



Item 39

## Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

**Meeting Date:** 9/25/12

**Prepared By/Phone Number:** Randy Nicholson #854-4603

**Division Director/Manager:** Anna Bowlin, Division Director, Development Services.

**Department Head:**  Steven M. Manilla, P.E., County Executive-TNR

**Sponsoring Court Member:** Commissioner Huber, Precinct Three

**AGENDA LANGUAGE:** Consider and take appropriate action on a request to hold a Water Supply Forum.

### **BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:**

TNR is preparing a Land, Water, and Transportation Plan (LWTP) that will become a framework for comprehensively planning, managing, and regulating the land, water, and transportation systems that TNR provides to county residents. The plan will include long term goals, programs, and strategies the court will use to guide the unincorporated areas orderly development and preservation of land and water resources. The plan is comprised of three key components: the Background Report, the Growth Guidance Policy Plan, and Public Engagement.

As part of the Background Report, TNR will convene a Water Supply Forum to elicit advice from a panel knowledgeable in this field. The charge of the panel is to identify specifically what the county can do to encourage and facilitate stewardship and the wise use of our water resources in new and existing private developments, some of which are currently faced with uncertain future water supplies, as well as our public parks, preserves, and green spaces. Guidance from the panel will be sought on how best to achieve any desired goals and objectives recommended.

Areas of interest could include but are not limited to:

- Subdivision development standards
- Sustainable site design, construction, operation, and maintenance
- Property protection from fires including wildfires
- Conservation Development Subdivision Rules
- Water conservation and reuse
- Surface water protection through development rules
- Adequate groundwater availability rules
- Surface water capture and storage
- Roles of Travis County in water supply and distribution

- Water availability for economically distressed areas
- The proliferation and reliability of water wells
- Travis County funding or providing financial support for water supply
- Water supply plans-do they assurance water service in the future?

Note that the county's authority to implement some recommendations may be limited by state law in some ways but a recommendation to pursue legislative change may be considered.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

TNR recommends holding a forum on Water Supply planning and that each court member appoint up to three members of the panel. The forum proceedings will become part of the LWTP Plan Background report. Suggested stakeholder categories for the panel include but are not limited to the following:

1. Private Sector Land Developer
2. Private Sector Utility Provider
3. Home Builders Association
4. Water Issues Attorney
5. Texas Water Development Board –Region K Staff
6. Lower Colorado River Water Planning Group Region K
7. LCRA
8. Travis County Groundwater Management Area 10
9. Travis County Public Interest (HOA or POA)
10. Municipal Utility
11. Travis County Small Business
12. Travis County Agriculture
13. Environmental

The forum is anticipated to require four hours and should be held this fall depending upon panel availability.

TNR staff members Jon White, Anna Bowlin, and Tom Weber will facilitate the panel of the experts with legal assistance to be provided by Tom Nuckols. Randy Nicholson will coordinate and administer logistics for the forum.

### **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:**

The LWTP Background Report is a tool to educate and inform about factors that are utilized to establish county policy. There are several issues related to comprehensive planning where water supply is important to gain a better understanding as to

potential County roles. This discussion will become part of the Background Report. In addition to including an overview of the current state of our water supply, it is appropriate to include a section of the plan on initiatives Travis County could undertake if it desires to take a leadership role in managing water supply resources.

**FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

None. Forum administration, logistics, and facilitation will utilize the resources of TNR staff and the panel will be asked to serve at no cost to the County.

**REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:**

Cynthia McDonald	Financial Manager	TNR	854-4239
Steve Manilla	County Executive	TNR	854-9429

**CC:**

Jon White			

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