



# County of Monterey

**Item No.**

## Board Report

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

**Legistar File Number: PCSD RES 23-003**

**November 07, 2023**

**Introduced:** 10/27/2023

**Current Status:** Agenda Ready

**Version:** 1

**Matter Type:** PCSD Resolution

Acting as the Board of Directors of the Pajaro County Sanitation District, adopt a Resolution to:

- Approve submittal of a Financial Assistance grant application to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Service for possible funding of restoration and repairs to the Pajaro County Sanitation District (PCSD) Wastewater System for damages resulting from winter storm events which began in Calendar Year 2022;
- Authorize the Director of Public Works, Facilities and Parks (PWFP), or designee, to act as agent for the County of Monterey/PCSD in processing all documentation to secure these funds and to sign and file the application on behalf of the County of Monterey/PCSD; and
- Direct PWFP staff to return to the Board of Supervisors for approval prior to acceptance of any grant award(s).

### RECOMMENDATION:

Acting as the Board of Directors of the Pajaro County Sanitation District, it is recommended that the Board of Supervisors approve a Resolution to:

- Approve submittal of a Financial Assistance grant application to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Service for possible funding of restoration and repairs to the Pajaro County Sanitation District (PCSD) Wastewater System for damages resulting from winter storm events which began in Calendar Year 2022;
- Authorize the Director of Public Works, Facilities and Parks (PWFP), or designee, to act as agent for the County of Monterey/PCSD in processing all documentation to secure these funds and to sign and file the application on behalf of the County of Monterey/PCSD; and
- Direct PWFP staff to return to the Board of Supervisors for approval prior to acceptance of any grant award(s).

### GRANT BACKGROUND SUMMARY:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Service recently announced a funding opportunity through their Calendar Year (CY) 2022 Disaster Water Grants Program. The Agency will have at least \$247,250,000 in grant funding nationwide through the Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023. Grant funds will be made available to qualified, rural applicants to pay for expenses (restoration, repair, or rebuilding) related to water infrastructure systems damaged by events that occurred during CY 2022 (and which resulted in a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration). Water infrastructure systems, as defined by the grant, include all water resource infrastructure, including wastewater, drinking water, storm drainage, and solid waste facilities.

Applications are being accepted on a continual basis, beginning on August 21, 2023 - and will continue until funds are exhausted. Projects located in a Disadvantaged or Distressed Community will receive bonus points in the rankings process. There are no cost sharing or

matching requirements associated with this grant.

#### PAJARO COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT - Wastewater System Overview

The Pajaro County Sanitation District (PCSD) is a dependent Special District. The PCSD Wastewater System is County-owned System is located within the jurisdictional boundaries of the PCSD in the northern unincorporated area of the County of Monterey. The system includes a wastewater collection system of approximately 16.5 miles of gravity sewer pipe, six (6) pump stations, and 2.4 miles of force sewer main. There are approximately 1,047 sewer connections and 1,768 billing units.

The PCSD Wastewater System is a collection system only and does not provide wastewater treatment. Instead, collected sewage is pumped to the City of Watsonville (City) wastewater treatment plant (plant). Under an agreement with the city, the plant accepts and treats PCSD sewage. The PCSD is charged for its share of the plant's costs based on its fraction of the total wastewater received by the plant and the quality of the received wastewater.

#### PRIMARY PROPOSED PROJECT

##### RELOCATE or REPLACE PAJARO FORCE MAIN

The County of Monterey operates and maintains the PCSD Wastewater System. The PCSD is a dependent special district which provides wastewater service to the Pajaro, Las Lomas, and Bay Farms communities. The final lift station pumps sewage from the Pajaro wastewater collection system to the Watsonville Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) through a sewer line consisting of 11,600 ft of 16-inch asbestos cement force main. This line has had significant damage during past storm events (e.g., 2017) and during this past winter as well.

During this past winter, the County responded to multiple leaks and a wholesale rupture of the force main due to a series of events which began on December 27th, 2022. It is unknown exactly when the leaks started to happen but were a result of increasing groundwater in the area (associated with flow in the Pajaro River). PWFP had crews fixing the breaks by January 17th. Subsequently, because of continuing storms and a break in the Pajaro levee, the force main was completely severed at the Highway 1 undercrossing.

