



Memorandum

TO: TRANSPORTATION AND
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: John Stufflebean

SUBJECT: PLANT MASTER PLAN
UPDATE – SEPTEMBER 2008

DATE: 08-25-08

Approved

Date

8/22/08

RECOMMENDATION

Accept this progress report highlighting activities since January 2008 on the Master Plan for the San José/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant.

OUTCOME

Acceptance of this report will allow staff to continue on course with the planned Plant Master Plan activities. These include extensive research and benchmarking, internal workshops, and public and stakeholder outreach through early 2009.

BACKGROUND

The San José/Santa Clara Water Pollution Control Plant (Plant) has evolved to become one of the largest advanced (tertiary) wastewater treatment facilities on the West Coast. It serves 1.4 million people and 16,000 businesses across eight cities and unincorporated pockets. The cities include San José, Santa Clara, Milpitas, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Saratoga, Campbell, and Monte Sereno.

On November 20, 2007, the Council awarded an agreement with Carollo Engineers to develop a Plant Master Plan that will address several critical issues, including aging infrastructure, energy management, population growth, flood control, odor control, new regulations, habitat protection, and land uses. The Plant Master Plan will chart a course for the next 30 years that continues the Plant's success in protecting public health, the environment and in supporting the region's economy. In addition to determining the most sustainable course for treating wastewater, the Master Plan will consider potential new uses on the Plant site, which comprise approximately 2,600 acres (including an 856-acre former salt pond).

Cross-Plan Coordination

The Plant Master Plan will coordinate with other key planning efforts, such as the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project, the Watershed Management Initiative, the City's Envision 2040 General Plan, the Alviso Specific Plan, and the City's Green Vision. The Master Plan integrates the Green Vision and will help realize all of the vision's ten goals. For example, it aims to increase recycled water use, add trails, and convert waste to energy.

Plant Master Plan Goals and Stretch Targets

The goals of the Plant Master Plan process are:

- Achieve sustainability
- Secure regulatory compliance
- Provide worker and community safety
- Protect and restore habitat
- Be a good neighbor
- Pursue economic opportunities

In addition, the following specific stretch targets have been identified:

- Be energy self sufficient in five years
- Be economically self sufficient in 20 years
- Be carbon neutral in 20 years
- Integrate ecological and human sustainability
- Optimize use of resources

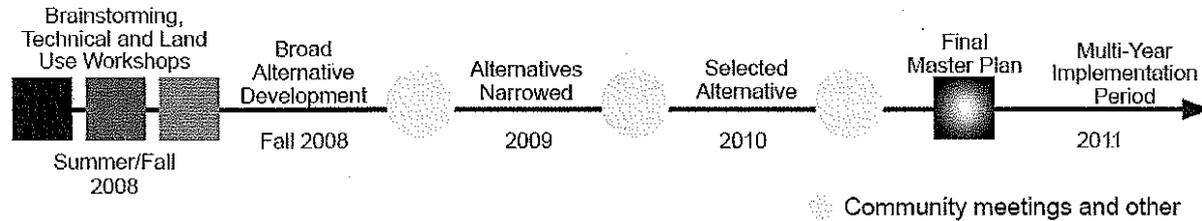
Plant Master Plan Management

The Plant Master Plan Steering Committee is managing the project and is composed of tributary agency staff and staff from City departments that have an interest or bring expertise. Policy issues and strategies are brought before the Executive Committee for feedback and direction; this committee includes City department heads and a City of Santa Clara representative.

Recommendations for action are brought to the Treatment Plant Advisory Committee and the Council. Two advisory groups, one technical and one community-based, will report to the Steering Committee and provide input into the process. Additionally, there is a Public Outreach Working Group comprised of public information officers (or equivalents) from each city and sanitary district working together on outreach to the eight-city service area.

Plant Master Plan Approach

The Plant Master Plan is a three-year process that begins with a series of exploratory workshops that lead to development of a set of alternatives for the Plant and site. The public and stakeholders will be engaged through community meetings; informed through the media, newsletters, and a website; and can give input in person, by mail or e-mail for the process of narrowing alternatives and selecting the course that culminates in the final Plant Master Plan and associated EIR. The general timeline for this approach is shown below; see also the backside of the Attachment, the Brainstorming Workshop Summary.



