

Agenda Report

File #: 2022-2538

Agenda Date: 12/7/2022

Agenda Item No: 9.

FROM: James D. Herberg, General Manager
Originator: Kathy Millea, Director of Engineering

SUBJECT:

TPAD DIGESTER FACILITY AT PLANT NO. 2, PROJECT NO. P2-128

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend to the Board of Directors to:

- A. Consider, receive, and file the Addendum to the Final Program Environmental Impact report for Biosolids Master Plan for Project No. P2-128; and
- B. Approve the project modifications as identified and described in the Addendum to the Final Program Environmental Impact report for Biosolids Master Plan for Project No. P2-128 (Chapter 4.0, Table 2, pages 8-11).

BACKGROUND

The Orange County Sanitation District (OC San) uses anaerobic digesters at both plants to stabilize sludge prior to dewatering. Anaerobic digesters are large, enclosed concrete structures that require pumping, mixing, heating, and gas handling systems. Anaerobic digesters also generate methane gas used to produce power and heat.

OC San has 18 digesters at Plant No. 2 that were built from 1959 through 1979. In 2017, OC San completed a comprehensive Biosolids Master Plan (2017 BMP), Project No. PS15-01, that provided a roadmap and framework for sustainable and cost-effective biosolids management options. The study recommended upgrading the existing digester complex by adding Temperature Phased Anaerobic Digestion (TPAD) facilities, including new thermophilic digesters and batch tanks, and refurbishing some existing digesters as the most resilient, lowest lifecycle cost.

TPAD Digester Facility, Project No. P2-128, is the combination of two projects identified in the 2017 BMP: (1) TPAD Digester Facility at Plant No. 2, and (2) Perimeter Screening. OC San certified a Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) in 2018 and both of these projects were analyzed in that PEIR. Modifications to these two projects have been proposed since the 2017 BMP was adopted. OC San has engaged the services of an environmental consulting firm to review the PEIR and the proposed project modifications. An Addendum to the PEIR has been prepared with these modifications analyzed. The modifications will not result in new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant environmental impacts. No new mitigation will be required as a result of implementing the project modifications.

RELEVANT STANDARDS

- Meet CEQA standards
- 24/7/365 treatment plant reliability
- Safe, beneficial reuse of Biosolids
- Use all practical and effective means for resource recovery

PROBLEM

Since the certification of the PEIR in 2018, several modifications to the project have been proposed. Per Section 15164(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, an addendum to the previously certified BMP 2017 PEIR is appropriate.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

Receive and file the Addendum to the Final PEIR for the BMP, Project No. PS15-01 (Addendum) and approve the modifications to the project identified and described in the Addendum to the Final Program Environmental Impact report for Biosolids Master Plan for Project No. P2-128 (Chapter 4.0, Table 2, pages 8-11).

TIMING CONCERNS

An addendum for the project to incorporate the project modifications is needed to proceed with the Coastal Development Permit application. To meet the project schedule, the Coastal Development Permit application shall be submitted in January 2023. If this project is delayed, OC San will continue to operate with less reliable digesters and continued seismic risk. Due to escalation, each one-month delay could result in more than \$1 million higher construction costs.

RAMIFICATIONS OF NOT TAKING ACTION

Not taking action means the modifications to the project cannot be made, and the permitting process cannot be started.

PRIOR COMMITTEE/BOARD ACTIONS

July 2020 - Approved a Professional Design Services Agreement with Brown & Caldwell to provide engineering design services for the TPAD Digester Facility at Plant No. 2, Project No. P2-128, for an amount not to exceed \$39,300,000, and approved a contingency of \$3,930,000 (10%).

June 2018 - Certified the Final Program Environmental Impact Report for the Biosolids Master Plan, Project No. PS15-01, dated May 2018; and adopted Resolution No. OCSD 18-07, entitled: "A Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Orange County Sanitation District Certifying the Program Environmental Impact Report for the Biosolids Master Plan, Project No. PS15-01; Adopting a Statement of Facts and Findings; Adopting a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and Approving the Biosolids Master Plan, Project No. PS15-01.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

N/A

CEQA

OC San, as lead agency, prepared a Final PEIR entitled Final Program Environmental Impact Report for BMP, Project No. PS15-01, dated May 2018. The Board certified the PEIR on 6/27/2018. OC San filed a Notice of Determination on 7/2/2018. Since that time, modifications to two of the projects analyzed in the PEIR have been proposed. The environmental impacts of the proposed modifications were analyzed, and it was determined that the modifications would be within the scope of the PEIR and would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant impacts (CEQA Guidelines § 15162). An Addendum was prepared accordingly (CEQA Guidelines §15164).

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

ATTACHMENT

The following attachment(s) may be viewed on-line at the OC San website (www.ocsan.gov) with the complete agenda package:

- Addendum to the Final Program Environmental Impact Report for Biosolids Master Plan for Project No. P2-128
- Final Program Environmental Impact Report for Biosolids Master Plan, Project No. PS15-01

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