



Legislation Text

File #: 16-527, **Version:** 1

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SUBJECT: Public Hearing for the Approval of the Memorandum of Understanding for the Formation of the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency

REPORT IN BRIEF

Considers adopting Resolution declaring the City's intention to fulfill its commitment to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and a Memorandum of Understanding with the Merced Irrigation District, City of Atwater, City of Livingston, Le Grand Community Services District, Planada Community Services District, and Winton Water and Sanitary District to Establish the Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Merced Area.

RECOMMENDATION

City Council - Adopt a motion:

- A. Adopting **Resolution 2017-25**, A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Merced, California, declaring its intention to fulfill its commitment to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act as part of the Merced Irrigation - Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency Memorandum of Understanding for our portion of the Merced Groundwater Basin; and
- B. Approving the Memorandum of Understanding with the Merced Irrigation District, City of Atwater, City of Livingston, Le Grand Community Services District, Planada Community Services District, and Winton Water and Sanitary District; and,
- C. Authorizing the City Manager or Assistant City Manager to sign the necessary documents to establish The City of Merced as a part of the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MIUGSA).

ALTERNATIVES

- 1. Approve, as recommended by staff; or,
- 2. Modify the action (specify in motion); or,
- 3. Deny; or,
- 4. Continue item to a future City Council meeting (date and time to be specified in the City Council motion).

AUTHORITY

Charter of the City of Merced, Article II, Section 200.

CITY COUNCIL PRIORITIES

As provided for in the 2016-17 Adopted Budget.

DISCUSSION

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was passed in September of 2014 and became law on January 1, 2015. SGMA requires all high and medium priority groundwater basins to be managed by one or more groundwater sustainability agencies (GSA). These GSAs will have the authority, and obligation, to develop one or more groundwater sustainability plans (GSP) that develops solutions for the long-term sustainable management of local groundwater resources. The GSP(s) needs to be adopted by either January 31, 2020 or January 31, 2022, depending on whether or not the particular subbasin is in a condition of critical overdraft.

Each groundwater subbasin must have all of its geographic area covered by one or more GSA(s) by June 30, 2017. The Merced Groundwater Subbasin is considered to be a critically over drafted basin, therefore our GSP is due January 31, 2020.

The City of Merced has been working with other local public agencies for the last two years to develop the Merced Irrigation-Urban Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MIUGSA). The Merced Groundwater Subbasin is expected to be managed by three GSAs, namely a Merced County GSA, Turner Island GSA and the proposed MIUGSA. Collectively, the goal is to develop a single GSP to coordinate the management of groundwater resources for the basin as a whole. The signatory agencies to the three GSAs have, so far, committed to develop a single GSP for the entire basin.

The public agencies to be included in the MIUGSA are:

City of Atwater
City of Livingston
City of Merced
Le Grand Community Services District
Merced Irrigation District
Planada Community Services District
Winton Water and Sanitary District

The boundary of the MIUGSA is generally the footprint of the MID boundary. This area lies south of the Merced River and generally north of the Chowchilla River.

The process to achieve the MIUGSA is:

- Each Agency sets a Public Hearing and publishes a notice of the Public Hearing per SGMA requirements.
- Each Agency holds a Public Hearing per SGMA requirements
- Each Agency authorized execution of the MOU
- Merced Irrigation District compiles the fully-executed MOU and required documentation per SGMA to file for a single GSA e.g. the MIUGSA, anticipated by the end of May 2017.

IMPACT ON CITY RESOURCES

The attached Memorandum of Understanding outlines percentages associated with sharing in the cost of GSA development. It is anticipated that the City of Merced share of cost in the first year is

approximately \$250,000.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution forming the MIUGSA
2. Memorandum of Understanding for the formation of the Merced Irrigation Urban Groundwater Sustainable Agency
3. Exhibit A
4. Exhibit B