

Moving Toward Equity in Watershed Management

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2022



What is the MWMO?

- Special-purpose unit of local government
- One of three dozen watershed organizations in Twin Cities metro area
- Protect and improve water quality and habitat



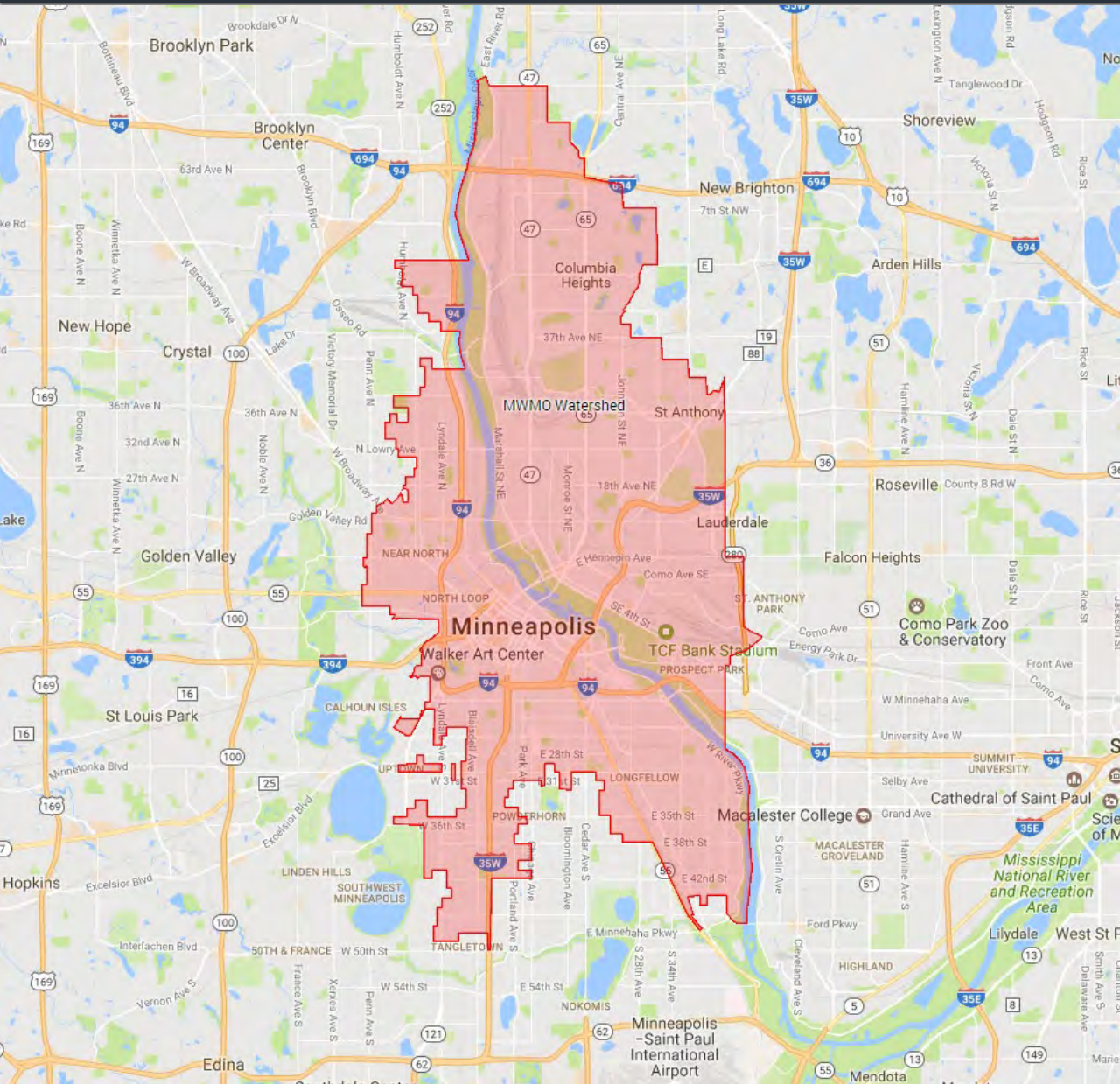
Who We Are

- Joint powers organization
- 16-20 staff
- \$5.7 million annual budget
 - \$1.6 million operating
 - \$4 million capital



