

Additional Documents

January 25, 2022 NREC Meeting

ITEM 1

General Public Comments



NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA

1414 MISSION STREET, SOUTH PASADENA, CA 91030

TEL: (626) 403-7240 • FAX: (626) 403-7241

WWW.SOUTHPASADENACA.GOV

REGULAR NREC MEETING

JANUARY 25, 2022 7:00PM

PUBLIC COMMENTS

FROM: Helena Wild
AGENDA ITEM: General
ATTACHMENT: 5 Photos
COMMENT:

Hello,

My name is Helena. I newly moved to Pasadena. I go to lower Arroyo Seco park every weekend. There is a small STREAM that used to flow. It's south to San Pascual Stables, and right next to Burke, Clarich, Nelson fields. The water was clear and abundant to sustain the ecosystem around it. including very tall, thick palm trees, bushes, fishes. I even saw a turtle in the stream.

Two days ago (Dec. 12), I found the stream was completely dry. I feel strange because it rained the last week, I thought there should be more water. There was more water in the nearby canal, though. I think there may be BLOCKAGE somewhere that dried up the stream. I took some photos. Please see attached. Pasadena is so dry, please don't let this little stream and the nearby eco-system vanish. Thanks!

Photo 1. the blue dot indicates where the stream was

3. the tree right above the stream

4. the dried stream bed

5. only tiny water remains. I used to see fishes and even a turtle live in this little cave

6. dried stream from a low angle.

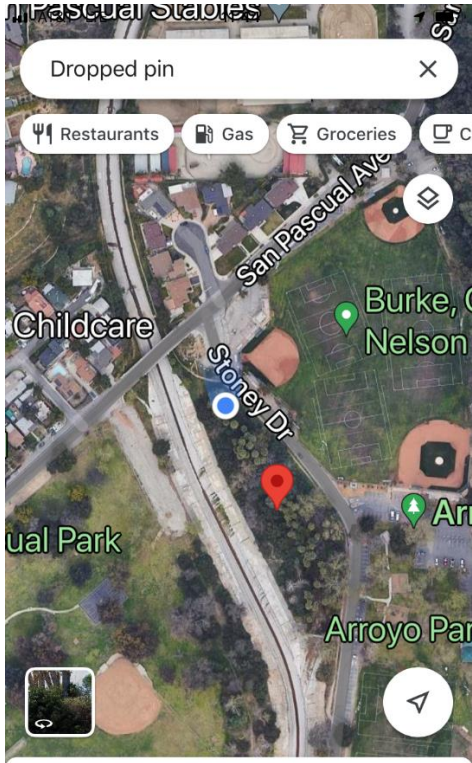
only two weeks ago, the stream was running, crystal clear, about 3 inches deep.

Thanks!

Helena



Public Comment from Helena Wild



Dropped pin
Near Los Angeles County, CA



FROM: Bonnie Lui
AGENDA ITEM: General
ATTACHMENT: None
COMMENT:

How does the city plan on raising awareness and educating its citizens of this new compost law?
Thanks!

Bonnie.
www.bonnielui.com
408.6216716

FROM: Barbara Eisenstein, Friends of the Nature Park
AGENDA ITEM: General
ATTACHMENT: Stakeholder Comments
COMMENT:

I would like to bring to the attention of the Natural Resources and Environment Commission the project being considered by our city for construction of large scale, subsurface infrastructure along the Arroyo Seco. I attended two virtual meetings on December 14 and 15, 2021 with presentations on the design concept for the project made by Stantec. I submitted the attached comment to the city council on December 26, 2021.

As I understand it, the project is currently in the design concept phase. Once the design concept is completed, Stantec will proceed with a feasibility study to determine the costs and the precise infrastructure needed to execute the design concept. I believe this will include information on likely flow in the channel below South Pasadena after water is taken to irrigate the golf course and soccer fields. It will also include information on whether the wetlands will need to be lined to stay wet throughout the year. It is my understanding that this work – the design concept and the feasibility study – was funded by the Safe Clean Water Program for \$400,000.

This expensive, heavily built project has to this point had limited involvement of NREC, environmental groups, and other stakeholders. It would benefit the city, the Arroyo Seco and the surrounding communities if the Natural Resources and Environment Commission, along with other stakeholders were involved and made comments on this project.

Thank you for your ongoing work on these important environmental issues.

