



Mobility & Infrastructure Committee

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: **MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE** DATE: **NOVEMBER 18, 2020**

FROM: **PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT** WARD: **4**

SUBJECT: **VAN BUREN BOULEVARD SEWER INSTALLATION – PROJECT UPDATE**

ISSUE:

Receive an update on the Van Buren Boulevard Sewer Installation Project between Wood Road and King Avenue; and support the acquisition of the vacant lot at 16476 Washington Street to construct the Krameria Sewer Pump Station to facilitate project construction.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Mobility & Infrastructure Committee:

1. Receive and file a project update on the Van Buren Boulevard Sewer Installation Project; and
2. Recommend that City Council approve the purchase of the vacant lot at 16476 Washington Street to construct the Krameria Sewer Pump Station to facilitate project construction.

BACKGROUND:

The Van Buren Boulevard Sewer Project (project) dates to 2010 when Western Municipal Water District (WMWD) reached out to the City to obtain the Woodcrest service area to consider a sewer expansion project. Some of the background associated with this project is reflected in Table 1.

Table 1: Project History

Year	Action
2010	WMWD requested that the sewer service area be transferred from the City of Riverside to WMWD so they could pursue a project to expand the sewer collection system.
2011	WMWD attempted to setup an assessment district to fund the sewer project.
2012	The assessment district was dissolved due to a legal challenge preventing bonds from being sold.
2015	Developers requested that WMWD pursue constructing the Woodcrest Sewer.
2015	WMWD purchased the lot at the northeasterly corner of Washington Street at Krameria Avenue to construct a sewer lift station to serve the Woodcrest Sewer Project.
2016	The developers indicated that they could not fund the cost of the Woodcrest Sewer

2017	On March 21, 2017, the City Council approved a conceptual plan to provide new sewer facilities on Van Buren Boulevard between Wood Road and King Avenue and authorized the Public Works Department to begin engineering design, environmental clearance, and right-of-way acquisition for the construction of the new sewer facilities.
2019	On February 5, 2019, the City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding with WMWD and the County of Riverside to purchase the property located at the northeasterly corner of Washington Street and Krameria Avenue to serve the Van Buren Boulevard Sewer Project, see attached MOU.
2019	On March 14 and on September 12, 2019, City staff attended Woodcrest Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) meetings to share the project details with the community including Riverside County residents.
2020	On March 3, 2020, the City Council approved a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting program for the construction of the sewer pipeline, sewer lift station, and force main associated with the Van Buren Boulevard Sewer project.
2020	On May 4, 2020, the WMWD Board of Directors considered the sale of the property location at the northeasterly corner of Krameria Avenue and Washington Street to the City of Riverside for the purpose of constructing a sewer lift station. The WMWD Board of Directors decided to postpone the item until the next meeting.
2020	On June 10, 2020, the Public Works Department hosted a project briefing via Microsoft Teams and invited the public and personnel from the County of Riverside, RUSD, WMWD, County Supervisor's Office, and two WMWD Board members.
2020	On June 17, 2020, the WMWD Board of Directors approved the sale of the property located at the northeasterly corner of Krameria Avenue and Washington Street to the City of Riverside for the purpose of constructing a sewer lift station.
2020	On October 6, 2020, the City Council considered an item to purchase a WMWD lot located at 16476 Washington Street. After discussion, the City Council tabled the item until the Mobility and Infrastructure Committee received a project update.

During public engagement with businesses, stakeholders, and City and County residents, there were a series of recurring questions. Table 2 is not an exhaustive list of questions/concerns shared by the community, but they represent some of the common questions fielded by staff.

Table 2: Community Questions and Staff's Responses

Item	Question	Response
1	Does the City plan to annex a portion of the County after project completion?	The Public Works Department is unaware of any plans to annex portions of the County within the project limits.
2	Did or will the City consider an alternate pump station location?	Yes, the Public Works Dept. considered 8 locations, see Attachment 4. See body of the report for additional details.
3	Does RUSD support the pump station location across from Woodcrest Elementary School?	RUSD has provided a support letter for this project and is aware of the proposed sewer pump station location near Washington St at Krameria Ave.
4	Are residents or businesses required to connect to the new sewer line?	No, existing residents or businesses are not required to connect to the new sewer line and can remain on their existing system. Although, Per RMC 14.08.030, tenant and development improvements along Van

