

FINAL REPORT

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW

Prepared for:

Sonoma Local Agency Formation Commission

Prepared by:

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I. INTRODUCTION

In 1997, the State Legislature convened a special commission to study and make recommendations to address California's rapidly accelerating growth. The Commission on Local Governance for the 21st Century focused energies on ways to empower the already existing Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) in California's counties. The Commission's final report, *Growth within Bounds*, recommended various changes to local land use laws and LAFCO statutes. Assembly Speaker Robert Hertzberg encompassed the recommendations of the Commission in Assembly Bill 2838, which passed into the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000. The new law endows LAFCO with more responsibilities and more influence to oversee growth in California.

One of the major new responsibilities of LAFCO is to conduct comprehensive, regional studies of municipal services (Municipal Service Reviews, or MSRs), in conjunction with reviews of city and district spheres of influence (SOIs). LAFCOs are directed to review and update agencies' SOIs, as necessary, every five years, according to Government Code Section 56425. Section 56430 requires MSRs to be conducted prior to or in conjunction with the sphere updates. MSRs must address at least the following nine factors:

1. Infrastructure needs or deficiencies
2. Growth and population projections for the affected area
3. Financing constraints and opportunities
4. Cost avoidance opportunities
5. Opportunities for rate restructuring
6. Opportunities for shared facilities
7. Government structure options, including advantages and disadvantages or consolidation or reorganization of service providers
8. Evaluation of management efficiencies
9. Local accountability and governance

Sonoma LAFCO retained Economic & Planning Systems, Inc. (EPS) to develop the MSRs for cities and special districts in Sonoma County. The process was split into phases; water and sewer service providers and fire protection providers were reviewed in the first two phases, and cities are studied in the third, and final, phase. An initial survey was mailed to each City with a request for documents such as general plans, budgets, and maps. EPS used the completed surveys and supporting documents to write provider profiles and to make the nine determinations required by law for each provider. The profiles and determinations were submitted to each City for its review. The cities' comments were then incorporated into the report.

II. SUMMARY OF SERVICE ISSUES AND TRENDS

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL GOVERNANCE

The City of Sebastopol was incorporated in 1902. Sebastopol has a Council-Manager form of government, with five Council members elected at-large. The City Council meets on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Sebastopol Youth Annex at 425 Morris Street. City Council agendas and meeting notes are posted on the City's web site. The City employs approximately 45 full-time employees.¹ Sebastopol is a General Law city.

Sebastopol's web site includes information on City services, as well as City Council agendas, City budgets, and other public documents.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Sebastopol has a population of approximately 7,800 people in 1.9 square miles. The 1994 General Plan set policies for limited and carefully controlled growth. In 1996 the voters adopted an Urban Growth Boundary consistent with the General Plan. The Housing Element of the General Plan was most recently updated in 2003. The next General Plan update is scheduled for 2009.

Future growth in Sebastopol is expected to be modest. According to Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department projections, the population of the City and its Urban Service Area is expected to grow to 9,620 by 2020, an increase of 1,512 (0.93 percent annually).²

The City is planning for both the aging of its infrastructure and the increase in residents with various infrastructure and service improvements. The Sebastopol Community Center is in the early stages of planning for complete replacement and upgrade of its facilities to address flooding problems. The City's Capital Improvement Program identifies a number of improvements to sewer, water, and storm drain infrastructure as well as a variety of street improvements, including signalization of Fircrest, Lynch, and Covert Lane on Highway 116, the Street Smart Sebastopol program of pedestrian safety improvements, streetscape improvements to Gravenstein Highway South, development of a new one-acre skatepark and community garden park, and further additions to the Laguna de Santa Rosa Wetlands Preserve.³

¹ Karen Cano, City of Sebastopol Finance Department, 28 June 2005.

² Sonoma County General Plan 2020, Overview Draft. <<http://www.sonoma-county.org/prmd/gp2020/draft1/index.htm>>.

³ Personal communication from Planning Director Kenyon Webster, 28 September 2005.

Planning activities in Sebastopol that may require reorganization efforts include the Northeast and South Area specific plans. Preliminary studies of the Northeast area, an area bounded by Morris Street, Sebastopol Avenue, Petaluma Avenue, and Laguna Park Way, began in 2004. Preparation of a Specific Plan began in 2005, with completion anticipated in 2006. With the exception of the Village Park mobile home park, the Plan area is within City limits. The Village Park area is outside the City's SOI; potential future actions regarding this area will be addressed in the Specific Plan. The Plan is expected to address the status of one unincorporated property adjoining the City border, and to make recommendations on whether amendment of the City's Urban Growth Boundary and annexation of the property are appropriate. The South area plan will address an area within the City's SOI but beyond City limits in the Highway 116 area. Initiation of this process is expected in the next three to five years.⁴

The City is currently reviewing a preliminary application for annexation of a property on Pleasant Hill Avenue that is within the SOI. No service deficiencies have been identified in relation to this proposal at this time.⁵

SERVICES

The City of Sebastopol is a full-service municipality, providing the following services:

- Building and Safety
- City Administration
- Engineering (Contractual)
- Finance
- Fire
- Planning
- Police
- Public Works (including provision of water and sewer service)

Public K-12 education for residents of the City of Sebastopol and surrounding areas is provided by the Gravenstein Union School District, which includes an elementary school (pre-K – 5) and a middle school (6 – 8); the Sebastopol Union School District, which includes three elementary schools (K – 3, 3 – 6, and K – 6) and one middle school (6 – 8); and the West Sonoma County Union High School District, which includes three high schools (9 – 12, including a continuation school). Sonoma State University, part of the California State University system, and Santa Rosa Junior College are located in Sonoma County and provide opportunities for higher education. The County Library system includes a Sebastopol branch library, in a building owned by the City of Sebastopol.

