



Agenda Report

August 31, 2026

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Department of Public Works

SUBJECT: **ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM FOR THE EATON WASH STORMWATER CAPTURE PROJECT AND APPROVE PROJECT DESIGN PLANS**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find on the basis of the whole record before it (including the Initial Study and any comments received), that there is no substantial evidence that the project, as mitigated, will have a significant effect on the environment and that the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the lead agency's independent judgment and analysis; and therefore adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Mitigated Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Eaton Wash Stormwater Capture Project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and
2. Approve the Eaton Wash Stormwater Capture Project reflected in the attached Project Design Plans.

BACKGROUND:

The Eaton Wash Stormwater Capture Project is proposed on a City-owned property adjacent to Eaton Wash and Eaton Blanche Park. The project was identified through the City's Storm Drain Master Plan and Watershed Assessment as a strategic location for stormwater quality improvements within the Eaton Wash watershed. To advance the project, the City secured approximately \$2.3 million in design funding through the Los Angeles County Safe, Clean Water Program. The project was developed to address stormwater quality requirements while providing meaningful recreational and community benefits.

The primary purpose of the project is to improve water quality by capturing and treating stormwater and urban runoff that would otherwise be conveyed downstream through

Eaton Wash. The project serves a tributary drainage area of approximately 10,294 acres and will reduce the amount of trash, sediment, nutrients, metals, and other pollutants entering Eaton Wash and downstream receiving waters. The project includes diversion structures, pretreatment and filtration facilities, underground storage and infiltration facilities, monitoring infrastructure, utility improvements, and associated appurtenances. In addition to these water quality benefits, the project will provide groundwater recharge through infiltration of treated stormwater.

A significant component of the project is the transformation of a long-unused City-owned property into approximately 3.5 acres of new publicly accessible open space. The project will effectively expand Eaton Blanche Park while activating a currently underutilized public property for recreational and community use. Planned improvements include community gardens, a dog park, walking paths, gathering areas, an outdoor classroom, demonstration gardens, interpretive features, landscaping, a pedestrian bridge connection to Eaton Blanche Park, and other amenities identified through the public outreach process. These improvements will expand recreational opportunities, improve pedestrian connectivity, and provide new educational and community amenities for Pasadena residents.

Project development has included extensive public outreach and community engagement. Multiple community meetings, stakeholder discussions, and outreach events were conducted throughout the planning and design process to gather input regarding both the stormwater and park components of the project. Community feedback helped inform the proposed site layout, amenities, circulation features, and overall project design. Information regarding the project, design alternatives, and outreach efforts has been made available to the public through the City's project website.

The project design is currently approximately 90 percent complete, with only minor refinements anticipated through final design and permitting. The Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) is included as Attachment A, the Mitigated Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) is included as Attachment B, the Project Design Plans are included as Attachment C and a Summary of Public and Agency Comments and Staff Considerations is included as Attachment D.

Adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration and approval of the Project Design Plans will complete the City's CEQA review for the project and allow the City to advance and finalize environmental permitting and consultation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB), and other agencies with jurisdiction over the project. These actions do not authorize construction or award a construction contract. Public Works staff will return to City Council, as necessary, to request award of a construction contract.

Completing CEQA at this stage is also necessary to maintain the project schedule. Construction is tentatively scheduled to begin in July 2027. Caltrans has committed

approximately \$6.5 million toward the construction phase that must be utilized within the applicable funding timeframe. While that commitment supports the schedule, the primary reason for action now is to complete the City's CEQA process so the required agency reviews can proceed, and the project can advance through permitting.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The Eaton Wash Stormwater Capture Project is consistent with the City Council's strategic goals to improve, maintain, and enhance public infrastructure; increase environmental sustainability and resiliency; protect and improve water resources; expand recreational opportunities; and support and promote the quality of life for Pasadena residents. The project advances the City's long-term sustainability, climate adaptation, stormwater management, groundwater recharge, and open space objectives while providing meaningful environmental and community benefits.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

The California Environmental Quality Act (Section 21000 et seq. of the California Public Resources Code, hereafter CEQA) requires analysis and consideration of environmental effects as part of agency approvals of discretionary projects. A project under CEQA is defined as "the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment." The Eaton Wash Stormwater Capture Project constitutes a project under CEQA.

