

**Community Development
Department**
Planning Division
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NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

DATE:	August 1, 2025
TO:	Reviewing Agencies, Interested Parties and Organizations
FROM:	City of Redwood City, Lead Agency
APPLICANT:	City of Redwood City
SUBJECT:	Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Recycled Water Master Plan Phase 2 Project

The City of Redwood City (City) proposes to adopt the Recycled Water Master Plan (RWMP) Phase 2 Project (Project). Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the City has determined that a program-level Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be necessary to evaluate the environmental impacts of the Project. The City is soliciting comments from the Redwood City community, the County of San Mateo, adjacent cities, responsible agencies, agencies with jurisdiction by law, trustee agencies, and other interested parties, as to the appropriate scope and content of the EIR.

Pursuant to *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15168, a program-level EIR will be prepared for the proposed Project. This type of EIR examines implementation of a plan over an extended period of time including known potential construction and operational impacts and mitigation measures of implementing the plan. This type of EIR allows for later activities that are expected to occur under the proposed RWMP to be evaluated to the extent feasible based on the level of detail currently available. Later discretionary actions occurring under the proposed Project will build upon the foundation of this programmatic EIR and may be subject to additional environmental review and documentation, on a project basis, if it results in new or more significant environmental effects.

In compliance with CEQA, the City will be the Lead Agency and will prepare the EIR. Attached are a description of the proposed project, location map, and preliminary identification of the potential environmental issues to be explored.

The City is requesting review and consideration of this Notice of Preparation (NOP) and comments and guidance on the scope and content of the program-level EIR from the Redwood City community, responsible and trustee agencies, interested public agencies, organizations, and the general public (CEQA Guidelines Section 15082). If your agency is a responsible agency as defined by Section 15381 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, your agency may use the environmental documents prepared by the City when considering permits or approvals for action regarding the proposed project. Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but **not later than 30 calendar days** after receipt of this NOP. The 30-day comment period for this NOP is **August 1 to September**



**Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental
Impact Report for the Proposed Recycled Water Master Plan
Phase 2 Project**

1, 2025. The final date for responses to the NOP to be received by the City of Redwood City is **September 1, 2025, by 4:00 p.m.**

Comments and responses to this NOP must be in writing and submitted by the close of business on the last day of the comment period. Please provide a contact name, phone number, and email address with your comments. All comments must be sent to:

Justin Chapel, Public Works
Superintendent, Water Division
City of Redwood City
1400 Broadway, Redwood City, CA 94063
(650) 780-7469 | jchapel@redwoodcity.org

Pursuant to *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15082(c) (Notice of Preparation and Determination of Scope of EIR) and Section 15083 (Early Public Consultation), the Redwood City Zoning Administrator will also conduct a scoping session for the purpose of soliciting views of the Redwood City community, the County of San Mateo, adjacent cities, responsible agencies, agencies with jurisdiction by law, trustee agencies, and other interested parties, as to the appropriate scope and content of the EIR.

The scoping session will be conducted by the Zoning Administrator at its August 12, 2025 hearing, which begins at 3:00 p.m. in person at City Hall, Conference Room 2B, 1017 Middlefield Road, Redwood City. Members of the public may attend in-person and participate at City Hall or observe the meeting remotely (no public comment) via Zoom at <https://redwoodcity.zoom.us/j/98094090644>.

Melinda Hue, Planning
Principal Planner - CEQA Coordinator
City of Redwood City

7/24/25

Date



Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Recycled Water Master Plan Phase 2 Project

Project Title and Applicant

Recycled Water Master Plan (RWMP) Phase 2 Project by the City of Redwood City (City)

Project Location

The Project area encompasses the existing and proposed recycled water service area and facilities in Redwood City. Figure 1 shows the current recycled water service area, which includes the northern, eastern, and central portions of the City. The proposed Project would establish a plan to: (a) expand the City's Recycled Water Service area to include the East market Assessment Area, which would then be subject to the Recycled Water Use Ordinance, (b) expand the City's Recycled Water pipeline system in the Central and East areas, which is home to a higher concentration of high-demand customers in close proximity as shown in Figure 2; and (c) include back up water storage tanks and pumps.

