

Watershed-based Organization

Sub-Committee



Meeting Notes

Meeting Date: February 1, 2017

Time: 9:00-11:00 am

Meeting Location:

Johnson County Transit Facility, 1701 W Old Hwy 56, Olathe, KS 66061

Attendees:

Watershed-Based Organization Sub-Committee

Celia Duran – City of Olathe
Courtney Christensen – City of Mission Hills
Mike Brungardt – City of De Soto
Tim Collins – City of Lenexa
Jim Hendershot – City of Spring Hill
Lorraine Basalo – City of Overland Park
Randy Gorton – City of Merriam/IBHC Rhodes
Tom Kimes – City of Kansas City, Missouri
Tom Jacobs – Mid-America Regional Council
Leslie Rigney – Miami County CD
Andy Sauer – Burns and McDonnell
Brenda Macke – CDM Smith
Chad Johnson – Olsson Associates
Les Barnt – GBA

JC SMP

Lee Kellenberger
Sarah Smith
Heather Schmidt

Consultant Team

Patti Banks – Vireo
Triveece Penelton – Vireo
Andrew Smith – B&V
Jeff Henson – B&V
Justina Gonzalez – B&V

Agenda Objectives

Discuss the goal of the watershed-based organization sub-committee and the anticipated process
Discuss and decide on preliminary watershed groupings in Johnson County
Discuss challenges and opportunities for moving toward a watershed-based organization

Handouts: Agenda

Notes

Introduction / Sub-Committee Goals and Expectations:

- Lee of JC SMP welcomed participants to the first meeting for the watershed-based organization sub-committee. The SMP Strategic Plan was updated in 2016 and has been adopted by County resolution. The purpose of sub-committee meetings is to now begin implementing the updated plan.
 - The watershed-based organization group is one of five that will be convening.
 - Vireo and B&V will be consultants helping facilitate meetings and the implementation process.
 - Participants should expect all meetings to occur at the Johnson County Transit Facility.

- Andrew of B&V asked attendees to introduce themselves. He then provided a quick review of the SMP strategic plan along with group goals and expectations.

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- **SMP Strategic Plan Review:** The last time the SMP strategic plan was put together was in 2002. B&V and Vireo helped guide JC through the update of the plan which included a review of similar stormwater programs throughout the country. The updated plan seeks to establish a state-of-practice for a watershed based approach. Such an approach will look at needs on a watershed basis rather than a jurisdictional basis so as to gain maximum value regarding flood control and water quality.
- The Stormwater Management Advisory Council (SMAC) recommended adoption of the updated plan which the Board of County Commissioners did in the fall of 2016. The new strategy is a mandate from the County. The development of how the watershed-based strategy will be structured, with roles and responsibilities, will be determined in the oncoming months through the sub-committee meetings.
 - **Sub-Committee Goal:** The framework developed in the watershed sub-committee meetings will guide the subsequent sub-committee meetings going forward.
 - The watershed-based subcommittee will be in charge of evaluating higher level planning and four other sub-committees will delve into further sets of details. Those other groups are:
 - System management (was a highlighted need for stakeholders).
 - Water quality (will look at such issues as defining what a water quality project is and how to rank it).
 - Flooding (still an important part of the program and a main driver for why the SMP exists).
 - Funding (will look at how to manage limited funds based on the new approach and will also identify alternative funding sources beyond the sales tax).
 - **Sub-Committee Expectations:** The implementation process will require a large amount of input from participants so an open discussion is greatly encouraged. Since the watershed-based sub-committee has a lot of important ground to cover, the consultants may re-direct the conversation as needed.
 - **Schedule:**
 - The sub-committee will meet once a month for a total of four meetings at the beginning.
 - There will be a roughly 6 month hiatus while subsequent sub-committees convene.
 - The watershed sub-committee will then meet again for two more meetings towards the end.
 - This will allow communication of progress and participants will be able to address questions and issues that were raised during the process.
 - **Review of Materials:**
 - Outside reference material, such as a Watershed-Based Organization White Paper, will be drafted and provided to participants. Efforts to review materials prior to meetings are appreciated.

