

DAKOTA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Dakota County Western Service Center – Room L139

14955 Galaxie Avenue

Apple Valley, MN 55124

Thursday, September 28, 2023

7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Agenda

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comments:

Anyone wishing to address the Planning Commission on an item not on the agenda may address the Planning Commission at this time (comments are limited to 5 minutes).

IV. Approval of the Agenda

V. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (August 24, 2023)

VI. Dakota County Solid Waste Management Plan – Information

(Renee Burman – Environmental Resources)

VII. Planning Manager Update and County Board Actions (Kurt Chatfield – Planning Office)

- Progress toward Planning Commission 2023 Work Plan
- County Board authorized release of draft Miesville Park Reserve Long-Range Plan and Natural Resource Management Plan for public review

VIII. Upcoming Public Meetings – Community Outreach

Dakota County Crisis and Recovery Center Ground Breaking	October 3, 5 p.m. Dakota County Northern Service Center Northeast parking lot
Vermillion River Watershed Plan Public meeting	October 12, 4pm-6pm Farmington Extension Building
Solid Waste Management Plan Public intercept (booth with staff)	October 13, 8am-noon West St. Paul Farmers Market (to be confirmed)
Cedar Avenue Pedestrian Bridge at 140th Open House	October 18, 5:30pm-7:30pm Dakota County Western Service Center, Rm 106
Miesville Park Reserve Long Range Plan and Natural Resources Management Plan Open House	October TBD (details available at future date)

IX. Topics for Next Meeting (Thursday, October 26, 2023)

- Vermillion River Greenway Natural Resource Management Plan

X. Planning Commissioner Announcements/Updates

XI. Adjourn



Meeting Minutes: Dakota County Planning Commission Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes-DRAFT

Date: 8/24/2023

Minutes prepared by: Liz Hansen

Location: Western Service Center

Attendance

Members Present

- Jerry Rich
- Amy Hunting
- Mike Cahn
- Barry Graham
- James Guttman
- Nate Reitz
- Tony Nelson
- Kelly Kausel
- Michael Esch
- Dennis Peine
- Brady Folkestad

Dakota County staff members attending:

- Niki Geisler, Parks Director
- Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator
- Lil Leatham, Principal Planner
- Joe Walton, Natural Resource Senior Ecologist, Parks

Member(s) Absent:

- Lori Hansen
- Jill Smith

Meeting Called to Order

- Time: 7:00 p.m.
- By: Planning Commission Chair, Amy Hunting

Pledge of Allegiance

- The Planning Commission opened the meeting by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

- Comments/Notes: No audience member wished to address an item not on the agenda.

Approval of Agenda

Chair Hunting asked if there were any changes to the agenda.

The Planning Commission advised no changes, additions, or deletions.

MOTION: Commissioner Cahn moved, seconded by Commissioner Graham, approving the agenda. Voice vote: Ayes – 11 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved

Approval of Minutes (from May 25, 2023)

Chair Hunting asked if there were any changes to the previous meeting's minutes.

The Planning Commission advised no changes, additions, or deletions.

MOTION: Commissioner Graham moved, seconded by Commissioner Esch, approving the previous meeting's minutes. Voice vote: Ayes – 11 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved

Welcome New Planning Commissioner—Brady Folkestad

Vice-Chair Guttman briefly introduced new Planning Commissioner Brady Folkestad, appointed from Commissioner Liz Workman's 5th district.

Commissioner Folkestad shared information about his work history and his family life. Commissioner Folkestad resides in Burnsville.

Item VII. Miesville Ravine Park Reserve Long-Range Plan and Natural Resource Management Plan – Action (Lil Leatham, Principal Planner; Joe Walton, Senior Ecologist)

Lil Leatham, Principal Planner, and Joe Walton, Senior Ecologist, presented this item. The Planning Commission received an overview of what's new and updated, the next steps in the process, responded to questions, and engaged in discussion.

Questions and comments by the Commissioners, along with responses from staff (*italics*):

What is Dakota County's Buckthorn removal plan? *Staff responded that different techniques are used to remove buckthorn, such as spraying techniques and hand pulling.*

A Commissioner stated that there was an excellent diagram with a detailed description of the garlic mustard strategy within the plan. *Staff thanked the commissioner for the comment.*

A Commissioner asked if garlic mustard could be used for anything else. *Staff responded that it could be eaten and harvested and that it had been brought in from Europe.*

What is a reach? *Staff responded that this is a linear water feature that flows into Trout Brook and is measured in feet or miles.*

Do the powerlines present an issue or problem from a Natural Resource Management perspective? *Staff responded that they would look into working with the power utility company for good management of vegetation under the powerlines.*

The amount of money for natural resource restoration and management is large. Are the maintenance costs significantly less once the plan is implemented? *Staff responded that the maintenance costs are ten times lower than the restoration costs, and staff try to use fire as the primary maintenance tool because removing brush is very expensive because this area has steep slopes. The use of herbicide and goat grazing are other methods to manage buckthorn.*

Is natural resource restoration in this park worthwhile, given that the park is at the bottom of the watershed? Are you battling something you can't win? *Staff responded that it depends, but we must be realistic in our expectations. Staff believes the level of garlic mustard can be managed. Though this park's natural systems have been altered, it is one of the highest-quality natural areas in Dakota County.*

A comment was made that Lebanon Hills provides an example of how long it may take for restoration. *Staff responded that there was more work to be done at Lebanon Hills, but we have seen progress. The plan for Miesville is striking a good balance. If something isn't working, we can change our approach.*

Is there a way to work with high schools or middle schools to do field trips and find ways to engage our youth in education opportunities within the park? *Staff responded that this a great idea and builds a sense of ownership of the park and the land, and this is exactly what we need: champions in the area and people interested in the land. One of the challenges at Miesville is recruiting volunteers, though once people visit the park, they love it and often return.*

Are we partnering with school districts and groups like the National Honors Society to get kids interested in different things? *Staff responded that there are hands-on learning opportunities outside with the Natural Resources staff, and we are rebounding to pre-COVID-19 numbers. However, we would love to see higher numbers. The visitor service plan is due for an update, and the demand is high, and schools want to be involved and be part of it.*

How many visitors do we get at this park? *Staff responded that in the year 2022, 33,000 visitors were estimated. However, we don't know about the Cannon River breakdown as many people enter the park for the purpose of canoeing, kayaking, or tubing and don't spend time at the park itself. Miesville is our least visited park, and Lebanon Hills is our most visited park, with nearly a million visitors annually.*

Has 4H has been utilized at all? *Staff responded that 4H and church groups have been used for the hoop house and garlic mustard pulls.*

Are the deer management park hunts viable? *Staff responded that this park is like a mecca for deer because they descend on this park from all the surrounding farm fields in the winter, and huge numbers are counted. Deer hunts happen yearly, and they are somewhat successful in managing the deer population.*

A Commissioner expressed that they were impressed with the deer management section and were happy to see multiple ways to control them in the long-range plan. *Staff responded that yes, there were alternatives to hunting. One of those ways was to reduce the amount of edge, open forest, and cropland.*

Will the maintenance roads be available for the public to use? *Staff responded that people can walk on the maintenance road, which is relatively clear of brush and debris but will not be maintained as trails or signed.*

Are campsites in the long-range plan? *Staff responded that campsites are in the operational long-range plan, and the main challenge with campsites is the ongoing operations costs.*

A commissioner stated that Miesville was once considered for the Bison range. Did staff conclude that getting trucks and operational vehicles in and out of this park would be difficult? *Staff responded that access was difficult, so Miesville was not chosen for the bison range. Also, there are no wells or wetlands.*

