



City of Palo Alto

City Council Staff Report

(ID # 11277)

Report Type: Consent Calendar

Meeting Date: 6/22/2020

Summary Title: Resolution Adopting the San Francisco Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

Title: Adoption of a Resolution Adopting the 2019 San Francisco Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

From: City Manager

Lead Department: Utilities

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Council adopt a resolution adopting the 2019 San Francisco Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plan.

Background

The development of the Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) is a nine-county effort to coordinate and improve water supply reliability, protect water quality, manage flood protection, maintain public health standards, protect habitat and watershed resources, and enhance the overall health of the San Francisco Bay.

On September 12, 2005, Council approved and authorized the mayor to sign the Letter of Mutual Understandings (LOMU) for the development of the IRWMP ([CMR:359:05](#)). The LOMU identified the goals of the IRWMP and outlined the working relationships for a diverse group of water suppliers, water quality agencies, wastewater agencies, storm water agencies, flood management agencies, watershed and habitat agencies, local governments, environmental groups, business groups, and other interested parties. The LOMU partners include: Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Alameda County Water District, Association of Bay Area Governments, Bay Area Clean Water Agencies, Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency, City of Napa, City of Palo Alto, Contra Costa Water District, Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, East Bay Municipal Utility District, Marin Municipal Water District, North Bay Watershed Association, San Francisco Estuary Project, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, Santa Clara Basin Watershed Management Initiative, Valley Water, Solano County Water Agency, Sonoma County Water Agency, State Coastal Conservancy, and Zone 7 Water Agency.

The first plan was finalized on November 1, 2006 and was adopted by Palo Alto via Resolution 8672 on November 20, 2006. The IRWMP participants updated the plan in 2013, and Council adopted it on May 20, 2019 ([Reso #9832](#)).

The Bay Area IRWMP:

- Provides a valuable venue for regional collaboration across agencies
- Improves responsiveness to regional needs and priorities
- Helps to effectively integrate water resources management activities
- Serves as a platform to secure state and federal funding

The five overarching goals of the Bay Area IRWMP are to:

1. Promote environmental, economic and social sustainability
2. Improve water supply reliability and quality
3. Protect and improve watershed health and function and Bay water quality
4. Improve regional flood management
5. Create, protect, enhance, and maintain environmental resources and habitats

Required changes outlined in the 2016 IRWM Guidelines fall into one of three categories:

- Updated code section: updates the code citation for the requirement (low level of effort)
- Clarification: provide more detail to an existing guideline, such as which groundwater constituents must be discussed (medium level of effort)
- New: new requirement not previously in guidelines, including climate change impacts on the Region (higher level of effort)

To address these new and updated requirements, the Bay Area IRWM Region made updates to the Plan, including:

- Discussing climate change vulnerabilities in the Bay Area;
- Identifying how management strategies can help address climate change challenges;
- Outlining specific processes and strategies used to engage and include underrepresented populations, such as Disadvantaged communities and Tribal communities, in regional planning
- Including additional details on the work performed under the Disadvantaged Communities and Tribal Involvement Program (DACTIP);
- Adding detail related to regional groundwater contaminants and management plans; and
- Other minor changes to conform to 2016 IRWM Guidelines.

The latest Bay Area IRWMP document can be viewed here: [2019 BAIRWMP](#).¹

Securing state and federal funding for water-related projects is of utmost importance to Palo Alto. Funding for the recycled water trunk line from the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant (RWQCP) south to Mountain View was acquired through the IRWMP process.

¹ <http://bayareairwmp.org/irwm-plans/>

Discussion

The development of the Bay Area IRWMP was in response to the state's requirement that grant funding is only provided for projects included in an adopted integrated water management plan. Currently, the Bay Area IRWM Coordinating Committee (CC) is soliciting projects for the region's response to a forthcoming draft Proposal Solicitation Package (PSP) from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) for Proposition 1 (The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014) IRWM Implementation funding. The Bay Area funding allotment for Prop. 1 Implementation is \$47,450,000 and will be split between two or more rounds.

In order to enable current funding from the Department of Water Resources' Proposition 84 IRWM Grant Program for the downstream work on the San Francisquito Creek, and potential future funding from a new proposal under DWR's 2019 Prop. 1 solicitation, all partner agencies to the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Agency (SFCJPA) are required to adopt the updated 2019 Bay Area IRWMP. To enable \$2,964,479 in Prop 1 grant funding for the SFCJPA upstream project in June 2020, all partner agencies to the SFCJPA are required to adopt the 2019 update to the Bay Area Integrated Water Resources Plan (BAIRWMP).

The expansion of Palo Alto's recycled water distribution system is another project benefitting Palo Alto on the Bay Area IRWMP list.

Resource Impact

Adoption of the IRWMP requires no financial commitment. Any project in which Palo Alto may participate would require Council consideration, at which time the resources for such a commitment would be identified. Adoption of the Bay Area IRWMP will enable Palo Alto to be eligible for certain state and federal funding opportunities.

Policy Implications

Adopting the Bay Area IRWMP is consistent with the Urban Water Management Plan, the Water Integrated Resources Plan, and the Sustainability/Climate Action Plan.

Environmental Review

The Council's adoption of the 2019 Bay Area IRWMP is not subject to review under the California Environmental Quality Act since receiving this report will have no foreseeable direct or indirect physical change in the environment and therefore does not meet the definition of a Project under Public Resources Code 21065.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Resolution Adopting the 2019 Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plan

* NOT YET APPROVED *

Resolution No. _____
Resolution of the Council of the City of Palo Alto Adopting the 2019
San Francisco Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management
Plan

- A. The State electorate approved multiple statewide bond measures since 2000, including Propositions 50, 84, and 1, to fund water and natural resource projects and programs, including Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM).
- B. The benefits of integrated planning for water resources management activities include increased efficiency or effectiveness, enhanced collaboration across agencies and stakeholders, and improved responsiveness to regional needs and priorities.
- C. State statute and guidelines require that an IRWM Plan be adopted by the governing boards of participating agencies before IRWM grant funds would be provided for water resources management projects that are part of the IRWM Plan.
- D. More recent state statutes and guidelines require that the Bay Area IRWM Plan be updated before agencies may receive future IRWM grant funding.
- E. The Bay Area IRWM Plan, most recently updated in October 2019, provides an implementation framework for tracking accomplishments, developing lists of prioritized projects and periodically updating the Bay Area IRWM Plan as conditions warrant, providing funding and resources to carry out these activities.
- F. Adoption of the Bay Area IRWM Plan does not entail a direct commitment of resources and implementation of each project, which will be the responsibility of the project proponent and any applicable project partners, and there is no joint commitment or responsibility by the Bay Area IRWM Plan participants to implement any or all of the projects.
- G. The IRWM Plan is meant to be complementary to participating agencies' individual plans and programs and does not supersede such plans and programs; adoption of the IRWM Plan does not prohibit or effect in any way a participating agencies' planning efforts separate from the IRWM Plan.

The Council of the City of Palo Alto does RESOLVE as follows:

SECTION 1. The Council hereby adopts the 2019 Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, which can be viewed [here](#).

SECTION 2. The Council’s adoption of this resolution does not meet the definition of a “project” under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), under to Public Resources Code Section 21065, so environmental review is not required. Environmental review of future projects developed as part of the Plan will be completed, as needed, prior to implementation.

INTRODUCED AND PASSED:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTENTIONS:

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

APPROVED:

Deputy City Attorney

City Manager

Utilities Director

Director of Administrative
Services