⁴ Personal communication from Planning Director Kenyon Webster, 28 September 2005. Interview with Planning Director Kenyon Webster, 14 Oct. 2005.

⁵ Personal communication from Planning Director Kenyon Webster, 28 September 2005.

Table 1 details the provision of services in the City of Sebastopol. **Figure 1** provides an overview of cities in Sonoma County. **Figure 2** provides a map of the City of Sebastopol.

Table 1
Municipal Service Providers for the City of Sebastopol
County of Sonoma Municipal Service Reviews

Municipal Service	Service Provider
General Government	
Governing Board	City Council
Manager	City of Sebastopol
Attorney	City of Sebastopol
Finance/Clerk/Administrative Services	City of Sebastopol
Public Protection	
Traffic Control/Accident Investigation	City of Sebastopol
Law Enforcement	City of Sebastopol
Fire Protection	City of Sebastopol and three surrounding Fire Protection Districts
Animal Control	City of Sebastopol
Land Use and Planning	
Regulation & Planning	City of Sebastopol
Building Inspection	City of Sebastopol
City Engineering	Contracted
Community Services	
Local Parks/Recreation Facilities	City of Sebastopol
Library	Sebastopol Regional Library (Sonoma County)
Public Works	
Roads, Local Drainage, Bridges, Signals	City of Sebastopol
Domestic Water	City of Sebastopol
Wastewater Treatment/Disposal	City of Sebastopol
Solid Waste Management/Disposal	Contract with Waste Management, Inc.
Flood Control	City of Sebastopol
Street Lighting	City of Sebastopol
Street Tree Maintenance	City of Sebastopol
Public Education	
K-12 Grade Levels	Gravenstein Union, Sebastopol Union, Twin Hills Union, and West Sonoma County Union High School District
College	Santa Rosa Junior College and Sonoma State University
Other Services	
Electricity	Pacific Gas & Electric
Gas	Pacific Gas & Electric
Cable Television	AT&T
Public Transit	Sonoma County Transit