Is there a reason we are referring to this plan as a long-range plan versus a master plan? *Staff responded that the term "Master" has a negative connotation. Referring to this plan as a long-range plan was an internal decision to follow what Met Council is doing. The Metropolitan Council Parks Policy Plan will be completed in 2024 and will replace "Master Plan" with "Long-range Plan".*

A Commissioner asked staff if they knew how the Met council refers to language in parking signs with the terminology "Handicapped" vs. "Disability" parking. *Staff responded that they were unsure and that they could look into this.*

How often does an outhouse need maintenance, and with limited water access in this park, how would handwashing with a picnic area work? *Staff responded that electricity is already in the park. Water will require drilling a well. The current restrooms do not meet current ADA guidelines and would be updated to comply. The existing restrooms are fairly large and hopefully will be able to include adult changing tables and running water.*

A Commissioner informed the Planning Commission that after January 2024, ADA accessibility has to be part of the plan when remodeling and building new construction of bathrooms. If there are pit toilets in Miesville, they would not be considered ADA-accessible after January. *Staff were encouraged to keep this in mind for future construction of bathrooms.*

How much does it cost to maintain the bathrooms? *Staff responded that they did not know, but our grounds staff are there regularly.*

According to the night sky map, a Commissioner stated that Miesville Ravine Park seemed to be the darkest spot in Dakota County and a good spot for star gazing. They asked what is the plan for lighting in this plan. *Staff responded that dark sky lighting was overlooked and could be added.*

A Commissioner stated that with telescopes, there was low-pressure sodium light or mustard light that could be blocked out with a single filter, and it was also noted that Flint Hills Resources had also changed their lighting.

A Commissioner thanked staff for their work and for sharing the long-range plan with the Planning Commission. When reviewing these plans, desires, and constraints focus their attention, and it is gratifying to see those changes come forward.

MOTION: Commissioner Reitz moved to recommend that staff release the Miesville Ravine Park Reserve Long-Range Plan and the Miesville Ravine Natural Resources Management Plan for public review, seconded by Commissioner Graham. Voice Vote: Ayes – 11 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved

Planning Manager Update and County Board Actions

Comments/Notes: Niki Geisler, Parks Director, provided the Planning Commission with an update on the following County Board Actions:

- County Board reviewed Miesville Ravine Park Reserve Concept
- Accepted grant funding from the National Scenic Byways program for Spring Lake Park Reserve
- Adopted the Veterans Memorial Greenway Interpretive Plan
- Toured Maintenance Facilities at Lebanon Hills Regional Park
- 3 Million Regional Bonding Dollars

Upcoming Public Meetings – Community Outreach

CR 46/CR 85 Proposed Round-a-bout Open House	August 28, 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. USW 662 Union Hall, Vermillion Township
Crisis and Recovery Center Ground Breaking	October 3, 5 p.m. (details available at future date)

Topics for next meeting (Thursday, September 28, 2023)

Niki Geisler, Parks Director, let the Planning Commission know that there are two tentative items on the schedule for next month’s meeting:

- Vermillion River Greenway Natural Resource Management Plan
- County Solid Waste Management Plan
- Planning Commission Workplan

Planning Commissioner Announcements/Updates:

A Commissioner discussed the 30 million dollar Lebanon Hills Maintenance project in which the Whole's Physical Development Committee approved the schematic design. *Staff responded that the new shop does include space and is a significant investment.*

A Commissioner asked if the Planning Commission could review the County's legislative priorities for 2024. *Staff responded that the County Board develops legislative priorities using a Legislative Advisory Workgroup. Staff will be able to provide an update to the Planning Commission on the County's legislative priorities when we get closer to the 2024 Legislative Session.*

Adjournment

Chair Hunting asked for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Commissioner Folkestad moved, seconded by Commissioner Esch, to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 p.m. Voice Vote: Ayes – 11 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved.

Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, September 28, 2023, at 7:00 p.m., Dakota County Western Service Center, Apple Valley

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator

DRAFT

DAKOTA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE: September 28, 2023

AGENDA ITEM: Required Revision of the Dakota County Solid Waste Management Plan

PREPARED BY: Mary Jackson

PURPOSE

Provide Planning Commission:

1. An introduction to the Solid Waste Management Plan and statutory requirements for revision
2. State Policy Plan new areas of emphasis
3. Proposed stakeholder engagement plan and revision process

BACKGROUND

Metropolitan counties must develop plans, projects, and programs to achieve state goals for waste management, guided by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Policy Plan (Policy Plan), which is updated every six years per Minn. Stat. § 473.149.

The MPCA published the [Draft 2022-2042 Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Policy Plan](https://www.pca.state.mn.us/business-with-us/solid-waste-planning) <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/business-with-us/solid-waste-planning> (Policy Plan) on June 5, 2023, for public comment. The Draft Policy Plan sets the framework for solid waste management in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area with regional numeric objectives for reduction/reuse, recycling, organics recovery, resource recovery, and land disposal, and required and optional county implementation strategies. The Policy Plan emphasizes waste reduction and reuse, sustainable building materials management, and wood waste management for the large volume of Ash tree waste projected due to the Emerald Ash Borer. Public comments on the draft were accepted through September 17, 2023, and State adoption of the Policy Plan is expected in November or December 2023. Minn. Stat. § 473.803 requires metropolitan counties to submit revised solid waste management plans to the MPCA within nine months of MPCA Policy Plan adoption. Dakota County anticipates completing its plan by August 2024. (Attachment: County Plan Revision Timeline)

As with the [2018 Dakota County Solid Waste Master Plan](https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Environment/ReportsStudies/solid-waste-master-plan/Documents/SolidWasteMasterPlan.pdf)

<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Environment/ReportsStudies/solid-waste-master-plan/Documents/SolidWasteMasterPlan.pdf> update, the Planning Commission will serve as advisors to the County Board and will be updated at key milestones throughout the update process. Staff are also conducting robust public engagement with residents, businesses and schools, waste haulers and facilities, public entities, and specialty groups to inform the plan. (Attachment: Public Engagement Plan):

- **September–October 2023:** Stakeholder engagement (Round 1)
- **October–November 2023:** Draft County Plan strategies
- **November–December 2023:** Stakeholder engagement (Round 2)
- **January–February 2024:** Draft and revise County Plan
- **Spring/Summer 2024:** Public comment on County Plan
- **Fall 2024:** County Plan finalization and approval

