

# Agenda Report

April 14, 2025

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Department of Public Works

**THROUGH:** Finance Committee (April 14, 2025)

**SUBJECT: AMEND THE FY 2025 CIP BUDGET TO ADD THE WASHINGTON PARK STORMWATER PROJECT AND AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A FUND TRANSFER AGREEMENT WITH THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT TO ACCEPT \$12,649,271 OF COMPETITIVE SAFE, CLEAN WATER PROGRAM GRANT FUNDS**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the proposed actions do not constitute a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 21065 of CEQA and Sections 15060(c)(2), 15060(c)(3), and 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines and, as such, no environmental document pursuant to CEQA is required;
2. Amend the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget to add the *Washington Park Stormwater Capture Project* and appropriate \$12,649,271 in Measure W – Safe, Clean Water Program Region Infrastructure Program grant funds to this project; and
3. Authorize the City Manager to execute a Fund Transfer Agreement with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District to receive a total of \$12,649,271 in Measure W – Safe, Clean Water Program Region Infrastructure Program grant funds.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) requires the City to take steps necessary to reduce or eliminate pollution in stormwater runoff. In addition, the City is part of a group of 18 agencies who participate in the Upper Los Angeles River (ULAR) Enhanced Watershed Management Program which addresses NPDES compliance issues

as a watershed region rather than as independent municipalities. Water in the Rio Hondo River, which is a major tributary of the Upper Los Angeles River, regularly exceeds the Total Maximum Daily Load for bacteria, heavy metals, and other pollutants set forth by the RWQCB.

The East Side Storm Drain (former Woodbury Creek turned channelized conveyance system) is the City's oldest and largest storm drain asset continuing from its origin in Altadena through Washington Park, before connecting with several other drains that constitute the Rubio Wash Drain and subsequent Rubio Wash, which is a tributary of the Rio Hondo River. Stormwater from this storm drain currently flows untreated into the Rio Hondo River and eventually the Pacific Ocean via the Los Angeles River.

In 2022, a Feasibility Study was performed to determine the viability of a stormwater project at Washington Park. A concept plan (Attachment A) proposing a basic design framework was developed and used to apply to Los Angeles County's Safe, Clean Water Program (Measure W) Regional Infrastructure grant program for funding. The goal of the project proposed under the concept is to intercept stormwater flows from the East Side Storm and divert these flows to a subsurface filtration, storage, and infiltration system to be constructed beneath the park. Additionally, surface improvements such as park amenities, native landscaping, and riparian habitat construction would also be incorporated. Ultimately the intended result is improved stormwater quality and increased groundwater storage while also providing benefit to park users. In October 2024, the City was awarded a Measure W competitive grant of \$12,649,271 for the design and construction phases of the project as well as initial year operations and maintenance costs. To accept these funds, a transfer agreement must be executed between the City and Los Angeles County.

Once funding has been received, Public Works staff will issue a Request for Proposals to procure a design consultant for the project design. As the design proceeds from concept to final design, all project components and construction timelines will be vetted through stakeholders and residents with an interest in this area of Pasadena, including the Friends of Washington Park, Washington Square Neighborhood Association, and others. Design is expected to begin in summer 2025 and be completed in winter 2026. The construction timeline will be dependent on the final design but is anticipated no earlier than spring 2027.

#### **COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:**

This project is consistent with the City Council's strategic goals to increase conservation and sustainability, support and promote the quality of life and the local economy, and to improve, maintain, and enhance public facilities and infrastructure. They also support the General Plan Land Use policy to encourage and promote the stewardship of Pasadena's natural environment, including water conservation and protection of water quality.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

The actions proposed herein are an amendment to the CIP Budget and authorization to execute a fund transfer agreement related to the potential future Washington Park Stormwater Project. These actions consist of government funding mechanisms which do not involve any commitment to any specific project, as the proposed fund transfer agreement allows the City to abandon the project and return the funds without penalty. In addition, further discretionary actions of the City would be necessary before the City would be committed to undertaking the project, including approval of project plans<sup>1</sup> and award of a contract for project construction. Therefore, the proposed actions do not constitute a project subject to CEQA pursuant to Section 21065 of CEQA and Sections 15060(c)(2), 15060(c)(3), and 15378(b)(4) of the State CEQA Guidelines and, as such, no environmental document pursuant to CEQA is required at this time. The City will undertake a CEQA process for the project concurrent with the development of project plans and will complete the CEQA process prior to committing to approve or undertake the project.

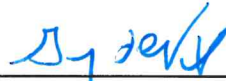
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<sup>1</sup> The Washington Park Stormwater Project has not been designed to date beyond conceptual level diagrams for discussion purposes and as needed to meet grant requirement. Subsequent to the subject approvals, the City would undertake a design process for the project, including soliciting community input and retaining a design firm to develop project plans.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This action will allow staff to accept competitive Safe, Clean Water Program Regional Infrastructure funding in the amount of \$12,649,271 for the Washington Park Stormwater Capture Project. Upon approval of this agreement, the County will release the funds to the City. No local match is required to receive this collective funding.

Respectfully submitted,



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GREG DE VINCK, P.E.  
Director of Public Works


Prepared by:



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Acting City Engineer

Approved by:



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MIGUEL MÁRQUEZ  
City Manager

Attachment A – Washington Park Stormwater Capture Project Concept

Attachment B – Washington Park Stormwater Capture Project FY2025-2029 CIP Project

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