

Corrected 3/13/2026 5:42 pm Attachments corrected.



**CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL**

**AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: March 17, 2026**

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**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
**From:** Oriana Hart, Public Works Director  
 Erik Billing, Public Works Supervisor  
**Subject:** Emergency Sewer Main Replacement on South High Street

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

That the City Council adopt a resolution to (1) declare that an emergency exists pursuant to California Public Contract Code Section 22050 related to the failure of the City’s sewer main on South High Street, (2) authorize the City Manager to execute a contract for the emergency replacement of approximately 156 linear feet of sewer main between Calder Avenue and Maple Avenue in an amount not to exceed \$81,720.00, and (3) approve a budget amendment for the project.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Public Works staff recently investigated a sewer service request from a resident at 575 South High Street related to a potential sewer lateral failure. During the investigation, staff identified significant deterioration of the City’s 6-inch clay sewer main located on South High Street between Calder Avenue and Maple Avenue.

Inspection of the mainline revealed multiple failing slip lined repair sections, extensive root intrusion, structural degradation of the clay pipe, and evidence of sewage exfiltrating into the surrounding soil. In addition, a plumber’s clearing hose became lodged in the mainline during a private lateral cleaning attempt.

Based on these conditions, staff determined that approximately 156 linear feet of the sewer main must be replaced to restore the integrity of the system and prevent potential sanitary sewer overflow or disruption of sewer service. Because the condition of the pipe presents a risk to public health, the environment, and essential sewer service, staff are requesting that the City Council declare an emergency and authorize immediate repair pursuant to California Public Contract Code Section 22050.

**BACKGROUND:**

Public Works staff received a service request from a resident at 575 South High Street reporting a suspected failure of the property’s sewer lateral and requesting that the City review the issue to determine whether any portion of the problem was within the City’s responsibility. As part of the investigation, staff reviewed video footage provided by the resident’s plumber and inspected the City’s sewer main located in the street.

During this review, staff identified significant deterioration in the City’s 6-inch clay sewer main located on South High Street between Calder Avenue and Maple Avenue. The inspection revealed multiple historic repair sections that are now failing, significant root intrusion, and structural degradation of the pipe. Staff also observed sewage exfiltrating from the mainline into the surrounding soil. In addition, a hose used by the plumber during a lateral cleaning attempt became lodged in the City’s sewer main, with a portion of the hose remaining in the pipe.



### **DISCUSSION:**

Based on field observations and inspection results, staff determined that this section of sewer main has reached the point of failure and requires replacement. Staff estimate that approximately 156 linear feet of sewer main between Calder Avenue and Maple Avenue will need to be replaced to restore proper function of the system.

The existing pipe condition presents a risk of sanitary sewer overflow, environmental contamination, and disruption of sewer service to nearby properties. Because sewer infrastructure provides an essential public service, delaying repairs in order to conduct a standard competitive bidding process could increase the risk of system failure.

California Public Contract Code Section 22050 allows a public agency, upon a four fifths vote of the governing body, to repair or replace a public facility and take any directly related and immediate action required by the emergency without giving notice for competitive bids when the governing body finds that the emergency will not permit the delay resulting from a competitive solicitation for bids and that immediate action is necessary to respond to the emergency.

For purposes of the Public Contract Code, an emergency is defined as a sudden, unexpected occurrence that poses a clear and imminent danger requiring immediate action to prevent or mitigate the loss or impairment of life, health, property, or essential public services.

The conditions identified in the sewer main on South High Street meet this definition. The pipe shows structural degradation, failing repairs, extensive root intrusion, and active sewage exfiltration into surrounding soils. These conditions create a risk of sanitary sewer overflow, environmental contamination, and interruption of essential wastewater service. Staff therefore recommend that the City Council declare the situation an emergency and authorize immediate repair pursuant to Public Contract Code Section 22050.

### **STAFF ANALYSIS:**

The section of sewer main on South High Street is part of the City's older clay pipe network and has undergone multiple localized repairs over time. The current condition of the pipe indicates that the mainline has reached the end of its useful life and requires replacement rather than additional spot repairs.

Staff has obtained a quote for the emergency repairs from for \$68,610.00. In addition, staff is requesting a \$13,360.00 percent (20%) contingency. Because of the emergency nature of the project, staff has not be able to prepare detailed plans and specs as is customary for construction projects and anticipate that a greater number of unexpected issues will arise than is normal. Staff is awaiting quotes from two additional qualified contractors that may be for less. The City Manager will award the contract to the lowest bid submitted by a responsible and qualified contractor. Replacement of the failed section will restore system integrity and reduce the risk of future sewer overflows or service interruptions.

