summary of Agency Early Input
June 2024

The following are summaries of comments received. The full responses, including links to available data and other useful information, can be found at [Watershed Management Plan - Elm Creek Watershed](#) .

Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

The Plan should focus on priority issues, clearly describe actions to be taken over the next 10 years, incorporate relevant and timely data and trends, and contain short-, mid-, and long-term measurable goals based on science, local priorities, and targeted implementation plans. The Plan must incorporate authentic self-evaluation, accountability, and potential efficiency of implementation to create ambitious yet realistic goals.

- The Plan must include goals for water quantity, water quality, public drainage systems, groundwater issues, wetland management, and any other priority issues identified during the input process.
- Goals need sufficient detail to determine what will be accomplished by the end of the Plan and whether success has been achieved.
- High priority projects should be targeted, to show how the Commission is addressing both resource and constituent concerns. BWSR strongly recommends identifying priority resources in priority areas and to identify projects in those specific areas in your CIP.

Elm Creek underwent a routine Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP) assessment midway through the Third Gen Plan, and BWSR had the following comments that should be addressed.

- The Commission was commended for its progress on many levels and met most its performance indicators.
- The Plan could be improved by more clearly prioritized, targeted, and measurable actions for future watershed management plans. Clearly establish the relationship between goals and their specific actions and set clear, measurable outcomes that the actions will achieve.
- Address possible communication gaps with member cities, as well as a need for educating city officials of project benefits the watershed undertakes to achieve more member support. Please identify ways the Commission will improve communication with member cities and city officials.

In addition:

- Work to address climate change and resiliency while providing critical information that can protect infrastructure.
- Consider additional programmatic funding for agricultural related effects on water quality and quantity.
- Undertake a water quality trend analysis to help prioritize water resources and associated targeted, measurable actions within the watershed.
- Consider the various Commission audiences and strive to write the Plan with plain language principles in mind.
- Please ensure the Plan is Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant.
- Consider elements of environmental justice and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Metropolitan Council

The Plan must be consistent with the Met Council's policy plan and must include quantifiable and measurable goals and policies that address water quantity, water quality, recreation, fish and wildlife, enhancement of public participation, groundwater, wetlands, and erosion issues. At a minimum the Plan should address:

1. Any problems with lake and stream water quality and quantity, including information on impaired waters in the watershed and the Organization's role in addressing the impairments
2. Flooding, emerging contaminants, groundwater/surface water interaction and stormwater rate control issues in the watershed
3. Climate and resilience planning
4. Impacts of water management on the recreation opportunities
5. Impact of soil erosion problems and general land use practices on water quantity and quality
6. Policies and strategies related to monitoring of area water resources and the use of best management practices
7. Erosion and sediment control and volume reduction goals at least as restrictive as requirements in the NPDES construction general permit
8. Capital improvement plan with itemized list of actions, estimated costs, and timeline.

Based on Council policies, the following issues are specific to the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission and are viewed as priorities by the Council for inclusion in the Plan:

- Fish Lake, Elm Creek and Crow-Hassan Regional Parks are located in the watershed. The Council has made a substantial investment in the regional park system through its park implementing powers. Improvement of water quality in the watershed would likely have a positive impact on the park, through improving fisheries and wildlife and/or by reducing risks to public health. The Plan needs to address any issues, problems, capital projects, or land use changes related to the regional parks.
- The Met Council has updated its Priority Waters list, formerly known as the Priority Lakes list, which now includes rivers and streams. It will provide a key lens for developing policies and activities to include in the 2050 Water Resources Policy Plan. It will inform how the Met Council can align with the priorities of local and state partners, like the ECWMC, and provide value for the region. The list includes Fish Lake, French Lake, and Weaver Lake, which should be identified as such in the Land and Water Resources Inventory.

Hennepin County

Climate Action Plan. In 2021, Hennepin County approved its first Climate Action Plan. This plan includes aggressive goals, such as to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Several of the strategies and actions in the plan have relevancy to the mission of ECWMC Plan.

Natural Resources Strategic Plan. In 2016, the Hennepin County Board adopted our first Natural Resources Strategic Plan, effective for 2015-2020, which is currently being updated. It will reflect recent county initiatives to build resiliency to, and mitigate impacts of, climate change, as well as incorporate initiatives to reduce disparities. Several of the strategies and actions in the plan have relevancy to the mission of ECWMC Plan.

