

2022 Austin Water External Review

Joint Meeting of:

Audit & Finance Committee and Austin Water Oversight Committee | March 29, 2023



Agenda

Shay Ralls Roalson, PE

Austin Water Director

- 💧 **Winter Storm Mara Summary & Lessons Learned**
- 💧 **External Review Recommendations Implementation Progress Report**
 - Overview of Implementation Status
 - Do Not Agree to Implement
 - Recommendations Implemented
 - Recommendations Underway
 - Recommendations Planned
 - Additional Items & Key Findings
- 💧 **Next Steps**

Winter Storm Mara

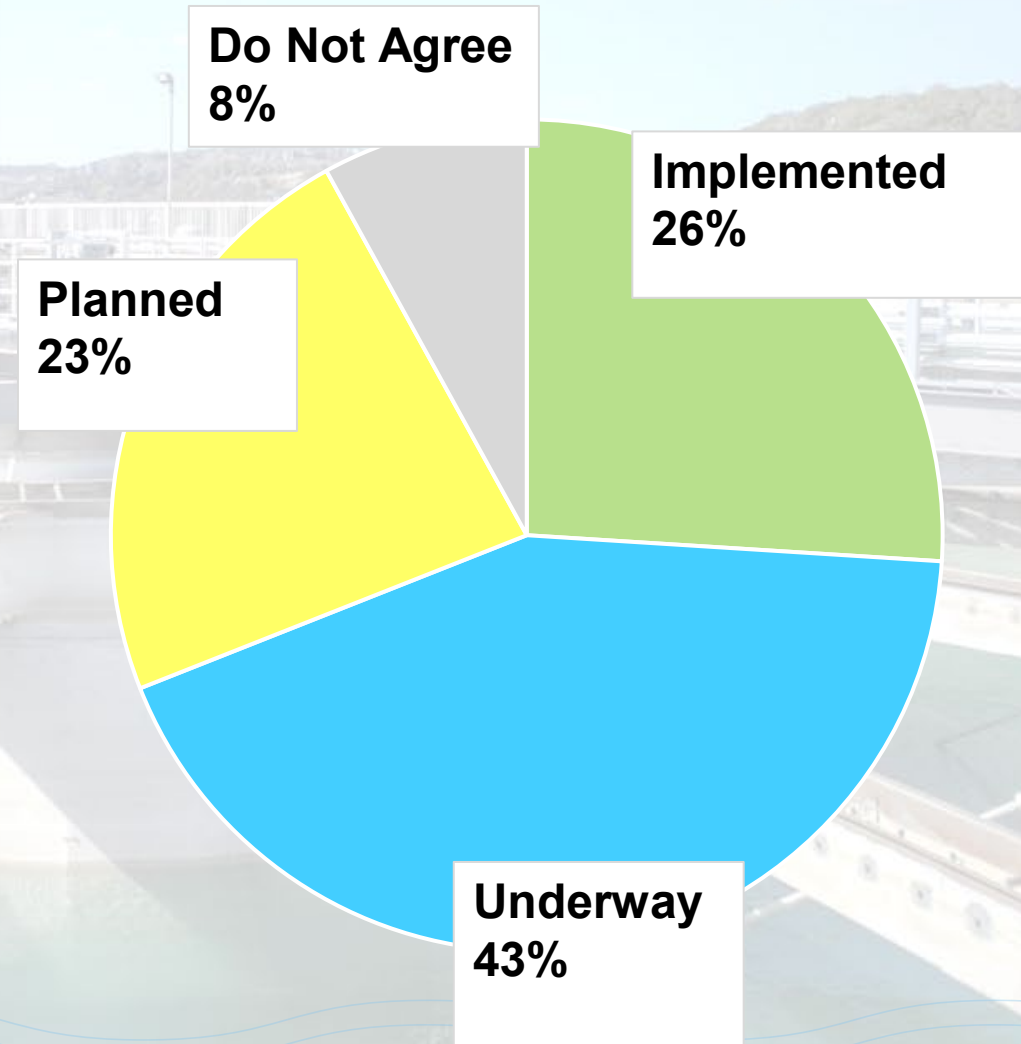
Summary and Lessons Learned

External Review Recommendations

Implementation Progress Report

Implementation Progress

- 💧 14 Implemented Recommendations
- 💧 23 Recommendations Underway
- 💧 12 Recommendations Planned
- 💧 4 Recommendations Do Not Agree



Do Not Agree To Implement 4 Recommendations

- 💧 Greater autonomy for AW Human Resources
- 💧 AW should report directly to the City Manager (2 separate recommendations)
- 💧 Reduce span of control for AW Director and Assistant Directors

14 Recommendations Implemented

💧 Employee & Leadership Development

- Hire above entry level when a candidate is qualified

💧 Emergency Management

- Increase purchasing authority during emergencies

💧 Operations & Engineering

- Prioritize Ullrich WTP centrifuge replacement project
- Address preventative maintenance backlog
- Develop additional pathways for South pressure zone water supply

14 Recommendations Implemented (Cont.)

💧 Public Information

- Provide media training for staff
- Publish information in languages other than English

💧 SOPs & Training

- Incorporate new training positions for operations and maintenance staff

23 Recommendations Underway

💧 Employee & Leadership Development

- Communicate significant decisions to operations staff
- Continue to advocate for increased operator salaries
- Continue to recruit and retain a skilled workforce

💧 Emergency Management

- Communicate roles and responsibilities prior to events and upon activation

💧 Public Information

- Continue to hire staff to handle water and wastewater concerns

23 Recommendations Underway (cont.)

💧 Reporting Structure

- Establish position for a single person to be in charge of Ullrich WTP

💧 Situational Awareness

- Exercise VEOCI¹ on small, low-stakes, no consequences events
- Evaluate emergency planning and training at each plant

💧 SOPs & Training

- Train personnel for plant-specific knowledge
- Improve communication between Pumping and Plant Operations

¹. VEOCI is Austin Water's online software platform that serves as a virtual emergency operations center.

16 Recommendations Planned

💧 Operations & Engineering

- Conduct stress testing of Ullrich WTP
- Evaluate capital projects based on condition assessments and communicate with staff

💧 Reporting Structure

- Review management structure to support plant operations

Additional Items & Key Findings

- 💧 AW Power Reliability and Emergency Preparedness Plan is effective.
- 💧 The Ullrich Water Treatment Plant infrastructure is adequately designed with sufficient capacity and AW treatment processes are appropriate.
- 💧 Austin Water has taken steps to mitigate water quality risks and improve operational resiliency at its water treatment plants.
- 💧 Austin Water's emergency management structures are well thought out, suitably structured, and aligned with FEMA standards.

Next Steps

Quarterly Status Reports:

- 💧 Implementation operationalized by October 25, 2023

An aerial photograph of a wastewater treatment plant. In the foreground, there are several large, rectangular concrete basins. A blue semi-transparent overlay covers the middle section of the image, containing the word "Questions" in white. In the background, a dense green forest separates the plant from a city skyline under a cloudy sky.

Questions