PWFP repaired numerous leaks/breaks in the force main along the route. This entire force main has been compromised likely primarily due the age of the infrastructure. The County recently completed a temporary repair of the portion of the force main that was severed during the March storm. There were also spot repairs at approximately 10 other locations along the line between January and March.

To prevent the release of wastewater and infiltration of groundwater into the wastewater conveyance system, as well as to minimize the potential for future force main breaks, the County must replace the entire reach of force main. Due to the upcoming project with the Pajaro River Flood Management Agency (PRFMA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), there is a high likelihood that PRFMA and USACE will require the County/PCSD to completely relocate the sewer main outside the levee zone.

A consulting engineering firm is assisting the County/PCSD with both emergency designs and a feasibility study to relocate or completely replace the force main. They have provided the

County with several alternatives. The cost of this 'primary' project is estimated to be \$5.4 million; however, there may be additional costs yet to be identified.

#### ADDITIONAL PROPOSED PROJECT

##### INTERNAL SYSTEM REPAIRS

Staff believes that there may have been other internal system damages within the PCSD Wastewater collection system sustained because of the storms which began in Calendar Year 2022. In addition, there are system repairs and upgrades necessary to address needed maintenance and maintain compliance with discharge requirements under an operating permit issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Additional repairs being proposed under the grant will include upgrades to the Pajaro Lift Station as well as spot repairs at approximately 25 locations within the Las Lomas area that are failing.

The estimated costs for those repairs are \$4.1 Million.

If both proposed projects are determined to be eligible for inclusion, the total amount of funding requested will be \$9.4 million.

#### NEXT STEPS

##### Prepare and Submit Grant for Consideration by USDA (ASAP)

Time is of the essence, as this is a nationally competitive process and grant proposals are processed in the order received. The proposed project is within a rural area as defined in the grant solicitation (population of not more than 35,000 inhabitants), and local USDA staff have indicated their belief that the project is eligible for this specific Grant. County staff time and associated consultant costs to prepare the application will be covered by the PCSD budget (estimated at approximately \$35,000); however, if successful, neither the PCSD nor County will be required to provide a cost-sharing match for actual project funding.

##### Bring the Grant to the Board for Formal Action/Approval

Should the proposed Force Main relocation/replacement and/or other internal system repairs projects be selected to receive USDA grant funding, staff will be bringing an item back to the Capital Improvement Committee, Budget Committee, and Board of Supervisors to accept the grant award and to add the project(s) to the Capital Improvement Plan and Annual Work Program.

##### Concurrently Investigate other Grant Possibilities

There are other substantial near- and long- term improvements needed for the PCSD Wastewater System. The costs are significant. Staff and retained consulting engineers will also be investigating other possible grant options for further potential investment in the system.

#### OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

If the Grant is awarded, the work will need to be coordinated with numerous other essential partners, including the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Monterey County Water Resources Agency, the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency, and the City of Watsonville. Close coordination and involvement with them will be necessary. Intergovernmental Agreements may eventually be required. The design and environmental review work to be

completed if the USDA Grant is successful will help inform discussions with all entities.

FINANCING:

Should the grant be awarded, PWFP will initially use a portion of the funds for the design and environmental review work needed to finalize the project parameters. This application will be for a 100% grant for the project (including design, right-of way, and construction activities) to support the Pajaro community through the PCSD. PWFP staff believe that there will not be a matching County contribution necessary for work under this grant.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

The Project will construct a sustainable, physical infrastructure that improves the quality of life for County residents and visitors. The recommended action supports the following Board of Supervisors' Strategic Initiatives:

- ☒ Economic Development
- ☐ Administration
- ☐ Health & Human Services
- ☒ Infrastructure
- ☒ Public Safety

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Approved by: Randell Ishii, MS, PE, TE, PTOE, Director of Public Works, Facilities and Parks

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The following attachment is on file with the Clerk of the Board:

Attachment A - Resolution USDA Grant Application