



REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Title: Request for Council Action - Mahler WRF Outfall Replacement

Preferred Agenda: November 8, 2022

Submitted By: Greg Springman, Public Works Director

Reviewed By: Kelcey Young, City Manager

Type of Action: Resolution ____ Motion X Roll Call ____ Other ____

Relevant Code/Policy: N/A

Towards Council Goal: 1.1 Develop specific steps for implementation of the adopted infrastructure master plans.

Attachments: West Yost Engineer's Recommendation for Mahler WRF Outfall Replacement

Purpose of this RCA:

Staff is requesting Council authorization to proceed with Mahler WRF Outfall Replacement, increasing the WWTP overall outfall capacity into the South Santiam River.

Background/Context:

City staff and West Yost staff recently met with representatives from Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), United States Department of Agriculture Rural Utilities Service (USDA-RUS) and National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) to discuss environmental permitting requirements for the planned outfall upgrades included in the current Mahler Water Reclamation Facility (MWRF) Project. The current planned approach for increasing outfall capacity to match the MWRF design flows is to retain the existing outfall and add an "overflow" that would be located outside the mean high-water elevation on the South Santiam River.

Staff and Engineers discussed this approach was discussed in a meeting with NMFS where it was indicated that the environmental permitting requirements for this proposed approach could be more complicated than simply replacing and upsizing the existing South Santiam River

outfall diffuser. The existing 14-inch outfall is undersized and is in a poor location in the South Santiam River. The existing outfall is outside the main river channel and subject to soil accretion that has reduced the effectiveness of the outfall. Further, the existing outfall is a hydraulic bottleneck.

Initial outfall planning and permitting activities would be completed concurrent with the ongoing MWRF Improvements 60% final design, planned for completion in January 2023. These initial activities would include:

- New outfall preliminary hydraulic sizing and design; and
- Completion of an updated Environmental Assessment (EA) and Biological Assessment (BA).

The additional environmental permitting activities to replace the MWRF outfall would be more rigorous than the previous efforts and would include a more rigorous EA and BA. The EA and BA would be prepared by Pacific Habitat Services, who completed the previous Environmental Report for the project under contract.

While completing the final design of the MWRF Improvements Project, West Yost would collect detailed river bathymetry data (river bottom elevations), complete final design of the replacement outfall, and prepare a mixing zone study for the new outfall. West Yost will include this as a task in our upcoming proposal for completing final design of the MWRF Improvements Project, which we anticipate submitting to the City in January 2023. The timeline for obtaining permits for the new MWRF outfall is not currently known but could be anywhere from 6-12 months based on agency feedback and discussions with other Oregon Cities pursuing permits for new or replacement outfalls.

If approved by the City, West Yost recommends utilizing the remaining \$49,652 in Owner-Controlled Contingency funds included in West Yost's current design contract to be utilized for outfall replacement activities. For this reason, West Yost recommends the MWRF Outfall Replacement be developed as a stand-alone bid package, separate from the MWRF Improvements Project.

The Challenge/Problem:

To make efficient use of limited funds to complete needed wastewater treatment improvements and satisfy DEQ requirements and state funding timelines.

Stakeholders:

- City Residents. Residents are the customers who deserve good service with the highest return on their taxes and fees that we can provide, and who trust the City to maintain their infrastructure systems at a high level of service.
- Council Members. Council members are the voice of the citizens we serve. Each member of this group is interested in providing the best service possible at the lowest possible cost. They must balance leadership with representation.
- Public Works Department Staff. This project will greatly improve the operability of the WWTP which is currently undersized and beyond its serviceable lifespan. Staff spends significant time fixing broken down equipment and fighting with system inefficiencies.
- Management Team. Comprised of five department heads, each with a responsibility to the citizens and City Manager to run their day-to-day operations as efficiently as possible.
- Oregon DEQ. The WWTP improvement project upgrades and a new NPDES permit is required for compliance with DEQ regulations.

Issues and Financial Impacts:

Proposed to utilize \$49,652 in Owner-Controlled Contingency funds remaining in West Yost's current WWTP design contract.

Elements of a Stable Solution:

A stable solution will provide efficient completion of needed facility improvements and make full use of the funding from the State of Oregon for this project.

Options:

1. Option 1 – Do Nothing. This will result in project delays and regulatory action by DEQ.
2. Option 2 – Move to authorize staff to proceed with Engineer's Recommendation for Mahler WRF Outfall Replacement. Staff will execute the proposed Mahler WRF Outfall Replacement.
3. Option 3 – Move to negotiate the proposal with West Yost. Staff will revisit the proposal with West Yost to address Council's concerns, then bring it back to Council to reconsider approval. This may result in cost increases due to fluctuating market prices.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends Option 2 – Move to authorize staff to proceed with Engineer's Recommendation for Mahler WRF Outfall Replacement.