Figure 1
Sonoma County Administrative Area Boundaries

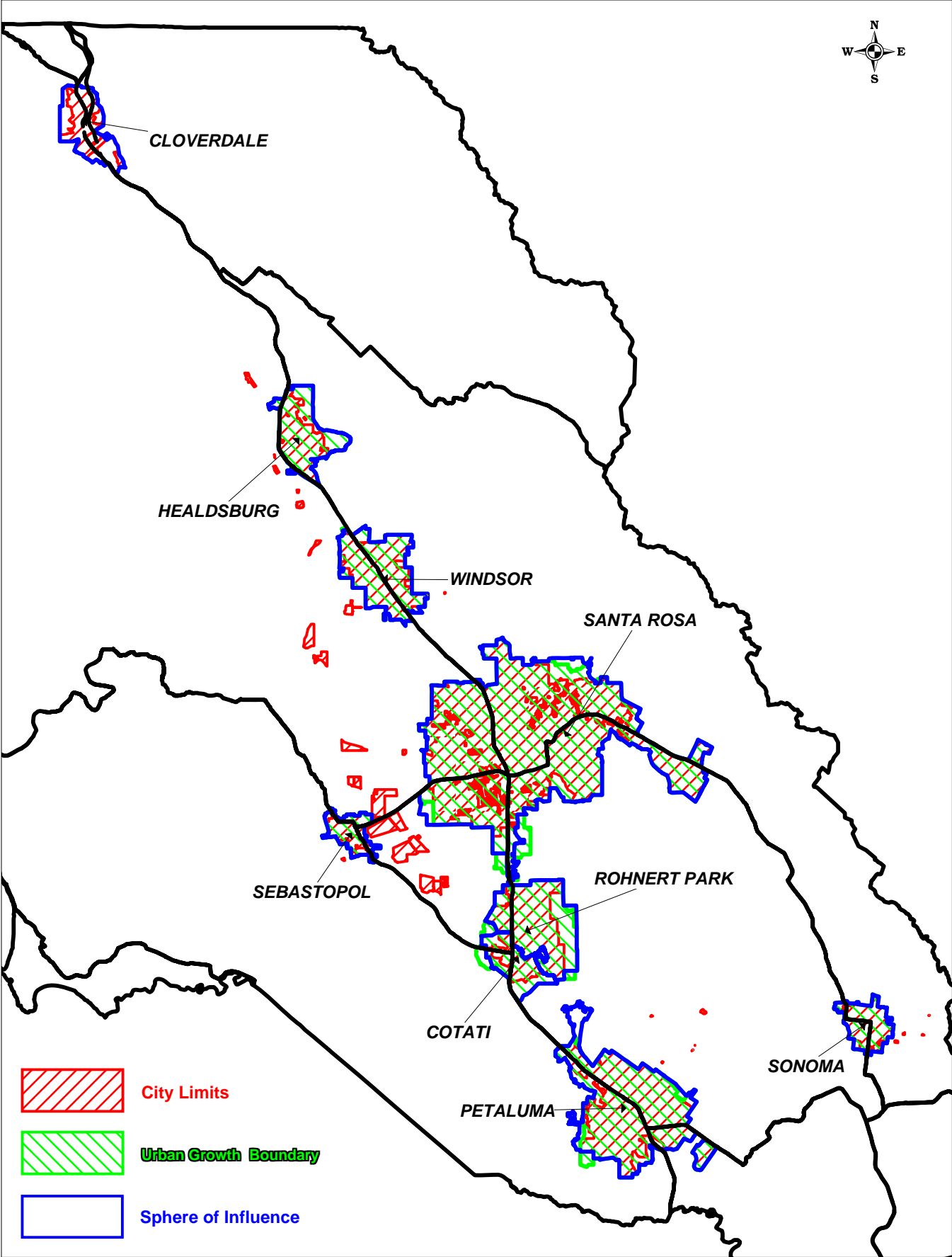
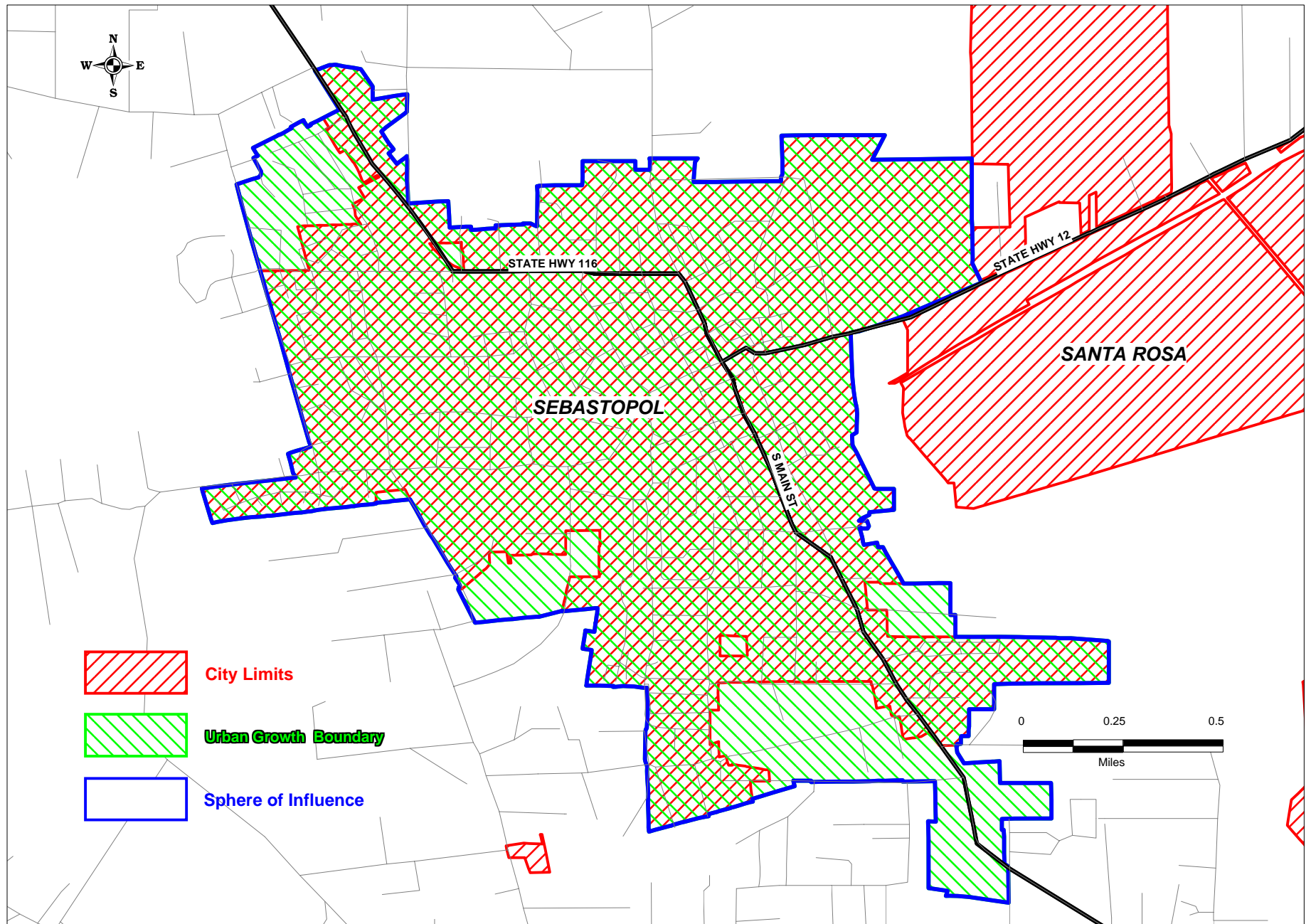


Figure 2
City of Sebastopol



III. WATER

GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

Sebastopol provides drinking water to its residents and businesses from city-owned and operated groundwater wells. The City's Engineering Department provides technical and engineering support for the water system, while Public Works performs operation and maintenance activities.

The City's water operating budget is \$525,000 for FY 05-06.⁶ The City repays approximately \$210,000 annually of debt accumulated from two certificates of participation for the purchase of the site and construction of Well No. 7. The three debts will be paid off in 2005, 2011, and 2013.⁷

Rates for water service were most recently revised in October 2005. Sebastopol charges a bi-monthly fixed charge plus a volume charge above 100 cubic feet (cf). The fixed charge ranges from \$21.57 for a 5/8" meter to \$359.34 for a 4" meter. Usage exceeding 100 cubic feet costs \$1.33 per 100 cubic feet, up to 3,000 cubic feet, and \$1.40 per 100 cubic feet thereafter.⁸

Water connection fees, charged of new development and new water hook-ups, are used to pay for water system capital improvements.

The City performs testing of its drinking water on a continuous basis, according to State Department of Health Services requirements, and reports on these findings annually in a Consumer Confidence Report. A Drinking Water Source Assessment and Prevention Plan was completed in 1998.⁹

INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Sebastopol produces water from four wells serving two pressure zones. The first pressure zone is supplied by two wells that pump water to the 1.5 million gallon First Street Reservoir. The other two wells and two Pleasant Hill Reservoirs with 6-million gallon storage capacity serve the second pressure zone.

⁶ City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06, 9.

⁷ City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06, 84.

⁸ Resolution 5493: A Resolution Amending Rates Controlling the Sale of Water in the City of Sebastopol and Repealing Resolutions in Conflict Thereto, 4 Oct. 2005.

⁹ Personal communication from Planning Director Kenyon Webster, 28 Sep. 2005.

