



**City of St. Helena
City Council Regular Meeting
Tuesday, September 8, 2026 @ 6:00 PM
Vintage Hall Board Room - Second Floor
465 Main Street, St. Helena CA**

PLEASE NOTE: Any person who wishes to speak regarding an item on the agenda or make a comment under the "Public Forum" portion of the agenda may do so, but please observe the time limit of four minutes.

The City Council meeting will be live-streamed on Comcast Channel 28 and on the City's website.

Public comment for City Council meetings will be accepted via email via to publiccomment@cityofsthelelena.gov. All public comments must be received three hours prior to the meeting. All other public comments received after the deadline will be attached to the item the next business day or soon thereafter. Public comments will not be read out loud but will be publicly available and attached to the online City Council agenda.

To ensure interpreters are available, requests must be made at least 72 hours in advance by calling the Office of the City Clerk at (707) 968-2640 or emailing cityclerk@cityofsthelelena.gov.

The schedule of upcoming meetings and published meeting agendas can be found on the City of St. Helena website at cityofsthelelena.gov.

Servicios de interpretación en español durante la reunión pueden ser solicitados por el público. Para asegurar que los intérpretes estén disponibles, los servicios tienen que ser solicitados al menos 72 horas antes de la reunión llamando a la oficina de la Secretaria de la Ciudad al (707) 968-2640 o por correo electrónico a cityclerk@cityofsthelelena.gov.

El horario de las reuniones publicadas y próximas puede ser localizado en el sitio de web de la Ciudad en cityofsthelelena.gov

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

Mayor: Paul Dohring, City Council Members: Aaron Barak, Michelle Deasy, Kate Spadarotto, Scott Diaz

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

5.1. Regular City Council Minutes of August 25, 2026

6. PUBLIC FORUM

Members of the public are entitled to speak on matters of municipal concern not on the agenda during Public Forum. Each person's comments shall be limited to 4 minutes. Each person is entitled to speak on any non-agendized item only once at any meeting. Brief questions by Council Members for clarifications may be posed and answered, and Council Members may make requests that items be placed on future agendas, but in accordance with state law, no substantive discussion or action may take place unless and until the matter properly appears on the agenda. Estimated start time: 6:05 p.m.

6.1. Public Comment

7. REPORTS BY STAFF AND CITY COUNCIL, FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS, AND AB 1234 REPORTS

Reports by staff and/or Council Members on items of general interest. Brief questions for clarification may be posed and answered, and Council Members may request that items be placed on a future agenda. Except under certain circumstances, the Brown Act prohibits any other discussion or action by the City Council.

8. PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC RECOGNITIONS

8.1. Proclamation Recognizing National Hispanic Heritage Month

9. STAFF BRIEFING AND PRESENTATIONS

9.1. Discussion/Presentation on Traffic Calming Measures and Spring Street

9.2. Oak Avenue Status Update

9.3. Main Street Sidewalks - Phase 1B Status Update

9.4. City Manager Recruitment Update

10. CONSENT ITEMS

Members of the Council or the public (present at the meeting) may ask that any items be considered individually for purposes of considering alternative action, for extended discussion, or for public comment. Unless that is done, one motion may be used to adopt all recommended actions. (Roll Call Vote)
Estimated start time: 6:35 p.m.

10.1. Downtown St. Helena Pedestrian Improvements Project Budget Amendment

CEQA Determination: Reliance on Prior Environmental Document (EIR/MND)
Prepared By: Eric Janzen, Asst. PW Director
Recommendation: Approve the resolution.

10.2. Second Reading and Adoption of Three Ordinances Amending Sections 17.22.030, 13.04.075, and 13.20.075 of the St. Helena Municipal Code to Update Regulations for Accessory Dwelling Units and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units and Related Water and Sewer Utility Requirements.

CEQA Determination: The proposed ADU ordinance is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.17, while the related Title 13 utility amendments are not projects under CEQA pursuant to Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(2), 15060(c)(3), and 15378.

Prepared By: Jackie Oneal, Senior Planner, Mario Traverso, Project Manager

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. Find that the ordinance amending Section 17.22.030 of the St. Helena Municipal Code is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.17; and conduct the second reading, waive full reading, and adopt the ordinance updating regulations for Accessory Dwelling Units and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units.
2. Find that the ordinance amending Section 13.04.075 of the St. Helena Municipal Code is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3); and conduct the second reading, waive full reading, and adopt the ordinance updating requirements applicable to private water service laterals.
3. Find that the ordinance amending Section 13.20.075 of the St. Helena Municipal Code is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3); and conduct the second reading, waive full reading, and adopt the ordinance updating requirements applicable to private sewer laterals.

11. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Estimated start time: 6:45 p.m.

11.1. Introduction and Waiver of First Reading Amending Sections 2.52.010 to 2.52.070 of Chapter 2.52 of Title 2 of the St. Helena Municipal Code Regarding the Library Board of Trustees.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

Prepared By: Ashley Sylvester, Director of Community Services Department

Recommendation: The Board of the St. Helena Public Library and City staff recommend that the City Council conduct the first reading and introduce by title only the changes to Chapter 2.52 of the City's Municipal Code which govern the Board. By doing so, the Municipal Code would more accurately reflect the current duties and responsibilities of the Library Board, and ensure compliance with Education Code 18900.

12. OLD BUSINESS

13. NEW BUSINESS

Estimated start time: 7:00 p.m.

13.1. Consideration of a Resolution to Appoint a Planning Commissioner to fill a vacancy with a term expiring on June 30, 2028.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

Prepared By: Andrew Bradley, Program Manager (City Clerk)

Recommendation: Appoint new Planning Commissioner to fill vacancy left by a resignation with a term expiring June 30, 2028.

13.2. Public Works Update on Efforts to Reduce Discolored Water Events and Proposed Mitigation Program

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

Prepared By: Joseph Leach, Director of Public Works

Recommendation: Receive a presentation regarding the City's investigation of recurring discolored-water events; review the proposed Discolored Water Mitigation Program framework; and provide direction regarding the proposed approach and next steps. No budget authorization is requested as part of this item.

13.3. Establishment of a One-Time Water Bill Credit Program and Ongoing Discolored Water Incident Credit Policy in Response to Ongoing Water Discoloration Impacts

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

Prepared By: James McCann, Interim City Manager

Recommendation: Adopt Resolution approving:

1. The creation of a one-time \$500,000 Water Bill Credit Fund allocated from the Water Enterprise Fund for active utility customers who were on account on or before July 31, 2026, anticipating an approximate \$200 credit per eligible customer account (excluding non-potable/standby account types).
2. The establishment of an ongoing reporting-based Water Bill Credit Policy for active customers who log verified discolored water incidents on the "St. Helena Grapevine" online portal or via direct phone call to City Staff.
3. Authorization for the City Manager, or their designee, to establish administrative guidelines to implement, calculate, and process one-time credits, ongoing usage credits, and damage claims.

13.4. Receive report for FY 2025/2026 City of St. Helena Water Supply Update and Projected Water Demand.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)
Prepared By: Ian Dale, Environmental Serv Tech
Recommendation: Receive and File.

14. CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

15. ADJOURNMENT

The next Regular City Council meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2026.

This agenda was posted at City Hall, 1088 College Avenue, and at Vintage Hall, 465 Main Street, St. Helena, California on September 3, 2026.

Andrew Bradley, City Clerk

In Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please call the City Clerk's Office (707) 967-2792. Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting.

CHALLENGING DECISIONS OF CITY ENTITIES

The time limit within which to commence any lawsuit or legal challenge to any quasi-adjudicative decision made by the City of St. Helena is governed by Section 1094.6 of the Code of Civil Procedure, unless a shorter limitation period is specified by any other provision, including without limitation Government Code section 65009 applicable to many land use and zoning decisions, Government Code section 66499.37 applicable to the Subdivision Map Act, and Public Resources Code section 21167 applicable to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Under Section 1094.6, any lawsuit or legal challenge to any quasi-adjudicative decision made by the City must be filed no later than the 90th day following the date on which such decision becomes final. Any lawsuit or legal challenge, which is not filed within that 90-day period, will be barred. Government Code section 65009 and 66499.37, and Public Resources Code section 21167, impose shorter limitations periods and requirements, including timely service in addition to filing.

If a person wishes to challenge the above actions in court, they may be limited to raising only those issues they or someone else raised at the meeting described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of St. Helena, at or prior to the meeting. In addition, judicial challenge may be limited or barred where the interested party has not sought and exhausted all available administrative remedies.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL RECEIVED AFTER THE POSTING OF THE AGENDA

Any supplemental writings or documents distributed to a majority of the City Council regarding any item on this Agenda, after the posting of the Agenda, will be available for public review in the City Clerk's Office located at 1088 College Avenue, St. Helena, California, during normal business hours and by appointment. In addition, such writings or documents will be made available on the City's website at cityofsthenelena.gov and will be available for public review at the respective meeting.

MINUTES
City of St. Helena
Regular City Council Meeting
Tuesday, August 25, 2026 @ 6:00 PM
Vintage Hall Board Room - Second Floor
465 Main Street, St. Helena CA

A complete video recording of this meeting, except for closed session, can be found at <https://sthelenaca.portal.civicclerk.com/> or by calling the City Clerk at (707) 968-2742. The City Council video is the official record of the Council meeting.

Present: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Aaron Barak, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto, City Council Member Scott Diaz

Absent: None.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Dohring called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Mayor: Paul Dohring, City Council Members: Aaron Barak, Michelle Deasy, Kate Spadarotto, Scott Diaz

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Dohring led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

City Council Member Kate Spadarotto moved to adopt the agenda. The motion was seconded by City Council Member Scott Diaz and, on voice vote, carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Aaron Barak, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto, City Council Member Scott Diaz

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

5.1. Regular City Council Minutes of August 11, 2026

City Council Member Scott Diaz moved to approve the Regular City Council minutes of August 11, 2026. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy and on voice vote, carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Aaron Barak, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto, City Council Member Scott Diaz

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

6. PUBLIC FORUM

Members of the public are entitled to speak on matters of municipal concern not on the agenda during Public Forum. Each person's comments shall be limited to 4 minutes. Each person is entitled to speak on any non-agendized item only once at any meeting. Brief questions by Council Members for clarifications may be posed and answered, and Council Members may make requests that items be placed on future agendas, but in accordance with state law, no substantive discussion or action may take place unless and until the matter properly appears on the agenda.

6.1. Public Comment

Michelle Liu Covell addressed the council.

7. REPORTS BY STAFF AND CITY COUNCIL, FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS, AND AB 1234 REPORTS

Reports by staff and/or Council Members on items of general interest. Brief questions for clarification may be posed and answered, and Council Members may request that items be placed on a future agenda. Except under certain circumstances, the Brown Act prohibits any other discussion or action by the City Council.

City Attorney, Ethan Walsh reported on the August 25, 2026, Special Closed Session meeting, noting that there was no reportable action.

Interim City Manager Jim McCann provided updates on the following items:

- Final concert in the park for this season.
- Reminder of the upcoming 150th Anniversary celebration.
- Update regarding Fire Chief John Sorensen assisting in the Trinity Alps fire. A good reminder to take precautions here at home.
- Virtual town hall on Thursday, August 27th at 4:00 P.M. regarding Measure S.
- Wrapping up the response to the Grand Jury report.

- Applications will close on August 30 for the vacancy on the Planning Commission. The intention is to appoint someone to that position at the next City Council meeting.

Vice Mayor Deasy provided an update on receiving reports on discolored water and wanted to ensure the public knew it continues to be a top priority.

8. PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC RECOGNITIONS

- 8.1.** Recognizing Mandy Kellogg for her 17 Years of Service and Leadership to the City of St. Helena

Mayor Dohring presented a proclamation to Administrative Services Director, Mandy Kellogg on behalf of the City Council. Interim City Manager McCann also provided comments thanking Director Kellogg for her 17 years of service to the City of St. Helena.

9. STAFF BRIEFING AND PRESENTATIONS

10. CONSENT ITEMS

Members of the Council or the public (present at the meeting) may ask that any items be considered individually for purposes of considering alternative action, for extended discussion, or for public comment. Unless that is done, one motion may be used to adopt all recommended actions. (Roll Call Vote)
Estimated start time: 6:30 p.m.

10.1. *THIS ITEM WAS PULLED FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION BY VICE MAYOR DEASY.*

Consideration and Adoption of a Resolution Authorizing Amendment No. 2 to St. Helena Contract FY2025-019 with West Yost & Associates, Inc for the Preparation of a Water Management Plan, Increasing the Contract Amount by \$93,000 for a Total Contract Amount Not-To-Exceed \$304,628 and increase the total project budget to \$316,628 to include \$12,000 for staff time.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)
Prepared By: Joseph Leach, Director of Public Works
Recommendation: Authorize the contract increase, the budget amendment and approve the attached resolution.

Interim City Manager McCann provided a brief overview of the item.

Mayor Dohring opened the public comment period; no public comment was received.

The Council engaged in additional questions and discussion.

City Council Member Scott Diaz moved to authorize the contract increase, the budget amendment and approve resolution. The motion was seconded by City Council Member Kate Spadarotto and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring

NOES: Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Aaron Barak

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

Adopted Resolution 2026-088

- 10.2.** Consideration and Proposed Approval of a Resolution Authorizing a Professional Services Agreement with GEI Consultants, Inc. for Construction Management Services related to the Bell Canyon Intake Tower and Valve House Rehabilitation Project, CIP No. W-109 and W-85.

CEQA Determination: Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)

Prepared By: Bruce Zaeni, Project Manager, Joseph Leach, Director of Public Works

Recommendation: Staff recommend authorization

City Council Member Aaron Barak moved to approve items 10.2 through 10.7, and 10.9. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Aaron Barak, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto, City Council Member Scott Diaz

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

Adopted resolution 2026-089

- 10.3.** Consideration and Proposed Approval of a Resolution Establishing 2027 Tax Rate for General Obligation Bonds.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)
Prepared By: Mandy Kellogg, Director of Administrative Services
Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the attached resolution.

City Council Member Aaron Barak moved to approve items 10.2 through 10.7, and 10.9. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Aaron Barak, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto, City Council Member Scott Diaz

NOES: None

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

Adopted resolution 2026-090

10.4. July 2026 Review and Forecasting of City Water Supply Availability and Suspend Monthly Council Action

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)
Prepared By: Ian Dale, Environmental Serv Tech
Recommendation: Receive and File.

City Council Member Aaron Barak moved to approve items 10.2 through 10.7, and 10.9. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Aaron Barak, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto, City Council Member Scott Diaz

NOES: None

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

10.5. Consideration and proposed approval of a resolution authoring 1) flying the Italian flag on the City's flag poles at City Hall and Old City Hall during the month of October 2026 for Italian Heritage Month; 2) temporary street parking closures on the west side of Railroad Avenue from the Fire Station to the end of Lyman Park and the parking lot between Lyman Park and the Fire Station during the Festa Italian event; 3) wine and beer vendors in Lyman Park during the Festa Italiana event; and 4) mobile food vendors to park and operate in the closed parking spaces on Railroad Avenue and

the parking lot during the event.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

Prepared By: Rebecca White, Administrative Assistant

Recommendation: Approve the attached resolution.

City Council Member Aaron Barak moved to approve items 10.2 through 10.7, and 10.9. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Aaron Barak, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto, City Council Member Scott Diaz

NOES: None

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

Adopted resolution 2026-091

- 10.6.** Consideration of a Resolution to appoint an applicant to the Library Board of Trustees.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

Prepared By: Andrew Bradley, Program Manager (City Clerk)

Recommendation: Consideration of a Resolution to appoint an applicant to fill a vacancy on the Library Board of Trustees, which has terms expiring on June 30, 2028.

City Council Member Aaron Barak moved to approve items 10.2 through 10.7, and 10.9. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Aaron Barak, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto, City Council Member Scott Diaz

NOES: None

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

Adopted resolution 2026-092

- 10.7.** Fiscal Year 2026 Investment Report for the Quarter ended June 30, 2026.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)
Prepared By: Mandy Kellogg, Director of Administrative Services
Recommendation: Receive and file the 4th Quarter Investment Report for the period ending June 30, 2026.

City Council Member Aaron Barak moved to approve items 10.2 through 10.7, and 10.9. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Aaron Barak, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto, City Council Member Scott Diaz

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

10.8. *THIS ITEMS WAS PULLED FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION BY A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC.*

Consideration and Adoption of a Position Requesting the Governor's Veto and Authorization to Transmit a Veto Request Letter on Assembly Bill 1383 (AB 1383) Regarding Public Employees' Retirement Benefits

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)
Prepared By: James McCann, Interim City Manager
Recommendation: Approve the draft letter requesting a Governor's veto on Assembly Bill 1383 (AB 1383) as presented or with suggested edits, and authorize the Mayor / City Council to execute and transmit the formal veto request letter to Governor Gavin Newsom, with copies to Senator Christopher Cabaldon, Assembly Member Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, other members of the California Assembly and California Senate as determined, and the League of California Cities.

Interim City Manager McCann provided an overview of the item.

Mayor Dohring opened the public comment period. Public comments were received by Iris Solana and Tyler Neiberger.

The Council engaged in additional questions and discussion.

Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy moved to approve staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by City Council Member Kate Spadarotto and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto

NOES: Mayor Paul Dohring, City Council Member Aaron Barak, City

Council Member Scott Diaz

ABSENT: None.

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

The motion failed.

10.9. Second Reading of an Ordinance Clarifying the Regulation of On-Site Storage

CEQA Determination: Common Sense Exemption (§15061(b)(3))

Prepared By: Jackie Oneal, Senior Planner

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the City Council:

1. Find that the proposed ordinance is exempt from environmental review pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3); and
2. Conduct the second reading, waive full reading, and adopt the ordinance amending Section 17.33.010, Table 17.17.020(A), and Table 17.18.020(A) of the St. Helena Municipal Code to clarify the regulation of On-Site Storage and distinguish storage that is incidental and subordinate to a lawfully established primary use from storage regulated as a separate use.

City Council Member Aaron Barak moved to approve items 10.2 through 10.7, and 10.9. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Aaron Barak, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto, City Council Member Scott Diaz

NOES: None

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

Adopted Ordinance: 2026-07

Mayor Dohring called for 10-minute recess at 6:55 p.m. The City Council reconvened at 7:06 p.m.

11. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 11.1.** Introduction and First Reading of Three Ordinances Amending Section 17.22.030 of the Zoning Ordinance and Sections 13.04.075 and 13.20.075 of the Public Services sections of the St. Helena Municipal Code (SHMC)

to Update Regulations for Accessory Dwelling Units and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units and general Water and Sewer Utility Requirements for residential units in the City.

CEQA Determination: The proposed ADU ordinance is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.17, while the related Title 13 utility amendments are not projects under CEQA pursuant to Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(2), 15060(c)(3), and 15378.

Prepared By: Jackie Oneal, Senior Planner, Mario Traverso, Project Manager

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the City Council take three separate actions:

1. Find that the proposed amendment to Section 17.22.030 of the St. Helena Municipal Code is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.17; and either

- a. Introduce and waive the first reading of the ordinance approving ZOA 26-001 as set forth in Attachment 1 and schedule the selected ordinance for second reading and adoption on September 8, 2026;

OR

- b. Introduce and waive the first reading of the ordinance approving ZOA 26-001 as set forth in Attachment 3 and schedule the selected ordinance for second reading and adoption on September 8, 2026.

2. Find that the proposed amendment to Section 13.04.075 of the St. Helena Municipal Code is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3); and

Introduce and waive the first reading of an ordinance updating requirements applicable to private water service laterals as set forth in Attachment 6; and schedule the ordinance for second reading and adoption on September 8, 2026.

3. Find that the proposed amendment to Section 13.20.075 of the St. Helena Municipal Code is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3); and

Introduce and waive the first reading of an ordinance updating requirements applicable to private sewer laterals as set forth in Attachment 8; and schedule the ordinance for second reading and adoption on September 8, 2026.

Interim City Manager McCann introduced the item. Senior Planner Jackie Oneal and Project Manager Mario Traverso presented on the item.

Mayor Dohring asked for clarifying questions from the council before opening the public comment period. Public comment was received by Joshua Devore, Joshua Parke, Dan Hale and Mary Stephenson.

The matter was then turned over to the Council for discussion, during which Council Members provided additional comments and asked questions.

Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy moved to introduce and waive the first reading of the Microtransit Alternative ordinance for properties within one-half mile of VINE transit stops along State Route 29 and schedule the selected ordinance for a second reading on September 8, 2026. The motion was seconded by City Council Member Scott Diaz.

Council Member Aaron Barak requested an amendment to the motion to change the maximum ADU size from 1,200 square feet to 1,000 square feet. Vice Mayor Deasy did not support the amendment.

Council Member Spadarotto requested a friendly amendment to specify that the roof of an ADU may not exceed the roof height of the main residence. Vice Mayor Deasy did not accept the amendment, and the original motion remained on the floor.

With the motion and the second on the floor, Mayor Dohring called for a roll call vote. On roll call, the motion carried with carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Scott Diaz

NOES: City Council Member Aaron Barak, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

Mayor Dohring moved to introduce and waive the first reading of both ordinances, as amended:

1. Water Service Ordinance — Section 13.04.75:

- Delete subsection(B)(3), relating to projects with an estimated construction cost exceeding \$100,000; and
- Amend subsection (B)(4) so that it applies solely to the development of an accessory dwelling unit (ADU).

