

# Levee Protection Planning and Improvements Project

## Community Informational Meeting

April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016

### QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- 1. If we are doing this project in Foster City, what happens if San Mateo or Redwood City doesn't do the equal amount – which leaves ourselves open to flooding anyways right? If there is coordination between the cities, why isn't it a county project? And if there are cities throughout the bay with the same problem, why isn't it a state project?**

There is a county vulnerability assessment that is also underway. This assessment looks at the potential of impacts to valuable assets. Unfortunately, we are at a point where we could lose accreditation if we don't conduct the improvements. We have to move forward early on our project and any other agencies, if their levees are found to be deficient, can conduct any necessary improvements. In regards to sea level rise, agencies are currently considering making improvements to address sea level rise. San Mateo was accredited back in 2012, so they have already made improvements to their levee and currently meet FEMA accreditation.

- 2. In the northwest corner of Foster City, in particular Baywinds Park down to the San Mateo Bridge and in the 1990s, the levee was raised and somewhere between 6-8 access points/ramps from the bay trail to the water were installed. There are 2 informal ramps for kiteboarders, kayakers, and windsurfers – which is known as the upper launch and the parking lot launch. Will this project maintain those existing ramps?**

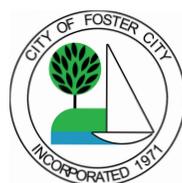
We are going to do all that we can to maintain what is existing and not eliminate any access points as best as possible.

- 3. In the June timeframe and on the next ballot, there will be Proposition AA for funding, which charges \$12 per parcel for everyone on the peninsula. It has four goals, which include the following: (1) wetland restoral, (2) access to the bay, and (3) levee protection for the city. Will this project be able to dip into any of that money?**

We don't believe any of that funding will be available by the time we're ready to start construction. If funding is available, we will take advantage of those funding opportunities and any grants that are available at that time.

- 4. On your hybrid model (Chart No. 10), where you drive the sheet metal down into the bay, is that sheet metal being driven down between the current rock levee and the bay trail? Or is it on the water side of the current rock?**

The sheet pile will be driven along the current alignment. We will do our best to maintain the current alignment as much as possible. The sheet pile will most likely be placed on the water side of the trail.



- 5. There are several points where you can access the beach today. Is that also a part of the plan to maintain those access points?**

Yes. In some cases, we are going to have to provide ADA access. There is a bike trail that currently crosses the levee as well and will need to be included in the project design.

- 6. With regards to alternatives to the current design, such as horizontal levees to some parts of the shoreline, are those being considered or what's the status of that? With regards to the environmental impact of this, a lot of this land abuts with the Redwood Shores Ecological Reserve. What is being done to make sure it doesn't have a negative environmental impact on those lands?**

We are currently working on the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Horizontal levees would be considered as one of the alternatives. Based on the EIR and the environmental requirements, these will determine the design alternative.

- 7. What about the noise that stems from pile driving? There are schools next to the levee, civilians, businesses, etc. This will go on for years.**

We are looking at about 2 years for construction. We're going to try to time the improvements where they are adjacent to the schools to be when school's not in session, if possible. We definitely don't want to impact schools, especially while they are studying. We would also be looking at how to phase the project to minimize impacts with traffic. With the trucks hauling material in and out of the City, we will need to minimize impacts as much as possible.

- 8. As I understand, we will lose FEMA accreditation in June 2016 and the project will finish in 2020. Will we be required to buy flood insurance starting June 2016?**

No. Fortunately, FEMA has granted us seclusion mapping designation, which allows us to stay outside of the flood zone on a temporary basis. As long as the City shows progress and demonstrates that we are moving forward with design and construction, then FEMA will most likely maintain the seclusion mapping designation. However, at any time they may pull this designation, which would place all the properties in a flood zone.

- 9. Is the new levee height earthquake resistant?**

Earthquake design will be factored in the design of the project. It's all part of the geotechnical investigation and then recommendations are provided on how to design the levee improvements based on those factors.

- 10. According to the design pictures, we are building up on the earthen/land side. However on the water side, is there any thought of building up that side as well? If there's a 10 foot drop or a 5 foot drop on the water side, then having easy access to the water wherever it may be, becomes either not possible or dangerous. I would be concerned about kids walking along the top of the levee, and if we build up the land side and obstruct their views, then it could be every easy for kids to fall off. It seems like it would be a good idea to build up the water side of the sheet pile as well – at least to the extent that one can get over it without any safety issues.**

Building up the water side would be considered as part of our design and then presented to the Council. The amount of material to be placed on the water side would be presented as an alternative.

**11. In your estimated timing for the assessment of \$75 million, when would that be determined?**

Based on an aggressive schedule, completion is anticipated in mid-2020. A community meeting will be conducted to discuss what the preliminary assessment would be, if the assessment district route is chosen by our City Council. That meeting is anticipated to occur around 2019, probably mid-year. There is a vote required to establish the assessment district; so should the actual cost be greater than the preliminary estimate to the individual property owner, the project would need to go to another vote for formation of the assessment district. The original preliminary estimates needs to be as accurate as possible. The assessment is estimated to occur during the fall of 2020 and would be included on your property taxes.