		Buren Blvd within the project would trigger the requirement for sewer connection.
5	Why does the City wish to service County properties?	The City and WMWD are the two sewer service purveyors for this area. Both WMWD and the City conducted "Cost of Sewer Analysis" studies and it was determined that construction costs were similar between the two agencies but the City has lower sewer connection and monthly service fees and thus the City took the lead on this project. Also, in 2012 WMWD was unable to secure bond funding for construction of the project.
6	What are some of the project benefits?	The project benefits the environment, allows Woodcrest Elementary to connect to sanitary sewer, allows restaurants and commercial businesses to connect to a more reliable system, is a catalyst for development, improves sewer plant operations, and allows Woodcrest Christian High School to eliminate its private sewer pump station thus allowing to make better use of the land.
7	Was this project included in a planning document or listed as a CIP project?	Prior to its design, the project was not listed in a planning or Capital Improvement Program (CIP) document. Nonetheless, the 2014 <i>Financial Plan and Rate Development Study</i> supports the funding and construction of capacity expansion projects. Planning and CIP documents establish goals and purposes, but projects listed in these documents are not exclusive and can change based on needs. The use of bond funds can be used to enhance capacity and help expand services. Prior to WMWD's request in 2010 to transfer the sewer service area to them, this sewer service area belonged to the City. Meaning, the City fully intended to provide sewer service to both City and County properties within the project limits once funding was secured. Since WMWD was unable to construct the project, the sewer service area reverted to the City and this project supports the initial goals of expanding service to this portion of the City and unincorporated County area. The project was added to the 2018-19 CIP and is listed as the Woodcrest Sewer project. On February 5, 2019, the City Council approved the funding plan and the project is fully funded.
8	Does Proposition 218 prevent the City from using bond funds to construct the project?	No, Prop. 218 requires that the sewer monthly service charges are set at the reasonable cost of providing that service. Rate studies are typically conducted prior to proposed rate increase to establish the reasonable cost of service. When determining the reasonable cost of service, Prop. 218 allows for planning for future expansion and CIP projects, in addition to the maintenance, overhead, and financial costs of providing the service. Prop 218 provides that fees collected are to be used for the service for which they are imposed, which is a general requirement to spend monthly sewer service fees for sewer purposes. Separate from Prop 218, there are additional requirements to follow when using bond funds, largely

		found in the authorizing bond resolutions. The City consulted with outside Bond Counsel, see Attachment 5, and determined bond funds may be used for the construction of the project, so long as revenues collected from the project are used to repay the bonds.
9	Can or should the County contribute towards this project?	The County may contribute to the project but it does not purvey sewer service. There is no nexus for the County to contribute to the project as they do not have mechanism to recover funding participation.
10	When will the City achieve a return in investment from this project?	There are multiple factors that impact the return on investment including type of development, development size, when development occurs, strength of effluent, and redevelopment. A detailed study is necessary to calculate return on investment. Although, sewer projects are typically considered and recommended based on needs. This project would allow businesses to switch from septic to sanitary sewer and spur development as septic systems have a shorter life span and are more prone to failure which can limit development.
11	Is this a component of the Van Buren Blvd widening project between Bountiful St and Washington St	No. This is a standalone project and the County of Riverside is taking the lead on the Van Buren Blvd. Widening project. The sewer project is anticipated to be constructed prior to the roadway widening.
12	What percent of the project is in the City and County?	The segment between Wood Rd and Gamble Ave is in the City and the segment between Gamble Ave and King Ave is the County. Approximately 56% of the project is in the City and the remaining portion in the County.
13	Approximately how much has the City invested in the project design, environmental clearance, and construction of other improvements in anticipation of this project?	The City has spent approximately \$2.8 million in the project's design, environmental clearance, and construction of midstream and downstream improvements in anticipation of this project.
14	What are the environmental benefits of this project?	Sewer lines are built to carry more wastewater, less susceptible to clogging, can withstand more abuse than septic system, are connected to a centralized sewer system, filters out pathogens and bacteria, less susceptible to failures, and can help replenish groundwater through recycled water percolation system. During large rain events or septic system failures, the surrounding soil and ground water is more susceptible to contamination. Businesses switching from septic to sanitary sewer would minimize risks and impacts to the environment.
15	What provisions have been included to mitigate pump station failures, safety, noise, and odors?	The sewer pump system was designed to include redundancy to minimize failures. The site would include engine driven backup pumps, electric generator, site intrusion alert system, site lighting, high/low water level alarms, SCADA communication/monitoring system, emergency storage capacity, submersible pumps, and an odor-control system. The submersible pumps would help dampen noise to lessen impacts to surrounding properties. The site would be protected with decorative wrought-iron fencing.