2. Sewer Lateral Ordinance — Section 13.20.075:

- Delete subsection (E)(3), relating to projects with an estimated construction cost exceeding \$100,000; and
- Amend subsection (E)(4) so that it applies solely to the development of an accessory dwelling unit (ADU)

The motion was seconded by Council Member Aaron Barak on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, Council Member Aaron Barak, Council Member Scott Diaz and Council Member Kate Spadarotto

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

12. OLD BUSINESS

13. NEW BUSINESS

- 13.1.** Approval of a Resolution 1. Appointing Susan Casey as Interim Director of Administrative Services pursuant to Government Code section 21221(h), effective August 31, 2026; and 2. Approving an Interim Employment Agreement with Susan Casey for service as Interim Director of Administrative Services.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

Prepared By: Mandy Kellogg, Director of Administrative Services

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the attached resolution.

Interim City Manager McCann reported on the item.

Mayor Dohring opened the public comment period. No public comment was received.

City Council Member Aaron Barak moved to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by City Council Member Kate Spadarotto and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Aaron Barak, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto, City Council Member Scott Diaz

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

Adopted resolution 2026-093

13.2. Adoption and Implementation Framework for the Interim Strategic Plan: Building the Groundwork for Long-Term Organizational Transformation

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

Prepared By: James McCann, Interim City Manager

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the City Council provide direction on and/or accept the Interim Strategic Plan and 6-Month Implementation Framework, authorize staff to initiate immediate quick-start operational and organizational adjustments, and direct staff to return to the City Council for future budget amendments, class specification/salary schedule updates, and consulting agreements as required.

Interim City Manager McCann presented on the item

Mayor Dohring opened the public comment period. Public comment was received by Joshua Parke and Deanna Griffin.

The matter was then turned over to the Council for further discussion.

At 9:00 p.m. Mayor Dohring asked for a motion to continue until 9:30 p.m. Council Member Aaron Barak moved to continue the meeting until 9:30 p.m. The motion was seconded by Council Member Kate Spadarotto and on voice vote carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Aaron Barak, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto, City Council Member Scott Diaz

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

Council Members were in support of the Interim Strategic Plan. The Council directed staff to move forward with the recommendations including the reorganization and key hires noted in the report. Staff will continue to bring back updates to the Council on the plan.

13.3. Approval of Resolution Authorizing Recruitment for One Police Officer and Authorizing the City Manager to Recruit for Vacant Positions Based on Organizational Needs.

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)
Prepared By: Mandy Kellogg, Director of Administrative Services
Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the attached resolution.

Interim City Manager McCann reported on the item.

Mayor Dohring opened the public comment period. No public comment was received.

City Council Member Aaron Barak moved to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by City Council Member Kate Spadarotto and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, City Council Member Aaron Barak, City Council Member Kate Spadarotto, City Council Member Scott Diaz

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

Adopted resolution 2026-094

14. CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Vice Mayor Deasy gave a brief update on the Climate Action Committee.
Council Member Barak gave an update on the Upper Waste Management Committee.

15. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Dohring adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

The next Regular City Council meeting is scheduled for September 8, 2026.

APPROVED:

Paul Jamison Dohring, Mayor

ATTEST:

Andrew Bradley, City Clerk

DATE: August 29, 2026

TO: Planning Director Leza Mekhail, Interim City Manager Jim McCann, Mayor Paul Dohring, Vice Mayor Michelle Deasy, and Council Members Aaron Barak, Kate Spadarotto, and Scott Diaz

EMAIL: Imikhail@cityofsthelena.gov, jmccann@cityofsthelena.gov, pdohring@cityofsthelena.gov, mdeasy@cityofsthelena.gov, abarak@cityofsthelena.gov, kspadarotto@cityofsthelena.gov, sdiaz@cityofsthelena.gov

SUBJECT: URGENT: OFFICIAL OBJECTION AND DEMAND FOR DENIAL – SPRING VINEYARD DEVELOPMENT (PROJECT NO. PL25-034)

Dear Planning Director Mekhail, Interim City Manager McCann, Mayor Dohring, Vice Mayor Deasy, & Council Members Barak, Spadarotto, and Diaz,

I am writing regarding the proposed 78-unit Spring Vineyard development at 1933 Spring Street.

Before the City takes any action on this project, several public-safety and financial questions need direct, documented answers. The City must act before the September 5th deadline to enforce our active, objective laws and deny this application.

1. The Fire Safety Fallacy & The City's Reversal Loop

The project proposes a single point of ingress and egress, directly violating St. Helena Municipal Code § 15.36.100(D), which requires developments exceeding 30 units to have two separate, approved fire-apparatus access roads.

- **Succumbed to Minimal State Code:** Our own City Council and Fire Chief John Sorensen have succumbed to the lowest common denominator by signing off on this design based on basic California Fire Code minimums that trade an evacuation road for internal building sprinklers.

- **The Chief's Statutory Mandate:** Nowhere in the Fire Chief's job description or statutory duties does it state his role is to weaken safety rules to generate tax revenue or fast-track development. His primary, unyielding obligation under the police power is to protect human life. Trading a physical evacuation route for internal building sprinklers in an area with a wildfire risk higher than 85 percent of communities in the United States is a dangerous abdication of that duty. Sprinklers do nothing to stop a community-wide evacuation bottleneck.

- **Expert Findings Ignored:** Our independent Zari consultant reports confirm that this single-access design creates an unacceptable, unmitigated gridlock bottleneck. Dismissing these findings to favor a developer's footprint, the Fire Department has failed to build a legally sound administrative record.

- **The Community Petition:** Over 700 out of 5,300 residents signed a formal referendum petition to block the repeal of the two-road safety code. While the City Council capitulated to this public pressure by rescinding their repeal and restoring the safety requirement, the City Attorney has stated that because the tentative map was already processed under the temporary repeal window, the restored fire code restrictions cannot retroactively strip the project of its mapapproval. This bureaucratic trap ignores an active community mandate and the deeply flawed safety record used to bypass it.

- **Government Code § 65589.5:** The Housing Accountability Act explicitly permits denial or reduced density when there is evidence of a direct, unavoidable safety impact based on an existing objective standard. The two-road requirement is an objective standard. If a second road cannot be provided, the project must be denied.

2. The Affordability Illusion

The claims that this project solves our local affordability crisis are completely contradicted by the actual numbers. Of the 78 proposed units:

- **79.5% Market Rate:** 62 of the 78 units are entirely market-rate.
- **Only 15.4% Low Income:** Only 12 units serve households at or below 80% of the Area Median Income (9 very-low-income, 3 low-income).
- **The \$198,500 "Affordable" Unit:** 4 units are designated for "moderate-income" households. Under Napa County's 2026 income limits, a four-person household earning as much as \$198,500 qualifies for these units.

I do not know any hairdresser, retail clerk, or food server in St. Helena who makes \$200,000 a year. A household making nearly a quarter of a million dollars using a "moderate-income" allowance completely fails to reflect the community's desperate need for true affordable housing. Before approving any Affordable Housing Agreement, the City must publish the exact maximum rent, bedroom count, and household-size assumptions for each of the 16 restricted units so the public can see what "affordable" means in actual dollars.

3. General Plan Violations and Infrastructure Strain

- **Unresolved Agricultural Conflicts:** While the City previously rezoned this 4.4-acre property to High-Density Residential in April 2024 to force it into the Housing Element, this administrative action has created a severe, unaddressed inconsistency with our mandatory General Plan policies regarding the protection of Prime Farmland and active vineyard use.
- **Infrastructure Capacity:** The City has failed to issue a formal public response to the community's June letter detailing how our limited water, excessive, brown-contaminated water, sewer, traffic, and parking infrastructure can suddenly absorb a three-story

townhome complex of this magnitude.

Conclusion

I am not asking the City to disregard state housing law. I am asking the City to enforce its own objective regulations. Forcing 78 units behind a single entrance on prime agricultural soil while ignoring an 85% national wildfire risk ranking is a catastrophic failure of local governance. Until the Zari consultant findings are addressed and the complete public record is made transparent, the City must deny this project.

Please include this correspondence in the official public project record for PL25-034.

With Sincere Hope for St. Helena's Future & Safety,

Tamara & Gary Sorensen
1381 St. James Drive
Saint Helena, CA

Public Comment for next CC: Water Rates, Infrastructure, Governance, and Public Trust

From Michelle Covell <michelle@covellarchitects.com>

Date Wed 9/2/2026 4:53 PM

To Michelle Covell <michelle@covellarchitects.com>

 1 attachment (58 KB)

water calcs.pdf;

September 2, 2026

To: St. Helena City Council

Regarding Water Rates, Infrastructure, Governance, and Public Trust

Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council,

The opinions expressed herein are mine individually and are not intended to represent the official position of the City of St. Helena or the St. Helena Planning Commission.

I am following up on my public comment from 8/25/26 – re: the 183% water rate increase from 2011 to 2026, and the need to check that number.

It seemed low given the 15years of time. I decided to do the math and see for myself.

Because the City's water rates and tier structures have changed over time, this is not a simple apples-to-apples calculation.

I went back to the 2011 rate structure, compared it with the 2026 rates, and also looked at the adopted future 2027 rates. I have attached my calculations in PDF format for transparency.

BASE FEES for Water and Sewer

The **water base fee** has increased substantially since 2011, from \$15.70/month to \$85.35/month **543%** increase

The **sewer base fee** in 2011 \$48.12/month, to \$100.83/month, **291%** increase.

Water Use Cost Comparison:

Being that the tiers and fees structure has changed, I decided to take the usage from July 2026 bill and run them through the tiers and rates.

On the left side of the attached pdf is the rates/tiers, and on the right side is the calculation per 17,025 gallons used for that month.

In 2011 – the amount of water would have cost \$44.63, and in 2016 it is \$316.01. This is over **7 times increase**. $44 \times 7 = 308$.

With the base fees added into it. 2011 (\$60.33); 2026 (\$401.36) with a delta of \$314.04 about 565% increase.

I don't know where the 183% rate increase number came from from the Grand Jury, I would love to see the math. Perhaps I'm missing something.

But conceptually I could tell it was too low. And I saw that the city council recognized that the number was incorrect, and that we should show the actual number.

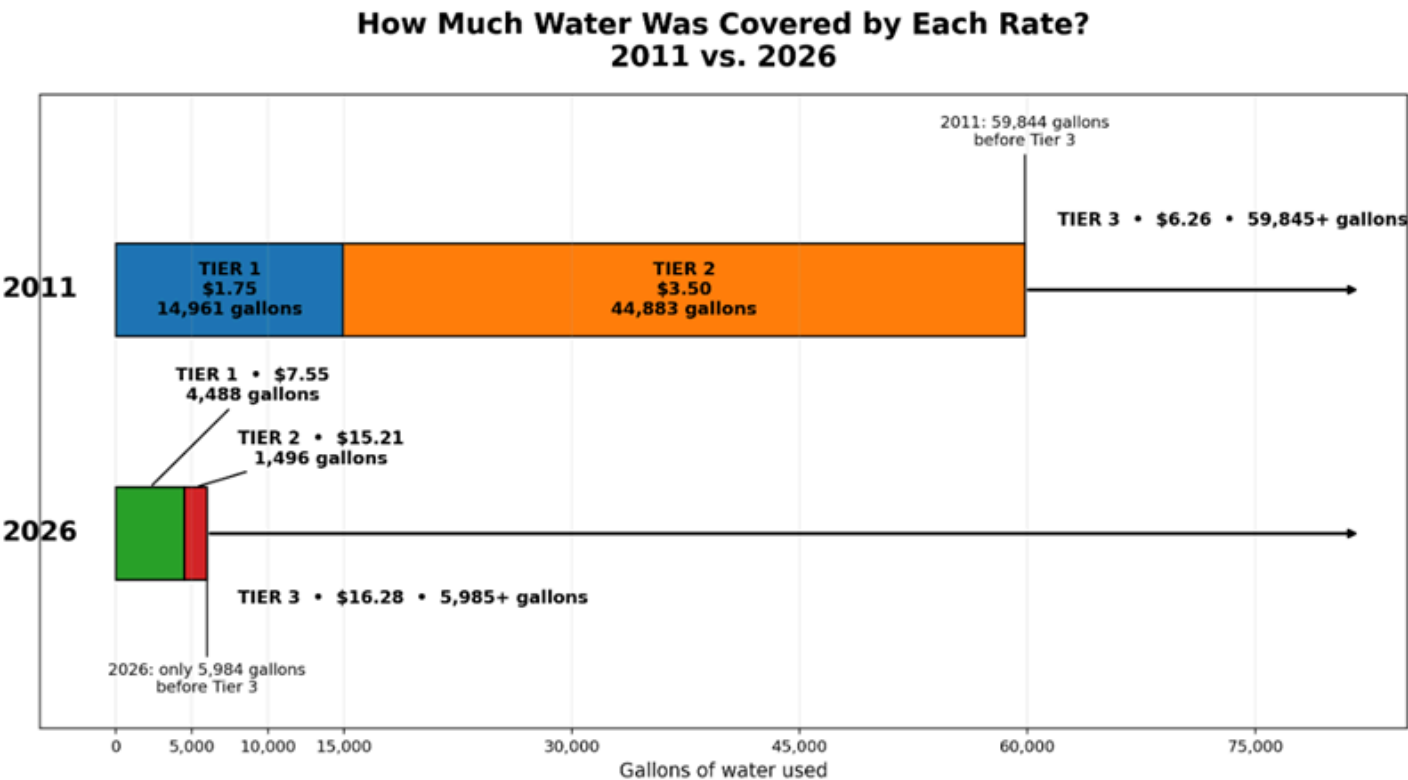
I would like to see what the actual number is by the city as well.

I won't go into the sewer and summaries – as it's all in the PDF doc, but overall our Water and Sewer bill when calc'd using same 'usage' the 2026 bill is significantly higher than 2011.

One particular point that was interesting to me when I worked through the fee structure, was the change in the tier structure itself.

In 2011, water that fell within the first tier was charged at approximately **\$1.75 per HCF**.

That same general level of usage is now subject to significantly higher tiered rates, with the current Tier 3 rate at approximately **\$16.28 per unit**.



What Does This Mean for an Ordinary Household?

I took the City's Water Neutrality Policy allowance of 150 gallons per bedroom per day.

For a three-bedroom household, that equates to approximately 450 gallons per day, or approximately 13,950 gallons per month using a 31-day month.

Using that level of usage, I calculate approximately \$334 per month for water alone, before adding the sewer base fee and sewer usage.

Using approximately \$40 for sewer usage based on my most recent bill, the total is approximately **\$475 per month for water and sewer.**

That is not a trivial household expense. When rent and or mortgages cost higher than typical, and affordable housing is an issue, with the high cost of living here, it's a struggle.

And ON TOP OF paying for water, for some residents they have to buy bottled water to drink as the quality is unhealthy.

And ON TOP OF buying additional drinking water, we are told to simply get a water filter, and pay for that more often than the filters are supposed to last.

My first point, therefore, is simple: **This is not sustainable for many residents.**

Nor will gaslighting and obfuscation be tolerated.

Whether or not CIPs are in legal priority number 4 for our prop 218 water enterprise, we expect that water quality is of the highest priority as it is a basic need.

Great – our roads have gotten better ratings. Great – we finally got better sidewalks by Lyman park

WE DON'T HAVE RELIABLE WATER TO DRINK. PERIOD.

BROWN, SWAMPY, CHLORINEY.

The City's Own Acknowledgements

-

What concerns me even more is that the City's draft response to the G.J. appears to acknowledge many of the underlying problems, but the overall message is that it still Partially disagrees with report.

Great. But can you recognize the real problem?

Rather than protect the residents, the city council and city manager form of government over the years, has taken the approach of protecting the staff, the institution.

The discussion of the BlackBerg Group report – needing a north star, this is the north star. The residents are the top of the org chart. Residents, then city council, then city manager.

Draft response:

- For example, on page 6, the City acknowledges that its methods of **documenting customer complaints have been inconsistent and have not provided the level of analytical information desirable for identifying long-term trends or prioritizing system improvements.**
- On page 7, the City agrees that portions of the water distribution system **have exceeded their intended service life**, that continued rehabilitation and replacement are necessary, and that infrastructure replacement needs have historically **exceeded available financial resources.**
- On page 8, the City acknowledges that **more recent** operational experience and engineering evaluation have identified distribution system conditions as an increasingly significant contributor to aesthetic water-quality concerns. **The City also acknowledges that high-priority projects were not completed** on originally estimated timelines due to project management and staffing constraints and that additional investment in distribution system rehabilitation remains necessary.
- On page 11, the City acknowledges that, over **a 15-year period encompassing eight election cycles, governance quality varied and that there were documented periods of insufficient project management oversight.**
- And on page 13, **the City disagrees** with the Grand Jury's finding regarding ineffective governance, emphasizing decades of deferred maintenance and the work undertaken by successive Councils, City Managers, Public Works staff, and utility professionals.

Residents do not "turn over" like employees in a position.

Many of us have lived here throughout these years. We have paid our utility bills year after year, with the **reasonable expectation** that the money collected by the City would be used to operate and maintain the system and provide safe, reliable, **potable drinking water.**

Staff turnover, Council turnover, management turnover, or changes in leadership **cannot become an explanation for a continuing lapse in the quality of essential public services.**

If institutional turnover is used as an explanation for why these problems persisted, then we need to ask a much larger question about whether the institution itself is functioning as it should for the residents it serves.

We Are Now Asking Residents to Pay for the mistakes and mismanagement.

From my perspective, residents are increasingly being asked to bear the financial consequences of deferred maintenance, delayed capital projects, operational problems, and past management decisions.

We are being asked to pay significantly higher utility bills at a time when the Valley is experiencing a difficult economic environment.

And even if every resident paid every bill, the magnitude of the infrastructure problem appears to be so significant that it raises the question of whether additional intervention or outside assistance is necessary.

At what point does maintaining the financial structure of the utility become secondary to addressing the condition of the infrastructure that the utility exists to provide?

When a system is designed such that inefficiency is profitable, this is organized extortion and corruption.

Hazard Mitigation and the Reality We Need to Acknowledge

I also want to connect this discussion to the **Draft Napa County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan** and the portion addressing St. Helena.

I have reviewed the St. Helena section and raised concerns about how the City's conditions and vulnerabilities are characterized.

The purpose of this document, as explained during the Planning Commission discussion, is not simply to describe what's working, aka only the positives, it is supposed to be an objective status of the town for public health and safety reasons.

It is also a tool for identifying hazards and potential mitigation strategies and can help communities **pursue grant funding and other assistance** to address public-safety risks.

In the St. Helena prioritization summary, **drought is identified as a HIGH priority.**

Yet the only strategy identified in that section is the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

The Water Neutrality Policy is not identified, despite the fact that we know that policy is insufficient and overdue for revision.

This matters because the City's planning documents should **reflect the reality** we are actually experiencing.

For years, I have felt that the City's approach has sometimes been to present a more favorable picture rather than clearly acknowledge the severity of the problems facing the community.

I do not believe that serves the City well.

If we accurately identify our vulnerabilities, we are better positioned to seek funding, prioritize projects, and make responsible decisions.

Public Trust

I appreciate everyone who serves in public office. I have also volunteered my own time to serve on the Planning Commission, and I recognize that public service is difficult.

But I also believe that being a resident who reads, listens, watches, participates, asks questions, and continues to speak up is itself a form of public service.

I have persisted in raising these issues because I care deeply about this community.

I am not trying to bring the City down.

I am trying to protect public health and safety and the community in which I live.

I also understand that the City has legitimate concerns about litigation and liability.

But the answer to difficult problems cannot be to focus primarily on protecting the institution from criticism or potential lawsuits while residents continue to experience the underlying problems.

I would much rather help solve these problems than continually feel as though the City and its residents are on opposite sides of the table.

I ask the Council to please read **BlackBerg Group Deliverable 3C, Items 8–10** in that context.

When I read those recommendations and then look at what residents are being asked to pay, while continuing to experience brown water, I cannot separate the financial discussion from the questions of governance, management, infrastructure, and public trust.

Over the past year, residents have witnessed significant changes in City leadership and increasing public concern about how the City operates.

At the same time, the evidence and documentation surrounding these issues continues to accumulate.

I am not making these observations to assign blame to any one individual. I am asking the Council to step back and look at the pattern.

Residents have raised concerns.

Residents have continued to pay.

Residents have continued to experience the consequences.

And now residents are being asked to pay substantially more to address problems that have accumulated over many years.

That is a difficult proposition to ask of a community **without also acknowledging how we arrived here.**

I have heard from and seen comments from residents across the community expressing increasing frustration with the City's response to the water situation.

I do not know many of these people personally, but it is clear that patience is wearing thin.

The narrative of "look at the positives" or simply putting a fresh coat of paint on the problem is no longer sufficient.

We need to be willing to acknowledge what is not working and look honestly at past decisions.

We need to understand the financial consequences of those decisions.

And we need to rebuild the trust between the City and the residents who ultimately fund and depend upon these systems.