ATTACHMENTS

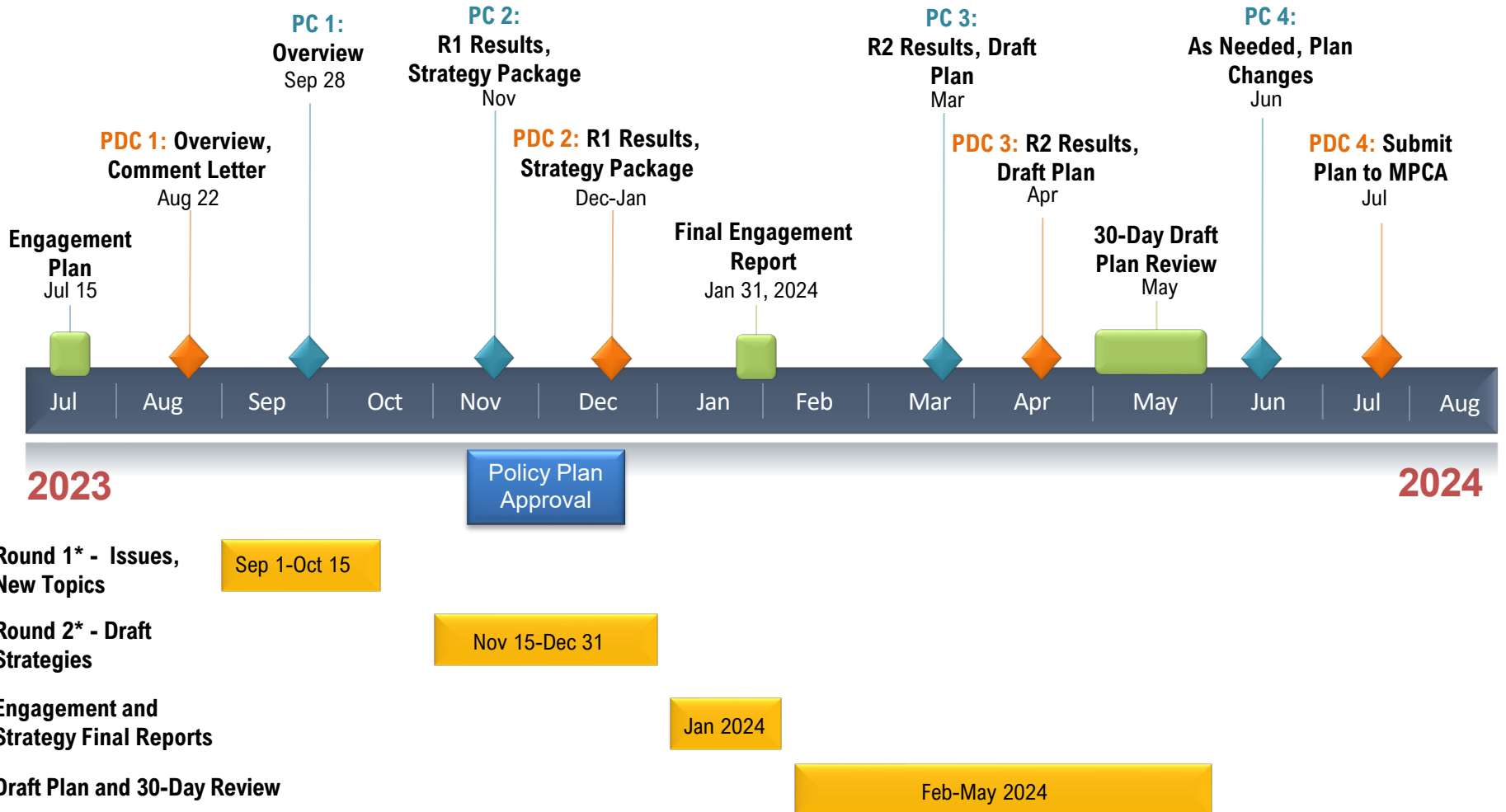
- A. County Plan Revision Timeline
- B. Public Engagement Plan
- C. Dakota County Board Chair comment letter on the draft Policy Plan
- D. Draft Policy Plan Strategies
- E. [2021 Dakota County Solid Waste Progress Report](https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Environment/ReportsStudies/Documents/2021SolidWasteProgressReport.pdf)
<https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Environment/ReportsStudies/Documents/2021SolidWasteProgressReport.pdf>

QUESTIONS

The following questions are provided to assist in reviewing the packet materials.

1. What initial thoughts do members have on the County's potential role(s) in the new areas of emphasis in the draft MPCA policy plan?
2. What recommendations does this Commission have on the proposed public engagement approach?
3. As an advisory committee, what additional information or data would be helpful when project updates are provided at future Commission meetings?

Solid Waste Management Plan Update Timeline



Round 1 and Round 2 will engage the waste industry, residents, business, schools, public entities, and specialty groups (tree/wood waste managers, reuse organizations, food rescue groups, and construction and demolition businesses). A revised draft Policy Plan was released for public comment on June 5, 2023, and MPCA Commissioner adoption of the Policy Plan is anticipated by November-December 2023. The new County Plan must be completed nine months after the MPCA Commissioner adopts the Policy Plan, by July-August 2024.

Public Engagement Plan for the Dakota County 2023 Solid Waste Management Plan Revision

1. Introduction

During 2023 Dakota County's (County) Environmental Resources Department (ERD) will be conducting stakeholder engagement while revising the Dakota County Solid Waste Master Plan. To be more inclusive of all residents and other entities, ERD intends to change the name of the Master Plan to the Solid Waste Management Plan during the revision process. The public engagement process will provide the County with timely, relevant, and candid feedback on strategies proposed to be included in the County Plan.

The current 2018-2038 [Dakota County Solid Waste Master Plan](#) (County Plan) defines Dakota County's plan for managing solid waste and describes the County's approach to support proper waste management by residents, businesses, industry, and government to meet County and State waste management goals.

The Dakota County Planning Commission will be Dakota County's primary advisory committee, and consulting services will be secured for development of the County Plan. The consultant will work closely with ERD's project team to develop, facilitate, organize, and summarize the public engagement process to inform the revision of the County Plan. Devoting resources to the planning effort beginning in 2023 will place the County in a better position to complete a viable County Plan by the anticipated deadline.

This Public Engagement Plan guides the public engagement by involving all affected stakeholder groups and creating effective and inclusive engagement methods tailored to each group to motivate and involve stakeholders who may not normally be engaged. A successful Public Engagement Plan will produce meaningful and pointed feedback to guide the development of proposed County Plan strategies.

2. Background

The County Plan framework and goals are influenced by the State of Minnesota's Waste Management Act (Minn. Stat. §115A) and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Policy Plan (Policy Plan) (Minn. Stat. §473.149) which is anticipated to be revised in 2023.

The State of Minnesota's Waste Management Act requires that waste be managed in accordance with the Waste Hierarchy, which identifies the preferred order of waste management practices:

1. Waste reduction and reuse (most preferred)
2. Waste recycling
3. Composting
4. Resource recovery
5. Land disposal with methane gas capture
6. Land disposal without methane gas capture (least preferred)

The strategies for waste diversion in the County Plan must reflect this waste management order. Strategies must also include mechanisms to meet the statutory recycling goals and household hazardous waste management requirements, including educational components.

Furthermore, the County Plan is developed in accordance with the MPCA Policy Plan which establishes the plan for managing the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area (TCMA), which includes Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington Counties). The existing Policy Plan was adopted in 2016 and is required to be updated every six years thereafter. All counties within the TCMA are required to implement the Policy Plan through revised county solid waste plans.

A revised draft Policy Plan has been released for public comment and is open for public comment until September 17, and MPCA Commissioner adoption of the Policy Plan is anticipated by October 2023. The new County Plan must be completed nine months after the MPCA Commissioner adopts the Policy Plan, by June 30, 2024. To allow time for the County to present information to the County Board of Commissioners and write the County Plan, the County must have the final stakeholder engagement report with findings and recommendations by January 31, 2024.

The current County Plan included new, significant regulatory strategies to address statutory changes, including an increased recycling rate goal for Metropolitan Counties (from 50% to 75% by 2030). County Plan regulatory strategies that have been adopted in County Ordinance 110 Solid Waste Management include: mandatory residential recycling; mandatory commercial (i.e., businesses, multi-unit residential buildings, schools, governments, events) recycling following best practices; mandatory organics (food scrap) collection in back-of-house areas for large commercial generators following best practices; and requirements for haulers to collect a minimum list of recycling materials, provide weekly recycling service to residential customers, educate customers on proper recycling using standardized messaging and bin labels, and implement standardized invoices. The Department anticipates the new County Plan will include refined strategies to support implementation of these efforts and the new Policy Plan priorities (e.g., wood waste management, organics recovery, reduction and reuse).