16	How will the sewer pump station fit adjacent to the school and residential properties?	The City invested in Conceptual Site Renderings which were shared with the WMWD Board, with the County of Riverside, RUSD, and select community members that participated in recent meetings. The site would include substantial landscaping and decorative wrought iron fencing to aesthetically fit in with the community. By installing the pump station at the corner of Washington St at Krameria Ave, it allows Woodcrest Elementary School to install a gravity flow line to facilitate connection. Otherwise, if the pump station is located on a higher elevation, Woodcrest Elementary and other businesses may be required to construct private sewer lift stations to pump flows to an alternate pump station location. Equipping the sewer pump station with a submersible pump would reduce noise impacts to residential properties located in the immediate vicinity.
17	Can the City share renderings of the sewer pump station?	The sewer pump station renderings are part of this report and are available to community members who request them.
18	How has the City engaged County residents on this project?	Public Works staff participated in multiple Woodcrest Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) meetings to provide project updates. During a 2020 WMWD Board meeting and at the request of residents, staff conducted a virtual meeting on June 10, 2020 to engage the public. Staff are available and supportive of engaging County residents and businesses but typically participate at the request of the meeting host. Staff has also kept Ward 4 Councilmember apprised of project updates.
19	Are there other areas where the City provides sewer service outside its City limits?	Yes, the City provides sewer services to Spring Mountain Ranch, Edgemont Community, Highgrove Community, Jurupa Community, and Rubidoux Community.
20	Are businesses attempting or have they attempted forming a Community Facilities District (CFD) for the construction of the project.	In 2011 WMWD attempted to setup an assessment district but were unsuccessful. In 2016, the business community was also unsuccessful in forming a CFD.
21	How does this project benefit City rate payers?	Sewer connection fees are designed to recover capital costs of providing sewer service to new users. The underlying premise is to charge each user the estimated reasonable costs for providing capital facilities necessary to provide sewer service (i.e., require growth to pay for growth). These sewer expansion improvements will eventually pay for themselves and help expand and/or upgrade the sewer system – they are a net investment gain.

DISCUSSION:

The project is located on Van Buren Boulevard between King Avenue and Wood Road and is fully within the WMWD and the City of Riverside sewer service area. In 2012, WMWD dissolved the assessment district due to legal challenges that prevented them from securing bond funding to construct the projects. Afterwards, WMWD and the City of Riverside conducted Cost of Sewer

Analysis studies and the analysis concluded that construction costs were similar between the two agencies, but the City has lower sewer connection and monthly service fees. WMWD conceded that due to the rate structure, the City should take the lead to construct the project as sewer connection and monthly service cost savings will be passed on to both City and County customers.

The Van Buren Boulevard Sewer Installation Project (Project) consists of construction and operation of facilities (sewer pipeline, sewage lift station, and force main) to provide service to properties along Van Buren Boulevard within the project limits. The Project would provide sewer service to a proposed residential development (Tract 36897), located north of Van Buren Boulevard, on a property northwesterly of the intersection of Iris Avenue and Chicago Avenue, and a neighboring parcel (west of Tract 36897) identified as Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 245-300-004. The Project includes the following components:

1. Proposed Sewer and Force Main Pipelines ranging from 6 inches to 12 inches in diameter, including:
 - a. Construction of approximately 10,900 linear feet (LF) of new gravity main on Van Buren Boulevard from Wood Road to Washington Street;
 - b. Construction of approximately 900 LF of new gravity main on Washington Street from Van Buren Boulevard to the new Krameria Avenue Lift Station (Krameria LS);
 - c. Construction of approximately 1,300 LF of new gravity sewer main on Van Buren Boulevard from King Avenue to Washington Street;
 - d. Construction of approximately 900 LF each of two new parallel sewer force main on Washington Street from the new Krameria Avenue lift station to Van Buren Boulevard; and
 - e. Construction of approximately 10,900 LF each of two new parallel sewer force mains on Van Buren Boulevard from Washington Street to Wood Road.
2. Proposed Krameria Avenue Lift Station will consist of the following:
 - a. Submersible pumps
 - b. Wet well
 - c. Control panels
 - d. Emergency standby generator
 - e. Odor control system
 - f. Emergency storage vault
 - g. Emergency back-up pumps
3. Demolition and Removal of the existing Martin Luther King 1 Lift Station.
4. Improvements to the existing Wood Road Lift Station include construction of below grade storage tank to provide adequate storage volume for the additional sewer coming from the Van Buren Boulevard area.

The Krameria Avenue Lift Station needs to be constructed at the project's low point near the intersection of Van Buren Boulevard and Washington Street. Sewer flows would reach the pump station via gravity flow and then pumped towards Wood Road. If the pump station is constructed at a site with a higher elevation, potential customers such as Woodcrest Elementary School may require a sewer lift station on or near the school grounds to pump flows uphill to an alternate pump station location. The Public Works Department considered eight pump station sites, see

Attachment 4, but were unable to come to terms with any of these sites. Instead, staff supports the purchase of the vacant lot at 16476 Washington Street, which is owned by WMWD and was acquired for a similar purpose. Constructing the pump station at this location would facilitate Woodcrest Elementary School and other businesses located at similar elevations to connect to the sewer line and would provide optimal service to this project. Some of the locations considered were on developed sites and many would have had to modify their circulation, operations, or would have impacted onsite parking opportunities.