My concern is that, over time, the City's north star became protecting the institution rather than protecting the residents the institution exists to serve.

When that happens, ego, reputation, personal bias, institutional defensiveness, and fear of liability can begin to cloud the fundamental purpose of public service.

I believe we are now facing the consequences of that.

I am asking the Council to use this moment not simply to defend the City's past actions, but to acknowledge the reality in front of us and determine what needs to change.

The residents of St. Helena deserve clean, reliable drinking water, transparent accounting of what they are being charged for, honest acknowledgment of the condition of the City's infrastructure, and a government that is willing to confront difficult problems rather than simply defend itself from them.

That is the standard I believe we should all be working toward.

Sincerely,

Michelle Liu Covell
Resident

4.4.2 Mitigation Successes

Since the adoption of the 2021 Hazard Mitigation Plan, the City of St. Helena has made measurable progress in implementing mitigation actions that reduce risk and enhance community resilience. These successes reflect the City's continued commitment to integrating hazard mitigation into local planning, capital improvement projects, and community programs.

The following success stories highlight completed and ongoing efforts that address key hazards such as drought, climate change, and resource sustainability. Collectively, these initiatives demonstrate the City's ability to move from planning to implementation by leveraging regulatory tools, aligning with state requirements, and advancing projects that provide long-term risk reduction benefits to the community.

4.2.4 Growth Trends & Future Development

The City of St. Helena has experienced moderate growth since the 1970s, with development patterns shaped by adopted growth management policies, infrastructure capacity, and regional housing demand. Growth in recent decades has occurred primarily through planned residential development and visitor-serving commercial uses. This approach reflects the city's long-standing emphasis on directing growth toward areas that can be efficiently served by public services and infrastructure while limiting outward expansion into agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands.

4-28

NAPA COUNTY | HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN 2026 UPDATE

PUBLIC DRAFT - MAY 2026

Table 4-11: City of St. Helena Hazards Prioritization Summary

Hazard	Priority	Explanation
Earthquake / Liquefaction	High	Profiled in Volume 1, Section 3.3.4, and Section 4.5.2.2 in this annex, including Liquefaction
Wildfire	Extreme	Profiled in Volume 1, Section 3.3.1, and Section 4.5.2.1 in this annex
Flood	High	Profiled in Volume 1, Section 3.3.2, and Section 4.5.2.3 in this annex
Levee Failure	-	Profiled in Volume 1, Section 3.3.2; not a priority due to low probability and impact potential
Extreme Weather / Storms	High	Profiled in Volume 1, Section 3.3.5, and Section 4.5.2.7 in this annex as Severe Weather, including High Wind and Heavy Rain (Winter Weather not a priority due to low probability and impact potential)
Drought	High	Profiled in Volume 1, Section 3.3.6, and Section 4.5.2.5 in this annex
Geologic / Mass Movement	Medium	Profiled in Volume 1, Section 3.3.5, and Section 4.5.2.4 in this annex as Slope Failure
Extreme Heat	High	Profiled in Volume 1, Section 3.3.8, and Section 4.5.2.8 in this annex
Agricultural Pests	-	Profiled in Volume 1, Section 3.3.9; not a priority due to low probability and impact potential and jurisdictional focus
Sea Level Rise	-	Profiled in Volume 1, Section 3.3.9; not a priority due to no exposure
Climate Change	High	Profiled in Volume 1, Section 3.3.9, and Section 4.5.2.8 in this annex and discussed as a compounding hazard in relevant profiles
Dam Failure	High	Profiled in Volume 1, Section 3.3.3, and Section 4.5.2.6 in this annex

- 7) During discussions with Administrative Services, it was reported that none of the seven individuals in the Accounting function (excluding the HR Analyst) holds a bachelor's or master's degree in accounting, nor does any possess a significant accounting certification, such as a CPA.

This staffing composition is noteworthy considering the magnitude of certain budget and financial reporting issues that have arisen in recent years, including substantial revisions to prior figures. The City Manager explained that he observed confusion amongst some individuals (including within the Finance Committee) about the budget deficiencies and what they comprise.

- 8) An executive manager reported that, during the tenure of a former (now-terminated) executive manager in Public Works, employees were instructed that they were not permitted to perform work without specific authorization and that required tasks must instead be assigned to contractors. The same executive manager further indicated that, because of this directive—combined with an overall lack of management oversight and assignment of duties—many Public Works employees were not performing their assigned responsibilities.

- 9) A formal request was made to the Director of Public Works for work volume and performance data in the following functional areas: buildings and streets, parks and trees, underground utilities, water treatment, and wastewater. The requested information was not provided in any meaningful detail. Subsequent discussions with the Director indicated that systematic tracking of such data does not currently exist.

Considering Public Works' status as a significant cost center and the projected multi-million-dollar scale of infrastructure investments, the lack of robust performance and workload monitoring represents a material weakness in oversight. This gap impairs the City's capacity to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of its workforce and contractor expenditures and elevates the risk of undetected resource misallocation.

- 10) Interviews with City personnel and examination of existing records indicate that minimal data is captured and maintained through formalized management systems. Data that is retained is predominantly stored in hard-copy documents or standalone Excel files, without version control, change tracking, or audit trails to monitor edits or safeguard integrity.

These conditions reduce the reliability and traceability of information and heighten the potential for undetected modifications to critical records.

BASE FEES comparison	2011	2026	delta per month	percentage of increase	2026/2011
water base fee/month	\$15.70	\$85.35	\$69.65	443.63%	543.63%
sewer base fee/month	\$48.12	\$100.83	\$52.71	109.54%	209.54%
	\$63.82	\$186.18	\$122.36	191.73%	291.73%

100 cubic feet = 748.05 gallons				
WATER CALCS ONLY.				
in 2011 - rate is \$/100cubic feet				
1 unit = 100 cubic feet				
		range of gallons		
tier 1	first 20 units	\$1.75	0.0	14,961.0
tier 2	21 - 80 units	\$3.50	14,962.0	59,844.0
tier 3	81 and up	\$6.26	59,845.0	up
in 2026				
tier 1	1-6 units	\$7.55	748.1	4,488.3
tier 2	6-7 unit	\$15.21	4,489.0	5,236.4
tier 3	8 and up.	\$16.28	5,237.0	up

in 2027				
tier 1	1-6 units	\$8.16	748.1	4,488.3
tier 2	6-7 unit	\$16.43	4,489.0	5,236.4
tier 3	8 and up.	\$17.59	5,237.0	up

sewage usage				
2011 per hcf	2.82			
2026	11.14			
2027	11.59			

Just water				
My bill from July CALC'ED AT DIFFERENT YEARS				
17,025 gallons used 22.75 UNITS (17,025/748.05)				
2011	units used	rate	cost	
	20	\$1.75	\$35.00	
	2.75	\$3.50	\$9.63	
			BASE FEE	TOTAL 2011
sum	22.75		\$44.63	\$15.70 \$60.33
DELTA % over 2011				
2026	6	\$7.55	\$45.30	
	2	\$15.21	\$30.42	
	14.76	\$16.28	\$240.29	
			BASE FEE	TOTAL 2026
sum	22.76		\$316.01	85.35 \$401.36
\$341.04 565.33%				
2027	6	\$8.16	\$48.96	
	2	\$16.43	\$32.86	
	14.76	\$17.59	\$259.63	
			BASE FEE	TOTAL 2026
	22.76		\$341.45	92.18 \$433.63
\$373.30 618.82%				

sewage usage from my bill				
2011	units	rate	cost	base fee total
	3.67	2.82	10.3494	\$48.12 \$58.47
2026	3.67	11.14	40.8838	\$100.83 \$141.71
\$83.24 242.37%				
2027	3.67	11.59	42.5353	\$104.86 \$147.40
\$88.93 252.09%				

this is my 2026 july bill	
CURRENT CHARGES	
Water Base Fee 5/8" Residential	85.35
Water Use	316.00
Sewer Use Residential	40.91
Sewer Base Fee Single Family Res	100.83
TOTAL CURRENT CHARGES	543.09
BILL SUMMARY	

summary for same water/sewer					
	water	sewer	total	delta	percentage over 2011
2011	\$60.33	\$58.47	\$118.79		
2026	\$401.36	\$141.71	\$543.08	\$424.28	457.16%
2027	\$433.63	\$147.40	\$581.02	\$462.23	489.10%

Sidewalks vs. DRINKING WATER

From Dagan Janev <daganmaria@gmail.com>

Date Thu 9/3/2026 11:08 AM

To Public Comment <publiccomment@cityofsthelena.gov>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from daganmaria@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To whom it may concern,

For the last two days the city has had a subcontractor in our neighborhood (and I am sure yours soon) measuring our sidewalks within a 1/4 inch for replacement. HOMEOWNERS are responsible for their sidewalks. WE CANT DRINK OUR F-ING WATER and you want stick it to us about our sidewalks right now. Oak street is a nightmare....it took years for the city to fix their own sidewalks. THIS IS WILD!!!! How much does it cost to hire sidewalk measurers???? Wouldn't it make more sense to put that cash in our water infrastructure???? I know the city reads this....I'D LOVE A RESPONSE.— in **St. Helena, California.**

Dagan Janev
1635 Kearney St.
707-291-8160

Public Forum - comment 3

From Michelle Covell <michelle@covellarchitects.com>

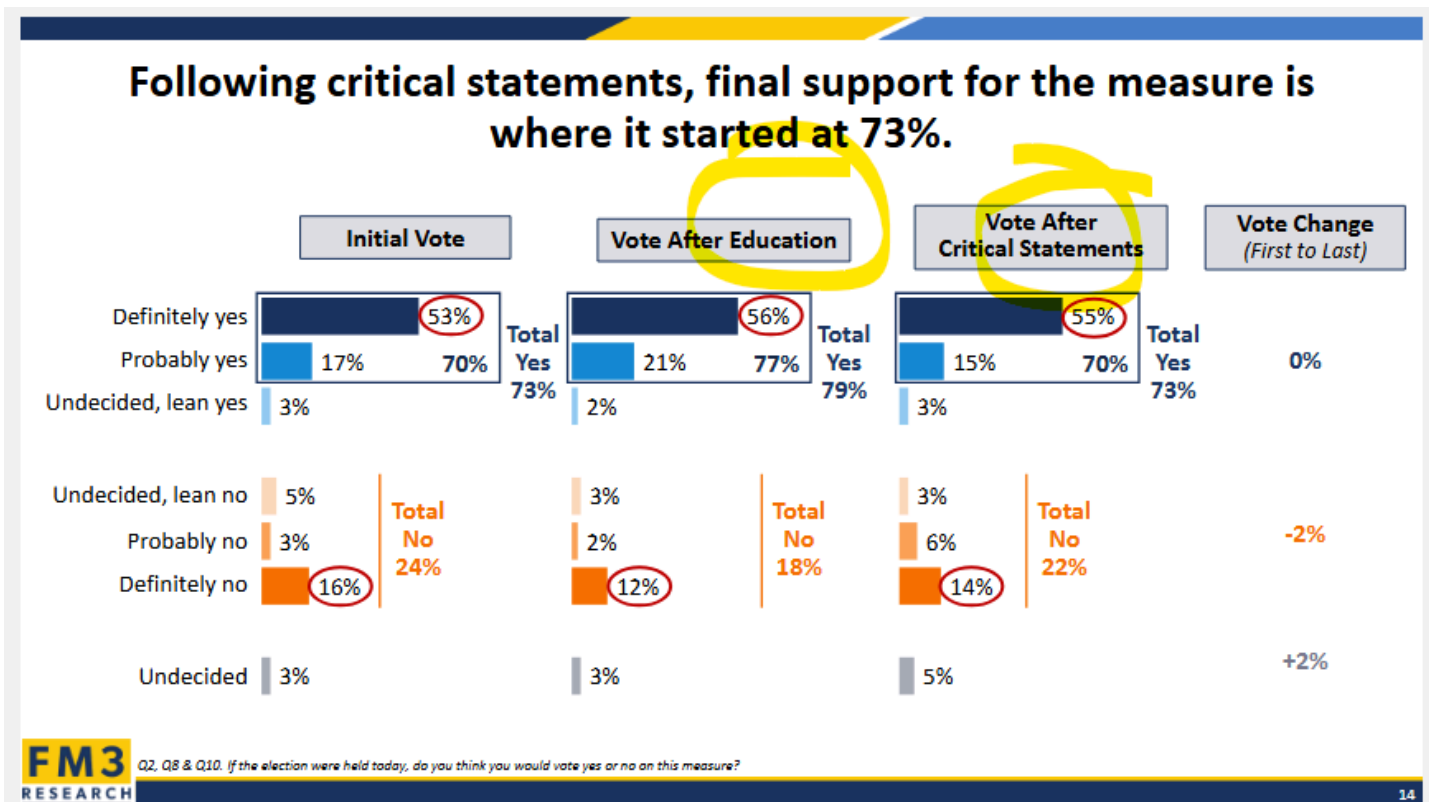
Date Thu 9/3/2026 2:00 PM

To Public Comment <publiccomment@cityofsthelena.gov>; Scott Diaz <sdiaz@cityofsthelena.gov>; Aaron Barak <abarak@cityofsthelena.gov>; Michelle Deasy <mdeasy@cityofsthelena.gov>; Paul Dohring <pdohring@cityofsthelena.gov>; Kate Spadarotto <kspadarotto@cityofsthelena.gov>

Hi City council,

Please provide what the “education” and “critical statements” were to this Survey.
I expect that the consultant would have these documents for public transparency.

Please respond.



The opinions expressed herein are mine individually and are not intended to represent the official position of the City of St. Helena or the St. Helena Planning Commission.

Michelle Liu Covell
Resident, Architect

PROCLAMATION

Hispanic Heritage Month 2026

Napa Valley and the City of St. Helena, California

September 15 – October 15, 2026

WHEREAS, each year, from September 15 through October 15, our nation recognizes Hispanic Heritage Month, a time to celebrate the history, cultures, traditions, achievements, and contributions of Hispanic and Latino communities that enrich the social, cultural, and economic fabric of the United States; and

WHEREAS, Napa Valley is a place deeply shaped by the presence, work, traditions, and contributions of generations of Hispanic and Latino families who have helped build and strengthen our rural and urban communities; and

WHEREAS, tens of thousands of Hispanic and Latino residents call Napa County home. The 2020 Census counted 48,829 Hispanic or Latino residents in the county, reflecting a diverse community that is essential to the life and identity of Napa Valley; and

WHEREAS, the Hispanic community of St. Helena represents an important part of the city's contemporary identity. Hispanic and Latino families, workers, students, entrepreneurs, artists, educators, community leaders, and professionals contribute every day to the vitality and future of St. Helena; and

WHEREAS, farm and vineyard workers and their families have played an indispensable role for generations in the history and prosperity of Napa Valley. Their experience, knowledge, dedication, and hard work are an inseparable part of the agricultural and wine industry that has brought worldwide recognition to our region; and

WHEREAS, the contributions of the Hispanic and Latino community extend far beyond agriculture and viticulture, reaching our restaurants and small businesses, hotels, wineries, schools, nonprofit organizations, public services, cultural institutions, the arts, education, healthcare, and countless professions that sustain and enrich our local economy; and

WHEREAS, Hispanic and Latino families bring extraordinary richness to our community through language, music, food, art, literature, faith, family traditions, and cultural celebrations, including the traditions reflected in Latin American independence celebrations, Día de los Muertos, and many other expressions of our cultural diversity; and

WHEREAS, Napa Valley is home to community organizations that work throughout the year to preserve and celebrate Latino heritage. Local community members, have promoted festivals, exhibitions, cultural programs, and celebrations that recognize the history and contributions of Latinos throughout our region; and

WHEREAS, organizations such as the Napa Valley Farmworker Foundation support farmworker families by providing education, training, community resources, and professional development opportunities, recognizing that when farmworker families thrive, the entire Napa Valley thrives; and

WHEREAS, our schools and educational institutions play a fundamental role in the future of our region, and the growing generations of Latino students represent an essential part of the diversity, creativity, and future leadership of Napa Valley; and

WHEREAS, Hispanic heritage in Napa Valley does not belong only to the past. It lives in the families who have called this region home for generations, in those who have recently arrived seeking new opportunities, and in the young people who are building the next chapter of our community; and

WHEREAS, recognizing this heritage also means honoring the stories of perseverance, sacrifice, service, entrepreneurship, leadership, and hope of countless families who have helped make Napa Valley and St. Helena stronger, more diverse, and more welcoming communities; and

WHEREAS, Hispanic Heritage Month provides an opportunity for all residents to listen to and learn from the experiences of our neighbors, support local businesses and organizations, celebrate our diversity, and strengthen the bonds that unite everyone who calls Napa Valley home;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that the period of **September 15 through October 15, 2026**, be officially recognized as: **HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH 2026 in Napa Valley and the City of St. Helena, California.**

We invite all residents, families, businesses, organizations, educational institutions, vineyards, wineries, cultural organizations, and community partners to celebrate and recognize the contributions of our Hispanic and Latino neighbors; to participate in cultural and educational activities; to support local businesses and leaders; and to promote a community where every family has the opportunity to thrive.

During this Hispanic Heritage Month, we especially honor **the generations who came before us, those who sustain and strengthen our community today, and the generations who are shaping the future of Napa Valley.**

We celebrate our stories. We celebrate with our families. We celebrate our work, our culture, and our traditions. And we celebrate the fact that **Hispanic history is also Napa Valley and St. Helena history.**

DATED this 8th day of September, 2026.

Paul J. Dohring
Mayor, City of St. Helena

Staff Briefing

Item 9.2 / 9.3

September 8, 2026

Mario Traverso
Project Manager



Oak Avenue Status Update

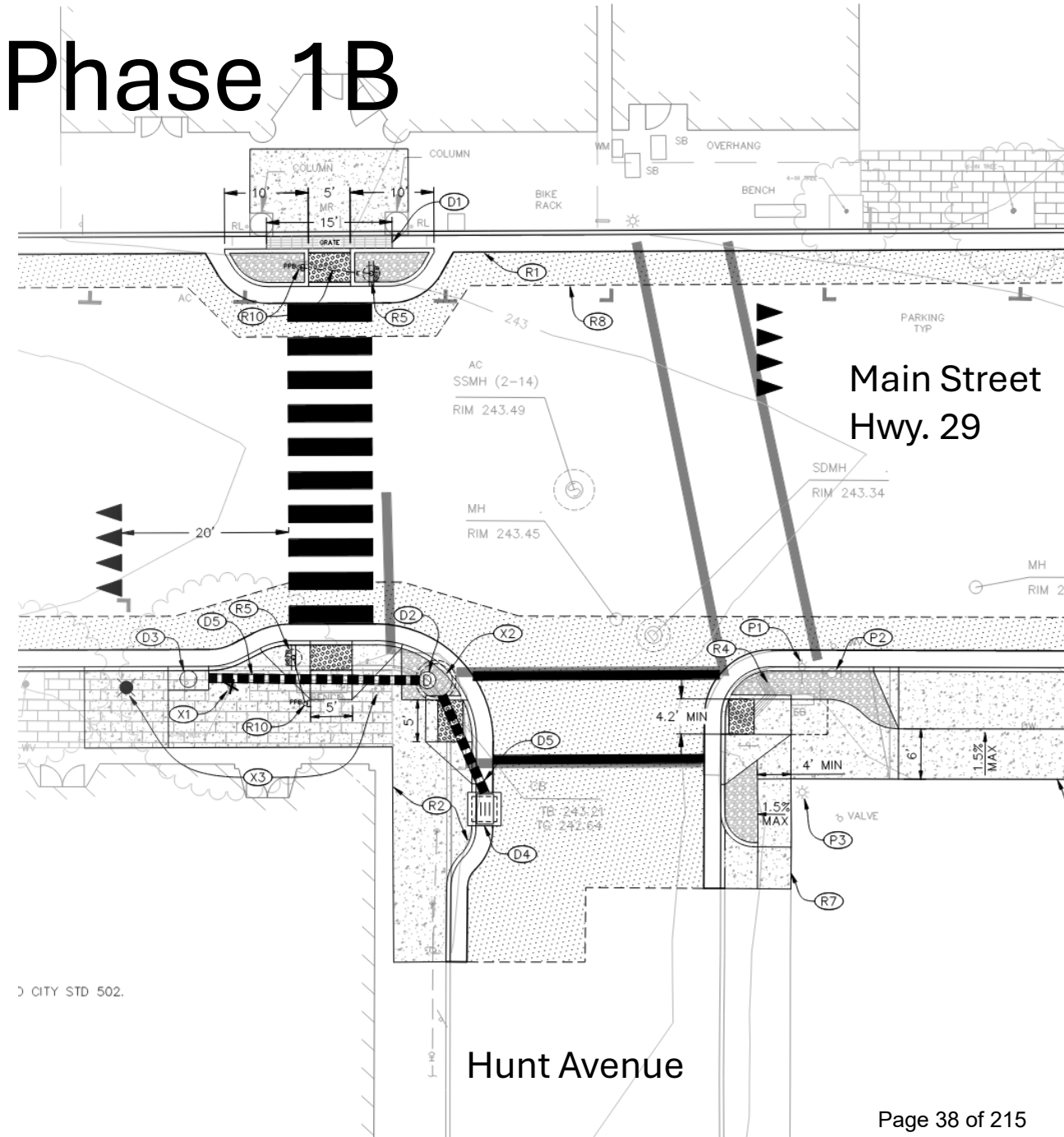
- Utility Work Complete
- Pavement Repairs Occurring 9/8 – 9/11
- Oak Surface Improvement Project Award on Consent (9/22 City Council Meeting)
- Replacement of Curb, Gutter, Sidewalk, & Pavement
- Fall & Winter Construction – Weather Dependent