Public and Stakeholder Outreach

An essential component of the effort is public outreach and engagement. ESD staff provided a separate presentation on the communication strategy and related budget for the Plant Master Plan to the T&E Committee in February 2008

(http://www.sanJose.ca.gov/clerk/CommitteeAgenda/TE/020408/TE020408_g.pdf).

ANALYSIS

Since staff last reported to the T&E Committee on the Master Plan in January 2008, the following activities have taken place:

Project Kick-Off

On April 21, 2008, Carollo Engineers hosted a project kick-off meeting to introduce the consultant team to the key staff from various departments and to outline the Plant Master Plan approach.

Data Collection and Benchmarking

Development of the Plant Master Plan alternatives will be based on data that details current operating parameters, regulatory and water quality objectives, demographic projections, and land use constraints. This data has been collected in coordination with other City departments and the consultant team. The alternatives development will also be based on understanding what new options and technologies exist. Staff has undertaken benchmarking as follows to help substantiate this effort:

- In May 2008, Plant staff exchanged information with the City of Munich (Germany), which sent a delegation of experts for a three-day visit to the Plant. Information was shared on biosolids processing, disinfection processes, and community integration.
- In July 2008, City and consultant staff traveled to France and Germany to witness first-hand how a new biosolids approach is using climate-controlled greenhouses and automated equipment. At our Plant, this approach could potentially reduce the current 800-acre open drying fields to a significantly reduced footprint in enclosed buildings. Biosolids treatment methodology is a key issue as it directly affects many of the Master Plan goals and stretch targets—such as becoming a good neighbor by controlling odors and addressing regulatory and resource issues by reducing the carbon emissions of Plant operations.

- Also in July 2008, staff traveled to the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District's wastewater treatment plant to tour their facilities and bufferlands. The District uses the bufferlands primarily for habitat mitigation. A number of private enterprises are also co-located on their site, taking advantage of various wastewater treatment by-products.

Brainstorming Workshop

As discussed above under Plant Master Plan Approach, the planning process begins with three exploratory workshops. On May 29 and 30, 2008, the Brainstorming Workshop was conducted. A panel of eight international experts in alternative energy, ecology, green building, climate change, biomimicry and architecture led about 40 City and tributary agency senior staff in exploring ideas for improving the Plant and transforming the site. Ideas from this workshop are summarized in the Attachment; these ideas provide a launching point for the Master Plan alternatives development and will be further evaluated in subsequent workshops.

Communications and Outreach Activities

In late 2007, ESD staff developed a Communications Plan that identified more than 160 individual stakeholder groups within seven target audience groups, and also identified appropriate outreach strategies for each group. The communications strategy and budget for the Plant Master Plan was presented to T&E in February 2008. Progress on the various elements of the communications strategy is as follows:

- ***Community Advisory Group (CAG)***. In summer 2008, the Plant's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) appointed city-specific and at-large representatives to a 20-member CAG that will provide a community perspective on the Master Plan process. CAG formation began during May 2008 when ads were placed in various media throughout the service area, and residents and stakeholder group members were invited to apply. The Public Outreach Working Group handled the selection process with TAC approving the recommended city candidates on July 14, 2008 and at-large candidates on August 11, 2008. Comments from the advisory group as well as any public input gathered at their open meetings will be collected and reported to the Steering Committee.
- ***Plant Tours***. A key outreach tactic is to build public awareness of the Master Plan through public tours of the Plant. In May 2008, a mailer advertising free tours was sent to households throughout the service area. The offer received an overwhelming response and staff quickly expanded the tours program to up to eight busloads of 30 people every Saturday through November 1. About 4,000 residents are expected to have toured the Plant by the end of 2008, and there is already a wait list of more than 400 for the spring 2009 tours.
- ***Informal Stakeholder Input on Outreach***. Since March 2008, staff has informally met with representatives from various environmental and open space groups, regulatory agencies, tributary agencies, businesses and neighborhood groups to discuss the best methods of outreach to their memberships. This has helped shape the process for formal, comprehensive stakeholder outreach and engagement (see Next Steps).

