



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Planning Commission Motion No. 19052

GENERAL PLAN REFERRAL  
HEARING DATE DECEMBER 19, 2013

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*Date:* December 12, 2013  
*Case No.:* **2008.1122EPR**  
*Project Name:* **San Francisco Groundwater Supply Project**  
*Zoning:* P (Public) Zoning District  
OS (Open Space) Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 7283/004 and 1700/001  
*Project Sponsor:* San Francisco Public Utilities Commission  
c/o Jeffrey Gilman  
525 Golden Gate Ave. 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
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**ADOPTING FINDINGS OF CONSISTENCY WITH THE GENERAL PLAN AND WITH THE PRIORITY POLICIES OF PLANNING CODE SECTION 101.1 FOR THE PROPOSED GROUNDWATER SUPPLY PROJECT AND FINDINGS UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT.**

WHEREAS, Section 4.105 of the City Charter and 2A.53 of Administrative Code require General Plan referrals to the Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") for certain matters, including determination as to whether the lease or sale of public property, the vacation, sale or change in the use of any public way, transportation route, ground, open space, building, or structure owned by the City and County, would be in-conformity with the General Plan prior to consideration by the Board of Supervisors.

On August 3, 2008, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission ("Project Sponsor") submitted an Environmental Evaluation Application to the Planning Department ("Department"), Case No. 2008.1122E, in connection with a project to provide an average of up to 4 million gallons per day ("mgd") of groundwater from the Westside Groundwater Basin to augment San Francisco's municipal water supply. The project, consisting of six groundwater wells, a pipeline distribution system, and a pH adjustment facility and chlorine analyzer, is located on the west side of the City on land owned by the City ("Project").

On December 30, 2009, the Department issued a Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (NOP) for the Project.

On March 13, 2013, the Department published the Draft Environmental Impact Report ("DEIR" or "Draft EIR") for the Project and provided public notice in a newspaper of general circulation of the availability of the DEIR for public review and comment. The DEIR was available for public comment until April 27, 2013.

The San Francisco Planning Commission held a public hearing on the DEIR on April 18, 2013 at a regularly scheduled meeting to solicit public comment regarding the DEIR.

The Department prepared responses to comments on environmental issues received at the public hearing and in writing during the public review period for the DEIR, prepared revisions to the text of the DEIR in response to comments received or based on additional information that became available during the public review period. This material was presented in a Draft Comments and Responses ("C & R") document, published on October 30, 2013, distributed to the Planning Commission and all parties who commented on the DEIR, and made available to others upon request at the Department.

A Final Environmental Impact Report ("FEIR" or "Final EIR") was prepared by the Department, consisting of the Draft EIR and the C&R document.

Project Environmental Impact Report files have been made available for review by this Commission and the public. These files are available for public review at the Planning Department at 1650 Mission Street, and are part of the record before this Commission.

On December 19, 2013, the Planning Commission reviewed and considered the Final EIR and found that the contents of the report and the procedures through which the Final EIR was prepared, publicized, and reviewed complied with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq.) ("CEQA"), 14 California Code of Regulations sections 15000 et seq. ("CEQA Guidelines"), and Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code ("Chapter 31").

The Commission found the Final EIR was adequate, accurate and objective, reflected the independent analysis and judgment of the Department and the Commission, and that the summary of comments and responses contained no significant revisions to the Draft EIR, and approved the Final EIR for the Project in compliance with CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines and Chapter 31.

The Planning Department, Jonas P. Ionin, is the custodian of records, located in the File for Case No. 2008.1122E, at 1650 Mission Street, Fourth Floor, San Francisco, California.