Ditch Management. The County still has jurisdictional authority under Minnesota Statute 103E over nine public ditches in Elm Creek's Watershed. These are shown in a table, along with the cities the ditches lie within. Some ditches mainly in Maple Grove no longer appear to serve an agricultural drainage function and could be considered for passing authority to the DNR.

- The County would appreciate identifying opportunities for collaborative projects to improve water quality of to help achieve TMDL goals.
- The Commission and County have been successful recently at undertaking collaborative conservation partnerships and would be interested in continuing that relationship.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)

The MPCA provided a table of current lake and stream impairments and noted that Fish Lake has been officially delisted. There are three new impairments not in the watershed or regional TMDLs: Fish bioassessment in Fish Lake and CD #16 (S Fork Rush tributary) and nutrients in Laura Lake.

The MPCA recommends:

- Incorporating and implementing strategies and goals from completed TMDL's and implementation plans
- Determine quantitative accounting of efforts and reductions you hope/intend to accomplish over the 10-year plan cycle relative to water quality targets
- Identify geographic priority areas and implementation to match those prioritized waters

Priority issues: the MPCA has identified several strategic goals including:

- Assist local partners to accelerate targeted reductions for identified priority impaired waters
- Assist to develop strategies to protect priority waters that are meeting water quality goals
- Reduce chloride to surface and ground water
- Protect groundwater
- Incorporate environmental justice into planning
- Increase community and environmental resilience to climate change

Planning should incorporate changing weather patterns to help our communities be prepared for extreme weather events.

Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA)

Passed along general information on the state's nitrogen fertilizer management plan, the groundwater protection rule that prohibits application of nitrogen fertilizer in the fall and to frozen ground, and a map of areas where the groundwater is most vulnerable to potential contamination from nitrogen fertilizer. Also forwarded information on conservation resources for famers and agricultural landowners, and on pesticide monitoring in groundwater being undertaken by the agency. While the information is extensive and very informative, it has limited applicability in the Elm Creek watershed. Staff recommends simply posting links to the most relevant information on the Commission's website. The County Conservationist Specialists are also familiar with the MDA data and programming.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

Passed along general information about watershed management strategies, integrated resource

management, groundwater sustainability, sand stormwater management, topics which the Commission in its plan and operations practices. Also provided useful links and information on outreach and engagement on septic system education, chloride management, natural shoreline management. Also latest thinking on stream stabilization, stream road crossings, fisheries management, AIS management, conservation and restoration of natural communities, and forest management.

Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)

MDH's concerns are primarily drinking water source water protection. While all communities in the Elm Creek Watershed (Watershed) rely on groundwater as a source of drinking water, and will likely continue to into the future, the Watershed is upstream of the drinking water intakes for the Minneapolis and Saint Paul-Mississippi River public water systems. The entirety of the Watershed is within Priority Area B and a portion of Priority Area A of the surface water Drinking Water Supply Management Area (DWSMA-SW) for the Minneapolis and Saint Paul-Mississippi River public water supply systems. Recommend local government units (LGUs) consider the impacts of future land use and zoning changes that could alter source water hydrology and, subsequently, water quality.

Approximately five percent of the area of the Watershed overlaps with one or more groundwater Drinking Water Source Management Areas (DWSMAs), most of which are of low to moderate vulnerability. Additionally, there are many private drinking water wells throughout the Watershed. While many residents rely on these wells for the water they drink, no public entity is responsible for water testing or management of a private well after drilling is completed and before it is sealed. LGUs are best equipped to assist private landowners through land use management and ordinance development, which can have the greatest impact on protecting private wells.

Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)

Since road projects often overlap watershed jurisdictions, MnDOT appreciates the alignment of project review standards with the most recent MS4 permit for consistency.

Would like to know current status of TMDL and of opportunities to coordinate on BMP load reduction projects. While infiltration is effective, would like to hear about other options.

Elm Creek WMC Third Generation Plan Self-Assessment

Third Generation Plan Activities

Management Plan Amendments and Policy Revisions

The Third Generation Plan has been amended eight times since 2015 (Table 1). Most of those were to revise the Capital Improvement Program, however, there were other significant amendments. In 2022 the Commission amended the Rules and Standards to adopt revised requirements for low floor elevations adjacent to natural and artificial waters, and to conform the Rules to the most recent version of the State of Minnesota General Stormwater Permit.

Table 1. Elm Creek Third Generation Plan record of plan revisions.

