

Austin Water Oversight Committee Meeting Transcript

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>> Kitchen: I'm convening the meeting of the Austin water oversight committee at 1:34 on Thursday, may 13th. We do not have any citizen communication, so first we'll take approval of the minutes. I have a motion and a second. Motion by councilmember alter. Second by councilmember Fuentes. Any objections to the minutes? Hearing none, the minutes are adopted. We are going to do our briefings first, guys, because that will give us background when we turn to talk about the resolutions. Our first briefing is the director's report. So director Meszaros if you want to go ahead. >> Just a couple of items and good afternoon, council members. One, I wanted to note for the upcoming council council meetings in may and June we have four large water main

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replacement transactions coming up. You know, that was a topic that was discussed during the winter storm debriefings about cast iron water mains experiencing significant breaks during cold weather. And all of these projects are targeting cast iron water mains over five miles of main replacement. These are high break water mains and so just to kind of looking forward to knocking this kind of infrastructure out and this is the kind of work that we'll be looking to accelerate, but going to get over 28,000 feet of this replaced with these four projects coming to the council in may and June. The other item I wanted to note, I suppose it's a bit of a warmup for the water forward discussion, but I did want the council to know that -- we may have talked about this before. At the new planning and development center, Austin water sponsored and funded and will operate and permitted an on-site treatment system. This was kind of what we've envisioned with water forward and some of the

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topics today. That system was recently organized with the outstanding use award with the wwa system and starting up in the next few weeks as we're coming out of the pandemic, there's enough wastewater flows for those systems to start up. We still believe this is the only on-site black water scale building system in the state of Texas and excited to be recognized for that work and seeing the start-up phases. We would certainly hope that members of the committee or your staff may want to come out there and see how this kind of system works, the size of it and how it all kind of works and is in a new building. That's some of the code a amendments you will be taking up today is these kind of systems and sometimes it's hard to visualize those. Hopefully before too long we can do something like that. And chair, that concludes my

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remarks. >> Kitchen: Thank you. Does anyone have a question on these items from the director? Councilmember pool. >> Pool: No questions, just congratulations. That sounds really, really great and I will try to find some time to come out and give a look-see at the new system. That's pretty cool. Congratulations on the award. >> Kitchen: Thank you. All right. We will move now to item number 4 related to the advanced metering infrastructure. Okay. I have some of my team picking that up. >> Can you hear me? >> We can.

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I'm Rick Coronado, assistant director for operations for Austin water. One of the sponsors for the my atx water program as well as one of the staff members that have been part of this project for at least five plus years. And so the last time we met we discussed some of the updates back in August of 2020. And so there's probably been about nine months' worth of progress that I want to go over. Next slide, please. Just to give a brief overview of the agenda items that I will be covering, I will be covering some of the infrastructure improvements as well as a little bit of the progresses towards what we call not only the network, but some the components of the network such as what we call the

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data collection unit that is kind of the hub of the network where it collects the information as well as some of the meter components that are in the property, the public side of the property for the meters,

the boxes, what we call the mt Us we'll go over the progress of that as well as some of the next steps B to just give staff members an overview over the last nine months I also want to touch base on where we have additional information. My atx water website that allows us to give us an idea of what the network consists of. So for those who aren't familiar with this, I'm going kind of just briefly go over the different components. So the visual that you see in front of you starts out with the meter, the meter

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box and the components that may be in the box, including what we call a meter transmission unit or mtu that has a battery as well as an antenna attached to it. We will go over the progress in which we install some of these over the next nine months. There's another component. The information that comes from the water meter gets sent to what we call a data collection unit. That data collection unit may be mounted on poles or tanks and we'll go over some of the progress that we've established over the last nine months as well. That information then goes to secured network in which we can then collect that information either for billing purposes, for data analytics, and eventually that information gets transferred to the customer through my atx customer

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portal. From the last discussion back in August of 2020, we had just launched the pilot area. If you recall, the pilot area -- and we have maps to kind of reflect that -- included about five neighborhood areas, the Windsor park neighborhood, the Mueller, long lake and long canyon. That is available at my atx water portal website. If you can go to the next slide, please. We had just launched the first dcu installation back in August of last year. And that was a critical point in order to start to establish meter connections, shortly after the August installation of the data collection unit, we also installed the first test meter in September. So that was the two first

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milestones that we had for hardware in the ground. What I have in front of you is the last report out of where we're at in progress since then of establishing a network citywide. So when I talk about data collection units, it's not just focused on the pilot areas, but now it's tywide. We have installed to date 18 data collection units as of 5-5 of last week. Actually, this week we're up to 22 of these data collection units and they're all in different phases of installation so I'll go over kind of a little bit of what that means. In addition to that I have a sample break down of where those dcus are located. One of the advantages we have in a process such as this is using and averaging

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the assets that we have with the city, including some of our elevated water tanks and towers throughout the city. The higher you are in elevation the more coverage you will get so we've tried to leverage of our assets that are high location or high altitude so we can capture a higher coverage in our service area. So that gives you kind after break down of those locations or the types of where those dcus are located. For example, we're targeting up to 29 in the communication towers, about 10 in elevated tanks and we have some that are on ground storage banks. One of the minimum requirements that you have to have is we have to have a height of at least 33 feet in order to put some of these dcus, whether they're on poles or co-located with other

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utilities. We also had some proposed roof mounts. All of this is captured in a database of record and asset management system that helps track the deployments throughout is the city. To give you an example of what those installations look like, this is what a typical installation would look like on top of a roof. This one does have a solar panel so it has an internal battery and collects information via the power of solar. Other sites such as the first data collection unit was installed at our first street tank that is the reclaim tank on 51st street and this is a typical information of what that would look like on one of one of our elevated tanks. The last example there is a pole-mounted dcu and so there are some -- a number

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of poles that we'll have to install that are new, but we'll leverage as many of our lift stations, pump station sites to install those dcus. Next slide, please. I mentioned the dcu coverage is citywide not targeted on one location, but everywhere throughout the city. Every single dcu which there are about 159 at this current time frame that we're proposing and initially when we started the project we were proposing close to 200 dcu locations. We've managed to get that down in count by utilizing some of our higher elevation assets. So we go through a sequence of staging events, whether they're proposed, then they go to a confirmed state. If they need to be designed

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with standard details we'll do that, as well as if they're site specific requirements we'll do some engineering to provide an adequate submittal for those locations. Once we get into a queue of kind of a work order system submission, they may go through permitting or even be staked out in the locations

proposed. Say they have to do a new pole, we'll do utility locations in order to have those planned in advance. Once we've done all our preconstruction activities then we'll go through and schedule the installations. To date I mentioned we are up to 22 dcus and that is reflected on this graphic that tells us which ones are commissioned throughout the city. And that's important to kind of establish where we will

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go next as far as the location of surveys as well as then eventually installation of new meters. Next slide, please. So I mentioned progress as another component that we've kind of continued to advance throughout the city is what we call surveying of the locations. Though initially resurveyed locations that are really tied to the initial pilot areas, we've now expanded a those surveys and that includes everything from going to the site visits, establishing a baseline of what are the conditions of the meter boxes, the size of the meters. We have gps locations of those sites, so it's a preconstruction survey in order to prepare for installation of the meters. So those are occurring

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citywide, but they follow kind of the pattern of establishing service first before establishing locations. For example, this graphic on the right is a dashboard which kind of helps track our progress. This was reflected of last week's progress on how many surveys we've done citywide. We're closer to above 9,000 to date so as we continue to progress citywide on dcu coverage we'll also progress on surveying the sites. That also is complimented by some of the communications we'll be sending out to customers as well as your district offices. I believe we just recently added two additional areas to focus in on. In the southwest dcus were established in coverage so you may receive some initial

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communications that we will be surveying as well as installing meters in the southwest area. Next slide, please. So once we've established some surveying -- pre-surveying of certain areas, we also will communicate with customers that we are in the area or when we will be installing, but more importantly is this tool helps us track progress on installations of the meters. We're probably closer to 4800 meters to date. This was captured probably a week ago, but we're progressing throughout the city as well as continue to establish meter exchanges in the pilot areas. There are some more challenging meters to kind of exchange and those are going to be the ones that

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are larger size and they require confined space entry into vaults so is some of those will continue to be addressed in the pilot areas as we continue to finish out some of the pilot as well as expand citywide. Next slide, please. So the next steps for mill atx water program is to continue to complete the pilot, which is a target of before 4800 meters, 4860 to be exact. And we were just slightly under that so we'll be completing that area within the next couple of weeks. But then also to launch new service areas which we're calling batch post-pilot areas. And I mentioned two of those locations are right now

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scheduled for in the southwest area of Austin, there's a total of about 2,000 meters that we plan to exchange within the next several months so we'll go through a series of dcu deployments, initial surveys, eventually meter installations for every single identified batch area. And so with that we also have to make sure that we address some of the lessons learned from communications through the pilot that we are adjusting to so this is an example of some of the communication information that Randy Jenkins will help cover in the next follow-up slides. So this kind of gives you our snapshot progress as we continue to not only expand through completion of our

