

Administration & Operations Committee Meeting Summary Report

Meeting Date: March 5, 2026

Committee Members Present: Director Carter Ohlmann, Director Rock Rockenbach

Staff Present: General Manager Weigold, Stephen (Administration), Bryce (Engineering), Rico (Collections), and Marco (Operations).

Duration: Approximately 2 hours

Overview

The Administration & Operations (A&O) Committee met to review and discuss the District's proposed Five-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP), operational priorities within the collection and treatment systems, and financial planning considerations including potential establishment of an emergency reserve fund specific to CIP.

The discussion focused on:

- Condition assessment and prioritization of sewer infrastructure
- Major CIP projects and sequencing
- Inflow and infiltration (I&I) investigation strategies
- Lift station modernization and relocation projects
- Treatment plant capital planning
- Emergency funding strategy
- Potential external funding sources

No actions were taken. The Committee discussion was intended to provide guidance to staff and inform future Board deliberations.

What follows is a list of projects discussed along with key topics related to each project.

1. Collection System Condition Assessment and Pipeline Prioritization

Staff described the District’s pipeline inspection program using CCTV inspections and NASCO-certified rating standards. The District maintains approximately 79 miles of sewer pipeline, which staff aims to inspect on a five-year cycle.

Pipeline conditions are evaluated based on:

- Structural condition ratings (1–5 scale with 5 being unserviceable)

- Operational/maintenance condition

- Pipe material and age

- Location and accessibility

- Consequence of failure

- Proximity to sensitive areas such as creeks

- Volume and importance within the system

Staff indicated:

- No sections are rated “5” (collapse conditions).

- Projects in the CIP prioritize roughly four miles of pipe with condition levels 3 and 4, representing pipelines with emerging structural or operational risks.

- The majority of the District’s system consists of vitrified clay pipe (VCP) installed primarily in the 1960s, approaching the end of its expected service life.

2. Pipeline Lining and Manhole Rehabilitation Projects

Pipeline Lining Program

The CIP includes approximately \$4.3 million in pipeline lining projects through 2030, targeting pipelines with condition scores of 3 and 4.

Staff explained that lining projects also help reduce inflow and infiltration (I&I) and extend the useful life of existing pipes.

Upon completion of the planned program, staff expects the system to largely consist of pipes rated condition 1–2, although ongoing monitoring will continue.

Pipeline lining consists of cured-in-place linings.

The program similarly targets isolated manholes with poor structural conditions.

3. Fleet and Equipment Replacement

The CIP includes scheduled replacement of several operational vehicles and equipment based on depreciation schedules and service life, including:

- CCTV inspection van

- Jetting truck

- Crane truck

- Generator equipment

Typical replacement intervals range from 10–15 years, depending on the equipment type.

4. Channel Drive Force Main Project

The Committee reviewed the Channel Drive Force Main replacement project, which addresses failures of an aging cast-iron force main.

The existing pipe has experienced multiple failures due to:

- Corrosion, high groundwater conditions, and overall age

The project will:

- Replace the force main

- Reconfigure lift station piping

The project involves complex permitting and coordination, including:

- Easements with the Bonnymede Association

- Work within the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way

5. San Ysidro Sewer Capacity Upsizing Project

Staff presented preliminary planning for a major sewer capacity project along San Ysidro Road.

The District's hydraulic modeling indicates that portions of the system:

- Can exceed pipeline capacity during intense storm events

- Can cause manhole surcharging

The project would:

- Install a new pipeline along San Ysidro Road

- Increase capacity from 8–10 inch lines to approximately 12–15 inches

- Redistribute flows across multiple basins

The design phase will include:

- Additional hydraulic modeling

- Survey and utility investigations

- Evaluation of construction methods such as pipe bursting or trench installation

6. Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) Investigations

The Committee discussed the District's ongoing I&I challenges, particularly the rapid increase in influent flow observed with rainfall events.

Staff believes much of the I&I may result from:

- Illegal or improper connections including storm drains connected to the sewer system.

Possible investigative tools include:

- Flow monitoring

- Sewer system modeling

- Smoke testing

The Committee noted that addressing I&I could:

- Reduce wet weather capacity constraints

- Lower treatment costs

Reduce the need for costly upsizing projects

However, the issue also involves policy considerations, enforcement, and coordination with the County permitting process.

7. Lift Station Projects

Several lift station projects were discussed.

Eucalyptus Lift Station Relocation

This project would evaluate relocation or redesign of the lift station due to:

- Its location in a coastal zone

- Aging infrastructure

- The presence of a beach pipeline

The design study will examine alternatives including:

- Individual residential pump stations

- New force main alignments

The project will require extensive community engagement and may involve homeowner participation.

Bonnymede Lift Station Improvements

This project would:

- Replace aging pumps and electrical systems

- Relocate the force main to a more accessible alignment

- Address corrosion risks associated with existing cast-iron pipe

Posilipo Lift Station Safety Improvements

- The wet well access hatch should be expanded to improve confined space entry safety for maintenance personnel.

Committee members noted the importance of prioritizing safety-related improvements.

8. Wastewater Treatment Plant Planning

Staff reported that the District expects major capital investments in the treatment plant over the coming years.

Preliminary estimates suggest \$25–\$40 million in upgrades may be required by 2030 depending on:

- Treatment technology choices

- Recycling capabilities

- Pumping configurations

The final scope will be informed by ongoing planning work with the District’s engineering consultant.

9. Ocean Outfall Inspection

The District must conduct periodic inspections of the ocean outfall pipeline as required by its NPDES permit.

The next inspection will include:

- External diver inspection

- Internal camera inspection of the pipe

The outfall pipe extends approximately 1,530 feet offshore.

10. Monte Cristo Road Reconstruction

The project would involve:

- Full road base reconstruction

- Possible arborist work

- Engineering design, survey and geotechnical investigation

11. Emergency Reserve Fund Discussion

The Committee discussed whether the District should establish a formal emergency reserve fund for CIP.

Currently:

Emergency funding is built into the annual budget.

Large emergencies require budget amendments and Board action.

Staff noted several recent emergencies costing hundreds of thousands of dollars, including storm-related infrastructure failures.

Potential approaches discussed included:

Maintaining \$3–4 million in available emergency reserves with funding budgeted at \$250k / year.

Obtaining a line of credit to replace and/or supplement emergency reserves

Historical data on emergency expenditures to be provided by staff.

12. Potential External Funding Opportunities

Staff reported ongoing efforts to pursue funding sources including:

Army Corps of Engineers (WIFIA / WRDA programs)

Federal Community Project Funding

State climate adaptation funding

Loans and forgivable grants

Some projects, such as the San Ysidro upsizing, may be suitable candidates for federal funding. Some projects may be relevant to the State's Climate Adaptation Funding program.

13. Future Meetings

The Committee discussed holding regular A&O meetings to monitor CIP progress and coordinate Board decision-making.

Members suggested meetings may occur quarterly or more frequently during periods of active capital planning.

Conclusion

The Committee acknowledged the significant volume of infrastructure planning currently underway and commended staff for advancing multiple complex projects simultaneously.

The discussion will inform upcoming Board deliberations regarding:

- CIP prioritization

- Funding strategies

- Rate study implications

- Infrastructure investment planning

The meeting adjourned following completion of the agenda.