



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Councilmember David Cohen

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: April 13, 2021

Approved

Date: 04/12/2021

SUBJECT: Santa Clara Valley Water District Efforts to Develop Purified Water Projects in Santa Clara County.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Accept the report regarding the status of the Santa Clara Valley Water District's (Valley Water) Purified Water Project in Santa Clara County.
2. Approve recommendations 1-7 from the Memorandum from Mayor Liccardo, Vice Mayor Jones, and Councilmember Jimenez, amending item 2 as follows:
"Coordinate with Valley Water to negotiate and enter into a three-party agreement with a mutually agreed upon consultant to facilitate negotiation meetings between the City and Valley Water staff for six months. Should these facilitated meetings not make significant progress within 60 days, establish an executive steering committee comprised of representatives from the San José City Council and the Valley Water Board to provide additional guidance."
3. Encourage that the negotiations from item 2 allows experts from both agencies to have the opportunity to address perceived risks and find solutions that maintains an equitable risk sharing model.

BACKGROUND

I want to acknowledge and share my appreciation of Vice Mayor Jones for his leadership in keeping the momentum for this very important project moving forward. I also want to acknowledge and share my appreciation of Mayor Liccardo for all the efforts he has personally attended to over the past 5 years to secure funding and other commitments for this project. That said, today we find ourselves at an important decision point for the future of expanding the capacity at the Regional Wastewater Facility.

As stated in the Memorandum from Mayor Liccardo, Vice Mayor Jones, and Councilmember Jimenez, the impact of COVID-19 on our ability to meet the timeline originally set is evident. Defining a way forward to continue this multifaceted negotiation is a shared interest of both parties. What I appreciate the most from the April 7th Memorandum is how it helps to explain

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the complexity of the report from our City's subject matter experts by providing direction on areas of negotiation that the City has an interest to pursue.

It has been estimated that at the current pace, there will not be enough freshwater available to meet global energy needs by 2040. The world's changing climate has been linked to an increased incidence of droughts that can greatly diminish freshwater supplies in a region which can lead to economic decline. We also must replenish our groundwater aquifers that are crucial to our water infrastructure and to slow down subsidence.

We know that increased recycled water infrastructure is crucial to meeting these goals. I believe that our residents will benefit from adding the additional recycled water infrastructure as an expansion of the existing Regional Wastewater Facility. Now more than ever it is essential that we get the experts from both agencies together to work out the remaining terms of this agreement along with a facilitator to ensure a timely and successful conclusion of these negotiations and shared oversight from elected officials of both agencies as needed.

I hope that council will join me in supporting the direction for the April 7th Memorandum with the above-mentioned amendments.