Main Street Sidewalks- Phase 1B

Status Update

- Currently in Design
- Approval to Bid September
- Bidding October
- Award November
- Construction January



Main Street Sidewalks- Phase 1B Status Update

- Community and Business Coordination
- Nightwork, Phasing
- Trees
- Spring Street Intersection
- Telegraph Alley





Discussion

Joe Leach P.E.
Assistant City Manager/Public Works
Director/City Engineer
707-968-2629
jleach@cityofsthelena.gov

Mario Traverso
Project Manager
707-204-9084
mtraverso@cityofsthelena.gov

Staff Briefing

Item 9.2 / 9.3

September 8, 2026

Mario Traverso
Project Manager



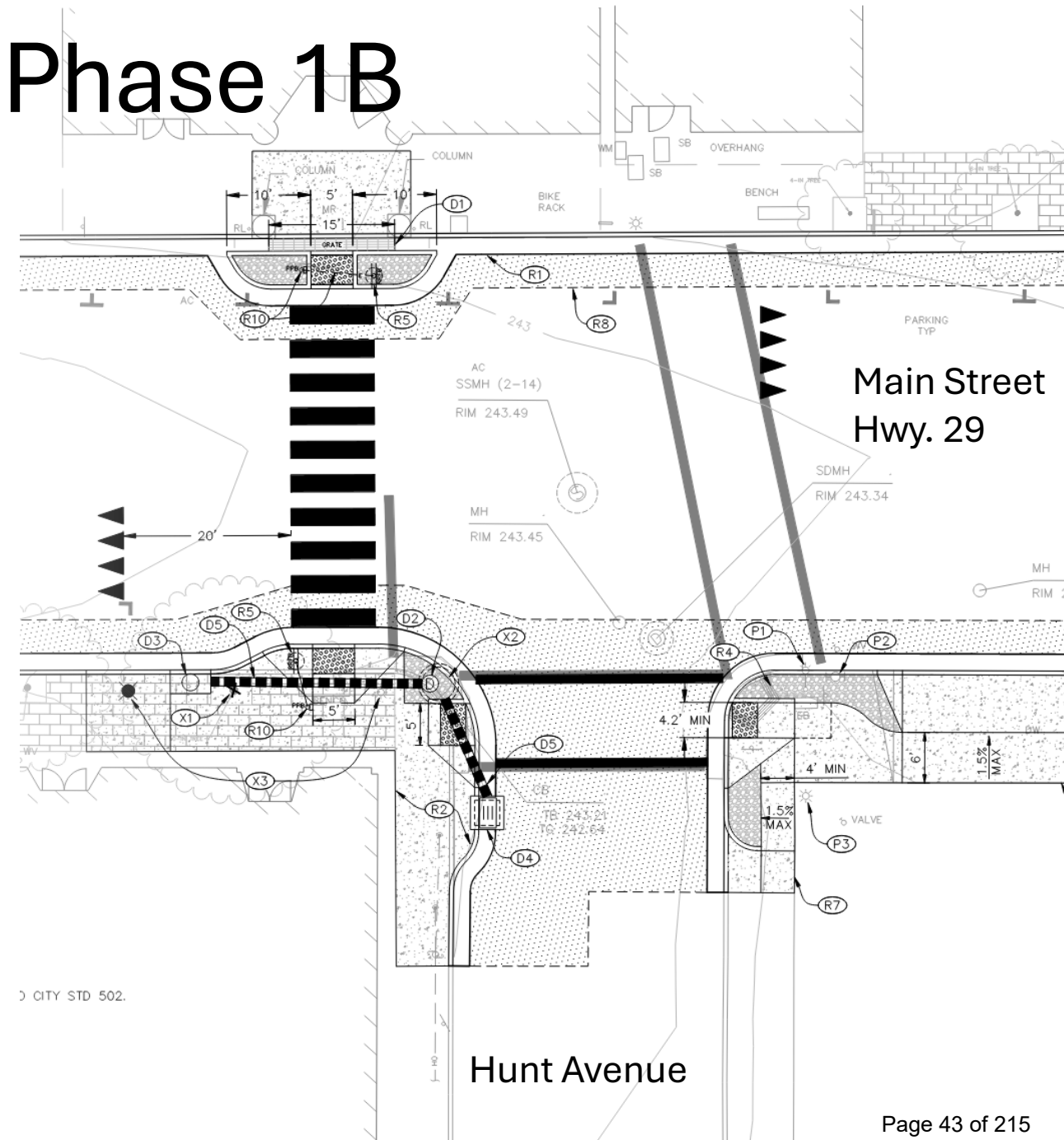
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Agenda Report to the City Council

Agenda Section: CONSENT ITEMS

Department: Public Works Department

DATE:	September 8, 2026
FROM:	Eric Janzen, Asst. PW Director
SUBJECT:	Consideration and proposed adoption of a Resolution authorizing FY2026-2027 budget amendment #2 to PSA FY2026-045 increasing appropriation for construction management within CIP R18-81 Downtown Sidewalk Improvement Project budget to \$126,698. Funds to be provided from Measure U.
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Approve the resolution.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	On July 28, 2026, the City Council adopted Resolution 2026-076 which authorized Amendment #1 increasing the not-to-exceed budget to \$73,698.
STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE:	On November 18, 2025, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2025-132 authorizing the Director of Public Works to issue the Notice to Proceed for CIP R18-81 Downtown St. Helena Pedestrian Improvements Project. The Director of Public Works initiated Professional Services Agreement FY2026-045 with Coastland/DCCM to supply construction management services for CIP R18-81. On November 18, 2025, the City Manager signed PSA 2026-045 with a not-to-exceed budget of \$50,000. On July 28, 2026, the City Council adopted Resolution 2026-076 which authorized Amendment #1 increasing the not-to-exceed budget to \$73,698.
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	This budget adjustment will increase the budget for construction management services by \$58,000 to a total not-to-exceed amount of \$131,698. The additional funding to be provided from Measure U.
CEQA DETERMINATION:	Reliance on Prior Environmental Document (EIR/MND)

BACKGROUND:

Downtown St. Helena Pedestrian Improvements Project was added to the Capital Improvement Plan in 2018. It includes full reconstruction of the Downtown Sidewalks including new curb, gutter, street trees and street furnishings.

On November 18, 2025, the City Manager executed a professional services agreement (PSA) with Coastland/DCCM to provide construction management services with a not-to-exceed budget of \$50,000.

On July 28, 2026, Public Works requested additional funds and the City Council adopted Resolution 2026-076 authorizing PSA FY2026-045, Amendment #1 and increased the construction management budget to \$73,698.

DISCUSSION:

The budget amendment approved on July 28, 2026 was calculated based on invoices previously approved for payment and an estimate prepared by Coastland/DCCM. This calculation had inadvertently excluded an invoice that was still being processed in the City's accounting software, creating a budget and contract shortfall. The unaccounted for invoice has now been processed. This budget amendment is intended to remedy the shortfall and projected need for services to complete the project.

Staff have prepared a final invoice estimate for the balance of construction management services of \$53,000 for total not-to-exceed budget of \$131,698. The additional funding shall be provided from Measure U.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

Reliance on Prior Environmental Document (EIR/MND)

GOAL:

Goal 2: Improve Infrastructure & Further Environmental Sustainability Goal 8: Implement Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) Projects Miscellaneous/Other

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution.20260908.Downtown St. Helena Pedestrian Improvements Project Budget Amendment
2. DRAFT.AMENDMENT 2.COASTLAND.202600908
3. Public Comment - Michelle Covell 7

**CITY OF ST. HELENA
RESOLUTION NO. 2026-**

**Resolution authorizing FY2026-2027 budget amendment #2 to PSA
FY2026-045 increasing appropriation for construction management
within CIP R18-81 Downtown Sidewalk Improvement Project budget
to \$126,698. Funds to be provided from Measure U.**

RECITALS

- A. On November 18, 2025, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2025-132 authorizing the Director of Public Works to issue the Notice to Proceed for CIP R18-81 Downtown St. Helena Pedestrian Improvements Project; and
- B. On November 18, 2025, the Director of Public Works initiated professional services agreement (PSA) FY2026-045 with Coastland/DCCM to supply construction management services for CIP R18-8 with a not-to-exceed budget of \$50,000 and the PSA was signed by the City Manager; and
- C. On July 28, 2026, the City Council approved Public Works request for Amendment #1 to the PSA FY2026-045 for additional construction management services increasing the not-to-exceed amount to \$73,698.00; and
- D. Public Works requests additional funds for Amendment #2 to complete construction management services and close the PSA; and
- E. Coastland/DCCM have prepared a final cost estimate in the amount of \$58,000 for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$131,698; and
- F. Staff have reviewed the estimate and find it reasonable and consistent with the existing PSA and work completed; and
- G. Staff recommend that Council approve a budget amendment allocating \$58,000 from Measure U to the Project.

RESOLUTION

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of St. Helena resolves as follows:

- 1. Authorizes a FY2026-27 budget amendment in the amount of \$58,000 to increase appropriations within the R18-81 construction management budget; and
- 2. Funding as follows:

Description	Fund/Funding Source	Expense GL Account	Amount
Construction Management	240 - Measure U	741-50-14-31-50	\$58,000.00

Approved at a regular meeting of the St. Helena City Council on September 8, 2026 by the following vote:

Mayor Dohring: _____
Vice Mayor Deasy: _____
Council Member Barak: _____
Council Member Kate Spadarotto: _____
Council Member Diaz: _____

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Paul Jamison Dohring, Mayor

Andrew Bradley, City Clerk

AMENDMENT NO. 2

TO PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH COASTLAND CIVIL ENGINEERING, LLP; STH CONTRACT NO: FY2026-045 FOR SERVICES RELATED TO CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT & INSPECTION SERVICES FOR R18-81, INCREASING THE CONTRACT AMOUNT BY \$58,000 FOR A TOTAL NOT-TO-EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$131,698.00.

This first Amendment to Professional Services Agreement STH Contract: FY2026-045 dated November 18, 2026 ("Agreement") is made as of this 8 Day of September, 2026, by and between the City of St. Helena, a municipal corporation ("City"), and Coastland Civil Engineering, LLP ("Consultant").

RECITALS

- A. On November 18, 2025, the City and Consultant entered into the Agreement for Consultant to provide construction management and inspection services in connection with the project described as R18-81; and
- B. On July 28, 2026, the City and Consultant entered into Amendment No. 1 for additional construction management and inspection services; and
- C. Additional construction management and inspection services are needed to complete the project and will exceed the amended contract amount of \$3,698; and
- D. The City of St. Helena and Coastland Civil Engineering, LLP are looking to increase the contract amount by \$58,000 to complete the R18-81 Project.

AGREEMENT

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises and of the mutual covenants and Agreements herein contained, for good and valuable consideration, the adequacy of which is hereby acknowledged, the parties agree to amend the Agreement as follows:

1. Section 2. B Compensation, is amended to read as follows:

"In no event shall the total amount paid for services rendered by the Consultant under this Agreement exceed the sum of \$131,698.00..."

All other terms of the Agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

Entered as of the day and year first above stated.

CONSULTANT:

Signatures of Authorized Persons:

By: _____

Print Name: _____

Title: _____

CITY OF ST. HELENA

a Municipal Corporation

By: _____

Print Name: James McCann

Title: Interim City Manager

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Ethan Walsh, City Attorney

Request to remove from consent items: 10.1. Downtown St. Helena Pedestrian Improvements Project Budget Amendment

From Michelle Covell <michelle@covellarchitects.com>

Date Tue 9/8/2026 12:47 PM

To Andrew Bradley <abradley@cityofsthenana.gov>

The opinions expressed herein are mine individually and are not intended to represent the official position of the City of St. Helena or the St. Helena Planning Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT – please remove this item from the Consent calendar and address these three questions. There is a chance I cannot be there in person today, so I would like to submit this formally as raising my hand regarding consent calendar items.

1. Please explain what a “not-to-exceed” contract is.
2. What is the City’s process for preventing ‘not-to-exceed’ contracts from exceeding?
3. What is the purpose of a NTE contract if it can be exceeded 3 times by almost 3-fold?

These are very different questions, I hope you can address each one during the meeting.

*Michelle Liu Covell
Resident, Architect*



Agenda Report to the City Council

Agenda Section: CONSENT ITEMS

Department: Community Development Department - Planning Division

DATE:	September 8, 2026
FROM:	Jackie Oneal, Senior Planner, Mario Traverso, Project Manager
SUBJECT:	Second Reading and Adoption of Three Ordinances Amending Sections 17.22.030, 13.04.075, and 13.20.075 of the St. Helena Municipal Code to Update Regulations for Accessory Dwelling Units and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units and Related Water and Sewer Utility Requirements.
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Staff recommends that the City Council: 1. Find that the ordinance amending Section 17.22.030 of the St. Helena Municipal Code is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.17; and conduct the second reading, waive full reading, and adopt the ordinance updating regulations for Accessory Dwelling Units and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units. 2. Find that the ordinance amending Section 13.04.075 of the St. Helena Municipal Code is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3); and conduct the second reading, waive full reading, and adopt the ordinance updating requirements applicable to private water service laterals. 3. Find that the ordinance amending Section 13.20.075 of the St. Helena Municipal Code is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3); and conduct the second reading, waive full reading, and adopt the ordinance updating requirements applicable to private sewer laterals.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	On August 25, 2026, the City Council conducted a public hearing and introduced and waived the first reading of three ordinances amending SHMC Sections 17.22.030, 13.04.075, and 13.20.075,

	with amendments. For the ADU and JADU Ordinance, the City Council selected the alternative ordinance addressing local transit and amended the proposed approach to: • Retain the citywide elimination of local off-street parking requirements for ADUs; • Recognize fixed-route VINE Transit service along State Route 29 for purposes of the additional transit-related ADU height allowance; and • Exclude demand-responsive, door-to-door, and other microtransit service from the local transit definition used for the height allowance. As amended, qualifying properties within one-half mile walking distance of the applicable fixed-route VINE Transit stops may utilize the transit-related height allowance of up to eighteen (18) feet, or up to twenty (20) feet where additional height is necessary to align the ADU roof pitch with the primary dwelling. For the Water Service Ordinance, the City Council amended SHMC Section 13.04.075 to: • Delete subsection (B)(3), relating to projects with an estimated construction cost exceeding \$100,000; and • Amend subsection (B)(4) so that it applies solely to the development of an accessory dwelling unit (ADU). For the Sewer Lateral Ordinance, the City Council amended SHMC Section 13.20.075 to: • Delete subsection (E)(3), relating to projects with an estimated construction cost exceeding \$100,000; and • Amend subsection (E)(4) so that it applies solely to the development of an accessory dwelling unit (ADU).
STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE:	The purpose of the proposed ordinances is to update the City's ADU and JADU regulations for consistency with current State law; establish clearer, more objective, and more readily administered development standards; and establish a coordinated framework for evaluating existing private water and sewer infrastructure. The Title 13 amendments are intended to allow continued use of

	existing utility infrastructure where it is adequate and meets applicable City standards, while preserving the City's ability to require repair, replacement, or upgrades where deficiencies are identified.
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	Adoption of the proposed ordinances would not result in a direct fiscal impact to the City. The ordinances would be implemented through existing Community Development and Public Works Department staffing and resources.
CEQA DETERMINATION:	The proposed ADU ordinance is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.17, while the related Title 13 utility amendments are not projects under CEQA pursuant to Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(2), 15060(c)(3), and 15378.

BACKGROUND:

On August 25, 2026, the City Council conducted a public hearing and introduced and waived the first readings of the proposed ADU/JADU, water-service lateral, and sewer-lateral ordinances, with amendments.

The ADU ordinance updates SHMC Section 17.22.030 to reflect current State law and establishes clearer and more objective local standards addressing ADU size, design, parking, transit-related height, historic resources, administrative requirements, and utility cross-references. The ordinance also eliminates local off-street parking requirements for ADUs citywide.

During first reading, the Council considered both the Planning Commission-recommended approach and a staff-prepared alternative addressing local transit. The Council selected the alternative ordinance but modified the proposed transit provisions to recognize fixed-route VINE Transit service along State Route 29, rather than the broader demand-responsive or microtransit definition originally proposed. The amendment allows qualifying properties within the prescribed one-half mile walking distance to utilize the transit-related ADU height allowance.

The companion Title 13 ordinances establish standards for evaluating existing private water and sewer infrastructure and determining when continued use, repair, replacement, or upgrades are appropriate. During first reading, the Council also narrowed the applicability of both utility ordinances by removing the proposed \$100,000 construction-cost trigger and limiting the additional development trigger to development of an ADU.

DISCUSSION:

The three ordinances are now before the City Council for second reading and adoption and have been revised to incorporate the amendments directed by the Council on August 25, 2026.

ADU and JADU Ordinance

The ordinance amending SHMC Section 17.22.030 has been revised to reflect the Council's direction regarding local transit.

The ordinance continues to eliminate local off-street parking requirements for ADUs citywide. For purposes of the transit-related height allowance, however, the ordinance now recognizes fixed-route VINE Transit service along State Route 29. Demand-responsive, door-to-door, and other microtransit service is not included for purposes of this height provision.

Under the revised ordinance, a qualifying detached ADU located within one-half mile walking distance of the applicable fixed-route transit service may be constructed up to eighteen (18) feet in height, with up to two additional feet, for a maximum of twenty (20) feet, where necessary to accommodate a roof pitch aligned with the primary dwelling.

This approach reflects the Council's direction to recognize existing fixed-route local transit while retaining the one-half-mile walking-distance framework used for the transit-related height allowance.

Water Service Ordinance

The ordinance amending SHMC Section 13.04.075 has been revised in two respects.

First, subsection (B)(3), which would have required review for projects with an estimated construction cost exceeding \$100,000, has been deleted.

Second, subsection (B)(4) has been revised so that the provision applies specifically to development of an ADU rather than more broadly to expansion of a property's functional use through additional floor area

Sewer Lateral Ordinance

The ordinance amending SHMC Section 13.20.075 has been revised in the same manner.

Subsection (E)(3), relating to projects exceeding \$100,000 in estimated construction cost, has been deleted, and subsection (E)(4) has been revised to apply specifically to development of an ADU.

The remaining technical standards for evaluating the capacity and condition of existing water and sewer infrastructure remain as introduced at first reading.

Adoption of the three ordinances would complete the ordinance amendment process.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The ADU ordinance is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.17.

The Title 13 water and sewer amendments are not projects under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(2), 15060(c)(3), and 15378.

GOAL:

Goal 2: Improve Infrastructure & Further Environmental Sustainability

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Ordinance of the City Council, 17.22.030, Accessory Dwelling Units
2. Ordinance of the City Council, 13.04.075, Water Service
3. Ordinance of the City Council, 13.20.075, Sewer Laterals

ORDINANCE NO. _____

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. HELENA
AMENDING SECTION 17.22.030 (ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS) OF TITLE 17
(ZONING) OF THE ST. HELENA MUNICIPAL CODE TO UPDATE REGULATIONS
FOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS AND JUNIOR ACCESSORY DWELLING
UNITS (ZOA 26-001), AND FINDING THE ACTION STATUTORILY EXEMPT FROM
CEQA UNDER PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTION 21080.17**

WHEREAS, the City of St. Helena, California (“City”) is a municipal corporation, duly organized under the constitution and laws of the State of California; and

WHEREAS, the Planning and Zoning Law authorizes cities to act by ordinance to provide for the creation and regulation of accessory dwelling units (“ADUs”) and junior accessory dwelling units (“JADUs”); and

WHEREAS, in recent years, the California Legislature has adopted multiple amendments to State ADU law that limit local authority to regulate ADUs and JADUs and require local ordinances to remain consistent with State law; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to amend Section 17.22.030 (Accessory Dwelling Units) of Title 17 (Zoning) of the St. Helena Municipal Code (“SHMC”) to update the City’s ADU and JADU regulations; and

WHEREAS, the proposed ordinance updates definitions, application processing procedures, ADU and JADU classifications, development standards, utility provisions, fee provisions, and provisions related to nonconforming conditions, building code violations, and unpermitted ADUs and JADUs; and

WHEREAS, on April 21, 2026, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed study session to review a draft ordinance, receive public comment, and provide feedback to staff regarding proposed amendments to SHMC Section 17.22.030; and

WHEREAS, following the April 21, 2026 study session, staff revised the proposed ordinance to respond to Planning Commission and public input, coordinate with the Public Works Department regarding utility standards, and improve consistency, clarity, and administration of the ordinance; and

WHEREAS, on July 7, 2026, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing to consider Zoning Ordinance Amendment ZOA 26-001 and, following consideration of the staff report, proposed ordinance, written and oral public comments, and the entire record, adopted Resolution No. PC2026-014 recommending that the City Council adopt ZOA 26-001 with modifications and find the action statutorily exempt from CEQA under Public Resources Code Section 21080.17; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission recommended modifications to: (1) remove the words “nonconforming” and “enclosed” from Section 17.22.030(G)(4)(b) to maintain

consistency with State law; and (2) modify the definition of “public transit” to include ride-share as a form of microtransit for local code purposes, while clarifying that the locally expanded definition would not apply to provisions authorizing additional building height; and

WHEREAS, after consideration of the Planning Commission’s recommendation, staff analysis, and the local transit conditions within St. Helena, the City Council desires to recognize qualifying microtransit service for purposes of the additional transit-related ADU height allowance; and

WHEREAS, the City gave public notice of the public hearing before the City Council for the proposed ordinance in accordance with applicable law; and

WHEREAS, on August 25, 2026, the City Council held a duly noticed public hearing, considered the Planning Commission’s recommendation, the staff report, public testimony, and the entire record, and introduced and waived the first reading of this Ordinance, as amended; and

WHEREAS, during the first reading, the City Council revised the local definition of “public transit” to include fixed-route VINE Transit stops located along State Route 29, while excluding demand-responsive, door-to-door, and flexible-route services; and

WHEREAS, all other legal prerequisites to the adoption of this ordinance have occurred.

