



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number: 15-5715

Agenda Item Number: 27.

Agenda Date: 11/12/2015

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Planning and Community Development

DEPARTMENT HEAD: John Dugan

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City-wide

SUBJECT:

Public comments on the final San Antonio Water Policy Study developed by Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources.

SUMMARY:

Public comments on the final San Antonio Water Policy Study developed by Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Councilman Ron Nirenberg, representing Council District 8, filed a City Council Communication Request (CCR) on February 10, 2014, to discuss an analysis of policies, procedures and regulations pertaining to long term planning to ensure water security including the provision of adequate and affordable water supplies. A subsequent memo reflecting the work of Mayor Castro and Councilman Nirenberg was issued to the Mayor and City Manager on April 10, 2014 by Councilman Nirenberg, which provided additional guidance on the scope of the work for the Water Policy Study.

On October 9, 2014, City Council authorized an interlocal agreement with Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources (IRNR) for the amount of \$98,096 to conduct a Water Policy Study to analyze policies, procedures and regulations to ensure water security through the year 2060. Integrated with the SA Tomorrow comprehensive planning effort, the purpose of the study is to inform San Antonio on how to better protect the current supply, ensure its availability in the future, and identify additional resources to fill gaps based on climate and growth. The report assesses San Antonio's and Bexar County's water security by reviewing existing data on city policies, regulations and initiatives involving the cost, quantity and quality of the water from the Edwards Aquifer and other sources. The City of Fair Oaks Ranch participated in the study. This study

was scheduled for completion on February 28, 2015; however, a contract extension was requested by IRNR.

The City received the first draft of the study on May 1, 2015. The draft study analyzed 12 water-supply sources and 24 water issues. Water supply sources were assigned a risk rating and policy issues were assigned a grade on water management and planning performance. On May 4, 2015, the City shared the draft report with SAWS. During the months of May and June 2015, City and SAWS staff conducted a peer review of the draft Study and provided a series of recommended edits to the IRNR on June 4, 2015. City and SAWS staff met with the IRNR staff to discuss both City and SAWS recommended edits on June 9 and June 12, 2015. Subsequently a second draft was submitted to the City on July 14, 2015.

The City was not satisfied with the July draft which still retained some outdated information, opinionated statements, and inaccuracies. Dr. Finch had retired and was no longer with the IRNR. The City contacted IRNR to address the issues related to the draft. In a memo dated September 23, 2015, Dr. Roel Lopez, IRNR Director, identified a three-step process to release the final report: 1) review the July draft report from Dr. Calvin Finch (now retired) with the latest edits and comments following the July 2015 version; (2) submit the updated draft water report through a scientific peer-review process, and address comments and suggestions from reviewers in a new draft version; and (3) release the final draft report to the City of San Antonio for final comments and submission. Given the significant policy implications of the water report, the peer review process is an added measure of quality assurance and scientific soundness. Dr. Roel Lopez will provide the briefing on the final report.

ISSUE:

This item will provide an opportunity to comment on the final San Antonio Water Policy Study developed by IRNR. An additional opportunity for the public to comment will be held on Wednesday, November 18 at 6:00 PM in the City Council Chambers.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item will provide an opportunity to comment on the final San Antonio Water Policy Study developed by IRNR.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item will provide an opportunity to comment on the final San Antonio Water Policy Study developed by IRNR.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item will provide an opportunity to comment on the final San Antonio Water Policy Study developed by IRNR.