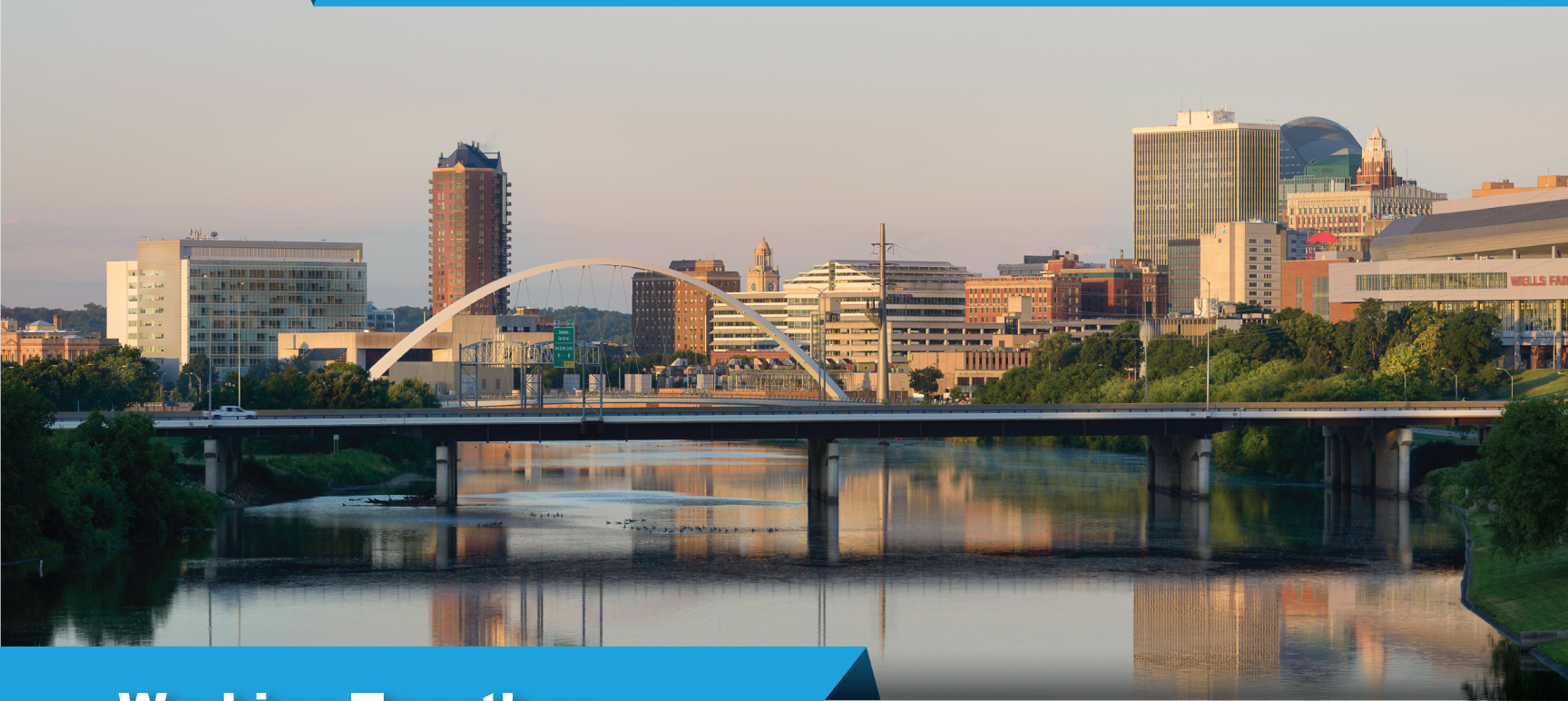


Central Iowa Regional Water

Working Together to Find a Solution



Working Together

President Thomas Jefferson once said, “The government closest to the people serves the people best.” While Jefferson said those famous words while advocating for state’s rights, they repeatedly seem to hold true on a broader sense even still today. In a time when political discourse is at an all time low in our country, it’s reassuring to see the level of participation and determination to work alongside neighbors to find a proposed solution to a complicated issue like water production regionalization.

Many public servants have spent a great deal of time working on this issue. Central Iowa mayors, city managers, public works directors, water utility staff, and interested citizens actively participated in over 25 hours of discussions throughout 2017. Not only have the discussions been respectful and productive, but they have also provided the opportunity to gain a greater appreciation of the issues that each individual city or entity may be facing.

