

**COMMISSION FILE NO:** 19-030-3 **DATE INTRODUCED:** March 11, 2019

**INTRODUCED BY:** Executive Director (Signature on File in the Office of the Commission)

**REFERRED BY COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON TO:** Policy, Finance, and Personnel Committee

**RELATING TO:** Approval of the Plan, Using Green Infrastructure to Promote Biodiversity in the MMSD Planning Area

**SUMMARY:**

The Commission is requested to approve the plan entitled, "Using Green Infrastructure to Promote Biodiversity in the MMSD Planning Area" (Plan).

The Plan was prepared under the MMSD Green Infrastructure (GI) Asset Management Plan associated with the in-progress 2050 Facilities Plan. The GI Asset Management Plan is to support the District's implementation of the 2035 Vision and Strategic Objective related to capturing the volume equivalent of 0.5 inch of rain falling on impervious cover in the District.

The Plan builds off the triple bottom line approach to sustainability, a selection of recommendations that have environmental, economic, and social benefits, by developing guidance to help protect and restore native biodiversity within MMSD's planning area through GI application. The Plan also complements the 2013 Regional Green Infrastructure Plan by digging deeper into the cobenefits of GI adoption and will support MMSD staff and regional stakeholders to identify GI alternatives to maximize environmental sustainability.

The Plan evaluates GI strategies promoted by MMSD for their ability to not only maximize the amount of stormwater managed, but also to enhance biodiversity. The Plan educates readers on direct and indirect benefits of different alternatives (i.e., improvements to habitat quality and improving aquatic biodiversity by returning instream flows to more natural conditions by removing concrete-lined channels).

**ATTACHMENTS:** **BACKGROUND** ☐ **KEY ISSUES** ☐ **RESOLUTION** ☒  
**FISCAL NOTE** ☐ **S/W/MBE** ☐ **OTHER** ☒ Plan

*PFP\_Using\_Green\_Infrastructure\_to\_Promote\_Biodiversity\_legislative\_file.docx*  
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**COMMITTEE ACTION:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## **SUMMARY (Cont'd)**

### **Approval of the Plan, Using Green Infrastructure to Promote Biodiversity in the MMSD Planning Area**

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The Plan summarizes changes over time in the regional landscape and informs readers of risks and challenges to biodiversity. The Plan also provides an inventory of regional programs that promote biodiversity and metrics for measuring biodiversity.

Ultimately, the Plan provides seven recommendations for using GI to promote urban biodiversity. They are:

- 1) When designing projects, implement GI strategies with the maximum potential to increase urban biodiversity.
- 2) GI designers should maximize the structure and complexity of plants and physical habitat when designing new GI projects. Projects should incorporate more complex habitats with diverse native species.
- 3) MMSD, partner agencies, and regional experts should work together to identify a list of priority or desired species for protection, ideally crossreferenced to those able and most likely to benefit from increased habitat associated with GI practices.
- 4) GI planners and designers should also update regional GI planning and design guidelines to prioritize projects that are within colonization distance of existing natural areas or green space.
- 5) Regional planners should identify priority locations where GI is likely to promote urban biodiversity best and improve the habitat for the priority species.
- 6) MMSD and partner agencies should look for opportunities to incorporate GI into other ongoing activities to improve urban biodiversity within the region.
- 7) MMSD and partner agencies should continue to invest in Greenseams® and leverage that program's ability to enhance urban biodiversity through the preservation and revitalization of primary habitat corridors.

Finally, the Plan addresses the importance of outreach, education, and public involvement to promote the information within it. The MMSD Fresh Coast Resource Center and local partner agencies can engage, educate, and incentivize the public to help MMSD maximize the investment of GI through the consideration of biodiversity.

## **RESOLUTION**

Approval of the Plan, Using Green Infrastructure to Promote Biodiversity in the MMSD Planning Area

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**RESOLVED**, by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage Commission, that the attached plan, Using Green Infrastructure to Promote Biodiversity in the MMSD Planning Area, is approved.