



**STAFF REPORT**  
**5/13/2026**

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**FROM:** Cástulo R. Estrada, Utilities Director

**SUBJECT:** Authorize the Interim City Manager to execute Professional Services Agreements with Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc. to Perform the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) and CEQA-Plus analysis, in the amount of \$72,430.00

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

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**BACKGROUND:**

California officially adopted a Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 10 parts per billion (ppb) for Chromium-6 (hexavalent chromium; Cr-6 or Cr(VI)) in drinking water, effective October 1, 2024. This regulation makes California the first state to set a specific limit, stricter than the current 100-ppb total chromium federal standard. Until its readoption of the 10-ppb threshold, Cr-6 was regulated in California applying a 50-ppb threshold. The City of Coachella and its Coachella Water Authority (CWA) is now required to comply with state requirements to lower Cr- 6 levels in drinking water by October 2027.

CWA's existing water system consists of different pressure zones, groundwater wells, storage reservoirs, booster pumping stations, and distribution facilities. CWA has one principal source of water supply: local groundwater pumped from CWA owned and operated wells. There are currently six (6) wells within the CWA's distribution system. A seventh well (Well No. 20) has been drilled and is under construction.

The total pumping capacity of active wells is approximately 11,400 gallons per minute (gpm) or 16.5 million gallons per day (MGD). CWA has three (3) storage reservoirs within the City, with a total reservoir storage capacity of approximately 10.5 MG. The current system serves approximately 9,000 customers.

**DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:**

This proposal describes the effort that will be completed by Terra Nova under the direction of the CWA to review the City's compliance measures for Cr-6 pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and provide CEQA-Plus analysis and compliance for the CWA Chromium-6 Treatment Facilities Project. CWA has determined that it will prepare an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) as the CEQA-Plus documentation for the project, and it will serve as Lead Agency for CEQA purposes.

CWA will also be applying for funding through the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB or SWB) State Revolving Fund (SRF) program. Therefore, the CEQA document will be prepared in accordance with the SWRCB's CEQA-Plus requirements to comply with applicable federal EPA National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, as the SRF consists in part of pass-through funds from the U.S. EPA. The primary objective of the Chromium-6 Treatment Facilities Project is to enable CWA to achieve compliance with the new Cr-6 regulations.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Requesting \$72,430.00 into City Project W-55 Hexavalent Chromium Treatment from undesignated reserves in the Water Fund.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc. Proposal