

WATER POLICY IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE
MEMORANDUM

TO: Task Force Members
FROM: Task Force Chair Cary Lowe
RE: Task Force Final Report
DATE: June 17, 2013

Attached is a transmittal letter to the City Council, to present them with our final report. It includes: (i) a history of our Task Force; (ii) a summary of how we have operated over the past year; (iii) highlights of our goals and recommendations; and (iv) a description of remaining steps before our work is concluded.

Please review this letter at your first opportunity. If you have any comments or concerns, I would appreciate receiving them (via Greg Parkington) in advance of our upcoming meeting, so that I have an opportunity to consider possible revisions. I will do my best to incorporate the sentiment of the group as to needed revisions.

With regard to the highlights of our goals and recommendations, please keep in mind that this portion of the letter is intended to be merely a preview, so the highlighted items are described in very brief form. If members of any of the Working Groups feel that different, more or fewer items should be highlighted in your respective areas, please include that in your comments.

A list of Task Force members will be attached to the letter. Please also consider whether all members should actually sign off on the letter.

Thank you.

San Diego City Council

Water Policy Implementation Task Force

June 24, 2013

President and Members of the City Council
City of San Diego
202 "C" Street
San Diego, California 92101

Re: Report of Water Policy Implementation Task Force

Hon. President and Members of the City Council:

The Water Policy Implementation Task Force is pleased to present you with our report and recommendations. We look forward to discussing this material in future hearings and workshops, and hope to see many of our recommendations quickly adopted as policies and ordinances of the City of San Diego.

The City Council appointed our Task Force on April 10, 2012, for the purpose of advising the Council with regard to implementation of the Council's Comprehensive Policy for a Sustainable Water Supply in San Diego (Policy No. 400-15), which was adopted unanimously in October 2011. The Task Force was constituted to represent all the significant private sector industries in the City, as well as environmental interests and the academic community. A list of Task Force members is attached.

1. Task Force Process and Actions.

Commencing in May 2012, the Task Force has met monthly. We underwent an initial educational period, in which the Task Force received presentations from staff at the Public Utilities Department and other public agencies, as well as from private experts in pertinent areas. In the months since then, we have debated and adopted an extensive set of specific recommendations for implementation of the City Council's adopted water supply policies.

Our deliberations and actions have been premised on the City Council's recognition that San Diego's water supply faces great uncertainty unless actions are taken to reduce our water consumption, to apply new technologies to addressing our water needs, to secure sufficient supplies to meet the remaining needs, and to pursue sustainable land use and economic growth policies. Consequently, in formulating our recommendations, we balanced two important considerations – improving the sustainability of our water use practices and ensuring a clean, reliable water supply sufficient to meet the needs of our residents, businesses and institutions.

During the course of our deliberations, we made two interim reports to the City Council's Natural Resources and Culture Committee, on October 10, 2012 and February 19, 2013. On each of those occasions, on behalf of the Task Force, I presented the recommendations adopted to date and briefed the Committee on our overall progress.

I am pleased to report that our recommendations regarding goals and priorities have been adopted largely by consensus. While the diversity of representation on the Task Force has produced lively debate on many issues, and occasionally has required compromise, it has not kept us from carrying out our assigned duties in a collegial and productive manner. We have reached consensus by operating through four Working Groups, focusing on:

- Water Conservation
- Water Recycling
- Effective Rate Structure
- Innovation and Technology.

Each Working Group has generated proposals for consideration by the full Task Force. In addition, we have considered proposals from city departmental staff and from members of the public.

2. Goals and Recommendations.

The full set of our recommendations is attached. With each recommendation is a proposed implementing action for that recommendation and proposed timing for that implementation.

We would like to present some highlights of our report. First, we identified four overarching goals which provide a context for the specific recommendations. These goals address the following:

- Reducing overall citywide water consumption
- Reducing importing of water
- Increasing recycling of waste water
- Initiating recycling of storm water.

In each of the Task Force's areas of focus, we adopted some particularly significant recommendations. The full text of all recommendations is in Attachment "A," but we want to summarize the more significant ones here. These include:

- a. Water Conservation.
 - i. Modifying the City's drought alert standards
 - ii. Promoting use of water-conserving landscaping
 - iii. Establishing an ongoing program to create a "water conservation ethic" among the general public
 - iv. Strengthening requirements for retrofitting homes with water-conserving fixtures at resale
 - v. Using new technology to facilitate tracking by property owners of indoor and outdoor water use
- b. Water Recycling and Reuse.

- i. Replenishing groundwater basins with storm water
 - ii. Promoting low-impact development to reduce storm water runoff
 - iii. Expanding the non-potable “purple pipe” system where cost-effective
 - iv. Expanding production of potable water through recycling, in accordance with the City’s 2012 Recycled Water Study
 - v. Supporting legislation to facilitate both direct and indirect potable reuse
 - vi. Facilitating use of graywater for irrigation
- c. Rate Structure.
- i. Modifying the current tiered rate structure to incentivize conservation
 - ii. Moving toward water budgeting for irrigation accounts
- d. Innovation and Technology.
- i. Reducing water loss throughout the city system
 - ii. Leveraging current water treatment technology to assist development of new related technologies
 - iii. Applying existing technologies to reduce energy consumption in the water distribution system
 - iv. Taking embedded energy implications into account in future water supply decisions
 - v. Establishing clear guidelines for on-site wastewater treatment and reuse facilities
 - vi. Accelerating retrofitting of water meters citywide with advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) technology

We have been pleased to see some of our recommendations adopted by the City Council already, prior to delivery of this report. The Council’s actions to advance full-scale implementation of potable reuse of wastewater and to facilitate use of graywater are consistent with Task Force recommendations.

3. Remaining Steps.

The attached Goals and Recommendations are the product of our year-long efforts to formulate a plan for implementing the City Council’s water supply policies. We have not addressed every individual policy, but have concentrated on recommendations intended to facilitate implementation of your set of policies as a whole.

President and Members of the City Council
City of San Diego
June 24, 2013
Page 4

Thank you for the opportunity to have participated in this process. We understand that our recommendations are subject to review by the Independent Rate Oversight Committee, and that Public Utilities Department staff and others will have comments regarding our work. At the appropriate time, we look forward to formally presenting this report to you, and to commencing the process of City Council review, leading to adoption of some or all of our recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,

Cary D. Lowe, Ph.D., AICP
Task Force Chairman

CDL:sh
Attachments