Number	Date of Adoption	Summary of Revisions
	9/23/15	Plan approved by BWSR
	8/14/15	Plan adopted
1	05/11/16	Add 5 projects; revise costs
2	05/10/17	Add 2 projects
3	05/09/18	Add 8 projects
4	05/08/19	Add 3 projects
5	06/10/20	Add 3 projects
6	06/09/21	Clarify low floor standards; conform to new SW permit
7	5/11/22	Add 1 project
8	6/12/24	Add 2 projects; revise one project

The Commission also adopted or revised several policies as shown in Table 2. Notably, the Commission adopted policies to create new funds to share in the costs of various improvements and adopted policies governing the use of those monies. The Commission also adopted a revised Capital Improvements Policy that increased the Commission cost share on certain types of projects that address “internal load” from 25% of the project cost to 100% of the project cost. Those projects, such as lake alum treatments, are intended to correct problems in the receiving water itself, as opposed to reducing pollutant loading from the watershed.

Table 2. New or revised policies adopted 2015-2024.

Date of Adoption	Description
September 12, 2018	Developed and adopted the Recommended Livestock Policy for member cities to consider for local adoption.
April 11, 2012	Developed and Adopted a Cost Share Policy
October 12, 2016	Revised the Cost Share Policy to provide a formula for sharing the cost of completing subwatershed assessments (SWAs) between the Commission and cities.
October 12, 2016	Revised the Cost Share Policy to eliminate the requirement that subwatershed assessments (SWAs) must be for lands outside the MUSA.
November 14, 2018	Adopted Closed Projects Account policy to establish allowable uses for levy funds remaining after reimbursing cities for the costs of completing a capital project.
August 11, 2021	Adopted a Policy on Internal Load Funding stating the Commission may contribute up to 100% of funding to internal load projects for impaired lakes with TMDLs where internal load is more than 50% of the load.
August 11, 2021	Established a City Cost Share program to contribute 50% of the cost of smaller member city BMP projects up to \$50,000.

Date of Adoption	Description
August 11, 2021	The Commission established a Partnership Cost Share program to contribute up to 100% of the cost of small BMP projects completed voluntarily by private parties on private property, up to a total of \$50,000.
September 8, 2021	Adopted a new Policy on Cost Share for Equipment and Non-structural Practices: 25% cost share in practices that have a demonstrated benefit to impaired waters with a TMDL. The applicant must document that benefit. The cost share applies only to equipment providing a new pollutant load activity or the cost of upgrading to better equipment to obtain more load reduction.
March 9, 2022	Revised Cost Share Policy to increase Commission maximum annual levy from \$500,000 to \$750,000 as a working guideline.
May 10, 2023	Adopted Adequate Fund Reserve Policy: The Commission shall maintain an unrestricted fund balance of approximately 50 percent of operating revenues (or no but not less than five months of operating expenses in its general fund).

Regulatory Program

The Commission does not issue permits but does require development and redevelopment to meet requirements for runoff rate control, treatment, and volume management. Those requirements and others relating to wetlands, floodplains, erosion control, buffers, and stream crossings are set forth in Rules and Standards. As part of the Third Generation Plan development the Rules were reviewed and revised and reissued just prior to adoption of that Management Plan. The Commission had previously acted as the Local Government Unit (LGU) for Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) administration for some member cities, but in 2019 relinquished that authority to the member cities.

Development and redevelopment projects that meet certain size and other criteria are required by city ordinances to incorporate into their developments Best Management Practices (BMPs) sufficient to meet the Commission’s Rules and Standards. Engineering plans, hydrologic calculations, wetland delineations, and other supporting material is submitted to the Commission’s Engineer, who conducts a Project Review and discusses the proposal and any necessary revisions with the developer.

In 2020 the Commission adopted a revised project review fee policy to require applicants to pay the full amount of the project review. In 2023 review fee schedule was revised to modify the amounts of the initial escrow deposited with the application and the administrative and technical services fees.

Table 3 summarizes the projects reviews that have been completed during 2015-2024. These project reviews include private development and redevelopment as well as public projects such as street and highway projects.

Table 33. Project review history 2015-2024.