**12. Will widening the existing width of the trail be incorporated in the design?**

We will do our best to widen the trail as much as possible, but at the same time maintain slopes based on limited work area. We will widen the trail as much as possible while keeping costs to a minimum.

**13. Have you secured a good source of financing in this project?**

We are currently working on alternatives for financing, which will be presented to the City Council and then we would receive direction as to how we would proceed. You are welcome to attend those meetings when we discuss those options.

**14. What have Cities done or thought about doing collectively to limit impacts? With the impact results it will affect other cities too. Collectively, are the cities or counties looking into that or doing a study on that?**

This was discussed at the last County Vulnerability Assessment meeting and there could be future studies.

**15. Would that be in conjunction before we do anything? I would be concerned with liability; that we end up doing something that would hurt Redwood City or further down south.**

At this time, we cannot guarantee that the study would be conducted before we conduct our project. There have just been preliminary discussions. We don't believe that any improvements will cause any damages to any other properties. What we experience here in Foster City is very mild waves and not what other agencies along the coast experience. We believe this is a conservative approach and we don't believe that we will be causing any damages to other cities.

**16. Would it be evaluated under the CEQA process? Where are we on the evaluation of the levee project? Should the cumulative impact be evaluated through the CEQA process? How are we addressing the environmental portion?**

We are looking at the different alternatives and what those footprints may look like. We are evaluating how the environment may be affected by that. We are doing what's called a biological assessment, an archaeological assessment, air quality traffic, and various other issues related to that. That all goes into other studies that feed into CEQA and the evaluation of the environmental impacts under CEQA. There are a series of hearings that occur as a part of that process, with public input. An EIR is produced and that determines which alternative for the project is the least damaging to the environment. In addition to that, there are multiple agencies and regulatory authorizations that are involved with the process. Among those are the Corp of Engineers, BCDC, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board. We also have to satisfy the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, related to the endangered species impact, the National Marines Fishery Service, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. There are a host of other agencies, but those are the principal ones. Each of those have policies that are designed to protect the environment. The Army Corp of Engineers cannot issue a valid permit unless it is the least environmentally damaging, practical alternative. That's related to the impact on wetlands and federal waters. The Regional Board follows that same policy. BCDC balances, in general terms, the public access, as well as the environmental concerns.

- 17. Are the effects of this financially material enough that when we are selling properties in Foster City that it needs to be part of our disclosure now? Considering the liability if we fail to mention it, isn't there sizable expense when someone thinks we should have disclosed it? When, from now until 2020, ought it to be disclosed?**

You wouldn't have to disclose it currently, but you could. You could mention that we are currently in a seclusion mapping zone, provide the FAQ sheet, but technically, we aren't in a flood zone. We are still outside of the flood zone and will do our best to maintain that status. I would still disclose any information as much as possible.

- 18. Some time ago, there had been conversations about a marina being built out. Is that being factored in? Is there any potential for that marina being built, then being impacted, whether now or in the future (how might it be affected)?**

We are exploring a number of design alternatives and the owner of that property asked that we explore one particular alternative, which would be shown in our CEQA documents. The purpose of this project is to raise the levee in order to retain accreditation through FEMA. We currently don't have, at this point, any proposal pending for development of that property. The focus of this project remains to retaining accreditation by raising the existing levee.

- 19. This area is also a pivotal area for emergency access. In addition to protection of the levee, which is to protection of floods and so forth, what do we have in place or what are we going to put in place, to consider that the bay could be an access to get out of Foster City? Is there going to be anything put in place in conjunction with the levee? We believe it's critical.**

We have approved our emergency evacuation plan for the City in our Emergency Operations Plan. This plan that has been adopted and includes how we would evacuate out of the City in the case of an emergency. There's been talk about ferries, but those are not a part of our evacuation system. It will not be incorporated in this particular levee project.

- 20. Of the \$75 million cost, how many properties is that expected to be spread over? Will that be a one-time payment or over 10 years or 20 years?**

The number of properties is approximately 9,000 properties. Based on that, if the assessment district route is the chosen route, then we are looking at a 20-year assessment. The cost would be spread over 20 years. The fortunate thing about having it as an assessment is that you can claim it on your taxes. Then after 20 years, the payments would cease. If you have to have flood insurance, that flood insurance would require payments every year.

- 21. This may be related to erosion, but what about the use of large boulders – as those seen in Pacifica?**

We currently have riprap. This is to dissipate some of the energy from the waves. In order to meet FEMA accreditation, if we use boulders the entire stretch, we would have to raise it that number of feet, which may be quite expensive. The least impact would be, at this time, the sheet pile alternative.

- 22. It was said that there are 10,000 properties that would need to be assessed to pay for this project. Are there properties that are exempt from this?**

All properties in Foster City are included in this project and would need to help pay for the improvements. The estimate amount of properties in Foster City is 9,000 properties.