3. Public Engagement Objectives and Approaches

The primary public engagement objectives are:

1. Collect data to best inform the County throughout the County Plan revision process, including attitudes, behaviors, and priorities related to waste management.
2. Describe and explain necessity for proposed County Plan strategies to the relevant stakeholder groups.
3. Request feedback, ideas, and opinions from the stakeholder groups to:
 - a. Assess solid waste management challenges and determine strategies for diversion opportunities.
 - b. Identify barriers to implement and/or to follow proposed County Plan strategies.
 - c. Understand the level of support for prospective County Plan strategies.
4. Provide accurate, relevant, and timely information to help all of those involved understand the Plan revision process and prospective strategies for them to make informed comments and recommendations.

The County's public engagement approach is designed to solicit ideas, responses, feedback, and opinions from a varied group of stakeholders. The public engagement process will bring together multiple points of view to inform decisions, give legitimacy to the County Plan revision process, identify potential problems and solutions, and articulate and clarify key strategies. The engagement process will connect the County with new collaborators and foster relationships with existing partners to encourage change and raise awareness of the County Plan revision. The County's engagement process will include visibility, transparency of the process, and appreciation for a range of viewpoints, and it will employ multiple communication methods to engage stakeholders.

The stakeholder groups affected by the plan revision are varied, with different and occasionally conflicting drivers and desired outcomes. Therefore, the County will use a broad range of engagement approaches, including:

- Creating an inclusive engagement process to encourage participation that reflects the demographics of the County and its various stakeholder groups
- Establishing, renewing, and maintaining relationships with stakeholders
- Providing a variety of opportunities using multiple engagement techniques for all stakeholders to share diverse ideas
- Informing, listening, inviting, and responding to feedback from stakeholders
- Incorporating feedback into the revision process or addressing it in other ways
- Providing opportunities for ongoing communication with stakeholders
- Updating stakeholders throughout the revision process
- Recognizing and thanking stakeholders for the contributions during the revision process

4. Major Groups to Engage

Engagement efforts will explore County Plan revisions for existing and new methods to manage waste; regulatory, financial, and educational influences on existing and new methods to manage waste; and accountability mechanisms for key stakeholders involved in waste generation, transportation, disposal, and regulation. Stakeholder groups will be engaged according to the overall proposed County Plan development process and timeline.

A. Waste Haulers and Facilities:

- Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) and recycling haulers: There are approximately 43 licensed in Dakota County. Waste services in the County are primarily privately-owned and operated
- Non-MSW haulers MSW landfills: Pine Bend Landfill and Burnsville Landfill
- Non-MSW landfills: SKB Landfill and Frattalone's Dawnway Landfill
- Recycling drop off center: The Recycling Zone
- Material Recycling Facilities: Allied Waste and Dick's Sanitation/Lakeville Sanitation
- Processing Facilities: Alpha Container, Dunham Brothers Shavings, Stericycle, Gem Ash, Bituminous Roadways
- Organics management and yard waste facilities: B & D Wood Recycling and Composting, ReConserve Inc./Endres Processing, SET/The Mulch Store, Sanimax, Hastings Drop-Off, Gertens R.E.S. Facility, and South St. Paul Compost Site
- Processing Facilities: Alpha Container, Dunham Bros. Shavings, Stericycle, Gem Ash, Bituminous Roadways
- Facilities outside of Dakota County: OTI Yard and Tree Waste (yard waste management), Barthold Recycling (organics management), Integrated Solid Waste Management Campus (processor), Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community Organics Recycling Facility (organics), wood waste/tree management facilities, and deconstruction material management facilities

B. Residents:

Dakota County has roughly 440,000 residents

- Single-family residents
- Multi-family residents
- Underrepresented residents, including non-native English speakers, low-income households, older adults, racial-ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities

C. Businesses:

- Commercial entities
- School Districts: 10 public school districts
- Landlords and commercial property owners
- Business owners
- Chambers and trade associations
- Hazardous/Industrial waste generators
- Underrepresented businesses, including those owned or managed by Black, Indigenous and People of Color

D. Public Entities:

- Municipalities/City Managers: 34 cities and townships

E. Specialty Groups:

- Food rescue organizations: Food banks, food shelves and other organizations that are involved in food recovery
- Deconstruction organizations
- Reuse organizations: Thrift stores and other organizations that contribute to reuse of goods (excluding vehicles), including building materials
- Tree waste/management organizations

County staff will have responsibility to directly engage these groups:

F. Political:

- Dakota County's Board of Commissioners: will be responsible for approving the County Plan
- Dakota County Manager: is accountable to the County Board and manages day-to-day operations of County employees
- Dakota County Planning Commission: will be used for committee advice and recommendation of strategies to the Dakota County Board of Commissioners
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA): The MPCA commissioner will review and approve the County Plan

G. County Departments:

- Dakota County Communications: will facilitate presenting timely and accurate information to stakeholders

- Facilities Management: to identify opportunities for reuse in construction/de-construction, employee and visitor operations related to waste, and housekeeping contracts
- Parks and Transportation: to identify opportunities in reduction, such as to use of compost and other materials in road design and earth works projects
- Purchasing: to identify improvements in environmentally-preferable purchasing
- Public Health: to identify opportunities to increase distribution at food recovery/food shelves in the community

It is important to note that not all of these groups will be impacted to the same degree or have the same level of interest in the County Plan revision process.

5. Engagement Methods

Anticipated stakeholder engagement methods include:

Online Surveys: Electronic surveys for residents and businesses to gauge current recycling practices in Dakota County and the direction in which residents and businesses would like the County to move, providing a framework for strategies.

Workshops: One or more workshops will be conducted and consist of interactive sessions to fully inform the County Board and Planning Commission, and for staff to gather input on the revision process, iterative proposed strategies, and the draft County Plan.

Additionally, paper versions of the surveys will be developed and printed. These surveys will be readily accessible at County facilities, such as public libraries, community centers and other County offices that are near Minnesota Valley Transit Authority transit routes.

Open House: Residential stakeholders will be invited to attend an open house to browse information on the County Plan revisions. County and HDR to discuss the potential for an open house during the Round 1 of engagement depending on timing and County Board direction. An open house is planned for Round 2 of engagement.

In-Person or Virtual Meetings: In-person and/or virtual meetings will be used to inform and fully engage haulers, facility owners/operators, select County staff, businesses, and public entities in the revision process, by inviting participation of all contributors while the draft strategies are being formed. In-person meetings will be necessary for waste haulers and facilities. Virtual meetings will be used for public entities and specialty groups during Round 1. Modifications may be made during Round 2 based on experiences from Round 1.

Intercepts at Existing Events/Meetings: Explore opportunities to engage stakeholders at existing County events (e.g., Parks) as intercept opportunities to provide feedback on County Plan strategies. A focus will be placed on holding intercepts in areas or at events geared towards under-represented populations. There will be two or three intercept events during Round 2 (one or two for residents, one for businesses).

Translations: Of note, translation and/or interpretation of public-facing materials is a recommended tactic to engage a broader public audience. These efforts will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

The County is flexible in the methods and quantity of engagement sessions, but engagement must be robust, include broad community engagement, and include utilize a framework of equity and inclusion, with a focus on under-represented residents and businesses. The County will consider other methods, provided stakeholders are engaged to a sufficient level and alternative methods are described in full in the response to the RFP.

