



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: March 8, 2023

PRESENTER: Michael Barajas, Public Works Director

SUBJECT: Consideration of Mitigated Negative Declaration under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for Kerman Sewer System Improvements Project (MB)

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends Council conduct public hearing and approve Resolution adopting the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Kerman Sewer System Improvements Project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The City owns and operates a City-wide sewer collection system and a WWTP under Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) No. R5-2007-0115. The City provides sewer service to 3,611 connections and receives an average daily flow of approximately one million gallons per day (MGD).

The City's sewer collection system is aged and some of the older portions of the system experience frequent blockages, overflows and require cleaning or removal of roots. The physical condition of some of these sewer lines is believed to be very poor, likely beyond their life expectancy, and need to be replaced. Beyond the required maintenance and repair activities, there has not been any major replacement or rehabilitation of the City's sewer collection system to date.

A condition survey of the sewer collection system was conducted to document the system's existing condition, identify deficiencies, and estimate the useful life of the sewer mains. The current physical condition of the system's components was assessed through site-visits, discussion with City staff, and an comprehensive closed-circuit television (CCTV) inspection. As part of this preliminary engineering process, the City conducted a comprehensive CCTV inspection on the older portions of the sewer collection system.

The primary need for a sewer collection system improvement project is due to the significant deterioration of some portions of the sewer infrastructure. The City's maintenance staff responds to problems with the collection system such as back-ups and overflows/spills and spends a great deal of their time locating and/or repairing the system in response to emergency calls from the City's residents. According to the results of the CCTV inspection, approximately 22 percent of the sewer lines inspected require either replacement or rehabilitation.

A Preliminary Engineering Report entitled "City of Kerman Sewer Collection System and Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements" was prepared by AM Consulting Engineers in September 2022 to address the needed improvements. A summary of Project activities is included herein.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

The City of Kerman Sewer Improvements Project consists of the following:

Sewer Main Replacement and Rehabilitation

- Replacing or rehabilitating approximately 5.3 discontinuous miles (27,847 feet) of existing gravity sewer mains within the City of Kerman. Sewer main improvements will consist of “in-kind” rehabilitation and replacements of the City’s gravity sewer mains.

Improvements to the Existing WWTP

- Installing a non-potable water system.
- Installing new clarifier gearbox.
- Installing new headworks hoists.
- Installing new Turbo Blowers for the Biolac system and the digester.
- Installing new Blower building to house the blower pumps.
- Replacing the old and failing screw press sludge feed pump, and a second pump for redundancy.
- Replacing the old decant pump.
- Replacing the pump in the septic receiving station and use the current pump for redundancy.
- Installing flow meters on the RAS and WAS lines.
- Replacing the existing 10HP RAS/WAS pump with a 20HP pump and add a second 20 HP pump for redundancy.
- Installing new DO sensors for the Biolac system and Digester.
- Installing new MLSS sensors for the Biolac system and Digester to ensure adequate level of treatment and maintain healthy sludge age in the treatment basins.
- Upgrading the SCADA system to show historic DO, pH, MLSS and flow trends to aid day-to-day decisions.
- Installing variable Frequency Drives (VFDs) on RAS/WAS pump.
- Installing upgrades to Lift Station No.17, including wet well rehabilitation, repair of pump chain welds and electric wiring upgrades.

Project Schedule

Construction is expected to begin in March 2025 and will take approximately 12 months to complete.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Project is subject to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and other regulatory environmental requirements. The City’s Project Engineer (AM Consulting Engineers) retained the services of Crawford & Bowen Planning, Inc. to prepare the required CEQA documentation and associated studies.

The Project CEQA document will require a public hearing (tonight) and review/approval of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). The MND was noticed in *The Kerman News* and circulated to the State Clearinghouse, and other interested local individuals and agencies. The MND was circulated for 30 days public review from February 1, 2023 to March 3, 2023.

The MND analyzed all environmental topics from the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G checklist and included specialized studies for biological and cultural resources. It was determined that all impacts were either less than significant or could be mitigated to a less than significant level.

