Item 16
Water & Wastewater Commission: November 13, 2024
Council: November 21, 2024

Posting Language

Recommend approval of a resolution repealing Resolution No. 20240502-005, which adopted the prior Water Conservation Plan for Municipal and Wholesale Water Use, and adopting an updated Water Conservation Plan, which describes Austin Water's ongoing water conservation strategies, programs and goals, as required by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Funding: This item has no fiscal impact.

Lead Department

Austin Water.

Prior Council Action:

May 5, 2016 – Council approved Resolution No. 20160505-0004 adopting a new Drought Contingency Plan and related revisions to City Code Chapter 6-4 (*Water Conservation*).

November 29, 2018 - Council approved adoption of Water Forward, Austin's Integrated Water Resource Plan.

April 11, 2019 – Council approved Resolution No. 20190411-002, repealing Resolution No. 20140417-004 and adopting the Utility Profile & Water Conservation Plan for Municipal and Wholesale Water Use as required by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

May 2, 2024 – Council approved Resolution No. 20240502-005, repealing Resolution No. 20190411-002 and adopting the Utility Profile & Water Conservation Plan for Municipal and Wholesale Water Use as required by the TCEQ.

Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

November 4, 2024 – Recommended by the Austin Integrated Water Resource Planning Community Task Force (Water Forward Task Force) on a vote of 7 in favor with Task Force Member Moriarty opposed and Task Force Members Faust and Lorenz absent.

November 13, 2024 – To be reviewed by the Water and Wastewater Commission.

November 19, 2024 – To be reviewed by the Resource Management Commission.

Additional Backup Information:

Austin is required by the TCEQ to file a Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) and a Water Conservation Plan (WCP) under Texas Administrative Code Title 30, Chapter 288. A DCP establishes a series of drought stages and the measures to curtail water use during specific times of drought. A WCP describes a utility's water use profile and describes water conservation goals and programs to reduce water use and otherwise increase water use efficiency. These plans are required to be updated on a five-year basis and submitted to the TCEQ.

Austin's last WCP was approved by Council on May 2, 2024. At the time of adoption, Austin Water committed to reviewing the WCP in further collaboration with the Water Resource Task Force and in conjunction with the anticipated update of the City's 2024 Water Forward Plan. The revised WCP and DCP will be presented to the City Council with the 2024 Water Forward Plan.

Highlights of Recommended Changes from the May 2, 2024 Water Conservation Plan:

- Provide additional information regarding increasing Austin Water's efforts to address water system loss and updates reflecting Austin Water's GoPurple program for reclaimed water and onsite water reuse.
- Detail additional and expanded activities with additional water use savings, including:
    - Additional water loss mitigation activities.
    - Add restrictions regarding the use of drip irrigation similar to the restrictions on automatic spray and hose-end irrigation.
    - Increase commercial and industrial customer engagement through the My ATX Water system.
    - Develop a community partnership grant program to expand outreach of water conservation messaging.
    - Develop the data and processes necessary for future water use benchmarking and budgeting.
- Amend the Total Gallons Per Capita Daily (GPCD) and Residential GPCD water use goals from the recently approved 2024 Water Conservation Plan.
- Add a new section titled "Future Water Use and Loss Activities" with detailed implementation milestones and anticipated water-saving yields for the five-year period covered by this plan. This implementation plan will form the basis for quarterly and annual reporting on water conservation activities and outcomes.