What We Do

- Monitoring
- Research
- Planning
- Projects
- Grants
- Education



The MWMO Watershed

- ~40 square miles
- Urban, fully developed
- Member communities
 - Columbia Heights, Fridley, Hilltop, Lauderdale, Minneapolis, St. Anthony, St. Paul, Mpls. Parks & Rec.



Protect it. Pass it on.

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WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT
ORGANIZATION

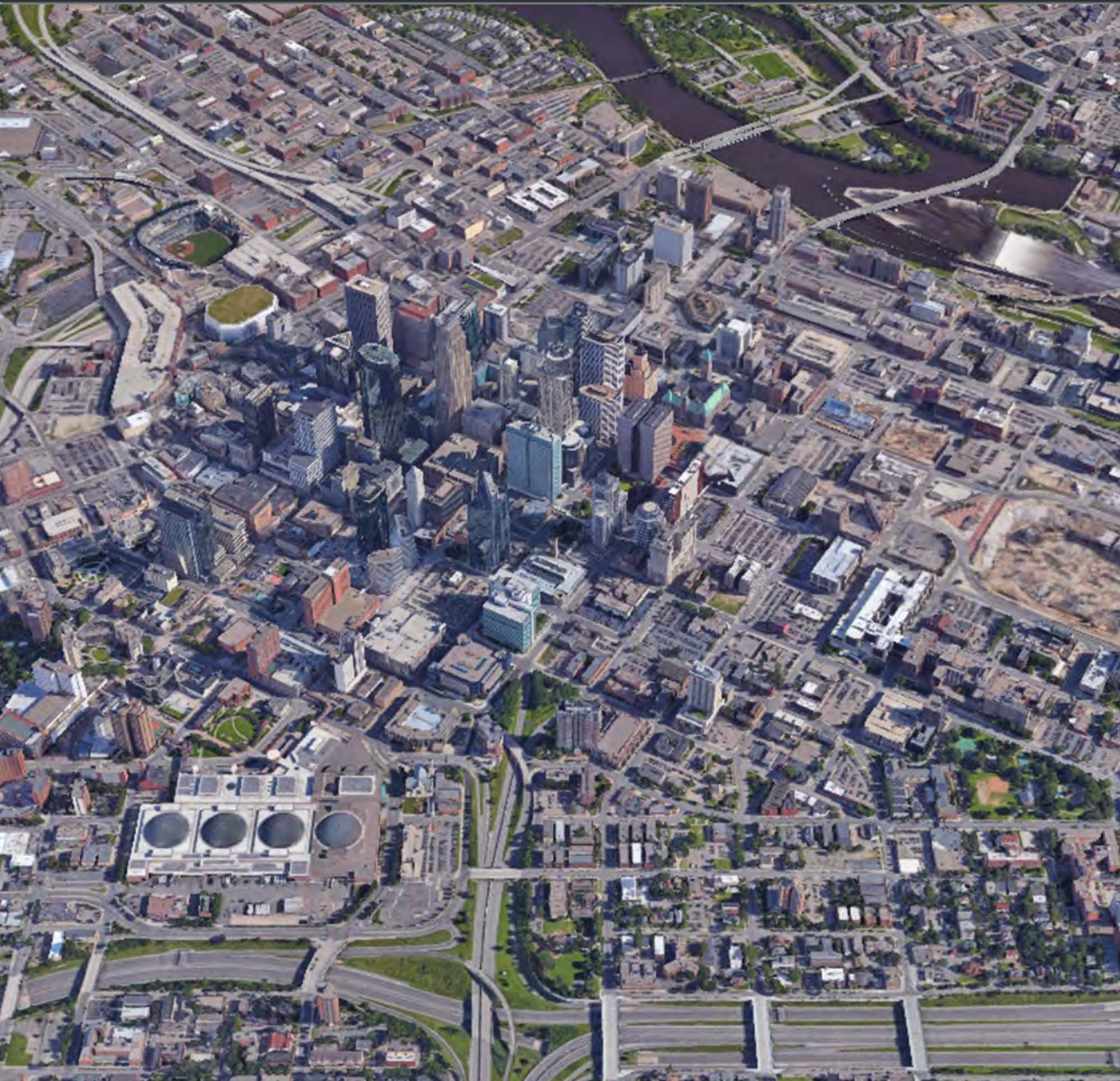
Fourth Generation Plan

Watershed Management Plan 2021-2031



Watershed Management Plan 2021-31

- Serve all people who live, work and play in MWWMO
- Find common ground and shared values around water and environment
- New focus on equity



Water Management Challenges

- Fully developed, urban watershed
- Impervious
- Aging and undersized gray infrastructure

MWMO Demographics

Table 11: Race and ethnicity within the MWMO

Race or Ethnicity (percent of population identifying as) ¹									
	Person of Color	Hispanic	Black	American Indian	Asian	White	Pacific Islander	Other	Multi-racial
Totals	44.9%	10.4%	21.8%	1.3%	7.0%	55.1%	0.0%	0.2%	4.1%
Columbia Heights	40.0%	10.8%	17.2%	0.8%	6.0%	60.0%	0.1%	0.9%	4.2%
Fridley	42.0%	10.4%	20.3%	1.0%	7.5%	58.0%	0.0%	0.1%	2.7%
Hilltop	68.6%	45.1%	10.1%	2.7%	2.6%	31.4%	0.0%	0.0%	8.1%
Lauderdale	48.6%	2.4%	17.2%	2.6%	23.7%	51.4%	0.0%	1.4%	1.5%
