



REQUEST FOR ACTION

Comprehensive Surface Water Management Plan

MEETING DATE:

June 1, 2026

ORIGINATING DEPT:

Public Works

AGENDA SECTION:

Consent Agenda

PRESENTER:

Aaron Luckstein

Action Requested:

Accepting the Comprehensive Management Surface Water Management Plan.

Report Narrative:

The City has completed a new Comprehensive Surface Water Management Plan (CSWMP) to guide the management of stormwater, surface water, and groundwater resources over the coming years. The previous plan, adopted in 1997 and updated in 1999, no longer reflected current conditions. Creating a new plan was necessary to address changes in federal and state regulations, incorporate updated rainfall and climate data, align with the City's Planning 2 Succeed: Rochester Comprehensive Plan 2040, and respond to continued growth and development.

The CSWMP establishes a coordinated, citywide approach to water resource management. It recognizes the connection between natural systems and built infrastructure to support informed decisions that protect water quality, reduce flood risk, and promote long-term sustainability. The plan combines traditional gray infrastructure, such as storm sewers and channels, with green infrastructure and natural features, including wetlands and tree canopy. This integrated approach improves system performance while providing environmental and community benefits.

To improve clarity and usability, the CSWMP is organized into three volumes. Volume I outlines the plan's purpose, guiding principles, and key strategies. Volumes II and III focus on development patterns, area-specific priorities, and contains the technical analysis supporting the plan. This structure allows City staff, developers, elected officials, and residents to easily access information relevant to their needs.

The CSWMP is built around five focus areas that guide the City's future actions:

- Protect water quality, groundwater resources, and natural habitats
- Improve resilience to changing climate conditions
- Strengthen policies, programs, and system operations
- Increase public awareness, partnerships, and community engagement
- Establish sustainable funding and asset management practices

Together, these focus areas provide a framework for addressing current challenges and preparing for future conditions. The CSWMP also identifies implementation strategies, regulatory coordination measures, and monitoring efforts to track progress and support future updates.

The proposed CSWMP was presented to the Council during the April 27, 2026, Study Session. The final draft was provided to the Council on May 6, 2026, for final review.

Staff recommends that the Council accept the CSWMP. Once approved, the CSWMP will be added to the City's Stormwater webpage.

Priorities & Foundational Principles:

Inclusive Growth Management

Responsible Environmental Stewardship

Policy Considerations & DEI Impact:

Policy: The CSWMP establishes policies for surface water and stormwater management while aligning with related City plans, including the Comprehensive Plan, Sustainability and Resiliency Community Work Plan, and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program Plan. The plan supports the City's strategic priorities of Inclusive Growth Management and Responsible Environmental Stewardship.

Engagement and DEI Impact: The City used a broad public and stakeholder engagement process to develop the CSWMP. Engagement activities included stakeholder meetings, public and developer surveys, resilience workshops, a stakeholder forum, public open houses, and interactive ArcGIS mapping tools that allowed residents to identify flooding concerns and provide feedback on priorities.

Input was gathered from City staff, residents, businesses, developers, community organizations, and regional partners to ensure the plan reflected a wide range of community perspectives and needs. Additional efforts were made to engage underrepresented groups through a Community Advisory Group focused on incorporating equity and environmental justice considerations into the planning process.

Feedback collected throughout the process was used to refine the plan's goals, strategies, and implementation actions, ensuring the final CSWMP reflects community priorities and stakeholder input.

Prior Legislative Actions & Community Engagement:

Aug. 3, 2020: Council Meeting - Professional Services Contract Authorized with Emmons and Oliver Resources, Inc. for Data Collection, Gap Analysis, and Project Scoping for the CSWMP - Project No. J6601.

June 7, 2021: Council Meeting - Professional Services Contract Authorized with Emmons and Oliver Resources, Inc. for Comprehensive Surface Water Management Plan Phase I of the CSWMP - Project No. J6601.

June 20, 2022: Council Meeting - Professional Services Contract Authorized with Emmons and Oliver Resources, Inc. for Planning and Engineering Services Related Phase II of the CSWMP - Project No. J6601.

July 10, 2023: Council Meeting - Professional Services Contract Amendment with Emmons and Oliver Resources, Inc. for Planning and Engineering Services Related Phase II of the CSWMP - Project No.

J6601.

January 22, 2024: Council Study Session - Comprehensive Surface Water Management Plan Update.

April 27, 2026: Council Study Session - Comprehensive Surface Water Management Plan Final Draft Presentation.

Fiscal & Resource Impact:

Acceptance of the CSWMP will not have a direct fiscal or staffing impact.

Funding for development of the CSWMP was provided in part through a Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Planning Grant for Stormwater, Wastewater, and Community Resilience, with the remaining costs funded through the Storm Water Utility Enterprise Fund. Funding was approved as part of the City's 2022–2027 Capital Improvement Program under City Project J6601 – Stormwater Management Plan Update.

Alternative Action(s):

No alternative actions are suggested at this time.

Prepared By:

Aaron Luckstein

Attachments:

[Comprehensive Surface Water Management Plan - June 1, 2026](#)