



7550 Sunwood Drive NW • Ramsey, MN 55303

City Hall: 763.427.1410 • Fax: 763.427.5543

www.cityoframsey.com

July 23, 2015

Attn: Lanya Ross
Metropolitan Council
390 Robert Street N
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Re: City of Ramsey Response to Draft 2015 Master Water Supply Plan

Dear Lanya:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the draft 2015 Twin Cities Metropolitan Area Master Water Supply Plan (MWSP). The City of Ramsey offers the following responses for your consideration.

The City of Ramsey fully supports the Master Water Supply Plan's single overarching goal of achieving a sustainable water supply system for the region, both now and into the future. However, the City feels strongly that such sustainability must be achieved in an equitable manner through the development and use of regional water supply partnerships.

Considering that regional water supply partnerships can be difficult and time consuming to develop, particularly when led by local agencies, we respectfully request that the Metropolitan Council consider actively supporting an effort to analyze the viability of regional partnerships from both service and funding perspectives.

The City of Ramsey utilizes groundwater for our water supply needs, though surface water from the Mississippi River could be utilized if necessary. But as is noted in Chapter 5 of the MWSP, investing in surface water treatment plants carries a large cost. Due to the extremely high costs associated with a groundwater to surface water system conversion, cities such as Ramsey are unable to fund such improvements on our own and would require financial assistance to comply with any such requirement.

We would also like to emphasize the need to maintain existing groundwater supply systems for supplemental or emergency water supply needs, such as when pollutants have been released into surface waters triggering temporary water supply facility shutdowns.

The City supports the reduction of water consumption through further exploration and implementation of water conservation methods including irrigation reduction practices and stormwater and wastewater reuse. The City also supports promoting infiltration practices to aid in groundwater recharge.

*It is our mission to work together to responsibly grow our community,
and to provide quality, cost-effective, and efficient government services.*

Based on our review of the draft 2015 Twin Cities Metropolitan Area Master Water Supply Plan we did not identify any new goals or initiatives that significantly conflict with current goals or initiatives of the City of Ramsey. However, based on other recent Met Council plan reviews we question whether the draft 2015 MWSP accurately reflects population growth forecasts for the region, and therefore question the accuracy of some of the information included in the draft 2015 MWSP.

The draft 2015 MWSP also does not appear to create any new requirements for the City of Ramsey, but instead appears to expand upon existing guidelines that could ultimately result in the City needing to consider the use of surface water for some or all of our water supply needs, instead of continuing to use groundwater aquifers. Because the City of Ramsey borders the Mississippi River, the City was previously directed to explore the use of the river as a potential water supply source before any new groundwater supply wells would be permitted. In response, the City completed a study which showed that a surface water treatment facility may indeed be technically feasible, though it would not be economically feasible if the intent is to serve only our water supply needs, unless significant outside financial assistance was received. However, it could be economically feasible if multiple communities were to partner in constructing a regional surface water treatment facility to serve the needs of all partnering communities.

The City of Ramsey appreciates the opportunity to review and respond to the draft 2015 MWSP and hopes that the Metropolitan Council will continue to work with the City to address our local water supply concerns and needs. Please note that our concerns with the population forecasts are not about our future land use vision, but rather how that vision relates to current infrastructure capacities, as well as future infrastructure investments and funding opportunities.

If you have any questions on these comments, please call me at 763-433-9825, or email me at bwestby@cityoframsey.com.

Sincerely,

Bruce Westby, P.E.
City Engineer

C: Kurt Ulrich, City Administrator