The following table lists potential engagement methods for each stakeholder group that the Contractor will have responsibility to engage:

Audience	Online Surveys	Open House	In-Person and/or Virtual Meetings	Intercepts
Waste Haulers and Facilities (MSW and non-MSW) (MSW and non-MSW Landfills, Transfer Stations, Materials Recovery Facilities, Organics Management Facilities)	1 per round		1-2 in-person meetings per round	
Residents (Single-Family and Multi-Family Residents, Under-represented Residents)	1 per round (online and hard copy)	Potentially 1 per round		1-2 per round
Businesses and Schools (Commercial Entities, Schools, Landlords, Business Owners, Trade Associations, Hazardous/Industrial Waste Generators, Businesses Owned by Under-represented Groups)	1 per round (online)			1 per round (businesses)
Public Entities (Municipalities/city managers)	1 per round		1-2 virtual meetings per round	
Specialty Groups (1) Food Rescue, (2) Deconstruction Organizations, (3) Reuse Organizations, (4) Tree Waste/Management Organizations			1 virtual meeting per group per round	

The following table lists potential engagement methods for each stakeholder group that County staff will have responsibility to engage:

Audience	Workshops	In-Person and/or Virtual Meetings
Political (County Board, County Manager, Planning Commission)	TBD	Yes
County Departments (Communications, Facilities Management, Parks, Transportation, Purchasing, Public Health, and others)		Yes
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency		Yes

6. County Tools to Promote Participation in Stakeholder Engagement

Effectively promoting and advertising the engagement opportunities will be crucial to their success. The County will assist the stakeholder engagement contractor to leverage existing resources to promote participation in stakeholder engagement using the County’s website, e-news (business, resident, school, multifamily); County Programs (Recycling Ambassador, Fix-it Clinics, The Recycling Zone); and social media. The County will create a website page dedicated to the County Plan revision process, including upcoming meetings, stakeholder surveys, and outcomes of meetings. The County will pay for agreed-upon print pieces for promotions.

County staff will develop and distribute materials to explain the County Plan revision process and potential strategies. This includes materials directed to the political sector, such as Request for Board Actions to the

County Board and informational guidance for nonprofits and public entities.

Surveys will be developed using contractor's survey software, JotForm.

7. Key Questions to Ask

County staff will provide key questions for each stakeholder group, based on draft Policy Plan strategies to be discussed in Round 1 stakeholder engagement sessions, and new draft County Plan strategies to be discussed in Round 2 stakeholder engagement sessions. Additionally, key questions the County seeks to answer through stakeholder engagement sessions include:

A. Waste Haulers:

- What infrastructure (e.g., trucks, containers, technology, etc.) limitations, if any, affect implementation of Policy Plan strategies?
- What are the current waste hauling cost structures?
- What financial, regulatory, and educational approaches should be considered to reach the Policy Plan objectives?
- What are the barriers to collecting new materials (e.g., curbside organics) and potential strategies to overcome these barriers?
- How can the County facilitate proper management of wood waste in the region?
- What are the barriers to collecting accurate data and measuring all waste streams?
- Are there any other barriers to implementation of proposed County Plan strategies, and if so, what are potential strategies to overcome these barriers?

B. Waste Disposal and Management Facilities:

- What infrastructure limitations, if any, affect implementation of proposed Policy Plan strategies?
- What financial, regulatory, and educational approaches should be considered to reach the Policy Plan objectives?
- What are the current and foreseeable markets for collecting materials or diverting new materials (e.g., building deconstruction materials, organics) and/or where does market development need to be focused to encourage more diversion?
- What are the health and safety hazards associated with implementation of proposed strategies?
- What is the current waste flow and capacity limitations for collecting existing and new materials (e.g., curbside organics)?
- Are there any other barriers to implementation of proposed County Plan strategies, and if so, what are potential strategies to overcome these barriers?

C. Residents:

- How well do they believe they are managing waste now, and what do they see as the greatest problem overall with waste management?
- What are the key barriers to improved waste diversion, and what are potential strategies to overcome these barriers?

- What are the current waste management attitudes and habits, especially for Policy Plan prioritized materials (e.g., building deconstruction materials, wood waste, organics recovery)?
- What financial, regulatory, and educational approaches should be considered to reach the Policy Plan objectives?
- What are the opportunities to make our waste abatement programs and resources for residents more accessible?
- How and when is the Recycling Zone used?

D. Businesses and Schools:

- What are the current waste management attitudes and habits, especially for Policy Plan prioritized materials (e.g., deconstruction/sustainable building material management, wood waste, organics recovery)?
- Has COVID-19 impacted your waste stream and if so, how?
- What are the biggest opportunities to divert more waste, and what are potential strategies to overcome these barriers?
- What financial, regulatory, and educational approaches should be considered to reach the Policy Plan objectives?
- Are there any barriers to implementation of proposed County Plan strategies, and if so, what are potential strategies to overcome these barriers?
- What are the opportunities to make County waste abatement programs and resources for businesses more accessible?

E. Public Entities:

- What are the biggest opportunities to divert more waste, and what are potential strategies to overcome these barriers?
- What are the legal limitations (e.g., city ordinances for organics collection, city ordinance for building deconstruction, city ordinance for tree waste management) for businesses and residents to divert waste and/or move waste up the hierarchy?
- What tools (e.g., license, permit, practice, contracts, city ordinances) are available to institutionalize proper waste management by public entities, businesses and residents within cities/towns and how can they be improved?
- What financial, regulatory, and educational approaches should be considered to reach the Policy Plan objectives?
- What is the County's role in programs that move waste up the hierarchy?
- Are there any barriers to implementation of proposed County Plan strategies, and if so, what are potential strategies to overcome these barriers?

F. Specialty Groups:

- What are the legal limitations in place to increasing food recovery?
- What efforts could be advanced to increase food recovery?
- What are the legal limitations in place to increasing recovery of household and commercial items, including building and construction materials?

- What efforts could be advanced to increase reuse of durable items that are no longer wanted?
- How can the County facilitate proper management of wood waste if current capacity is reduced or if the amount of wood waste increases?
- What are the financial, regulatory, and educational approaches should be considered to reach the Policy Plan objectives?

G. Political Bodies:

- What strategies and implementation timeline are most effective in achieving Policy Plan goals?
- What are the overall goals the County Plan should meet, and which are high priorities?
- What are the policy and resource issues surrounding implementation of the County Plan?

H. County Departments:

- How can the Dakota County leverage existing and new contracts with vendors to incentivize/encourage moving waste up the hierarchy?
- How might potential County Plan strategies impact day-to-day operations of County departments?
- How can the Department close communication loops between departments to better encourage proper waste management?
- What is the timing and level of involvement that County departments envision for implementing proposed County Plan strategies?
- Are there any barriers to implementation of proposed County Plan strategies, and if so, what are potential strategies to overcome these barriers?

8. Action Plan

As noted above, a revised draft Policy Plan is available for public comment through September 17, 2023, and MPCA Commissioner adoption of the Policy Plan is anticipated by October 2023. The new County Plan must be completed nine months after the MPCA Commissioner adopts the Policy Plan, by June 30, 2024. To allow time for the County to present information to the County Board of Commissioners and write the County Plan, the County must have the final report with findings and recommendations by January 31, 2024.