The Capital Improvement Plan adopted in September 2004 includes a new well treatment system, a water main replacement, new booster pump station, and the Cannery Area water main replacement.¹⁰ Sebastopol expects to complete a Water Master Plan in early 2006. The Master Plan will help the City plan for future water demand through General Plan buildout.¹¹

In 2005, the City commissioned an audit of City facilities to identify energy efficiency measures to be implemented for energy consumption reduction. Based on the findings of this study, the City plans to add more efficient ventilation equipment at two pumps and install system control and data acquisition (SCADA) equipment to monitor the water system.¹²

DEMAND AND CAPACITY

According to the most recent available figures (2003-2004), Sebastopol's total annual water production was 479 million gallons. This amount of water served Sebastopol's population of approximately 7,800 at a per capita rate of 169 gallons per person per day.¹³

Historically, Sebastopol's annual water production has not exceeded 30 percent of its pumping capacity, which indicates that the City has ample ability in its production and delivery system to provide water to new development.¹⁴ A basic assessment in the City's General Plan supports this claim, stating that water supply from City wells is sufficient to serve anticipated needs.¹⁵ The completion of Sebastopol's Water System Master Plan will help project future water demand more accurately and identify future infrastructure and/or water supply needs.

The City's General Plan stated that the Southern portion of Sebastopol, just beyond City limits but within the SOI, may require a third separate pressure system with its own water supply and storage capacity.¹⁶ However, the Utility Needs Study completed by Winzler and Kelly in 1999 indicated that this would not be necessary.¹⁷

¹⁰ Interview with Public Works Director Richard Emig, 4 Jan. 2005.

¹¹ Interview with Engineering Director Sue Kelly, 14 Oct. 2005.

¹² Personal communication from Public Works Superintendent Richard Emig, 17 Nov. 2005. City of Sebastopol Staff Report, 7 June 2005. As part of this program, the City will also replace heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units at the Library and Police Department (discussed in the "Police" section of this report).

¹³ Interview with Engineering Director Sue Kelly, 14 Oct. 2005.

¹⁴ Interview with Engineering Director Sue Kelly, 14 Oct. 2005. Personal communication from Engineering Director Sue Kelly, 29 Nov. 2005.

¹⁵ Sebastopol General Plan, p. III-12.

¹⁶ Sebastopol General Plan, p. I-8.

¹⁷ Personal communication from Engineering Director Sue Kelly, 29 Nov. 2005.

Sebastopol has a water-saving ordinance as required by the Water Conservation Act of 1990. This ordinance reduces municipal water use for landscaping by limiting turf area, encouraging the use of native plants and other low water use vegetation, and requiring water-efficient irrigation systems. The City also has a water conservation program that promotes the installation of water saving toilets and the development of water-efficient landscaping. In addition, in 2005 the City adopted a water and energy conservation ordinance that requires ultra-low flow fixtures in new development and major remodels.¹⁸

The Water Utility budget funds a backflow prevention program, a fire hydrant replacement program, and a meter replacement program, all of which are aimed at increasing efficiency and reducing lost water, thus reducing costs.¹⁹

¹⁸ Personal communication from Planning Director Kenyon Webster, 28 September 2005.

¹⁹ Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06, 82.

IV. WASTEWATER

GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

The Sebastopol Public Works Department maintains sewer collection and transmission infrastructure that consists of approximately 25 miles of gravity mains, two force mains, and two pump stations. From a collection point on Morris Street, effluent is pumped through a force main to Llano Road, where it is discharged to the Subregional Treatment System operated by the City of Santa Rosa. Sebastopol's wastewater is treated at the subregional Laguna Treatment Plant. Sebastopol's share of the Plant's 18 mgd capacity is 0.84 mgd.²⁰ The City's Engineering Department provides technical and engineering support for the sewer system, while Public Works performs operation and maintenance activities.

The sewer department oversees three enterprise budgets: sewage treatment, sewer mains, and sewer administration. Sewage treatment operation and maintenance costs, which represent the City of Sebastopol's share of the Santa Rosa Subregional Sewer system operating expenses, are \$793,000 for FY 05-06, with an additional debt service of \$633,000.²¹ The operating budget for the sewer mains is \$230,000 in FY 05-06.²² The sewer administration budget in FY 05-06 totals \$345,000.²³ The City is also repaying a 1987 general obligation bond for sewer improvements at a rate of approximately \$259,000 per year.²⁴ This bond will be repaid in full by 2007.

Most sewer revenue comes from sewer service fees charged of customers. Sebastopol most recently updated sewer service fees in October 2005. Sewer service charges for non-industrial users are bi-monthly, and include a fixed rate and a volume rate. A typical single-family home pays a \$43.84 fixed rate plus \$3.89 per 100 cf over the initial 100 cf allowance. Takeout and on-premise dining facilities pay higher volume rates.²⁵

Sewer connection fees, charged of new development and new sewer hook-ups, are used to pay for sewer capital improvement projects.

INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

During the past four years, Sebastopol has funded a sewer cleaning program, including a televising program in which video cameras are used to identify substandard conditions inside sewer mains. The City's goal with this project has been to reduce

²⁰ Sebastopol General Plan, p. I-8.

²¹ City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06, 77.

²² City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06, 79.

²³ City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06, 76.

²⁴ City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06, 86.

²⁵ Resolution 5494: A Resolution of the City of Sebastopol Amending Resolution No. 1769 Establishing Rates for Sewer Service, 4 Oct. 2005.

infiltration and overflow situations, ultimately reducing City liability and pumping costs. The data gathered through this process will be integrated into the City's Sewer Master Plan, expected to be completed in early 2006.²⁶

The City's Capital Improvement Fund, approved September 2004, includes the replacement of the Laguna force main that transports sewage to the Santa Rosa wastewater treatment plant, as well as a sewer line replacement. The City's annual wastewater enterprise fund balance will pay for the replacement of these lines.