Getting to where things are today hasn’t necessarily been easy. Success to date has been made possible by these community leaders coming together to find the appropriate solution, not necessarily the solution that they originally sought to find.

Dale Acheson - Urbandale Water
Mayor Bob Andeweg - Urbandale
Gary Benjamin - Xenia Rural Water
Dave Carlson - DMWW
Mayor Frank Cownie - Des Moines
Ted Corrigan - DMWW
Mayor Paula Dierenfeld - Johnston
Paul Drey - Brick Gentry
Andy Fish - Warren Rural Water
Peggy Freese - DMWW
Mayor Steve Gaer - West Des Moines
Graham Gillette - DMWW
Hon. E. J. Giovannetti - Polk County
David Gordon - FCS Group

Tom Hadden - West Des Moines
Dennis Henderson - Clive
Melody Hobart - FCS Group
Sue Huppert - DMWW
David Jones - Ankeny
Amy Kahler - DMWW
Councilman David Lindeman - Johnston
Mayor Gary Lorenz - Ankeny
John McCune - Urbandale Water
Mike McCurnin - DMWW
Tim Morman - Waukee
Jason Mumm - FCS Group
Karen Novak - WDMWW
Gail Palmer - Urbandale Water

Mayor Bill Peard - Waukee
Stan Ripperger - Warren Rural Water
Jim Sanders - Johnston
Scott Sanders - Des Moines
Laura Sarcone - DMWW
Mike Schulte - Polk City
Jody Smith - WDMWW
Bill Stowe - DMWW
Jim Utter - Altoona
Marc Wallace - DMWW
Jeff Walters - Polk City
Diana Wilson - WDMWW
Councilman Vern Willey - Altoona



Our Main Objectives

THE OBJECTIVES OF A REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY

After months of workshops and public meetings, it is helpful to remind all those involved and interested what the regionalization of water production in central Iowa may accomplish: Improve the governance of regional water production to include wider representation within the greater Des Moines region;

- Consolidate the authority for the planning and expansion of existing water production facilities, including construction of new facilities;
- Consolidate ownership of existing water production assets and facilities;
- Establish rates for water production;
- Provide for the operations and maintenance of all regional water production facilities; and
- Retain structure and governance of local utility boards and/or city councils in all matters related to distribution of water to their customers.



We encourage anyone interested in the topic to attend a workshop or the public meetings. We also have made information from the meetings available on various websites, and can be accessed through one of the links below:

<http://www.dmww.com/about-us/board-of-trustees/central-iowa-regional-water/>

<http://www.cirdwc.com/regionalization-1.html>



Where We've Been

A recap of 2017 progress

Beginning in the spring of 2017, leaders from the three independent water boards in the Des Moines metro – Des Moines Water Works, Urbandale Water Utility, and West Des Moines Water Works – have been involved in discussions to explore the opportunity for regionalized water production for central Iowa. The meetings started with the discussion among the three water boards and quickly expanded to include leaders of various cities in the central Iowa region.

In September, the group engaged an independent facilitator, and formal discussions have taken place through the fall. Through facilitation, the group has been seeking resolution on identified issues. Each participant has approached these bi-weekly meetings with an open mind and a desire to find the best solution to how central Iowa will manage water production now and into the future.

Throughout 2017, the Central Iowa regional water workgroup has held seven public meetings and eight workshop sessions where participants have invested numerous hours discussing subjects involving regionalizing water production in Central Iowa.



What's Next?

Issues to address in 2018

Currently, the group is working on establishing a memorandum of understanding that will help focus further discussions. The next round of discussions will focus on three areas.

FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF AN ASSET TRANSFER MODEL

As you may recall, asset transfer was originally something the three independent water boards sought to avoid. However, during discussions with the larger group that included representatives from suburban cities and Des Moines, it became clear that there was a growing consensus that the new water authority should own all water production assets in the region so that it can better control costs.

The transfer of assets has thwarted previous regionalization attempts because it adds a level of complexity to the discussions. However, the group is committed to revisiting this option, believing it to be the most sustainable long-term solution to regionalization.

OPERATING CONTRACTS

The new water authority will be responsible for the operation of water production facilities, however, there was broad consensus that operating contracts should initially be granted to existing operators for a set period of time.

COMPOSITION OF THE NEW WATER AUTHORITY'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The group has shown interest in modeling the governing board after entities in our own region that people are already familiar with and have demonstrated success, like Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART), Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), or the Des Moines Wastewater Reclamation Authority (WRA).

COMPLETION

It is anticipated to have a finalized agreement by the middle of 2018.