

OREGON SUMMER FELLOWSHIP PROJECT BRIEF

Sunrise Water Authority Project

July 2023 – September 2023, Chandler Norton Oregon Summer Fellow

PROJECT GOALS

To review Sunrise Water Authorities (SWA) rules and regulations and offer consultation via reports and discussions. The second goal was to help SWA get a sense of HB2001 within the context of their line of work. The main questions answered were:

1. What are other water districts and city utilities doing to their rules and regulations to modernize?
2. What could or should SWA implement? What are ways they can avoid liability?
3. What are other locales around the state doing about HB2001 and how might it impact water utilities?
4. Multi-cluster housing provides issues with system development charges what are other locales doing and why are they doing that?

TAKE-AWAYS

- SWA is in a unique position as they are not privately owned, but they are not run by a city. Which gives them some freedom within their rules and regulations, but they still want them to be simple to understand and modern. As well there was a vested interest to alleviate possible liability for SWA.
- SWA is supposed to run at cost as well as look for equitable solutions where possible. So, system development charges provide significant challenges. Depending on how the board acts, based on said report may change pricing to incentivize multi-cluster housing or not.
- Many utilities work the same way in how they bill users, so it is reasonable to look at other utilities for guidance.

CHALLENGES

The challenges present during this project are mostly related to timeline. During the 10 weeks of work there were 2 projects and the scale of each was quite lopsided. However, time was inversely correlated to scaling. The second project required content analysis and interviews over a smaller period which created harsher work

experiences. The other main challenge was the lack of feedback from the sponsor. Much of what was being done was the first work I had put into practice, and it was hard to tell what was being done well and what needed work.

STRATEGY

SWA rules and regulations were analyzed under the guidance of the sponsor. Areas of interest for updates were known. Then a robust content analysis of 6 other water utilities, both cities and authorities were considered until an ideal template was found and that worked as the guideline for SWA rules and regulation update. With a back and forth with the manager until he was satisfied with the product.

The next section of work required a different approach as interviews were involved. Not only was there a similar process for analyzing rules and regulations, but interviews were conducted to see what local leaders were thinking with the changes to house zoning codes. This included reading many documents and watching meetings for boards to see why they might make a certain choice. Finally topped off with interviews were possible to get a big picture view of HB2001 and how it could be dealt with from SWAs perspective.

RESULTS

The first report will advise the team at SWA how they might go forward in adopting new rules and regulations. There are specific notes that speak to language used and why it is used, who benefits from said language. This will inform them how to modernize their rules and regulations.

The technical memo will give a deep overview of City, County, and other authorities approach to HB2001 and system development charges. However, how they proceed is based on their board. My memo is designed to inform them of the benefits of certain actions. Why certain actions might be taken and other circumstances such as pricing.

Both sections of the project are aimed at informing people who may not be super familiar with the policy area of their work. Hopefully, this leads to informed policy decisions.