Yours,
Barbara Eisenstein



COMMENTS ON THE ARROYO SECO INFILTRATION AND WETLANDS PROJECT DESIGN CONCEPT BY STANTEC FOR THE CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA

Barbara Eisenstein, Friends of South Pasadena Nature Park
December 26, 2021

On December 14th and 15th I attended two virtual meetings during which a design concept for water infiltration and purification along the Arroyo Seco in South Pasadena was presented. I was invited as a stakeholder, presumably due to my work in our local nature park that is located adjacent to the Arroyo Seco flood control channel. I have serious concerns about this design concept. Although I have been interested in creating improved habitat and water infiltration in the nature park, my concerns about the design concept are broader than my work at the nature park, and focus on its reliance on a heavily engineered, high maintenance system.

From what I understand from attending these meetings – and please note, this was the first time I heard anything about the project – the City of South Pasadena hired the consulting firm, Stantec, to develop a plan for large infrastructure project to be funded through LA County’s Safe Water Program. The design concept presented in December itself was funded by this program. I commend the city council and city staff for their desire to participate in projects aimed at ensuring that we have safe and clean water in the future.

The goals of the project are to capture, purify, and infiltrate storm water before it can enter the flood control channel. In addition, the project seeks to create improved habitat and parkland by building two wetland areas, and ensure a source of irrigation water for the golf course and the soccer fields into the future.

The design concept was for four engineered “facilities.” The areas begin near the San Pascal Stables to the north and extend through the golf course to the driving range at the southwest end. The project includes the construction of two wetlands and two large, subsurface infiltration vaults, along with water treatment and disinfection systems.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The project is a backward-looking, engineer-heavy solution to urban runoff entering the Arroyo Seco channel. The design concept requires the reliance on concrete infiltration vaults and artificial wetlands that may need to be lined to function year around. In addition, it was suggested that water may have to be taken from the channel during the dry season to not only water the golf course and soccer fields, as is currently the case, but also to maintain the artificial wetlands. The built structures do not allow for natural infiltration and purification into the Arroyo Seco watershed. As an alternative, the project might have used more natural above ground modifications such as swales, detention basins and dry stream beds to slow the flow of water and increase infiltration.

This project also fails to consider what the future of the flood control channel itself will be. Work on the channel in South Pasadena began in 1935, putting the channel at more than 80 years old. It will not last forever and any new large scale projects along the Arroyo should be working toward the goals of restoring ecological and hydrological health to the Arroyo as the existing infrastructure inevitably begins to fail. This project takes us further from the possibility of naturalizing the Arroyo Seco while still providing essential flood protection. It adds to the concrete infrastructure, rather than progressing to a more natural and beautiful alternative.

ECOLOGICAL CONCERNS

I was dismayed that the design focused almost solely on built structures with no input that I could detect from ecologists or biologists. It was mentioned during the questions from stakeholders that this project could reduce water flow in the channel during the dry season to almost nothing. Birds currently use and

need this year around water source, dirty as it is. The further loss of habitat in the Los Angeles River and its tributary, the Arroyo Seco, would be a seriously negative outcome. Were biologists and ecologists consulted on this project? Were the people who are working toward bringing trout back to the Arroyo consulted? What about the Audubon Society?

MAINTENANCE

I would love to see habitat rich wetlands created in South Pasadena. That is one of the promises of this project. However, the proposal is not for a natural wetland that is hydrologically connected to the Arroyo Seco. In fact, it is not even a design that is synchronized with our natural climate, which would likely be dry during the dry season and years with low rainfall numbers. Rather it is fed by water taken from the channel, purified and run through the engineered system. One might say, yes, but it still creates good habitat, possibly even making up for the downstream losses. Maybe, but this is not a maintenance free endeavor. The pipes, infiltration basins, irrigation systems, and artificial wetlands will need maintenance or it will become a weedy, mosquito-infested mess.

I realize that the funding for projects like this one is derived from a special parcel tax on private properties in the LA County Flood Control District. This may lead to the possibility that funding for ongoing operations and maintenance will exist and be available to our city in perpetuity, but this is not a sure thing. This project will require significant ongoing resources, whether the county or the state continues to fund it or not.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

It is alarming that the first bit of information to stakeholders on this project comes in the form of these two virtual meetings in mid December of 2021. During the Tuesday meeting I believe that I was the only South Pasadena resident, other than city staff and council members, who was present. Tim Brick, representing the Arroyo Seco Foundation, was also there and this was the first he had heard about the project. Drew Ready of the Council for Watershed Health also attended. This is a very small representation of the potential stakeholders. I question how much effort was made to truly involve a broad and representative group of stakeholders including members of the South Pasadena Natural Resources and Environment Commission, the Audubon Society, and Friends of the Los Angeles River, to mention just a few.

