CITY COUNCIL MEMO

CENTRAL WATERFRONT RESILIENCE

DATE: JUNE 1, 2022

Overview:

Thanks to policy and strategic workplan direction set by City Council, the City of St. Helens is engaged in a thoughtful community conversation about redeveloping our waterfront to provide increased access and public amenities as part of the future development. The community desires an active waterfront, with improved access and expanded public uses, that are accessible to all.

One area of consideration along the St. Helens waterfront is the Central Waterfront. This property is an important piece of land in these redevelopment efforts. The property connects the City's downtown Riverfront District to the north and the St. Helens Industrial Business Park property to the south.

The Central Waterfront Property is approximately 50 acres and the current location of the City's 39-acre wastewater treatment plant facility. The facility's secondary lagoon was built in 1972 as a partnership with Boise Cascade. Today, the facility is oversized, expensive to maintain, and is not the best use of a large stretch of Columbia River waterfront property. The 50-year-old lagoon also creates environmental permitting challenges due to its age and outdated technology.

The City of St. Helens is currently exploring options to repurpose part or all of the wastewater treatment plant facility. It is critical that we understand the conditions and context of the site. By doing so, the City will be able to **improve the St. Helens environment and health of the Columbia River by creating a properly sized wastewater treatment plant facility that uses modern technology to meet today's environmental standards**.

Recent funding from state and federal partners will assist with the Central Waterfront Project. The Oregon Legislature approved House Bill 5202 which allocates $984,000 to the City of St. Helens for the Central Waterfront redevelopment efforts. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) also approved $387,000 through its Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for the City of St. Helens to study wastewater treatment resiliency.

Current scope of work for adoption:

- Geotechnical investigation of lagoon and containment berm
- Groundwater monitoring well installation
- Wastewater Treatment Plant hazard risk analysis
- Future treatment plan infrastructure planning and site evaluation
- Sampling and chemical analysis of sludge and subsurface soils

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