



# the Scoop...ON PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES



**OUR WASTEWATER FACILITY CLEANS  
5 MILLION GALLONS  
OF WATER DAILY  
HALF OF ITS TOTAL CAPACITY**

## ***Ensuring Future Flow - A Wastewater Roadmap***

The City of Watsonville owns and operates its own wastewater treatment plant. More than 170 miles of sewer pipeline and 20 pump stations are used to transport wastewater to the facility for treatment every day. The plant processes an average of 5 million gallons of wastewater daily from approximately 60,000 people from Watsonville, Freedom, Salsipuedes, and Pajaro.

In November 2018, the City Council agreed on the need to develop a Wastewater Facilities Master Plan to assess the condition of the facility and related infrastructure. The Master Plan prioritizes future project recommendations for the next 20 years. The cost estimates of some of these projects will be included in the City's 10-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The Wastewater Master Plan was developed by:

- *Assessing the conditions of the wastewater infrastructure and its vulnerability to natural hazards, such as flooding and earthquakes.*
- *Assessing the condition of the sewer-collection pump stations located around town.*

The upgrades identified in the Capital Improvement Plan are needed due to outdated or obsolete technology, aging equipment and infrastructure (some of which are over 40 years old), and risks to natural hazards such as floods and earthquakes. The majority of the projects are to prolong the useful life of the structural and mechanical facilities.





## Wastewater Treatment Plant Significant Projects\*

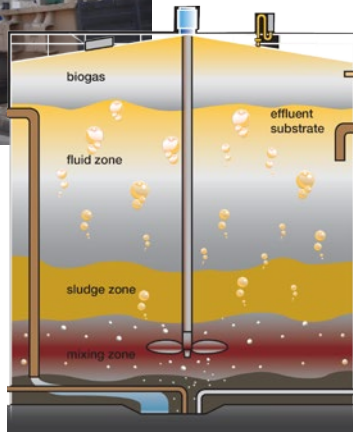
| 2020-2025   | Price          |
|---|----------------|
| Replace main electrical system of the entire Plant  | \$11.3M        |
| Stabilize river levee embankment to protect plant against floods  | \$1.6M         |
| Rehabilitate digester tanks; improve fats, oils, and grease receiving station                                 | \$2.1M         |
| Replace or repair 5 collection system pump stations   | \$2M           |
| Repair and/or replace priority sewer pipelines (Airport, Freedom; Freedom Blvd.; Alta Vista to Green Valley)* | \$5.3M         |
| <b>Total cost of significant projects</b>   | <b>\$22.3M</b> |

\*Visit the City's website for a full list of the remaining 10-Year Capital Improvement Projects and costs.

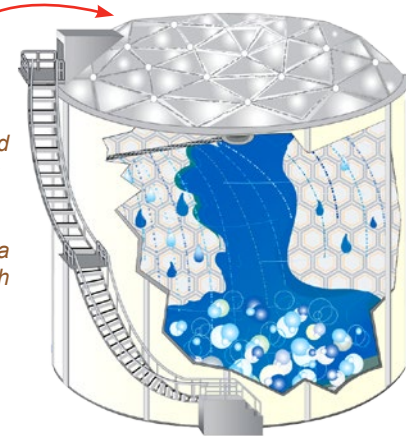
| 2026-2030   | Price         |
|---|---------------|
| Improve digester mixing systems and make improvements to protect in case of earthquakes   | \$760k        |
| Increase receiving station capabilities for fats, oils, and grease to maximize biogas production, which supplies power to run Plant | \$5.8M        |
| Replace and/or upgrade headworks, Influent Pump Station, and gravity thickener  | \$15.8M       |
| Upgrade secondary treatment processes   | \$14.8M       |
| Upgrade or replace 7 collection system pump stations  | \$7M          |
| Repair and replace priority sewer pipelines   | \$5.4M        |
| Replace emergency information communications equipment (SCADA)  | \$1.5M        |
| <b>Total cost of significant projects</b>   | <b>\$5.7M</b> |



Our wastewater treatment plant has a Fats Oils and Grease (FOG) storage station. Local businesses bring their FOG here to prevent sewage backups and overflows.



The bio tower, or "trickling tower" is part of the secondary treatment process. Wastewater is sprayed down from the top. As it falls, it trickles down honeycomb-shaped structures covered in a slime of bacteria which "eat" water pollutants and clean the water.



FOG is pumped from it into our digesters, which work like giant stomachs and produce gases such as methane. The gas is captured and converted into energy to help power the plant.

### How Will Watsonville Pay for These Projects?

From the completed Master Plan, we will be able to strategically plan for improvements to keep providing sewage services over the next 20 years and stay in compliance with current and new regulations. The Plan will also inform future financial planning and budgetary decisions, such as applying for grants for infrastructure projects and cost-sharing opportunities with private developers.

In order to pay for the needed updates and improvements, a consultant is completing a financial analysis and a rate

study. The rate study will include recommendations to fairly and sustainably adjust our utility rates to generate the funds needed over the next 5 years. The rate study will be presented to the City Council this April. We are proud to serve our community and want to be transparent about the costs of the current operational and capital funding needs of our wastewater and sewer collection system. **We will be hosting a community meeting to present the rate study and associated projects on April 9, 2020 6pm-7pm at the Civic Plaza Community Room on the 4th Floor (275 Main St).**