NOW, THEREFORE, The City Council of the City of St. Helena does hereby ordain as follows:

Section 1: Recitals

The Recitals set forth above are true and correct and are incorporated into this Ordinance.

Section 2: Amendment to SHMC Section 17.22.030.

Section 17.22.030 (Accessory Dwelling Units) of Title 17 (Zoning) of the St. Helena Municipal Code is hereby amended in its entirety to read as set forth in Exhibit A, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

Section 3: Severability.

If any section, subsection, phrase, or clause of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. The City Council would have passed this Ordinance and each and every section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase not declared invalid or

unconstitutional without regard to whether any portion of the Ordinance would be subsequently declared invalid or unconstitutional.

Section 4: General Plan.

The City Council hereby finds that the adoption of the Ordinance is consistent with the General Plan as a matter of law under Government Code section 66314(c).

Section 5: HCD Submittal.

In accordance with Government Code sections 66326 and 66333.5, the City Clerk is directed to submit a copy of this Ordinance to the California Department of Housing and Community Development within 60 days of adoption.

Section 6: CEQA.

This Ordinance was assessed in accordance with the authority and criteria contained in the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), the State CEQA Guidelines, and the environmental regulations of the City. The City Council finds that this Ordinance is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.17, which provides that CEQA does not apply to the adoption of an ordinance by a city or county implementing Article 2 of Chapter 13 of Division 1 of Title 7 of the California Government Code, California's ADU law, which also regulates JADUs.

Section 7: Notice and Effective Date.

This Ordinance was duly noticed to the public. This Ordinance shall take effect and be enforced within thirty (30) days from and after the date of its adoption by the City Council at a second reading and shall be posted and published in accordance with the California Government Code.

THE FOREGOING ORDINANCE was introduced at a regular meeting of the St. Helena City Council on the 25th day of August, 2026, and was adopted at a regular meeting of the St. Helena City Council on the 8th day of September, 2026, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

(signatures on next page)

APPROVED

ATTEST

Paul Jamison Dohring, Mayor

Andrew Bradley, City Clerk

Attachments:

EXHIBIT A, Section 17.22.030 *Accessory Dwelling Units*

SHMC 17.22.030. Accessory Dwelling Units

- A. *Purpose.* The purpose of this section is to allow and regulate accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and junior accessory dwelling units (JADUs) consistent with Chapter 13 of Division 1 of Title 7 of the California Government Code (Gov. Code Sections 66310 et seq.) as may be amended from time to time.
- B. *Effect of Conforming.* An ADU or JADU that conforms to the standards in this section will not be:
1. Deemed to be inconsistent with the city's general plan and zoning designation for the lot on which the ADU or JADU is located.
 2. Deemed to exceed the allowable density for the lot on which the ADU or JADU is located.
 3. Considered in the application of any local ordinance, policy, or program to limit residential growth.
 4. Required to correct a nonconforming zoning condition as defined in subsection [\(C\)](#) of this section. This does not prevent the city from enforcing compliance with applicable building standards in accordance with California Health and Safety Code Section 17980.12.
- C. *Definitions.* As used in this section, terms are defined as follows:
1. "Accessory dwelling unit" or "ADU" means an attached or a detached residential dwelling unit that provides complete independent living facilities for one or more persons and is located on a lot with a proposed or existing primary residence. An accessory dwelling unit also includes the following:
 - a. An efficiency unit, as defined by Section 17958.1 of the California Health and Safety Code; and
 - b. A manufactured home, as defined by Section 18007 of the California Health and Safety Code.
 2. "Accessory structure" means a structure that is accessory and incidental to a dwelling located on the same lot.

3. “Complete independent living facilities” means permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation on the same parcel as the single-family or multifamily dwelling is or will be situated.

4. “Efficiency kitchen” means a kitchen that includes each of the following:

- a. A cooking facility with appliances.
- b. A food preparation counter and storage cabinets that are of a reasonable size in relation to the size of the JADU.

5. “Junior accessory dwelling unit” or “JADU” means a residential unit that satisfies all of the following:

- a. Is no more than five hundred (500) square feet of interior livable space in size;
- b. Is contained entirely within an existing or proposed single-family structure. An enclosed use within the residence, such as an attached garage, is considered to be part of and contained within the single-family structure;
- c. Includes its own separate sanitation facilities or shares sanitation facilities with the existing or proposed single-family structure;
- d. If the unit does not include its own separate bathroom, then it contains an interior entrance to the main living area of the existing or proposed single-family structure in addition to an exterior entrance that is separate from the main entrance to the primary dwelling;
- e. Includes an efficiency kitchen, as defined in this subsection [\(C\)](#).

6. “Interior livable space” means a space in a dwelling intended for human habitation, including living, sleeping, cooking, eating, or sanitation. Interior livable space includes bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens, laundry rooms, closets, and interior stairs. For purposes of this section, interior livable space is measured as the floor area within the finished interior surfaces of the enclosing walls of the ADU or JADU and does not include garages, unfinished attics, crawl spaces, exterior balconies, decks, porches, patios, or similar unenclosed areas.

7. “Living area” means the interior habitable area of a dwelling unit, including basements and attics, but does not include a garage or any accessory structure.

8. “Nonconforming zoning condition” means a physical improvement on a property that does not conform with current zoning standards.

9. “Passageway” means a pathway that is unobstructed, clear to the sky, and extends from a street to one entrance of the ADU or JADU.

10. “Proposed dwelling” means a dwelling that is the subject of a permit application and that meets the requirements for permitting.

11. “Public transit” means a location where the public may access shared transportation services available to the general public, including fixed-route services such as buses and trains. For purposes of this chapter, public transit includes major transit stops and high-quality transit corridors as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21155, and fixed-route Vine Transit stops located along State Route 29.

12. “Tandem parking” means that two or more automobiles are parked on a driveway or in any other location on a lot, lined up behind one another.

D. *Approvals.* The following approvals apply to ADUs and JADUs under this section:

1. *Ministerial Approval.* Applications for accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units shall be considered ministerially, without discretionary review or a public hearing, consistent with State ADU Law. Every ADU and JADU requires a building permit.
2. *Completeness Review.* Within fifteen (15) business days of receiving an application for an accessory dwelling unit or junior accessory dwelling unit, the City shall determine whether the application is complete.

If the application is incomplete, the City shall provide the applicant with a written notice identifying all information necessary to complete the application. The notice shall include a complete list of incomplete items and a description of how the application can be made complete, as required by Government Code Section 66317.

If the City does not provide written notice of incompleteness within fifteen (15) business days, the application shall be deemed complete for purposes of this section.

3. *Resubmittal of Incomplete Applications.* If an application is determined to be incomplete, the applicant may submit the additional information identified in the City's written notice.

Upon resubmittal, the City shall determine whether the resubmitted application has remedied all incomplete items identified in the City's written notice. The City shall not require the resubmitted application to include an item that was not identified in the initial written notice of incompleteness, consistent with Government Code Section 66317.

4. *Action on Application.* The City shall approve or deny an application for an accessory dwelling unit or junior accessory dwelling unit within sixty (60) days from the date the City receives a complete application, or from the date the application is deemed complete under this section, as applicable.

If the application to create or serve an ADU or JADU is submitted with an application to create a new single-family or multifamily dwelling on the lot, the City may delay acting on the ADU or JADU application until the City approves or denies the application for the new single-family or multifamily dwelling, provided that the ADU or JADU application shall be considered ministerially, without discretionary review or a public hearing.

If the applicant requests a delay, the sixty (60)-day period shall be tolled for the period of the requested delay.

To the extent applicable, the time periods set forth herein shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the Permit Streamlining Act and State ADU law.

5. *Basis for Denial.* An application for an ADU or JADU may be denied only if the proposed unit does not comply with applicable objective standards in this section or other objective standards that the City is authorized to apply under State ADU law.

Any denial shall be in writing and shall include a full set of comments identifying the defective or deficient items and describing how the application may be remedied.

6. *Appeals.* If an application for an ADU or JADU is determined to be incomplete or is denied, the applicant may appeal the determination in writing to the Planning Commission. The appeal shall be considered and decided within the timeframes required by Government Code Section 66317. No other local appeal shall apply to ministerial decisions under this section.
7. *Processing Fees.* The City may charge fees for the processing of applications for ADUs and JADUs, as established by resolution of the City Council and set forth in the City's adopted fee schedule. Any such fees shall be limited to the reasonable cost of providing the service and shall be imposed in accordance with applicable State law.
8. *Concurrent Review of Demolition.* A demolition permit for an existing structure that is to be replaced with an accessory dwelling unit shall be reviewed concurrently with the application for the accessory dwelling unit and shall be issued in conjunction with the permit for the accessory dwelling unit. The City shall not require a demolition permit to be issued separately from the accessory dwelling unit permit.

E. Classes.

1. *Class 1: State-Mandated ADUs and JADUs.* Class 1 ADUs and JADUs are approved under Government Code section 66323. If an ADU or JADU complies with each of the general requirements in subsection (F) below, it is allowed in each of the scenarios provided in this subsection (E)(1). An ADU and JADU approved under subsection (E)(1)(a) may be combined with an ADU approved under subsection (E)(1)(b), and ADUs approved under subsection (E)(1)(c) may be combined with ADUs approved under subsection (E)(1)(d).
 - a. *Converted on Lot with Single-Family:* One ADU as described in this subsection (E)(1)(a) and one JADU on a lot with a proposed or existing single-family dwelling on it, where the ADU or JADU:

- i. Is either: within the space of a proposed single-family dwelling; within the existing space of an existing single-family dwelling; or (in the case of an ADU only) within the existing space of an accessory structure, plus up to 150 additional square feet if the expansion is limited to accommodating ingress and egress; and
 - ii. Has exterior access that is independent of that for the single-family dwelling; and
 - iii. Has side and rear setbacks sufficient for fire and safety, consistent with applicable State standards; and
 - iv. The JADU complies with the requirements of Government Code sections 66333 through 66339.5 including but not limited to requirements related to size, owner-occupancy, and efficiency kitchen facilities.
- b. *Limited Detached on Lot with Single-Family*: One detached, new-construction ADU on a lot with a proposed or existing single-family dwelling, if the detached ADU satisfies each of the following limitations:
 - i. The side- and rear-yard setbacks are at least four feet.
 - ii. The total floor area is 800 square feet of interior livable space or smaller.
 - iii. The peak height of an ADU shall not exceed the applicable height limit in subsection (F)(2) and shall be measured consistent with the City's standard definition of building height, provided that this method does not preclude compliance with State-required height allowances.
- c. *Converted on Lot with Multifamily*: One or more ADUs within portions of existing multifamily dwelling structures that are not used as livable space, including but not limited to storage rooms, boiler rooms, passageways, attics, basements, or garages, if each converted ADU complies with state building standards for dwellings. Under this subsection (E)(1)(c), at least one converted ADU is allowed within an

existing multifamily dwelling, up to a quantity equal to 25 percent of the existing multifamily dwelling units.

d. *Limited Detached on Lot with Multifamily*: No more than two detached ADUs on a lot with a proposed multifamily dwelling, or up to eight detached ADUs on a lot with an existing multifamily dwelling, if each detached ADU satisfies all of the following:

- i. The side- and rear-yard setbacks are at least four feet. If the existing multifamily dwelling has a rear or side yard setback of less than four feet, the city will not require any modification to the multifamily dwelling as a condition of approving the ADU.
- ii. The peak height of an ADU shall not exceed the applicable height limit in subsection (F)(2), and shall be measured consistent with the City's standard definition of building height.
- iii. If the lot has an existing multifamily dwelling, the quantity of detached ADUs does not exceed the number of primary dwelling units on the lot.

2. *Class 2: Locally Regulated*. Class 2 ADUs are approved under Government Code sections 66314–66322. Except for Class 1 ADUs and JADUs approved under subsection (E)(1) above, all ADUs are subject to the standards set forth in subsections (F) and (G), as applicable.

F. *General ADU and JADU Requirements*. The following requirements apply to all Class 1 and Class 2 ADUs and JADUs:

1. *Zoning*.

- a. A Class 1 ADU approved under subsection (E)(1) may be created on a lot in a residential or mixed-use zone.
- b. A Class 2 ADU approved under subsection (E)(2) may be created on a lot that is zoned to allow single-family dwelling residential use or multifamily dwelling residential use.
- c. In accordance with Government Code section 66333(a), a JADU may only be created on a lot zoned for single-family residences.

2. *Height.*

- a. Except as otherwise provided by subsection (F)(2)(b) and (F)(2)(c) below, a detached ADU created on a lot with an existing or proposed single family or multifamily dwelling unit may not exceed 16 feet in height.
- b. A detached ADU may be up to 18 feet in height if it is created on a lot with an existing or proposed single family or multifamily dwelling unit that is located within one-half mile walking distance of a public transit stop, as defined in subsection (C)(11). The maximum height of the ADU may be increased up to two additional feet in height (for a maximum of twenty (20) feet) to accommodate a roof pitch that is aligned with the roof pitch of the primary dwelling unit.
- c. A detached ADU created on a lot with an existing or proposed multifamily dwelling that has more than one story may not exceed 18 feet in height.
- d. An ADU that is attached to the primary dwelling may not exceed 25 feet in height or the height limitation imposed by the underlying zone that applies to the primary dwelling, whichever is lower. Notwithstanding the foregoing, ADUs subject to this subsection (F)(2)(d) may not exceed two stories.
- e. For purposes of this subsection (F)(2), height shall be measured consistent with the City's standard definition of building height.

3. *Fire Sprinklers.*

- a. Fire sprinklers are required in an ADU if sprinklers are required in the primary residence.
- b. The construction of an ADU does not trigger a requirement for fire sprinklers to be installed in the existing primary dwelling.

4. *Rental Term.* No ADU or JADU may be rented for a term that is shorter than thirty (30) days. This prohibition applies regardless of when the ADU or JADU was created.

5. *No Separate Conveyance.* Except as otherwise provided in Government Code Section 66341, no ADU or JADU may be sold or otherwise conveyed separately

from the lot and the primary dwelling (in the case of a single-family lot) or from the lot and all of the dwellings (in the case of a multifamily lot).

6. *Septic System.* If the ADU or JADU will connect to an on-site water-treatment system, the owner must include with the application a percolation test completed within the last five years or, if the percolation test has been recertified, within the last ten (10) years. Refer to the county of Napa's environmental health department regulations.
7. *Owner Occupancy.*
 - a. *ADUs.* ADUs are not subject to an owner-occupancy requirement.
 - b. *JADUs.*
 - i. *Generally.* As required by state law, JADUs are generally subject to an owner-occupancy requirement. A natural person with legal or equitable title to the property must reside on the property, in either the primary dwelling, ADU, or JADU, as the person's legal domicile and permanent residence.
 - ii. *Exceptions.* The owner-occupancy requirement in this subsection (F)(7)(b) does not apply in either of the following situations:
 - a) The JADU has separate sanitation facilities (i.e., does not share sanitation facilities with the existing primary dwelling unit structure).
 - b) The property is entirely owned by another governmental agency, land trust, or housing organization.
8. *Deed Restriction.* Prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy for a JADU, a deed restriction must be recorded against the title of the property in the county recorder's office and a copy filed with the community development director. The deed restriction must run with the land and bind all future owners. The form of the deed restriction will be provided by the city and must provide that:
 - a. The JADU may not be sold separately from the primary dwelling.

- b. The JADU is restricted to the approved size and to other attributes allowed by this section.
- c. The deed restriction runs with the land and may be enforced against future property owners.
- d. The deed restriction may be removed if the owner eliminates the JADU, as evidenced by, for example, removal of the kitchen facilities. To remove the deed restriction, an owner may make a written request of the community development director, providing evidence that the JADU has in fact been eliminated. The community development director may then determine whether the evidence supports the claim that the JADU has been eliminated. Appeal may be taken from the community development director's determination consistent with other provisions of this code. If the JADU is not entirely physically removed, but is only eliminated by virtue of having a necessary component of a JADU removed, the remaining structure and improvements must otherwise comply with applicable provisions of this code.
- e. The deed restriction is enforceable by the community development director or his or her designee for the benefit of the city. Failure of the property owner to comply with the deed restriction may result in legal action against the property owner, and the city is authorized to obtain any remedy available to it at law or equity, including, but not limited to, obtaining an injunction enjoining the use of the JADU in violation of the recorded restrictions or abatement of the illegal unit.

9. *Building and Safety.*

- a. *Building Code Compliance.* ADUs and JADUs shall be constructed in compliance with applicable building standards in effect at the time of permit issuance, consistent with State law.
- b. *No Change of Occupancy.* Construction of an ADU does not constitute a Group R occupancy change under the local building code, as described in California Building Code Section 310, unless the chief building official makes a written finding based on substantial evidence in the record that the construction of the ADU could have a specific, adverse impact on public health and safety. Nothing in this subsection (F)(9)(b) prevents the city from changing the occupancy code of a space that was uninhabitable space or that was only

permitted for nonresidential use and was subsequently converted for residential use in accordance with this section.

10. Certificate of Occupancy Timing.

- a. *Generally.* No certificate of occupancy for an ADU or JADU may be issued before the certificate of occupancy is issued for the primary dwelling unit.
- b. *Limited Exception for State-declared Emergencies.* Notwithstanding subsection (F)(10)(a) above, a certificate of occupancy for an ADU may be issued before a certificate of occupancy for the primary dwelling if each of the following requirements are met:
 - i. The county is subject to a proclamation of a state of emergency made by the California Governor on or after February 1, 2025.
 - ii. The primary dwelling was substantially damaged or destroyed by an event referenced in the Governor's state of emergency proclamation.
 - iii. The ADU has been issued construction permits and has passed all required inspections.
 - iv. The ADU is not attached to the primary dwelling.

G. *Specific ADU Requirements.* The following requirements apply only to Class 2 ADUs approved under subsection (E)(2) above. This subsection (G) does not apply to Class 1 ADUs or JADUs approved under subsection (E)(1) above.

1. Maximum Size.

- a. The maximum size of a detached or attached ADU subject to this subsection G is one thousand two hundred (1,200) square feet of interior livable space.
- b. An attached ADU that is created on a lot with an existing primary dwelling is further limited to fifty percent (50%) of the floor area of the existing primary dwelling.
- c. Application of other development standards in this subsection G, such as FAR or lot coverage, might further limit the size of the ADU, but no application of the percent-based size limit in subsection (G)(1)(b) above or of an FAR, maximum gross floor area, front setback, lot coverage limit, or open-space

requirement may require the ADU to be less than eight hundred (800) square feet of interior livable space.

2. *Gross Floor Area.* No ADU may cause the total gross floor area of the underlying zone to be exceeded, except that this standard shall not be applied to preclude an ADU of at least eight hundred (800) square feet of interior livable space as required by State law.

3. *Lot Coverage.* No ADU subject to this subsection G may cause the total lot coverage of the lot to exceed the maximum lot coverage for the zoning district in which the ADU is proposed as established in Table 17.16.030(B), Development Standards—Residential Zoning Districts, subject to subsection (G)(1)(c), above.

4. *Setbacks.*

a. ADUs that are subject to this subsection (G) must conform to 4-foot side and rear setbacks. ADUs that are subject to this subsection (G) must conform to the front setback as required by the underlying zoning district, subject to subsection (G)(1)(c), above.

b. No setback is required for an ADU that is subject to this subsection (G) if the ADU is constructed in the same location and to the same dimensions as an existing structure.

5. *Passageway.* No passageway, as defined by subsection (C) of this section, is required for an ADU.

6. *Parking.*

a. No off-street parking is required for an ADU.

b. *No Replacement.* When a garage, carport, covered parking structure, or uncovered parking space is demolished in conjunction with the construction of an ADU or converted to an ADU, those off-street parking spaces are not required to be replaced.