NEXT STEPS

It is my understanding that the next step in the process is to do a feasibility study. According to the recent presentation, the city:

*Received \$400,000 from the Safe Clean Water Program, Technical Resources Program
- A feasibility study is currently being developed.*

*The Feasibility Study will be submitted as an infrastructure program application.
- If it is accepted into the infrastructure program, the project will proceed to design and construction.*

I would like to see significant modifications made to both the design concept and the process by which the project is planned. There should be more involvement of the community throughout the Los Angeles River and Arroyo Seco watersheds before proceeding to a feasibility study on the design concept presented.

I implore the city to reconsider this proposal. I ask that you take a longer term view and work with the organizations and individuals who envision a vibrant healthy Arroyo Seco that is an asset to our region, providing clean water and healthy habitat for people and other critters who share the land with us.

ITEM 4

**Strategic Planning Review and Development of the
2022 Work Plan**



City Council Agenda Report

ITEM NO. 20

DATE: December 15, 2021
FROM: Arminé Chaparyan, City Manager *AC*
PREPARED BY: Lucy Demirjian, Management Services Director
SUBJECT: **Approval of 2021-2026 Strategic Plan**

Recommendation Action

It is recommended that the City Council approve the City's Strategic Plan for 2021-2026.

Background

In June 2021, in light of significant social and economic changes, and with the hiring of a new City Manager, the City Council requested a comprehensive strategic planning and visioning process for the community. Patrick Ibarra, Co-founder and Partner of Mejorando Group, was selected to assist the City in the strategic planning process and facilitation. The process began with extensive outreach to stakeholders, including three virtual focus group discussions held on September 9 and September 22, with over 30 participants. In mid-September, a public survey was released to gather community input on strategic priorities. The online survey received 385 responses, equivalent to 19.3 hours of public comment.

The City Council held a two-day strategic planning session on October 8 and 9, 2021. The insight from stakeholders helped inform the Council's strategic planning workshop session to identify 5-year goals and objectives.

The City's Executive Team met to establish target delivery dates for the objectives which will be included in each department's workplan with defined milestones and benchmarks. The goals and objectives may be adjusted in order to balance additional needs of the city and available resources.

Discussion/Analysis

The Strategic Plan provides a comprehensive framework of priorities set by City Council. In addition to forming a renewed community vision, the strategic plan establishes priorities and clear goals to lead the organization in realizing the vision for the community through teamwork, creativity and fiscal responsibility.

During the strategic planning retreat held in October, the City Council developed a new vision statement:

“We are a culturally and economically diverse, and fiercely independent community that cherishes creativity, education and our small-town character, committed to building a more just and environmentally and financially sustainable future.”

The goal of the Strategic Plan is to ensure maximum alignment between City resources and activities, City Council’s policy direction, community interests, and customer service expectations. The Plan identifies strategies and initiatives to support the core goals for the next five years. The 2021-2026 Strategic Plan identifies the following goals which will guide the City in successfully advancing its priorities over the next five years:

- Develop and Implement Strong Fiscal Policies to Ensure a Resilient Financial Future.
- Create a Strong Economic Development Strategy to Strengthen Local Business.
- Develop a Comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Plan to Ensure Public Safety through Active Response and Recovery Efforts.
- Enhance Community Sustainability through Investment in Infrastructure and Environmental Management Programs.
- Plan for Affordable Housing to Comply with State Mandates and Respond to Community Needs.
- Enhance Customer Service through Innovation to More Effectively Respond to Community Priorities.

Next Steps

Strategic Planning sessions are typically held prior to the update of the City’s annual budget so that the City’s budget reflects priorities identified in the Strategic Plan.

The approved Strategic Plan, vision statement and goals will be shared with all City commissions and posted on the City’s website and social media platforms.

Staff will provide quarterly progress reports to the City Council. The City Council will have an opportunity to review and update the Strategic Plan annually to ensure maximum alignment between City resources and activities, policy direction, and community interests.