Year	Project Reviews	Wetland Actions	TEP panels
2015	39	22	14
2016	52	17	17
2017	53	40	12
2018	54	66	12
2019	32	8	*
2020	42	*	*
2021	55	*	*
2022	49	*	*
2023	29	*	*
2024**	15	*	*
TOTAL	420		

*Discontinued role of LGU for WCA in 2019

**Through May 2024.

Monitoring Program

Lakes. The Commission contracts with Three Rivers Park District to conduct a monitoring program that tracks conditions in the lakes and major streams of the watersheds. The Third Generation Plan established four sentinel lakes – Fish, Weaver, Diamond, and Rice – which are monitored annually. Each year two other lakes are monitored on a rotating basis. Most years one additional lake is monitored by volunteers through the Met Council's Citizen-Assisted Monitoring Program (CAMP). Prior to 2020, the Commission collaborated with Hennepin County and adult volunteers to assess 3-4 wetland sites per year through the Wetland Health Evaluation Program (WHEP). That program was paused starting in 2020 due to COVID restrictions, and ultimately was discontinued by the County.

Streams. The Commission collaborates with the USGS, which operates a monitoring station on Elm Creek in Elm Creek Park Preserve in Champlin. In addition to the partnership with the USGS to monitor flow and water quality on Elm Creek, the Commission currently routinely monitors flow and water quality at three sites on Elm, Rush, and Diamond Creeks. Students collect biological data at 3-4 sites per year through the Hennepin County RiverWatch program, which was paused for a few years due to COVID restrictions but resumed in 2023.

Lake and stream data is summarized annually and is available on the Commissions' website and in the Commission's annual report, along with the findings of the volunteer monitoring programs.

Education and Outreach Program

The Third Generation Plan established the goal of the Education and Outreach Program as “to educate and engage everyone in the watershed by increasing awareness of water resources, and creating and supporting advocates willing to protect and preserve the resources in the watershed.” The Commission provides most of its education and outreach through the West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA), a collaborative formed by the Commission along with Shingle Creek WMO, the West Mississippi WMO and Bassett Creek WMO. While the Commissions do continue to provide local education and outreach, the four WMOs pool resources to take on larger, more visible initiatives. The most significant and far-reaching program is Watershed PREP, in which contracted educators present water resource-based classes to fourth grade students. Since the program's inception in 2013, over 22,700 students have participated in the watershed introduction lesson, and 9,700 in the water cycle lesson.

In 2023 the Commission and the other three WMOs in WMWA, the Richfield-Bloomington WMO and Hennepin County pooled grant funding to hire an education and outreach specialist for two years to develop and deliver messaging and coordinate implementation projects. This specialist is dedicated half time to the WMWA+ collaborative and half time to general County work. In 2024 the same entities are poised to renew that funding for another two years, with a long-term strategy of self-funding on an ongoing basis once the grants funds are depleted.

Other education and outreach activities include:

- In partnership with Hennepin County, student and adult volunteer monitoring of selected stream and wetland sites in the watershed.
- In partnership with the Metropolitan Council, volunteer lake water quality monitoring on one lake per year.
- In coordination with Hennepin County, helped promote outreach to and field days focused on aspects of land and animal management for water quality.
- Reference material and news posted on the Commission's website.
- In partnership with WMWA, workshops on rain gardens and sustainable turf management.
- Education and outreach materials highlighting proper use of road salt for snow and ice control.
- Outreach to local print and cable television for news coverage of commission and city projects.

Special Studies

Subwatershed Assessments. Subwatershed assessments are intensive studies of small areas of land to identify the best locations for small Best Management Practices (BMPs) such as rain gardens, tree trenches, and bioinfiltration basins. They are usually completed in areas that are already developed and have little or no stormwater treatment or where additional load reductions are sought. Each of the studies below identifies the highest priority, most cost-effective practices that could be considered. The Commission has dedicated grant and levy funds to supplement other city and county funds for implementation and has completed several BMPs in these study areas.

in 2019 the Commission, Hennepin County and City of Cocoran hosted an open house for the Rush Creek Headwaters SWA project for over 200 households, which generated 22 site visits. Two property owners took on projects themselves, while four were considered for Hennepin County funding and/or technical assistance.

- Rush Creek Headwaters: the area draining to the North Fork of Rush Creek from its headwaters to CR 116/Fletcher Lane, including the Jubert Lake and Henry Lake drainage areas.
- Diamond Creek: the area draining to Diamond Creek, including the drainage areas to Diamond, French, and Hayden Lakes.
- South Fork Rush Creek: the area draining to the South Fork of Rush Creek, from its headwaters to its confluence with the North Fork in Maple Grove.
- Weaver Lake: The City of Maple Grove evaluated the Weaver Lake direct drainage area.
- Rice Lake: the City of Maple Grove evaluated the Rice Lake direct drainage area.