Minneapolis	45.8%	10.4%	22.6%	1.4%	7.1%	54.2%	0.0%	0.2%	4.1%
Saint Anthony Village	14.5%	4.9%	1.4%	2.2%	2.1%	85.5%	0.0%	0.2%	3.7%
Saint Paul	15.6%	2.3%	0.8%	0.0%	10.8%	84.4%	0.0%	0.4%	1.3%

(1) Based on 2014-2018 Census Block data and percent area within MWMO.

- MWMO population ~330,000 people
- Density avg. 11 people/acre
- 45% non-white
- Over 90 languages spoken
- Significant areas of concentrated poverty



Areas of focus around equity

- Increase engagement, trust and sense of agency
- Climate resilience
- Green jobs



Community Engagement

- Relationship and trust building (two-way relationships)
- Nurturing partnerships
- Providing information, resources and funding as appropriate

Refining Outreach Approaches

- Tailored outreach/communications
- Responsive outreach programs (e.g. Good Neighbor Guide, Community Cleanups, Meet the Mississippi)



Youth Programs

- Prioritize long-term, deep engagement over short programs.
- Develop relationships with local youth-serving organizations to co-create programs



Mississippi River Green Team

- Youth employment program in 14th year
- High school aged youth from N and NE Minneapolis
- Environmental jobs: Exposure and exploration



Workforce Development

- Sustainability-related jobs is a growing field
- Opportunities for living-wage (and beyond) jobs
- Green Infrastructure Training Programs
- Career and educational pathways