Department staff prepared a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program ("MMRP") for the Project and these materials were made available to the public and this Commission for this Commission's review, consideration and action.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Project Sponsor, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission ("SFPUC"), is proposing the San Francisco Groundwater Supply Project (Groundwater Supply Project). The proposed project would provide an average of up to 4 million gallons per day (MGD) of groundwater to augment San Francisco's

municipal water supply. All of the proposed groundwater well facilities would supply groundwater to existing reservoirs, where it would be blended with San Francisco's existing municipal water supply before distribution within the City. All project components would be located on the west side of San Francisco on land owned by the City and County of San Francisco (CCSF). The Groundwater Supply Project includes the following components:

Construction of six groundwater production well facilities, including: 1. The construction of four new groundwater well facilities; and 2. The conversion of two existing irrigation well facilities in Golden Gate Park to potable groundwater well facilities, if the SFPUC's Westside Recycled Water Project is also approved and constructed. Each of these facilities would include a groundwater well and a pump station. Disinfection equipment would be included at two of the groundwater well facilities, and pH-adjustment equipment would be installed at one well facility.

- Construction of a distribution system (including pipeline and connection points) to connect five of the groundwater well facilities to the SFPUC's existing Sunset Reservoir. The sixth well would connect to the SFPUC's Lake Merced Pump Station (which pumps water to both Sutro and Sunset Reservoirs) and would require a short length of new distribution piping.
- Construction of a pH adjustment facility at Sunset Reservoir within an addition to the existing reservoir building and a chlorine analyzer/sample station at the reservoir.

The Project is proposed to be implemented in two phases: (1) construction and operation of the four new well facilities to supply an annual average of approximately 2.5 to 3.0 mgd of groundwater; and (2) conversion of the two existing irrigation well facilities and operation of the converted irrigation wells to provide an additional annual average of approximately 1.0 to 1.5 mgd of groundwater. Phase 1 includes conversion of previously installed test wells to groundwater supply wells. These test wells are located at the proposed well sites south of Golden Gate Park and in Golden Gate Park at the proposed Central Pump Station well site. The SFPUC also would construct pipelines necessary to deliver groundwater from the Phase 1 well facilities to the existing municipal water supply system at Sunset Reservoir or the Lake Merced Pump Station.

Phase 2 of the Project would be implemented only if the SFPUC approves and constructs the San Francisco Westside Recycled Water Project, which is currently undergoing separate environmental review. The San Francisco Westside Recycled Water Project proposes to provide recycled water to Golden Gate Park and nearby golf courses. If this Project is approved and constructed, SFPUC would convert two existing groundwater well facilities in Golden Gate Park that now supply groundwater for park irrigation and lake fill to municipal water supply. Phase 2 includes extension of groundwater supply pipelines to the well facilities in Golden Gate Park. The existing irrigation piping system would be retained to serve as a backup irrigation supply for Golden Gate Park.

The three main objectives of the SFGW Project are:

- Expand and diversify the SFPUC's water supply portfolio to increase system reliability
- Increase the use of local water supply sources

- Reduce dependence on imported surface water

In addition, the Project is part of the SFPUC's adopted Water System Improvement Program ("WSIP") adopted by the SFPUC on October 30, 2008 (see Section I.c). The WSIP consists of over 70 local and regional facility improvement projects that would increase the ability of the SFPUC's water supply system to withstand major seismic events and prolonged droughts and to meet estimated water-purchase requests in the service areas. With the exception of the water supply goal, the overall WSIP goals and objectives are based on a planning horizon through 2030. The water supply goal to meet delivery needs in the SFPUC service area is based on a planning horizon through 2018. The overall goals of the WSIP for the regional water system are to:

- Maintain high-quality water.
- Reduce vulnerability to earthquakes.
- Increase water delivery reliability.
- Meet customer water supply needs.
- Enhance sustainability.
- Achieve a cost-effective, fully operational system.

The Project would help meet WSIP goals by increasing water delivery reliability and helping to meet customer water supply needs. In addition, the Project would provide potable groundwater for emergency supply in the event that an earthquake or other major catastrophe interrupts the delivery of imported surface water supplies from Hetch Hetchy Reservoir and the local watersheds.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

On December 19, 2013, the Planning Commission (hereinafter "Commission") conducted a public hearing on the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Project. The Commission reviewed and considered the EIR and found the contents of said report and the procedures through which the EIR was prepared, publicized and reviewed complied with the California Quality Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code section 21000 *et seq.*) ("CEQA"), the CEQA Guidelines (14 Cal. Code Reg. section 15000 *et seq.*), and Chapter 31 of the San Francisco Administrative Code.

