



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: Public Works Commission

FROM: Cathi Zammit, CWP Program Manager

PREPARED BY: Public Works Department

MEETING DATE: Thursday, November 12, 2015

SUBJECT: Clean Water Program Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report Public Comment

RECOMMENDATION

That the Public Works Commission discuss and receive comment on the Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report for the Clean Water Program

BACKGROUND

The Clean Water Program (CWP) is a series of projects to upgrade and increase the capacity of the City's wastewater treatment plant and sewer collection system to eliminate sanitary sewer overflows and meet current and future regulatory requirements. The City of San Mateo is considering two potential Clean Water Program alternatives:

- The In-System Storage Program, which would include construction of one or more underground storage basins upstream of the Dale Avenue Pump Station to detain wastewater flows during peak wet weather events. It would also include needed upgrades at the wastewater treatment plant.
- The Full Conveyance Program, which would include a new pump station next to the existing Dale Avenue Pump Station and larger pipelines to deliver peak wet weather flows to the wastewater treatment plant. It would also include needed upgrades at the wastewater treatment plant.

The CWP is intended to achieve the following objectives:

- Provide adequate system capacity to efficiently convey and treat the peak wet weather flow.
- Meet current regulatory requirements for the sanitary sewer collection system and wastewater treatment plant, as included in the 2009 Cease and Desist Order and 2013 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit.
- Meet anticipated future regulatory requirements, including total nitrogen and total phosphorous concentrations, and pathogen removal.
- Be consistent with San Mateo's sustainability objectives, including more efficient use of energy and recycled water.
- Provide space planning to support implementation of projects addressing the objectives above within the limitations of the sites available for wastewater treatment facilities.

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a public agency should prepare a programmatic environmental impact report (PEIR) when it proposes a program or series of actions that are linked geographically; are logical parts of a chain of contemplated events, rules, regulations, or plans that govern the conduct of a continuing program; or are individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental effects that could be mitigated in similar ways. PEIRs generally analyze broad environmental effects of the program, acknowledging that site-specific environmental review may be required for portions of the program.

A Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (Draft PEIR) has been prepared to analyze the potential environmental consequences of adopting and implementing the Clean Water Program. The Draft PEIR evaluates the potential environmental effects of both the In-System Storage Program and the Full Conveyance Program at an equal level of detail. Both CWP alternatives include any of the three potential wastewater treatment configurations (baseline treatment, conventional activated sludge, and membrane bioreactor). In addition, the New Headworks Facility Project and the Primary Clarifier Replacement Project, the first projects proposed for construction, are evaluated at a project level of detail.

The environmental review process was initiated with the release of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) on March 2, 2015, for a 30-day scoping period. The purpose of the Notice of Preparation and scoping period was to solicit comments from the public and from public agencies on issues that should be considered in the PEIR. Members of the public were given an additional opportunity to comment on the scope of the PEIR at a Public Works Commission meeting on March 11, 2015, at San Mateo City Hall. The following comments were received and addressed where appropriate in the Draft PEIR:

- The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) sent a comment letter describing additional environmental review requirements if the City chooses to apply for Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) grants.
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) sent a comment letter describing its criteria for traffic impact studies and related processes and permit for encroachments across the state highway system.
- San Mateo County sent a comment letter requesting a copy of the public Draft PEIR.
- One individual sent a comment letter requesting that the City's design criteria and feasibility study consider a holistic approach to the wastewater system, including integrating the related issue of water supply.
- At the March 11 meeting, three individuals provided oral comments, focused on collection system improvements to optimize effectiveness and minimize costs and how in-system storage could negatively affect neighborhoods and property values.

The Draft PEIR provides the environmental setting, potential impacts, and proposed mitigation measures for the following environmental resources:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services

- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities

Potentially significant impacts could occur during construction and operation of either CWP alternative. All of these impacts can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level through implementation of the mitigation measures. The exception is noise and vibration impacts due to construction. Mitigation measures, including implementing construction noise minimization measures, operating a construction noise hot line, and resolving construction noise complaints, are proposed to reduce these impacts but they are anticipated to be significant after mitigation.

As required by CEQA, the Draft PEIR discusses alternatives to the Clean Water Program, including the No Project alternative, and identifies the environmentally superior alternative. The In-System Storage Program and the Full Conveyance Program would have very similar impacts in type, scale, and location, and neither is environmentally superior to the other. Both the In-System Storage Program and the Full Conveyance Program are considered the environmentally superior alternatives among the alternatives considered.

Notice of availability of the Draft PEIR was provided to the California Office of Planning and Research and mailed directly to property owners within 500 feet of any proposed project location and to individuals and agencies that requested notice in writing and submitted written comments during the scoping period. A digital copy of the Draft PEIR is available for download on the Clean Water Program website at <http://www.cleanwaterprogramsanmateo.org/>. Hard copies are available for viewing at the following locations: City Hall, 330 West 20th Avenue; San Mateo Main Library, 55 West 3rd Avenue; San Mateo Marina Branch Library, 1530 Susan Court; and San Mateo Waste Water Treatment Plant, 2050 Detroit Drive.

Next Steps

Comments on the adequacy of the environmental review in the Draft PEIR will be taken at the Public Works Commission meeting on November 12, 2015. In addition, comments may be submitted in writing by agencies and the public through December 18, 2015 as described in Section 1.6 of the Draft PEIR. Responses to comments will be prepared and issued by May 2016.

BUDGET IMPACT

None at this time. Proposed mitigation measures, if included in the final certified PEIR, could result in additional costs to the construction of the CWP; however, these costs are imbedded in the overall cost of the Clean Water Program.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

Certification of the PEIR will allow the City Council to select and approve the preferred Program alternative for implementation and to approve the New Headworks and Primary Clarifier Projects for construction. Subsequent individual projects may require focused supplemental environmental review at a project level of detail.

ATTACHMENTS None.

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