



# City of Oceanside

300 North Coast Highway,  
Oceanside, California 92054

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 25-894

**Agenda Date:** 8/6/2025

**Agenda #:** 19.

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**DATE:** August 6, 2025

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers

**FROM:** Water Utilities Department

**TITLE:** **APPROVE CONTINUATION OF EMERGENCY WORK TO REPAIR THE 18-INCH MESA LOMA WATER MAIN AT LOMA ALTA CREEK**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

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

### **BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS**

Water Utilities staff detected decreased water pressure on January 18, 2024, and identified a potential leak in the 18-inch Mesa Loma Water Main near Loma Alta Creek and the North County Transit District (NCTD) railroad crossing. Due to the pipeline's location within environmentally sensitive areas, and the complexity of internal pipe access to pinpoint leak, it took several months to complete field investigations, internal inspections, permitting, and environmental assessments necessary to locate the leak and develop a repair approach.

By early 2025, the City confirmed two critical pipeline defects requiring immediate repair. Given the estimated 9 to 12 months for standard CEQA processing, staff obtained emergency permitting from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board. In addition, contractor and staff coordinated and obtained the necessary training and permits from NCTD. Emergency repairs began in April 2025 under the City's emergency procurement policy.

Initial excavation at Repair Location No. 1 revealed no damage at the first suspected site, but further pressurization tests and video inspections uncovered corrosion-related deterioration at multiple joints along the pipeline, including a significant breach near the second repair, Location No. 2. While Repair Location No. 1 has since been completed and backfilled, progress at Repair Location No. 2 was paused on April 21 due to discovery of an active bird nest. On May 21, a second nest was discovered in the project area further delaying the repair work. In compliance with environmental protection regulations, all work in the affected area was suspended until field inspections on July 3 confirmed that the birds had fledged. As a result, work can resume.

In response to the extent of corrosion identified during follow-up inspections, staff re-evaluated the repair strategy and determined a trenchless, high-pressure liner would be most suitable due to the

nature of the defects, risk of additional failure if left unaddressed, potential delays imposed by protected species nesting, and the need to complete work under existing emergency environmental permits.

Pipeline rehabilitation and final connections are expected to be complete by the end of September. Staff will return with an update on the rehabilitation work at the next scheduled City Council meeting.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Funding for the emergency repair and pipeline rehabilitation work will be sourced from the Water Fixed Asset Replacement Fund, which is supported by water meter and service charges.

Cass Arrieta has completed emergency repairs at Location No. 1 on a time-and-materials basis at a cost of \$282,966. Since this amount exceeds the original contract amount of \$100,000, Change Order No. 1 in the amount of \$182,966 was processed and signed by the City Manager under the City's emergency procurement policy to cover the difference.

Cass Arrieta's total estimated cost for all work is approximately \$1,000,000. This includes the \$282,966 for the completed emergency repair and about \$700,000 in additional support services to assist the lining contractor with the remaining pipeline rehabilitation work.

Expenses for engineering support services under already approved as-needed services contracts is estimated at \$263,000. These include Helix Environmental, LGC Geotechnical, Guida Surveying, HDR corrosion services, and Ardurra project management services. In addition, required NCTD flagging services for work near railroad tracks is expected to cost \$121,500.

A final breakdown of total construction and engineering services costs will be provided in the next update to City Council.

This project is funded under the Water Pipeline Replacement Account No. 908163620712. Staff also recommends an additional \$100,000 to this account to replenish the account for future emergency response needs.

### **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 prior to the start of construction, in compliance with regulatory requirements. The City is working closely with environmental consultants to ensure all necessary environmental approvals are in place and that impacts to the surrounding ecosystem are minimized and agencies are kept apprised of any changes during construction.

### **COMMISSION OR COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Utilities Commission was apprised of the project update at its regularly scheduled meeting on September 16, 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.

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Submitted by: Jonathan Borrego, City Manager