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pilot areas, but also expand citywide with not only the dcu progress, but also the surveying of our meters and then eventually the installation of our new my atx water meter. With that I'll turn that over with the next slide. I believe Randy will cover some of the communications. >> Great, thank you, Rick and good afternoon, council and committee members. I appreciate the opportunity to cover our my atx water communications. Next slide, please. So as an overview of what I plan to cover with you this afternoon, I'm going to start with our communications overview and kind of recall some of the prior information that we shared in our August 2020 briefing to you and also share some of the lessons learned and key highlights from our evaluation of our

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communications thus far. And then lastly I'll go over Howie plan to improve the customer experience and our action items and next steps related. Next slide, please. So as I mentioned I'll be starting with our communications overview. Next slide, please. So as you may recall from our August 2020 briefing, we have applied a comprehensive and multi-phase communication approach to our my atx water project. So it started with after approval from council in March of last year and then subsequently our contract executions with our vendors we launched a website. That website really provides insight and

introduction to our Ami information and certainly showcases our features of this project and of our customer portal. And then it also provides

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downloadable content within those web pages. You know, and with hopes to build citizen trust and provide overall customer service around the clock any time that anyone may want more information about our project. Second by we have been providing mailers and postcards throughout the pilot phase of this project. It starts with our mailer. We traditionally send out a mailer 20 days separate to a meter install. Our vendor follows up one to two weeks after with a postcard and that provides an introduction and then the postcard a reminder to the project and showcases the benefits to our advanced metering infrastructure project. Once the meter is installed at a customer's address, we -- the vendor provides a door hanger to the customer and then it lets them know that the meter installation was successful and it also

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provides details about flushing their water lines outside their home and also information about reminding to sign up for our customer portal. If installation was unsuccessful for whatever filled areas may have occurred, then a door hanger is also left notifying that customer that the meter was not installed at this time, but that we will be circling back to that address after work is performed at that meter box. The other item I want to mention is certainly social media has been used throughout this project. About one to two months prior to the pilot launch we implemented social media content and were monitoring that throughout. As community events initiated, we reminded the community members about our neighborhood meters that we were hosting, you know, albeit virtually, right now due to the pandemic, but certainly directing them to our website for more information and encouraging

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attendance at those neighborhood meetings. We coordinated internally with all of our contact centers throughout the city, namely our utility contacts center with Austin energy as well as 311. And then internally to Austin water our dispatch and customer service team. We wanted to make sure that all of our team members throughout the city including your offices were situated with information that could be utilized to answer customer and the city questions and concerns. And finally as I notated a few minutes ago, community outreach and stakeholder events have been held throughout this pilot project including presentations on ai and all of its robust projects. So just as a visual reminder this slide did he pictures both our customer mailer and

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postcard. So items one through five on the green I've covered in the prior slide, but I really want to point out the ways that we will and are using our my atx customer water portal. Not only is it a way for customers to sign up about their huge, but we're also utilizing it to engage and email customers and a way to provide back and forth information so if they have an email question they can email through the portal and one of the representatives is able to answer their questions on the spot. Next slide, please. So moving into lessons learned and some of our key highlights, I want to touch in on some of our surveys and customer focus groups that we've held. Next slide, please. So as an overview of what we've performed since nearing the end of our pilot phase of this project, we surveyed approximately 3400

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of our new Ami customers. And through those surveys and focus groups we've kind of been able to drill down into some of the touch points that we need to enhance as well as those that are working well. And so as an overview of that, one of the key takeaways thus far has been the timeliness of our customer touch points to the actual meter install. Secondly making sure we're enhancing training for our installs and trainers to ensure consistency so no matter who the installer is at the residence that is making the metering exchange that they are saying and doing the same thing that all the other installers across the city are doing. Additionally we are going to be adding a customer portal link to our door hangers. While it has always been included in our mailers and postcard, we do want to at that last point of contact

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make sure that customers are reminded that they are able to view their usage right away so to make sure that they're signing up for that. We also have found that we need to provide some additional clarity around our flushing language to prevent any confusion with our customer base about how they are able to conduct flushing and making sure it's simple and does not create additional anxiety for our customers. And lastly, we want to ensure that our vendor is properly using the did not install door hanger. There is a place on that door hanger for the installer to place comments so we want to make sure that all of the installers are placing those comments so our customers are aware of what the issue is and we will be back to them to install their Ami meter. So some of the online survey

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highlights gave us some great insight and also some positive feedback additionally so when we asked there was an increased awareness of the project, 81% of our customers who took the survey were already aware of the project, so I think what that indicates is our website and other messaging is working and is filtering down to the public. When our survey respondents communicated with an installer, they reported a positive interaction 96% of the time, which is a high value to us. We want customers to feel good about the information that their getting from our vendor and through the Ami installs. There was an overall high average satisfaction. On a one to 10 scale when we asked our respondents that almost 8.5% or eight and a half times they were highly and more than average

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satisfied. One of the kind of ah-ha moments we had throughout our surveys and certainly through our focus groups is that our customers indicated that they preferred email communication over traditional mailed communication from us. And that was to 85% of the time they stated that they preferred an email in lieu of traditional mailings. And then lastly, what I noted on the prior slide, the timing of the communications was the most important customer pain point and able drilling into that in my future slides. So to provide a few highlights about the focus group that were held, we held three focus groups in the month of April and overall participants indicated that they were motivated by desire to conserve water. That is certainly one of the takeaways and one of the advantages to the utility to

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put this project in motion so we were happy to hear that. They also highlighted the safety features of this portal and I think that certainly is on the heels of the winter storm and everyone playing close attention, excuse me, to their portal and what it can do for them. And again, negative experiences still were centered around the lack of communication about when exactly their meter install would happen. And then one-third of our customers in our focus groups noted that they did not receive the door hanger at all and were concerned about the lack of information about how to flush their pipes. And then lastly, there was a concern from those focus group members while they did not personally have this information, they did respond with an overall concern for those who may not have the same access to or experience with technology and highlighted a

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potential digital divide. So I'll talk a little bit more about that in my next slide. Next slide, please. So with all of that feedback and evaluation of our communications related to the my atx water project, we will be taking action steps and already have to improve the customer experience as we continue to roll this project out citywide. Next slide, please. And so as you heard me mention several times throughout my

presentation about aligning better with the meter install schedule, we will be doing that. We are going to streamline that process. We will still be mailing our initial informative letter to our customer base by traditional mail methods. But we will be revising and replacing our postcard communication that our vendor was previously sending. And we're going to replace that specifically with

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neighborhood signage we're going to send email notifications closer to the time when the work is actually being done so within that week we will be notifying customers that their meter install is pending and to expect us soon. So that will get us much closer to the time there. We're going to continue our effective methods and materials so not everything we did was poor. We certainly had some big wins. You know, our virtual outreach meetings were well attended. In fact, looking back in history of Austin water projects, our virtual meetings were actually more attended than any of our prior in-person meetings that we held prior to the pandemic. So that was certainly a win for us. In addition to our outreach meetings, we are going to tweak that a little bit. We're going to continue that

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method virtually and hopefully with the pandemic lifting go back to some in-person options but also we'll video a standing available 24/7 kind of you've, get information about the project with frequently asked questions and answers so that a community member or resident can go online or watch that video at any time that may be best for them in their schedule. And we're going to continue our door hangers. We are going to ensure that all of our installers will continue to be framed and to be aware of what that door hanger notification purpose is and ensuring that they are meeting that requirement and then we are going to continue all of our methods of inviting customers to join the portal. That in itself is a multi-phase process. We invite them several times throughout all of our communication methods and then after their meter install we circle back with them and encourage them to sign up for the portal

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again. Some other improvements. As always we'll continue to improve our web page and add -- and make our faqs more robust as more questions and answers come up from our community. We're going to increase our videos and certainly our portal messages that interacts with our customers not only through email that I mentioned earlier, but also utilizing Robo calls to let them know that we are coming, we are coming to their neighborhood and to expect us soon. Next slide, please. And that concludes my portion of the presentation. At this time I'll open it back up to you, council members, to ask any questions that you may have of myself or Rick. >> Kitchen: Okay. So thank you all very much.

Thank you, Rick and Randi for that presentation. Let's see, so do we have questions from -- do we have any questions?

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>> All right. I have one question then. I just want to -- it's not really a question. I just wanted to emphasize for the public again the value of Ami. And director, would you say as well as -- would you all talk about at a high level what the benefit to an individual is that lets them track how much water they're using. Which helps them if they're attempting to reduce their water usage, which is what we all want to be working towards. And from our perspective, the city perspective, it helps you track the use of water which means with all the data that's available to you, you can help detect leaks sooner and you can help manage water in the system sooner. Is that the right way to talk about it or is there anything that you would add?

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I'm just trying to take it up a level just to remind people how important this Ami system is for our water usage in the city. >> Yes, council member. I think you're hitting exactly on the value. If you just take a high level step back, right now customers just get one data point a month from the utility and that's retroactive, you get your bill. And you can't do anything about it and you just have to pay it. With the new technology that really changes that whole paradigm. Instead of one data point a month you get multiple data points a day. You can see how much water you're using hour by hour, you can set up notices to be alerted if the system detects a leak at your home for you to consider investigating. It will give you additional insights into, say, your irrigation system.