On December 19, 2013, the Commission certified the Final EIR by Motion No. 19052. Additionally, the Commission adopted approval findings, including findings rejecting alternatives, amending a mitigation measure, and making a statement of overriding considerations, and adopted a mitigation monitoring and reporting program ("MMRP") pursuant to CEQA by Motion No. 19052, which findings and MMRP are incorporated by this reference as though fully set forth herein.

The proposal addresses the following relevant objectives and policies of the General Plan:

## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ELEMENT**

### **OBJECTIVE 5**

ASSURE A PERMANENT AND ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF FRESH WATER TO MEET THE PRESENT AND FUTURE NEEDS OF SAN FRANCISCO.

The City and County of San Francisco owns and operates one of the most extensive water and power systems in the world. At present, the supply of fresh water generated by the Hetch Hetchy/Water Department system is more than adequate. Current projections indicate that the present system will meet San Francisco's needs until the year 2020. Over the years, the consumption of fresh water in the city has risen substantially: over 100 percent between 1940 and 1971. This increase in water consumption is primarily due to commercial expansion and has occurred despite a decline in San Francisco's resident population since 1950.

Hetch Hetchy and the SFPUC should continue their excellent planning program to assure that the water supply will adequately meet foreseeable consumption demands. To this end, the City should be prepared to undertake the necessary improvements and add to the Hetch Hetchy/SFPUC system in order to guarantee the permanent supply. Furthermore, San Francisco should continually review its commitments for the sale of water to suburban areas in planning how to meet future demand.

#### **POLICY 5.1**

Maintain an adequate water distribution system within San Francisco.

*The project implements this policy. The proposed project would diversify and increase the reliability of San Francisco's water supply. It would provide an average of up to 4 million gallons per day of groundwater to augment San Francisco's municipal water supply.*

The San Francisco Groundwater Supply Project is consistent with Planning Code Section 101.1(b) Priority Policies as follows:

1. That existing neighborhood-serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses enhanced.  
*The Project would have no adverse effect on neighborhood serving retail uses or opportunities for employment in or ownership of such businesses. The proposed project would diversify and increase the reliability of San Francisco's water supply. A reliable water supply is essential for the preservation and enhancement of the neighborhood-serving uses.*
2. That existing housing and neighborhood character be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhood.  
*The Project would have no adverse effect on the City's housing stock or on neighborhood character. The Lake Merced, Central Pump Station, South Windmill Replacement, and North Lake well facilities are not located in any residential or commercial neighborhoods, but are rather located at Lake Merced and within Golden Gate Park and would not affect housing or neighborhood character. As for the proposed well facilities at South Sunset and West Sunset playgrounds, the proposed designs would be compatible with the surrounding playground facility buildings in both scale and design, and would not affect the overall neighborhood character. The proposed project facilities at these sites have received approval from the Civic Design Review Committee of the San Francisco Arts Commission.*

3. That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced.  
*The Project would preserve the City's supply of affordable housing by diversifying and increasing the reliability of the City's water supply.*
4. That commuter traffic not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking.  
*The Project would not result in commuter traffic impeding MUNI's transit service, overburdening the streets or altering current neighborhood parking. The proposed project would construct up to six well stations in the western half of San Francisco. Each well station would require one daily visit by an SFPUC staff person for maintenance purposes. As such, commuter traffic would not increase notably that would impede MUNI services or the streets.*
5. That a diverse economic base be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development, and that future opportunities for residential employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced.  
*The Project would not affect the existing economic base in this area. The proposed project would protect the diversity of retail and service uses already existing in the City by diversifying and increasing the reliability of the water supply.*
6. That the City achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake.  
*The proposed project would diversify and increase the reliability of San Francisco's water supply, which would improve the City's preparedness for an earthquake. The proposed project well stations would also serve as an emergency potable water supply after an earthquake. Moreover, the proposed project well stations would be designed and constructed to comply with applicable San Francisco Municipal Code standards to ensure public safety in the event of an earthquake.*
7. That landmarks and historic buildings be preserved.  
*The proposed project would not affect designated landmarks or buildings. Golden Gate Park is a registered Historic District; however, the proposed project would not affect any landmarks or historic buildings within Golden Gate Park, or affect any contributors to the historic district. The project would construct a total of three well stations inside Golden Gate Park. One of the wells would be located next to the Central Pump Station, which is not a historic landmark or building, and the adjacent yard area is currently used as a wood waste storage and composting facility. The other two well facilities in Golden Gate Park would replace two existing well stations, neither of which are historic buildings as they were constructed in early 2000s.*
8. That our parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas be protected from development.  
*The proposed project has been designed in coordination with the SFRPD. New well stations would be constructed at South Sunset and West Sunset playgrounds. Three wells stations would be constructed in Golden Gate Park, one new well located next to the Central Pump Station, and two wells that would renovate the existing wells at South Windmill Replacement and North Lake irrigation wells. The*