Longer term financial issues that may require future rate increases include probable cost increases of wastewater disposal because of the Santa Rosa Geysers pipeline project and the more stringent water quality standards required for Russian River disposal.

DEMAND AND CAPACITY

In 2004, the City's Average Daily Dry Weather Flow (sewage flow measured in the driest months) was 0.610 mgd. Flow from existing and approved projects was 0.018 mgd. According to Sebastopol's General Plan, 5 percent (0.042 mgd) of the City's sewage treatment entitlement must be reserved for emergencies. This leaves 0.17 mgd sewer treatment capacity for future growth. This amount is expected to be sufficient for General Plan buildout within City limits and within part of the Urban Growth Boundary. The Sewer Master Plan, expected to be completed in late 2005, will include more current projections of capacity for future growth.²⁷

The area just south of the City limits, within the SOI, cannot be served by gravity flow to the current system because topography. Connection to the city collection system would require a pump station and force main. However, this could potentially exceed the capacity of the Petaluma Avenue trunk main. An alternative is to construct a separate gravity system that discharges directly into the Llano interceptor.²⁸ An infrastructure needs study was completed for this area but no action has been taken regarding annexation or preparation of a specific plan.²⁹

²⁶ Interview with Public Works Director Richard Emig, 4 Jan. 2005. Interview with Engineering Director Sue Kelly, 14 Oct. 2005.

²⁷ Interview with Engineering Director Sue Kelly, 14 Oct. 2005.

²⁸ Sebastopol General Plan, p. I-9.

²⁹ Interview with Public Works Director Richard Emig, 4 Jan. 2005. Interview with Engineering Director Sue Kelly, 14 Oct. 2005.

V. STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

The City's Public Works Department is responsible for operation and maintenance of the City infrastructure, including the water and sewer systems, industrial waste system, streets, parks, swimming pool, parking lots, and government buildings.

Of the City's 9 Public Works employees, 2.5 are budgeted for streets maintenance. The total General Fund budget allocated for street maintenance in FY 05-06 is approximately \$127,000, of which \$75,000 is covered by gas tax funds. Total gas tax funds, including non-General Fund, are \$233,000. These funds are received from the State from the City's share of Highway User Tax. Proceeds are restricted to the operation and maintenance of City streets.³⁰

INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES, AND SERVICES

The City is responsible for the maintenance of 23.7 road miles.³¹ On Highways 12 and 116, which run through Sebastopol, Caltrans is responsible for all road surface maintenance (including striping, paving, and regulatory traffic signs) and reimburses the City for other services such as curb, sidewalk, tree, and storm drain maintenance.³²

Road projects for 2005-2006 include the repair of traffic signal loops at Bodega Avenue and Pleasant Hill Avenue, to be paid for through Gas Tax funds.³³

DEMAND AND CAPACITY

Level of Service (LOS) is a qualitative indicator of the relative ease or congestion of traffic movement, with Level 'A' representing free flow conditions and Level 'F' representing conditions where traffic flow is at or over roadway capacity. Sebastopol's General Plan recommended the adoption of LOS standards that would allow a minimum operation of LOS D for signalized intersections within the Downtown and LOS C for signalized intersections outside of Downtown, and a minimum LOS E for Highway 12 east of Main Street, LOS D for Highway 116 and Bodega Avenue, and LOS C for all other road segments. The General Plan also seeks to allow a maximum of 1,500 to 2,000 vehicles per day on all existing residential streets and a maximum of 1,000 to 1,500 vehicles per day on all new residential streets. These standards are used to make decisions regarding new development; according to the Land Use Chapter of the

³⁰ City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06, 8, 66.

³¹ Personal communication from Engineering Director Sue Kelly, 29 Nov. 2005.

³² Interview with Public Works Director Richard Emig, 13 July 2005.

³³ City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06, 68.

General Plan, the City is required to “manage growth and infrastructure capacity so that the quantity and capacity of City services and infrastructure will not drop below acceptable Levels of Service as a result of new development.”³⁴ Development may be required to provide new streets or paving in order to accommodate growth.³⁵

A portion of ongoing pavement maintenance costs is covered by the City’s ¼ cent sales tax increment, last renewed in November 2004 and dedicated to citywide capital improvements. County-wide sales tax Measure M, also approved in November 2004, will provide additional funds for local streets maintenance, and also earmarks \$2 million over the life of the tax measure for the Street Smart Sebastopol program of pedestrian safety projects.³⁶

³⁴ City of Sebastopol General Plan, p. II-15.

³⁵ Interview with Public Works Director Richard Emig, 13 July 2005.

³⁶ Personal communication from Planning Director Kenyon Webster, 28 September 2005.

VI. PARKS

GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

All City parks and landscape areas are maintained by the Public Works Department. There are 1.3 full-time employees specifically assigned to Parks and Landscaping; the division budget for FY 05-06 is \$128,000. (This does not include any recreation programming costs.)³⁷

The City's General Plan recommends that schools and parks share responsibility for the development and maintenance of park and recreation facilities. Because Sebastopol's parks serve residents of the greater western Sonoma County area in addition to City residents, the General Plan also recommends increasing cooperation between the City and other local jurisdictions providing park and recreation.³⁸

INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The City has four major park areas. Ives Park, Sebastopol's oldest park, was established approximately 55 years ago and contains a playground, picnic areas, baseball field, and municipal swimming pool. In 2004, the City performed required infrastructure improvements on the Ives Pool, including heaters, filters, resurfacing, and painting to reduce maintenance and operating costs and to improve financial viability. Libby Park, built in the mid-1970s in the west part of Sebastopol, is home to Sebastopol's Super Playground, Garzot Community Building, picnic areas, and a pond.

