



TOWN OF PARADISE
Council Agenda Summary
Date: September 9, 2026

Agenda No. 1(X)

ORIGINATED BY: Marc Mattox, Assistant Town Manager, Public Works Director

REVIEWED BY: Jennifer Macarthy, Town Manager

SUBJECT: Paradise Sewer Project Update

COUNCIL ACTION REQUESTED:

1. None, written monthly update only.

Background:

This report is a monthly effort to provide additional opportunity for public engagement on the status and next steps of the Paradise Sewer Project.

Analysis:

Since its incorporation in 1979, the Town of Paradise has sought a centralized wastewater system to address failing septic systems that impact public health, groundwater quality, and economic development. The need for sewer service became even more urgent following the 2018 Camp Fire, when the lack of modern wastewater infrastructure emerged as a major barrier to rebuilding businesses, housing, and community resiliency.

In 2022, the Town secured \$30 million in CDBG-DR funds to begin pre-construction work, including environmental review, design, and permitting. To provide technical expertise, HDR was retained as Owner's Agent, and a progressive design-build team was selected to develop a Basis of Design Report. That effort confirmed that a locally managed, phased sewer project was necessary to achieve both affordability and long-term community needs.

In January 2025, the Town Council formed a Sewer Project Ad Hoc Committee to evaluate local treatment and collection alternatives, with strong emphasis on public engagement and cost feasibility. The Committee, working alongside staff, HDR, and the Paradise Irrigation District, conducted community meetings, stakeholder workshops, site tours of other wastewater systems, and a technical alternatives analysis.

In August 2025, the Town Council unanimously voted to concur with the Paradise Sewer Project Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation to direct a revised project description to include hybrid gravity/low-pressure collection system, aerated lagoon wastewater treatment, and percolation/evaporation pond effluent discharge.

Subsurface investigations at potential wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) sites conducted in the spring of 2026 concluded that percolation ponds were not feasible for the Sewer Project. Additional desktop geotechnical evaluations indicated that these conditions were likely to be representative of other potential sites in and around Paradise. As a result, the Town sought to revise the project description to replace the lagoon and pond concept with a membrane bioreactor (MBR) treatment facility and surface water discharge of treated effluent. In June 2026, the Town Council voted to concur with the Paradise Sewer Project Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation to approve that revised project description.

Below is a summary of the main accomplishments in the last month and forecast for key activities in the month ahead:

Main Accomplishments

- Began Financial Analysis of the updated project description.
- Ongoing development of the Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (EIR).
- Continued preliminary design of the Collection System.
- Pumped and Gravity Service Areas Workshop.
- Resumed preliminary design of the WWTF under the revised project description.
- Ongoing evaluation of potential WWTF alternative sites.

Key Activities (One Month Look-Ahead)

- Continue development of Financial Analysis of the updated project description.
- Continue developing the project description for the Subsequent EIR.
- Ongoing preliminary design of Collection System.
- Ongoing preliminary design of the WWTF.
- Ongoing evaluation of potential WWTF alternative sites.