



Our Water, Our Future

212 Locust Street, Suite C, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 ♦ (831) 420-5200

Español • Este aviso contiene información importante sobre el proyecto que mejoras las instalaciones en la planta de tratamiento de agua de Graham Hill (Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant Facility Improvements Project). Para asistencia en Español, comuníquese con el Departamento de Agua de la Ciudad de Santa Cruz al (831) 420-5220 o 212 Locust Street, Suite D; Santa Cruz, CA 95060.

December 7, 2023

City of Santa Cruz Water Department NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

PROJECT TITLE: Climate Resilient Santa Cruz: Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant Facility Improvements Project

The City of Santa Cruz (City) as the Lead Agency has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Climate Resilient Santa Cruz: Graham Hill Water Treatment Plant (GHWTP) Facility Improvements Project (Proposed Project) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

PROJECT LOCATION: The Proposed Project would primarily be constructed and located at the City's existing GHWTP, located within City limits. Additionally, the Proposed Project is anticipated to involve activities outside of the GHWTP for the purposes of temporary construction staging and potential utility and traffic safety improvements. These activities would occur in both City and County of Santa Cruz (County) jurisdictions. The Proposed Project is anticipated to be located at four sublocations of the approximately 17.1-acre primary project site, and construction would be supported using two staging areas, which together constitute the project site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Proposed Project would replace and substantially upgrade the majority of the existing water treatment processes at the GHWTP and associated infrastructure with modern facilities. The Proposed Project would improve the GHWTP to: meet current seismic, building, electrical, and fire code requirements; support the treatment of wet season water to facilitate implementation of the City's Water Supply Augmentation Strategy and Securing Our Water Future Policy; increase the City's treatment reliability to meet current and anticipated future water quality requirements; and improve the ability to treat variable and degraded source water quality conditions, such as those associated with post-wildfire, severe storms, and droughts. Characteristics and elements of the Proposed Project include the following:

- **Reliable Water Treatment Plant Capacity.** The Proposed Project would be designed to reliably produce a maximum of 18.2 million gallons per day, under a broad range of source water conditions.
- **New and Upgraded Water Treatment and Related Processes.** The Proposed Project includes process upgrades related to: pretreatment, treatment, solids handling, and chemical feed systems

- **New and Upgraded Buildings.** The Proposed Project would include new and upgraded buildings including: upgraded Operations and Filter Building, new Maintenance Building, new Ozone Building, new Solids Dewatering Building, and a new Chemical Storage and Feed Building
- **Infrastructure and Site Improvements.** Proposed Project infrastructure and site improvements would include:
 - Sewer improvements
 - Stormwater management improvements
 - Electrical; lighting; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning; Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition; and alarm improvements
 - Existing natural gas infrastructure would be removed and replaced with electrical infrastructure
 - Vehicular access improvements
 - Screening and landscaping improvements
 - Fencing and site security improvements
- **Project Operations and Maintenance.** Under the Proposed Project, operation and maintenance of the upgraded GHWTP would include many activities largely consistent with current activities, as well as new activities related to the new treatment process and solids dewatering equipment.

Project construction is anticipated to commence in phases over a four-year period (from 2025 through 2029) while maintaining ongoing operations and continuous production of drinking water at GHWTP. The City has identified standard construction practices that would be implemented by the City and/or its contractors. Additionally, the Proposed Project would implement the applicable avoidance and minimization measures from the City's Low Effect Habitat Conservation Plan and associated Incidental Take Permit under Section 10(A)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The Draft EIR found that construction of the Proposed Project may result in potentially significant environmental impacts in the following resource areas: biological resources; geology and soils; hazards and hazardous materials; and operational noise and vibration, which would be reduced to less than significant with the incorporation of mitigation measures, except that construction of the Proposed Project may result in significant and unavoidable impacts related to temporary construction noise.

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS: Two public meetings will be held to provide information on the Proposed Project and the Draft EIR, and to solicit written comments on the Draft EIR. Both meetings will present identical content.

- **Wednesday, January 17, 2024, at 5:30 PM (in-person)** at the Santa Cruz Police Department Community Room located at 155 Center Street, in Santa Cruz.
- **Thursday, January 18, 2024 (virtual) at 3:30 PM.**

As the dates for the meetings approach, additional details, including virtual meeting log-in information, will be posted online at: <https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/water/online-reports/environmental-documents> or bit.ly/DraftEIR.

There will be an opportunity to ask questions about the CEQA review process at the end of each meeting. Written comments on the Draft EIR can be submitted during the public review period per the instructions below.



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REVIEW AND COMMENT: The 60-day public review period for the Draft EIR is December 7, 2023 through February 5, 2024.

Comments on the Draft EIR must be received in writing by email or mail to the contact listed below by 5:00 PM on February 5, 2024. **Please include a return address and contact name.**

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Online review of the Draft EIR is encouraged. The Draft EIR and information on how to comment are available for review online at: <https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/water/online-reports/environmental-documents> or bit.ly/DraftEIR.

A printed copy of the Draft EIR may be reviewed at the City of Santa Cruz Water Department Engineering Counter (212 Locust Street, Suite C in Santa Cruz). Please note that counter hours for the public are Monday through Friday, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. Interested parties may call 831.420.5210 or email the Water Engineering Section at waterengineering@santacruzca.gov to schedule an appointment outside of those hours.

A printed copy of the Draft EIR is also available at the Santa Cruz Public Library, located at 224 Church Street in Santa Cruz; check with <https://www.santacruzpl.org/> or call 831.427.7713 for library hours and document access information.