Dakota County will solicit proposals for consulting services to develop a public engagement process to: 1) plan and conduct stakeholder engagement, and 2) provide a final report with recommendations to inform the development of strategies for the new County Plan. See “REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP): CONSULTING SERVICES TO SUPPORT DAKOTA COUNTY’S SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN REVISION: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT” for details, including the timeline and deliverables.

After receipt of the final report, County staff will refine strategies for review of draft County Plan January through February 2024.



August 29, 2023

Commissioner Katrina Kessler
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road North
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Commissioner Kessler,

On behalf of the Dakota County Board of Commissioners, thank you for the opportunity to share our comments as part of the process for the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)'s regular update of the Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Policy Plan. The County recognizes the need for robust strategies to meet the current statutory waste management goals and appreciates many aspects of the Draft 2022-2042 Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Policy Plan (Draft Policy Plan), including flexibility in choosing from a list of optional strategies that will best align with Dakota County priorities.

Minnesota Statute §473.803 requires metropolitan county solid waste plans to implement the Policy Plan. Therefore, the content of the Policy Plan is extremely important to the citizens of Dakota County. The Dakota County 2022 Strategic Plan includes "A healthy environment with quality natural areas" as one of four strategic goals. The Dakota County Solid Waste Master Plan is one of the primary tools we use to achieve that goal.

Dakota County offers the following comments for consideration:

Responsible Entities and Accountability: The Draft Policy Plan identifies accountability as a goal that underlies the basis for improving waste in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area (TCMA) area.

Goal 2 (pg. 9). "Whether private or public, hold all members of the system accountable for meeting the goals of this MPP."

However, the Draft Policy Plan does not specifically address the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder group, how each group will be held accountable, and who will hold each group accountable. Nor does it identify the mechanisms for establishing the authority to hold other entities accountable for implementing the various strategies identified throughout the Draft Policy Plan.

The final Policy Plan should clearly identify each stakeholder group (e.g., cities, counties, MPCA, waste industry, residents, businesses, schools, non-profits) and the activities each is responsible for completing under this plan, the recommended mechanism to ensure accountability, timelines for completion, methods to measure success, and ramifications if success is not achieved. A table is preferred to show this.

County Board of Commissioners

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Waste Abatement Objectives – Measurement, Capacity and Timeframes: The Draft Policy Plan reflects revised system objectives (pg. 14) for waste reduction (Table 2) and mixed municipal solid waste (MMSW) (Table 3) for how waste needs to be managed in the TCMA. The County appreciates the Draft Policy Plan’s recognition of the difficulty in reaching the statutory goal of a 75 percent recycling rate for traditional recyclable materials and organics by 2030, as required in Minn. Stat. § 115A.551.

- Waste Reduction Objective: Table 2 shows a 2.1% reduction in waste by 2030. Waste reduction is the highest level of the management hierarchy and will require a systematic and consistently applied measurement method. The final Policy Plan should include a proposed measurement model or timelines for the MPCA to develop a measurement approach for use by counties. The MPCA should consider adjustment of anticipated recycling rates if reduction and reuse efforts are successful in reducing the overall amount of waste to manage. Measures should also consider landfill diversion reporting over individual management methods.
- Organics Objective: The MMSW Metro Forecast (Table 14, pg. 87) identifies that an additional 152,260 tons of organics will need to be diverted from 2021 forecast numbers to achieve the 2025 TCMA organics objective in Table 3. Although new source-separated organics capacity is being planned in the region, it is not anticipated to be sufficient to manage this amount of new tonnage by 2025. The regional objectives should be updated to reflect anticipated capacity available to manage organics, which will also require a recalculation of the other TCMA system diversion and disposal objectives.
- Waste-to-Energy Objective: Dakota County has few options to increase waste conversion to energy, primarily due to limited waste processing capacity in the current system. Although some of the tons delivered to resource recovery facilities are generated in Dakota County, there is limited opportunity to significantly contribute to the TCMA objective for resource recovery in Table 3, which will continue to result in higher landfilling rates for Dakota County waste.

The Draft Policy Plan identifies Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reductions as one of the key themes that underlie all elements of the plan (pg. 8).

“GHG emissions reductions can be found throughout the solid waste system.”

The plan notes that achievement of the objectives will reduce GHG emissions, among other benefits, but does not identify anticipated GHG reductions related to the strategies. To assist counties in prioritizing implementation and allocating resources, the revised plan should quantify anticipated GHG reductions for each strategy, taking into account all major stages identified in the Draft Policy Plan’s sustainable material management approach (pg. 12) including *“raw material extraction, product manufacturing, product use, transportation and end-of-life management.”*

Existing Statutes and Authority: Greater recognition of existing authorities and roles, as well as limitations to county solid waste authority, would ground the Draft Policy Plan more strongly. The final Policy Plan should recognize that MPCA is responsible for enforcement of existing statutes to improve recycling and reduce landfilling (i.e., public entity and commercial recycling requirements, hauler reporting compliance, Restrictions on Disposal). The County recommends hauler reporting compliance be state led to provide for a uniform implementation approach. Counties can assist in some efforts, but the Draft Policy Plan should recognize that the MPCA ultimately has enforcement authority.

The Draft Policy Plan appears to take a broader view in multiple areas than Dakota County’s solid waste authorities allow for independent implementation. Dakota County has limited solid waste authority for several Draft Policy Plan strategies, including:

- *Wood Waste Required Strategy 41 (pg. 36): “Develop plans to prevent and manage wood waste in each county and throughout the region”* which includes a requirement that the plan “include strategies to educate the public about Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), tree treatment and preservation.” Current solid waste statutes do not give the County solid waste staff authority to deal with living trees, including providing education to the public about tree diseases and treatments. This required strategy should be modified to include only wood waste management and disposal activities, because other agencies have authorities to work on live tree treatment and education. For example, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has authority to identify infestation zones and to take measures to control an infestation (Minn. Stat. § 89.55), work with and allocate those costs to land owners (Minn. Stat. § 89.56), and collect them by reporting the costs to the county levy authority. In addition, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) already has a program that allows landowners to receive funds for environmental conservation efforts. The MPCA should coordinate with these state agencies to expand tree treatment and tree management education activities.
- *Organics Market Development Required Strategy 50 (pg. 38): “Require food-derived compost in county construction and landscaping projects.”* While the county can require food-derived compost in county projects, a more effective and consistent implementation approach is for state agencies to coordinate to modify the Minnesota Department of Transportation (DOT) 3890 construction specifications to require compost use, since municipal public works departments use DOT standard specifications for performing work on construction projects.
- *Sustainable Building and Deconstruction Required Strategy 60 (pg. 45): “Implement the use of Building Materials Management Plan and require that a building material management plan be used for specific non-government projects or for all publicly owned buildings being modified or removed within the jurisdiction.”* Dakota County can develop such a plan for its own facilities but does not have solid waste authority to require use of the plan for non-county projects or other publicly owned buildings.

Additionally, while the county acknowledges the benefits such as conservation of natural resources, supporting the economy, and reduction in greenhouse gas as mentioned in the Draft Policy Plan Vision (pg. 7) from an integrated waste management system, efforts should focus on solid waste management and counties should be not required to implement programs and strategies beyond what is required by Minn. Stat. § 473.149.

With respect to the Draft Policy Plan *wood waste management strategy 44 (pg. 37) to “update ordinances that address wood burning,”* to reduce the open burning of wood waste, the county recommends greater coordination among state agencies. The strategy specifies that counties should update their ordinances to better define and restrict open burning. At the state level, however, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issues burn permits in rural areas for wood waste management. The county recommends that the MPCA coordinate with the DNR on reducing wood waste burning activities in areas where the DNR has jurisdiction.