- **Employee Brown Bags.** Throughout the months of July and August 2008, staff conducted Employee Brown Bags for all ESD staff, senior staff from other departments, and the Executive Committee. These presentations provided a Plant Master Plan overview and shared the ideas generated at the Brainstorming Workshop (Attachment). Staff collected employee feedback and will include this as early input into the planning process.
- **Baseline Survey.** A baseline survey to determine current public awareness of the Plant and gain some measurement of public values has been completed and results are being tabulated at the time of this writing. Surveys at the midpoint and endpoint of the master planning process also are planned to measure changes in public perception and values as a result of the public outreach associated with the Master Plan process.

Next Steps

Building on the above activities, the next steps in the Plant Master Plan process include:

- **Community Advisory Group Orientation.** In September 2008, members of this newly formed group will be given an extensive orientation on the Plant Master Plan and will tour the Plant and bufferlands.
- **Technical Workshop.** The Technical Workshop is planned for October 2008. Wastewater industry experts will examine the technical merits of the consultant team's assumptions and their analysis of future treatment options. These experts comprise the Plant Master Plan's Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and will meet at appropriate junctures to review the technical aspects of the developing alternatives.
- **Land Use Workshop.** The Land Use Workshop is planned for November 2008. The consultant team will lead the discussion on land use opportunities. After this third workshop, the consultants will synthesize the workshop series into broad alternatives that can be presented at community meetings and stakeholder presentations.
- **Community Meetings.** Staff is planning community meetings for input on the early development of Plant Master Plan alternatives. These meetings will be facilitated by the consultant team; will include translation services for the Spanish-speaking community; and are targeted for early 2009. Details will be provided in the next T&E update in January 2009.
- **Stakeholder Group Engagement.** In early October, staff plans to send a formal Plant Master Plan announcement letter to all stakeholder groups that briefly outlines the Master Plan and engagement options.

With these steps completed and the first round of community and stakeholder input gathered, the Plant Master Plan process will continue to the next phase: Staff will work to refine the Master Plan vision that reflects input from all stakeholders; further develop the Master Plan goals and include performance metrics; and narrow the alternatives into more clearly viable directions for a second round of public input and stakeholder engagement in late 2009.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP

The communications strategy for the Plant Master Plan includes a number of performance measures for tour/workshop attendance and survey percentages indicating satisfaction with the participation process. The goal of getting 2,000 residents to tour the Plant and learn about the Master Plan has already been surpassed; about 4,000 are expected to have toured the Plant by November 2008. Tours by specific stakeholder groups are planned in early 2009.

Staff will provide another progress report to T&E in January 2008. Each progress report will include communications and outreach activities.

PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST

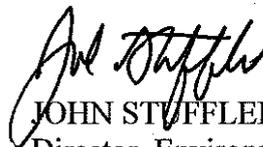
Engaging the general public and the many stakeholder groups is an essential component to developing the Plant Master Plan. The communications strategy for the Plant Master Plan was developed by City staff with input from the Master Plan Steering Committee and the Plant's Technical Advisory Committee. The tributary-wide Public Outreach Working Group has been giving input on the public outreach strategy since December 2007, and the soon-to-commence Community Advisory Group will likewise share insights on public outreach.

COORDINATION

This report has been coordinated with the Attorney's Office and is scheduled to be reported at the September 11, 2008 Treatment Plant Advisory Committee.

FISCAL/POLICY ALIGNMENT

This item is consistent with Council approved Budget Strategy Memo General Principle #2, "We must focus on protecting our vital core City services."



JOHN STUFFLEBEAN
Director, Environmental Services

For questions, please contact Bhavani Yerrapotu, Division Manager, Technical Support Services, Environmental Services, at (408) 945-5321.

Attachment: Brainstorming Workshop Summary