



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: DECEMBER 17, 2019
FROM: PUBLIC UTILITIES DEPARTMENT WARD: ALL
SUBJECT: RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES WILDFIRE MITIGATION PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH SENATE BILL 901

ISSUE:

Approve the Riverside Public Utilities Wildfire Mitigation Plan in accordance with Senate Bill 901.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the City Council approve the Riverside Public Utilities Wildfire Mitigation Plan in accordance with Senate Bill 901.

BACKGROUND:

Riverside Public Utilities (RPU) Wildfire Mitigation Plan (WMP) is designed to meet the standards set forth by Senate Bill (SB) 901, which was signed into law September 2018. SB 901 tasked all private and publicly owned utilities and corporations to construct, maintain, and operate their electrical system in a manner that will minimize the risk of wildfire. Additionally, SB 901 requires utilities to submit and update a wildfire mitigation plan annually and for utilities to hire a qualified independent evaluator to review and assess the comprehensiveness of its WMP.

On July 12, 2019, Assembly Bill (AB) 1054 was passed along with AB 111. Both bills, complement SB 901 and the existing regulations related to wildfire mitigation. AB 1054 does not add to the required content for a WMP but does add an additional process requirement that the WMP be submitted to the newly formed Wildfire Safety Advisory Board (“Wildfire Board”) by July 1st of each year. In accordance with SB 901 requirements, RPU will prepare and present the WMP to its governing board by January 1, 2020. Upon approval, RPU will comply with AB 1054 by submitting the WMP to the Wildfire Board by July 1 of each year.

DISCUSSION:

SB 901 established several requirements that a Wildfire Mitigation Plan must effectively cover, including, but not limited to:

1. Persons Responsible
2. Objectives of the Plan
3. Preventative Strategies
4. Evaluation Metrics
5. Impact of Metrics
6. De-Energization Protocols
7. Customer Notification Procedures
8. Vegetation Management
9. Inspections
10. Prioritization of Wildfire Risks
11. CPUC Fire Threat Map Adjustments
12. Enterprise Wide Risks
13. Restoration of Service
14. Monitoring and Auditing the Plan
15. Qualified Independent Evaluator

RPU's WMP addresses all required sections of the legislation with the exception of being evaluated by a qualified independent evaluator. As noted, RPU is required to have the WMP reviewed by an independent evaluator to ensure that the plan meets the requirements of the legislation. However, the Wildfire Board, which is tasked with identifying the firms that will be considered qualified evaluators, has not yet provided the list. Once the Wildfire Board has identified qualified evaluators, RPU will have the WMP reviewed and, if necessary, will refine the WMP to address any recommendations. RPU did utilize recommendations set forth by the California Municipal Utilities Association (CMUA). These recommendations provided a template for public utilities such as Riverside to follow to meet the requirements. Furthermore, RPU shall adhere to submission deadlines and keep accurate track of plan performance metrics and data associated with the plan.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact for the approval of the Riverside Public Utilities Wildfire Mitigation Plan.

Prepared by: Todd M. Corbin, Utilities General Manager
Certified as to
availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer
Approved by: Al Zelinka, FAICP, City Manager
Approved as to form: Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachments: Wildfire Mitigation Plan (WMP)