



## City/County Water and Wastewater Study Oversight Committee



December 2, 2008

TO: City of Tucson Mayor and Council Members  
Pima County Board of Supervisors

FROM: City/County Water and Wastewater Study Oversight Committee

RE: Recommendations for Phase II of the Water Study

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### **Introduction**

The City/County Water and Wastewater Study Oversight Committee respectfully submits its third progress report to the Mayor and Council and Board of Supervisors. This progress report focuses on the Committee's Recommended Phase II Plan (Plan) for the joint Water and Wastewater Study (Water Study). The recommended Plan addresses both substantive issues and process issues. The Committee is interested in receiving feedback on these recommendations from the Mayor and Council and Board of Supervisors, which will be incorporated into the Phase II section of the Final Report for Phase I, which will be finalized in February 2009.

The Scope of Work for the Water Study approved by the Mayor and Council and Board of Supervisors in the Spring of 2008 sets forth the goals for Phase II of the study. Phase II is to focus on the City/County service area and the Committee is recommending a specific set of issues, questions, and processes for completing this phase.

On a process level, the Committee is recommending that it continue to provide oversight to the study through Phase II as constituted by the Mayor and Council and the Board of Supervisors in the original scope of work. As in Phase I, the Committee will establish an open and inclusive public process with many access points for all interested stakeholders and the public. In a change from Phase I, however, the Committee recommends a more formal stakeholder review process, to provide review and comment on both the information received by the Committee and recommendations considered by the Committee.

The stakeholder process recommended by the Committee would be specific and transitional and would not constitute the full regional dialogue envisioned for Phases III - V. However the proposed Phase II stakeholder process could provide a transition to the larger dialogue of these later phases. The Committee recognizes the importance of a regional dialogue on a sustainable water future and in order for this to take place, will disband as soon as Phase II is completed, no later than November 2009 and perhaps as early as September 2009, if the proposed schedule can be met.

It is likely that the Committee's recommendations for Phase II will generate the same arguments that were raised about the process at the beginning of Phase I, namely that the Committee is unrepresentative and should be reconstituted with more people "at the table." At its meeting of November 15, 2008, a motion was made by a Committee member to recommend expanding the membership to be more regional, or at least, that the Committee delay sending its report until the Committee discussed this issue again. This motion did not receive a second and so was not voted on. The Committee voted (with one "No" vote) to forward its recommendations for Phase II as described below, but with notice to the Mayor and Council and Board of Supervisors that there is some continued objection to the present composition of the Committee.

The Committee believes decisions about its composition rest exclusively with the Mayor and Council and Board of Supervisors. The Committee would not object if both bodies decide to reconstitute the Committee. In the meantime, the Committee will continue to operate as currently constituted, while providing for the fullest possible public access to our deliberations and work product. We believe the following recommendations for Phase II of the Water Study are consistent with your current directions.

### **Topics for Phase II**

The scope of work for the Water Study approved by the Mayor and Council and the Board of Supervisors last spring includes seven areas of focus for Phase II of the study:

- A. Agreement on Population Growth, Water, Urban Form, Land Use Planning and Infrastructure
- B. Integrating Land Use Planning with Water Resources and Infrastructure for each Jurisdiction
- C. Increasing Reclaimed Water for Turf Irrigation
- D. Developing Renewable Water Sources for the City/County Area
- E. Developing a Consolidated Drought Management Plan
- F. Implementing Consistent Water Conservation Standards
- G. Respect for the Environment

The Oversight Committee proposes to organize the seven areas of focus into three "Issue Clusters":

1. Adaptive Management Includes (C) Increasing Reclaimed Water for Turf Irrigation, (E) Developing a Consolidated Drought Management Plan, and (F) Implementing Consistent Water Conservation Standards
2. Comprehensive Planning - Includes: (A) Agreement on Population Growth, Water, Urban Form, Land Use Planning and Infrastructure, (B) Integrating Land Use Planning with Water Resources and Infrastructure for each Jurisdiction, and (G) Respect for the Environment
3. Water Resources Includes (D) Developing Renewable Water Sources for the City/County Area

The Committee envisions sustainability being an overarching theme that will guide analysis, discussions, and recommendations made within each of the Issue Clusters. Phase I will identify a wide range of possible principles of sustainability which can be used to evaluate options in Phase II.