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Maybe you misprogrammed our irrigation system and instead of one day per week it's going on every night. And you can spot these trends earlier and take actions to video a high water bill or a messy leak repair and it gives us a two-way street to communicate with customers. So you're right, this is a whole new paradigm of the way we give customer data and the way that the data can be used. So really we want to emphasize that you use the portal, sign up for the portal as much as possible. Use this new new lens into your water use. >> And now we will go into the water forward implementation updates. >> Ellis: I had a question. >> Kitchen: Sorry. I didn't see you.

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>> When you first asked for questions there were no hands. I'm so glad the city of Austin is able to participate in other phases of the pilot. I would ask to please send us information, let us know who our point of contact will be and let us participate in it. I think it's very exciting. >> Thank you, council member. We'll continue to coordinate with your offices and we hope by the surge probably later summer, we'll ramp up to 100 meters installed. We're starting to get into the industrial phase of this where meters will start to peel out very rapidly. We'll coordinate with offices in the community as we're reaching those levels. >> That's really great to hear. I'm so excited for you and for the community to be able to do this. >> Kitchen: Okay. Thank you. Let's move on to item number 5, water forward implementation update. >> Good afternoon, council members. My name is Kevin, assistant director for Austin water.

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I'm over our environmental planning and development services program area. I'm just happy to be able to provide you all with an update on our integrated water resources planning activities and our progress and our water forward exercise. So I'm going to turn off my camera so that I can help navigate through the slides, but I am here. Next slide, please. I'm going to start with a R an overview of our water supply conditions in our region. Basically this graph depicts the amount of water stored in both Lakes Buchanan and Travis, which is our source of stored water from the Colorado river. Our current student status is shown along the right-hand side of the slide. You will note that we're just over 1.4 mill acre feet in water in the highland

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Lakes which is about 64% of our volume full. We're on a downward trend which is typical for this type of year as we begin to see increases in water demand moving into the spring and summer months. In addition, this slide also shows or depicts an historical reservoir storage that happened in our more recent drought of 2008 to 2015. You will note in that time frame we saw some very historically low storage volumes getting down to approaching 600,000-acre feet of storage volume in the highland Lakes and that represents about 30% of capacity of the highland Lakes. So next slide, please. One of the key factors impacting reservoir storage levels are inflows into the highland Lakes. This graphic depicts historical and recent inflows into the highland Lakes on a monthly basis. The light blue bars show the average monthly inflow over the period ranging from 1942

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to present. The dark blue bars show that monthly inflow from that drought period from 2008 to 2015. And then the green bars show the current inflows that we've experienced so far this year. While this has been a disappointing year from an inflow perspective and we'll continue to keep our eye on inflows into the highland Lakes, we want to point out a couple of things. Number one, as you can see, inflows in the highland Lakes are highly variable from year to year or month to month. And while our inflows from the January to April time frame have totaled about 63,000-acre feet, which is somewhat lower than we would have preferred, just since the start of may we've actually received 60,000-acre feet in the first 12 months of the year. First 12 days of the year -- month, excuse me. Next slide, please. So what does the remainder of the year hold for our

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water supply outlook? The lower Colorado river authority updates the lake forecast on a monthly basis. This particular graphic can be found at their website at www.lcra.org. In general the graph flex the recent decline in last 12 months and then provides some projections over the next 12 months which starting at the gold bar moving to the right and those are some potential different conditions to reflect wet, medium, dry or is extremely dry conditions represented in the green, blue, Orange and red dotted lines. Under all of these scenarios we anticipate that a stage 1 drought restriction could potentially be necessary. However, in none of the predictions do we anticipate getting down to a stage two drought restrictions at this time. I'd also note that the national weather service is predicting a transition from la Nina to a traditional

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weather pattern from the may to July period so overall that's a good Signor us. That anticipates us moving from our current more dry conditions to perhaps some more neutral weather conditions. Next slide, please. So with that as a backdrop I'd like to shift to provide some background and updates on water forward and just by way of kind of regrounding everyone, in 2018 the city of Austin adopted our water forward plan which is our 100 year integrated water resource plan. Several key factors around our planning included conversation of continued population growth, droughts and climate change in the future. So hydrology and climate analysis and modeling was an important part of our plan. Water forward provides us a roadmap for demand management and supply strategies to ensure diversified, sustainable and resilient water future. In order to make sure that the plan reflected our

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community values, Austin water staff met on a monthly basis with our council appointed citizens task force a and water forward citizens task force. Additionally we conducted extensive community outreach

throughout the development process and we continue to do that in the implementation stages. As we begin to start to focus on planning for an update in water forward, which will be due to be completed in 2023, we will also continue that outreach and try to even enrich those outreach opportunities. Next slide, please. So at a high level this slide represents the simplified overview of water forward recommended strategies in the 2018 plan. Basically in this slide we've got strategies categorized in four primary categories, starting left to right, reducing demand. Then reuse, protecting our

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core surface water supplies and building resiliency. Individual strategies under those categories include under the reducing demand, we've got benchmarking, Ami, which you just received an update on, water loss control and conservation ordinances incentives. Under expanding reuse opportunities, this includes strategies such as expanding or developing our on-site reuse program, centralizing our water supply development and also beginning work on decentralized reclaimed water supply development. Under protecting the core Colorado river supplies that's our water protection strategies, those are primarily related to working with regional partners like the lower Colorado river authority, our state water planning region K planning activities, working with interest groups and agencies and municipalities through that process. And then under building resilience we have a couple

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of particular strategies which include our aquifer storage and recovery project, which council will recall that you approved several months ago, the selection of an engineering firm for that. And then also we're looking at indirect potable reuse as a drought mitigation strategy for the future. Through all of these strategies we continue to engage a variety of stakeholders, stakeholder groups through a variety of ways, again including our water forward community task force, various subcommittees of that task force, a number of working groups, technical advisory committees, special interest groups and continuing to try to strengthen community outreach and cast the broadest net to get all voices throughout our community. Next slide, please. So we'll take just one second to note, Greg mentioned some award opportunities. We're proud of the national level recognition that we

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have received. You know, obviously our water resources utility of the future award certainly recognized our work in the water forward space. Additionally Greg mentioned our Oscar and Clara, on-site reuse projects, received two separate awards from Texas awwwa for conservation and large utility reuse category. And then previously we also received an award from the excellence in environmental engineering and science for our water forward program. Next slide, please. So I'll take the next several

slides to provide a little more detail of some of the specific water forward strategies and kind of where we are on those. Again, the Colorado river has long been the life blood of our community and will continue to be the core of our water supply now and in the future. One example of these strategies includes Austin water continuing to be a

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leading voice in the Texas water development board sponsored regional water supply planning efforts. Through our active participation in region K, we participate in a variety of meetings, collaborations, planning studies. We continue to work with others to protect our interests locally and throughout the region. That includes things like balancing regional water supply needs for municipal uses, agricultural uses and industrial and other water needs. Additionally it includes ensuring protection of environmental flows for instream flows and for other freshwater needs. Other activities in this category include Austin water and city staff regularly meeting with technical and executive representatives of the lower Colorado river authority related to our water partnership and contracts. And it also includes working with lcra and the tceq on regular updates to lcra's water management plan and other water rights activities that might serve to impact our core water supply. Next slide, please.

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I won't spent a lot of time here. We did already talk about our -- my atx water, but just to resonate the importance of, you know, improved information to our customers about water use efficiency to promote effective and responsible water use to heighten awareness of water use habits and behavior, and ultimately promote water conservation and efficiency towards water savings. Next slide, please. In the category of reducing demand, we've been pursuing a number of strategies related to new and updated water conservation programs. We're lucky that as a community we've long held a very high water conservation ethic. And we are a leader in our region among other Texas cities and communities in water conservation. That's evidenced by our repeated strong ranking in Texas living waters Austin water conservation score. Some specific areas of new

[2:23:25 PM]

commercial and industrial conservation ordinances include our improved cooling tower efficiency standards related administrative penalties and other programmatic disincentives to try to help promote efficient cooling towers. Council may remember that item was brought back I think in around the November time frame of last year. And we're also working on other water conservation incentive programs aren't irrigation system efficiency and upgrades, landscape transformation rebates, a new program for laundry to landscape, which is a gray water reuse program. Incentives around pool cartridge

filters to reduce the need for backwashing. We've doubled rebate amounts for certain conservation strategies and we've streamlined rebate application and approval processes. Next slide. In the category of moving reuse forward, we made

[2:24:26 PM]

considerable progress around our on-site reuse program. Again, that's an opportunity for us to use buildings and sites to actually be a separate source of water supply. You may recall that in November council was -- approved our regulatory framework, which provides us technical and administrative process for review and approval of on-site reuse systems. And of course we still need to move forward on the adoption of IdC code amendments so that by 2023 we'll have the mandatory requirement for large development projects to include on-site reuse as part of their development. Next slide. On the incentive front, as recently as April, council approved a new pilot incentive program for on-site reuse projects. This is an important incentive to help us drive voluntary participation in large developments for on-site reuse so that we can test our regulatory framework.

