

SWEETWATER AUTHORITY

Engineering and Operations Committee

January 13, 2025



REVISED

Development Services Update – August 15, 2024 through December 31, 2024

CONCLUSION

This is an information item.

OVERVIEW

Authority staff last provided a development services update to the Board at its August 26, 2024 meeting, with the update capped through August 14, 2024. This informational item presents a Development Services update from August 15, 2024, through December 31, 2024, and focuses on the following information:

- An update on continuing improvements to better serve development customers
- Highlights from development services activities.

Continuing Improvements to Development Services Program

To enhance interagency protocols and streamline permitting and construction processes for developer clients, Authority staff has been engaging regularly with the cities of Chula Vista and National City staff since June 2024. These discussions focus on improving the development review process and addressing project-specific inquiries. Initially, these meetings occurred at the management level but have since transitioned to staff-level meetings involving personnel directly responsible for the daily plan check reviews of private development submissions. The process improvements that have been implemented since the last Development Services Update provided to the Board are:

- The Board adopted Resolution 24-18 on December 11, 2024, amending the Rates and Rules and its Supplement to clarify fire service requirements for accessory dwelling units, thereby streamlining the development project review process.
- City of Chula Vista staff now advises their developer clients to consult with the Authority early to determine if their project requires a plan check for public water infrastructure improvements. This encourages concurrent reviews by both agencies where applicable. Developers are urged to refrain from initiating the plan check review with the Authority until the plan check review with the City of Chula Vista has concluded or is nearing completion. This approach may result in a reduction of review iterations by the Authority.
- The templates for design review and water availability letters have been updated to include the rationale for the Authority's request for consumer-side piping size and layout details on the plans. This ensures that adequate water flow and pressure are delivered to customers.
- Due to vacancies in the Engineering Manager positions during this period, roles for certain staff were re-evaluated to prioritize work effectively. This aims to maintain the same level of service for our developer clients and to achieve faster turnaround times for reviews where feasible.
- Continued to offer pre-submittal meetings for complex development projects. This has resulted in developers having a better understanding of different approaches to delivering water to its development while complying with Authority design standards and Rates and Rules.

- Staff is working on implementing a software to better track development submittals, including a public facing portal.

Highlights from Development Services Activities

Authority staff continues to strive for excellence in addressing the needs of the development community in our service area. The table below shows the numbers of new projects submitted and approved for construction from August 15, 2024 through December 31, 2024, with the timeframe it took to review submittals during that period, including the ones that were not approved for construction, in addition to the Authority’s current backlog for review.

| Timeframe | New Projects Submitted | Projects Approved for Construction | Timeframe to Complete the Review | Current Projects in Backlog |
|---|------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| August 15, 2024 through December 31, 2024 | 110 | 65 | 4-6 weeks | 28 |

In addition, the following activities were performed by Authority staff:

- Approximately 50 letters including design review, design requirements, and fee and deposit letter were processed per month.
- A total of 168 customer calls were answered, mostly for accessory dwelling units, static pressure at specific parcels, or development services process inquiries.
- A total of 33 Fire Flow Requests were completed.

The following are updates on notable development projects:

- **Citrus Bay Development:** The project consists of a multi-family development comprising 256 townhomes over a 13-acre site, which is the former location of the Sears retail store at the Chula Vista Center Mall. The project is currently under construction, and the easements granted to the Authority for water facilities have been recorded.
- **SBCS Community Service Building:** The project consists of a four (4)-story administration office with community meeting space in Chula Vista. In July 2024, Authority staff approved the improvements plans, followed by issuing a Notice to Proceed for construction in November 2024. The project is currently under construction.
- **Chula Vista Bayfront Redevelopment, H-3 Parcel:** Staff continued to provide construction inspection services for the public water facilities being installed for this project. The public facilities serving the site have been installed, and connections to the distribution system have been made. Acceptance testing of the cathodic protection (CP) system for the welded steel pipe and other minor punch list items were incorporated. The final verification of the CP system and updating the acceptance testing report are the only remaining tasks related to the Authority’s involvement in this project.

Feedback Received from Developers

Following direction from the Board in April 2021, staff continues to request and collect post-project surveys from each developer. Since the previous update to the Board in August 2024, no developer surveys have been received. However,

the Authority periodically receives emails from developers and its representatives expressing gratitude for the coordination and extra effort that staff puts into developer projects.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this update.

OPTIONS

This is an information item.

Staff Contact:

Carlos Quintero, General Manager

Roberto Yano, Assistant General Manager

Erick Del Bosque, Director of Engineering and Operations

Kyehee Kim, Engineering Manager

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Attachment

Staff Presentation

Strategic Plan

Strategic Plan Goal No. 2: System and Water Supply Reliability – Achieve an uninterrupted, long-term water supply through investment, maintenance, innovation and developing local water resources.

- Objective SR7: Proactively engage and coordinate with the land use agencies, development community, residents, and businesses on public water infrastructure requirements to ensure proposed public facilities meet Authority standards, and to expedite review process.
 - Task 1: Obtain development information once a month from each land use agency, to determine which development projects require public water infrastructure review of compliance with Authority standards.
 - Task 2: Attend once a month a public event for local outreach, to disseminate information on Authority development requirements.
 - Task 3: Provide quarterly updates to the Board on highlights of development services efforts and process improvements.
 - Task 4: Install and/or upgrade water facilities for developer customers in accordance with approved plans, as needed and based on fees collected from developers.
- Objective CS3: Explore and implement process improvements to better serve developer customers.
 - Task 1: As part of quarterly updates to the Board on development services (SR7-3), report to the Board on process improvements made to better serve developer customers.

Past Board Actions

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|-------------------|--|
| December 11, 2024 | The Board adopted Resolution 24-18 amending the Rates and Rules and the Supplement. |
| August 26, 2024 | The Board received a Development Services update (Information Item) |
| June 12, 2024 | The Board approved the FY 2024-25 Strategic Plan Detailed Work Plan. |
| March 13, 2024 | The Board received a Development Services update (Information Item) |
| October 11, 2023 | The Board received a Development Services Improvements Implementation Plan and Development Services update (Information Item) |
| April 12, 2023 | <p>The Board directed staff to prepare an implementation plan for consideration at a future Board meeting; and present it to the Engineering and Operations Committee meeting for input.</p> <p>The Board received a Development Services update from staff (Information Item)</p> |