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Title: Actions pertaining to the Fresno Priority 2 Regional Transmission Water Mains Pipeline Project:
1. Adopt findings for the Fresno Priority 2 Regional Transmission Water Mains Pipeline Project, Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), State Clearing House No. 2015101105.
2. Approve an Amended Exhibit (Figure 1) to the Fresno Metropolitan Water Resources Management Plan Update, reflecting a minor pipeline routing change (citywide).

Sponsors: Department of Public Utilities

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments: 1. RTM Mitigated negative Declaration.pdf, 2. Fresno Priority 2 Regional Transmission Mains SMND_final.pdf, 3. Supplement File 16-123.pdf

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
2/4/2016	1	City Council	approved	Pass

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

February 4, 2016

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Department of Public Utilities

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Department of Public Utilities - Water Division

SUBJECT

Actions pertaining to the Fresno Priority 2 Regional Transmission Water Mains Pipeline Project:
1. Adopt findings for the Fresno Priority 2 Regional Transmission Water Mains Pipeline Project, Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), State Clearing House No. 2015101105.
2. Approve an Amended Exhibit (Figure 1) to the Fresno Metropolitan Water Resources Management Plan Update, reflecting a minor pipeline routing change (citywide).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that City Council adopt findings for the Fresno Priority 2 Regional Transmission Water Mains (RTMs) Pipeline Project, Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), State Clearing House No. 2015101105; and approve an Amended Exhibit (Figure 1) to the Fresno Metropolitan Water

Resources Management Plan Update, reflecting a minor pipeline routing change.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Approval of these essential project components will support the objectives and goals set forth in the City of Fresno's (City) Metropolitan Water Resources Management Plan Update (Metro Plan) and Urban Water Management Plan, to ensure a reliable and sustainable water supply by the year 2025. In conjunction with a new Southeast Surface Water Treatment Facility (SESWTF), the RTMs will convey treated surface water to the City's existing water distribution system. Approvals of these actions are necessary for the City to move forward with the project. The MND and Amended Exhibit have been approved by the City Attorney's Office.

BACKGROUND

The City has a service area that covers nearly 114 square miles and serves approximately 513,000 residential customers and 35,000 commercial and industrial accounts. The City's water demands are approximately 130,000 acre-feet annually, which is met by 86% groundwater and 14% treated surface water. Groundwater production is achieved by utilization of approximately 260 active municipal wells, while treated surface water is provided by the City's existing 30-million gallons per day (mgd) Northeast Surface Water Treatment Facility (NESWTF). The NESWTF commenced operations in 2004.

Although the City has an existing surface water treatment facility and an aggressive intentional groundwater recharge program, groundwater overdraft problems continue. Through this project, the City's expanded use of existing surface water entitlements will aid in meeting current and future goals for a balanced and sustainable water supply. The City has completed and is in the process of implementing the key recommendations contained in the Metro Plan.

A key element of the Metro Plan is to construct the Southeast Surface Water Treatment Facility (SESWTF). The proposed RTMs are required to convey treated surface water from the SESWTF and the existing NESWTF to the City's Water Transmission Grid Mains and distribution system. The RTMs will convey water from the SESWTF through a network of approximately 13 miles of large diameter pipelines.

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

The City of Fresno Metropolitan Water Resources Management Plan Environmental Impact Report (MEIR) (SCH No. 2012111015) was prepared, and the subsequent Metropolitan Water Resources Management Plan Update (Metro Plan Update) EIR (SCH No. 2013091021) was prepared and adopted by the Council on June 12, 2014, for this Project. The Project was initially evaluated under the Metro Plan EIR and Metro Plan Update EIR at a Project level, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15168. An analysis was performed pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15162 to determine whether subsequent environmental review was required for the Project, and as a result of minor changes to the routing of the Pipeline, a supplemental environmental assessment Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) (SCH No. 2015101105) was prepared for the Project.

It has been determined that all applicable mitigation measures of MEIR and Metro Plan Update have been applied to the Project, together with project specific mitigation measures necessary to assure that the Project will not cause significant adverse cumulative impacts, growth inducing impacts and

irreversible significant effects beyond those identified, as provided by CEQA Section 15178(a). In addition, pursuant to Public Resources Code, Section 21157.6(b)(1), staff has determined that no substantial changes have occurred with respect to the circumstances under which the MEIR and Metro Plan Update were certified, and that no new information, which was not known and could not have been known, has become available. Therefore, it has been determined based upon the evidence in the record that the Project will not have a significant impact on the environment and that the filing of the MND is appropriate in accordance with the provisions of CEQA Section 21157.5(a)(2) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15178 (b)(1) and (2).

Based upon the attached environmental assessment and the list of identified mitigation measures, staff has determined that there is no evidence in the record that the Project may have a significant effect on the environment and has prepared an MND for this Project. This process included the distribution of requests for comment from other responsible or affected agencies and interested organizations. The State Clearinghouse submitted the MND to selected State agencies for review, and no comments or appeals specifically related to the environmental document were received by the closing date of November 30, 2015, for the review period.

An analysis has been performed pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15162 to determine whether subsequent environmental review is required for the project. Based upon this analysis the following findings are made to support the determination that no further environmental review is required:

1. No substantial changes are proposed in the Project which will require major revisions of the previous MND due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects. In this case, the proposed pipeline alignment has not changed.
2. There is no new information, which was not known and could not have been known at the time of the previous Mitigated Negative Declaration that the project will have significant effect not discussed in the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Based upon these findings, it has been determined that no further environmental documentation is required for this project.

LOCAL PREFERENCE

Local Preference was not considered because this action does not include a bid or an award of a City construction or services contract.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approving adoption of this MND and Amended Exhibit will not impact the General Fund. Although there are no direct costs specifically associated with adoption of this MND, appropriations associated with preliminary costs of this Project are included in Water Division's FY2016 Capital Improvement Program budget within the Water Enterprise Fund (40101). Project construction is expected to start in Summer 2016. The award of this construction contract will be funded by the State Revolving Fund Low Interest Loan through the State Water Resources Control Board as part of the construction of the RTM Project. Depending on the timing of the award, appropriations will be requested for FY 2016 or included in the FY 2017 Capital Improvement Program adopted budget within the proposed State Low Interest Loan RTM Project Fund (40185). The loan repayments for the low interest loan were

included in the water rate model used to create the five-year utility rate plan that was adopted by the City Council on February 26, 2015.

Attachments:

Mitigated Negative Declaration

Figure 1 - Amended Exhibit