

One Water Advisory Group: Meeting #1

August 27, 2020
5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

View the Recorded Virtual Meeting:

https://qbsm.zoom.us/rec/share/xs5SBor0zjxIX4mc2B3Gf408D6bleaa82ycfrvEMyEm6DJ2r118LhnAEglKJj_xM (Passcode: T%EUq052)

Meeting Purpose

- Provide One Water background, opportunities and roadmap of the planning process
- Review roles and responsibilities of the One Water Advisory Group (OWAG)
- Receive input on key elements of the One Water Plan

Welcome and Introductions

- Meeting facilitator Miles Graham reviewed the meeting purpose, goals and agenda with the group.
- Each member of the Core Planning Team was introduced and spoke about their organization's role in the project:



- City and County of Denver
 - Dept. of Transportation and Infrastructure
 - Community Planning and Development
 - Parks and Recreation
- Mile High Flood District
- The Greenway Foundation/The Water Connection
- Denver Water
- Metro Wastewater Reclamation District
- Colorado Water Conservation Board

- The meeting facilitator coordinated OWAG member introductions, background and ice breaker discussion:
 - Name?
 - Organization?
 - Favorite water activity?



Charter Discussion

- Miles Graham reviewed the roles and responsibilities of an OWAG member:
 - Serve as a strategic advisor
 - Represent your organization
 - Commit to the process
 - Bring ideas and share information
 - Collaborate and focus on task at hand



Background on One Water

- One Water project manager Dave Jula with Denver DOTI provided historical approach to water management and presented the Denver One Water definition:

“An integrated planning and implementation approach to managing finite water resources for long-term resilience and reliability, meeting both community and ecosystem needs”

- Devon Buckles with The Water Connection demonstrated why Denver needs a One Water Plan.
 - Projected State Water Plan shortfall
 - Increasing population growth
 - Unpredictable future supplies
 - Climate change risks
 - Lack of uniform and enforceable water and land use policies
- Devon Buckles provided multiple benefits of One Water efforts:
 - Agency coordination to institutionalize best practices
 - Predictable and implementable water policies tied to land use
 - Supports economic development and smart growth
 - Collaboration in water planning and implementation

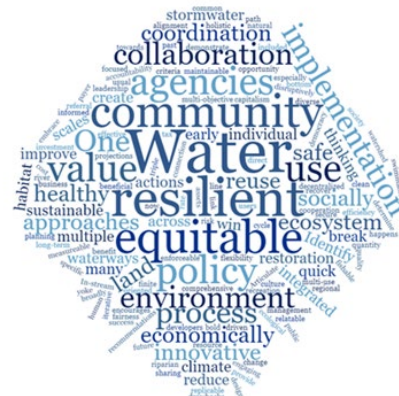
- Environmental stewardship and conservation of finite resource
- Unified vision with a roadmap to achieve goals
- Barb Chongtoua with the Mile High Flood District provided characteristics and examples of projects that would be good candidates for a One Water approach:
 - One that works with the land and the natural resources in the land
 - Watershed should work as a leaf with networks of streams
 - Proposed new watershed development
- One Water project manager Dave Jula talked about a new approach to projects regarding the City and County of Denver
 - Finding opportunities to add green infrastructure
 - Identifying and prioritizing multi-beneficial projects