HUC8 Special Hazard Areas Study. Elm Creek received a grant from the DNR to update hydrologic and hydraulic modeling for the watershed using the most recent Atlas 14 rainfall depths and distributions. This modeling has been completed and is usable but is still under agency review. When approved and adopted it will be used by the DNR and FEMA to update the Flood Insurance Study Special Hazard Area (Floodplain) maps.

Progress Toward TMDLs

Several of the lakes and the major streams in the watershed do not meet state water quality standards and have been designated by the State of Minnesota as Impaired Waters. The Elm Creek Watershed Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) process to evaluate and address these impairments was completed in phases over several years, starting with additional monitoring and data gathering in 2009-2010, analysis and development of the TMDL in 2012-2014, and then final completion of the TMDL document and accompanying Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) document in 2015. The final reports were approved by the MPCA and EPA in 2016.

The Elm Creek TMDL study addresses:

- Seven lake *nutrient* impairments (Cowley, Sylvan, Henry, Rice, Fish, Diamond, Goose)
- Four stream *E. coli* impairments.
- Three stream *DO* impairments.
- Four stream *fish and macroinvertebrate* impairments, with primary stressors *total phosphorus (TP)* and *total suspended solids (TSS)*.

Since completion of the Watershed TMDL, there are new impairments:

- Elm Creek and the lower reach of S Fork Rush Creek for excess *chloride*. These were included in the Metro Chloride TMDL.
- *Total Suspended Solids (TSS)* in Elm Creek. Since this was a primary stressor in the TMDL, the Commission is already assigned and making progress toward required load reductions.
- *Fish biotic integrity (F-IBI)* in CD #16, a tributary to S Fork Rush Creek. No TMDL has been established.
- *Fish biotic integrity (F-IBI)* in Fish Lake. NO TMDL has been established.

The Fish Lake nutrient impairment has now been “delisted,” or removed from the Impaired Waters list as the lake now meets state standards.

In 2024 the Commission is completing a ten-year review of progress that is comprised of the following:

- Completing additional lake and stream monitoring to better assess current conditions and evaluate any future trends.
- Evaluating load reductions achieved through the conversion of lands with little or no stormwater management to development incorporating stringent runoff volume and pollutant load reduction practices.
- Evaluating load reductions achieved through BMPs in the watershed, including stream restoration, lake management, structural and nonstructural practices such as enhanced street sweeping.
- Completing a trend analysis on current water quality data.
- Evaluating implementation strategies and recommending any revisions.

This analysis is expected to be complete by the end of 2024, although water quality monitoring will also be completed in 2025. Initial results will be available to incorporate into the Fourth Generation Plan.

Cost Share Projects

The Commission operates two programs to share in the cost of small BMP installations. The City Cost Share Program provides matching funding for City voluntary BMPs. The Partnership Cost Share Program provides up to 100% of the cost of voluntary BMPs on private property. Cost share guidelines specify project eligibility, and participation is granted on a first come first served basis as funds are available. Two City projects have been funded; no Partnership projects have yet been funded.

Table 4. City Cost Share projects 2013-2021.

Year	Project	Description	Cost Share
2023	Dayton River Road Channel Stabilization	Repair of an eroding channel from Dayton River Rd to the Mississippi	\$50,000
2024	Fish Lake Carp Management	Cost share in Fish Lake carp removal	\$11,856
TOTAL			\$61,856

Grants

The member cities have been actively taking actions to manage and improve the water resources in the watershed. The Commission has been fortunate to have been successful at receiving grants to undertake projects and special studies. As detailed in Table 6, this has provided nearly \$1.2 million to supplement local funding.

Table 6. Grant funding received 2015-2024.

PROJECT	AMOUNT	SOURCE	YEAR
Rush Creek Headwaters SWA	\$50,280	BWSR CWLA AIG	2016
Fish Lake Alum	\$200,000	BWSR CWLA	2017
Elm Creek Phase IV	\$134,486	BWSR WBIF	2018
Elm Creek Phase V	\$200,000	BWSR WBIF	2020
S Fork Rush Cr Restoration	\$314,153	BWSR WBIF	2020
Headwaters Ag BMP Implementation	\$175,000	BWSR WBIF	2022
Education and outreach specialist	\$30,000	BWSR WBIF	2022
High priority studies	\$92,274	BWSR WBIF	2022
TOTAL	\$1,196,193		

WBIF = Watershed Based Implementation Funding; CWLA = Clean Water Legacy Act; AIG = Advance Implementation Grants

Capital Projects

The Commission shares in the cost of qualifying capital projects in accordance with a CIP Cost Share Policy. The Commission share is funded using the authority under Minn. Stat. 103B.251, which allows the Commission to request Hennepin County to levy an ad valorem tax on its behalf across all the property in the watershed. Any excess levy funds after project close outs are segregated in a Closed Projects Account and may be used only for additional capital projects. Cities serve as contracting agencies and are then reimbursed from Commission funds. Table 7 shows the Third Generation capital projects.