The Project is expected to be funded by Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) funds administered through the California State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board). One requirement of CWSRF funding is that the City will be required to comply with the Water Board's environmental requirements including CEQA-Plus. CEQA-Plus involves additional environmental analysis of certain topics to include federal thresholds, rules and regulations (for topics such as air, biology, cultural, etc.). In addition to this Mitigated Negative Declaration, the City is preparing a separate Environmental Package for submittal to the Water Board which includes the CEQA-Plus analysis.

Once the public hearing occurs and the MND is adopted, the City's consultants will submit an Environmental Package to the State Water Board which contains all of the documents needed to satisfy the Board's environmental requirements.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact associated with the adoption of this Resolution. The project cost is estimated to be approximately \$8.3 million. The City is pursuing grant funding through the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF). The SWRCB is currently processing the City's grant application and has not determined if a loan component will be required. Any required loan component will be executed through a funding agreement with the SWRCB which will be presented to Council for consideration and approval.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Resolution
- B. Sewer Improvements Project CEQA Document and Attachments

RESOLUTION NO. 23-__

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL, OF THE CITY OF KERMAN ADOPTING THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE KERMAN SEWER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Kerman has received and reviewed the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration, including the draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration with appendices, and supporting information sources (collectively, the "draft MND"), together with the staff report and any comments received and responded to during the public review and hearing process (collectively, the "Environmental Record") for the proposed sewer improvements project (the "Project"), as described in the draft MND; and

WHEREAS, the City is the lead agency for purposes of environmental review of the Project under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21000 et seq., and the State "Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act"; and

WHEREAS, the Project could, without mitigation, result in a potential impact to certain areas of environmental concern, including Biological and Cultural Resources; and

WHEREAS, the City has prepared mitigation measures to address and mitigate all potential environmental impacts to a "less than significant" level, which is a part of the Environmental Record reviewed and considered by the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the City has incorporated the mitigation measures described in the Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) of the draft MND as conditions of approval by the City; and

WHEREAS, with the exception of the potential impacts stated above, there are no other potentially significant environmental impacts resulting from the Project; and

WHEREAS, the City submitted a Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration to the State Clearinghouse and distributed it to those agencies which have jurisdiction by law with respect to the Project; placed the Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration concerning the Project in *The Kerman News* for publication; and mailed the Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration to other interested parties; and

WHEREAS, the draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration with appendices and supporting information sources were duly noticed for public review and comment from February 1, 2023 to March 3, 2023, as provided by law; and

WHEREAS, the City received no written comments in response to the draft MND; and

WHEREAS, a hearing concerning the City's intent to adopt a final MND and MMRP was duly noticed and held on March 8, 2023, at which time any interested parties were afforded an opportunity to be heard in addition to the public review and comment period referenced above as part of the Environmental Record; and

WHEREAS, the City has considered, prior to adoption of the final MND, the Environmental Record in support of the final MND.

NOW THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Kerman finds, determines and resolves as follows:

SECTION 1. The City Council adopts the foregoing recitals as true and correct.

SECTION 2. The City Council finds that the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration reflect the independent judgment of the City as the lead agency for the Project.

SECTION 3. The City Council finds that it has independently reviewed and considered the Environmental Record, including the Initial Study and proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration, as a final Mitigated Negative Declaration, prior to adopting the final Mitigated Negative Declaration.

SECTION 4. On the basis of the Environmental Record as the whole record before the City Council, including the Initial Study and any comments received, the City Council finds, in its independent judgment and analysis, that there is no substantial evidence the Project will have a significant effect on the environment.

SECTION 5. The City Council confirms that the mitigation measures described in the Initial Study, have been incorporated into the Project and adopts a Mitigated Negative Declaration, as the final Mitigated Negative Declaration, which documents are a part of the Environmental Record before the City Council for the Project.

SECTION 6. The City Council approves and adopts the findings set forth herein and the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Kerman Sewer Improvements based on the Environmental Record.

SECTION 7. City staff is authorized and directed to cause a Notice of Determination concerning the adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Project to be filed in the office of the Fresno County Clerk and with the Office of Planning and Research in accordance with CEQA and State CEQA Guidelines.

This foregoing resolution was introduced and adopted at a regular meeting the City Council of the City of Kerman held on the 8th day of March, 2023, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Maria Pacheco
Mayor

ATTEST:

Marci Reyes
City Clerk