

# Agenda Report

June 2, 2025

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council  
**FROM:** Department of Public Works  
**SUBJECT:** **ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE UPDATED SEWER SYSTEM MANAGEMENT PLAN AND AUTHORIZE THE LEGALLY RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL TO CERTIFY AND SUBMIT TO THE CALIFORNIA STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD**

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the Sewer System Management Plan is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 5, Section 15061(b)(3), and California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 19, Class 1, Section 15301, Existing Facilities;
2. Adopt a resolution approving the updated Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP); and
3. Authorize the Legally Responsible Official (LRO) to certify and submit the updated SSMP to the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and adopt any legally necessary interim updates as may be required by the SWRCB.

## **BACKGROUND:**

On December 6, 2022, the SWRCB adopted Order No. WQ 2022-0103-DWQ (Order), titled *Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) for Sanitary Sewer Systems*, which establishes updated requirements for the operation and maintenance of public wastewater collection systems. The goal of the Order is to reduce the frequency and volume of sanitary sewer overflows throughout the state.

The City of Pasadena owns, operates, and maintains a public sanitary sewer collection system consisting of approximately 328 miles of gravity pipelines. This system serves the majority of the City's 23.1-square-mile area and conveys an average daily flow of approximately 14 million gallons. As the owner and operator of a qualifying collection system, the City is required to comply with the WDR.

In accordance with the WDR, the City shall adhere to the following:

- 1) Participate in the Monitoring and Reporting Program, issued as an attachment to the Order, and report all sewage spills to the SWRCB; and
- 2) Develop and implement a customized SSMP that provides a plan and schedule for the proper management, operation, and maintenance of the City's sanitary sewer system.

The updated SSMP has been prepared in accordance with the WDR and incorporates all required elements, including: identification of the City's legal authority; an operation and maintenance program; pipe design and performance standards; an overflow emergency response plan; a fats, oils, and grease control program; a system evaluation and capacity assurance plan; a monitoring and audit program; a communication program; and the certification required by the SWRCB.

Both the SSMP document and its implementation program must be certified by the City to ensure compliance with the WDR and must be approved by City Council in a public meeting. In accordance with the Order, the SSMP is required to be audited at least once every three years, updated every six years, and re-certified if any significant program changes occur, as determined by the SWRCB. The City's current SSMP was last approved by City Council in 2019, and the updated SSMP will remain valid through May 2031, unless significant program changes necessitate an earlier revision. If changes are required during the approval cycle, the City Engineer, as the City's designated LRO, or an authorized designee, is authorized to make the necessary updates to ensure compliance with the SWRCB.

Upon adoption of the resolution by City Council, the SSMP document will be certified by the LRO and submitted to the SWRCB.

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

The project is consistent with the City Council's goal to improve, maintain, and enhance public facilities and infrastructure. It also supports the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan by maintaining public facilities to enhance the quality of life of the community.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:**

There is no new construction proposed as part of this action. This action authorizes the City to adopt and submit the SSMP (with the previously adopted programs and projects) and the SSMP implementation program to the SWRCB. The proposed actions have been determined to be exempt from environmental review pursuant to the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 5, §15061(b)(3)). Chapter 3, Article 5, §15061(b)(3) exempts activities from environmental review if, "the activity is covered by the common sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on



the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.” The SSMP is primarily a plan for the operation and maintenance of the existing sewer system in accordance with the WDR permit requirements. While the SSMP may articulate the need for replacement, rehabilitation, or improvement of facilities, the plan does not constitute design approval for such activities and does not limit the choice of alternatives or mitigation measures. Rather capital improvements needed to implement the SSMP will be subject to individual planning and design processes that will include appropriate environmental review pursuant to CEQA. This action authorizes the City to adopt and submit the SSMP (with the previously adopted programs and projects in December 2019) and the SSMP implementation program to the SWRCB. Management activities under the SSMP are also categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Existing Facilities, which allows for the operation and maintenance and permitting of existing public facilities with negligible or no expansion of use. There are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt class and, therefore, there are no unusual circumstances.

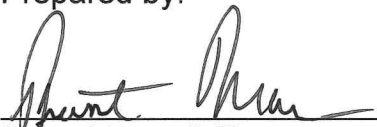
**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with the adoption of the SSMP. Ongoing sewer maintenance and related Capital Improvement activities are funded through existing appropriations in the Sewer Fund and other relevant capital project funds.


Respectfully submitted,

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

Prepared by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brent Maue, P.E.  
Acting City Engineer

Approved by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MIGUEL MARQUEZ  
City Manager

Attachment A – Sewer System Management Plan 2025

Attachment B – Resolution Adopting the Updated Sewer System Management Plan and  
Authorizing the Legally Responsible Official to Certify and Submit to the  
California State Water Resources Control Board