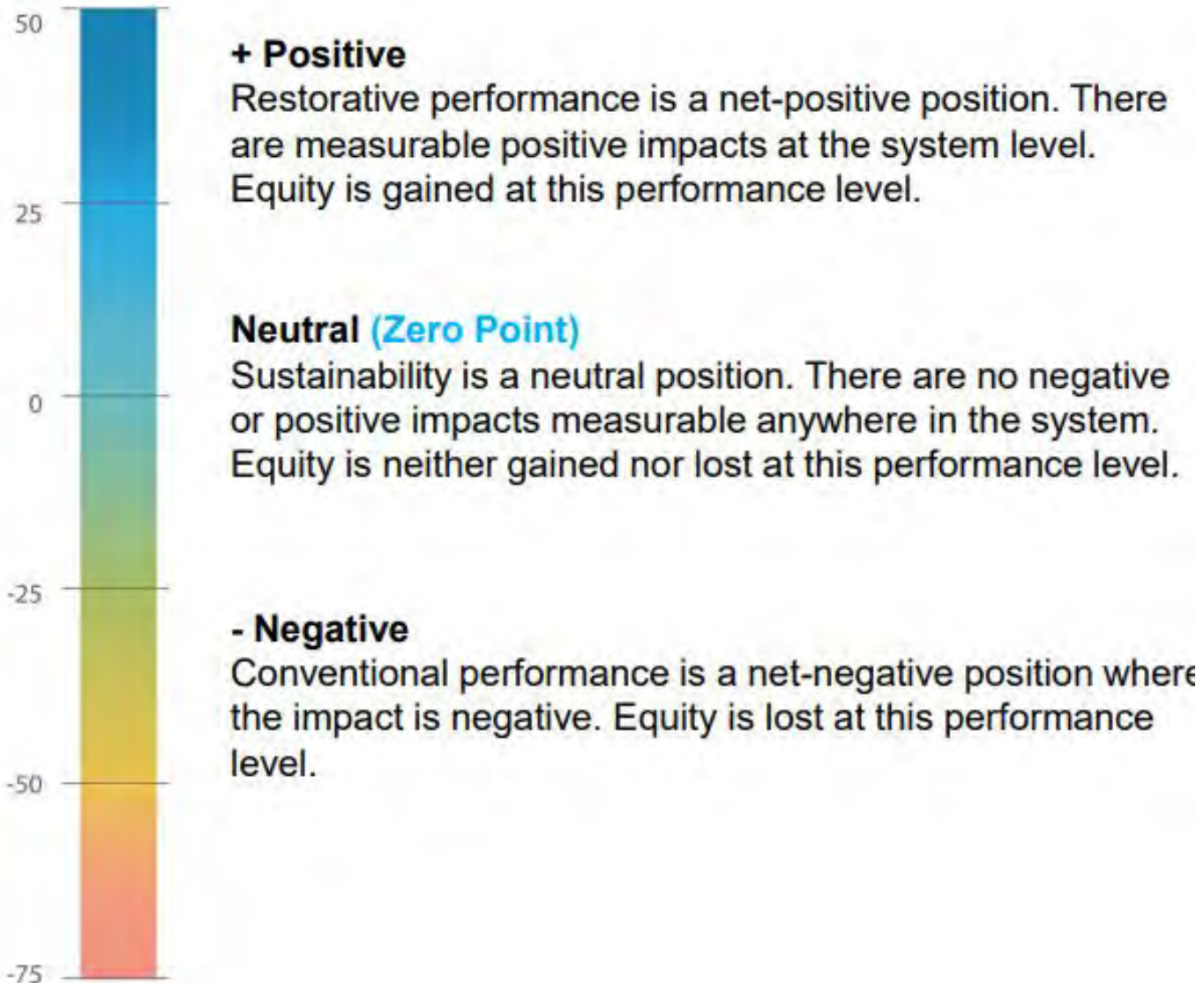
Restorative Development

- Circular vs linear system
- Eliminates waste
- Yields equitable and net-positive outcomes across sectors (environmental, social, economic)



Restorative Development Goals

- Improved economy, workforce development
- Improved climate, air/water quality
- Improved health, nutrition
- More efficient, resilient, lower-cost energy
- Improved quality of life (equity, safety, housing, natural spaces, engagement)



Restorative Development

- Projects evaluated by equity
- Project is an asset
- How does community benefit (environmentally, socially, economically)?



Restorative Development

- Working with partners to shift to restorative approach
- Continuously returning to “how does community benefit from this project?”



THANK YOU

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