



Title: Lake Nokomis Area Groundwater and Surface Water Evaluation Briefing

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Purpose:

At the January 19, 2022, meeting of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), staff will brief the CAC on the Lake Nokomis groundwater and surface water evaluation, collect feedback from the CAC on the briefing, and identify how this evaluation has helped to inform MCWD's future role with climate adaptation.

Background:

Since November 2017, MCWD has been participating in an evaluation to understand water concerns that arose for South Minneapolis residents near Solomon Park and Lake Nokomis, and their impact on public and private infrastructure as well as residential structures. In response to these water concerns, the City of Minneapolis assembled a multi-agency team ("Team") because surface water and groundwater management fall under several jurisdictions. Staff from the U.S. Geological Survey, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Hennepin County, MCWD, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and the City of Minneapolis came together to evaluate and understand what could be contributing to the water concerns and help identify actions to mitigate impacts for homeowners and community leaders.

Over the past four years these agencies have collectively reviewed over 70 studies and resources, invested over \$140,000 to install six new groundwater wells, held over 20 multi-agency team meetings, participated in five meetings with policy makers and members of the public, and created a webpage to summarize the ongoing evaluation. After concluding their study, the Team recommended preparation of a white paper to document the evaluation, findings, next steps, and recommendations into one comprehensive document. Given the MCWD's expertise in watershed science, MCWD took a lead role to synthesize the work of the Team into a white paper. With the white paper nearing completion, the Team is working to develop a public rollout strategy. This strategy will first involve formal acceptance of the white paper by MCWD and other agencies on the Team. After the white paper has been formally accepted, the evaluation's findings will be shared at a public town hall meeting in the coming months.

CAC meeting focus and next steps:

At the January 19, 2022, CAC meeting, MCWD staff will:

- Present the draft findings from the Lake Nokomis groundwater and surface water evaluation and the proposed next steps.
- Summarize how the Lake Nokomis area evaluation helped to inform MCWD's future role in climate adaptation for MCWD's communities.