Laguna Youth Park was built in 1987, and is located at the east border of Sebastopol, between the Community Center and the Laguna de Santa Rosa. It consists of picnic areas and two baseball fields, which are used by Little League.

The Laguna de Santa Rosa Wetlands Preserve is an area adjacent to the Laguna Youth Park with several miles of trails and an outdoor classroom accommodating up to 50 people.³⁹ Four phases of the Preserve have been completed and additional phases are planned for the future.⁴⁰ It currently relies on donations and volunteers to offset maintenance costs not covered in the City's budget.⁴¹

³⁷ City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06, 53.

³⁸ City of Sebastopol General Plan, p. III-18.

³⁹ City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06, 52.

⁴⁰ City of Sebastopol Web site, <<http://www.ci.sebastopol.ca.us/publicworksparks.shtml>>.

⁴¹ City of Sebastopol Web site, <<http://www.ci.sebastopol.ca.us/lagunawetlandspreserve.shtml>>.

A fifth major park area is in development. The City has purchased a one-acre site on Laguna Park Way for development of a skatepark and community garden. Substantial grant funding has been obtained, and plans are in preparation. Construction is anticipated in 2006.⁴²

DEMAND AND CAPACITY

Sebastopol's General Plan adopted a park standard of 5 acres per 1,000 persons. Once the skatepark has been completed the City will have 29.85 acres of urban parkland. (This includes pathways and picnic areas in the Laguna Preserve, but not habitat areas.) Projected buildout population (8,669 at the time of the General Plan) would thus require an additional 13.5 acres of parks.⁴³

In addition, Sebastopol acquired grant monies from the Coastal Conservancy for the expansion of the Laguna Preserve. This expansion has been completed, and in 2005 was supplemented by the incorporation of a 50-acre former industrial waste field into the Laguna Preserve. The City's 05-06 budget provides additional funding for landscape maintenance that Public Works will need in order to maintain the Laguna Preserve. Completion of a new skatepark/ community garden on Laguna Park Way, planned for 2006, will also increase the need for Public Works maintenance funding.⁴⁴

⁴² Personal communication from Planning Director Kenyon Webster, 28 September 2005.

⁴³ Sebastopol General Plan, p. III-15.

⁴⁴ Personal communication from Planning Director Kenyon Webster, 28 September 2005.

VII. POLICE

GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

The Police Department provides police service and animal control. As of February 2005, Sebastopol has 15 authorized sworn officer position (approximately 1.9 sworn officers per 1,000 population), including a chief, a lieutenant, two sergeants, and nine additional police officers. Sworn staff is currently two sworn positions lower than in 2001 because of State takes of local revenues and limited-term grant funding of several positions.⁴⁵

In addition to sworn staff, the department employs an administrative support manager, five dispatchers, a police aide, and a part-time per diem dispatcher. Volunteer staff includes eight reserve police officers, eleven community service volunteers, and five youth “police explorers.”⁴⁶

Sebastopol’s Police funding comes primarily from the City’s General Fund. In addition, two officer positions are funded by state grants from the Office of Traffic Safety and the Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Fund.⁴⁷ The Department has an FY 05-06 operating budget of \$2.4 million. An additional \$8,000 is budgeted for animal control, which is provided in part through a contract with the Humane Society of Sonoma County.⁴⁸ Overall expenditures increased by \$118,000 from FY 04-05 to FY 05-06, due primarily to growing retirement and health insurance costs.⁴⁹

Having determined that it was more efficient and cost-effective to operate its own information systems, the City withdrew from the Sonoma County Law Enforcement Consortium (CAD/RMS/MDC) in June 2003. However, the City continues to participate in an informal mutual aid arrangement with the County, whereby each agency may respond to calls in the other’s jurisdiction.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Personal communication from Planning Director Kenyon Webster, 28 September 2005. Interview with Department Chief Jeff Weaver, 14 Oct. 2005. Personal communication from Department Chief Jeff Weaver, 1 Dec. 2005.

⁴⁶ City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06. Interview with Department Chief Jeff Weaver, 4 Jan. 2005. Personal communication from Planning Director Kenyon Webster, 28 September 2005.

⁴⁷ Interview with Department Chief Jeff Weaver, 4 Jan. 2005.

⁴⁸ City of Sebastopol Annual Budget, FY 05-06. Personal communication from Department Chief Jeff Weaver, 1 Dec. 2005.

⁴⁹ City of Sebastopol Annual Budget, FY 05-06.

⁵⁰ Interview with Department Chief Jeff Weaver, 4 Jan. 2005.

INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The Department operates out of a single station, located at 6850 Laguna Park Way. According to the Department, this facility is adequate to meet current and anticipated demand. In addition, the Department maintains two marked police motorcycles, six marked police cars, a marked police van (runs on compressed natural gas only), a marked support vehicle (Toyota Prius Hybrid), an unmarked support vehicle, and two unmarked administrative vehicles (one of which is a Ford Escape Hybrid). The Department will be replacing two of the six marked police cars later this year. One of the two replaced marked cars will replace an unmarked support car, which will be retired. The second replaced marked car will be retired as well.⁵¹

The Sebastopol Police responded to over 21,645 calls in 2004, with an average response time of 2.5 to 3 minutes.⁵² In the past, a great majority of calls for police service in Sebastopol have been for social-related concerns, such as drug abuse, homelessness, domestic disputes and youth-related problems.⁵³ Police officers often refer these cases to County social agencies.

Based on the findings of its 2005 energy efficiency study, the City plans to replace existing heating and ventilation units at the Police Department with more energy-efficient equipment.⁵⁴

DEMAND AND CAPACITY

The Department runs a number of preventative programs aimed at reducing the risk of public safety emergencies. These include school zone traffic enforcement, traffic calming, parking enforcement, and two annual reports on traffic and parking and on crime and police activity.