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And again prepare for our 2023 mandated adoption. This will provide us opportunity for piloting, more learning around how using these on-site systems can help us. Help incentivize early adopters who will come in to the space and be more forward thinking in how they might use more water sustainable approaches to their development. And at the end it will help us test and calibrate our regulatory framework to gain insights into making this an effective program. Next slide. Again, this is something that Greg mentioned. Austin water has been a leader by piloting innovative on-site reuse. This is a picture of our new permitting and development center. This is the extra installation of our black water reuse system, which we have dubbed Clara. On the site in addition to black water treatment and

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reuse for toilet flushing, we also have Oscar, which is a rainwater collection and reuse system. So again, this is a great opportunity for us to demonstrate to community how these types of strategies can be implemented in our development space. Next slide. Also in the category of increasing water reuse, we have developed or staff has developed an important tool, a water benchmark calculator, which is a tool for applicants, engineers, designers and building owners to understand how their project water needs and opportunities for reuse on-site. Currently this water balance calculator is used in the context of individuals seeking to get an on-site reuse permit, so people that go through our on-site reuse permitting process are required to submit a water

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benchmark or water balance calculation. Again, this is another opportunity for to us take that water benchmark calculator to all site development applications, but again that's pending adoption of further land development code ordinance changes. Next slide. On the -- additionally on the reuse front, our commitment to our historic and award winning centralized reclaim water system continues. Austin's purple pipe system has been in operation for over 30 years. We continue to add reclaimed customers. As of the first quarter of this year, we've reached nearly 160 individual reclaim customers on our system. We're working with more than 30 potential new customers for reclaimed water applications. We continue to work on a number of projects to complete the core and further develop our reclaimed master plan. And we expect again this

[2:28:27 PM]

system to be enhanced through future ldc code adoption that mandates connection to the water -- reclaimed water system to those developments that are within 500 feet of the existing system. Next slide. In addition to our on-site reuse niche initiatives, we're working on expanding our centralized -- our decentralized approaches as well. Rather than only consider traditional centralized utility solutions, we're working to enhance our planning practices to consider alternatives to use decentralized reclaim solutions in certain areas of our service area. These solutions can help bring district-scale opportunities that can either defer large expensive wastewater conveyance projects and/or help eliminate capacity constraints in existing wastewater infrastructure. Next slide.

[2:29:30 PM]

In the area of building resiliency, we have successfully contracted with an engineering consultant, hgr, to help further validate the feasibility of our aquifer storage and recovery strategy and begin our piloting process. This project would allow us to store up to 60,000-acre feet of access treated water when it's available, store that underground in an aquifer which could then be reused in a future drought or in the case of a system upset. This project will include about a two to three year initial planning phase which we're in the beginning stages of right now. To evaluate different formations for possible asr pilot development and technical feasibility. Then we'll have about a three to four year design construction and testing process to do a pilot test of asr functionality. If all things go successful as we hope, that will give us a full scale

[2:30:30 PM]

implementation of the asr project starting in the 2030-2035 time frame. Next slide so looking forward we'll be communicating with our active community and stakeholder processes through the various subcommittees and different and new outreach to our community. We'll continue further study to perform our planned implementation which will be a draught response plan for our community T. We'll continue to work on completion of the update of the centralized water plan and we'll also start with preliminary analysis scoping and kicking Auch our planning effortses for our water forward update process which will be completed by 2023. Next slide.

[2:31:31 PM]

So just provided this to you all. This is a reminder -- we do provide quarterly update. This is a snapshot of that. It's fairly condensed and compacted. This recounts the presentation I just made to you, perhaps with a little more specificity on a few more details. We would like to invite council members and their staff to reach out to us if you have any additional questions. We welcome any feedback or suggestions on how we can make this report more meaningful or informative. With that, I think next slide -- I think I am at the end of the presentation, and I am available for questions. I'll invite -- we have one of our staffers, Ms. Marisa.

[2:32:40 PM]

She and I will be happy to answer any questions you have >> All right. I know -- thank you very much. I know that council member pool had a question. If you want to go first >> Pool: Thank you, chair. Since you finished I have two. One is on the stakeholder process with the different community groups and subject matter experts and that sort of thing. How is that going? And, you know -- so generally how is that going? And then specifically to water budgets, river flow in region K. I wanted to check back in with y'all on how the water budget planning process was going with Tesla. You may remember a year and a half ago we had folks in to talk about that at one of our previous committee meetings. I know that -- the water budget they were looking at was rather

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large. I also know they're downstream of the city of Austin but they will have impacts. The impacts will be the downstream folks and the water life health is important to us >> I would say our engagement process has been I would say very successful. We did a lot of outreach in the planning process and trying to reach out beyond the more traditional groups that we typically receive feedback from. I'll say that particular part of process continues to a planning process as we look forward to water forward 2023.

We've watched some of the activities in the community resilience and equity planning. I think we were going to try to adopt some of those kind of protocols in trying to reach

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out. But otherwise, you know, we've had a number of workshops and presentations and engagements along the way to various members of the community, both the advocate community as well as the development community. Certainly, you know, immediately sort of pre pandemic and as we moved into the space to adopt our on site regulatory framework, as an example. Beyond that, we've got a lot of engagement with, again, our task force members and various subcommittees and working group. Marisa, do you have any other areas you want to highlight in that regard >> Our reuse team held several workshops in the summer of 2019 together. Community and stakeholder feedback -- particularly on the water reuse programs.

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Those were well received. It was an opportunity to let the community know about the programs we're contemplating putting in place and that outreach program will continue those opportunities and overall, as Kevin mentioned, for the water forward update process we are planning to develop a community advisory group to develop a road map for the plan development process and that will help create a guiding principles level type of information we'll incorporate into a plan of our own. >> So if that answers that question, then I'll go back to the other question around Tesla. Just for everybody's update, we have been working with Tesla on their factory. I will say it's complicated that

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at that site is primarily in the authorized service area of another neighboring utility provider. They're technically in the area of southwest water >> I thought they were trying to move out of that >> They are. It has been a laborious process. We have been working with them conditionally on a service extension request with the expectation on their part that they would be successful in that. They have just received some clarification from public utility commission of Texas in the last week about valuation issues associated with extracting themselves from the ccn. We expect in the next several weeks that matter will be cleared up. In essence, they're building infrastructure at risk headed to

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our utility infrastructure. So we have been reviewing their engineering developments, permits, et cetera to make sure that -- assuming they do extract themselves that they're building the infrastructure compliant with our requirements. We no it will be plumbed in such a way it can receive a substantial amount of reclaimed water. They located close to the plant which is a source for a lot of reclaimed water which we expect they'll use in a lot of their industrial processes. We are awaiting the delivery of -- technically a water balance for the balance of their property. We haven't received it yet but hope to receive it within the next month or so, so I know again Katherine -- her name was

[2:38:58 PM]

mentioned before. She is on the on site reuse team. She's been in meetings with Tesla and we're getting more information about the specific plumbing and kind of the specific water-use requirements on the site and so we expect to see more from that soon >> Are they going to be pulling water from different areas that are outside Austin's etj and inside? >> All of the plotable water needs, all of the reclaimed and waste water needs would go from or to our waste water system. There's a variety of drainage issue which we don't have a lot of insight to. That's a matter of water shed protection, but they know water shed protection has been working

[2:39:58 PM]

to make sure this is considered. Probably your question would be better addressed by water shed >> I thought -- let me ask one more question. This really isn't on the agenda to talk about Tesla. I was under the impression and I don't know why that they were going to pull water from the river which would affect the -- because it was hundreds of millions of -- hundreds of thousands of gallons a day. Wasn't it 450,000 gallons a day at one of the Nevada sites or something like that? >> Yeah. Their site needs a lot -- we have not seen any indication >> Is that going to come out of our -- it is a direct impact to the city of Austin >> A direct impact to our utility systems >> We need to be looking -- you have that slide about our drought >> Yes, ma'am

[2:40:58 PM]

>> That's where I was driving and why I brought up Tesla. I'm going to be -- I know we're sort of -- we're not in -- what was it, Greg, stage 2? One of the earlier slides. We're not quite there >> No. We are just on the favorable side, if you will, on our shortage. Just above 1.4 million acre feet. We're at a more traditional water conservation -- we would have to enact water drought strategies potentially >> I would like you to earmark this and, chair, if we could continue to have an update be a part of the report, you know, at our meetings going forward and kind of if you would walk us through our efforts with Tesla and keep us and the public aware

[2:42:02 PM]

of how that's going >> Absolutely. >> I think we will need to have that information and good, strong reporting on that >> Got it >> Okay. Thanks >> All right. Thank you, council member pool do we have other questions on this presentation? Not seeing any, we'll move to item number 2 and ask our staff to stay available with us as there might be questions. Item 2 related to -- item 2 relates to resolutions for code amendments and other actions relating to our forward as well as other water-related conservation reuse. What I'd like to do, colleagues, is we have three proposals and

