



CITY OF SAN MATEO

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Agenda Report

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TO: Sustainability & Infrastructure Commission

FROM: Brad Underwood

PREPARED BY: Public Works Department

MEETING DATE: December 09, 2020

SUBJECT:
Overview of City Stormwater System Management Activities

RECOMMENDATION:
Receive information on unfunded stormwater system activities.

BACKGROUND:
Managing the City's stormwater system includes a wide range of engineering, operations, and regulatory compliance efforts. These efforts include operating and maintaining Marina Lagoon and other creeks, capital improvement master planning, infrastructure and green infrastructure construction, operations and maintenance of stormwater conveyance and pumping systems, trash management activities, and regulatory compliance with the Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit. Public Works is primarily responsible for completion of these management activities. Additionally, the overall funding needs to effectively manage the City's stormwater system are greater than what is currently available through the General Fund. This agenda report summarizes the various storm system activities, most of which are funded by the General Fund without a separate, dedicated funding source. Staff will return to the Commission in January 2021 to present a separate report and analysis of potential funding options for these activities.

Storm sewers are infrastructure that convey rainwater away from streets and developed areas towards the creeks, bay, or lagoon. Routine operation and maintenance activities for storm sewers includes cleaning and repairs of curbs, inlets, catch basins, lateral and main lines, outfalls, and nine stormwater pump stations. The City has four main creeks that convey water towards the bay and/or the lagoon; San Mateo Creek, Leslie Creek, Borel Creek, and Laurel Creek. Creek maintenance includes routine removal of nuisance vegetation, bank stabilization, outfall maintenance, and other related activities. Any maintenance conducted within our creeks requires permits and approval from various regulatory agencies such as California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

The City implements a stormwater program in compliance with the Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit (MRP). Over the years, the range of actions and necessary level of effort to implement the stormwater program and comply with the MRP have increased in response to the evolving regulatory requirements and community needs. These activities are primarily funded by the General Fund except for street sweeping and trash capture device CIP, which are funded through Solid Waste Program fees. The City offsets some of the costs by participating in a collaborative, countywide effort, the San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program (SMCWPPP), which is a partnership with the City/County Association of Governments. As a result of the partnership, some of the MRP requirements are implemented directly by the municipalities, while others, such as public education and outreach and water quality monitoring, are addressed by SMCWPPP on behalf of the member agencies.

The stormwater compliance program includes overarching program management, specific implementation actions related to MRP components, and planning for future needs based on new permit requirements. MRP components requiring

specific activities and/or capital improvement include: Municipal Operations; New Development and Redevelopment including Green Infrastructure; Industrial and Commercial Site Controls; Illicit Discharge and Elimination; Construction Site Controls; Public Information and Outreach; Water Quality Monitoring; Pesticides Toxicity Controls; Trash Reduction; Controls for Mercury, Copper, and Bacteria; and Annual Reporting.

Marina Lagoon is a remnant of a tidal slough that has been diked and dredged to form an enclosed estuary. Marina Lagoon meanders for approximately 4.5 miles from its inlet at O'Neill (Belmont) Slough to the outlet into Seal Slough and San Francisco Bay. The lagoon is surrounded by high density residential areas; and over 300 of the shoreline parcels have private docks. Managing the lagoon as a flood control basin as its primary purpose includes maintaining operating levels, water exchange rates, the pump station, and other infrastructure. The lagoon is also managed to provide recreational uses such as swimming, kayaking, and boating. Management includes removal of nuisance aquatic plant control, water quality protection, wildlife management, permit compliance, and regulation of encroachments such as private docks, beaches, banks, and dredging.

Sedimentation of the lagoon over time has reduced stormwater capacity and the area amenable to safe boating due to gradual shallowing. The shallowing of the lagoon leads to reduced water flow and increased temperatures, which create an environment for increased nuisance vegetation growth and negative impacts to water quality and aesthetics. A Dredging Feasibility Study conducted in 2018 estimates that up to 270,000 cubic yards of sediment could be removed to restore the lagoon to its original capacity. Disposal options for dredged sediment could be limited or very costly due to potential pollutants found within the sediment. The cost for identified sediment removal ranges from \$8M to \$80M depending on the extent of dredging and the disposal requirements. If no dredging takes place, water quality, recreation, and other beneficial uses will be compromised. Additional analysis and public outreach will be necessary to evaluate various options for projects and funding.

Storm system capital improvement projects contained within the FY 21 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) are mostly unfunded, and include those from the 2018 Marina Lagoon Dredging Assessment, the Trash Load Reduction Plan, a Storm Drain Condition Analysis, a Storm Drain Master Plan update, creek maintenance permitting efforts, and several other projects. The cost for these identified storm system CIP projects is approximately \$139M, with \$126M being unfunded projects including dredging of the Marina Lagoon in the amount of \$80M. Funded projects primarily consist of trash capture devices, which are funded through Solid Waste fees.

The City has contracted with SCI Consulting to perform a funding analysis that evaluates financial needs for stormwater activities, explores funding options and sources for dredging as well as other stormwater system activities, and preparation of a preliminary rate structure and roadmap for funding implementation. Next steps will be a presentation of the draft report to the Sustainability and Infrastructure Commission in January 2021. Future tasks may include community polling, revenue report and action plan, funding implementation assistance, and community outreach and education.

BUDGET IMPACT:

There is no budget impact due to the presentation of this information item.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

This informational item is not a project subject to CEQA, because it is an organizational or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5).)

NOTICE PROVIDED

All meeting noticing requirements were met.

ATTACHMENTS

None

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