<u>Issue Cluster</u>	<u>Scope Item</u>	<u>Products</u>
1. Adaptive Management	C. Increasing reclaimed water for turf irrigation	Recommended programs, ordinances or IGAs to be implemented
	E. Developing a consolidated drought management plan	
	F. Implementing consistent water conservation standards	
2. Comprehensive Planning	A. Agreement on population growth, water, urban form, land use planning, and infrastructure	Recommended principles and policies to include in the City General Plan and County Comprehensive Plan
	B. Integrating land use planning with water resources and infrastructure for each jurisdiction	
	G. Respect for the environment	
3. Water Resources	D. Developing renewable water sources for the City/County service area	Recommended approaches to securing new water resources and evaluation criteria to use in considering new sources

### Issue Cluster #1. Adaptive Management

The Scope of Work identifies the following questions to be addressed within this issue cluster:

- *How can we overcome the financial and institutional constraints for building reclaimed water infrastructure in order to maximize the use of this renewable source of water?*
- *How can we develop a consolidated drought management plan and improve our preparedness as a region for potential future droughts?*
- *How can we implement consistent water conservation standards to help sustain long-term water supplies? How do we ensure that water conservation protects our future water supply, not simply makes more population growth possible?*

Adaptive Management is a term borrowed from the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) *Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report: Summary for Policy Makers*. As used in the IPCC report, adaptive management refers to programs to manage or reduce adverse impacts related to weather and climate change and variability. The Committee believes that the issues of conservation, drought preparedness, and use of reclaimed water fall under this category. Under this issue cluster, the Committee's recommendations would most likely be focused on strategies, ordinances, programs, and funding considerations that the Mayor and Council and Board of Supervisors could consider implementing in furtherance of these goals, building on the current reclaimed, drought planning, and conservation efforts of the City and County.

### Issue Cluster #2. Comprehensive Planning

The Scope of Work identifies the following questions to be addressed within this issue cluster:

- *Where should future population growth be located so that it is most beneficial to the environment, economy, and conservation of our resources?*
- *How can future population growth be located in such a manner so as not to disadvantage or adversely impact existing residents?*

- *How do we connect land use planning with water resources and infrastructure investments to influence where the future population growth increment will occur?*
- *How should we assess land use decisions relative to water supply and infrastructure?*
- *What is the appropriate balance between the reservation of water for consumption and growth, and the acknowledgment that our environment is also a consumer of water resources?*
- *What standards and goals should we set regarding reclaimed water use for the environment and prohibition of groundwater wells in areas near groundwater-dependent ecosystems?*

The Committee believes this is the issue cluster is the most complex and will generate the most interest from stakeholders. Therefore, it will likely require the most Committee time in Phase II. The City and County will soon initiate mandated updates to their Comprehensive and General Plans. The Committee believes these updates afford the most logical focus for implementing its recommendations on these issue areas. The Committee would identify and recommend policies and principles that could be included in both the City General Plan and County Comprehensive Plan updates.

### Issue Cluster #3. Water Resources

The Scope of Work identifies the following questions to be addressed within this issue cluster:

- *How can we use regional collaboration efforts to acquire new, renewable water supplies?*
- *How do we ensure that the long-term future water supply not occur at the expense of our existing residents or the environment?*

The Committee recognizes that the Tucson region may need to secure new, renewable water sources at some time in the future and now is the time to begin these discussions. The Committee recognizes that securing new water resources is a complex undertaking involving many difficult decisions and is likely to be more successful when done using a collaborative, regional approach. It is more likely that significant sources of new renewable water resources can be secured for the Tucson region through a unified regional effort rather than through individual pursuits.

The Committee recognizes that there are costs, beyond just financial, associated with acquiring new water resources. Local and non-local environmental effects as well as social justice issues must be considered in evaluating new water resources. In addition to looking at new water resources, we must also look to maximize conservation as well as our use of local water sources such as rainwater/stormwater, greywater and effluent.

The Committee will not be in a position to identify what our new renewable water resources will be. The Committee, rather, can suggest approaches that can be used to engage in a regional and state-wide process as well as evaluation criteria that the Mayor and Council and the Board of Supervisors can use in considering which new water sources to pursue.