The number of Sebastopol police officers has varied considerably in recent years based on funding availability, reaching a high of 17 in 2001. The Department currently has 15 sworn officers, but would like to increase this staff by refilling its eliminated full-time school resources officer position. There is no identified funding for this position at this time.⁵⁵ The Department also anticipates that one additional general officer position might become necessary, though not in the immediate future. Future funding for these positions, as well as for the traffic officer position currently funded (through mid-2006) by a state grant, is uncertain. The Department will explore new grant funding and other

⁵¹ Personal communication from Planning Director Kenyon Webster, 28 September 2005.

⁵² Interview with Department Chief Jeff Weaver, 4 Jan. 2005. City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06.

⁵³ Sebastopol General Plan, p. VII-17.

⁵⁴ Personal communication from Public Works Superintendent Richard Emig, 17 Nov. 2005. City of Sebastopol Staff Report, 7 June 2005.

⁵⁵ Interview with Department Chief Jeff Weaver, 14 Oct. 2005.

potential revenue sources. Staffing shortages may also be mitigated through attempts to minimize time lost to on-duty injuries and to increase the use of volunteers. Other goals articulated in the FY 05-06 budget, such as enhanced professional training, maintenance of a viable Volunteer Bureau, and expanded collaboration with local schools, could also help the Department maximize its resources in order to meet increasing demand.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Interview with Department Chief Jeff Weaver, 4 Jan. 2005. City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06.

VIII. FIRE

The City of Sebastopol's Fire Department provides fire protection to the City's 7,800 residents in an area of 2 square miles.

A profile of the Sebastopol Fire Department was included in the Municipal Services Reviews of Fire Service Providers (Summer 2005) and is reprinted below, updated as of October 2005.

While the Department's facilities, equipment, and staff are adequate to meet current demand, anticipated growth and aging among the existing population may create a future need for increased full-time staff.

GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

Sebastopol employs a full-time Fire Chief and a full-time Technician (shared with the Building and Safety Department) and has 33 volunteer firefighters. The City's fire station is located on Bodega Avenue in Sebastopol.

Total Department operating expenditures requested for FY 05-06 are approximately \$590,000.⁵⁷ The City's total unallocated estimated General Fund reserves are \$350,700. In addition, approximately \$1,341,300 are in allocated reserves for equipment replacement, building repair, economic uncertainty, worker's compensation, vacation and sick leave payments, and retirees' medical premiums.⁵⁸

In addition to General Fund revenues, the Fire Department receives one-time annexation fees that go into the capital improvement fund. A ¼ cent sales tax passed in November 2002 and again in November 2004 has been designated by the City Council for citywide capital improvements. Revenues generated by this sales tax are being used to pay off debt on a ladder truck purchased in November 2003; according to the Department, it is likely that proceeds from the tax will continue to cover purchases of fire-related capital equipment in the future.⁵⁹ The Department also maintains a separate Volunteer Account, separate from its City budget allocation, which is supported by fundraising and donations.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 05-06, 34.

⁵⁸ Personal communication from Planning Director Kenyon Webster, 28 September 2005.

⁵⁹ Interview with Sebastopol Fire Dept. Chief John Zanzi, 10 Nov. 2004.

⁶⁰ Interview with Sebastopol Fire Dept. Technician Patti DeLucchi, 29 Sept. 2004.

The City participates in REDCOM and has automatic aid agreements with the neighboring Gold Ridge, Rincon Valley, and Graton Fire Protection Districts. The Department's volunteer firefighters occasionally participate in drills with other districts and departments.⁶¹

INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES, AND SERVICES

The Department's response time is four to six minutes. Its ISO rating is 3 and it responds to approximately 900 calls per year.⁶²

The City has one fire station, located on Bodega Avenue. Its equipment includes three engines and one ladder truck, purchased in November 2003. According to the Department, this equipment is more than adequate to meet current and anticipated demand.⁶³

DEMAND AND CAPACITY

According to Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department projections, the population of the City and its Urban Service Area is expected to grow to 9,620 by 2020, an increase of 1,512 (0.93 percent annually).⁶⁴ The City's 1989 General Plan projects a population increase of 299 between 2000 and 2005, an annual increase of 0.75 percent; the City has not made projections beyond 2005.⁶⁵ A proposed subdivision could add 140 homes and new commercial space to the Department's service area. This proposal is currently being debated; its outcome is not expected to have a significant effect on the Department's future needs.⁶⁶

The City's fire station and equipment are anticipated to be adequate to meet the demands of future growth, though staffing of the department will need to increase as the number of calls for service grows. According to the General Plan, which was last updated in 1998, "although the Fire Department has worked well with a largely volunteer force, future growth, the aging population and increasing area traffic may

⁶¹ Interview with Sebastopol Fire Dept. Technician Patti DeLucchi, 29 Sept. 2004. Interview with Sebastopol Fire Dept. Chief John Zanzi, 10 Nov. 2004.

⁶² Interview with Sebastopol Fire Dept. Technician Patti DeLucchi, 29 Sept. 2004.

⁶³ Interview with Sebastopol Fire Dept. Chief John Zanzi, 10 Nov. 2004.

⁶⁴ Sonoma County General Plan 2020, Overview Draft. <<http://www.sonoma-county.org/prmd/gp2020/draft1/index.htm>>.

⁶⁵ Sebastopol General Plan, p. I-2. The City's projections for 1990 through 2005 were overall lower than County projections for the same period and anticipated a slower rate of growth.

