



DATE: April 4, 2016

TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council

VIA: Kevin M. Miller, City Manager

FROM: Jeff C. Moneda, Public Works Director/City Engineer  
Doris L. Palmer, Communications Director/City Clerk

SUBJECT: PUBLIC OUTREACH FOR LEVEE PROTECTION PLANNING AND IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT (CIP 301-657)

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### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council of the City of Foster City review and comment on the draft presentation prior to conducting the public outreach efforts to the residential and business communities of the City.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the City Council Study Session on February 22, 2016, staff and the City's consultant, Schaaf & Wheeler, presented the draft Levee project presentation for comments from the City Council. The intent of the study session was for the City Council to review the presentation and provide comments before the information is presented to the public at the planned community meetings. The City Council requested that staff modify and revise the presentation to address the basic message to the public.

### BACKGROUND

The current levee system in Foster City was recertified and accredited by FEMA in 2007, designating land within Foster City as Zone X (moderate-risk area), and exempting residents from having to purchase mandatory flood insurance. In 2012, San Mateo's Bayfront levee between the Foster City limit and San Mateo Creek, along East Third Avenue, was accredited by FEMA, which means all of Foster City and a portion of San Mateo were mapped as Zone X in the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) effective October 16, 2012.

In July 2014, FEMA completed the San Francisco Bay Coastal Flood Hazard Study as part of the California Coastal Analysis and Mapping Program (CCAMP). Results of the

study were used by FEMA to remap FIRMs for San Francisco Bay communities including Foster City, and a new FIRM covering Foster City will become effective in mid-2016. The Coastal Flood Hazard Study indicates that the Foster City levee is deficient and will not retain accreditation.

In December 2014, the City hired Schaaf & Wheeler to prepare a Levee Protection Planning report to identify the City's flood risk and determine potential levee improvement alternatives that may be necessary to restore levee accreditation. FEMA has granted to the City "Seclusion Mapping" designation to keep Foster City property owners out of the flood zone designation as long as sufficient progress is being made with the project. It is critical that progress be made with the project as FEMA can remove the "Seclusion Mapping" designation at any time which would place the City in a flood zone and would require mandatory flood insurance for many properties in the City. Schaaf & Wheeler is currently working as the City's engineering consultant for the levee improvement project to meet FEMA's accreditation requirements. The project team is currently working on the environmental and preliminary design work for the project.

It should be noted that staff has received at least 25 phone calls from residents regarding general questions associated with the levee project. Those questions have been addressed by providing information on the City's website and preparation of the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet, as well as including the information with the PowerPoint presentation for the community.

#### PRESENTATION AT COMMUNITY MEETINGS

At the February 22, 2016 City Council Study Session, Schaaf & Wheeler and staff presented the draft PowerPoint presentation to the City Council for comments. Upon the directions received from the City Council, staff revised the PowerPoint presentation accordingly (Attachment 1).

It is proposed that the PowerPoint presentation be presented to the community at two separate meetings to be held at the City Council Chambers on April 21, 2016 (residential community) and May 12, 2016 (business community) as outlined below.

#### PUBLIC OUTREACH

The project outreach phases identify the actions and informational materials that are required during each stage of outreach for the project.

#### ***Phase One: Exploration – Initial Outreach***

##### **Informational Meetings:**

Two informational meetings will be held in a centralized location (City Council Chambers) on two different dates. Postcards will be mailed to two target stakeholder

groups (1<sup>st</sup> meeting – residents; 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting - businesses), but anyone is welcome to attend either of the meetings.

### **Messaging:**

- What are we doing? We are improving our levee system.
- Why are we doing this? To get FEMA accreditation and keep all properties out of the flood zone. If not, property owners will be required to purchase flood insurance for federally backed loans, which are anticipated to cost greater than \$2,000 annually.
- How are we doing this? We have a team comprised of City staff and the best engineers and financing firms to ensure a high quality project is built that will meet the goal of receiving FEMA accreditation and protecting lives, homes and businesses.

### **Strategy to deploy at informational meetings to ensure message delivery:**

- Timeline – The timeline will explain the general stages of the project. It will demonstrate where we are and where we are going. Example: initial stage of project research design, etc. A very basic timeline will be used, with a “You Are Here” dot positioned on the timeline.
- FAQ Video – Create a short video that will address the what, why and how’s to the extent that we have received Council direction about the project and in particular the practical questions such as:
  1. How will this affect my property value?
  2. How much will I need to pay for this through flood insurance or special assessment parcel tax?
  3. How will this affect me trying to sell my property?Questions will be answered by the Public Works Director and Consultant.
- Video of Meeting – The informational meeting will be recorded and edited for use on the City website and distributed to interested parties.
- PowerPoint Presentation – Non-technical slides will be presented to serve as an informative presentation and technical slides will also be available at the meetings to explain the project in more detail, if needed. The presentation length and technical details shall be tailored to address the appropriate audience.
- Informational Materials – Flyers, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and other informational materials, project binder (staff reports, resolutions, etc.) will be designed to support and promote the informational meetings.

### **Outreach to get targeted audience to attend meeting:**

- Direct Mail – Postcards to targeted stakeholders
- Website
- E-newsletter
- Electronic Invitation - Eventbrite for each meeting will be emailed to the target groups as identified by the Consultant.
- Social Media - If social media is used, the meeting information will be posted on the City's Facebook and Twitter accounts. Nextdoor could also be utilized.
- Press Release – A press release will be drafted and reviewed by the Public Works Director before normal distribution.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no additional fiscal impact associated with this report. The funding for this phase of public outreach for the Levee Protection Planning and Improvement Project is currently funded as part of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP 301-657).

Attachment: Community Meeting Levee Project Presentation