Table 7. Elm Creek capital projects and levies, 2015-2024.

PR#	City	Project Name	Commission Share	Local Share	Est Total Cost	Amount Levied
2015-01	Plymouth	Elm Cr Reach E	\$250,000	\$836,000	\$1,086,000	\$250,000
2016-01	Rogers	CIP-2016-RO-01 Fox Cr, Creekview	80,312	240,938	321,250	80,312
2016-02	Champlin	Mississippi Point Park Riverbank Repair	75,000	225,000	300,000	75,000
2016-03	Champlin	Elm Creek Dam	187,500	6,813,720	7,001,220	187,500
2016-05	Maple Grove	Fish Lake Alum Treatment-Phase 1	75,000	225,000	300,000	75,000
2016-04	Maple Gove	Rush Creek Main Stem	75,000			75,000
2017-01	Rogers	Fox Cr, Hyacinth	112,500	337,500	450,000	112,500
2017-03	Champlin	Mill Pond Fishery and Habitat Restoration	250,000	4,750,000	5,000,000	250,000
2017-04	Champlin	Rain Garden at Independence Avenue	75,000	225,000	300,000	75,000
2018-01	Maple Grove	Rush Creek Main Stem	75,000			75,000
2018-02	Plymouth	CIP-2017- EC Stream Restoration Reach D	212,500	637,500	850,000	212,500
2018-03	Champlin	Elm Creek Stream Restoration Phase III	100,000	300,000	400,000	100,000
2018-04	Champlin	Downs Road Trail Raingarden	75,000	225,000	300,000	75,000
2019-01	Maple Gove	Rush Creek Main Stem	25,000	1,775,000	1,650,000	26,513
2019-04	Medina	Hickory Drive Stormwater Improvement	76,823	231,097	307,920	81,471
2019-05	Corcoran	Downtown Regional Stormwater Pond	26,477	79,433	105,910	28,709
2019-06	Champlin	Elm Creek Stream Restoration Phase IV	150,000	450,000	600,000	159,075
2020-01	Various	Livestock Excl, Buffer & Stabilized Access	50,000	-	50,000	53,025
2020-02	Various	Agricultural BMPs Cost Share	50,000	-	50,000	53,025
2020-03	Plymouth	Enhanced Street Sweeper	25,000	50,000	75,000	31,512
2021-01	Maple Grove	Elm Rd/Everest Ln Stream Resto	125,000	375,000	500,000	132,536
2021-02	Champlin	Elm Creek Stream Restoration Phase V	150,000	750,000	900,000	159,075
2022-01	Various	City Cost Share	100,000	100,000	200,000	106,500
2022-02	Various	Partnership Cost Share	50,000	-	50,000	53,250
2022-03	Maple Grove	South Fork Rush Creek Restoration 1	406,252	2,843,748	3,250,000	430,828
2023.01	Maple Grove	South Fork Rush Creek Restoration 2	406,250			430,830
2023.02	Dayton	CSAH 12/Dayton River Rd Stabilization	110,000	1,219,410	1,329,410	116,655
2023.03	Rogers	Downtown Pond Expansion and Reuse	101,500	304,500	406,000	107,640
2023.04	Various	City Cost Share Program	100,000	100,000	100,000	106,050
2023.05	Various	Partnership Cost Share Program	50,000	-	50,000	53,025
			\$3,645,114	\$1,623,910	\$1,885,410	\$3,772,531

Evaluation of Goals and Strategies

Third Generation Priorities

The Third Generation Watershed Management Plan established five priorities to be addressed in the 2015-2024 planning period. The Plan also established goals in six areas and priority actions. The following is an overview of progress through mid-2024.

Priority 1: Begin implementing priority projects and actions in 2015, providing cost-share to member cities to undertake projects to help achieve WRAPS lake and stream goals.

