

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

TO: BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES
FROM: COLIN CLOSE, SENIOR WATER RESOURCES PLANNER
SUBJECT: ISSUANCE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR WATER
SUPPLY ALTERNATIVES PLAN

AGENDA ACTION: MOTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the City Council/Board of Public Utilities Liaison Committee and Santa Rosa Water that the Board of Public Utilities, by motion, approve the issuance of a Request for Proposals to solicit proposals from qualified consultants to complete a study of potential water supply sources and develop a Water Supply Alternatives Plan for increasing the City's water supply resiliency and reliability.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Santa Rosa Water wishes to explore options to increase the City's water supplies to reduce vulnerability to prolonged droughts which are projected to occur with more frequency and severity due to climate change. To determine the best path forward for enhancing the City's water supply portfolio, staff proposes to hire a consultant to assist in this effort. Staff will present information about the proposed scope of work and timeline and ask the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to approve issuance of a Request for Proposals.

BACKGROUND

The City's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) includes details about Santa Rosa's planned water supplies and projected demands through 2045 during an average water year, a single dry year, and dry five-year periods. As documented in the UWMP, Santa Rosa Water has three existing and planned sources of water: entitlement of 29,100 acre-feet per year (AFY) from Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water), 2,300 AFY of local groundwater supply from City wells, and 140 AFY of recycled water supply from the City's Regional Water Reuse System.

The UWMP concludes that the City's three supply sources would be sufficient to meet projected water demands through 2045 in average rainfall years and even below average rainfall years. However, in severely dry years, water supplies would not be sufficient to meet projected ordinary water demands of Santa Rosa Water's customers.

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If the City were to experience a water shortage of 30 percent or more, water customers would be required to adhere to strict, site-specific water allocations (water rationing) and new development would be required to offset new demand for water to achieve a net zero impact.

While the City has not experienced such a shortage to date, climate change has increased the risk of more severe (hotter, drier, longer) and more frequent droughts. The current drought has persisted for three years and is the second driest period on record. For the past 15 months, Sonoma Water's water supply storage in Lake Sonoma has been at the lowest level for any comparable time period in the past 30 years. The lake's level in October 2021 nearly dropped below 100,000 acre-feet, which could have triggered mandatory 30 percent reductions in supply.

Given the realities of climate change and the desire to avoid severe water shortages, Santa Rosa Water wishes to hire a highly qualified consultant to assist in developing a clear plan for increasing the City's water supply sources.

The proposed scope of work will include:

- Working with an interdisciplinary team of Water staff
- Engaging an external stakeholder group
- Establishing long-term local water supply goals
- Evaluating potential water supply sources
- Developing alternative portfolios of water supply options
- Preparing a Water Supply Alternatives Plan to achieve the City's water supply goals.

Staff have identified two initial water supply goals based on the desire to (a) reduce the City's vulnerability to severe water shortages of 30 percent or greater (which trigger water rationing and demand offset requirements) and (b) respond to the "Local Production Capacity Goal" (in Section 1.15 of Sonoma County Water Agency's *Restructured Water Agreement for Water Supply*) which encourages water suppliers to develop capacity to produce 40 percent of peak day demand. The Study will need to assess the validity and feasibility of the initial goals and refine them as needed.

The initial goals are to increase City water supplies by 2045 to achieve capacity to locally produce:

- a) 30 percent (7,500 acre-fee per year) of projected 2045 annual demand, and
- b) 40 percent (13 million gallons per day) of the projected 2045 average day in maximum demand month.

Potential water supply sources and strategies to be considered may include:

- Aquifer storage and recovery
- Collaborative resiliency projects with Sonoma Water and/or Water Contractors
- Desalination

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- Groundwater
- Interties
- Potable reuse
- Stormwater
- Surface water
- Water trading
- Other sources identified by Water staff, the stakeholder group, or consultant

Criteria for evaluating water sources may include:

- Ability to integrate with existing distribution system.
- Cost (construction and O&M)
- Cost effectiveness
- Environmental impacts (for example, greenhouse gas emissions)
- Hazard/risk analysis
- Permitting and regulatory compliance
- Potential impacts on operational staffing needs, certifications, system designation
- Potential impacts on operations of the Water System, Wastewater Collection System, Wastewater Treatment System, and Recycled Water Distribution system
- Potential legal constraints (e.g., water rights, intertie agreements, water trading)
- Public education/perception
- Revenue impacts
- Scalability of alternative
- Supply source resiliency (seasonal availability, dry year impacts)
- Timeline for implementation/phased approach for alternative portfolios of options
- Water chemistry/quality/treatability
- Other criteria recommended by the Water staff, stakeholder group, or consultant

The estimated timeline for this work is:

- May-Aug 2022:
 - Solicit proposals, select firm, & award contract.
- Sep 2022- Mar 2023:
 - Launch project with interdisciplinary team of Water staff. Engage stakeholders. Establish water supply goals. Conduct study. Draft plan.
- Apr-May 2023:
 - Hold public study session to review draft plan and solicit input. Finalize plan.

PRIOR BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES REVIEW

Not applicable.

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ANALYSIS

Issuing a Request for Proposals will allow staff to solicit proposals from qualified firms and select a consultant to conduct the study and develop the plan. The process from advertising to contract award is expected to take approximately three months (May-August 2022).

FISCAL IMPACT

This action has no immediate fiscal impact.

After a consultant has been selected for the Water Supply Alternatives Plan project, staff will bring a recommendation for contract award to the BPU for consideration (anticipated to occur in September 2022). Similar efforts recently initiated by water providers in the region have ranged from approximately \$250,000 to \$400,000. Funding for the Water Supply Alternatives Plan is included in the proposed 2022-2023 Water budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378 in that the issuing of an RFP would not have a significant impact on the environment. However, the Water Supply Alternatives Plan would be considered a project under CEQA. Staff anticipate this Plan would be exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 in that the Water Supply Alternatives Plan involves only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions. The study and plan will not include physical facilities or improvements to be constructed at the time the plan is approved. CEQA compliance will be achieved for any actual facilities proposed to be constructed after the plan has been finalized.

BPU/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On April 28, 2022, the City Council/Board of Public Utilities Liaison Subcommittee, by motion, approved the staff recommendation to (1) solicit proposals and ask the BPU to award a contract, (2) conduct the study and prepare the draft plan, (3) review the draft plan in a BPU study session to solicit input from the BPU and public, revise the plan as needed, and finalize the plan, and (4) execute the plan over time and report progress to the BPU periodically.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

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ATTACHMENTS

Not applicable.

CONTACT

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