⁶⁶ Interview with Sebastopol Fire Dept. Technician Patti DeLucchi, 29 Sept. 2004.

require additional full-time employees.”⁶⁷ The Department confirms that the addition of at least one full-time position may become necessary in the next five years. There is no funding currently available to pay for new staff.⁶⁸

The Department has introduced a number of cost saving measures in recent years, including a countywide purchasing agreement to lower pager costs, major maintenance projects to reduce ongoing maintenance expenditures, and a reduction of utilities costs because of the replacement of HVAC equipment and the implementation of solar energy savings programs.⁶⁹ These savings may help offset the rising costs of labor.

⁶⁷ Sebastopol General Plan, p. VII-15.

⁶⁸ Interview with Sebastopol Fire Dept. Chief John Zanzi, 10 Nov. 2004.

⁶⁹ City of Sebastopol Annual Budget FY 03-04, 31. Interview with Sebastopol Fire Dept. Chief John Zanzi, 10 Nov. 2004.

IX. DETERMINATIONS

INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS AND DEFICIENCIES

- The Capital Improvement Plan adopted in September 2004 includes a new well treatment system, a water main replacement, new booster pump station, and the Cannery Area water main replacement. Sebastopol expects to complete a Water Master Plan by November 2005; this plan will detail system-wide infrastructure needs.
- The Laguna Force Main, which transports sewage from Sebastopol's collection system to the Subregional wastewater treatment plant, will be replaced in 2006-2007. Further system-wide infrastructure needs will be detailed in the upcoming Sewer Master Plan.
- Sebastopol's General Plan calls for 5 acres of parks per 1,000 persons. With completion of the planned skatepark, the City will have 29.85 acres of urban parkland. Projected buildout population (8,669 at the time of the General Plan) will thus require an additional 13.5 acres of parks.

GROWTH AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR THE AFFECTED AREA

- Sebastopol is expected grow by about 1,500 people by the year 2020. This represents an almost 20 percent growth over the City's 2000 population, or annual growth of around 0.9 percent between 2000 and 2020.

FINANCING CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- A long-term financial constraint for the sewer system includes probable cost increases of wastewater disposal because of the Santa Rosa Geysers pipeline project and the more stringent water quality standards required for Russian River disposal.
- Maintenance of the Laguna de Santa Rosa Wetlands Preserve depends in part on donations and volunteers. Sebastopol secured a Coastal Conservancy grant to expand the trail network and native plant restoration at the preserve, which will expand maintenance needs.
- Increasing costs and state budget cuts have led to the loss of several sworn police officer positions since 2001. The Police Department is exploring the possible use of grant funding and other alternative funding sources.

COST AVOIDANCE OPPORTUNITIES

- The City's water conservation ordinance and water conservation program promotes the installation of water saving toilets and other fixtures and the development of water efficient landscaping. Significant new requirements for water-conserving fixtures in new development and major remodels were enacted in 2005.
- The City contracted for a four-year program to inspect all sewer lines with the goal of reducing infiltration and overflow situations by identifying and repairing substandard mains. The data from the completed project will be included in Sebastopol's Sewer Master Plan and will ultimately reduce City liability and pumping costs.
- Efforts by the Police Department to expand its volunteer program and minimize on-duty injuries could result in decreased personnel costs.
- The Fire Department has introduced a number of cost saving measures in recent years, including a countywide purchasing agreement resulting in lower pager costs and the use of energy-efficient solar power equipment to decrease utilities expenses.
- In FY 02-03, solar panel systems were installed on the Public Works and Fire department buildings; this technology has reduced energy costs.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR RATE RESTRUCTURING

- A ¼ cent sales tax passed in November 2002 and renewed in November 2004 has been designated by the City Council for citywide capital improvements.
- Sebastopol most recently updated sewer and water rates in October 2005. Sebastopol's water and sewer systems are run as enterprise funds, so rates will continue to be reviewed and adjusted to fund program costs. The City is also considering rate restructuring to encourage water conservation.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHARED FACILITIES

- Sebastopol shares the wastewater treatment capacity of the subregional Laguna Treatment Plant with the cities of Santa Rosa, Cotati, Rohnert Park and the South Park Sanitation District. Sebastopol's share is 0.84 mgd, less than 5 percent of the plant's total average daily dry weather flow of 17.5 mgd.

- The City's General Plan includes the recommendation that schools and parks share responsibility for the development and maintenance of park and recreation facilities. It also recommends increasing cooperation between the City and other local jurisdictions providing park and recreation facilities since Sebastopol's parks serve residents of the greater western Sonoma County area in addition to City residents.
- In the past, the City's School Resource Officer position was partially funded by the West Sonoma County Union High School District. The District has been unable to fund this position since FY 03-04 because of state budget cuts.
- The Fire Department has automatic aid agreements with Gold Ridge, Rincon Valley, and Graton Fire Protection Districts.

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE OPTIONS

- Planning activities in Sebastopol that may require reorganization efforts include the Northeast and South Area specific plans. Preparation of the Northeast Area Specific Plan began in 2004, with completion anticipated in 2006. The majority of this plan area is within City limits, with one property located outside of the City's SOI. Initiation of the South Area Specific Plan is expected in the next three to five years and will address an area within the City's SOI but beyond City limits.

EVALUATION OF MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCIES

- Having determined that it was more efficient and cost-effective to operate its own information systems, the City withdrew from the Sonoma County Law Enforcement Consortium (CAD/RMS/MDC) in June 2003.
- The Police Department anticipates that additional sworn staff will become necessary in the long term. If adequate funding is not available to fill these positions, staffing shortages could prevent the Department from operating at maximum efficiency.
- The Fire Department's largely volunteer force may not be capable of meeting the demands of a growing and aging population; in order to operate at maximum efficiency, additional full-time staff may be necessary.

LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

- City Council agendas and meeting notes are posted on the City's web site. The web site also includes public documents, such as the budget, municipal ordinance, and public hearing notices, which are available to download. The City Council meets publicly the first and third Tuesdays of each month.