Legal Review

Not required for this item.

Fiscal Impact

While there is no fiscal impact with the approval of the Strategic Plan, each objective will require staff and funding resources above and beyond day-to-day operations. The goals and objectives will be reflected in the Annual Budget and incorporated in Department work plans. The City Council will have opportunity to review and approve additional funding allocations associated with the implementation of the Strategic objectives whenever required.

Strategic Plan 2021-2026

December 15, 2021

Page 3 of 3

Public Notification of Agenda Item

The public was made aware that this item was to be considered this evening by virtue of its inclusion on the legally publicly noticed agenda, posting of the same agenda and reports on the City's website.

Attachment: 2021-2026 Strategic Plan Matrix

ATTACHMENT 1

2021-2026 Strategic Plan Matrix

City of South Pasadena STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2026



VISION STATEMENT

We are a culturally and economically diverse, and fiercely independent community that cherishes creativity, education and our small town character, committed to building a more just and environmentally and financially sustainable future.

2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

1. Develop and Implement Strong Fiscal Policies to Ensure a Resilient Financial Future

Task	Action Item	Target Date	Department	Status
1a. Long Range Financial Plan	Complete Indirect Cost Allocation Plan to increase potential reimbursement for staff time on grants and special fund projects.	FY 22-23	Finance	
1b. Reduce CalPERS unfunded liability	Explore and recommend options to reduce CalPERS and OPEB liability.	FY 21-22	Finance	
1c. Financial policies	Develop comprehensive Finance Department Policies and Procedures manual.	FY 21-22	Finance	
1d. Business License Tax	Research and recommend update to business license tax, business classifications and tax rates.	FY 22-23	Finance	
1e. Library Parcel Tax	Library Parcel Tax Renewal	FY 22-23	Finance/Library	Election: November 8, 2022

2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

2. Create a Strong Economic Development Strategy to Strengthen Local Business

Task	Action Item	Target Date	Department	Status
2a. Technology Upgrade	Recommend permit software & funding for building and planning to track permits online and streamline approval processes	FY 22-23	Community Development	
2b. Economic Development Program	Develop and Launch Economic Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Branding and Marketing Plan • New City website • New Econ Dev website • Ombudsman services • develop a Guide on 'How to Do Business in the City' 	FY 22-23	City Manager's Office	
2c. Economic Development Plan	Produce a permit application guide to help streamline application process.	FY 21-22	City Manager's Office/ Community Development	
2d. Redevelopment of Recreational Facilities	Evaluate redevelopment opportunities of recreational facilities in the Arroyo, including seeking restaurant operator at golf course.	FY 22-23	Community Services	Interviews for Restaurant consultant Dec 3, 21, Closed Session on I-tennis lease Dec 1
2e. Parking Policy	Create comprehensive parking policy for the City.	FY 23-24	Community Development	

2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

3. Develop a Comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Plan to Ensure Public Safety through Active Response and Recovery Efforts

Task	Action Item	Target Date	Department	Status
3a. Seismic Regulations	Contract with consultant to complete inventory of soft story buildings in preparation for consideration of future regulations.	FY-22-23	Community Development	
3b. Crisis Comm. Systems	Promote crisis communication systems. City applied for and was granted licensing to conduct Wireless Emergency Alerting (WEA).	Ongoing	Fire/Police	Blackboard Connect was renewed with an updated platform. Nixel is maintained by PD dispatch.
3c. Local Emergency Partnerships	Prepare needs analysis & implementation schedule to address gaps in disaster coverage and seek appropriate contracts. Renew the city's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). Obtain Planet Bid for establishing contracts with vendors during a disaster.	FY-22-23	Fire/Police	EOP will be brought before stakeholders and City Council during first quarter of 2022. LHMP will be brought before City Council during fourth quarter of 2022.
3d. Emergency Preparedness	Initiate regular Emergency Operations Center (EOC) training for Department Directors and staff. Training will be provided during the renewals of the EOP and LHMP.	FY22-23	Fire/Police	
3e. Wildfire Mitigation	Work with SGVCOG and apply for grants on wildfire mitigation on city-owned vacant lots. Research alternative methods of controlling/mitigating hazardous vegetation in the City's high hazard brush area.	FY 22-23	Fire	Chief Riddle attended a webinar in early November 2021 hosted by SGVCOG and will be point of contact for future opportunities/discussions.