The member cities, other agencies, and private property owners have implemented a variety of actions to improve lakes and streams, from large capital projects to individual property maintenance choices. Some examples include:

- Several significant stream restoration projects totaling x,xxx linear feet on Elm Creek and Rush Creek, and projects on smaller streams such as Fox Creek.
- Lake improvement actions including alum treatments, and carp and invasive vegetation management.
- Partnering with Hennepin County Board Conservationists to promote and undertake improvements on agricultural and other lands. These include actions such as nutrient management plans, buffers, swales, manure bunkers, runoff storage and treatment, and wetland restorations.
- Routinely incorporating Best Management Practices into public infrastructure projects.

Priority 2: Use the results of the WRAPS study to establish priority areas, and complete subwatershed assessments to identify specific Best Management Practices that feasibly and cost-effectively reduce nutrient and sediment loading to impaired water resources.

The Commission has completed Subwatershed Assessments in three priority upper watershed areas with predominately agricultural/rural residential land uses: The Rush Creek Headwaters, South Fork Rush Creek, and Diamond Creek subwatersheds were identified in the WRAPS as potentially contributing higher pollutant loads to impaired streams and lakes. In addition, the Commission supported the city of Maple Grove in its completion of SWAs for the Weaver Lake and Rice Lake drainage areas.

Priority 3: Develop a model manure management ordinance to regulate the placement of new small non-food animal operations using the City of Medina ordinance as a guide, and require member cities to adopt that ordinance or other ordinances and practices to accomplish its objectives.

A model ordinance was developed in 2018 and cities were encouraged to consider using it as the basis for their own official controls. Each city in the watershed has adopted the model or a modified version.

Priority 4: Partner with other organizations to complete a pilot project for targeted fertilizer application and to increase and focus outreach to agricultural operators.

While there was initial support, the Commission opted instead to work with Hennepin County to encourage a broad range of agricultural BMPs.

Priority 5: Continue participating in joint education and outreach activities with WMWA and other partners.

The Commission has actively participated in WMWA to develop and deliver coordinated messaging and outreach focused on protecting waters and good practices, from elementary students to lake associations to tabling at city festivals and events. The Commission also dedicated some of its Watershed-Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) to a pool with four other WMOs and Hennepin County to hire a shared outreach coordinator to develop and deliver a broader range of focused messaging and outreach.

Progress Toward Third Generation Goals and Actions

Water Quantity. The Third Generation Plan goals for water quantity are focused on reducing, or at minimum achieving no increase in, the volume and rate of runoff discharging to the streams in the watershed, to reduce potential for downstream flooding, erosive velocities and minimize further streambank erosion and mass wasting. An additional management goal is to maintain the current flood profile of Elm Creek and tributaries.

Goal Area A: Water Quantity

Third Generation Goals	Progress Toward Goals	Status
A.1. Maintain the post-development 2-year, 10-year, and 100-year peak rate of runoff at pre-development level for the critical duration precipitation event.	Commission rules for new development and redevelopment require no increase in the rate of runoff post development. Small projects less than 1 acre are encouraged to add voluntary BMPs.	Complete and ongoing
A.2 Maintain the post-development annual runoff volume at pre-development volume.	Commission rules for new development and redevelopment require abstraction of new volumes, but allow filtration where infiltration is not feasible, which is common. New volumes are tracked.	Needs work
A.3 Prevent the loss of floodplain storage below the established 100-year elevation.	Commission rules require compensating storage where this occurs.	Complete and ongoing
A.4. Reduce peak flow rates in Elm, Diamond, and Rush Creeks and tributary streams to the Crow and Mississippi and preserve conveyance capacity.	Theoretically if all projects meet the infiltration requirement. Not all do because of poor soils. Not tracked.	Needs work

Water Quality. The goals for water quality are focused on making progress to improve the lakes and streams in the watershed as well as protect those that are not impaired waters.

Goal Area B: Water Quality

Third Generation Goals	Progress Toward Goals	Status
B.1 Improve Total Phosphorus concentration in the impaired lakes by 10% over the 2004-2013 average by 2024	Progress is being assessed in the 10-year TMDL Review currently underway. Fish Lake has been delisted due to improved water quality	In process
B.2 Maintain or improve water quality in the lakes and streams with no identified impairments.	Progress is being assessed in the 10-year TMDL Review currently underway	In process
B.3 Conduct a TMDL/WRAPS progress review every five years following approval of the TMDLs and WRAPS study.	Progress is being assessed in the 10-year TMDL Review currently underway	In process
B.4 Identify high priority areas where the Commission will partner with cities and other agencies to provide technical and financial assistance.	Subwatershed assessments have been completed for catchments where modeling for the TMDL indicated a higher-than-average pollutant load contribution. Partnering with the County on BMPs in those areas.	Complete

Groundwater. The Commission has undertaken limited groundwater management activities in the past, primarily by requiring projects meeting project review thresholds to infiltrate a portion of runoff. The Rules also limit the use of infiltration in sensitive recharge areas and Wellhead Protection Emergency Response Areas.

