

## Memorandum

**Date:** May 22, 2020

**To:** Becca Nash, Director, Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR)

**From:** Stacy Sjogren, Senior Consultant, Management Analysis and Development (MAD)

### RE: Re-engaging in the strategic planning process

---

This memo serves as a follow-up to our phone conversation on May 13, 2020, during which you asked about the circumstances necessary for MAD to reengage with LCCMR to complete their statutorily required strategic planning process.

#### Background

In 2019, MAD was contracted by LCCMR to scan and summarize related strategic documentation, plan community stakeholder and subject matter expert input opportunities, and facilitate the Commission's planning retreat on November 13, 2019. The purpose of the retreat was to assist in the Commission's assessment of the input collected earlier in the process and develop the 2020–2026 strategic plan. However, the Commission was unable to complete the plan during their retreat.

Per MAD's December 26, 2019, report, **Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund Strategic Planning Process Report**:

*During this deliberative process, some members left the meeting due to schedule conflicts. Some of the remaining members voiced concern about proceeding without those who had left. Others expressed concern about the lack of consideration being given to the stakeholder input received. The meeting adjourned without consensus.*

MAD's contract with LCCMR expired in January 2020.

Throughout the duration of this contract, MAD consultants observed significant levels of member discord and distrust. Much of this tension focused on whether ENRTF funds could be used for rural wastewater treatment projects, an issue that first emerged during a 2018 legislative session and spilled into the LCCMR board's dynamics.

#### Conditions for successful reengagement

MAD is concerned that any facilitator hired to provide additional assistance with the strategic planning project would not be successful without first removing the wastewater treatment issue from the planning process. Removing the issue could be achieved through legislative action, by deliberately setting the topic outside the

scope of planning for the current cycle, or through some other creative solution. Free of this enormous barrier, members could engage in the thoughtful deliberative group process that is the hallmark of good board work.

That said, MAD would be pleased to facilitate the remaining planning process when the Commission's board, as a whole, is ready to demonstrate the following conditions of success:

- A commitment by all members to participate in good faith and stay at the table
- An eagerness to seek out and explore possible areas of consensus together, which may require a willingness to reconsider one's own position on an issue for the health of the board as a functioning body
- A willingness to allow collected stakeholder and expert input to guide planning decisions

Once this shared mindset is in place, a good starting point for working together is to decide to start the planning process exactly where it left off or at an earlier point in the retreat's decision-making sequence. It is up to the members to decide if they can make that decision without the assistance of a facilitator.

We look forward to hearing from you after the members have had an opportunity to come to some decisions about moving ahead. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any further questions that may expedite the process.