



## AGENDA REPORT SUMMARY

**Meeting Date:** June 25, 2019

**Subject:** Green Stormwater Infrastructure Plan

**Prepared by:** Aida Fairman, Interim Engineering Services Director

**Approved by:** Chris Jordan, City Manager

**Attachment(s):**

1. Addendum to Various Existing City of Los Altos Planning Documents for Inclusion of Green Stormwater Infrastructure

**Initiated by:**

Staff, NPDES Permit Requirements

**Previous Council Consideration:**

July 11, 2017 (*Green Infrastructure Plan Framework*)

**Fiscal Impact:**

Not applicable for incorporation of this Addendum into City Plans; (Costs of using Green Stormwater Infrastructure methods are evaluated for individual CIP projects to determine feasibility)

**Environmental Review:**

Not applicable

**Policy Question(s) for Council Consideration:**

- Does the Council wish to amend various existing City plans by Addendum to include and encourage Green Stormwater Infrastructure?

**Summary:**

- Section C.3.j.i.(2)(h) of City's Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit (MRP) requires the City to prepare a Green Infrastructure Plan that contains "a summary of the planning documents the Permittee has updated or otherwise modified to appropriately incorporate green infrastructure requirements" for plans "that may affect the future alignment configuration or design of impervious surfaces within the Permittee's jurisdiction"
  - This section of the MRP also specifies "Permittees are expected to complete these modifications as a part of completing the Green Infrastructure Plan, and by not later than the end of the permit term"

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**Reviewed By:**

City Manager

CJ

City Attorney

CD

Finance Director

SE

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- Aside from this MRP requirement, the following plans were not scheduled for updating in the near future: Collector Traffic Calming Plan, Stormwater Master Plan, Pedestrian Master Plan, and Bicycle Transportation Plan
- In order to incorporate green stormwater infrastructure, City Staff have prepared an addendum to be added to the various existing plans encouraging inclusion of Green Stormwater Infrastructure
- The City's GSI Plan must be submitted to the Regional Water Quality Control Board with the City's 2019 Annual Report (in September)

**Staff Recommendation:**

Move to amend the various existing City plans to include the Green Stormwater Infrastructure Addendum, including, but not limited to, the Collector Traffic Calming Plan, Stormwater Master Plan, Pedestrian Master Plan, Bicycle Transportation Plan, the General Plan and all other existing City plans, as applicable



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### **Purpose**

Amend the various existing City plans to include the Green Stormwater Infrastructure Addendum, including, but not limited to, the Collector Traffic Calming Plan, Stormwater Master Plan, Pedestrian Master Plan, Bicycle Transportation Plan, the General Plan and all other existing City plans, as applicable.

### **Background**

Urban development has traditionally involved replacing natural landscapes with solid pavements and buildings, and using storm drain systems to carry increased amounts of stormwater runoff and pollutants directly into local streams. Green stormwater infrastructure (GSI), however, uses plants and soils to mimic natural watershed processes, capture stormwater, and create healthier environments. Bay Area cities and counties are required by State and regional regulatory agencies to move from traditional (grey) stormwater conveyance systems to GSI systems over time. The GSI Plan serves as an implementation guide for the City of Los Altos (City) to incorporate GSI into storm drain infrastructure on public and private lands where feasible over the next several decades.

The City previously created a Green Infrastructure Plan Framework<sup>1</sup> in 2017, in accordance with MRP<sup>2</sup> requirements, which initiated the City's efforts toward evaluating opportunities to more comprehensively manage stormwater and provide multiple benefits for the environment and community. The 2019 GSI Plan expands on the goals and elements proposed in the 2017 Framework.

Green Infrastructure is defined by the MRP as infrastructure that uses vegetation, soils, and natural processes to manage water and create healthier urban environments. Examples of Green Infrastructure include: Landscape-based areas that use soil and plants to treat stormwater (e.g., bioretention or green roofs); pervious paving systems (e.g., interlocking concrete pavers, porous asphalt, and pervious concrete) that allow water to soak into the ground; rainwater harvesting systems (e.g., cisterns and rain barrels) that capture stormwater for non-potable uses such as landscape irrigation, etc.

### **Discussion/Analysis**

Section C.3.j.i.(2)(h) of City's Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit (MRP) requires the City to provide a summary of the planning documents the City has updated or otherwise modified to appropriately incorporate green infrastructure requirements. This section of the MRP also specifies that the City is expected to complete these modifications as a part of completing the Green Infrastructure Plan. Aside from this MRP requirement, the following plans were not scheduled for updating in the near future: Collector Traffic Calming Plan, Stormwater Master Plan, Pedestrian

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<sup>1</sup> Although the permit and earlier reports refer to "Green Infrastructure" agencies have regionally agreed to revise the term to "Green Stormwater Infrastructure" to distinguish the primary focus on stormwater, as opposed to other types of environmentally beneficial infrastructure

<sup>2</sup> Order No. R2-2015-0049



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Master Plan, and Bicycle Transportation Plan. In order to incorporate green stormwater infrastructure, City Staff have prepared an addendum to be added to these plans encouraging Inclusion of Green Stormwater Infrastructure.

The addendum is intended to provide an alternative to performing an overall update of each of these plans at this time, which would require a substantial investment in staff time and consulting assistance. Instead, the addition of an addendum to these plans can enhance the City's clarity on green infrastructure goals for the short-term, while allowing for further integration of GSI elements into future updates of each plan.

### **Options**

- 1) Amend various City plans to include the Green Stormwater Infrastructure Addendum: Collector Traffic Calming Plan, Stormwater Master Plan, Pedestrian Master Plan, and Bicycle Transportation Plan and other existing plans.

**Advantages:** Provides multiple benefits for the environment and community by planning and promoting green infrastructure implementation in public and private projects; complies with MRP requirements

**Disadvantages:** None

- 2) Do not approve amendment of various City plans to include the Green Stormwater Infrastructure Addendum: Collector Traffic Calming Plan, Stormwater Master Plan, Pedestrian Master Plan, Bicycle Transportation Plan, General Plan, and other existing plans.

**Advantages:** None

**Disadvantages:** The City may be out of compliance with the MRP requirements or the City may need to invest substantial resources to perform overall updates to planning documents

### **Recommendation**

The staff recommends Option 1.



## Addendum

### to Various Existing City of Los Altos Planning Documents For Inclusion of Green Stormwater Infrastructure

#### **Impetus**

Section C.3.j.i.(2)(h) of the Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit states that municipalities are expected to complete modifications to planning documents to appropriately incorporate green infrastructure requirements as part of completing the Green Infrastructure Plan.

#### **Addendum**

Urban development has traditionally involved replacing natural landscapes with solid pavements and buildings, and using storm drain systems to carry increased amounts of stormwater runoff and pollutants directly into local streams. Green stormwater infrastructure (GSI), however, uses plants and soils to mimic natural watershed processes, capture stormwater, and create healthier environments.

This plan is amended to specify that the City encourages incorporating Green Stormwater Infrastructure into private and public projects throughout the City, as applicable within this plan.

This amendment encourages use of the following strategies and methods in planning and project decisions:

- Minimize adverse effects on groundwater and surface water quality
- Maximize stormwater infiltration
- Slow, retain, and/or treat stormwater runoff

Projects guided by this plan should incorporate appropriate stormwater treatment measures to achieve stormwater quality and quantity standards and objectives in accordance with the City's Green Stormwater Infrastructure Plan and in compliance with the City's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The SCVURPPPP Green Stormwater Infrastructure Handbook may be referenced for technical guidance on design of GSI measures and integration of GSI with public or private streets, parking lots, parks, and other applicable areas.