Goal Area C: Groundwater

Third Generation Goals	Progress Toward Goals	Status
C.1 Promote groundwater recharge by requiring abstraction/infiltration of runoff from new development and redevelopment.	Commission rules for new development and redevelopment require abstraction of new volumes, but allow filtration where infiltration is not feasible, which is common. New volumes are tracked.	Needs work
C.2. Protect groundwater quality by incorporating wellhead protection study results into development and redevelopment Rules and Standards.	Infiltration is not allowed in certain high-risk areas.	Complete

Wetlands. The Commission’s primary tool for managing wetlands is the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA). The Commission no longer serves as the Local Government Unit (LGU) for WCA administration in any of the member cities.

Goal Area D: Wetlands

Third Generation Goals	Progress Toward Goals	Status
D.1 Preserve the existing functions and values of wetlands within the watershed.	Cities are now responsible for enforcing the WCA. Impacts are as allowable under WCA. Commission does not track cumulative impacts.	Work needed
D.2 Promote the enhancement or restoration of wetlands in the watershed.	SWAs have identified some potential wetland restorations. The Commission has partnered with the County on a few restorations.	Work needed

Drainage Systems. Hennepin County retains ditch authority over several jurisdictional ditches in the watershed. The primary Third Generation activity related to drainage systems is to periodically review the advantages and disadvantages of ditch authority and if requested to reconsider jurisdiction.

Goal Area E: Drainage Systems

Third Generation Goals	Progress Toward Goals	Status
E.1 Continue current Hennepin County jurisdiction over county ditches in the watershed.	Continuing current jurisdiction.	Complete

Operations and Programing. The following goals guide the routine programs and operations of the Commission, and include the education and outreach program; maintenance of rules and standards; the annual monitoring program; and programs and activities to stay abreast of changing standards and requirements, search for grant and other funds to supplement the regular budget, and operate a capital improvement program and share in the cost of projects.

Goal Area F: Operations and Programming

Third Generation Goals	Progress Toward Goals	Status
F.1 Identify and operate within a sustainable funding level that is reasonable to member cities.	The member dues have increase 19% since 2015, from \$209,000 to \$250,000, or less than 2% per year. The inflation rate increased 31% in that period.	Complete
F.2 Foster implementation of TMDL and other implementation projects by sharing in their cost and proactively seeking grant funds.	The Commission has provided \$3.6 million in CIP cost share, \$62,000 in small project cost share, and obtained \$1.2 million in grants funds.	Complete
F.3 Operate a public education and outreach program to supplement the NPDES Phase II education requirements for the member cities.	Primarily participation in the West Metro Water Alliance. Limited independent education and outreach. Maintains a website.	Complete, but needs work
F.4 Operate a monitoring program sufficient to characterize water quantity, water quality, and biotic integrity in the watersheds and to evaluate progress toward meeting TMDL goals.	The Commission contracts with Three Rivers Park District to administer the monitoring program set forth in the Plan. Results are presented annually to the Commission.	Complete
F.5 Maintain rules and standards for development and redevelopment that are consistent with local and regional TMDLs, federal guidelines, source water and well head protection requirements, sustainable water yields, nondegradation, and ecosystem management goals.	The Commission maintains Rules and Standards and periodically revises them as necessary for clarification or to incorporate the latest standards or regulatory requirements.	Complete
F.6 Serve as a technical resource for member cities.	The Technical Advisory Committee is comprised of representatives from the member cities and staff from Hennepin County, Three Rivers Park District, and consulting staff. The TAC meets periodically throughout the year to review and advise on topics referred by the Commission and to learn about new technologies and topics and share information.	Complete

Assessment of Third Generation Plan Performance

In preparation for the Fourth Generation Management Plan, the Commission conducted a self-assessment to identify achievements and areas for improvement. The Commissions have completed or will have completed by 2024 nearly all the work plan activities and strategies identified in the Third Generation Plan. The most successful achievements of the Third Generation Plan were:

[List]

Areas that fell short of Third Generation expectations or which could be improved include:

[List]