

City hopes to lend a helping hand

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By Westsideconnect Staff

NEWMAN - City officials are submitting an emergency grant application to the United States Department of Agriculture in hopes of extending the municipal water system to a group of homes just outside the city limits with failing wells.

City Planner Stephanie Ocasio told the City Council last week that the project involves a group of a dozen homes on West Mariposa that have been impacted by the drought. A number of wells serving those homes have gone dry due to the low groundwater table, Ocasio said.

According to a staff report, the residents reached out to non-profit Self-Help Enterprises, which in turn assisted residents obtain water storage tanks through the county.

Five residents have had to rely on temporary storage tanks to supply water, Ocasio stated in a staff report.

The city is taking the lead in applying for the grant, she said, while Self-Help Enterprises would assist with grant management and Stanislaus County would be responsible for project design, bidding and construction. The county would be compensated for that work with the grant funds.

If the grant application is not funded, Ocasio emphasized, the residents would need to seek out alternative resources to resolve their water issues.

Extending the city water system 1,200 feet to take in the nearby residents would cost more than \$100,000, she told the council.

Council members voted 4-0, with Roberta Davis absent, to approve the grant application and authorize staff to negotiate an agreement with Stanislaus County on the project.