

CITY OF SANTA ROSA  
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: COLIN CLOSE, SENIOR WATER RESOURCES PLANNER  
WATER DEPARTMENT  
SUBJECT: WATER SUPPLY ASSESSMENT FOR THE SANTA ROSA  
DOWNTOWN STATION AREA SPECIFIC PLAN UPDATE  
AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Water Department that the Council, by resolution, approve the Water Supply Assessment for the proposed Santa Rosa Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Update.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The State of California, in accordance with Senate Bill 610 (SB 610) which took effect in 2002, requires water suppliers to provide a determination of available water supply in a Water Supply Assessment (WSA) on certain large projects subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The City of Santa Rosa Planning and Economic Development Department is the land use and planning agency for the proposed Santa Rosa Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Update (Project) and has determined that the Project is subject to CEQA and that it would demand an amount of water equivalent to or greater than the amount of water required by a 500 dwelling unit project. The Water Department prepared this WSA for the Project. Pursuant to State law, the WSA is to be approved by the governing body of the water supplier.

BACKGROUND

The State of California, per SB 610, requires that water suppliers provide a WSA to planning agencies for any proposed projects which are subject to CEQA and would demand an amount of water equivalent to or greater than the amount of water required by a 500 dwelling unit project. The proposed Project is subject to CEQA and has an increase of approximately 7,399 residential dwelling units over the current Santa Rosa General Plan 2035 (General Plan 2035), so it is subject to SB 610.

The Project proposes to update the previously adopted Downtown Station Area Specific Plan (2007 DSASP). Because the 2007 DSASP was the subject of a previous Water Supply Assessment (WSA) and because the 2007 DSASP amended the General Plan

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2035, the current WSA for the proposed Project focuses on the change in development compared to the General Plan 2035. Therefore, the projected water demand for the Project analyzed in this WSA is the incremental increased demand from the General Plan 2035.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

On December 12, 2006, the City Council, by Resolution No. 26738, approved a WSA for the 2007 DSASP.

On October 9, 2007, the City Council, by Resolution No. 26950, approved the General Plan amendments necessary for the adoption of the 2007 DSASP.

On December 3, 2019, the City Council held a study session on the preferred alternative for the proposed Project.

ANALYSIS

The Project is subject to CEQA and is expected to have an increase of approximately 7,399 residential dwelling units over the General Plan 2035. This triggers the need for a WSA pursuant to SB 610. The density and land use of the Project have been defined as part of the Project.

The Project proposed will update the previously adopted 2007 DSASP, which amended the General Plan 2035. Therefore, the Project projected water demand analyzed in this WSA is the increment of increased water demand from General Plan 2035 to the Project. The net increase is projected to be a maximum of 870 acre-feet per year (afy).

Santa Rosa currently has three existing sources of water which serve the Project area: entitlement of 29,100 afy from the Sonoma County Water Agency pursuant to the Restructured Agreement for Water Supply; 2,300 afy of local groundwater supply; and approximately 140 afy of recycled water supply. Additionally, the City has a very aggressive water conservation program which provides supply through reducing current demands and assuring that future demands are efficient.

The WSA must consider available water supply under normal, single-dry year, and multiple-dry water year conditions. The analysis shows that supplies for historic and planned future uses, including the Project, are sufficient under normal water year conditions. Under dry water year conditions, demand could exceed supply at Project buildout (assumed to be 2040) by up to 3.6 percent. If a water shortfall occurs in dry water years, the City would implement more stringent water conservation efforts to ensure water demand does not exceed supply. If circumstances require that demand be reduced by 10 percent or more, the City would implement the appropriate stage of its Water Shortage Contingency Plan.

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While the City has experienced a number of droughts over the years, it has not experienced a drought-based reduction in water supply or deliveries from Sonoma Water since 1976-77. To be conservative during dry conditions at various times in the past, the City has adopted demand reduction Resolutions, and the Santa Rosa community has responded each time by reducing water use. During the recent historic drought (2014-2016), the City did not experience a water supply shortage. However, the City implemented Stage 2 of its Water Shortage Contingency Plan in response to the State's mandate that Santa Rosa reduce water demand by 16 percent (despite adequate local water supplies). In response, the City launched an extensive outreach campaign to encourage water customers to conserve water and participate in the City's water efficiency programs. As a result, Santa Rosa water customers reduced demand by more than 25 percent.

In its conclusion, the WSA finds that the City's existing and projected water supplies are sufficient at this time to meet the projected demand associated with the Project, in addition to existing and planned future uses for the 20-year projection.

The WSA will be circulated with the Environmental Impact Report for the Project.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this action does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action has been found exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guideline Section 15306 in that project consists of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – SB 610 Water Supply Assessment for Santa Rosa Downtown Station Area Specific Plan Update
- Resolution/ Exhibit A

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