



City of Hermosa Beach

Civic Center, 1315 Valley Drive, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254-3885

March 29, 2019

RE: Herondo Storm Drain Infiltration Project

To: Leslie Laudon, Deputy Director, State Water Resources Control Board, Division of
Financial Assistance: Leslie.Laudon@waterboards.ca.gov

CC: Daman Badyal: Damanvir.Badyal@waterboards.ca.gov
Spencer Joplin: Spencer.Joplin@waterboards.ca.gov

Dear Deputy Director Laudon:

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me on Wednesday. The City of Hermosa Beach appreciates this opportunity to provide an update on the Herondo Storm Drain Infiltration Project (Project) for which the State Water Resources Control Board has graciously provided funding. The Project is the highest priority project in the Beach Cities' Enhanced Watershed Management Program (EWMP) that would achieve the greatest reduction in bacterial levels, at the Herondo Drain Outfall in Hermosa Beach. The awarded Proposition 1 Stormwater Implementation Grant of \$3,099,400 represents approximately one half of the estimated total project cost.

In response to significant community concerns regarding the proximity of the Project to residential dwelling units and the potential construction and operational impacts, progress was delayed on the Project as City Council reviewed alternative project sites and initiated negotiations with one of our EWMP partner cities, Redondo Beach, to site the project in Redondo Beach. While it may have appeared that the City was delaying in its obligations under the grant agreement, I can assure you that the City was diligently trying to solve this problem, namely, how can we best site this important project. The decision is not simple and the concerns from our residents were sincere, as I have learned that approximately 720 residential units are within 500 feet of the existing project site. The City Council created a subcommittee of myself and Councilmember Fangary to work with staff and our EWMP partners on solving this complicated issue, including engaging the City of Redondo Beach to discuss alternate project locations. This work culminated in a public hearing on March 26, 2019, where the City Council could have an in-depth and *informed* conversation about all available options.

In a letter dated March 26, 2019, Redondo Beach Mayor Bill Brand authorized the City of Hermosa Beach to investigate the feasibility of North Francisca Avenue in Redondo Beach as an alternative location for the Project. At our March 26, 2019 City Council meeting, the Hermosa Beach City Council directed staff to work with staff from the Beach Cities Watershed Management Group cities to explore the feasibility of North Francisca Avenue to further



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develop a project at this location. The City Council further directed amendments to the current cost-sharing MOU as necessary to accomplish this direction and allow us to investigate alternate sites in order to accomplish the project as envisioned and to capture the requisite amount of stormwater. This will require close work with our EWMP partners and we are committed to doing that. This will require amendments to our current cost-sharing MOU. We are swiftly initiating that process. The City Council and the community also acknowledged the complexities of managing stormwater and that even if the North Francisca site is viable, our EWMP obligations may still require identifying a site for a smaller project in Hermosa.

Tetra Tech Inc. will immediately commence exploratory studies of North Francisca Avenue under the current professional services agreement with the City of Hermosa Beach and Hermosa Beach will cover the cost of this investigation. Previous site investigations presented in the draft preliminary design report for the adjacent Greenbelt location including geotechnical analysis and utilities research indicate that the North Francisca Avenue site is a feasible location for diverting and infiltrating stormwater from the Herondo Drain. The City of Hermosa Beach has permission from the Beach Cities Watershed Management Group cities to explore the feasibility of North Francisca Avenue, as confirmed on a teleconference Thursday morning.

I want to convey our City's sincerity in investigating this alternate location at North Francisca Avenue and our commitment to be accountable throughout this process. Should you be willing to recommend keeping the grant in place, which I hope you do, I would offer to personally check in on a regular basis to report our progress directly to you. Our city staff can also be available for regular check-ins with the grant coordinator and any additional members of your team.

To that end, I want to report our proposed steps to move the grant project forward, which are also being conveyed to our EWMP partners.

1. Immediately authorize Tetra Tech to explore the feasibility of North Francisca Avenue to further develop an infiltration project at this location. The City of Hermosa Beach will cover the cost of this exploratory work. We are also hopeful that some of the design work already created for the greenbelt will be useable in the substitute infiltration project.
2. Propose an amendment to our cost-sharing MOU for the project (which currently identifies Hermosa Beach as Lead Agency and covers the parties' obligations through the design phase of the Greenbelt Project). We are currently drafting proposed language to propose to our EWMP partners.
3. Convene regular meetings with State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Financial Assistance to provide updates on the status of the project.



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4. Once the substitute project is identified, execute any necessary changes to the grant agreement to reflect the substitute project and promptly authorize Tetra Tech to start design (in accordance with the terms of the amended cost-sharing MOU).
5. The City of Hermosa Beach will take the lead in providing notification and project details to the Regional Board for project substitutions in the EWMP. The EWMP acknowledged that certain regional projects may be sited in alternate locations and an EWMP Amendment may not be required. Should an EWMP amendment be required, Hermosa will take the lead in seeking approval of an amended EWMP.
6. Consistent with the City's commitment to jointly implement the EWMP, Hermosa Beach will actively participate and contribute its share to the design, CEQA review and construction of the project.

In addition to this letter, City staff will submit all required grant documentation requested by your office by April 1st. This will include an estimated timeline for the above plan, which city staff and Tetra Tech are compiling.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information and we look forward to providing frequent updates as we proceed with implementing a successful project.

Sincerely,

Stacey Armato
Mayor, City of Hermosa Beach