Project Description

Project Background

In August 2003, the City Council of Redwood City approved the first phase of the Redwood City Recycled Water Project (Phase 1 Project), which consisted of recycled water infrastructure facilities to deliver tertiary treated wastewater to customers in the Redwood Shores, greater Bayfront area, and Central Redwood City area of Redwood City. The Phase 1 Project would be implemented in multiple phases over several years.

Recycled water is an alternative water source that can safely replace potable water in a variety of uses and significantly reduces demands on the potable water supply. Redwood City's Phase 1 Project provides disinfected tertiary recycled water to City customers for landscape irrigation and a variety of Title 22 approved non-potable uses including dust control, car washing, concrete mixing, toilet flushing, cooling, and other industrial uses.

Redwood City adopted a Recycled Water Use Ordinance in July 2008 that established the recycled water service area and requirements for use within the service area. The Ordinance (now Redwood City Municipal Code - Chapter 38 – Article VIII) identifies the required and voluntary uses of recycled water, including requirements for dual plumbing.

The design and construction of Phase 1 the Redwood City Recycled Water Project began in 2004 and included recycled water treatment, storage, and pumping facilities at the Silicon Valley Clean Water (SVCW) treatment plant, located at 1400 Radio Road in northeastern Redwood City; a recycled water distribution system; and on-site customer retrofit facilities. From 2005 to 2010, Phase 1 of the recycled water distribution system was constructed to expand the City's recycled water system along the eastern edge of United States Route 101 (US-101), from Redwood Shores to the Greater Bayfront Area. Phase 1 included construction and operation of two 2.2-million-gallon storage tanks, a distribution pump station, and 17 miles of distribution pipelines. Recycled water service began in 2007, and the system has helped save hundreds of millions of gallons of potable water each year. Phase 1 currently supplies recycled water to more than 450 points of connection. Sites served by recycled water include Oracle Inc., residential and City of Redwood City

Recycled Water Master Plan Phase 2 Project
Notice of Preparation

August 2025



Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Recycled Water Master Plan Phase 2 Project

multifamily developments, the Redwood City Police Station, the Port of Redwood City, and other industrial customers. In 2012, the City evaluated opportunities to expand the recycled water system. Later phases of the Phase 1 Project are underway and will bring recycled water pipes west of US-101 towards downtown Redwood City. Extension of the recycled water system along Walnut Street from US- 101 to Marshall Street is completed. Figure 1 shows the current recycled water service area, which includes the northern, eastern, and central portions of the city.

Proposed Project

The City's RWMP¹ Phase 2 is intended to provide a logical planning framework for the City to expand the existing Phase 1 recycled water system to serve additional customers with the available recycled water supply. Specifically, the proposed Project would establish a plan to: (a) expand the City's Recycled Water Service area to include the East market Assessment Service Area, which would then be subject to the Recycled Water Use Ordinance, (b) expand the City's Recycled Water pipeline system in the Central and East areas, which is home to a higher concentration of high-demand customers in close proximity as shown in Figure 2; and (c) include back up water storage tanks and pumps. The RWMP Phase 2 RWMP Phase 2 is intended to function as a planning document for the City as expansion opportunities for the recycled water system are considered.

The purpose of the Project is to:

1. **Identify a cost-effective, phased approach to expansion:** The City plans to expand the City's Recycled Water Service Area to areas with anticipated demand and add transmission pipeline loops to expand the distribution system and Recycled Water Service Area. Phasing options are evaluated to implement planned projects over time at different funding levels.
2. **Prioritize improvements to the recycled water system:** The City seeks to improve resilience of the overall recycled water system by considering conceptual designs for new recycled water storage tanks, a chlorine booster system, and a new potable water storage tank to serve as backup supply for the recycled water system and to provide emergency storage.