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some amendments, and so I thought we'd take up the proposal that I'm -- that I have put forward and then the proposal that council member tovo put forward and the one council member Fuentes put forward. As we do that, we'll take up the amendments that council member Ellis has. I'm going to proceed that way, assuming that works for everyone so, council member Fuentes >> Fuentes: I think the resolution I have could go as an amendment to yours but I'm curious in you could elaborate a little more on the distinction between the two >> It can be done either way. It doesn't matter. I'm happy to take it as an amendment on my resolution or if

[2:44:03 PM]

you want to bring it as a separate resolution. The way this works, so you'll understand, when a committee recommends resolutions, then it is put on the agenda under the committee's name, and so if we keep it separate you'll see three resolutions. If you want to combine it, you'd see two. So it's really up to you. I think that it works either way. Do you have a preference >> I guess we could keep it as a separate resolution. That's fine >> Okay. I think that there's also -- yeah. I think that makes sense to do that. Okay. All right. Then I'm going to -- council member Ellis? Did you have a point about that? >>Ellis: I was going to make a point about what Vanessa just

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said >> I want to make sure I understood is the intent to take three different votes or talk about all three and then vote on them together or how -- >> That's up to how you want to do them. We can vote on them together if you would like as a package. Happy to do that. Or we can vote on them separately. I think we have to lay them out like we would a resolution, but we can choose to vote on them all

together if we want >> I think separately might make sense in case people have nuances or pros and cons to each one >> Okay. Council pool >> Pool: We should explain that it wasn't any of them were necessarily in competition but that each author of the

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different initiatives wanted to bring them themselves rather -- rather than -- I don't want to characterize what we're going to do it before we do it. But it would help to understand why we have three, not two or one >> They're all complementary, I think. >> Okay >> Council member Tovo >> Tovo: I don't serve on the committee so it was my intent to bring it forward as if with hopefully feedback and cosponsorship from you all if the other one or two comes forward. >> It would come as your resolution regardless, whether we put it under the committee as a recommendation or whether you post it separately.

[2:47:07 PM]

So, you know -- that's the way I've seen it done before. So it maintains the fact that you are the sponsor, I guess is what I'm saying. Okay. But you can think about that. Okay. So I am going to -- so we'll move each of these and then we'll take them up and decide if we're -- I think council member Ellis suggested we vote on them separately. We can do that. I'm going to move that the committee recommend to the council adoption of the water forward resolution that I've brought forward. If we get a second, then I -- second from council member pool. Let me explain this one. What this one does is this one is very specific and focused on bringing forward the three aspects of water forward that

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were part of the land development code as far as we got with the land development code. And these relate to water benchmarking and water balance calculations to mandatory on-site water reuse system requirements by 2023 and to connecting the reclaimed water connection requirements. So just as a reminder to folks, those were the three items that were -- that there was language written into the land development code revisions and voted on as part of those revisions as far as we got, which was only to the second reading on code next. I want to also just highlight that as was referenced in the report from staff, the mandatory on-site water reuse requirement

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picks up the third aspect of those recommendations. The first two have already been accomplished. The third aspect was that by 2023 that on site water reuse systems is required for a large development project. The other two aspects that have already been accomplished was adopting the rules, you know, to implement on site water reuse. And then the other -- council adopted that in December, I believe. The other was the incentive program for on site water reuse, which our staff just reported to us the progress of that and that's something that council has already adopted also. So with that said, I know that -- I don't know -- let's see. Let me just ask our staff. I think that this is -- that moving forward with this is

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aligned with the path that the staff has been on in implementing the water forward task force recommendations and is aligned with their time line for doing so, and is there anything, director, that you would like to add about that? >> You're correct, council member. This is in alignment with the direction we've been taking. I might ask for elaboration on that if they have anything to pass on >> I would just say, you know, the resolution as we've seen and the language therein is very consistent with, number one, the language we submitted in the land development code rewrite process, that envisions changes

[2:51:15 PM]

to what was going to be chapter 23. I think as we understand the resolution, it's very must aligned >> Okay. And, yes, what it does is it -- what it does is it initiates amendments to the code and asks that these ordinance adhere as closely to the language that the council had already implemented. It initiates an ordinance waving the -- waiving the requirements for going back through the planning commission because these have been through planning commission. It still requires a public hearing process. It doesn't waive that. It still requires a public hearing process. It's just that it would come back to council without having to go through the planning

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commission process again since it's been through that. That's the second -- council member Ellis, I know you had some amendments you wanted to make -- you had one amendment you wanted to make to this item. Did you want to speak to that >> Ellis: I did. Thank you very much. On the word document I had my settings on simple mark-up. I wanted to day light for people reading that to see that. I wanted to strike the language about skipping the planning commission process in 21-5-02. It's only a simple adjustment because it's been two years since we approved the may 2nd direction of 2019. One year

since it went to the planning commission. We do know that -- how we're able to build, what we're able to build, materials cost have

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changed and we have two now colleagues. I would like to give their members an opportunity to weigh in on this too. I hope that would be seen as agreeable. I wanted to add language that says the city manager is directed to provide recommendations to mitigate the impacts of affordability of these new building requirements. The recommendation will be developed with stakeholder input and brought back to council for consideration in conjunction with the above ordinances. I've been supportive of water forward. When we wrapped it in with the 1984 ldc rewrite which was different from the code next process which I was not involved in. I think everyone at that time wanted to move it forward and wanted to move it forward in the best way possible to make sure

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lawsuits and the water forward practices of the water utility and development services were not going to conflict. I've been happy to move water forward forward. That's tricky to say but we need to understand the city is experiencing an affordability and water conservation crisis. Fewer young families can afford to buy and our seniors are struggling to age in place. Rents are increasing too. Given the climate change -- we need to conserve and reuse our water supplies however we can. We need to be sure we're not fixing one problem and improve another. We need to address the affordability crisis. It is what this amendment asks staff to do -- provide

[2:55:19 PM]

recommendations to provide other options for affordability, adding other development regulations. I do hope they are friendly. I know along the way we've talked about these particular components of water forward given there are many others that our task force is working on and currently implementing and we're so glad those commissioners are willing and able to serve in this capacity but I have been concerned about the legal implications since it's wrapped up in the rewrite lawsuit and the affordability components I spoke about. I'm fully supportive of trying to get everything with water forward that we can but know there is trickiness to policy writing that we need to make sure we're taking a calculated approach to >> Thank you, council member Ellis. Let's take the two pieces of it. I'd like to take it separately. I can accept as friendly the language around affordability, understanding that -- it's my understanding that's already

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been part of the process that the staff has done and it would be part of the process in bringing it forward to us as a public hearing. The other aspect I cannot support the language so I'd like to vote that separately. Council member? >> I'm confused. I don't believe what you read is what was -- I'm not sure I'm following exactly what the language is. I had sent an amendment or kitchen's amendment that had to do with affordability. I just -- it felt like there were two different things that were read and I just -- what we're talking about is -- because you started talking about strike-outs and strike-outs also strike out the part about initiating an ordinance being waived so I don't

[2:57:20 PM]

know. I'd like to better understand >> Okay. So council member Ellis, can you -- as I understand it, there are -- council member Ellis is proposing two different things and I'm asking that we consider them separately. One is to delete the last resolve that I have put forward regarding the waiver. I'd like to take that up secondly. The second is her language around affordability. Do you want to read that language again, council member Ellis, so we can be clear >> I'm happy to. It's similar to another amendment I sent around for council member Tovo. So make sure the one that said council member Kitchen on it is the one we're looking at. The language to be added would say the city manager is directed to provide recommendations to mitigate the impacts of affordability to these new building requirements. The recommendation will be

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developed with stakeholder input and brought back to council for consideration in conjunction with -- >> Does that answer your question >> The strike out is to the last be it resolved, not the first >> Right >> Sorry. Okay. And then you want to separate the questions in between what's -- and the affordability. Is the stakeholder input part of the deletion or part of the affordability piece as you're separating it? >> I would say the affordability piece >> Well, there's two sentences in the part that was added. >> Uh-huh >> I would suggest we take up the two sentences together that are being added.