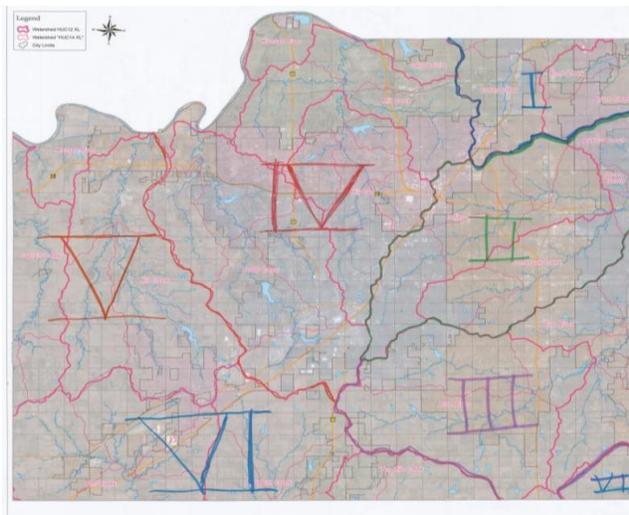
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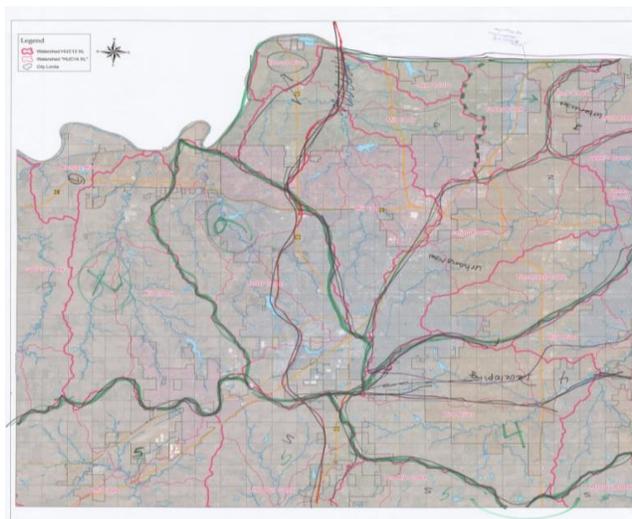


Watershed Delineations:

- JC SMP provided large scale maps of Johnson County with existing watersheds delineated based on Hydrological Unit Codes (HUC) from the USGS.
 - Maps of HUC 12 and HUC 14 along with city boundaries were placed on the table.
- Vireo separated participants into two groups and asked that each group establish their own watershed boundaries based on watershed similarities and natural divisions.
 - Participants were encouraged to draw revised watershed boundaries on maps. Their maps are shown below.



Map from Group 1



Map from Group 2

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- Each group presented their new boundaries and the following similarities between groups were noted:
 - Watershed boundaries were based primarily on similar development characteristics, density, and similar cities.
 - Different project needs were anticipated per development such as more system maintenance in developed areas versus more water quality opportunities in undeveloped areas.
 - Groups began by combining Turkey and Rock Creek because they have some of the oldest areas in the County and are similar jurisdictionally.
 - Indian and Tomahawk Creek were combined.
 - Blue River was separated as a large, mainly undeveloped area with similar cities.
 - Watersheds flowing south, such as Bull Creek and Little Bull Creek, were combined.
 - Kill Creek and Cedar Creek/Mill Creek areas were separated.
- Drafted watershed boundaries were mostly the same between groups, with Group 1 having 6 boundaries and Group 2 having 7. Group 2 separated Cedar Creek on its own due to how fast it is developing and its corridor structure.
- Participants voted on watershed boundary preference with the 6 boundaries being the preferred grouping.
 - The sub-committee will continue to recognize the idea of creating Cedar Creek as its own watershed boundary but the 6 boundaries will be the initial highest level of groupings.
 - The large scale boundaries can then be further broken down into sub-watersheds so as to differentiate between project development and management.

Projected Opportunities and Challenges:

- Participants discussed potential challenges and opportunities for a watershed-based organization with the following highlights:
 - **Opportunities:**
 - The updated strategic plan is forward thinking and may later act as a template for others in the region. The sub-committees will need to clearly establish and document their methodology and reasoning throughout this process since impacts may be beyond the JC area. Flexibility may be key throughout this process so that truly effective methods are developed.
 - Watershed groups can develop a shared understanding and shared benefit. Groupings could allow for more integration and multi-benefits.
 - For instance, watershed groups could evaluate integrated planning approaches such as partnering with waste water, etc.
 - May offer larger range of opportunities in addressing water quality TMDLS.
 - Different funding could come into play for watersheds that feed into drinking water sources.
 - Watershed-based approach may reduce issues of areas pushing problems further downstream.
 - County mandate helps reduce the politics in a watershed-based approach.
 - Possibility for project funding to go to the County and not individual cities.
 - Watershed groups would be intermediary between County and municipalities.

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○ Challenges:

- Will be difficult to address the different needs of project management versus project delivery.
 - Large groupings should be established for policy followed by sub-watersheds for project development.
- Conflicts will still arise when communities will be seen as benefiting more than others.
- Concerns about matching funds, especially since tax dollars cannot be used outside of city jurisdiction.
- Concerns of fairness relating to system management since some cities have greater level of maintenance than others.
- Potential for each large watershed grouping to need its own master plan with sub-watersheds having master plans as well.
 - Will likely have a need for larger planning tools than just flood studies.

Closing / Next Steps:

- Meeting closed with participants requesting a copy of the delineated maps, which are provided at Vireo's website for the [Watershed-Based Kickoff](#).
- The sub-committee will meet again on March 1st at the same time, same place.
 - The discussion will be in regards to a Watershed-Based Organization White Paper that will be sent out for review prior to the next meeting.
- JC SMP and consultants thanked the participants for their time and thoughtful discussion. Comments will be incorporated into meeting notes and used in later discussions.