



Utility Advisory Committee

Downtown Toilets - Wastewater Utility Funding

Agenda Date: 3/2/2017
Agenda Item Number:
File Number: 17-0195

Type: discussion **Version:** 1 **Status:** Filed

Title

Downtown Toilets - Wastewater Utility Funding

Recommended Action

Review and provide input.

Staff Contact:

Andy Haub, Water Resources Director, 360.753.8475

Background and Analysis:

In December 2016, City Council requested that the UAC provide feedback regarding the policy and financial implications of using Wastewater Utility funds for the construction and maintenance of downtown public toilets. More recently, Council has taken interim action on funding toilets using Wastewater funds and is currently considering using additional wastewater funds.

Three related Council actions are in the works:

- In February, City Council authorized the expenditure of Wastewater Utility funds for the operation and maintenance of two portable toilet facilities to be located downtown. The estimated total cost is \$70,200 in 2017. Funding will come from the Wastewater Utility. The portable facilities are part of a pilot program subject to review later this year.
- On March 21, City Council will host a public hearing addressing funding allocations for the federal Community Development Block Grant administered by the City's Community Planning and Development Department. The allocations include funding for a "Portland Loo". The Loo is a modular restroom connected to sanitary sewer (See attached photo). The estimated cost of the Loo including construction is roughly \$350,000. Depending upon the availability of other funding sources, the Wastewater Utility could be responsible for approximately \$26,000 of the \$350,000.
- Previously, Council asked the UAC to consider the policy and financial implications of Wastewater funding for an additional 3-4 Portland Loos. Costs would include construction (+/- \$350,000 each) plus \$30,000 annually for operation and maintenance.

Paying for public restrooms with Utility funding is legally acceptable. The policy considerations and financial implications of the potential funding have not been addressed in past Utility planning and financial evaluations.

Given the Council request, UAC input and recommendations to City Council is appropriate.

Financial Impact:

Utility funding of \$70,000 and potentially up to \$96,000 in 2017 will come from fund balances typically transferred to the Wastewater capital construction program. More appreciable funding in 2018 could be provided by a rate increase or reprioritization of other wastewater construction projects. Generating \$100,000 of wastewater funds requires a 1.75% rate increase.

Attachments:

Photo of a Loo