[2:59:23 PM]

And I have a question for staff about it >> Okay. Council member Pool first >> Pool: So I don't know what the real wisdom is to sending this item back through the various commissions when it is the same, you know, absent these amendments, that was considered previously. So unless the intention is to slow down the implementation of water forward because it will slow it down. The other thing I would like to

hear from council member Ellis is if it comes back that water forward negatively affects affordability, lets just say it did, does that mean you would no longer support water forward? >> I think we should go through the due diligence of letting our newly appointed planning

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commissioners have input. We have two new colleagues, council member Fuentes, council member Kelly. I think it's important for this commission as it stands -- the new planning commission to be able to weigh in on this. It's not an effort to slow things down. As I spoke about earlier, I think we're all trying to move it forward. We're trying to understand the components and angles of it before moving something that is tied up in a lawsuit and to change that so we are all trying to move it forward. I've been supportive of moving it forward the whole time and the planning commission meets every two weeks, so I don't see this as a high burden to do this and have due diligence to the public input in the process >> This does not affect the notice and petition rights aspects of the lawsuit. That actually is not an accurate statement. But how then would you choose -- if you did get an answer back

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from the manager that staff said this would increase costs for building but they wouldn't be able to pull them apart from the increased costs that are happening anyway because of the supply chain and the local economy and the global economy. Then would you choose not to move forward with these policy changes that we've been -- and staff have been working for for quite a long time and say, no, we're not going to do them because in your estimate, based on what the city manager is showing you, you have decided it would negatively affect affordability and if so what affordability? Because these are long-term investments. And they always look like they're really look expensive at the front end but in fact have -- >> Can I answer? >> And just to -- >> Council member pool -- let's let council member Ellis answer

[3:02:28 PM]

>> Sometimes we have to make large investments at the front end because they have mitigating and helpful economic impacts later on and then just to reiterate that the zoning -- this is not a zoning issue, which is why it's in a different factor and it is not in fact tied up in the litigation -- ruling litigation >> Just to clarify it says provide recommendations to mitigate. It just says provide recommendations to mitigate. That's -- I don't know how much more clear I can be >> Okay. I have a question. >> Sorry >> Okay. Just looking for a value. I just kind of wanted to understand your amendment and to get to the motivation behind it. Go ahead chair >> Okay.

[3:03:28 PM]

I have a question of staff. Can you speak to us about what a valuation that you had done in the past about affordability of this -- these items as part of your process, as part of your water forward process analysis? >> So, Kevin -- let me ask Marisa to first answer that and then I'll follow there. >> Just for background when we were originally evaluating strategies we developed cost estimates for the strategies and that was incorporated as part of the whole planning process. For on site in familiar, those were developed by consultant ghd. They have a significant amount of experience with on site Australia.

[3:04:33 PM]

The timing of these strategies, especially closer to the language as included within the ldc allows us some time to look at affordability and cost of the on site reuse strategies. So the mandate is not -- is anticipated to be implemented in 2023, three years after the implementation of our on site water reuse rules and the goals of having this incentivized period for outside water reuse is for us to be able to have pilots where we can develop cost data. We can gather that information and understand the affordability implications and we can work with that to just as different discussions have mentioned, develop different recommendations and thoughts about how we can mitigate those types of affordability impacts. The incentive program is intended to end at the point where we would be mandating that these buildings have these on site.

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But it's the testing period that allows us to gather the data. So the information works out with us being able to evaluate the affordability impacts >> Am I hearing the incentive process you're going through and the incentive period will provide you with information that can help you think about mitigating costs at the point that it becomes -- at the point that it would become mandatory in 2023? Is that what you were saying? >> That's the goal, yes, for us to have several projects on the private side for us to gather that information >> Okay. All right. So -- okay. So any other -- so I have a suggestion. And -- so council member Ellis, I'm wondering if you would B okay with your language and then just striking in conjunction

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with the above ordinances because my thought is that the -- I appreciate the effort to bring back recommendations to mitigate the impacts of affordability and I think that's a good part of this process, an important part of this process, but I'm hearing that that is going to have to happen as part of this

testing period that they're in right now with the incentives and so it's not -- they're not going to be finished with that by the time the ordinance comes back to us, so would you consider that to be -- to work for what you're trying to get at if we keep the language related to bringing us back regulations about mitigating the impacts of affordability but not requiring all the recommendations to come back to us at the time the ordinance comes back to us?

[3:07:34 PM]

I'm sure they may have some preliminary kinds of recommendations but they may not be finished. That's the concern that I have. >> I completely see where you're coming from on that. I wonder if it could say in conjunction with implementation of the changes just so it was tied to ordinances and more tied to the process >> I think that works >> Okay >> Staff perspective -- that seems to align with what you're -- okay. So it would say in conjunction with implementation of the above ordinances. >> Yeah. I'm completely comfortable with that. Thank you for that. >> With that language, I can -- I can take that as friendly. Do -- council member pool, do you have a concern >> I think that amendment is a good one as well. Thank you, council member Ellis >> Okay. Anybody -- any objections to taking that as a friendly

[3:08:35 PM]

amendment? Okay. I don't see an objection. So the second thing then is -- let's talk about the second piece, council member Ellis. I think it is important to -- that's why I would like to keep the waiver language and the purpose behind it -- when you go back through the commission review process, it's not just the planning commission. It has to go back to a subcommittee of ordinances, to planning commission and they have several public hearings they have to do and they make a recommendation, and then it comes to us and we do another public hearing. And so there are multiple steps along the way for public input and I think it -- I think it would have the effect of slowing down the process. I also don't think it's necessary because we just -- council just considered this language very recently, and I

[3:09:40 PM]

understand that there are new planning commission members, but I don't think we need to send everything back through the planning commission again because there's a -- so I'd like to keep that revision, and we can vote on that if you'd like. But I can't accept that as a friendly amendment. Are there -- other people have any comments or questions they'd like to say about that part of it before we vote? Is there anything else you want to say, council member Ellis, about that? >> I can just say I'd much prefer to follow that public input process. I do see where you're coming from, that there's a few meetings it'd have to be at. As long as it's legal for us to do that, I'm okay with keeping it in >> Okay >> I'd prefer more public input opportunities but I understand where you're coming from >> Okay.

[3:10:41 PM]

We're going to vote on these separately. So let's go ahead and take a vote on this one and then we'll move to the next one. So all in favor of recommending this to the full council for adoption? >> This is your item, right? >> Item as amended >> As amended. Sorry. >> I might rather abstain because of the planning commission process but I appreciate the friendly amendments and discussion on it >> Now we'll move to the second one. That passed four, I think. Four with one abstention. Council member tovo, do you want to lay yours out >> Tovo: Yes, thanks >> Before she does that -- I just want to clarify for anyone

[3:11:43 PM]

who's watching that council member tovo doesn't serve ton committee and she's not on the committee, not because she's not voting but because she's an active in water forward -- I think she might have set off the task force in the first place and has graciously decided to make her resolution part of our water committee discussion so we can be more coherent. >> Thank you, council member. Very important. Council member tovo, do you want to go ahead >> Tovo: Yes. Thank you for that. Yes, I did the resolution that sort of started the task force and then started the integrated water management plan that became water forward and so most of you I think on this committee know that Shannon -- she's on my

[3:12:50 PM]

staff and has done a lot of great work. The resolution I'm bringing forward and it will likely have some tweaks here and there. I'm going to do some edits here and there to what you see before you and clarify some of the direction toward the end. This is line with both what council member kitchen is moving forward with her resolution and also with staff presentation about some of the priorities they have been focusing on and some of the work they have underway. Really I would say -- I know we're running kind of behind or y'all are running kind of behind today so I'll keep it really quick. It is imperative that we do everything we can to reduce our water usage and really focus on conservation, so the direction here to our staff and to our task force is to take a look at the water forward recommendations and particular the ones heres -- expansion of

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water connections, which is in the water benchmarking. And in particular the landscape ordinances and irrigation efficiency and incentive program to see what among those concepts that were the recommendations that came forward from water forward are low-hanging fruit. What can we do sooner than had been laid out on that implementation schedule? We know we are in need and in a time of climate change, potentially going to really be facing drought conditions again. That is the intent here -- again, to really consider implementing any additional strategies that we can sooner rather than later so we can do our best, put ourselves in the best position to protect our water supply >> Okay. Does someone want to move council member tovo's

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resolution? Council member alter? Do we have a second? Council member Ellis. I think there are some amendments. Council member alter and then council member Ellis. >> I just had a couple of typo things to flag so they don't move forward. I forgot to mention that -- I think it was on page four of council member kitchen's -- it refers to items have been -- it would probably be useful to have the code reference there. So for council member tovo's -- I appreciate this resolution. These are tiny nothings but I don't know how else to do it given we're doing this. So in whereas -- I think it should be adopted rather than

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adopts >> Tovo: Thank you. Perfect. I am slowly but surely changes adopts to approves. I always appreciate this kind of feedback, so thank you >> And then there's a whereas associated with storage levels -- I think it should be in storage levels. >> Tovo: I'll make a note. I don't immediately see it but I'll find it >> The eighth whereas -- provides triggers for the initiation of drought stages associated with changes. Should be in storage levels >> Tovo: Yes >> And there's a whereas clause on page 3, the second one you can see on page 3 where it says "Whereas according to a 2021 --" -- >> Tovo: That one I caught. Not the others.

