

Water Service Area Policy Review

Comments from 10.20.11 and 10.24.11 Meetings Grouped by Theme

NO NEED FOR CHANGE NOW/ CONCERNS ABOUT MOVING AWAY FROM POLICY

- Low number of denials/appeals shows process is working
- Haven't had enough time to know if policy is working or not
- Concern that criteria become too porous that the policy is watered down
- Don't chip away at policy through small changes

POLICY HURTS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Policy discourages economic development
- Commercial projects currently in jeopardy
- Consider short term economic benefit by allowing exemptions for development
- In 'pink' areas, annexation requirement may impact our ability to attract a company – creates an additional hurdle/uncertainty

POLICY DOES NOT HURT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Poor education system is deterring industry more than water policy
- Our environment is the "golden goose" here

EXPAND THE BOUNDARY IN THE SW

- May be better to expand SW boundary rather than modify infill criteria
- SW was identified as a growth area in W/WW Study
- City has moral obligation to serve SW (through some means – wheeling, etc.)
- Why is City not following through with earlier decisions to provide service in SW area?
- Development occurred in SW based on previous policy
- Allowing infill in SW is not a large water resource impact (much undevelopable land)
- Look at infill in SW before expanding boundary in SE
- There is development in the SW
- Lower lift/energy cost in SW due to elevation and proximity to source
- Consider benefits of infill to using existing TW infrastructure

CONCERNS ABOUT EXPANSION/ WATER RESOURCES, FUTURE UNCERTAINTIES, COSTS

- Need to consider future water limits articulated by regional and state planning studies such as Morrison Inst.
- Need to ensure sufficient water is dedicated to environmental needs
- Concern about backing off policy in any major way because of future uncertainties
- There are limits to water supplies if expansion occurs beyond current boundaries
- Consider whether agricultural water is really available over the long term
- How will climate change impact ability to meet future water needs for current available lands for development if water supplies decrease/
- Need to consider down sides of annexation and true costs of growth
- Ratepayer concerns if we expand infrastructure outside of existing service area
- Wheeling could be counterproductive to service area boundary

POTENTIAL MITIGATIONS TO EXPANSION

- Good to store as much water as possible
- Need to calculate water resource needs in SE and SW
- If we expand in one area, need to retract in another
- Consider water use requirements between commercial and residential
- Need to attract appropriate industries for Tucson from a water use perspective
- Charge customers outside a higher rate

PURSUE EXPANSION ALTERNATIVES/ WHEELING, GRANDFATHERING, SALE OF ASSETS

- Wheeling agreements, grandfathering, and sale of TW infrastructure should be pursued in non-expansion areas to provide an alternative path
- Service should be provided in some way in non-expansion areas (wheeling, grandfathering, sales of assets, etc.)
- Many parcels have already completed development process, and now some undeveloped areas are excluded
- Timeframe for construction planning exceeds time limitations in will serve letters
- Provide service to those with development plans approved under earlier policy that have tentative plat approval and expired will serve letter
- TW should consider selling assets in non-service areas
- Should there be criteria for wheeling water?

MODIFY INFILL CRITERIA

- Consider making infill criteria larger for commercial (20 acre has no relationship to commercial)
- Commercial properties provide more economic benefit
- Reconsider size requirement if there are 4 sides of service
- Gross rather than net penalizes protecting sensitive areas
- Consider location of existing water lines

STREAMLINE ANNEXATION/PADA PROCESS

- PADA process too cumbersome (e.g. Mayor and Council continuing an approval)
- Developer risk and cost goes up with increased time and uncertainties
- Improve procedures and process without chipping away at policy
- Allow areas outside to incorporate

CLARIFY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EXEMPTION PROCESS

- Need to further refine/clarify the economic development exemption
- Define the criteria for determining if it qualifies
- There may be reluctance to go through public process to determine exemption
- Economic development mechanism should be clear and streamlined