

RESOLUTION NO. 8560

RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALO ALTO ADOPTING AHWAHNEE WATER PRINCIPLES FOR RESOURCE EFFICIENT LAND USE (AS MODIFIED FOR LOCAL USE)

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Palo Alto's Vision Statement for its Natural Environment Element states in pertinent part that Palo Alto will respect and manage natural resources in a way that sustains the natural environment, strive for cleaner water, and adopt policies and programs that will foster water conservation; and

WHEREAS, an important part of responsible stewardship of the water supply is designing, remodeling, and maintaining land uses in a way that protects ground and surface water and permits careful use of both potable and non-potable water supplies; and

WHEREAS, the Local Government Commission is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization with a board of directors consisting of California city and county elected officials, created in 1979 to adopt and implement local solutions to the energy crisis, based on conservation and the use of renewable resources, and then expanding its mission to assisting communities working to make themselves healthy, walkable, livable, prosperous and resource-efficient; and

WHEREAS, in 1991 the Local Government Commission proposed "The Ahwahnee Water Principles for Resource Efficient Land Use," which, with modifications to adapt them to the particular situation of Palo Alto, are useful in moving towards the City's goals of becoming a more sustainable community.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Council of the City of Palo Alto does hereby RESOLVE as follows:

SECTION 1. The Council hereby approves the adoption of modified Ahwahnee Water Principles for Resource Efficient Land Use, as shown in Exhibit "A" attached to this resolution and a part of it.

SECTION 2. The Council finds that the adoption of this resolution does not constitute a project under the California Environmental Quality Act and the CEQA Guidelines and, therefore, no environment assessment is required.

INTRODUCED AND PASSED: October 17, 2005

AYES: Beecham, Burch, Cordell, Freeman, Kishimoto, Kleinberg, Morton, Mossar, Ojakian

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTENTIONS:

ATTEST:

Donna J. Rogers
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Wynne S. Fink
Senior Asst. City Attorney

APPROVED:

J. Bunn

Mayor

J. Bunn

City Manager

Pat J. Verick

Director of Utilities

C. [Signature]

Director of Administrative Services

EXHIBIT "A"

The Ahwahnee Water Principles for Resource Efficient Land Use (As Modified for Local Use)

Preamble

Cities and counties are facing major challenges with water contamination, storm water runoff, flood damage liability, and concerns about whether there will be enough reliable water for current residents as well as for new development. These issues impact city and county budgets and taxpayers. Fortunately there are a number of stewardship actions that cities and counties can take that reduce costs and improve the reliability and quality of our water resources.

Community Principles

1. Community design should be compact, mixed use, walkable and transit-oriented so that automobile-generated urban runoff pollutants are minimized and the open lands that absorb water are preserved to the maximum extent possible.
2. Natural resources such as wetlands, flood plains, recharge zones, riparian areas, open space, and native habitats should be identified, preserved and restored as valued assets for flood protection, water quality improvement, groundwater recharge, habitat, and overall long-term water resource sustainability.
3. Water holding areas such as creek beds, recessed athletic fields, ponds, cisterns, and other features that serve to recharge groundwater, reduce runoff, improve water quality and decrease flooding should be incorporated into the urban landscape, while meeting best practices for mosquito control and groundwater pollution prevention.
4. All aspects of landscaping from the selection of plants to soil preparation and the installation of irrigation systems should be designed to reduce water demand, retain runoff, decrease flooding, and recharge groundwater.
5. Permeable surfaces should be used for hardscape where practical. Impervious surfaces should be minimized wherever practicable or runoff water should be redirected so that land is available to absorb storm water, reduce polluted urban runoff, recharge groundwater and reduce flooding.

6. Dual plumbing that allows gray water from showers, and non-kitchen sinks to be reused for subsurface landscape irrigation should be encouraged for new and remodeled buildings, and education programs should be developed on the proper construction and operation of systems that use gray water.

7. Community design should maximize the use of recycled water and other nonpotable water supplies for appropriate applications including outdoor irrigation, toilet flushing, and commercial and industrial processes. Purple pipe should be installed in large, new construction and when plumbing is being replaced on a large scale in existing buildings in anticipation of the future availability of recycled, or other nonpotable, water.

8. Urban water conservation technologies such as low-flow toilets, efficient clothes washers, and more efficient water-using industrial equipment should be incorporated in all new construction and retrofitted in remodeled buildings.

9. Ground water treatment and brackish water desalination should be pursued when necessary and practical to maximize locally available, drought-proof water supplies.

Implementation Principles

1. Water supply agencies should be consulted early in the land use decision-making process regarding technology, demographics and growth projections.

2. City and county officials, the watershed council, LAFCO, special districts and other stakeholders sharing watersheds should collaborate to take advantage of the benefits and synergies of water resource planning at a watershed level.

3. The best, multi-benefit and integrated strategies and projects should be identified and implemented before less integrated proposals, unless urgency demands otherwise.

4. From start to finish, projects and programs should involve the public, build relationships, and increase the sharing of and access to information. The participatory process should focus on ensuring that all residents have access to clean, reliable and affordable water for drinking and recreation.

5. Plans, programs, projects and policies should be monitored and evaluated to determine if the expected results are achieved and to improve future practices.