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This is great >> They're very minor. And to the extent that you're moving this forward I'd be pleased to cosponsor >> Tovo: Great. Thanks very much and thank you for pointing out the issues. Thank you >> Council member Ellis? I think you had an amendment >> Ellis: Yes. This is similar to the amended language we worked out on your resolution, chair kitchen. It says the city manager is. . . Of these water forward strategies. The recommendation shall be developed with stakeholder input and brought back to council on a time frame that aligns as closely as possible. I think that's almost identical to what chair kitchen my other language -- >> Council member tovo, do you

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want to comment on that >> Tovo: We're not initiating the code amendments. What we're asking is for the manager to consult with the Austin water staff and the task force regarding the implementation. It is a stakeholder process and that's consistent also with the water forward implementation recommendations to include it within a task force, so I don't know what -- I don't know what it would do to the time frame. I mean, I guess to me, again, we're asking stakeholders to provide that feedback so I'm not sure why I'd need to be -- I'd need to understand really why the recommendations being developed with stakeholder input is relevant here. One, the recommendations have already been developed with extensive stakeholder input, and now we're saying please take another look at them with an eye

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to which ones can move forward on a quicker time frame. I mean, that stakeholder input has already happened to a great extent, and so that's -- I mean I guess you're talking about recommendations to mitigate the impacts on affordability. I leave it to the committee. I'm not sure whether -- that's kind of what I have to say on this. I'm not sure how relevant it is to this particular resolution >> Okay. Council member Ellis -- in regards to this -- in the context of the way that council member tovo has set this out, what are you thinking you would like to see with regard to affordability with this one >> I think it would be helpful for there to be some understanding of mitigating affordability issues regarding

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these as I had previously mentioned. As time goes on and as we go by year by year implementing what is a gat plan talking about these last pieces in particular could be helpful to have an eye on mitigating affordability impacts as well. If it makes more sense in the language of the resolution to go with the first sentence since as council member tovo explained there's other mentions of the water forward task force which is doing great work, I'm happy to go forward with the nod of coming back to council with those recommendations so we can weigh them at the same time. >> So what you're talking about is coming back the recommendations related to affordability at the same time you're bringing back recommendations that -- with regard to what to move forward with. Is that -- okay. Does staff have any comment they want to make on that?

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>> I don't -- I think that's pretty consistent. I think we're good >> Okay. Council member alter >> Thank you. I think it makes sense to move forward with the first part. That has been very much part of the process but part of the reason we're trying to make sure we take all these steps for the water supply is because that is also key to affordability kind of over the long run. So I'm comfortable with this. This is like as you're putting this together keep in mind if you tweak it this way or that way it might have a big impact on affordability or trying to phase something in a particular way or something like that. To me it's consistent. I don't want us to lose the notion that we have to pursue these strategies to secure the

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water supply, which is fundamental in my view for affordability. I'm not saying you're suggesting -- I just want to clarify that's how I'm interpreting kind of what we're talking about here. It is not -- this is not a license to say we need strategies to -- >> Oops >> As council member Ellis suggested earlier, easy to adopt >> If I'm hearing you right, friendly to your amendment -- take the first sentence related to affordability. Is that what you're saying? >> Yes >> My amendment -- >> Not your amendment. I'm sorry. I'm getting my processes messed up >> Council member tovo's resolution. I was clarifying to make sure I

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understood the intention of the amendment as amended and what that meant in terms of the direction that we were providing, given the subject of council member tovo's resolution >> A small tweak I might make the first sentence to add city manager is directed to provide to council, just so it's got that specifier in that first sentence. >> Okay. Can you read it to us just so we're making sure we're understanding >> Would say the city manager is directed to provide to council recommendations to mitigate the impacts to affordability of these water forward strategies >> Okay. Council member tovo, do you consider that friendly >> Tovo: You know -- and this is, I guess -- here's the awkwardness, right? I'm bringing it forward to the full council and it may be a little different than the one that you guys are talking about,

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and so I will consider -- I mean, I'll consider the fact that you're adding this amendment today. I'm not voting on it here today because I'm not on the committee and what you vote on may or may not be the same as what I bring forward. Let me talk about affordability. I certainly appreciate the concern, council Ellis, and the desire to have that become part of the conversation. It has been part of the water forward conversation. Were I to add something like this to the resolution that goes to council, I would talk about it a little bit differently because it really needs to be looked at in terms of both affordability -- in terms of

the initial development as well as the long-term -- the impact on long-term -- over the long term residents.

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The up front infrastructure costs will -- infrastructure costs will help people save in the long run. It would need to be a well crafted study of affordability to be able to measure our water conservation methods against the cost of securing water rights -- additional water rights if we are in a situation where we need to. Talking about affordability doesn't capture all the nuances. I'll just throw that out there for - if you notice hesitation on my part, that's part of why. It really is all those considerations. I know when we were considering the possible need for the city to contract with additional water providers -- you know, those come at quite a cost. That would need to be measured against the cost of doing these infrastructure. Anyway, thanks for the conversation >> So my suggestion is that we make our motion -- that we move

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forward with the inclusion of the sentence that council member Ellis is proposing. We understand -- and the way this works is when a committee brings something forward and as council member Tovo said she intends to bring an -- there's further discussion at the council level. And we understand you may tweak the language some and that's fine. If that's already with everybody, could we vote on it that way, or would you prefer not? Council member Pool? >> Pool: Yeah. I just want to emphasize again what I said previously about infrastructure projects being a big cost at the front end and they have a long tail of affordability elements which is why we do them in the first place. With water forward, knowing the region is growing as fast as it is, and we can't make more water. So we have to be really mindful

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about how we use it and conserve it or not conserve it, which was my -- frankly my really serious and deep concern, that there would actually be a point at which we would say no to water forward and conservation because it looked like it was not going to be affordable, however you define it, in the short term. My view is way long. And our view on the council has to be far into the future. The short-term stuff is great too but the longer term is what we're building for. So if we're going to have any kind of rhetoric in here about affordability, it has to be crafted in a way that acknowledges that up front costs are going to be big, like project connect -- massive, up front costs. But the long tail of that far into the future is going to be

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immensely helpful financially to whoever is in the city. So if we could kind of internalize that kind of philosophical approach and public policy approach, then I think we can both signal that we are concerned fiscally but we also recognize that sometimes we have to -- often governmental entities have to make an investment at the front end in order to reap the benefits -- financial benefits later on, so I am a little bit cautious about the amendment that is coming from council member Ellis. Is there a way -- would you like to maybe think about the affordability piece and give it a little more context so it's clear that it's not just the front-end costs that you're

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concerned about? If that is indeed the case >> I have a suggestion, council member pool, unless you want to respond to that, council member Ellis >> I just think lower case affordability is not really prescriptive. So I certainly see what you're saying, that some investments are necessary to make to ensure our resilience as a city. So I don't think I'm being overly prescriptive about what that affordability is or what it looks like -- just to think about it >> I think I have a suggestion. My suggestion is that this has been a really good discussion, and it's been a good discussion for us to have. But council member tovo has indicated she intends to bring it in as a separate ifc. We don't have to vote on this today, you know? We can just consider this a good discussion and move on and -- so would y'all like to do that

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instead, or would councilmember tovo, do you want the committee to try to act on this or no? I wasn't sure what direction -- >> Tovo: Entirely up to y'all. >> Kitchen: All right -- go ahead, councilmember Ellis. >> Ellis: It's going to suggest since councilmember tovo was going to suggest ifc, I don't know what we're working on and the process if she's doing an ifc that is different enough that maybe we postpone it or withdraw it once it goes to full council. I've never approached this question before so I don't know if it's more helpful to approve it this way and just to have it as backup just in case. Or how that's best to make sure we don't shut any doors if this could be useful and then the council can still work on it together. I don't quite know.

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>> Kitchen: All right. Councilmember alter and then councilmember pool. >> Pool: I think we should leave -- >> Alter: I think we should leave it to councilmember tovo whether she wants us to vote on it today. I think it was useful to have is a discussion as part of the broader question on water forward and

to have the opportunity if we needed it for the staff to be able to provide feedback so we can know that the direction that she's doing and I'm looking forward to co-sponsoring it to make sure that that direction is what staff thinks is feasible and getting done, but I would love that our committees had the power if our committees supported it, but since that's not the reality we live in, I don't know that it impacts things majorly either way. >> Kitchen: All right. Let's move on, then. Councilmember pool? >> Pool: I was going to say given the fact that councilmember tovo worked really hard to get it to the committee and brought it and

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explained it and laid it out and everything, I would like us to -- I actually would like us to go ahead and vote on it. And if she was thinking -- Kathie, didn't you mention that you were thinking about having the committee be co-sponsors on the item? Did I hear that right? >> Tovo: We can't have all of the committee because there are too many of you. Certainly I invite as many of you as would like to be on up to the number of subquorum to propose as co-sponsors and I've already talked to a couple of you on that front. >> Pool: What I was going to suggest is maybe if we vote it through fanned councilmember Ellis wanted to join as a co-sponsor then she could work directly with Kathie on the kind of language that she can see that captured the more global concerns that I've express and that others have expressed and that we could actually have the support of the committee behind it when it gets to the full dais.

