



City of Oceanside

300 North Coast Highway,
Oceanside, California 92054

Staff Report

File #: 25-766

Agenda Date: 5/7/2025

Agenda #: 10.

DATE: May 7, 2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

FROM: Water Utilities Department

TITLE: CONTINUATION OF EMERGENCY WORK TO REPAIR THE MESA LOMA WATER MAIN AT LOMA ALTA CREEK

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council determine that there is a need to continue emergency work to repair the 18-inch Mesa Loma Water Main.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

On January 18, 2024, the City detected a decrease in water pressure within the system. Staff isolated a segment of the pipeline crossing Loma Alta Creek and the North County Transit District (NCTD) railroad tracks as the likely source of the issue. Staff was able to use the Mesa Loma Pump Station to provide system stability while staff worked to locate the break.

Since discovery of the issue, the City has performed several field investigations, land surveying, and internal pipe investigations to pinpoint the location of the leak. To address environmental and regulatory challenges, the City retained Helix Environmental Planning, Inc. in July 2024, with CEQA compliance estimated to take 9 to 12 months. Additional field investigations and an internal pipeline condition assessment (CCTV) were conducted to locate the break. A video of pipe interior confirmed two defects in need of repair—one within Loma Alta Creek and another at the top of a slope. Guida Surveying was contracted in early 2025 to stake the defect locations above-ground while Helix conducted biological and aquatic surveys.

In January 2025, the City initiated the necessary work needed to secure emergency repair permit applications with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). Permits were finalized and submitted in March 2025 for review. Once the emergency permits are approved, construction would need to start within two weeks from notice of approval.

On March 13, 2025, under the City's emergency procurement policy, the City Manager provided approval to use a pre-qualified emergency contractor. Cass-Arrieta prepared a construction cost estimate and information to support the permit applications. Their work is performed on a time-and-material basis.

On April 11, City staff pressurized the water main to assess its condition and observed water surfacing approximately 15 feet north of a known access point, indicating a potential defect. The

contractor required four additional days beyond the original schedule to complete this investigation.

Following the pressure test, the pipeline was drained and televised, extending beyond the previously submerged segment. Video inspection revealed multiple corrosion-related defects at several joints, where mortar intended to protect against corrosion had not been properly applied.

City staff is currently evaluating the risks associated with deferring a more comprehensive repair of the water main. A failure of the pipe could result in substantial damage to Loma Alta Creek, complicating future emergency response and restoration efforts, and significant water loss to system.

FISCAL IMPACT

The estimated construction cost is currently being finalized. Funding for the emergency repair will be sourced from the Water Fixed Asset Replacement Fund that is obtained from water meter and service charges. Since the repair work is being performed on a time and materials basis, the final cost will not be known until completion of work in May 2025. The total construction cost will be finalized following the completion of the work.

The repair will be funded under the Water Pipeline Replacement account 908163620712.5703.10600. The total estimated expenses for construction are \$383,500 until actual costs are provided by the Contractor.

Expenses for engineering support services under already approved as-needed services contracts include \$111,000 for Helix Environmental and LGC Geotechnical in the amount of \$23,000. A full accounting will be provided to Council after the work is completed.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

Due to the location of the pipeline within an environmentally sensitive area, the project required multiple environmental permits prior to construction. The City obtained the necessary permits from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) under RGP 63 and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under RGP 63, both of which were issued before construction commenced. Additionally, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife 1610 notification was submitted within 14 days of the start of construction, in compliance with regulatory requirements. The City worked closely with environmental consultants to ensure all necessary environmental approvals were in place and that impacts to the surrounding ecosystem were minimized and agencies kept apprised of any changes during construction.

COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE REPORT

The Utilities Commission will receive a project update at its regularly scheduled meeting on May 20, 2025.

CITY ATTORNEY'S ANALYSIS

Emergency procurements for public projects without competitive bidding are authorized according to the provisions of Section 28A.24 of the Oceanside City Code and California Public Contract Code Section 22050. The emergency action should be terminated at the earliest possible date that

conditions warrant so that the remainder of the work, if any, may be completed pursuant to the City's regular competitive bidding process.

Prepared by: Mabel Uyeda, Principal Water Engineer
Reviewed by: Michael Gossman, Assistant City Manager
Submitted by: Jonathan Borrego, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Staff Report
2. Project Area Map
3. Contractor's Cost Estimate