7. *Architectural Requirements.* The following objective standards apply to ADUs:

a. The exterior lighting shall be limited to fully-shielded and downward-directed, except as otherwise required by applicable building, fire, or electrical code.

b. The ADU shall have a separate exterior entrance.

c. All windows located four (4) feet or closer to a side or rear property line that is not adjacent to a public right-of-way line shall either be clerestory windows with the bottom of the glass at least six feet above the finished floor or utilize frosted or obscure glass.

8. *Historical Protections.* An ADU that is on a lot listed in the California Register of Historic Resources shall be located entirely behind the rear-most exterior wall of the primary dwelling and directly behind the primary dwelling.

9. *Allowed Stories.* The number of stories of an ADU shall be consistent with the applicable height limits of this section.

H. *Utilities.* ADUs and JADUs shall be adequately served by water and sewer utilities. Existing water and sewer utilities may be required to be repaired, replaced, or upgraded based on their capacity and condition, in accordance with Sections 13.04.075 and 13.20.075 of this Code and applicable State law. Where existing water or sewer service is determined to be adequate, an ADU or JADU may connect to the existing service in accordance with applicable Public Works standards.

I. *Fees.* The following requirements apply to ADUs and JADUs approved under subsection (E)(1) or (E)(2) of this section, as applicable:

1. *Impact Fees.*

a. No impact fee shall be imposed on an ADU that is seven hundred fifty (750) square feet or less of interior livable space or a JADU containing five hundred (500) square feet or less of interior livable space. For purposes of this subsection (I)(1), "impact fee" means a fee under the Mitigation Fee Act (Gov. Code Section 66000(b)) and a fee under the Quimby Act (Gov. Code Section 66477). "Impact fee" does not include a connection fee or capacity charge for water or sewer service.

b. Any impact fee imposed on an ADU containing more than seven hundred fifty (750) square feet of interior livable space shall be charged proportionately in relation to the square footage of the primary dwelling unit (e.g., the floor area of

the ADU, divided by the floor area of the primary dwelling, times the typical fee amount charged for a new dwelling).

2. **Utility Fees.** Utility connection requirements, connection fees, capacity charges, and other applicable utility fees for ADUs and JADUs shall be governed by Title 13 of this Code and applicable State law.

J. *Nonconforming Zoning Code Conditions, Building Code Violations, and Unpermitted Structures.*

1. *Generally.* The city will not deny an ADU or JADU application due to a nonconforming zoning condition, building code violation, or unpermitted structure on the lot that does not present a threat to the public health and safety and that is not affected by the construction of the ADU or JADU.

2. *Unpermitted ADUs or JADUs Constructed Before 2020.*

a. *Permit to Legalize.* As required by state law, the city may not deny a permit to legalize an existing but unpermitted ADU or JADU that was constructed before January 1, 2020, if denial is based on either of the following grounds:

- i. The ADU or JADU violates applicable building standards; or
- ii. The ADU or JADU does not comply with the state ADU or JADU law or this section.

b. *Exemptions.*

i. Notwithstanding subsection (J)(2)(a) of this section, the city may deny a permit to legalize an existing but unpermitted ADU or JADU that was constructed before January 1, 2020, if the city makes a finding that correcting a violation is necessary to comply with the standards specified in Health and Safety Code section 17920.3.

ii. Subsection (J)(2)(a) of this section does not apply to a building that is deemed to be substandard in accordance with California Health and Safety Code Section 17920.3.

ORDINANCE NO. _____

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. HELENA
AMENDING SECTION 13.04.075 OF TITLE 13 OF THE ST. HELENA MUNICIPAL
CODE TO ESTABLISH REQUIREMENTS FOR THE EVALUATION, CONTINUED
USE, REPAIR, REPLACEMENT, AND UPGRADE OF PRIVATE WATER SERVICE
LATERALS, AND FINDING THAT THE ACTION IS NOT SUBJECT TO THE
CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT PURSUANT TO CEQA
GUIDELINES SECTIONS 15060(c)(2) AND 15060(c)(3)**

WHEREAS, the City of St. Helena, California (“City”) is a municipal corporation, duly organized under the constitution and laws of the State of California; and

WHEREAS, Title 13 of the St. Helena Municipal Code (“SHMC”) establishes regulations governing the City’s water system, including water service connections and private water service infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, SHMC Section 13.04.075 establishes property-owner responsibility for the inspection, maintenance, repair, and replacement of private water service laterals; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to amend Section 13.04.075 to establish clearer standards for determining whether an existing water service lateral and meter have adequate capacity and are in acceptable condition to serve existing and proposed development; and

WHEREAS, where an existing water service lateral, meter, or other private water service component does not meet applicable requirements, the proposed ordinance requires repair, replacement, or upgrade of the deficient component to the extent necessary to comply with applicable City standards; and

WHEREAS, the proposed ordinance establishes criteria for evaluating existing water service when specified development activity is proposed and allows continued or expanded use of an existing water service where adequate capacity and compliance with applicable City standards are demonstrated; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments are intended to provide clear and consistently administered water-service requirements while allowing continued use of existing infrastructure where that infrastructure is demonstrated to be adequate; and

WHEREAS, the amendment is being considered in coordination with amendments to SHMC Section 17.22.030 governing ADUs and JADUs so that detailed water-service requirements are administered under Title 13 rather than duplicated within the City’s zoning regulations; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has considered the staff report, the proposed ordinance, all written and oral public testimony, and the entire record associated with the proposed amendment; and

WHEREAS, the City gave public notice of the public hearing before the City Council for the proposed ordinance in accordance with applicable law; and

WHEREAS, on August 25, 2026, the City Council held a duly noticed public hearing, considered the staff report, public testimony, and the entire record, and introduced and waived the first reading of this Ordinance, as amended; and

WHEREAS, during the first reading, the City Council directed that the proposed construction-cost applicability threshold be removed and that the applicability provision relating to additional development be revised to apply solely to the development of an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU); and

WHEREAS, all other legal prerequisites to the adoption of this ordinance have occurred.

NOW, THEREFORE, The City Council of the City of St. Helena does hereby ordain as follows:

Section 1: Recitals

The Recitals set forth above are true and correct and are incorporated into this Ordinance.

Section 2: Amendment to SHMC Section 13.04.075.

Section 13.04.075 (Property owner's obligation to maintain, repair and replace private water laterals) of Title 13 of the St. Helena Municipal Code is hereby amended in its entirety to read as set forth in Exhibit A, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

Section 3: Severability.

If any section, subsection, phrase, or clause of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. The City Council would have passed this Ordinance and each and every section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase not declared invalid or unconstitutional without regard to whether any portion of the Ordinance would be subsequently declared invalid or unconstitutional.

Section 4: CEQA.

The City Council finds that this Ordinance is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(2)

and 15060(c)(3). Adoption of this Ordinance will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment and does not constitute a project as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15378.

Section 5: Notice and Effective Date.

This Ordinance was duly noticed to the public. This Ordinance shall take effect and be enforced within thirty (30) days from and after the date of its adoption by the City Council at a second reading and shall be posted and published in accordance with the California Government Code.

THE FOREGOING ORDINANCE was introduced at a regular meeting of the St. Helena City Council on the 25th day of August, 2026, and was adopted at a regular meeting of the St. Helena City Council on the 8th day of September, 2026, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

APPROVED

ATTEST

Paul Jamison Dohring, Mayor

Andrew Bradley, City Clerk

Attachment:

Exhibit A - Section 13.04.075, Property owner's obligation to maintain, repair and replace private water laterals

SHMC 13.04.075.

Property owner's obligation to maintain, repair and replace private water laterals.

A. Each property owner shall, at the property owner's expense, inspect, maintain in good working order, repair and replace, as necessary, the private water service, including any portions that may lie within the public right-of-way, so that it does not cause or contribute to any water overflow from either the private water lateral or the public water main. The private water lateral shall be free of displaced joints, open joints, root intrusion, substantial deterioration of the line, cracks, leaks, inflow, infiltration of extraneous water, fats, oils and grease, sediment deposits or any other similar conditions, defects or obstructions likely to cause or contribute to blockage of the water lateral or the public water main.

B. Each property shall be served by a water service and meter of adequate capacity to serve the existing and proposed uses on the property. The adequacy of the water service lateral and meter size shall be determined by engineering calculations that account for available system pressure and existing and proposed demands, including any required fire-flow or fire-sprinkler demand.

The requirements of this subsection apply when a property owner proposes:

1. Demolition of an existing structure and construction of a new structure;
2. Remodeling of an existing structure that affects fifty percent (50%) or more of the square footage of the existing structure; or
3. The development of an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU).

When this subsection applies:

- i. The existing water service shall be inspected and engineering calculations shall be provided demonstrating that the existing water service lateral and meter are adequately sized to serve the existing and proposed uses on the property, including any required fire-flow or fire-sprinkler demand;
- ii. The existing water service shall be free of any components containing galvanized steel or lead materials;
- iii. Where the existing water service lateral and meter are adequately sized and comply with the material requirements of this subsection, continued and expanded use of the existing water service shall be permitted. An additional structure, including a detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), may connect to the existing water service at a point between the meter and the point of connection to the primary structure;

- iv. Where the existing water service connection does not meet the requirements of this subsection, repair, replacement, or upgrade of the deficient component shall be required; and
- v. The Director of Public Works may approve an alternative means of compliance with the repair, replacement, or upgrade requirements of this subsection where the applicant demonstrates, based on engineering calculations or other documentation acceptable to the City, that the alternative provides adequate water service capacity and complies with applicable City standards.

C. Private water laterals are not part of the public water service system. The private water laterals are the property of the property owner and are not part of the public water service system. Nothing in this chapter shall be interpreted as changing the private nature of the private water laterals or incorporating them into the public water service system.

D. Each property owner is responsible for obtaining encroachment permits necessary to maintain, repair, or replace any portion of their private water services within the public right-of-way.

E. Each property owner shall maintain, repair, and replace their private water services according to the standards set forth in the city's municipal code. (Ord. 24-1 § 3)

ORDINANCE NO. _____

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. HELENA
AMENDING SECTION 13.20.075 OF TITLE 13 OF THE ST. HELENA MUNICIPAL
CODE TO ESTABLISH REQUIREMENTS FOR THE EVALUATION, CONTINUED
USE, REPAIR, AND REPLACEMENT OF PRIVATE SEWER LATERALS, AND
FINDING THAT THE ACTION IS NOT SUBJECT TO THE CALIFORNIA
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES SECTIONS
15060(c)(2) AND 15060(c)(3)**

WHEREAS, the City of St. Helena, California (“City”) is a municipal corporation, duly organized under the constitution and laws of the State of California; and

WHEREAS, Title 13 of the St. Helena Municipal Code (“SHMC”) establishes regulations governing the City’s sewer system, including sewer service connections and private sewer laterals; and

WHEREAS, SHMC Section 13.20.075 establishes property-owner responsibility for the inspection, maintenance, repair, and replacement of private sewer laterals; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to amend Section 13.20.075 to establish clearer standards for determining whether an existing private sewer lateral and its connection to the public sewer are in acceptable condition to serve existing and proposed development; and

WHEREAS, the proposed ordinance establishes criteria for evaluating existing private sewer laterals when specified development activity is proposed and allows continued or expanded use of an existing private sewer lateral where its condition and compliance with applicable City standards are demonstrated; and

WHEREAS, where an existing private sewer lateral, connection to the public sewer, or other private sewer service component does not meet applicable requirements, the proposed ordinance requires repair or replacement of the deficient component to the extent necessary to comply with applicable City standards; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments are intended to provide clear and consistently administered sewer-service requirements while allowing continued use of existing infrastructure where that infrastructure is demonstrated to be adequate; and

WHEREAS, the amendment is being considered in coordination with amendments to SHMC Section 17.22.030 governing ADUs and JADUs so that detailed sewer-service requirements are administered under Title 13 rather than duplicated within the City’s zoning regulations; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has considered the staff report, the proposed ordinance, all written and oral public testimony, and the entire record associated with the proposed amendment; and

WHEREAS, the City gave public notice of the public hearing before the City Council for the proposed ordinance in accordance with applicable law; and

WHEREAS, on August 25, 2026, the City Council held a duly noticed public hearing, considered the staff report, public testimony, and the entire record, and introduced and waived the first reading of this Ordinance, as amended; and

WHEREAS, during the first reading, the City Council directed that the proposed construction-cost applicability threshold be removed and that the applicability provision relating to additional development be revised to apply solely to the development of an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU); and

WHEREAS, all other legal prerequisites to the adoption of this ordinance have occurred.

NOW, THEREFORE, The City Council of the City of St. Helena does hereby ordain as follows:

Section 1: Recitals

The Recitals set forth above are true and correct and are incorporated into this Ordinance.

Section 2: Amendment to SHMC Section 13.20.075.

Section 13.20.075 (Property Owner's Obligation to Maintain, Repair and Replace Private Sewer Laterals) of Title 13 of the St. Helena Municipal Code is hereby amended to read as set forth in Exhibit A, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

Section 3: Severability.

If any section, subsection, phrase, or clause of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. The City Council would have passed this Ordinance and each and every section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase not declared invalid or unconstitutional without regard to whether any portion of the Ordinance would be subsequently declared invalid or unconstitutional.

Section 4: CEQA.

The City Council finds that this Ordinance is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3). Adoption of this Ordinance will not result in a direct or reasonably

foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment and does not constitute a project as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15378.

Section 5: Notice and Effective Date.

This Ordinance was duly noticed to the public. This Ordinance shall take effect and be enforced within thirty (30) days from and after the date of its adoption by the City Council at a second reading and shall be posted and published in accordance with the California Government Code.

THE FOREGOING ORDINANCE was introduced at a regular meeting of the St. Helena City Council on the 25th day of August, 2026, and was adopted at a regular meeting of the St. Helena City Council on the 8th day of September, 2026, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

APPROVED

ATTEST

Paul Jamison Dohring, Mayor

Andrew Bradley, City Clerk

Attachment:

Exhibit A - Section 13.20.075, *Property Owner's Obligation to Maintain, Repair and Replace Private Sewer Laterals.*

13.20.075

Property owner's obligation to maintain, repair and replace private sewer laterals.

A. Each property owner shall, at the property owner's expense, inspect, maintain in good working order, repair and replace, as necessary, the private sewer lateral, including any portions that may lie within the public right-of-way, so that it does not cause or contribute to any sewer overflow from either the private sewer lateral or the public sewer service system. The private sewer lateral shall be free of displaced joints, open joints, root intrusion, substantial deterioration of the line, cracks, leaks, inflow, infiltration of extraneous water, fats, oils and grease, sediment deposits or any other similar conditions, defects or obstructions likely to cause or contribute to blockage of the sewer lateral or the public sewer service system.

B. Private Sewer Laterals Not Part of Public Sewer Service System. The private sewer laterals are the property of the property owner and are not part of the public sewer service system. Nothing in this chapter shall be interpreted as changing the private nature of the private sewer laterals or incorporating them into the public sewer service system.

C. Each property owner is responsible for obtaining encroachment permits necessary to maintain, repair, or replace any portion of their private sewer lateral within the public right-of-way.

D. Each property owner shall maintain, repair, and replace their private sewer lateral up to but excluding the connection fitting installed in the public sewer. Replacement of a private sewer constructed on public property shall comply with the standards set forth in the St. Helena standard sewer construction details and specifications. (Ord. 24-3 § 4)

E. Evaluation of Existing Private Sewer Lateral for Development.

The requirements of this subsection apply when a property owner proposes:

1. Demolition of an existing structure and construction of a new structure containing plumbing fixtures;
2. Remodeling of an existing structure containing plumbing fixtures that affects fifty percent (50%) or more of the square footage of the existing structure; or
3. The development of an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU).

When this subsection applies, the existing private sewer lateral and its connection to the public sewer shall be inspected by closed-circuit television (CCTV), and a report documenting the condition of the lateral and connection shall be submitted to the City.

Continued and expanded use of the existing private sewer lateral shall be permitted where the inspection demonstrates that the lateral:

- i. Is free of holes, significant cracks, separations, offsets, root intrusion, or other defects that impair its function;
- ii. Has a minimum inside diameter of four (4) inches;
- iii. Is constructed of material acceptable under applicable City standards;
- iv. Has a properly located and accessible cleanout; and
- v. Is connected to the public sewer by a manufactured connection or other connection approved by the City.

An ADU, JADU, or other additional structure may connect to the existing or improved private sewer lateral at a location outside the public right-of-way that is accessible by a cleanout and approved by the Director of Public Works.

Where the existing private sewer lateral or its connection to the public sewer does not meet the requirements of this subsection, repair or replacement of the deficient lateral, connection, or other private sewer service component shall be required to the extent necessary to meet applicable City standards.

An alternative to the repair or replacement requirements of this subsection shall be permitted where CCTV inspection, engineering documentation, or other information demonstrates that the alternative provides adequate wastewater service and complies with applicable City standards.



Agenda Report to the City Council

Agenda Section: PUBLIC HEARINGS

Department: Community Services Department Community Services Department - Parks and Recreation Division St. Helena Public Library

DATE:	September 8, 2026
FROM:	Ashley Sylvester, Director of Community Services Department
SUBJECT:	Introduction and Waiver of First Reading Amending Sections 2.52.010 to 2.52.070 of Chapter 2.52 of Title 2 of the St. Helena Municipal Code Regarding the Library Board of Trustees.
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	The Board of the St. Helena Public Library and City staff recommend that the City Council conduct the first reading and introduce by title only the changes to Chapter 2.52 of the City's Municipal Code which govern the Board. By doing so, the Municipal Code would more accurately reflect the current duties and responsibilities of the Library Board, and ensure compliance with Education Code 18900.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	The following changes were made at previous City Council meetings regarding Chapter 2.52 of the Municipal Code. • On March 23, 2016, the City Council approved Ordinance 2016-6 amending Chapter 2.52 of the Municipal Code. • On July 8, 2014, the City Council approved Resolution 2014-45 regarding protocol for Committees, Commissions, and Boards. • On July 8, 2014, the City Council approved Ordinance 2014-6 amending Chapter 2.52 of the Municipal Code.
STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE:	Conduct a public hearing to consider amendments to the City of St. Helena Municipal Code Chapter 2.52 Concerning the Library Board of Trustees
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	There is no fiscal impact associated with updating Chapter 2.52 of the City's Municipal Code.
CEQA DETERMINATION:	Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

BACKGROUND:

On December 10, 2025, at their regular monthly meeting, the Library Board discussed their

current role and charge in relation to the current City of St. Helena Municipal Code Chapter 2.52, which governs the Board, its duties, and its responsibilities.

The implementation of the Community Services Department in 2024 prompted City staff, in coordination with the Library Board of Trustees, to review Municipal Code Section 2.52. During this review, inconsistencies between the Municipal Code and current operational practices were identified. The changes to Chapter 2.52 being requested herein incorporate the concerns expressed and recommendations made by the Library Board and City staff in order to align Chapter 2.52 with current practice.

At their January 21, 2026, meeting, the Library Board voted to recommend that the City Council adopt these changes in order to improve organizational effectiveness and ensure that roles and responsibilities are accurately reflected.

Upon guidance from the City attorney's office, additional changes were brought before the Library Board. At their April 8, 2026 meeting, the Library Board voted to recommend these changes to Municipal Code Chapter 2.52, in accordance with the Municipal Libraries Act.

DISCUSSION:

Section 2.52 of the Municipal Code is out of line with current City policy and practice. In order to accurately represent the role of the Library Board and the work of Library leadership, the Board recommends that the City Council update Section 2.52 as outlined in the summary below of proposed changes to Municipal Code 2.52.

Summary of Proposed Changes and Additions to Municipal Code 2.52

Current: Board of Library Trustees

Proposed: St. Helena Library Board or St. Helena Library Commission

Current: Municipal Code: Section 2.52.010 Library established—Composition, and appointment of members – Term of board of library trustees

The free public library heretofore established and now maintained by the city shall be known as the “Dr. George J. Wood and Elsie M. Wood Library,” and shall be **managed by a board of library trustees, consisting of seven members, to be appointed by the mayor with the consent of the city council.** Trustees shall hold office for two years, with the term of office to expire at the end of the fiscal year. The city council may establish one-year terms for the purpose of staggering term expirations. Trustees shall be residents of the city; provided, that the mayor reserves the authority to appoint nonresidents as trustees on a case-by-case basis, with the consent of the city council. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment of the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointments are made.

Proposed: Municipal Code: Section 2.52.010 Library established—Composition, and appointment of members – Term of board of library board members

The free public library heretofore established and now maintained by the City shall be known as the “Dr. George J. Wood and Elsie M. Wood Library,” and shall be **managed by City staff and supported by an advisory board named the St. Helena Public Library Board, consisting of five members,** to be appointed by the mayor with the consent of the City Council. Board members shall hold office for two years, with the term of office to expire at the end of the fiscal year. The city council may establish one-year terms for the purpose of staggering term expirations. Board members shall be residents of the City of St. Helena; provided that the mayor reserves the authority to appoint non-residents as board members on a case-by-case basis, with the consent of the city council. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment of the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointments are made.

Current: 2.52.020 Meetings of board—Quorum—Officers—Records.

