



TOWN OF PARADISE
Council Agenda Summary
Date: July 14, 2026

Agenda No. 1(i)

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

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 spring of 2026 concluded that percolation ponds were not feasible for the Sewer Project. Further desktop geotechnical studies concluded the conditions verified at potential sites were likely to continue for other sites in or near Paradise. In June 2026, the Town Council 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, membrane bioreactor (MBR) wastewater treatment, and surface water discharge of treated effluent.

Main Accomplishments

- Completed initial field topographic survey for the Phase 1 Collection System.
- Collection System Lateral Connections workshop.
- Evaluated community proposal consideration for full STEP collection system, Membrane Bioreactor treatment and beneficial reuse alternative in parallel to ongoing work as directed by Council.
- Town Council approval of the revised project description consisting of a hybrid gravity/low pressure collection system, membrane bioreactor (MBR) wastewater treatment, and surface water discharge of treated effluent.
- Resumed development of the Subsequent EIR.
- Ongoing evaluation of potential WWTF alternative sites.
- Coordinated with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board about WWTF discharge permitting requirements in consideration of the project changes.

Key Activities (One Month Look-Ahead)

- Ongoing evaluation of potential WWTF alternative sites.
- Ongoing preliminary design of Collection System.
- Resume preliminary design of the WWTF under the revised project description.
- Develop the project description for the Subsequent EIR.