The City is currently undertaking development of a Sewer Master Plan that will evaluate the condition of the wastewater collection system and assist in identifying long term rehabilitation priorities for the City's sewer infrastructure.

### **CITY COUNCIL GOALS/PRIORITIES/AND OR GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY:**

This agenda represents the City Council goals/priorities as follows:

- Goal 3 – Infrastructure. Maintaining high quality infrastructure, facilities and services includes repairing/ replacing outdated city facilities, improving streets, stormwater and wastewater infrastructure.



This agenda item represents the City Council General Plan Consistency (if applicable):

- The Planning Commission previously made a finding of General Plan Consistency for the City’s Capital Improvement Plan. The proposed repair work is consistent with the goals of maintaining and improving essential public infrastructure.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The proposed costs of the emergency repair, including a contingency, is \$81,720.00 This repair was not included in the Fiscal Year 2025 to 2026 adopted budget and will require a budget amendment funded through the Wastewater Reserve Fund.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH:**

This item has been noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date.

As of the writing of this staff report, the City has not received any public comment on this item. However, if staff receives public comment from interested parties following the publication and distribution of this staff report, such comments will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting. In addition, public comments may be offered during the public comment portion of this item.

**RESTATED RECOMMENDATION:**

That the City Council adopt a resolution to (1) declare that an emergency exists pursuant to California Public Contract Code Section 22050 related to the failure of the City’s sewer main on South High Street, (2) authorize the City Manager to execute a contract for the emergency replacement of approximately 156 linear feet of sewer main between Calder Avenue and Maple Avenue in an amount not to exceed \$81,720.00, and (3) approve a budget amendment for the project.

**CITY COUNCIL OPTION(S):**

The City Council may choose to defer the repair and incorporate the project into the next Fiscal Year Capital Improvement Program budget. Under this option, the Council would not declare an emergency and the project would proceed through the standard solicitation and competitive bidding process required under the Public Contract Code. This approach would likely delay construction until late summer and would increase the risk of further deterioration of the sewer main and the potential for a sanitary sewer spill, which could result in liability and/or fines for the City.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1- Resolution
- 2-Map of Sewer Line to be Replaced

**APPROVALS:**

Department Head Approval: Approval Date: 3/12/2026

CEQA Determination (Planning): Approval Date: NA

This project is Categorical Exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (d).

Administrative Services (Financial) Approval Date:

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget:  Yes  No  N/A

Account Code (f applicable) Fund 510



City Attorney Approval:  
City Manager Approval:

Approval Date: N/A  
Approval Date: 3/11/26

**RESOLUTION NUMBER: XXXX-2025**  
**CITY OF SEBASTOPOL**

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL DECLARING AN EMERGENCY PURSUANT TO CALIFORNIA PUBLIC CONTRACT CODE SECTION 22050 RELATED TO THE FAILURE OF THE CITY'S SEWER MAIN ON SOUTH HIGH STREET, AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT FOR THE EMERGENCY REPLACEMENT OF APPROXIMATELY 156 LINEAR FEET OF SEWER MAIN BETWEEN CALDER AVENUE AND MAPLE AVENUE IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$81,720.00, AND APPROVING A BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR THE PROJECT

WHEREAS, Public Works staff received a service request from a resident at 575 South High Street regarding a suspected sewer lateral failure; and

WHEREAS, during the investigation staff inspected the City's sewer main located on South High Street between Calder Avenue and Maple Avenue and discovered significant deterioration of the City's 6-inch clay sewer main; and

WHEREAS, inspection of the mainline revealed multiple failing repair sections, significant root intrusion, structural degradation of the pipe, and evidence of sewage exfiltration into surrounding soils; and

WHEREAS, staff determined that approximately 156 linear feet of sewer main must be replaced to restore the integrity of the wastewater system and prevent potential sanitary sewer overflow or disruption of sewer service; and

WHEREAS, California Public Contract Code Section 22050 authorizes the City Council, upon a four-fifths vote, to repair or replace a public facility without competitive bidding when the Council determines that the emergency will not permit the delay resulting from a competitive solicitation for bids and that immediate action is necessary to respond to the emergency; and

WHEREAS, the deteriorated condition of the sewer main presents a risk to public health, property, and essential wastewater services and therefore qualifies as an emergency requiring immediate action; and

WHEREAS, the repair of the failed sewer main was not included in the Fiscal Year 2025–2026 adopted budget and requires a budget amendment funded through the Wastewater Fund.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Sebastopol does hereby declare that an emergency exists pursuant to California Public Contract Code Section 22050 related to the failure of the sewer main on South High Street; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council authorizes the City Manager to execute a contract for the emergency repair and replacement of approximately 156 linear feet of sewer main between Calder Avenue and Maple Avenue in an amount not to exceed \$81,720.00; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council approves a budget amendment of \$81,720.00 for the emergency sewer repair project funded through the Wastewater Reserve Fund.