2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

4. Enhance Community Sustainability through Investment in Infrastructure and Environmental Management Programs.				
Task	Action Item	Target Date	Department	
4a. Renewable Energy	Implement Climate Action Plan for environmental initiatives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out electric leafblower program (FY22-23) 	FY 25-26	Public Works	
4b. Water Resources	Implement Integrated Water Resources Plan to address ongoing aging infrastructure challenges, operational and supply sources, financial strategies, and a drought proof City.	FY 21-22	Public Works	
4c. Pocket Parks	Award design contract and break ground on Berkshire & Grevelia pocket park project.	FY 21-22	Community Services	Construction documents underway (2/28/21)
4d. Transportation and Mobility Projects	Contract technical team in anticipation of TDM TSM alternative.	FY 22-23	Public Works	
4e. Capital Improvement Program	Bring forward a comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).	FY 21-22	Public Works	
4f. Mobility Plan	Update mobility master plan, with consideration for bike lanes and walkability.	FY 22-23	Public Works	
4g. Facilities Assessment	Conduct assessment of city facilities to determine repair costs for municipal buildings and costs for enhanced security measures and space planning.	FY 22-23	Public Works/ Mgmt Services/ Community Development	
4h. Electrify fleet	Pursue electrification of city fleet.		Public Works/Fire/ Police/ Community Services	PD staff report for EV set for January Council Meeting CSD awaiting new electric van 6/1/21

2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

5. Plan for Affordable Housing to Comply with State Mandates and Respond to Community Needs.

Task	Action Item	Target Date	Department	Status
5a. City Housing Division	Create a Housing Division in Community Development Department to focus on Housing related matters including funding opportunities, land use, partnership with stakeholder groups including other governments, federal and state laws, tenant protections/ relocation assistance measures.	FY 21-22	Community Development	
5b. SB 381/ sale of unoccupied Caltrans properties	Implementation of SB 381 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commence policy discussions on the acquisition of unoccupied Caltrans surplus properties. • Identify HRE's to work with the City • Explore formation of Community Land Trust. 	FY 21-22	Community Development	Staff scheduled to take an update to Council at the Dec. 1st City Council meeting
5c. Affordable Housing policies	Produce information on Inclusionary Housing Ordinance and ADU Ordinance. Public education on new housing laws affecting cities.	FY 22-23	Community Development	
5d. Housing Support	Present Occupancy inspection program and policy for adoption.	FY 22-23	Community Development	
5f. Homeless Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue working with the SGVCOG on region-wide solutions • Participate in Menatl Health/Crisis Intervention Program (CAHOOTS model) • Expand working relationship with community partners and Union Station 	FY 21-22	Police/ Community Development	RFP being drafted for April implmentation

2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

6. Enhance Customer Service through Innovation to More Effectively Respond to Community Priorities.

Task	Action Item	Target Date	Department	Status
6a. Traffic Management	Neighborhood Traffic management Policy Adoption and Implementation.	FY 22-23	Public Works	
6b. Accessibility/ Customer Service	Bring forward a recommendation for an automated customer care application.	FY 22-23	City Manager's Office (CMO)	
6c. Centralized Operations	Centralize grants management and contract management.	FY 21-22	Management Services	
6d. Update Policies	Develop comprehensive administrative policies manual – including ADA, FLMA, Harassment, etc. with the Internal Policy Committee. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Department assessment. • Update the Rules & Regs 	FY 21-22	Management Services	PD Assessment RFQ relased on December 1, 2021 RFP March 2022 City Council May 2022
6e. Improve technology	Create an IT Master Plan for introducing or updating technologies in all departments.	FY 21-22	Management Services	
6f. Public Engagement	Establish and implement a targeted Community Outreach Program.	FY 21-22	CMO	
6g. Governance	Review all Boards and Commissions.	FY 21-22	CMO/ Mgmt. Services	
6h. Governance	Undertake process for Redistricting.	FY 21-22	Management Services	
6i. City Workforce	Pursue a healthy Workplace Culture including efforts to raise employee morale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Employee Committee to assist with morale boositing initatives and events 	Ongoing	CMO/ Mgmt. Services	

2021-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create new Training an Mentoring Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create new branding for HR and City through Onboarding Process. 			
6f. Modernize Division	Human Resources Division enhancments.		Management Services	