The proposed Project includes the adoption of a RWMP Phase 2 to guide future expansion of the recycled water service area to include the East Market Assessment Service Area subject to the Recycled Water Use Ordinance and the enhancement of the physical pipeline system in the Central and East areas together with backup storage tanks and pumps in the Central area as further described below. This strategic focus enables the City to enhance its reuse efforts while minimizing the need for extensive new construction, fostering sustainable growth and maximizing efficiency in resource allocation. The proposed Project includes adding more than 30,000 linear feet, or 5.7 miles of transmission, distribution, and lateral pipelines that would create multiple transmission and distribution loops, as shown in Figure 2. The proposed Project expansion would enable the City to serve an additional 762 AFY of recycled water if all potential customers connect to the system, which represents about 78 percent of the estimated Central

¹ City of Redwood City. 2024. *Draft Final – Redwood City Recycled Water Master Plan Phase 2*. October 9.



Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Recycled Water Master Plan Phase 2 Project

demand (973 AFY). Focused expansion in the Central area would enable the fastest and most economical growth for the City's recycled water system.

The Redwood City Recycled Water System Design Criteria Part XIII requires high density polyethylene (HDPE) for the recycled water pipelines and outlines the process for sizing pipelines. For planning purposes, 12-inch HDPE pipe would be used as the default size for all distribution pipelines, 24-inch HDPE pipe would be used as the default size for all transmission pipelines, and 8-inch diameter pipe would generally be used for service laterals. The highest priority section that connects other transmission loops, Marshall Street B, would be a 30-inch diameter pipeline.

As the City expands the recycled water system, an increase in additional recycled water storage and pumps would be required to meet the growing demands and effectively manage fluctuations in peak recycled water usage throughout the day. Additional recycled water storage and pumps would improve service reliability for recycled water customers who rely upon recycled water for toilet flushing and other commercial type uses. The City is considering two concepts for recycled water storage: (1) a single 2 million gallon buried concrete recycled water tank, or (2) two 1 million gallon, above-ground steel recycled water tanks. A vacant 3.8-acre lot between Blomquist Street and Maple Street, opposite the Redwood City Police Station, would serve as a potential location for a new recycled water storage tank(s). At this location, regardless of the storage method used, the City would also build a new pump station with associated improvements and utility connections to help manage system pressures and a new chlorine boosting system to improve water quality in the recycled water system.

Furthermore, enhancing potable water storage would improve reliability by providing a backup supply for dual-plumbed buildings in the event that recycled water supply is unavailable due to disruptions in tertiary treatment at SVCW. The additional potable water storage would serve a critical role in supporting emergency needs and fire suppression efforts in various portions of Redwood City, ensuring greater resiliency and continuity of service. The City is considering two concepts for potable water storage: (1) 1-million-gallon steel water tank above ground, or (2) 3-million-gallon steel water tank above ground. The proposed potable tank would be located at an approximate 10-acre parcel currently used by Redwood City Public Works for office space and storage of vehicles, equipment, and construction materials at 1400 Broadway. At this location, regardless of the storage method used, the City would also build a new pump station with associated improvements and utility connections.

Construction of pipelines would occur primarily within existing roadway and public easement rights-of-way. Most pipeline construction would be performed by the "trench-and-cover" method, which involves excavating an open trench, laying pipe, and replacing and compacting soil to refill the trench. For construction in paved areas, the trench area is then repaved. For construction in landscaped areas, the landscaping would be replaced. Construction equipment would typically occupy approximately a 20- to 26-foot-wide segment of the roadway.

Construction of some pipeline segments would utilize the bore-and-jack method of construction. This method is typically used for pipeline crossings of railroad tracks, creeks or other water bodies, major transportation facilities (such as highways), or congested street intersections. This method involves

City of Redwood City
August 2025

Recycled Water Master Plan Phase 2 Project
Notice of Preparation



Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Recycled Water Master Plan Phase 2 Project

excavating a pit on either side of the area to be crossed. The pipeline is then installed by “jacking” or tunneling between the two pits. This method is more time-consuming than the trench and cover technique but allows installation of pipeline without disrupting the surface along the whole length of the pipe.

