

RESOLUTION NO. 20090827-059

WHEREAS, groundwater is a significant resource that can be utilized to help achieve the City's water conservation and environmental goals; and

WHEREAS, constructing subsurface structures impacts the City's infrastructure, public health and safety, and the environment by intercepting and disrupting groundwater sources and by resulting in discharges of significant volumes of water to the surface; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 20080306-041 directed the City Manager to provide a report to the City Council on the adequacy of the City's development codes, technical criteria, and other policies regarding underground structures and groundwater, including recommendations on appropriate feasible, and permissible measures to address potential impacts on the City's infrastructure, health and safety, and the environment; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Board has reviewed the recommendations of the "Groundwater Characteristics and Challenges for Subsurface Structures in Austin's Urban Core" report submitted to the City Council in February of 2009 by the Watershed Protection and Development Review Department; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Board passed a resolution on August 5, 2009 requesting that the City Council consider the recommendations of the report and direct the City Manager to immediately begin implementing the recommendations; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to process the necessary code amendments and follow the procedures required to implement the following recommendations from the groundwater report:

1. Ensure groundwater discharge review by the One Stop Shop to provide more scrutiny of groundwater discharges from subsurface structures and to ensure that subsurface structures comply with all drainage requirements;
2. Develop criteria requiring properties along stream corridors to recharge the base flow of the streams by means of linear French drains or infiltration trenches;
3. Evaluate the feasibility of allowing groundwater infiltration as an alternative to discharges to storm sewers;
4. Continue to encourage water reuse and evaluate and make recommendations on additional incentives and assistance that would encourage reuse of groundwater discharges;
5. Research and collate contaminated groundwater data from multiple known sources and produce/maintain a data tracking system and a map of known groundwater contaminated sites that will provide the necessary information on subsurface contamination and the need to conduct Environmental Site Assessments;

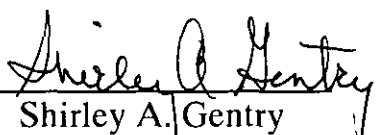
6. Assess the current drainage fees and make a recommendation on potential increases to provide additional funding for drainage infrastructure improvements.
7. Consider and make recommendations on the implementation of a drainage infrastructure impact fee that can prevent increases in taxes and encourage smart growth in geographically defined areas and help mitigate increased financial burdens from new development placing heightened stress on existing infrastructure;
8. Study the prospect of employing Public Improvement Districts (PID) to implement a funding program, separate from potential impact fees, as a tool to assist in financing utility improvements that might be required to adequately address excess urban groundwater; and
9. Investigate alternative funding and cost-sharing options, to facilitate storm sewer improvements ahead of redevelopment and densification of urban areas.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED

The City Manager is directed to provide a briefing to the City Council within six months on the ongoing status of the implementation of these recommendations.

ADOPTED: August 27, 2009

ATTEST:


Shirley A. Gentry
City Clerk