*proposed well facilities would not be located on active play fields at South Sunset or West Sunset playgrounds, or in high visitor use areas in Golden Gate Park. The proposed project facility at the South Sunset Playground would include a room devoted exclusively to SFRPD storage for use in connection with the existing recreation uses. As the West Sunset Playground site, an area devoted to soils storage for use on the adjacent fields is proposed for use by the SFRPD.*

*Siting a well facility in the undeveloped forested area at the Central Pump Station well facility site would not substantially reduce Golden Gate Park recreation use areas, as this site is not highly used for recreation, and is adjacent to an existing, active irrigation pumping station and wood waste storage area. The site would include an approximately 798 square foot building with a resin-paved driveway and parking for worker site visits and maintenance. Therefore, the various recreational opportunities within the park would remain available during project construction activities and operations and would not be affected by completion of the proposed project.*

*The proposed Golden Gate Park wells would provide a backup irrigation supply and ornamental lake supply for Golden Gate Park, which would contribute to the upkeep of existing recreation areas in the park. For the reasons stated above, the proposed project would not affect public parks and open spaces operated and maintained by the SFRPD.*

*The proposed project would not affect the parks' access to vistas and sunlight. The Urban Design Element of the General Plan does not identify any scenic vistas near any of the proposed well facilities to be located within Golden Gate Park or on the Sunset District playgrounds.*

*The well facilities at West Sunset and South Sunset playgrounds would be located in out of the way spots and would not affect the vistas either from within or outside the playgrounds. The well buildings would be approximately 15 feet tall at those locations and would not block access to sunlight.*

*Within Golden Gate Park, the proposed project would not affect any significant vistas. The new well next to the Central Pump Station would be located in a wooded area. The well facility at North Lake would be immediately south of Fulton Street, and in another wooded area. The proposed project would demolish the current well building at North Lake and replace it with another similar utilitarian structure. The South Windmill Replacement well facility would also be a renovation of an existing well facility. The South Windmill Replacement site is in the western end of the Park and is in an area that is currently used to store logs, and contains stockpiles of soil, concrete blocks and other debris, and therefore does not represent a scenic vista. Because two of the wells in Golden Gate Park would be replacement wells, no new shade would be created. The well station at Central Pump Station would be in an existing wooded, shady area, and therefore, would also not create additional shade.*

The Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting to consider the proposed findings of General Plan conformity on December 19, 2013.

On December 19, 2013, the Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting to consider the General Plan Referral application, Case No. 2008.1122EPR. The Commission

heard and considered public testimony presented at the hearing and has further considered written and oral testimony provided by Department staff and other interested parties.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission hereby adopts the CEQA Findings set forth in Motion No. 19052X) and finds the proposed groundwater supply project, as described above, to be consistent with the General Plan of the City and County of San Francisco, including, but not limited to the Environmental Protection Element, and is consistent with the eight Priority Policies in City Planning Code Section 101.1 for reasons set forth in this motion.

I hereby certify that the Planning Commission ADOPTED the foregoing Motion on December 19, 2013.

Jonas P. Ionin  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Commissioners Hillis, Borden, Sugaya, Antonini, Moore, and Wu

NAYES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Fong

ADOPTED: December 19, 2013

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