



CONSERVING FOR THE FUTURE:

City Council Approves Consultant for Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasibility Study

BUDA, TX — Engineering Consultant **CH2M** will conduct an Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Feasibility Study for the City of Buda. On August 2, 2016, City Council approved the agreement with the engineering company. The study is anticipated to be complete within six months.

The concept behind ASR is simple. Water is stored in a suitable aquifer and retrieved for later use, particularly during the dry summer months. In Buda's case one likely scenario would involve storing a portion of the City's Edwards Aquifer groundwater supply in the Trinity Aquifer during the winter and recovering it during summer months when water demand is at its highest.

If geological conditions are favorable, ASR also opens up the possibility of "banking" water over multiple years to have available during an extended drought.

"Drought resiliency is one of the huge benefits that ASR can add to an existing water supply," said Buda Water Specialist Brian Lillibridge. "It's especially relevant during a declared drought when our available groundwater is subject to mandatory reductions of up to fifty percent, depending on the severity of the drought. The ability to store a large volume of water to offset pumping reductions is invaluable."

ASR is a proven technology that is being successfully used in Texas (San Antonio, El Paso, Kerrville) and throughout the U.S. to enhance local water supplies. Councilmember Angela Kennedy, who also chairs the Buda Water and Wastewater Steering Committee, is looking forward to the results of the study.

"The ASR feasibility study will help us determine if the Trinity aquifer near Buda is capable of accommodating an ASR project and how we would benefit from implementing it into our current supply. I am very excited about getting started on it!"

Some components of the city's ASR feasibility study will include:

- An assessment of the Trinity Aquifer and its suitability for supporting an ASR project designed for either short-term (seasonal) or multi-year storage
- Examination of the city's existing water supply to determine how it may interact with native water when stored below ground

- Suitability and cost of converting existing city facilities to an ASR project

"We're excited to have CH2M on board for this effort. They have an extensive background in developing a number of ASR projects of varying size and complexity," said Lillibridge. "Active projects that CH2M has developed include San Antonio Water System's large-scale ASR Facility in south Bexar County as well as the City of Kerrville's expanding ASR system. CH2M has also engaged in some very recent local work to assess the Trinity Aquifer for ASR compatibility, so they are bringing a great deal of pertinent knowledge to this effort."

The ASR Feasibility study is another step in identifying viable water conservation options for the City.

"Making the best and most efficient use of our current supplies through water sharing agreements, water recycling and water conservation pushes the need for more expensive supplies further into the future and saves Buda Citizens money," said Councilmember Angela Kennedy. "The City of Buda has chosen the most economically and environmentally sustainable approach to managing our water resources."

With Buda growing at a rapid pace, Kennedy says the City has been proactive when it comes to water conservation.

"Buda has been extremely progressive in our approach to water conservation through our 'purple' pipe (water reuse) program and in evaluating many potentially feasible options for protecting and conserving our water supply. Much of this has been possible because of very capable City Staff, support from City Council, and through partnerships with world class consultants, BSEACD and the Region K water planning group."

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