

Summary of Results

December 13, 2008 CCWWSOC Oversight Committee Meeting
Report Writing: Chapter 3 Sustainability

Small Group Exercise:

- What are the critical points in this chapter relative to the scope of work?
- Have we addressed the elements in the scope and if not, which elements are missing?

Scope questions for Chapter 3:

- What is the most likely sustainable population of the city / county service area, given known city and county water supplies?
- What are the near term factors associated with sharing a stable and sustainable water supply?
- What investments may be needed in water, wastewater, and reclaimed water infrastructure systems to meet the service demands and needs of the sustainable water population?

Critical Points

Following are the themes that emerged from the small group exercise in which Committee members discussed the critical points for Chapter 3. Below each theme is a list of the specific comments provided by committee members pertaining to that theme. The number of dots assigned to each theme also is provided and the themes are listed in the order of most to least number of dots received.

WET WATER VS. PAPER WATER / LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON SAFE YIELD/ RELATIONSHIP TO OVERDRAFT – 10 DOTS

- Do you force CAGR to deliver to areas of hydrologic impact?
- Tucson AMA – need to bring out that we are in an AMA. How do we interact with all the other jurisdictions and water providers in the AMA and also incorporate the water for the environment element?
- Change title of Chapter 3: “Water Future: is it Sustainable?”
- Issue: explosive growth in the north with no wet water to replenish. Need better alignment of wet and paper water.
- Misconception about ownership – Groundwater is not owned by anyone except the state. Similarly, CAP is contracted – not owned. Providers have entitlements which are paid for. Effluent is owned

- Creative use of infrastructure (wheeling water) to use renewable supplies and help the environment regionally (less use of CAGR D)
- Legislative advocacy to change CAGR D (pumping / recharge disconnect)

ALIGNING ECONOMY WITH CHANGES IN POPULATION GROWTH – 7 DOTS

- Presenters used the example of Paris as a shrinking population that is not stagnant. This raises a values question: Can you accept less growth if we re-tool the economy so that the situation does not become stagnant? If you don't re-tool during a downturn and the population shrinks then the situation declines. This issue needs to be summarized in the Executive Summary.
- In water planning, the population and characteristics of place are not taken into consideration (other factors besides water that influence growth).

WATER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT – 7 DOTS

HOW TO PREDICT POPULATION GROWTH – 7 DOTS

- Our population is going to grow, but past is not necessarily a predictor of the future – we are in flux.
- What population projections are best for predicting growth to date and will they be adequate for predicting future growth? Note: Dave Taylor's comments on various methods are germane.
- Page 1: Population projections – It needs to be stated that those are established by PAG.
- The definition of sustainable population has too many variables to provide a definition. Can do if limit the criteria, but the criteria will change, e.g. the current change in consumption is not in the existing long range plans.
- Can make assumptions – recognizing the analysis will be outdated in a given (possibly very short) timeframe. (Tucson Water updates every 2-5 years).
- Need to decide how much rehabilitation versus new capacity and be prepared to be flexible in making decisions in light of changing variables.
- Page 4: "Backlog of infrastructure costs ... must get more aggressive about calculating the cost of growth"

INTEGRATING WATER IN GROWTH PLANNING – 6 DOTS

- Regarding the phrase “sharing of water supplies” - when you talk about “sharing” there is the possibility to transfer water from other areas to supplement. This should be discussed.
- Who is responsible to make sure that water is used. For example, the Cienega Creek. Is it Tucson Water’s responsibility to wheel it to them? How do we structure agreements and make it affordable?
- We have to plan ahead for some growth. But this should not mean facilitating as much growth as possible (need to consider environmental constraints).
- Urban form is important. It has implications for water usage rates, infrastructure costs
- The principle of the need for a growth boundary – what makes sense in terms of access to renewable supplies and other variables? Cannot discuss sustainability without having this discussion.

REGIONAL PLANNING AND COOPERATION – 3 DOTS

- Distribution system vs. overall governing authority (i.e. 40% not in City)
- Water side is more complex than regional planning due to multitude of private water companies
- The refusal of the city to serve and the water needs for the environment represent examples of why we need to examine how to best coordinate planning - Is it a regional authority or a regional planning agency that deals with individual authorities?

POLICIES INFLUENCE GROWTH – 3 DOTS

- Growth here is shaped by outside factors but our policies, including water policies, will influence this growth.

COST ARE GOING TO GO UP – 2 DOTS

- Wastewater rates to triple for ROMP. Water rates need to go up to meet maintenance needs. Rates have been low in the past.

WE ARE AHEAD OF OTHER CITIES – 1 DOT

- We are in pretty good shape and Tucson Water and Pima County Wastewater are well run

- We are ahead of other cities in terms of water planning, conservation, etc. This is an important economic development message.

NEED TO BALANCE QUALITY OF LIFE TRADE OFFS – 1 DOT

- There are both economic needs and values for water as well as environmental needs and values and there are tradeoffs and you have to do them both and the goal is quality of life

WE ARE IN UNCERTAIN TIMES – 1 DOT

- Sun Corridor is a reality; Tucson's share is uncertain; Phoenix will grow and will impact us.
- Our place in the Colorado River Basin is also uncertain. Forces outside us that will determine our degrees of freedom. We are in pretty good shape for a while but uncertainties in the future.

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Missing Information / Report Changes

Following are the missing elements or requested changes to the report that emerged from the small group exercises. These items were not prioritized.

- Some of the additional, major drivers of growth need to be mentioned as well as the ones presented, such as the cost of land, not paying the true cost of water, infrastructure.
- Page 5 section C – Suggestion to organize timeline along five tracks:
 - Population
 - Economic
 - Land Use
 - Law & Policy
 - Environmental (e.g. last time river flowed)
- Pages 3, 4, and 7: Population growth is a prime driver of the economy here leading to our service based economy. The conclusion that the solution is to tax services was presented however that is not the only solution. Other alternatives should be considered. The question can be posed: “Do we move away from a service-based economy? How do we pay for investments during times when our economy is declining?”
- As population grows the cost of water increases. More money is spent in acquisition and delivery. Yes we can acquire more water, but at what cost? Is the new water affordable? Page 18 – does address this but need to pull out and emphasize this issue.
- Page 7: Last sentence of first paragraph – need to identify acreage and amount of vacant land in urban core. Cannot quantify under developed land – this is a values issue.
- What is the cost of developing in areas without renewable supplies? Should we have paper water? Lack of legal authority.
- More information is needed to clarify what new water resources are being pursued (chapter 2 or 3?). Tucson Water passive role in ADD water process (Chapter 3 page 13 or chapter 2) what is Tucson Water advocating for (legislative agenda – may be phase 2 white paper).
- Historic population growth going back further (pg 1) decade to decade percent plus # growth; annual growth rate; rate and # staying same; Tucson percent of Pima County (down arrow); strengthen drivers of growth section

- Pg. 3 – what are assumptions behind vacant land bar chart and phase 2 white paper on this topic. Existing zoning vs. Comp. Plan densities.
- Add Rob Marshall Pie charts to Sec. E
- Megdal’s scenario doesn’t explicitly address environmental needs. need footnotes in text. Take out her recommendations.
- Pg. 22 statement about not maintaining flows?
- Tucson Water 2050 Plan does not address environmental needs
- Env. Needs issues: env restoration using effluent and protecting groundwater dependent ecosystems
- Pg 21 Reclaimed Pip to Vail – need to clarify proposed in next G.O. Bon

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