## Phase II Process and Timeline

In Phase I, the Committee was focused on receiving information on a wide variety of topics. In Phase II the Committee will devote more time to detailed analysis and deliberation on specific issues and the development of recommendations and implementation strategies.

For each Issue Cluster, the Oversight Committee will review and discuss additional research on the topic in the form of technical reports, receive comment from stakeholder groups and the public, and will draft recommendations to the Mayor and Council and the Board of Supervisors. The Committee intends to commission and receive all Phase II technical reports in advance of its meetings. Committee meetings will be working meetings focused on discussion and analysis, hearing from stakeholders, and drafting recommendations. The proposed schedule below is ambitious and the Committee recognizes that more time, additional meetings, or a reduced scope of effort may be required to complete Phase II.

<u>Issue Cluster</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>
Adaptive Management	Week of February 23, 2009	Technical reports posted for public and committee review
	Week of March 9, 2009	Committee and stakeholder panel discuss technical reports
	Week of April 06, 2009	Committee meets to draft recommendations
Comprehensive Planning Principles	Week of April 13, 2009	Technical reports posted for public and committee review
	Week of April 27, 2009	Committee and stakeholder panel discuss technical reports
	Week of May 11, 2009	Committee and stakeholder panel discuss technical reports
	Week of May 25, 2009	Committee and stakeholder panel discuss technical reports
	Week of June 08, 2009	Committee meets to draft recommendations
	Week of June 22, 2009	Committee meets to draft recommendations
New Water Resources	Week of July 13, 2009	Technical reports posted for public and committee review
	Week of July 27, 2009	Committee and stakeholder panel discuss technical reports
	Week of August 10, 2009	Committee meets to draft recommendations
Draft Report Completed	Week of August 24, 2009	Committee meets to finalize Draft Phase II Report
Public Comment Period	September	Open houses; on-line review/comment
Report Finalized	October	

## Public Involvement

The Committee envisions an open and comprehensive public process as part of Phase II that builds on the strategies employed in Phase I. The primary public forums will be:

- Committee Meetings – The Committee will review and discuss the technical reports at meetings that will be open to the public and include a call to the audience portion. Meetings will be held at times and places convenient to the general public. Agendas and technical reports will be distributed to the stakeholder mailing list and posted on the study website prior to the meetings.
- Stakeholder Panel Discussions – Stakeholder groups representing a balanced set of varied interests as well as technical expertise would be asked to review and comment on the draft reports for each issue cluster. Working through PAG staff and the PAG Management Committee, other jurisdictions and water utilities would also be asked to comment on draft reports.

- Open Houses – A minimum of four open houses would be held throughout the study area once the draft Phase II report is completed. The purpose of the open houses would be to share the Committees recommendations with the public, answer questions, and receive comment and feedback prior to finalizing the report.
- Opportunities to partner with any outreach efforts associated with the City and County Comprehensive Plan updates will be explored.

Steps that will be taken to notify the public and involve interested parties in the process will include, but not be limited to:

- Stakeholder Notification - The current database of approximately 1,000 contacts will be reviewed and expanded to ensure all interested parties and key stakeholders are being reached.
- ADA Accessibility – The Committee will ensure that all meetings are held in ADA accessible facilities.
- Website – The study website ([www.tucsonpimawaterstudy.com](http://www.tucsonpimawaterstudy.com)) will be maintained. All “technical reports” and draft reports will be posted to the website and there will be an on-line function for the public to provide comment.
- Contact Card & Brochure – A contact card with the study phone number /e-mail address/ mailing address, along with a brochure about the study will continue to be distributed at libraries and public meetings/events.
- Audio, Video and Text Records of Meetings – Meetings will be audio and video recorded and transcribed and all of these files posted to the study website.
- Record of Public Comments – All public comments that are received (at Committee meetings, and via e-mail, phone, mail, and website) will be transcribed, compiled, and posted to the study website.
- Television Coverage – The Committee will request that Channel 12 and Access Tucson continue to air Committee meetings as they have done for Phase I.

The Committee and staff would appreciate suggestions for additional steps that can be taken to increase public participation in Phase 2.