The board of library trustees shall meet at least once a month at such time and place as they may fix by resolution. Special meetings may be called at any time by four trustees, by written notice served upon each member at least twenty-four (24) hours before the time specified for the proposed meeting. A majority of the board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The board shall appoint one of their number chairperson, who shall serve for one year and until **his or her** successor is appointed, and in his or her absence, shall select a chairperson pro tem or vice-chairperson. The board shall cause a proper record of their proceedings to be kept.

Proposed: 2.52.020 Meetings of board—Quorum—Officers—Records.

The St. Helena Public Library Board shall meet regularly, typically once a month, at such time and place as they may fix by resolution. Special meetings may be called at any time with the approval of a majority of board members, by written notice served upon each member at least twenty-four (24) hours before the time specified for the proposed meeting. A majority of the board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The board shall appoint one of **their** number chair person, who shall serve for one year and until their successor is appointed, and in their absence, shall select a chairperson pro-tem or vice-chair person. The board shall cause a proper record of their proceedings to be kept.

Current: 2.52.030 Powers of board. The board of library trustees shall have the power:

- A. Subject to approval and confirmation thereof by the city council, **to make and enforce** all rules, regulations and bylaws necessary for the administration, government and protection of the public library, and all property belonging thereto;
- B. To **administer** any trust declared or created for such library, and to receive by gift, devise or bequest and hold in trust or otherwise, property situated in the state or elsewhere, and where not otherwise provided, dispose of the same for the benefit of such library;
- C. To advise the city council **in fixing the duties and powers of the library director**;
- D. To review and **approve** the library's annual budget and to make recommendations to the city council, which may adopt, reject or modify the recommendation when it makes the final budget decision, and to purchase necessary books, journals, publications and other personal property;
- E. To require the Secretary of State and other state officials to furnish such library with copies of any and all reports, laws and other publications of the state not otherwise disposed of by law;
- F. To borrow books from, lend books to and exchange the same with other libraries, and to allow nonresidents to borrow books upon such conditions as they may prescribe.

Proposed: 2.52.030 Roles and Responsibilities of the board. The library board shall have the responsibility:

- A. Subject to approval and confirmation thereof by the city council, to **advise library leadership and City Council on** all rules, regulations and bylaws necessary for the administration, government and protection of the public library, and all property belonging thereto;
- B. To **ensure the appropriate use of** any trust declared or created for such library, and to receive by gift, devise or bequest and hold in trust or otherwise, property situated in the state or elsewhere, and where not otherwise provided, dispose of the same for the benefit of such library;
- C. To advise the city council **on the strategic direction and priorities of the library**;
- D. To review and **endorse** the library's annual budget and to make recommendations to the city council, which may adopt, reject or modify the recommendation when it makes the final budget decision, and to purchase necessary books, journals, publications and other personal property;
- ~~E. To require the Secretary of State and other state officials to furnish such library with copies of any and all reports, laws and other publications of the state not otherwise disposed of by law;~~
- ~~F. To borrow books from, lend books to and exchange the same with other libraries, and to allow nonresidents to borrow books upon such conditions as they may prescribe.~~

Current: 2.52.040 Annual report of board

The board of library trustees shall, on or before the first Monday in April in each year, make a report to the

legislative body of the municipality, giving the condition of the library on the first Monday in April, together with a statement of their proceedings for the year then ended, and forward a copy thereof to the state library at Sacramento.

Proposed: 2.52.040 Annual report of board

The St. Helena Public Library Board shall make an annual report to the City Council, providing a summary of their proceedings and notable work plan items for the current and upcoming terms.

Current: 2.52.050 Library fund

All money acquired by gift, devise, bequest, or otherwise, for the purposes of the library, shall be apportioned to a fund to be designated the library fund, and be applied to the purpose authorized by this chapter. The library fund may consist of any combination of bank accounts, municipal budget accounts or trust funds. If such payment into the treasury should be inconsistent with the terms of any such gift, devise or bequest, the board shall provide for the safety and preservation of the same, and the application thereof to the use of the library, in accordance with the terms and conditions of such gift, devise or bequest. Payments from the fund shall be ordered by the board of library trustees in the manner provided for the payment of other demands against the municipality.

~~Proposed: 2.52.050 Library fund~~

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Current: 2.52.060 Free use of library

The public library shall be forever free to the inhabitants and **nonresident taxpayers of the city**, subject always to such rules, regulations and bylaws as may be established by the board of library trustees, with the approval and confirmation thereof by the city council.

Proposed: 2.52.060 Free use of library

The public library shall be forever free to the inhabitants of the City and **non-residents**, subject always to such rules, regulations and bylaws as may be established by the board of library trustees, with the approval and confirmation thereof by the city council.

Current: 2.52.070 Contract for lending books

The board of library trustees may contract for lending the books of such library to residents of counties or neighboring municipalities upon a reasonable compensation to be paid by such counties or neighboring municipalities.

Proposed: 2.52.070 Contract for lending books.

~~The board of library trustees may contract for lending the books of such library to residents of counties or neighboring municipalities upon a reasonable compensation to be paid by such counties or neighboring municipalities.~~

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

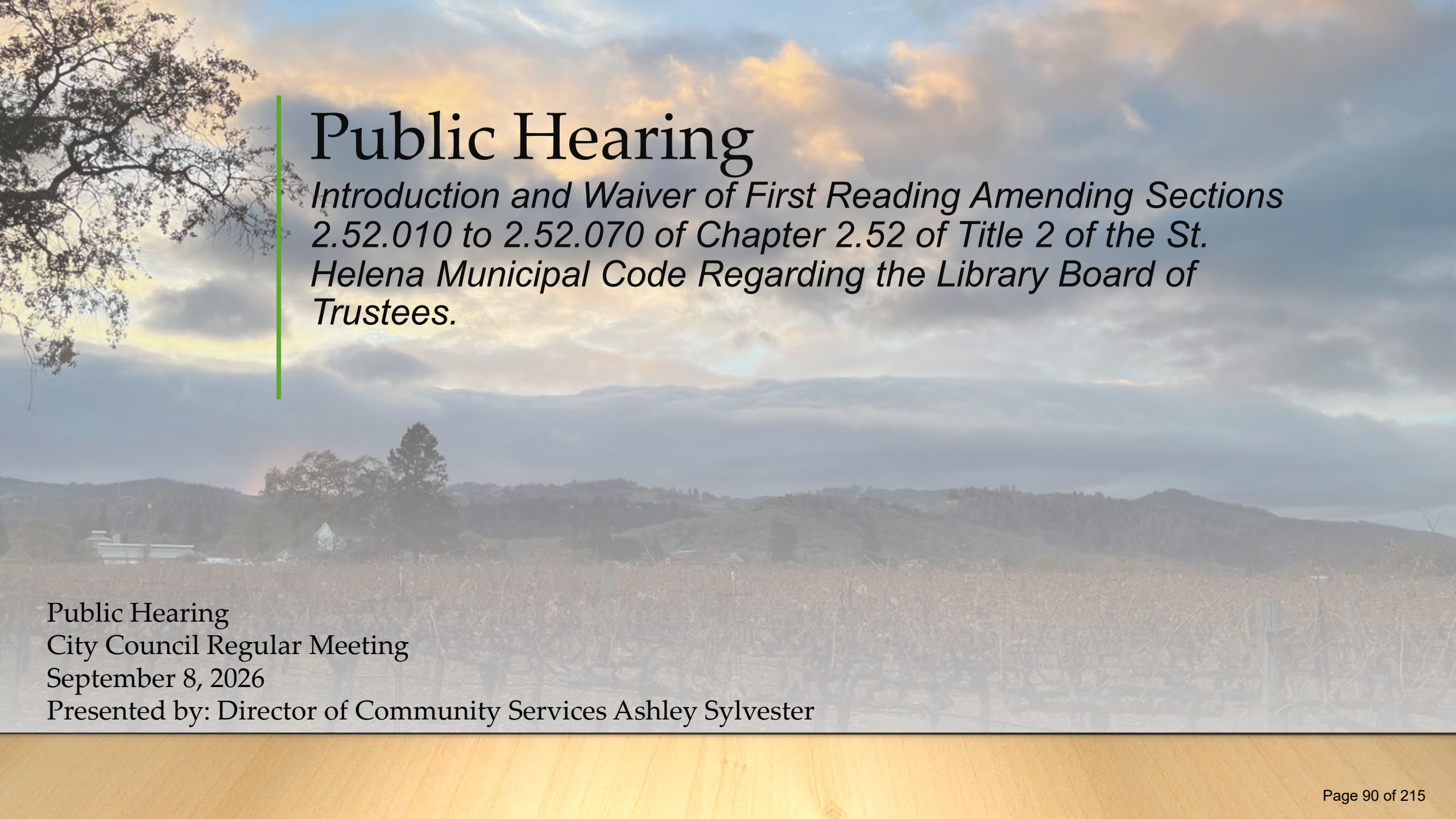
Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

GOAL:

Goal 4: Provide Effective Community Information & Opportunities for EngagementGoal 7:
Enhance Organizational Effectiveness

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Presentation - Introduction and Waiver of First Reading Amending
2. Summary of Proposed Changes and Additions to Library Muni Code 2.52
3. Proposed City Council Ordinance Library Municipal Code 2.52.010-070



Public Hearing

Introduction and Waiver of First Reading Amending Sections 2.52.010 to 2.52.070 of Chapter 2.52 of Title 2 of the St. Helena Municipal Code Regarding the Library Board of Trustees.

Public Hearing
City Council Regular Meeting
September 8, 2026
Presented by: Director of Community Services Ashley Sylvester

Background

- December 10, 2025 the Library Board of Trustees reviewed and the current City of St. Helena Municipal Code Chapter 2.52, which governs the Board, its duties, and its responsibilities.
- January 21st, 2026 recommendations were given to staff for changes to the St. Helena Municipal Code Chapter 2.52.
- April 8, 2026 staff brought back changes to the Library Board of Trustees, vote was approved to take these changes to council.

Proposed Changes

2.52

- Proposed: St. Helena Library Board or St. Helena Library Commission

2.52.010

- Proposed: “managed by City staff and supported by an advisory board named the St. Helena Public Library Board, consisting of five members..”

2.52.020

- Proposed: “The board shall appoint one of their number chair person..”

Proposed Changes

2.52.030

- Roles and Responsibilities of the board. The library board shall have the responsibility:
- A. "to advise library leadership and City Council on all rules, regulations and bylaws.."
- B. "To ensure the appropriate use of any trust.."
- C. To advise the city council on the **strategic direction and priorities of the library**;
- D. "To review and **endorse** the library's annual budget.."
- Remove E
- Remove F

2.52.040

- Proposed: The St. Helena Public Library Board shall make an annual report to the City Council, providing a summary of their proceedings and notable work plan items for the current and upcoming terms.

2.52.050

- Proposed: Remove 2.52.50 in its entirety

Proposed Changes

2.52.060

- Proposed: “the inhabitants of the City and **non-residents..**”

2.52.070

- Proposed: Remove 2.52.070 in its entirety

Recommended Actions:

Amending Sections 2.52.010 to 2.52.070 of Chapter 2.52 of Title 2 of the St. Helena Municipal Code Regarding the Library Board of Trustees.

Introduce and waive 1st reading

Schedule 2nd reading September 22, 2026

Questions & Discussion



Thank you

Summary of Proposed Changes and Additions to Municipal Code 2.52

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- B. To administer any trust declared or created for such library, and to receive by gift, devise or bequest and hold in trust or otherwise, property situated in the state or elsewhere, and where not otherwise provided, dispose of the same for the benefit of such library;
- C. To advise the city council in fixing the duties and powers of the library director;
- D. To review and approve the library's annual budget and to make recommendations to the city council, which may adopt, reject or modify the recommendation when it makes the final budget decision, and to purchase necessary books, journals, publications and other personal property;
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or elsewhere, and where not otherwise provided, dispose of the same for the benefit of such library;

C. To advise the city council **on the strategic direction and priorities of the library;**

D. To review and **endorse** the library's annual budget and to make recommendations to the city council, which may adopt, reject or modify the recommendation when it makes the final budget decision, and to purchase necessary books, journals, publications and other personal property;

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Current: 2.52.060 Free use of library

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Current: 2.52.070 Contract for lending books

The board of library trustees may contract for lending the books of such library to residents of counties or neighboring municipalities upon a reasonable compensation to be paid by such counties or neighboring municipalities.

Proposed: ~~2.52.070 Contract for lending books.~~

~~The board of library trustees may contract for lending the books of such library to residents of counties or neighboring municipalities upon a reasonable compensation to be paid by such counties or neighboring municipalities.~~

ORDINANCE NO. _____

**ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. HELENA AMENDING
SECTIONS 2.52.010 TO 2.52.070 OF CHAPTER 2.52 OF TITLE 2 OF THE ST.
HELENA MUNICIPAL CODE REGARDING THE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES.**

WHEREAS, the Municipal Libraries Act (Education Code, section 18900 et seq.) requires a library established by any city in the State of California to be managed by a Library Board of Trustees; and

WHEREAS, the Library Board of Trustees of any Municipal Library performs certain oversight functions as set forth in the Municipal Libraries Act; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Helena ("City") operates a public library for the benefit of its residents which is subject to the Municipal Libraries Act; and

WHEREAS, a Code update is necessary to ensure the St. Helena Municipal Code reflects the current responsibilities of the Library Board of Trustees, Library leadership and other City staff, respectively; and

WHEREAS, the Library Board of Trustees recommends renaming the Library to be "St. Helena Public Library," to better communicate the Library's mission of serving the community of St. Helena.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of St. Helena does ordain as follows:

Section 1: The Recitals set forth above are true and correct and are incorporated by reference into this Ordinance.

Section 2: Amendments to Chapter 2.52.

Chapter 2.52 of Title 2 of the St. Helena Municipal Code is hereby amended to read as follows (new language is underlined, deletions are in ~~strikeout~~):

"Section 2.52.010. Library established—Composition, and appointment of members—Term of board of library trustees

The free public library heretofore established and now maintained by the city shall be known as the "Dr. George J. Wood and Elsie M. Wood Library," and shall be managed by city staff and supported by an advisory board named the St. Helena Public Library Board, consisting of five members, to be appointed by the mayor with the consent of the city council. Trustees shall hold office for two years, with the term of office to expire at the end of the fiscal year. The city council may establish one-year terms for the purpose of staggering term expirations. Trustees shall be residents of the city; provided, that the mayor reserves the authority to appoint nonresidents as trustees on a case-by-case basis, with the consent of the city council. Vacancies shall be filled

by appointment of the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointments are made.

2.52.020. Meetings of board—Quorum—Officers—Records.

The board of library trustees shall meet at least once a month at such time and place as they may fix by resolution. Special meetings may be called at any time by ~~four~~ three trustees, by written notice served upon each member at least twenty-four (24) hours before the time specified for the proposed meeting. A majority of the board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The board shall appoint one of their number chairperson, who shall serve for one year and until their successor is appointed, and in their absence, shall select a chairperson pro tem or vice-chairperson. The board shall cause a proper record of their proceedings to be kept.

2.52.030. Powers of board.

The board of library trustees shall have the power:

A. Subject to approval and confirmation thereof by the city council, to advise library leadership and the city council on all rules, regulations and bylaws necessary for the administration, government and protection of the public library, and all property belonging thereto;

B. To ensure the appropriate use of any trust declared or created for such library, and to receive by gift, devise or bequest and hold in trust or otherwise, property situated in the state or elsewhere, and where not otherwise provided, dispose of the same for the benefit of such library;

C. To advise the city council on the strategic direction and priorities of the library;

D. To review and endorse the library's annual budget and to make recommendations to the city council, which may adopt, reject or modify the recommendation when it makes the final budget decision.

2.52.040. Annual report of board.

The St. Helena Public Library Board shall make an annual report to the city council on or before August 31st, in each year, providing a summary of their proceedings and notable work plan items for the current and upcoming terms.

2.52.060. Free use of library.

The public library shall be forever free to the inhabitants of the City and non-residents, subject always to such rules, regulations and bylaws as may be established by the board of library trustees, with the approval and confirmation thereof by the city council.

Section 3: This action is not subject to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"). The approval of this Ordinance is not a "project" within the meaning of 14 CCR Section 15378 ("State CEQA Guidelines") because it has no potential for resulting in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. The approval of this Ordinance is exempt from CEQA review because it will not have a significant effect on the environment under Section 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

Section 4: If any section, subsection, subdivision, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion of this Ordinance, of the application thereof to any person or place, if for any reason held to be unconstitutional or invalid by the decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance or its application to other persons or places.

Section 5: The Mayor shall sign this Ordinance and the City Clerk shall cause the same to be published in accordance with Government Code section 36933. This Ordinance shall become effective thirty (30) days later.

THE FOREGOING ORDINANCE was introduced at a regular meeting of the St., Helena City Council on 8th day of September 2026, and was adopted at a regular meeting of the St. Helena City Council on the ____ day of _____ 2026, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

APPROVED

ATTEST

Paul Jamison Dohring, Mayor

Andrew Bradley, City Clerk



Agenda Report to the City Council

Agenda Section: NEW BUSINESS

Department: City Clerk

DATE:	September 8, 2026
FROM:	Andrew Bradley, Program Manager (City Clerk)
SUBJECT:	Consideration of a Resolution to Appoint a Planning Commissioner to fill a vacancy with a term expiring on June 30, 2028.
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Appoint new Planning Commissioner to fill vacancy left by a resignation with a term expiring June 30, 2028.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	None
STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE:	The purpose of this action is to appoint a new applicant to the Planning Commission.
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None.
CEQA DETERMINATION:	Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

BACKGROUND:

Planning Commissioner Autumn Anderson resigned from the Planning Commission on July 10, 2026. Her term was set to expire on June 30, 2028.

DISCUSSION:

The City has advertised a recruitment seeking applicants from the community to fill the vacancy through announcements at City Council Meetings, social media, and in the City's email newsletter. The Community Development Department also did additional outreach. The term of office will expire June 30, 2028.

The following lists the names of the applicants:

Planning Commission

- Elaine Honig

Should Council decide not to appoint the current applicant, staff would re-advertise for the position to fill the vacancy.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

N/A

GOAL:

Miscellaneous/Other

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution - Planning Commission Appointment
2. Elaine Honig Application - Redacted
3. Elaine Honig - Resume (About)
4. Elaine Honig - Resume (Job History)
5. Public Comment - Amy Barak

CITY OF ST. HELENA

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-

**APPOINTING AN APPLICANT TO A VACANT
PLANNING COMMISSION POSITION**

RECITALS

- A. Planning Commissioner Autumn Anderson submitted her resignation on July 10, 2028, with a term expiring on June 30, 2028; and
- B. The City Clerk conducted a recruitment to fill the position with a term expiring June 30, 2028, and received one application; and
- C. The City Council will have the opportunity to reappoint the applicant at the August 11, 2026 regular meeting.

RESOLUTION

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of St. Helena resolves as follows:

- 1. The City Council appoints _____ to the vacant Planning Commission term of office expiring June 30, 2028.

Approved at a Regular Meeting of the St. Helena City Council on August 11, 2026, by the following vote:

Mayor Dohring:	_____
Vice Mayor Deasy:	_____
Council Member Barak:	_____
Council Member Spadarotto:	_____
Council Member Diaz:	_____

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Paul Jamison Dohring, Mayor

Andrew Bradley, City Clerk

Board/Committee Application

First Name	Elaine
Last Name	Honig
Primary Phone Number	
Email	
Street Address	
City	St. Helena
State	CA
Zip Code	94574
Length of residency in the City of St. Helena	5 years
Please choose the Commission/Committee you are applying for:	Planning Commission
Employment Status	Employed
Employer (include title)	STUDIO 4Forty, Founder, Chief Creative Officer, Chief Financial Officer
Reason for Applying	Interesting in city planning, real estate, and general commitment to the well being of the city.
Educational Background	B.S Economics from Tufts University
Other relevant experience:	Real estate investor and developer, business owner, served on multiple nonprofit boards
List any involvement with civic or charitable organizations:	Currently on the Board of Directors for Amplifi Napa Valley, previously on the Board of Directors of Napa Firewise, Board of Directors of DiRosa Preserve, Board of Directors and President of the Board of Napa County Land Trust.
Have you ever attended a meeting of the Commission to which you are applying?	Yes
What is your understanding of the role and responsibility of this Commission?	Attend monthly meeting, prepare for meetings by staying current with reading materials.
What would be your goal(s) as a Commissioner?	Help shape St. Helena's planning and development.

Have you previously served, or do you currently serve, on a St. Helena Commission or Committee?

Yes

Which one(s) and for what period of time? Financial Task Force

References

i. Name

Sue Furdek

Phone Number

Email

ii. Name

Oliver Caldwell

Address

Phone Number

Email

iii. Name

Cathy Buck

Phone Number

Email

About

Elaine is an entrepreneur who thrives on creating brands, building businesses and helping nonprofits thrive. A native Oklahoman with an Economics degree from Tufts University, she started out in the real estate development business, then spent 21 years in the wine business helping grow a small family project into a nationally recognized wine brand.