The above and foregoing Resolution was duly passed, approved, and adopted at a meeting by the

City Council on the \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2026 by the following vote:

**VOTE:**

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Abstain:

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

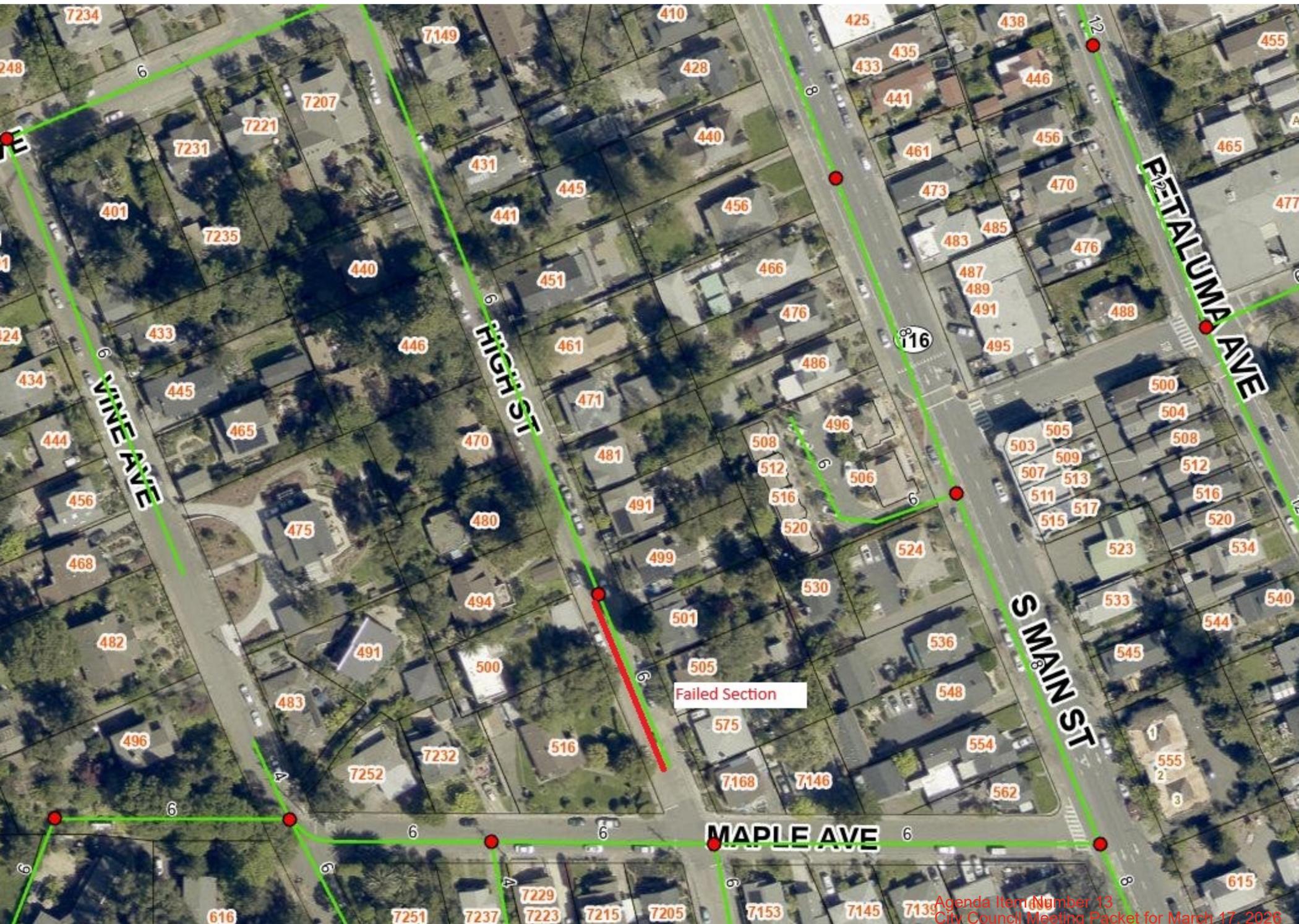
Mayor Jill McLewis

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

Mary Gourley, Interim City Manager/City Clerk, MMC

APPROVED AS TO FORM: \_\_\_\_\_

Alex Mog, City Attorney



Failed Section