In accordance with CEQA requirements, the City prepared an Initial Study to evaluate the potential environmental effects associated with implementation of the Eaton Wash Stormwater Capture Project. The Initial Study evaluated all applicable environmental resource areas identified in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, including aesthetics, agricultural and forest resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, public services, recreation, transportation, tribal cultural resources, utilities and service systems, and wildfire.

Based on the analysis contained within the Initial Study, the City determined that the project would not result in significant environmental impacts with implementation of the mitigation measures incorporated into the project. The Initial Study concluded that potentially significant environmental impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels through implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the IS/MND and included in the MMRP.

The City prepared a Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and circulated the Draft IS/MND for public review beginning on May 4, 2026. The Notice of Intent was distributed in accordance with CEQA requirements and provided information

regarding the project, the availability of the Draft IS/MND, and procedures for submitting comments. During the public review period, the City received written comments from public agencies and members of the public. The comments primarily addressed downstream hydrology and water quality, water rights and regulatory authority, groundwater recharge and project operations, construction traffic and hauling, biological resources, and technical studies.

CEQA requires the City Council to consider the comments received together with the proposed IS/MND before taking action. CEQA does not require the City to prepare formal written responses to comments on an IS/MND. Nevertheless, to assist the City Council and demonstrate how the comments were considered, Attachment D summarizes the comments received, staff's consideration of the issues raised, and any revisions incorporated into the Final IS/MND. Where comments raise matters within another agency's jurisdiction, including federal and state permitting, biological resources, waters of the United States or State, and applicable water right considerations, those matters will be evaluated by the USACE, CDFW, LARWQCB, State Water Resources Control Board, Los Angeles County Flood Control District, and other agencies, as applicable, through their respective permitting and consultation processes.

No changes to the project have been proposed following the circulation of the Draft IS/MND. Furthermore, no new information of substantial importance has become available that would indicate the project would result in a new significant environmental impact, a substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified impact or require mitigation measures not previously identified. Therefore, recirculation of the Draft IS/MND is not required pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15073.5.

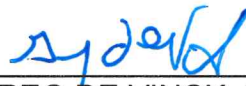
As the project advances through final design and permitting, minor refinements may occur. There is no expectation that future design refinements would result in environmental impacts greater than those analyzed in the IS/MND. Nevertheless, City staff will review any future modifications to determine whether additional environmental review is required pursuant to CEQA.

On the basis of the whole record, including but not limited to the Initial Study, Draft and Final IS/MND, technical studies, public comments received, and staff's consideration of comments, and the MMRP, there is no substantial evidence that the Eaton Wash Stormwater Capture Project, as mitigated, would have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, staff recommends that the City Council adopt the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigated Monitoring and Reporting Program and approve the project as reflected in the attached Project Design Plans.

FISCAL IMPACT:

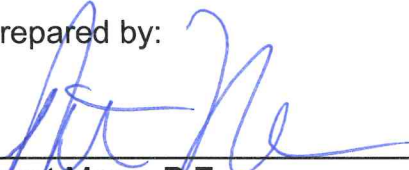
There is no fiscal impact associated with the recommended actions. The project design phase has been funded through approximately \$2.3 million in Safe, Clean Water Program (SCWP) grant funding. Construction of the project is anticipated to be funded through a combination of SCWP funding and approximately \$6.5 million in funding provided through an agreement with Caltrans. Approval of the Mitigated Negative Declaration, Mitigated Monitoring and Reporting Program, and Project Design Plans will not result in any additional General Fund appropriation.

Respectfully submitted,



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Approved by:



MATTHEW E. HAWKESWORTH
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Attachment A – Final Initial Study/ Mitigated Negative Declaration Eaton Wash
Stormwater Capture Project

Attachment B – Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program Eaton Wash Stormwater
Capture Project

Attachment C – Eaton Wash Stormwater Capture Project Design Plans as of 11-17-2025

Attachment D – Summary of Public and Agency Comments and Staff Recommendations