

PLANNING AUTHORITY (VER 1.0)

What is it? *Planning authority is the degree of control granted to the regional entity to plan for future capacity needs for the region in order to meet its obligation of service in future periods (i.e. water production).*

How it Fits in the Regional Plan? *If it is the regional entity’s obligation to provide for the Members’ water production requirements whenever the Members request it, then the entity will need a remit to plan for and obtain the resources needed to meet its obligation.*

A PROPOSED STARTING POINT FOR DISCUSSIONS:

Our previous discussions have helped define the entity’s obligation to serve, and established a vision for the entity as the sole provider of water production for the region. A separate issue paper discusses the operational authorities needed to meet this obligation. What specific planning authorities should the entity possess in order to meet those future capacity needs in the region? The below table lists some of the authorities needed and a description of what this would possibly mean under a strong level of authority.

| Element of Planning Authority | Provision for Strong Planning Authority |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Long-Range Regional Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The regional entity has the authority to develop and approve the long-range plan for the region’s water production needs as defined by its obligation of service. |
| Capital Improvement Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The regional entity has the authority to develop and approve capital improvements plans, schedule the proposed spending, and develop and execute funding strategies to pay for the improvements. |
| Project Specifications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The regional entity has the authority to develop the necessary design specifications for any project contained within its capital improvements plans. |
| Contracting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The regional entity has the authority to negotiate and enter into contracts related to planning, designing, and constructing regional water production facilities. |
| Self-Performance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The regional entity has the authority to hire and retain its own personnel to provide for planning and execution of capital projects. |

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

The planning authority discussed here is separate from the operational authority discussed earlier. The planning authority is about the *future* needs of the region, while the operational authority is about the *day-to-day* operations of water production facilities. Input from previous workshops appears to indicate the group expects the regional entity will be responsible for meeting the regional water production requirements for all future capacity needs. Insuring that this need is met would seem to require a stronger planning authority.

The transition of planning authority is worth further consideration. Currently, planning needs are being met by Des Moines Water Works and individual agencies. Des Moines Water works just recently presented a long-range plan to its Board. What should happen with that long-range plan while these regional discussions are taking place? What should happen with the plan *after* a regional entity is created?

Regional coordination is another key consideration. The preponderance of regional water production capacity currently resides with Des Moines Water Works. To the extent future projects are planned and designed by the regional entity, it should be clear that there is a need to work collaboratively on any design criteria that may affect the proper functioning of the existing facilities (owned by DMWW and others). Should there be any provision in the 28E/F about requiring regional design review?