An alternative pipeline construction method may include directional boring, also known as Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD). This is a trenchless method for installing underground pipelines by drilling a pilot hole along a desired path, enlarging it, and then pulling the pipeline into place, minimizing surface disturbance.

EIR Scope

The City has determined, pursuant to CEQA, that the RWMP Phase 2 will require the preparation of a Program EIR to evaluate potential environmental impacts that could result from implementation of the proposed project. The EIR will evaluate the following CEQA topics:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

The EIR will also address:

Cumulative Impacts. The cumulative analysis will assess where cumulative impacts are significant compared to baseline conditions, and when the RWMPs’ Phase 2 incremental effect is cumulatively considerable. The cumulative impact analysis will rely on a combined projections/list-based approach.

Alternatives. Pursuant to *State CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6, the EIR will also identify and conduct a comparative evaluation of a reasonable range of alternatives to the RWMP Phase 2. The alternatives assessment in the EIR will consider alternatives to the proposed project, including the CEQA-required no-project and environmentally superior alternatives.



Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Recycled Water Master Plan Phase 2 Project

EIR Purpose

The purpose of an Environmental Impact Report is to inform decision-makers and the general public of the environmental impacts of a proposed project that an agency (in this case, the City of Redwood City) may implement or approve. The EIR process is intended to: (1) provide information sufficient to evaluate a project and its potential for significant impacts on the environment; (2) examine methods (e.g., project-specific mitigations, uniformly applied development regulations) for avoiding or reducing significant impacts; and (3) consider alternatives to the proposed project.

In accordance with CEQA, the EIR will include the following:

- A summary of the project, its potential significant environmental impacts, and mitigations required to avoid or reduce those significant impacts;
- A project description;
- A description of the existing environmental setting, potential environmental impacts, and mitigations for the project;
- Alternatives to the proposed project; and
- Other environmental consequences of the project including:
 - (1) growth-inducing effects,
 - (2) significant unavoidable impacts,
 - (3) irreversible environmental changes,
 - (4) cumulative impacts, and
 - (5) effects found not to be significant.

As discussed above, the EIR will be a program EIR pursuant to Section 15168 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, as described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15168 (c)(2) or further review is required.

Required Approvals

At this time, it is anticipated that implementation of the Project would require the discretionary approvals as identified in Table 1. The EIR will confirm the required approvals.



**Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental
Impact Report for the Proposed Recycled Water Master Plan
Phase 2 Project**

Table 1: Anticipated Approvals and Actions for Project Implementation

Lead Agency	Permit/Approval/Action
City of Redwood City	• Certification of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) • Adoption and implementation of a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program • Adoption of Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations • Adoption of the Phase 2 Recycled Water Master Plan • Fire Department – Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) • Public Works - Water use requirements and cross-connection control • Engineering Department – Design approvals, Traffic Plans and Public Infrastructure
Responsible Agencies/Entities	
San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)	• Approval of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for stormwater discharge • Clean Water Act Section 401 Certification
State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water (DDW)	• Water System Permit amendments for new tanks and pump stations
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	• Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement, Endangered Species Act, Riparian Vegetation Removal
San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC)	• BCDC Permit
Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Bay Area Air District)	• Permits for utility equipment
Department of Toxic Substances Control	• Hazardous Materials and Storage
Department of Health Services	• Review and approval of Engineer's Report
Caltrans and Peninsula Joint Powers Board (JPB)	• Encroachment Permit: Caltrans crossings
California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA), Mines and Tunnels	• Trenchless construction (e.g., jack/bore) for large diameter pipes or casing

Source: Compiled by LSA (2025).

