COON CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT
Request for Board Action

MEETING DATE: November 13, 2012
AGENDA NUMBER: 14
ITEM: Comments on Comp Plan Review

POLICY IMPACT: Discussion
FISCAL IMPACT: Budgeted

REQUEST
1. Review and discuss comments on Rough Draft Comprehensive Plan.
2. Provide staff direction on addressing outstanding issues/concerns with Plan.

BACKGROUND
On October 22, 2012, the Board approved the release of a rough draft of the District
Comprehensive Plan for review by the District Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) and
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Copies of the plan were distributed to the:
- Board of Managers October 8
- CAC October 10
- TAC October 11

CAC and TAC had 14 week days to review and comment on the plan. The CAC
reconvened to review the plan October 30. The TAC met on October 31.

241 Comments needing responses were received. This figure does not include the
comments, suggestions and corrections concerning punctuation, word choice or
formatting.

142 of the comments were accepted and the plan was changed or corrected.

80 comments received responses noting the comment and either clarifying or making note
of the comment.

14 of the comments were actually questions.

12 comments addressed or revealed issues/concerns requiring some additional work.
ISSUES/CONCERNS

1. **Advisory Committee Comments**
   **Implementation Specifics:** There were numerous requests and verbal comments for either:
   a) More implementation specifics regarding budget or work plan level directives for the 10-year period
   b) A clear(er) connection between the goals and outcomes through clarification of inputs, outputs and outcomes
   c) Clarification at the Objectives level, noting means for achieving objectives, related activities, timeframes and milestones (Current plan takes this approach).

   **At Present**
   The rough draft plan identifies specific actions (identified by program) and repeats those actions in the implementation section and provides a time and estimated cost for implementation.

   **Options:**
   1. Work out 10 years of work plan details
   2. Clarify by outcome the inputs and outputs to achieve the desired outcome
   3. Clarify at the Objective level the means, related activity, timeframes and milestones for achieving the objective
   4. Leave as is: Implementation timing and effort are handled through program/strategy/cost center descriptions.

   **Recommendation:**
   Options 3 or 4
   3) There is some validity to the underlying concern here of being able to discern the District’s intentions of how we will pursue these goals (#3).
   4) On the other hand, the State (MPCA & BWSR) emphasis is on implementation and estimated costs. The ‘Cost Center approach (#4) provides a closer immediate connection to District accounting and funding system.

   **Standards:** An observed and noted fact was that the District’s management principles and standards were not available in the rough draft. These principles and standards provide the basis and technical guidance for the best management practices used in the District and the need and reasonableness of the District’s rule.

   The absence of the standards was an oversight. The section needs to be included and updated to address water quality actions.
**Mining:** An issue that was addressed as needing consideration early in the planning process was mining and its effect on groundwater. The issue pertains primarily to Ham Lake but also could have significant bearing on Blaine and Andover where large amounts of material have been removed to balance the site and homes have been built around the edge of the resulting pond or lake. The issue stated in this manner is a land use/development concern and will never rank very high, because the District avoids land USE allocation decisions.

However, when we consider the fact that most of the water filling these man-made lakes and ponds is ground water from the surficial/drift aquifer and that this water resource has been in steady decline, then creating additional open water bodies exposes this resource to additional, potentially significant loss through evaporation, transpiration or both. If we factor in the decline in humidity levels in the spring (lower than the southwest U.S. in early spring), we add an element leading to potentially significant seasonal loss.

**At Present**
The rough draft plan only brushes on the effects of mining and construction of impoundments through discussion of water balance and climate change

**Options:**
1. Develop a separate Issue Goal section on mining/creation of lakes and ponds
2. Address/clarify these concerns in the existing plan in one or all of the following sections: Preventing property damage, hydrologic balance, beneficial uses, climate change, water conservation, loss of groundwater-driven surface waters
3. Include a special study that addresses exposed groundwater specifically and recommends actions and amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.
4. Leave as is: Continue to view this concern as a land use issue.

**Recommendation:**
Option 3: Include in Plan a special study (SAMP) that specifically addresses the consequences of exposing the drift aquifer to loss from evapotranspiration.
**Weather Stations:** There was interest by the TAC in the identified need and value of establishing weather stations capable of assisting in identifying micro storms and variation within the watershed as early as possible. One member expressed interest in cost-sharing with the District.

**At Present**
The purchase of stations is not scheduled in the capital equipment portion of CIP.

**Options:**
1. Rework plan, tightening the climate change and CIP implementation schedule
2. Note interest and further evaluate specific need and value for stations through the CIP budget process.
3. Remove consideration from the plan.

**Recommendation:**
Option 2: Note interest and further evaluate specific need and value for stations through the CIP budget process (Staff Recommendation).

**Water Rates & Use of Grey Water:** Several reviewers felt that a more full review and discussion of both of these items was warranted.

**At Present**
The rough draft plan discusses the basics of conservation pricing, where incrementally or in a block fashion, the user pays more the more water is used (marginal price increases with marginal cost) and because water rates/water supply is controlled by the cities, the plan proposes that the District conduct a study and act as a forum and catalyst for the cities to address water conservation through this method.

The rough draft plan does not address grey water specifically. Grey water use is a huge issue with regional and statewide implications. The rough draft plan, however, does address the need for cities to discuss re-use or harvesting options. To some parties this may be a distinction of no difference. However, “re-use” and harvesting offers many more options and scales of implementation from private cisterns and rain barrels to retrofitting parking lots and business campuses for landscape watering or other uses.

**Options:**
1. Include a special study on the potential use of grey water within the District in the plan.
2. Include a policy or action that specifically states that the District will follow any discussion on the use of grey water.
3. Leave as is: focus on conservation pricing and encouraging water re-use.
Recommendation
Option 3: Leave as is.

2. **Comments from the Board of Managers:**
   Are there issues/concerns on the part of managers?

3. **Next Steps:**
   1. Update the Draft Plan to reflect the above changes
   2. Finalize digital and online options for reviewing Draft
   3. Plan Review Process: Determined by M.S. 103B.231 Subd. 7. The steps and timing would be as follows. The timeline assumes a December 10 date for release of the DRAFT for public review.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Action</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>Board Meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DRAFT Review</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>12/10/12</td>
<td>02/08/13</td>
<td>02/14/13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response to Comments</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>03/10/13</td>
<td>03/11/13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRAFT Plan Hearing</td>
<td></td>
<td>04/15/13</td>
<td></td>
<td>04/15/13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met Council State Agency Review</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
<td>06/09/13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BWSR Approval</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>09/07/13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCWD Adoption</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>10/07/13</td>
<td>01/05/14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RECOMMENDATION**
1. Review and discuss Advisory Committee issues and concerns
2. Review and discuss Board Issues and concerns
3. Provide staff direction on addressing identified issues
4. Plan to release DRAFT Comprehensive Plan for Public Review at the December 10 meeting