

## OUTCOME 6.2: WATER QUALITY

### WORKING GROUP WHITE PAPER

#### Overview

Outcome 6.2: By 2050, we have implemented a regional strategy that manages and conserves water as a beneficial resource. The strategy addresses water management including flood and drought risk, water quality and water supply-to both adapt to changing conditions and limit the impact of natural disasters.

*The Water Quality working group has focused on implementing a Regional strategy that manages and conserves water as a beneficial resource. Strategy will address water management for 1) flood and drought risk; 2) water quality and 3) water supply to adapt to changing conditions and limit the impact of natural disasters.*

#### Accomplishments in the past two years:

- Projects and Initiatives
  - This year has been about establishing a champion for this outcome. Andy Szatko with the City of Omaha's Stormwater Program agreed to be the water workgroup champion in late 2017. His efforts so far have been to get familiar with the role as champion and to share activities associated with his position that relate to Outcome 6.2. For example, the City of Omaha works with the Papillion Creek Watershed Partnership, including the communities of La Vista, Papillion, Bellevue, Gretna, Sarpy County, Ralston, Boys Town, to create consistent approaches and regulations for stormwater management, managing flooding risks, and protecting floodplains, streams, and rivers.
  - World O! Water – World O! Water is a free annual event designed to enlighten the public about water conservation, quality and recreation. Numerous organizations come together to support this event each year.
  - Green Infrastructure Education Network – The Omaha Stormwater Program developed as part of a collaborative grant with the University of Nebraska at Lincoln's Planning Department, a stormwater and green infrastructure educational toolkit to outreach to the metro area's school districts. The toolkit includes maps of green infrastructure projects across the metro area, a buy-in guide to engage educators and administrators, and example lesson plans. The resources provided relate directly to the state science and math standards.
- How does it impact the MAPA members/the community?
  - Water does not recognize political boundaries and only through the collaboration of governmental and non-governmental organizations can we improve how water resources are managed here. There are a number of organizations already working together to manage water resources but this workgroup will help create a space to share what everyone is doing and provide more opportunities to build upon one another's efforts.

#### What is our work group working on now/in the next year or two:

- Projects and Initiatives
  - The next 1 to 2 years will focus on creating meaningful connections with water-related organizations to begin sharing information, resources, and processes for meeting the goal of 6.2.

- Individuals within those organizations will be sought to be part of the water workgroup. Specific projects and initiatives that support the strategies in Outcome 6.2 will be developed as the workgroup is developed.
- Identify streams and watersheds for regional focus. This will include staying informed on these current efforts: the US Army Corps of Engineers Section 22 Streambed Degradation Study, US Army Corps of Engineers Papio Watershed General Investigation, and the Papillion Creek Watershed Partnership's Watershed Plan update.
- Assess current stormwater/green infrastructure codes.
- How will it impact the MAPA members/the community?
  - The creation of the workgroup will provide MAPA members and the community an opportunity to bring the many aspects of water management together and align efforts.
  - The US Army Corps of Engineer efforts listed will provide significant information that will help to guide water management efforts going forward for the watershed and region. Future water management efforts will focus on addressing current issues and conserve/protect high quality water resources.
- How will we measure success?
  - Gaining members of the water workgroup
  - Develop a clear understanding of the current codes that either encourage or discourage sustainable stormwater management and how to improve them going forward.

**What challenges does our workgroup currently face or will we face in the near future? What items do we need assistance with?**

- Problems Facing the Working Group
  - Time
  - How to create consistency in an area that can be highly variable from one location to another
  - Soliciting involvement
- Who (individual, organization, entities, etc.) is best suited to assist the workgroup?
  - Papillion-Missouri River NRD
  - Papillion Creek Watershed Partnership – includes La Vista, Papillion, Bellevue, Gretna, Sarpy County, Ralston, Boys Town
  - Douglas County Environmental Services
  - MUD – Metropolitan Utilities District
  - USGS – United States Geological Survey
  - The Nature Conservancy
  - Iowa Stormwater Education Partnership
  - Nebraska H2O
  - Nebraska Stormwater and Floodplain Managers Association



**In the next 5 – 10 years, what priorities has the workgroup identified to accomplish the Heartland 2050 objective? Which priorities are high, medium or low.**

Priorities	High	Med	Low
Establish members of the Heartland 2050 Water Resources Workgroup	X		
Identify streams and watersheds for regional focus	X		
Assess current stormwater/green infrastructure codes		X	