City Council Meeting
08-11-25
Item 7.A.

Council Agenda Report

To: Mayor Riggins and the Honorable Members of the City Council

Prepared by: Rob DuBoux, Public Works Director/City Engineer

Approved by: Candace Bond, Interim City Manager

Date prepared: July 23, 2025 Meeting date: August 11, 2025

Subject: PCH Wastewater Update

RECOMMENDED ACTION: 1) Receive an update on the preliminary design for the Pacific Coast Highway Wastewater project; 2) Provide direction on committing with the Hyperion connection alternative; and 2) Authorize the Mayor to sign a letter to the County of Los Angeles requesting support and coordination for the project.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact associated with the recommended action at this time. The preliminary design work is being completed under the existing amendment with Woodard & Curran. Funding needs for detailed design, construction, and agreements will be brought back to Council at a later date.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: This item was not included in the Adopted FY 2024-25 Strategic Priority Project List, but this has been prioritized due to the rebuilding efforts.

DISCUSSION: On April 24, 2025, the City Council reviewed five wastewater options for beachside properties affected by the Palisades Fire. Council directed staff to further evaluate connecting properties along PCH from Carbon Canyon Road to Topanga Canyon Road to the Hyperion Water Reclamation Plant. The option was estimated at $124 million with a 65-month timeline. Council also formed a PCH Wastewater Ad Hoc Committee and directed staff to retain a consultant for preliminary design.

On May 12, 2025, Council amended the agreement with Woodward and Curran (Civic Center Water Treatment Facility, Phase 2 consultant) to increase their scope of work to provide a preliminary design report for the Hyperion wastewater option. The preliminary design report will provide a draft alignment of the wastewater collection system, project schedule, and provide a total project cost estimate. Woodard and Curran will also attend various project meetings, including the PCH Wastewater Ad Hoc Committee and the

various stakeholders that the City would need to engage with during this project. The purpose of these meetings is to determine if there are any major issues and roadblocks that would prevent this project from moving forward and to provide the Ad Hoc Committee with those updates.

Since April 24, 2025, staff, Woodward and Curran, and other Ad Hoc Committee members have met with the following stakeholders:

City of Los Angeles / Hyperion Water Reclamation Facility

Role & Interest**:** City of Los Angeles operates the Hyperion Water Reclamation Plant. They must approve any new connection, confirm available capacity, define flow/quality limits, and execute a service/connection agreement.
Key Meeting Outcome**:** City of Los Angeles staff indicated Hyperion has sufficient treatment and hydraulic capacity for Malibu's projected flows. They confirmed an agreement will be required to specify allowable flows, fees, pretreatment/monitoring requirements, and construction/connection conditions at the selected tie-in point.
Next Step**:** Staff and Woodard & Curran (W&C) will continue to coordinate with the City of Los Angeles and will provide further design details.

Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)

Role & Interest: Regulates wastewater discharges and onsite wastewater treatment systems.
Key Meeting Outcome: RWQCB staff stated no separate City permit is required for the PCH wastewater line itself. They understood that this project will likely take five years to complete and solutions are needed for the damaged properties. They are willing to allow property owners to repair/replace failing septic systems in the interim, provided the City formally commits to constructing the PCH collection system and maintains schedule momentum.
Next Step: Following Council direction to proceed with the project, staff will continue to work with RWQCB to memorialize the interim septic system policy language.

City of Santa Monica (Pier Lift Station)

Role & Interest: Owns and operates an existing wastewater lift station that will receive Malibu flows before conveyance to Hyperion.
Key Meeting Outcome: Santa Monica staff indicated the upgraded station is expected to accommodate Malibu's incremental flow, subject to final confirmation of design peaking factors and timing.
Next Step: Exchange detailed flow models/design criteria with the City of Santa Monica.

Caltrans (Pacific Coast Highway Right-of-Way)

Role & Interest: Owns, operates and maintains PCH right-of-way. Caltrans issues encroachment permits for projects on PCH.

Key Outcome: Caltrans expressed no conceptual objections but requires formal encroachment permits after preliminary (≈30%) plans are ready. They highlighted the need for a comprehensive traffic management plan and coordination with any concurrent PCH projects. But no major issues were identified.
Next Step: Submit preliminary alignment and construction approach for early review, then prepare the full permit package once the project design is completed.

The outcome of these meetings have been positive and supportive of the proposed project. Staff does not see any major issues that would prevent the City from completing this project. Continued coordination with the stakeholders are needed for this project, including a continued discussion with the Regional Board regarding the property owners use of their existing septic systems or equivalent until the project is completed. As stated in the update, the Regional Board needs project commitment from the City to finalize this policy. Staff is seeking direction from Council on whether to proceed with the design and construction of this project.

Lastly, successful completion of the PCH Wastewater Collection System will require close coordination with the County of Los Angeles, both for political support and for technical and funding partnerships. Staff recommends that the Council authorize the Mayor to sign a letter to the County requesting support for the City's project and commitment to collaborate. Upon Council authorization, staff will forward the signed letter and schedule a follow-up coordination meeting with County staff.

ATTACHMENTS: None