

**STRATEGY:**

# Water Quality Focus

**OBJECTIVE**

Enhance the SMP's efforts to improve water quality within and leaving Johnson County, including funding water quality improvement projects and developing additional programs to assist Watershed Committees.

**REASON**

Water quality impairments, particularly issues related to Total Maximum Daily Limits (TMDLs), are a concern. It is likely only a matter of time that increased regulations will be enforced in Kansas. The SMP helps member municipalities with MS4 permitting and water quality research projects; however, full-fledged water quality improvement projects have been outside the purview of the SMP. Prioritizing funding for projects might be a challenge. Alleviating that challenge is yet another benefit of shifting to a watershed-based program. That is, it would allow individual watershed boards to decide the means by which funds would be assigned, according to the priorities of the particular watershed.

**TACTICS**

- Define water quality project criteria
- Work with the Watershed Committees to develop strategies to address TMDLs
- Work with the Watershed Committees to develop strategies to de-list 303(d) water bodies

**IMPACTS**

Each strategy is designed to have impacts on multiple gap areas. In addition to closing gaps around water quality, the Water Quality Focus strategy will help SMP close gaps associated with:

**Watershed-Based Organization:** Water quality goals are anticipated to be primary drivers for the watershed organizations, allowing members to have a unifying goal.

**System Management:** Stream bank stabilization can also make a significant impact on the long-term viability of buried infrastructure near streams.

**Alternative Funding:** Federal programs and Non-governmental Organizations are particularly interested in programs that have a core mission of improving water quality.

In response to new stormwater-related challenges and opportunities, the Johnson County Public Works & Infrastructure Urban Services Division initiated an update of the initial 2002 Strategic Business Plan of the Stormwater Management Program (SMP). The "State of Practice" in stormwater management, including new approaches and advances, are reflected in the strategies developed for the new 2016 plan. In addition to water quantity and flood damage reduction concerns, the strategies address water quality and regulatory issues as well as a growing trend toward integrated water resource management planning.