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>> I'm happy to help review language. I feel like I'm out of my element. I know this is a public meeting and the agenda has been posted. And we have the message board and we won't be able to have a subquorum on whatever councilmember tovo has and have this publicly whether it's friendly acceptance or whether is it's something that needs more discussion. I'm very worried that we might be on the deep end on how to work through these things. >> Kitchen: Councilmember Fuentes? >> Fuentes: Thank you. I just wanted to share that I'm ready to move forward and be interested in taking a vote on this item and wanted to thank councilmember tovo for taking this forward. I definitely feel an urgency with moving forward on the water forward plan and certainly I would be supportive of us taking a vote today. >> Kitchen: Okay. Let's go ahead and take a

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vote. And we have a resolution and an amendment to that resolution on the floor, so let's take a vote on councilmember Ellis's amendment first and then the resolution itself. Does that make sense? Okay. All in favor of adding the language related to affordability at this point as councilmember Ellis has mentioned? Okay. So it will be added. All in favor of passing the resolution, and again that's -- passes on as a

recommendation to the full council to adopt it. Okay. All right. Thank you. So that passes unanimously. Thank you, councilmember tovo. We really appreciate your work on this. And appreciate you bringing

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it to us to consider. >> Tovo: Thank you all. Thanks for the support. >> Kitchen: Okay. Councilmember Fuentes, would you like to motion first and second it and then lay out your institution. >> Fuentes: Sure. I'll like to make a motion to move forward with this resolution that seeks to address the increased need for flood protection along with water supply needs. >> Kitchen: Okay. Do we have a second? Second from councilmember Ellis. >> Fuentes: Wonderful. So with this resolution we're looking at specifically the on-site reuse of storm water as an economic and environmental benefit to address both water supply and food management. It incorporates strategies from the water forward plan which relates to uses of water, including rainwater, storm water and the addition of wastewater. And it hones in on the recommendation from the water forward plan to

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develop ordinances that require new larger commercial and multi-family buildings' use of alternative water generated on-site. It pulls from the proposed Idc update around redevelopment requirements, around storm water management. And this is important, as you all know because older industrial, commercial and multi-family developments that lack provisions for managing storm water and this is especially important to my district here in southeast Austin given our history to the tricycle flooding events -- thetropic flooding events we've had in Austin that resulted in loss of life and hundreds of families displaced. So it's a majority for the district. So in short this resolution similar to councilmember kitchen's really is honing in on the need to increase flood protection and we'd

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set that in motion directing the city manager to come back or do the alternative water ordinance and incentives option, which is outlined in the water forward plan. Also looking at community storm water harvesting and assessing existing needs for rainwater harvesting at multi-family units. >> Kitchen: All right. Thank you so much for bringing this. I think it's really important and I appreciate the work that you've done focusing on flood protection. This really takes us to another level on that. So rather than just being responsive workingowards being preventive. Does anybody have any questions or comments? Councilmember alter. >> Alter: I saw this right before we started so I haven't had a chance to really dive into it. I agree with the problem and the need to address the

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flood protection and increase our -- on the increased need. I'm curious from staff what you take this as providing you direction to do that you're knots already doing or does this accelerate and focus intention on the water forward system. I want to make sure I understand it having just gotten into it. >> I'll start and we just got it too and so I think we're trying to absorb the language a little bit. I think water forward and on-site reuse has always envisioned rainwater capture and storm water runoff aspects of water forward as part of reuse. I don't know other aspects of the proposed language and how much that pulls in other watershed ordinances that you will go beyond just water forward. I don't know if Kevin or Marissa have had a chance to

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reflect on this and have anything they would like to pass on right now. >> I would say a couple of things. Certainly water forward does identify storm water capture and reuse as a potential strategy so it's in the water forward plan as a you potential strategy. Additionally a recently passed regulatory framework for on-site reuse includes and envisions the opportunity to reuse storm water on-site. So some level we've accommodated that. There are some more complicated aspects of trying to achieve storm water capture to achieve water quality protections and flooding protections and water supply. I mean, just by the nature.

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For those -- for holding reservoirs to work, they basically need to be empty. So we are working with watershed on kind of how do we find a way to better understand that co-benefit and how we could actually apply that in a more specific engineering context so again, I'm not sure that's particularly helpful other than it is part of the plan and we're moving forward. I'm not exactly sure what it would mean to kind of pick those up individually as it relates to this particular moment. >> Kitchen: Councilmember Fuentes. >> Fuentes: I think originally when we drafted this it was proposed as an amendment to councilmember kitchen to tie it in to redevelopment requirements for commercial developments and multi-families. So certainly it's to build

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off of work. And I see it as complimentary. I think it draws attention to the need to look at on-site reuse from the lens of flood protection and reducing flood risk. But I'm happy to -- if we bring it forward or however we bring it forward, happy to add additional language to make it more specific and then also

we can pull in some of the language and recommendations that came out of the memo from the flood resilience resolution that we passed earlier this year. >> Kitchen: Yes. That sounds good. Councilmember alter, did you have your hand raised? >> Yeah. I think that would be great. And if part of it is because I think it was comment as part of the other one. So I wanted to -- I wanted to make as much sense so that we're giving clear direction. And so I would be happy to

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assist in doing that. I just -- I think the problem you're trying to assess is fine and it could shape the amendment to the one that question just passed and we passed the amendment when it comes before council and we figure how to you to put in in there or on we write a separate resolution that builds out the focus for it. I just think it would be what I've learned is what we provide staff affects the product that we get back. And I think this is an important enough issue and we want to make sure that we have as much clarity as possible so we can add things to protect people from the flooding which I think is the goal that we all share. So I'll leave it to you, councilmember Fuentes, on how you want to proceed and I'm happy to assist with that. I'm a little bit I feel like it doesn't do enough for what it could do and I

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haven't had the time to think it through to add that or to make it an amendment. >> I have some thoughts on it, but first, councilmember pool. I was going to say that we amend the motion to say as an amendment too in an item that we already passed and to move forward so that it would be tied to the other action and maybe councilmember Fuentes and alter can work together and if there's some additional sin site that you want to bring to what councilmember Fuentes is bringing. But I think we can easily pass this as with the motion saying as an amendment to the previous item that we passed. >> Kitchen: I think it might make more sense on -- I think it fits.

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Basically what you're asking is that if I'm understanding correctly is you're asking that as part of considering implementation from these particular aspects of water forward related to -- that we look at the increased flood protection. So example, your second bullet is examination of implementation issues of community storm water harvesting. So that's a very specific ask and really what I think you're doing is you're asking that you examine the implementation issues for community storm water harvesting from the perspective that it adds to or addresses increased need for flood protection. So the existing needs for rainwater harvesting and multi-family sites is

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another example. So I think it makes sense as it is. It could add language as do this as part of your implementation and bring back a report to council it might just need language like that. So it's asking the city manager to address these items, but it doesn't have a report back or a next step specifically. Councilmember alter, did you want to say something? >> I think your comments are really helpful. This is basically saying we have water forward which is our water supply plan, but there are things that are in that that are strategies that have I am planning activities a indication for flood protection while you're implementing those and we want you tonight grate the flood protection benefits into [indiscernible] As part of the direction?

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>> I hear what you're saying, councilmember alter. This policy area is very important and so when we drafted it it was drafted as an amendment to councilmember kitchen's resolution. And so -- I think what I would like to do is either pass it as an amendment to councilmember kitchen's resolution and then work with you on really rounding out the flood resilience and flood protection, increasing flood protection. Or just crawl withdraw it and come back when we have some tighter language. >> Kitchen: I would suggest that we adopt it as an amendment to my resolution and then we'll go from there. Because I think it's really important and it's nice to carry all these together, I think. So I would suggest we do that. Does that make sense to everybody? And we can all work on the language and contribute to the language. Okay. All right.

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>> Pool: So the motion then is to adopt this item as an amendment to your item and send all through. Okay. Cool. >> Kitchen: All right. All in favor of that? It passes unanimously. Okay, everybody. Now we're moving to the last item. Thank you for all that work that was good conversation and discussion from everyone. Thank you. So the last item is to identify items at future meetings. Is there anything that anybody would like to bring forward right now. >> Pool: Chair? >> Kitchen: Councilmember pool.

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>> Pool: What I mentioned earlier about Tesla and the water project and impacts on drought planning and conservation plans. >> Kitchen: Okay. Councilmember alter? >> Alter: This may be watershed, but I think it's water. For our water quality lands, we had a lot of funding in our bond for purchase of those lands. We've made a lot of purchases. I think it might be useful to get a quick update on where we're at

and how much is left in the bond and if there are opportunities that we need to be thinking about on the horizon. They are out for allocation and we don't have another bond set very close since I want to see what we have to look ahead for that. I could be wrong because I don't have the data. >> Kitchen: Okay. That sounds good. Councilmember Ellis?

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>> Ellis: You may be planning to do it, but I would like to hear about the Ami so keep that on your list. >> Kitchen: Okay. Especially in the southwest. >> Ellis: Especially the southwest, but everybody has constituents who are wanting to get Ami installed. >> Kitchen: Yes! Okay. I think we already mentioned that we wanted to circle back on the drought. We covered some of that today. I think there are some to cover in terms of the status of our drought levels. Okay. Other items? Anything else? All right. Thank you all. I think we are at the end of our meeting now. So I'm going to close our meeting at 3:50. Thank you all.