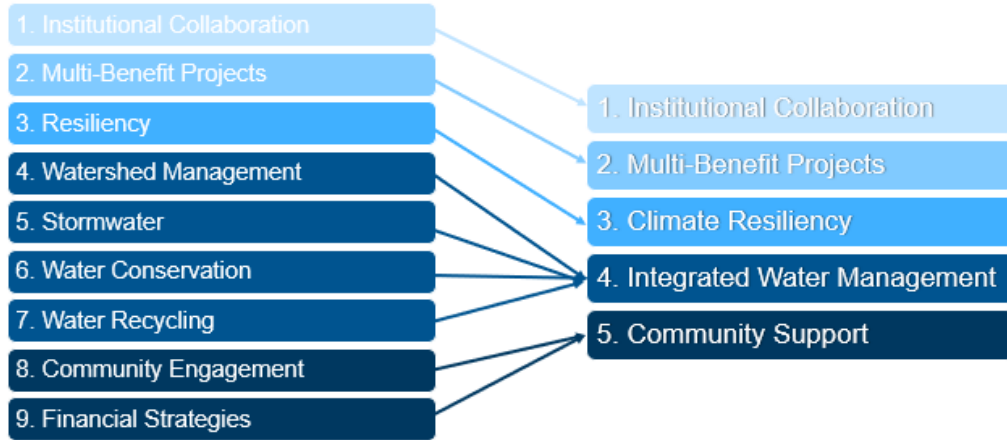
Vision, Goals and Process

- Dave Jula presented the Denver One Water vision statement and goal categories:

“The Denver One Water Plan provides a framework for implementing holistic and resilient water management and land use strategies through collaboration and strong policies that promote healthy watersheds in an equitable, economically, and environmentally beneficial manner”



- One Water Goal Categories Established by the Core Planning Team



- Example Denver One Water Goals and Strategies

Goal	Strategy
Promote Institutional Collaboration	Strengthen communication, coordination, and collaboration between the City and County of Denver, Mile High Flood District, Denver Water, Metro Wastewater Reclamation District, and The Water Connection to employ and implement integrated water management processes and to better understand each entity's regulatory and policy dynamics.
	Strengthen and institutionalize connections between land use and water planning entities to reconcile policies and management strategies and collaborate on mutually beneficial policies, starting early in a project's life cycle and including all departments that are relevant, (e.g., public works, engineering).
	Engage elected officials and governing boards to support coordination and cooperation to promote integrated management of water resources and policies.
Implement Multi-Benefit Projects and Programs	Identify and implement projects that present opportunities for inter-agency (multi-benefit) collaboration.
	Create a framework with comprehensive criteria to identify and prioritize multi-benefit projects or water management strategies based on measures of social, environmental, and economic benefits and costs.
	Consider the water-energy nexus when evaluating new developments and land use plans to maximize funding opportunities.
	Strengthen land-water-food-energy nexus by linking urban water management more closely to urban agriculture for increased food security, community benefits, and environmental health

Roll of the One Water Advisory Group

- Project manager Dave Jula reviewed and discussed expectations of the OWAG:
 - Sharing of ideas
 - Feedback on process of plan thus far
 - Assist in promoting philosophies of One Water
 - Upcoming meetings and opportunities for community-wide engagement

Discussion Zone: Q&A

- Meeting facilitator Miles Graham coordinated responses to group questions regarding case studies from other cities in Colorado and/or across the United States using a similar approach to develop a One Water plan:
 - One Water project manager Dave Jula noted that several municipalities across the country have developed One Water plans, particularly in the arid western states – such as Los Angeles and San Francisco in California and Tucson in Arizona – but emphasized that Denver One Water is likely the first plan in Colorado and has the potential to serve as a model for headwaters states moving forward.

Polling Question:

- Meeting facilitator Miles Graham presented a poll to the group:
 - How much community awareness of the Water concept exists in Denver today?
 - Significant amount
 - Some awareness
 - Very little
 - The poll indicated 76% of very little awareness
 - The poll indicated 24% of some awareness

Breakout Groups & Reporting

Key Takeaways & Themes

- Collaboration between all water agencies is key to establishing a holistic framework across agencies with a roadmap for implementation
- Need to integrate and factor in climate change in future water planning
- Integrate land use into the discussion to consider water needs for new developments and existing uses – prioritize the land use/water nexus
- Equity – water as a fundamental human right

- Adopt best practices – look at other urban water leaders, what they implement and what their education programs cover
- Connect water quality to water quantity – importance of community awareness/education
- Collaboration instead of silos – water can unite us so we plan and don't just react

Breakout A Reporting:

- How does your organization interact with water? Who is your go-to water agency?
 - Mile High Flood District
 - Metro Roundtable
 - One World – One Water Center
 - Denver Water
 - City and County of Denver
 - Metro Wastewater
 - DWCP (?) for funding
 - Recycled Water community (treatment and customers)
 - Water Resource Center (collaboration with CSU)
 - State Dept. of Water Resources
 - **Theme: Collaboration between ALL agencies**
 - Water Education Colorado
 - Colorado Water Conservation Board
 - South Platte River (fisheries and other recreational benefits like walking, biking, etc, and community amenity)
 - Green Infrastructure
 - Cherry Creek Trail project
 - Water Quality to protect Public Health – Water Quality Standards for human consumption and ecosystems
 - Permitting
 - Irrigation for farming
 - Program and education opportunities for students & organization
 - Balance supply & demands
 - Water conservation programs (education)
 - Watershed Health programs (education)
- What do you see as the most important benefits of Denver's One Water Plan?
 - Integration!
 - Establishing efficiencies through coordination
 - **Theme: Establish a holistic framework across agencies/get a roadmap for implementation**
 - Community benefit; increase inclusion and participation, equity, and education, increase understanding
 - **Theme: Integration of climate change in future water planning**
 - Finding opportunities to reuse and use water more efficiently
 - Find opportunities to increase the value of water
 - Share best practices between agencies/entities

- Optimize water management – Right water for the right use
- What types of projects present the greatest One Water opportunities/challenges?
Where do you see low hanging fruit? Where does water fall in the hierarchy of planning/project priorities?
 - Expand uses of water, including a framework for reuse beyond current practices
 - Goal: protect all uses for municipal, environmental, etc
 - Look for opportunities of local reuse on-site with new developments with decentralized systems
 - **Theme: Integrate land use planners into the discussion to consider water needs for new developments and existing uses**
 - Align code changes for land use and water management
 - There is no real low hanging fruit
 - Responsibility of the front range to manage water wisely
 - Take a look at Douglas County is doing

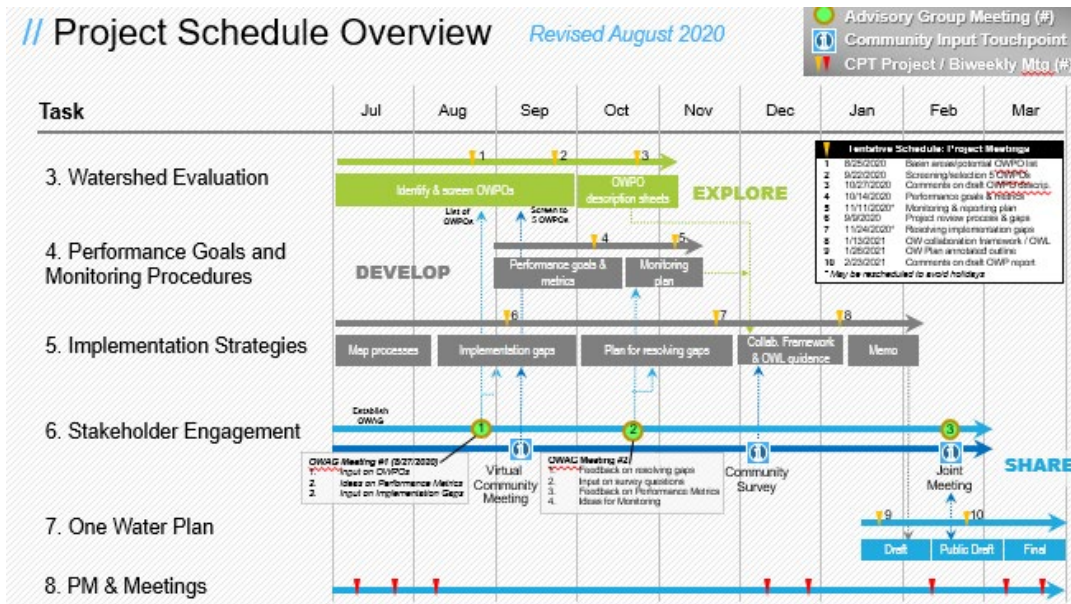
Breakout B Reporting:

- How does your organization interact with water? Who is your go-to water agency?
 - Theme: **Tying water quality to water quantity; collaborate instead of former silos – water can unite us**
 - Integrating water and land use planning – better to start early, not retrofit
 - Water / land use nexus
 - Standards/regs for Drinking Water, Wastewater, Reuse, Nontraditional sources
 - Education for water planners – integrating water sources
 - Allocating SRF loans – DW, WW, grey infrastructure; technical assistance and funding liaison to local gov'ts
 - **Theme: Equity – water as a fundamental human right**
 - Citywide and local plans for water management
 - Denver Water, City of Boulder, CWCB, Colo. Dept. of Ag, CDPHE WQCD, Cherry Creek Basin WQ Authority, IBCC Roundtables, EPA, local public health agencies
 - Efficiency – help address drought, climate change challenges
 - State and regional leadership / connections to Colorado River issues
 - Best practices in land use: inconsistent rules inhibit progress – we can clarify the path
 - Equity esp. in big urban environment; consider downstream impacts on underserved neighborhoods
- What do you see as the most important benefits of Denver's One Water Plan?
 - **Theme: Move water to forefront of thinking for development services**
 - Shift from potable sources for irrigation to nonpotable sources (e.g., stormwater)
 - Holistic approach → Increase water efficiency, enhance conservation opportunities
 - Focus more on ecosystem health vs. gray infrastructure
 - Centralizing decision-making to enhance access

- Better education
 - Better water quality in stream
 - Proactively address issues, get ahead instead of react
- What types of projects present the greatest One Water opportunities/challenges?
Where do you see low hanging fruit? Where does water fall in the hierarchy of planning/project priorities?
 - DPS – adopt universal drinking water policy re: access to clean drinking water
 - Update development review process w/ integrated water lens (“seconded”)
 - Watersheds: South Platte River, Highline Canal
 - Prioritize investments for storm/flood protection for low-income communities instead of traditional property value-focused approach – while considering potential unintended consequences
 - **Theme: Look at other urban water leaders e.g., SFPUC, Portland – what they implement, and what their education programs cover**
 - Green stormwater infrastructure
 - Education demonstration projects – high-profile, high-traffic neighborhoods w/educational element for public awareness
 - Allow grey water reuse onsite
 - Water-smart landscape ordinances – more/better – potable and stormwater

Next Steps

- Planning team lead John Rehring shared the project schedule and next steps; project manager Dave Julia provided a closing statement and adjourned the meeting.



Meeting Participants

Advisory Group Members:

- Anne Kuechenmeister (Bluebird Business Improvement District BID)
- Brandi Honeycutt (Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment CDPHE)
- John Covert (Colorado Trout Unlimited)
- María Corral (Denver Office of Immigrant/Refugee Affairs: Agency for Community Partnerships)
- Barb Biggs (Metro Basin Roundtable)
- Brad Buchanan (National Western Center)
- Waverly Klaw (Sonoran Institute)
- Christopher Hawkins (The Nature Conservancy)
- Paul Lander (University of Colorado Masters of the Environment Program)
- Nona Shipman (Metro State University One World One Water Center)
- Tony Massaro (Business for Water Stewardship)
- Casey Davenhill (Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners)
- Bret Icenogle (Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment CDPHE)
- Becky Long (Conservation Colorado)
- Christy Wiseman (DOLA/CWCB/ Babbitt Center)
- Matt Mahoney (Revesco Developer Rep)
- Christopher Parr (Sun Valley Eco District)
- Marianne Eppig (ULI Colorado)
- Austin Troy (UCD Department of Urban and Regional Planning)
- John Berggren (Western Resource Advocates)
- Samuel Valeriano (Foundation for Sustainable Urban Communities)

Planning Team:

- Dave Jula (Core Planning Team: CCD)
- Sarah Cawrse (Core Planning Team: CCD)
- Kathleen LeVeque (Core Planning Team: CCD)
- Devon Buckles (Core Planning Team: TWC)
- Barb Chongtoua (Core Planning Team: MHFD)
- Ty Bereskie (Core Planning Team: Denver Water)
- Kevin Reidy (Core Planning Team: CWCB)
- Dawn Ambrosio (Core Planning Team: MWRD)
- Brandy DeLange (Core Planning Team: MWRD)
- John Rehring (Core Planning Team: Carollo)
- Inge Wiersema (Core Planning Team: Carollo)
- Miles Graham (Core Planning Team: GBSM)
- Steve Coffin (Core Planning Team: GBSM)