FIGURE 1

Redwood City Existing Recycled Water System Service Area

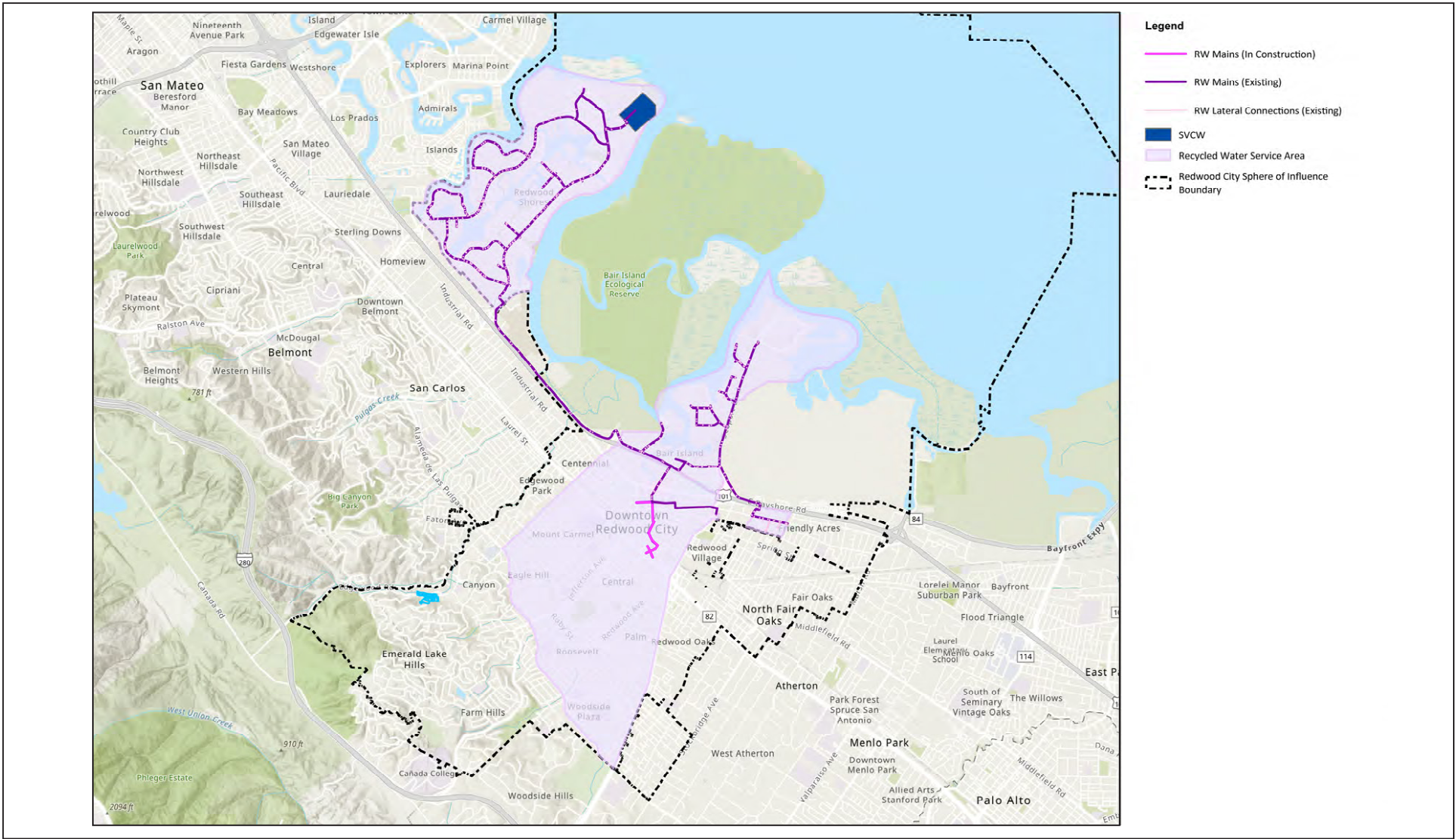


FIGURE 2