Implementation Resources: Dakota County supports the enforcement of existing state solid waste laws by the MPCA. However, achieving the goals and objectives within the Draft Policy Plan will require additional resources. The final Policy Plan should identify which required and optional strategies do or do not contribute to the waste reduction system objectives (Table 2) and MMSW management system objectives (Table 3), including wood waste, construction, demolition, and deconstruction related strategies.

Additionally, the final Policy Plan should identify new resources that will be provided for new required strategies that go beyond current county efforts to achieve compliance with solid waste laws. Below is a short list of additional resources that the MPCA could provide to assist in meeting new required strategies:

- Advocate for increased SCORE funding to counties, or another ongoing secure funding source, to assist with the implementation of required wood waste management plans and sustainable building material management plans.

- Provide funding and state assistance to implement required waste composition studies at waste facilities. The MPCA should consider securing its own contractor to conduct these studies to ensure consistent sorting methods and coordinated implementation, rather than each metropolitan county conducting studies on their own. In addition, the MPCA should curate and proactively share study results with TCMA counties.
- Advocate for and identify funding opportunities from other state or federal agencies and coordinate applications on behalf of counties, or secure funding directly and allocate it to the counties instead of requiring counties to apply for it.

In addition, related to the state's Sustainable Building Guidelines, while the county supports efforts to make buildings more energy efficient, these requirements should come with state funding to help offset the added costs to reduce the financial burden to counties.

New Wood Waste Management Technology: New technologies in solid waste management have arisen that do not fit precisely within the identified waste hierarchy, including biochar for wood waste management (strategy 48, pg. 37). The Policy Plan should provide direction on how biochar will be defined, how it fits into the waste management system objectives (Table 2 and 3), and whether it will count toward the 75% recycling rate goal.

Alternative Strategies: The final Policy Plan should allow more flexibility in required and optional strategies and identify the process for point calculation for counties to include alternative strategies that meet the intent of the Policy Plan's strategies. For example, the MPCA should allow an alternative strategy for counties that are planning to build a second permanent HHW facility in place of *Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Optional Strategy 59 (pg. 44): "Host monthly drop-off sites in locations other than a permanent HHW site."* A permanent location is a more cost-efficient use of public funds, provides access to more people over time than intermittent events do, and increases capacity for counties to properly manage waste.

Additional Comments and Request for Clarifications:

- Improving the Reliability of Data Required Strategy 1 (pg. 20): "Increase compliance with hauler reporting per Minn. State. 115A.93."* This strategy requires counties to implement best practices to promote hauler compliance with state reporting requirements and provides Dakota County as an example of achieving better compliance than other TCMA counties. Please note that MPCA determined Dakota County's hauler reporting compliance as 68%, while County staff data indicates a higher level of compliance, close to 100%, for haulers that are required to report.
- Regional Solutions Required Strategy 9 (pg. 22): "Participate in annual joint commissioner/staff meeting on solid waste."* The county recommends that the MPCA convenes and facilitates these meetings and works with counties to develop meeting topics that focus on waste policy issues.
- Regional Solutions Required Strategy 10 (pg. 22): "Commit to standardized outreach and education."* The strategy specifies that TCMA counties should utilize Recycling Education Committee (REC) materials, and that any deviation requires all TCMA counties to agree. Dakota County supports coordinated messaging and participates in REC but recognizes that REC is a statewide group of solid waste representatives that voluntarily meet and develop messages that may not be specific to market conditions in the TCMA area. Dakota County ordinance already mandates haulers, cities, and commercial waste generators annually deliver standardized recycling messages published on the county's website. Please clarify the governing entity that will have authority to review county materials and the variance procedure for counties to follow if messaging deviates from REC materials.

- d) *Collection Best Practices Required Strategy 28 (pg. 29): "Collect recycling weekly by 2025."* MPCA staff stated at the July 11, 2023, in-person public meeting that "recycling" for this strategy includes both traditional recyclables (i.e., paper, cardboard, metal, glass, plastic) and organics (i.e., food scraps).
- As it relates to collection of traditional recyclables: Dakota County implemented a hauler requirement to provide weekly recycling collection, effective in 2022. Haulers have requested a variance to this requirement in dispersed rural populations. The county is evaluating variance options and considering additional requirements for increased capacity and hauler education to address the intent of our ordinance. Dakota County recommends that the MPCA consider a similar allowance for this strategy in low population areas and, for further consistency, that it match the population threshold in *Organics Management Required Strategy 37, "Make residential organics collection available in cities with a population greater than 5,000."*
 - As it relates to collection of organics: The timeline is not feasible. Residential organics curbside collection does not currently exist in Dakota County. Increased organics collection activities in the region are anticipated to maximize current regional organics management capacity, including Dakota County's phased-in commercial organics collection requirements which fully go into effect in 2024. The final Policy Plan should include an effective date, such as by 2030, that accurately reflects the time needed to develop and implement requirements and to permit and construct new infrastructure such as composting facilities and collection capacity in the waste industry, and that also includes factors such as capacity limitations.
- e) *Recycling Management Required Strategy 34 (pg. 31): "Establish mandatory pre-processing of waste at resource recovery facilities and landfills by 2025"* provides an unreasonable timeframe. The final Policy Plan is not anticipated to be adopted until late 2023 and county solid waste plans not approved until late summer 2024, allowing only months to implement this required strategy. Implementation of this strategy will require extensive planning, implementation, and financial considerations. Additionally, any such requirement should be a state requirement, rather than a county requirement, for consistency in implementation and enforcement.
- f) *Organics Management Optional Strategy 39 (pg. 34): "Require management of organics from large food generators by 2030."* Please clarify if this strategy includes two separate components, i.e., prevention requirements and management of organics. The MPCA should also specify what is intended by "local policies should first require adoption of policies that support prevention and rescue initiatives at large generators."
- g) *Waste to Energy, Page 41 (pg. 36):* For accuracy, please add language to the third paragraph so it reads, "Designation in Goodhue County has stabilized the base amount that Red Wing receives, and tonnage is supplemented with contract waste from two cities in Dakota County and Dakota County operations." This revision is needed to reflect that MMSW from county operations is going to Red Wing for processing.

Thank you for your consideration. We appreciate your attention to these comments and look forward to working with you towards a final version of the Metropolitan Solid Waste Policy Plan that will best serve the diverse needs of the Twin Cities region through 2042.

