



Legislation Text

File #: 20-0988, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to authorize City Manager, or designee, to execute all documents necessary to approve amendments to the Memoranda of Understanding with the Los Angeles Gateway Region Integrated Regional Water Management Joint Powers Authority, for the Watershed Management Programs for the Lower Los Angeles River, Los Cerritos Channel, and Lower San Gabriel River Watersheds, and execute any other necessary documents in support of the amendments. (Citywide)

The City of Long Beach (City) storm drain system discharges into three watersheds, the Lower Los Angeles River Watershed, the Los Cerritos Channel Watershed, and the Lower San Gabriel River Watershed (watersheds). The operation of this storm drain system is regulated through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit that is issued by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRWQCB). This permit is typically renewed every five years, with each subsequent renewal increasing in stringency and cost.

The current NDPEs permits for the City and the Los Angeles County Region require Long Beach, along with 16 other participating cities located within the watersheds, to implement and maintain Watershed Management Programs (WMPs) for each of the watersheds. The permits mandate stringent stormwater quality regulatory requirements. The primary goal of the watershed groups is to reduce the overall cost of compliance through a multi-agency cooperative effort, rather than each city addressing these mandated regulatory requirements separately at a much greater cost. These WMPs provide a comprehensive analysis of pollutant sources within the watershed areas, strategies for reducing or treating pollutants from those sources, and computer modeling to substantiate the strategies.

On March 11, 2014, the City Council authorized three separate Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the Los Angeles Gateway Region Integrated Regional Water Management Joint Powers Authority (GWMA) to develop WMPs for the City's three watersheds. Participating cities in each watershed were assessed their share through cost-sharing formulas based on land areas among all the participating cities. At the time of the original action in 2014, the aggregate project participation cost for the City was stated as \$428,700, consisting of \$228,000 for the Lower Los Angeles River Watershed, \$168,000 for the Los Cerritos Channel Watershed, and \$32,700 for the Lower San Gabriel River Watershed. The \$428,700 cost was provided pending the completion of the Reasonable Assurance Analysis (RAA) model being developed to calculate the actual costs needed to implement each WMP plan. Calculations based on the completed RAA model were completed in the summer of 2015 and resulted in an additional cost to the City in an amount of \$135,346. The FY 21 project participation cost to the City is \$586,951, which does not include GWMA administrative costs. The FY 21

project participation cost of \$586,951 consists of \$266,329 for the Lower Los Angeles River Watershed, \$292,444 for the Los Cerritos Channel Watershed, and \$28,177 for the Lower San Gabriel River Watershed.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Amy R. Webber on August 27, 2020 and by Budget Analysis Officer Julissa José-Murray on September 17, 2020.

City Council action is requested on October 6, 2020, to ensure the MOUs are in place before the current MOUs expire.

The total WMP project participation costs for FY 21 will be \$616,299, of which \$568,950 is for participation costs and \$29,348 is for administrative costs for all three watersheds. The estimated average annual ongoing costs for WMP MOU participation for FY 22 through FY 25 is not anticipated to increase more than 5 percent annually per watershed for GWMA administrative costs. The FY 21 project participation cost of \$616,299 for the development of watershed management programs is budgeted in the General Fund Group in the Public Works Department. Subsequent years increases will be addressed as part of the annual budget process. This recommendation has no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with existing City Council priorities. There is no local job impact associated with this recommendation.

Approve recommendation.

ERIC LOPEZ
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

APPROVED:

THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER