



Talk of the Town Letter March 1, 2022

Mayor Phil Goode

Prescott's Draft Water Policy February 1, 2022

Dear Citizens of Prescott:

For the past several months, Prescott City Council and the Water Issues Subcommittee have been working with staff to draft a revised water policy that will meet the needs of our current users, and create a sensible plan for growth in Prescott for years to come. Water use is a primary concern for many of our residents. How we use and conserve water will have an impact on the entire Prescott region for many years to come.

There are 24 points to the policy. Here are a few particularly important items for consideration:

1. The City is using the Water Resource Management Model (WRMM) to determine actual water usage within the City's Water Service Area. Water usage is more accurate than ever through the use of over 22,000 utility billing records, which take the guesswork out of water usage within the City. The WRMM eliminates the need for estimating water and provides a policy that sets actual water usage by user type. (Policy 3)
2. Private development projects already underway such as Deep Well, Arizona Eco Development, Prescott Lakes, and other subdivisions already have the right to water from Development Agreements approved by prior Council's. The water for these projects has already been contractually obligated and accounted for as "Committed" and "Projected" water demands in the City's Water Resource Management Model (WRMM).
3. The Council is considering going back to a "Water Budget" for new residential and non-residential projects that the City is not already contractually obligated to provide water to. The "Water Budget" would be set bi-annually and no single project would be able to receive more than half of the remaining balance in the budget at the time of the request. Administrative requests would also be included as part of the "Water Budget".
4. Providing water to property outside the City limits has been a hotly debated topic. Providing water and sewer service to properties outside the Prescott Water Service Area, as defined by the City's voter approved General Plan, would not be allowed under the proposed draft policy. Properties within these areas that could be potentially annexed, may be considered, but would require water saving measures, as well as the return of wastewater flows for potential recharge into the aquifer.

The draft policy is being reviewed by the City's Water Issues Sub Committee, then will be reevaluated by Council within the next several weeks. It is important to note that citizen input has been paramount in the Council's deliberations to this point. The draft policy has been posted on the City Website since early January, and we encourage citizens to review this, and comment. City staff has already gathered many comments, and is reporting back to Council on a regular basis. There is still time for you to be heard, both through comments, and at upcoming public meetings.

To review the draft water policy and comment, go to Prescott-az.gov, and click on the 2022 Draft Water Management Policy tile on the home page. We have the opportunity to create a sustainable water policy so that generations to come can benefit.

Phil Goode, Mayor
City of Prescott