Sincerely,



Liz Workman, Chair
Dakota County Board of Commissioners

Cc: Dakota County Board of Commissioners
Matt Smith, Dakota County Manager

Draft 2022-2024 Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Plan Strategy Table

Code Number	Strategy	Type	Optional Point Value
	Improving the Reliability of the Data		
1	Increase compliance with Hauler reporting per Minn. Stat. § 115A.93.	Required	
2	Provide required county reporting	Required	
3	Require waste composition study at least once every five years at all landfills that are located within your county	Required	
4	Improve recycling data collection at businesses within the county	Optional	7
5	Require waste composition study at least once every 5 years at all landfills that are in the TCMA.	State-led	
6	Develop appropriate and consistent waste reporting systems to measure all waste.	State-led	
7	Continue to explore options for growing the agency’s life cycle assessment data, modeling, and resources to better support counties in measuring and tracking environmental and human health impacts.	State-led	
8	Continue to engage with counties in the development of an environmental target that better accounts for and incentivizes programming and actions higher on the hierarchy.	State-led	
	Regional Solutions		
9	Participate in an annual joint commissioner/staff meeting on solid waste.	Required	
10	Commit to standardized outreach and education.	Required	
11	Engage in efficient and value-added infrastructure planning.	Required	
	Waste Reduction		
12	Provide grants for or access to software that can track food waste.	Required	
13	Establish partnerships between food rescue organizations and restaurants/stores to increase food rescue.	Required	
14	Launch bi-annual sustainable consumption challenges for residents.	Required	
15	Implement a formal county sustainable purchasing policy using MPCA guidance.	Required	
16	Participate in GREEN Group meetings.	Required	
17	Work with health inspectors to educate restaurants and other establishments that have excess prepared food to donate.	Optional	7
18	Offer grants or rebates for organizations to transition to reusable food and beverage service ware.	Required	
19	Offer grants for waste reduction, reuse, and repair.	Required	
20	Implement a county policy encouraging all county and city-led events and food providers use reusable food and beverage service ware.	Optional	6
21	Adopt an ordinance with a mandatory consumer charge for take-out single-use cups, containers, and utensils.	Optional	9
22	Join and/or actively participate in a reuse network, like Reuse Minnesota, to provide county and city staff with learning opportunities to broaden their reuse expertise.	Optional	6
23	Establish a Repair Ambassador program, like the Recycler/Composters (RCAs) Ambassador programs.	Optional	7

Code Number	Strategy	Type	Optional Point Value
24	Establish a reuse location for residential drop-off and pick-up.	Optional	7
25	Establish a curbside set-out day to allow residents to set out used items for reuse.	Optional	7
26	Develop standardized guidance and methodology for tracking waste reduction and reuse activities and their resulting benefits.	State-led	
27	Research and pursue financial strategies to best incentivize waste reduction and reuse, such as grants and loans.	State-led	
Collection Best Practices			
28	Collect recycling weekly by 2025.	Required	
29	Pair the option of bi-weekly trash collection with weekly recycling and organics collection.	Required	
30	Collect recyclables, organics, and trash on the same day.	Required	
31	Contract for residential recycling and organics by 2030.	Optional	7
32	Contract for residential MMSW collection by 2030.	Optional	7
Recycling Management and Market Development			
33	Recruit a minimum of 12 commercial businesses a year to recycle at least three materials from their operations and promote the environmental and resource benefits.	Required	
34	Establish mandatory pre-processing of waste at resource recovery facilities and landfills by 2025.	Required	
35	Assist with tracking commercial recycling self-hauling activities.	State-led	
36	Support and invest in new facilities and retain processors of recycled material for end markets.	State-led	
Organics Management and Wood Waste			
37	Make residential curbside organics collection available in cities with a population greater than 5,000.	Required	
38	Expand backyard composting outreach and resources for residents.	Required	
39	Require management of organics from large commercial food generators by 2030.	Optional	5
40	Standardize the role of compostable products in organics recycling programs by 2025.	State-led	
41	Develop plans to prevent and manage wood waste in each county and throughout the region.	Required	
42	Promote existing programs that use EAB-affected wood for furniture, home goods, flooring, and other purposes.	Required	
43	Composting and mulching operations must continue to be supported.	Required	
44	Update ordinances that address wood burning.	Optional	4
45	Develop and distribute EAB tree care education programs for privately owned land.	Optional	8
46	Incentivize tree treatment as a cost-effective strategy to extend the life of ash trees and to reduce the volume of wood waste generated over the next 20 years.	Optional	8
47	Allow assessments on property taxes to spread the cost of tree care over a multi-year timeframe.	Optional	9

Code Number	Strategy	Type	Optional Point Value
48	Expand composting and mulching capacity beyond existing markets	Optional	5
49	Support development of systems that use wood fuel.	Optional	4
50	Require food-derived compost in county construction and landscaping projects.	Required	
51	Find new outlets to increase food to animal operations.	Optional	7
Emerging Technology, Waste to Energy & Landfilling			
52	Develop a process for gathering the information necessary to make timelier and consistent policy decisions.	State-led	
53	Counties must continue to support the implementation of Minn. Stat. § 473.848 Restriction on Disposal.	Required	
54	Implement additional fees to better account for the externalities of land disposal.	Optional	4
Product Stewardship & Household Hazardous Waste			
55	Participate with the Product Stewardship Committee under the Solid Waste Administrators Association (SWAA).	Required	
56	Encourage retailers to increase consumer awareness of responsible end-of-life handling for products containing lithium-ion batteries.	Required	
57	Continue participation in the reciprocal use agreement for HHW collection sites.	Required	
58	Partner with cities to increase participation in HHW collection.	Optional	8
59	Host monthly drop-off sites in locations other than a permanent HHW site.	Optional	8
Sustainable Building and Deconstruction			
60	Implement the use of a Building Material Management Plan.	Required	
61	Prior to a demolition being approved, county-owned buildings require that SMM strategies are considered.	Optional	7
62	Host a building material collection event or swap.	Optional	8
63	Provide financial assistance to offset the additional cost of building deconstruction, used building material installation, and/or structural moving.	Optional	8
64	Provide deconstruction training.	Optional	8
65	Annually host or aid with home and building repair and refurbishment trainings.	Optional	8
66	Use purchasing guidelines to require environmental product declaration (EPD) for concrete.	Optional	7
67	Study waste classification practices.	State-led	
68	Propose changes to B3 guidelines to strengthen deconstruction requirements.	State-led	
69	Incentivize deconstruction over landfilling MMSW and demolition debris.	State-led	
70	Lead Sustainable Building Group (SBG) developments.	State-led	
		Optional Strategy Point Total	186

Planning Commission 2023 Work Plan

Board Goal	Committee's Goal for 2023	Project/Activity	Outcome Measure	Timeline
A Healthy Environment with Quality Natural Areas	Park Ordinance No. 107 (Phase II)	Update park ordinance	Recommendation to PDC	Q1
	Miesville Ravine Park Reserve Natural Resource Management Plan	Prepare assessment and plan to restore and manage natural resources	Recommendation to PDC	Q1-Q4
	Miesville Ravine Park Reserve Master Plan Update	Update master plan	Recommendation to PDC	Q1-Q4
	Veterans Memorial Greenway Natural Resources Management Plan	Prepare assessment and plan to restore and manage natural resources	Recommendation to PDC	Q1-Q3
	Veterans Memorial Greenway Master Plan Amendment	Review alignment amendment	Recommendation to PDC	Q1
	Vermillion River Greenway (Hastings) Natural Resources Management Plan	Prepare assessment and plan to restore and manage natural resources	Recommendation to PDC	Q1-Q4
	Vermillion River Greenway (Hastings) Interpretive Plan	Prepare interpretive plan and messaging along greenway	Recommendation to PDC	Q2-Q4
	Mississippi River Greenway Master Plan	Update master plan	Recommendation to PDC	Q2-Q4*
	Mississippi River Greenway Natural Resources Management Plan	Prepare assessment and plan to restore and manage natural resources	Recommendation to PDC	Q2-Q4*
	Park System Plan Update (Including NRMP and Visitor Services Plan)	Review research findings, park units, service levels, and system needs and amend plan as needed	Recommendation to PDC	Q1-Q4*
	Solid Waste Master Plan	Amend plan based on progress toward plan	Recommendation to PDC	Q1-Q4*
A great place to live	Trunk Hwy Plans and Design Studies (Highways 77, I-35, 3)	Review and discuss proposed improvements to State highways as part of multi-agency coordination effort	Review and comment to PDC	Q1-Q4

* Indicates that project will extend into 2024 work plan.