TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL
FROM: CITY MANAGER  DEPARTMENT: UTILITIES
DATE: NOVEMBER 14, 2005  CMR:418:05
SUBJECT: PALO ALTO’S COMMENTS ON THE SCOPLING PHASE OF THE PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION’S WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

This report, containing Palo Alto’s written comments submitted to the City of San Francisco’s Planning Department on the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) Water System Improvement Program (WSIP), is for the Council’s information only. No action is required.

DISCUSSION
On October 17, 2005, the Council received a report (Attachment A: CMR:394:05) on the City and County of San Francisco’s plans to prepare a PEIR for SFPUC’s WSIP. At that time, staff had not prepared written comments for the Council to consider. The staff report only provided broad areas that the City could have considered for comment. Based on those broad areas and Council direction provided at the October 17, 2005 meeting, staff prepared and submitted comments to San Francisco Planning Department by the October 24, 2005 deadline for receiving comments on the PEIR scoping (Attachment B).

Palo Alto is a member of the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA), a special district that represents the interests of 26 cities and water districts and two private utilities that purchase water wholesale from the San Francisco regional water system. On October 21, BAWSCA submitted comments on the NOP of the PEIR for SFPUC’s WSIP (Attachment C).

NEXT STEPS
The period for submitting written comments on the scoping phase of the PEIR for SFPUC’s WSIP is over. However, throughout the preparation of the PEIR, comments can be provided to San Francisco. Formal opportunities for comment will also arise upon release of the draft PEIR, which is expected to be in mid-2006. Staff plans to schedule a study session with Council in
January or February 2006 to discuss the status of the WSIP and the PEIR. In addition, staff will brief new Council members.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The comments submitted to San Francisco on the scoping phase of its PEIR are in conformance with Council-approved policy. Specifically, the Water Integrated Resource Plan (WIRP) Guidelines approved by the Council in December 2003 [CMR:547:03] contain Guideline #2: “Advocate for an interconnection between SFPUC and the Santa Clara Valley Water District.”

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Submitting comments on the scoping phase of the PEIR for SFPUC’s WSIP does not constitute a project under the California Environmental Quality Act, therefore, no environmental assessment is required.

**ATTACHMENTS**

A: CMR:394:05 Scoping Phase of the Program Environmental Impact Report for the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission’s Water System Improvement Program

B: Comments submitted on October 24, 2005 by the City of Palo Alto on the NOP of a PEIR for SFPUC’s WSIP

C: Comments submitted on October 21, 2005 by BAWSCA on the NOP of a PEIR for SFPUC’s WSIP

D: Comments submitted by other parties

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