The project has a cost estimate of \$14 million and is anticipated to better serve Woodcrest Elementary, the only remaining RUSD school on a septic system, and Woodcrest Christian High School. Even though Woodcrest Christian High School is served by a public sewer, the project would eliminate a sewer lift station located on school grounds which allows the school to expand or make better use of this space. The project would also better protect the environment and the ground water system. Public sewers are constructed to withstand heavy loads and can better accommodate periods of heavy rainfall or storm surges that may overwhelm smaller home-based septic tanks, which by virtue of their size are more prone to overflow and can contaminate storm water systems and ground water tables. In such cases, flies and mosquitos that are attracted to breed in wet areas can spread hepatitis, dysentery, and other infectious diseases. Stakeholders have been engaged through this process and some have provided letters of support (see attached), particularly the Riverside Chamber of Commerce, the Riverside Unified School District, the KZ Companies LLC, County of Riverside Supervisor's Office, and Ward 4 Councilmember, as the project is considered a catalyst for economic growth.

The area within the project limits has empty parcels totaling 74 acres as well as underdeveloped lots which would benefit from this project. A sanitary sewer allows for maximum use of an undeveloped lot and can spur redevelopment as septic systems can be a limiting factor. Septic systems can be limited by inadequate or inappropriate soils, excessive slopes, or high ground water tables which can influence or limit large development projects. The sewer connection and monthly service fees by new development and existing commercial development on and near Washington Street would help offset project investment within a 20 to 25-year period. Sewer lines have a service life up to 100 years which brings stability to the area and expands services to new customers. The expansion of services would secure new customers and generate increased funding for the continued financial health, operation, maintenance and repair which are consistent with good utility practice. When considering some of the indirect benefits such as increased property taxes, new jobs, increased housing, and increased sales tax associated with new development then the economic growth has an even more profound benefit.

In addition to facilitating economic growth and better protecting the environment, the Project would help the Riverside Water Quality Control Plant (RWQCP) by increasing flows into the Plant. The RWQCP was designed to treat approximately 46 million gallons per day (mgd) and operates most efficiently when treating approximately 60% to 70% of its maximum capacity (27 mgd to 32 mgd). Currently, the RWQCP treats approximately 25 mgd and additional flows from the Woodcrest area would improve efficiency and operations.

Residents and visitors who do not connect to the sewer line would also reap some of the benefits as the new line would better protect the environment and better safeguard their health. The experience and interaction with the business and restaurants that connect to the public sewer would also be more enjoyable as routine septic tank service would no longer impact business operations or the patrons' experience which can be diminished by foul odors when these systems are serviced or are not operating efficiently.

Due to the benefits and potential service cost savings, the City anticipates that many businesses and property owners within the project limits would connect to the public sewer. Nonetheless, businesses that do not construct significant tenant improvements nor wish to connect to the sewer line will not be required to do so. Through public and stakeholder engagement, the project is anticipated to meet a strong need for a public sewer in the area to spur economic growth, better serve two schools, protect the environment, reduce health concerns, and help improve the quality of life of the local community in both City and County unincorporated areas.

The project recently secured the environmental clearance and staff are anticipated to complete the design plans by December 2020. The project is anticipated to award and begin construction by Spring 2021 and construction would be completed within 18-24 months after commencement. The project would start near Van Buren Boulevard at King Avenue and would progress eastward towards Wood Road. Due to the anticipated lane closures and construction impacts, the Traffic Engineering Division would collaborate with the County of Riverside to modify the signal timing plans to reduce motorist delay.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total estimated construction cost for this project is \$14 million. To date, approximately \$3 million has been spent on the Wood Road sewer capacity improvements, Van Buren Boulevard section between Little Court and Fred Street, environmental study and Krameria pump station design, in-house design for the gravity and force main lines, and for the Woodcrest Sewer Study Report. The remaining construction cost is approximately \$11 million and is fully funded from Account No. 9896923-440301 (Van Buren Sewer Improvement).

Prepared by: Kris Martinez, Public Works Director
Certified as to
availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer
Approved by: Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form: Kristi J. Smith, Chief Assistant City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Location Map
2. Memorandum of Understanding
3. Support Letters
4. Alternate Sewer Pump Station Locations
5. Stradling Yocca Carlson & Ruth Bond Counsel Letter
6. Sewer Pump Station Renderings
7. Presentation