In 2005, she developed Wine Women & Shoes, her first signature fundraising event, which was a local community fundraiser for the Napa Valley. This inaugural event exceeded expectations and paved the way for a new business category, licensed signature fundraising events. With a boundless love for art and architecture, in 2016, she conceived and launched another signature fundraising event, Farm to Table(jaux). Needing a place for both signature events to live and to grow more events, she created STUDIO 4Forty, which has raised over \$500mil net for their nonprofit partners.

In addition to nonprofit fundraising, Elaine is also an active real estate investor with an emphasis in high-end executive furnished rentals featuring her extensive personal art and antique collection.

Elaine is actively involved in the Napa Valley community. She's currently on the board of Amplifi Napa Valley and has previously served on the boards of the Napa Communities Firewise Foundation, The Napa County Land Trust, where she was the President for 2 years, dRosa Center for Contemporary Art, The Napa County Farm Bureau, The Napa County Sierra Club, and the Board of Advocates for Planned Parenthood.

Elaine Horig

Founder & CFO STUDIO 4Forty

Resources

Experience

Founder & CFO

STUDIO 4Forty

Jul 2019 - Present · 7 yrs 1 mo

St Helena, CA

Founder & President

STUDIO 4Forty

Jan 2017 - Jan 2019 · 2 yrs 1 mo

St. Helena, California

Studio 4Forty is the business umbrella where Wine Women & Shoes, and Farm to Table(jaux), the new co-ed art and food focused fundraising event, reside.

Founder & CEO

Wine, Women & Shoes

Sep 2005 - Jan 2017 · 11 yrs 5 mos

In 2005, while still at Horig Vineyard & Winery, Elaine created Wine Women & Shoes to educate women about wine and raise money for a local Napa Valley non-profit. When she left Horig in 2008,...

Creative Director

Horig Vineyard & Winery

Jun 1998 - Dec 2007 · 21 yrs 7 mos

Elaine joined Horig when it was a team of 2 people. During her 21 year tenure, she marketed, branded, communicated and sold Horig Wine, growing it from it's garage roots to a highly-regarded,...

Project Development and Management

Diversified Properties

May 1983 - Sep 1987 · 4 yrs 5 mos

San Francisco, CA

By checking the box below, you agree with the following statement:

I agree that all of the information contained in my responses to the questions on this application are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I further agree that, by checking the box below and submitting this application, online or otherwise, I am affixing my digital signature to this form as of the date submitted.

I also agree that if appointed, I will serve on the Commission/Committee for which I have submitted this application.

I understand the agreement statement provided to me.

I agree.

Signature

Elaine Horig

Date

07/30/2026

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Experience



Founder & CFO

STUDIO 4Forty

Jul 2019 - Present · 7 yrs 1 mo

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In 2005, while still at Honig Vineyard & Winery, Elaine created Wine Women & Shoes to educate women about wine and raise money for a local Napa Valley non-profit. When she left Honig in 2008,... more



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Project Development and Management

Diversified Properties

May 1983 - Sep 1987 · 4 yrs 5 mos

San Francisco, CA

Planning Commission Appointment

From Amy Cheng <mycheng@gmail.com>

Date Sun 8/9/2026 2:02 PM

To Public Comment <publiccomment@cityofsthelena.gov>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from mycheng@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Mayor and Members of the St. Helena City Council,

I would like to recommend Elaine Honig for appointment to the St. Helena Planning Commission.

I have known Elaine for several years and know her to be deeply committed to St. Helena and passionate about making our city an even better place to live. She is a successful entrepreneur, thoughtful leader, and well-respected and connected member of our community.

Elaine brings a valuable combination of business, real estate, and civic experience. As a business owner and real estate investor and developer, she understands how to evaluate complex issues and balance different perspectives. She has also demonstrated a strong commitment to our community through service on the various local boards and task forces.

I believe Elaine would bring sound judgment, a collaborative approach, and a genuine commitment to St. Helena's long-term well-being to the Planning Commission. I strongly support her appointment.

Sincerely,
Amy Barak
925 Pratt Ave



Agenda Report to the City Council

Agenda Section: NEW BUSINESS

Department: Public Works Department

DATE:	September 8, 2026
FROM:	Joseph Leach, Director of Public Works
SUBJECT:	Update on Efforts to Reduce Discolored Water Events and Proposed Mitigation Program
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Receive a presentation regarding the City's investigation of recurring discolored-water events; review the proposed Discolored Water Mitigation Program framework; and provide direction regarding the proposed approach and next steps. No budget authorization is requested as part of this item.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	The City Council has received periodic updates regarding water-quality conditions, treatment and distribution-system improvements, and efforts to address discolored water.
STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE:	To provide the City Council and community with an update on recurring discolored-water conditions, summarize what the City has learned from customer-reporting, operational and distribution-system data, identify important remaining uncertainties, and present a coordinated framework for continued investigation, mitigation, and performance monitoring.
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	There is no direct financial impact associated with receiving this update and no budget authority is requested. The proposed framework includes activities that will require additional expenditures, including water-quality sampling, targeted internal pipe inspection, distribution-system cleaning, instrumentation/SCADA improvements, and potentially future capital improvements. Significant contracts, treatment modifications or capital actions requiring Council authorization will be presented separately with specific fiscal analysis. Planning-level pipe rehabilitation/replacement costs may also be developed as part of future alternatives analysis if physical inspection identifies pipe condition as a significant contributing factor.
CEQA DETERMINATION:	Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

BACKGROUND:

Recurring reports of brown, yellow, orange, rusty, sediment-laden, foul-smelling, or otherwise discolored or objectionable water have affected significant portions of St. Helena's distribution system over decades. Over the last three years, the City has intensified efforts to understand and address these conditions through customer service, operational flushing, treatment adjustments, distribution-system cleaning and continued evaluation of potential causes. Recent events, particularly during summer 2026, have increased both the amount of available information and the need for a coordinated long-term strategy.

The City has already implemented or initiated several measures intended to improve water quality and system control. These include changes to water-treatment chemistry, including chlorine application ahead of filtration and refinements to the ferric treatment program; a pilot high-velocity distribution-system cleaning program; expanded review of customer-reporting data; and work to improve instrumentation and SCADA control associated with treatment chemical systems. These actions have provided useful information but have not, individually, established a single cause of recurring discoloration.

In June 2026, the City conducted pilot high-velocity cleaning in selected portions (i.e. totaling nearly 7 miles) of the distribution system (approximately 45-mile pipeline network). The work demonstrated that removable material is present in portions of the system and can be mobilized and removed through controlled cleaning. In July 2026, a traffic accident involving a bus and a hydrant resulted in a large instantaneous flow estimated at approximately 4,500 gallons per minute. The resulting extreme hydraulic disturbance within the distribution system was followed by a substantial and geographically distributed increase in discolored-water reports. Additional elevated reporting continued during August under different source, storage, and operating conditions. Together, these observations support further investigation of both accumulated material and the conditions under which it is mobilized and transported.

Staff has been working with water-quality and distribution-system specialists to develop a more systematic approach. The resulting framework is intentionally evidence-based and adaptive: the City will take reasonable actions to reduce known problems while continuing to collect the information needed to determine the relative contributions of legacy deposits, ongoing pipe corrosion, source and treatment water quality, system chemistry, storage conditions, and operating hydraulics.

Resolving recurring discolored-water conditions is the Public Works Department's highest operational priority. Staff is committed to making measurable progress through both near-term physical actions and systematic investigation of the underlying causes. The objective is to convert that evidence into prompt, measurable actions and projects that reduce discoloration while continuing to refine the City's understanding of the underlying causes.

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this update is not to present a single presumed cause or a single proposed cure. The City's current evidence supports a more nuanced conclusion: discolored water is a recurring system condition with both persistent background activity and larger episodic events. The available information is sufficient to support action, but additional investigation is needed to determine where material originates, what causes it to mobilize, how it moves through the

system, and which combination of treatment, operational, cleaning, and capital measures will provide durable improvement.

What the City Knows

Customer-reporting data show a recurring and strongly seasonal pattern. Staff analyzed 801 water-related St. Helena Grapevine (cityofsthelena.gov/grapevine) service requests submitted from January 2024 through September 1, 2026. Using both structured customer responses regarding water appearance and narrative descriptions, 595 records contain affirmative evidence of visible discoloration. Approximately 79 percent of identified discoloration records occurred from July through September in both 2024 and 2025; that concentration exceeded 90 percent in 2026 through September 1.

The data also shows that the problem is not adequately described as a small number of repeat customers. Repeat locations are present and are important for targeted investigation, but major events have involved broadly distributed reporting from many locations. Likewise, major events do not reproduce one consistent geographic footprint. Reports occur near multiple pipe materials and diameters, and the current GIS analysis does not support attributing the condition to a single pipe material, street, or neighborhood.

The July 18-21, 2026, event provides the clearest recent example of hydraulic mobilization. Ninety-seven water-quality-related Grapevine requests were created during the event period, 87 of which contain affirmative evidence of visible discoloration. The reports were geographically distributed and followed the July hydrant event. The event supports a strong association between significant hydraulic disturbance and subsequent discoloration, while not establishing the precise origin or transport path of material observed at individual customer locations.

The June pilot cleaning work provides complementary evidence. Controlled high-velocity cleaning mobilized measurable turbidity and removable material from selected mains (over one hundred-sixty pounds of wet filters/debris). Portions of the Crinella/Park area were among the locations cleaned during the pilot, yet that area experienced reports again following the July hydraulic event. This does not establish that cleaning failed. It indicates that successful local cleaning does not necessarily make an area immune from material transported from elsewhere, residual or adhered material, reaccumulation, ongoing corrosion, or other source/treatment and operating influences.

Water-Quality Testing and Public Health. The City routinely monitors its drinking water for regulated contaminants and conducts additional sampling in response to customer water-quality concerns. The City has experienced specific drinking-water compliance events, including exceedances of the Maximum Contaminant Level for haloacetic acids (HAA5) associated primarily with a limited distribution-system monitoring area, as well as a separate chlorine-residual event in July 2025. These conditions have been publicly reported through required drinking-water notices, and the City has implemented treatment, operational, monitoring, and equipment improvements in response.

The recurring discolored-water conditions addressed in this report are not, by themselves, evidence that the water is unsafe to drink. However, as a precaution, the City does not recommend drinking visibly discolored water and encourages customers experiencing discoloration to report the condition to Public Works.

California's standards for iron (300 µg/L) and manganese (50 µg/L) are secondary drinking-water standards established primarily for consumer-acceptance concerns such as discoloration, taste, and staining. Review of approximately three years of available laboratory data confirms that individual distribution-system samples have periodically exceeded these secondary standards, including repeated elevated results at selected monitoring locations. The City's regulatory monitoring data do not indicate an iron or manganese compliance violation during the period reviewed.

The City nevertheless considers recurring discolored water unacceptable and is applying water-quality goals more stringent than the State's secondary standards. For purposes of managing discoloration and evaluating system performance, the City's water-quality team is using aesthetic and operational goals of 50 µg/L for iron and 20 µg/L for manganese. These are operational performance goals, not regulatory standards. Available monitoring data show more frequent exceedances of these operational goals than of the applicable secondary standards, reinforcing the need to better understand iron and manganese behavior from source water through treatment, storage, and distribution.

What Remains Unknown

Customer reports identify where discoloration is observed, not necessarily where material originated or was mobilized. Similarly, proximity to a modeled water main is useful for evaluating patterns but does not establish that the nearest main caused a customer observation.

The City has not yet quantified the relative contributions of historical deposits, ongoing internal corrosion, iron, or manganese entering from source/treatment processes, storage conditions, system chemistry, or operational hydraulics. Multiple mechanisms may be acting simultaneously and their relative importance may vary by event and location.

For that reason, the City is applying a weight-of-evidence approach. Customer reports, water-quality/chemistry data, physical pipe inspection, cleaning results, hydraulic information and operational records will be evaluated together rather than treating any single dataset as independently establishing causation.

Actions Completed and Underway

Treatment and operational improvements. Staff has implemented treatment-chemistry changes, including chlorine application ahead of filtration and refinements to the ferric program, and is advancing improvements to WTP chemical-system instrumentation and SCADA control. These improvements are intended to increase treatment consistency and improve the quality and reliability of operational information.

Pilot distribution-system cleaning. The City completed a pilot high-velocity cleaning program in selected areas during June 2026. The work demonstrated the ability to mobilize and remove material and provided an initial basis for refining future cleaning scope, field data collection and performance monitoring.

Historical and event analysis. Staff has integrated Grapevine reporting, constituent correspondence, GIS information, flushing records, and operational chronologies to evaluate when and where events occur and how reported conditions relate to known system operations.

Specialist support. Water-quality and distribution-system specialists are assisting the City in developing systemwide chemistry sampling, targeted internal pipe inspection, sediment/material characterization, and future cleaning and monitoring protocols.

Proposed Discolored Water Mitigation Program

Staff recommends an investigation-and-mitigation framework and philosophy to guide near-term actions, projects, and longer-term decisions, organized around five plain-language steps:

UNDERSTAND > INSPECT > CLEAN > MONITOR > ADAPT

These steps are supported by six coordinated technical workstreams: historical forensics; source and chemistry evaluation; physical pipe investigation; hydraulic investigation; distribution-system cleaning; and performance monitoring.

UNDERSTAND. Continue analysis of customer reports, historical water-quality information, source/treatment conditions and operational events to refine temporal, geographic, and causal hypotheses.

INSPECT. Conduct targeted CCTV/internal inspection and, where practicable, collect sediment or pipe material samples before widespread cleaning. Inspection locations will include previously cleaned areas, persistent problem areas, and lower-reporting comparison locations representing different pipe materials and hydraulic roles.

CLEAN. Advance systematic distribution-system cleaning while collecting standardized run-level information on flow, velocity, turbidity, runtime, gallons used, filter loading, pressure, and other observations. Cleaning will function both as a mitigation measure and as an opportunity to characterize material removed from the system.

MONITOR. Establish baseline and post-intervention monitoring at representative sentinel locations and track physical, chemical and customer/system performance before cleaning and at defined intervals afterward, including following significant hydraulic events.

ADAPT. Use the combined evidence to refine treatment, operating practices, cleaning frequency, monitoring, and capital priorities. The strategy may change as new evidence clarifies which mechanisms are most important.

Near-Term Implementation

Systemwide chemistry characterization. Develop and implement a coordinated sampling program to better understand iron, manganese, pH, turbidity, chlorine, and other relevant conditions from source and treatment through storage, distribution, and representative customer locations.

Water quality sampling and reporting. Implement coordinated system sampling and targeted sampling associated with reported discoloration events, and publish monthly summaries of relevant sampling and testing results on the City's website.

Targeted internal pipe inspection. Complete CCTV/internal inspection of selected mains before additional cleaning where practicable, including comparison of previously cleaned and connected or persistent-problem locations. Inspection will evaluate sediment, scale, tuberculation, corrosion, and other internal conditions.

Distribution-system cleaning. Refine the scope and sequencing for additional high-velocity cleaning, reconcile areas completed during the June pilot with remaining areas, and require standardized electronic data collection so cleaning results can be mapped and evaluated over time.

Hydraulic/event investigation. Continue forensic review of the July and August 2026 events and compare future events against storage levels, source utilization, flow changes, and other qualified operational data.

Treatment controls and SCADA. Advance near-term WTP chemical-system instrumentation and SCADA improvements to provide more reliable chemical-feed control, operating alarms, trending, and event data needed to operate the treatment process and evaluate future water-quality events. Staff anticipates completion of these strategic improvements by the end of 2026.

Advisory Committee and Council review. Present significant findings, proposed interventions, and performance results to the Water and Wastewater Advisory Committee for technical and community review. Future actions requiring City Council authorization, including significant contracts, treatment modifications or capital improvements, will return to the Council with Committee input as appropriate.

Near-Term Schedule

The Program is intended to produce visible activity in the near term, not simply additional study. By the end of 2026, staff anticipates advancing systemwide water-quality sampling, targeted CCTV/internal pipe inspection, WTP instrumentation/SCADA improvements, refinement of the distribution-system cleaning scope and data protocol, and continued forensic analysis of recent events. Findings from these activities will inform subsequent cleaning, treatment, operational and capital actions. Staff will provide monthly progress updates to the

Water and Wastewater Advisory Committee and return significant actions requiring authorization to the City Council, as appropriate.

Potential Long-Term Capital Implications

The investigation may identify individual mains or portions of the distribution system where physical condition warrants rehabilitation or replacement. At this stage, the City does not have evidence indicating that widespread replacement of the distribution system is necessary to address discolored water.

Because pipe replacement represents the most capital-intensive potential response, staff will develop planning-level unit costs for use in future alternatives analysis if physical inspection or other evidence identifies pipe condition as a significant contributing factor.

This sequencing is intentional: the City should understand whether, where and why pipe replacement is warranted before presenting broad replacement as a solution to a problem that may also involve source, treatment, chemistry, storage, hydraulic, and maintenance factors.

Performance Monitoring/Measuring Success

The objective is not simply to produce clear water immediately following a flushing or cleaning operation. Success will be evaluated by whether improvements are durable.

The principal performance standard is a sustained reduction in the frequency, severity, duration, and geographic extent of discolored-water events. Staff will evaluate physical indicators, water chemistry, customer-reporting patterns, and system response following future hydraulic events to determine whether interventions are producing lasting improvement.

Additionally, performance monitoring will evaluate the frequency and magnitude of iron and manganese results above the City's aesthetic and operational goals of 50 µg/L and 20 µg/L, respectively.

The resulting information will support a risk-based long-term strategy for treatment, operations, preventive maintenance, and capital investment.

Communication and Public Engagement

Staff will provide regular and proactive public communication regarding discolored-water conditions, investigation and mitigation activities, testing results, and planned work. Staff will provide monthly updates to the Water/Wastewater Advisory Committee as well as a progress update to the City Council at every second meeting of the month while the Program remains an active priority. Additionally, staff will maintain a dedicated webpage with updates regarding activities, reported incidents, locations, available testing results and upcoming work.

When operational information indicates that conditions may increase the likelihood of a discolored-water event, staff will use available City communication tools to provide proactive

public notification when practicable rather than relying solely on customer reports to identify an event.

Grapevine remains an important source of documented customer observations but is not a census of all customer experience. Staff will continue encouraging timely reporting through Grapevine, telephone, and email so customer observations can be documented and compared with operational and water-quality information.

At the September 8 meeting, the Council will also separately consider establishment of a one-time Water Bill Credit Program and an ongoing Discolored Water Incident Credit Policy in response to customer impacts associated with recurring discoloration.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

GOAL:

Goal 2: Improve Infrastructure & Further Environmental Sustainability

Goal 4: Provide Effective Community Information & Opportunities for Engagement

Goal 5: Enhance Quality of Life

Goal 8: Implement Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) Projects Miscellaneous/Other

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Presentation - St. Helena Discolored Water
2. City of St Helena Discolored Water Mitigation Program_090326 v2
3. Public Comment - Michelle Covell 2
4. Public Comment - Joshua Parke 1
5. Public Comment - Joshua Parke 2
6. Public Comment - Joshua Parke 3
7. Public Comment - Michelle Covell 4
8. Public Comment - Michelle Covell 5
9. Public Comment - Tracy McBride
10. Public Comment - Michelle Covell 6
11. Public Comment - Daniel Hale

DISCOLORED WATER MITIGATION PROGRAM

What We've Learned • What Hasn't Worked • What Happens Next

**The outcome residents care about is what comes out of the tap —
We have not yet produced the durable improvement they expect.**



Tonight's Path

ACKNOWLEDGE

Where we are and
how we got here

LEARN

What the evidence
now tells us

EVALUATE + MITIGATE

Investigate causes while
taking physical action

MEASURE

Determine whether
improvement is durable

Council Question: Are we pursuing the right strategy?

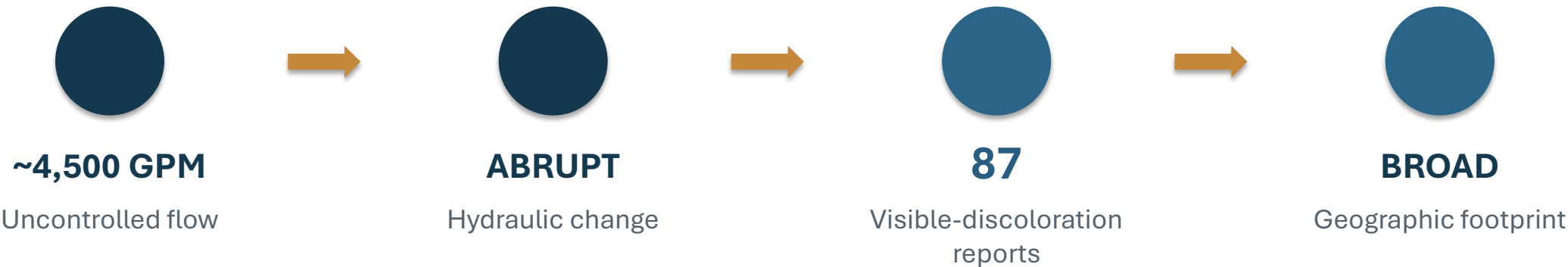
Three Years of Work — But Not Yet the Result We Need



Three years of work have improved portions of the system — but have not yet produced the durable customer-level result we need.

July 18 Changed the Scale of Our Understanding

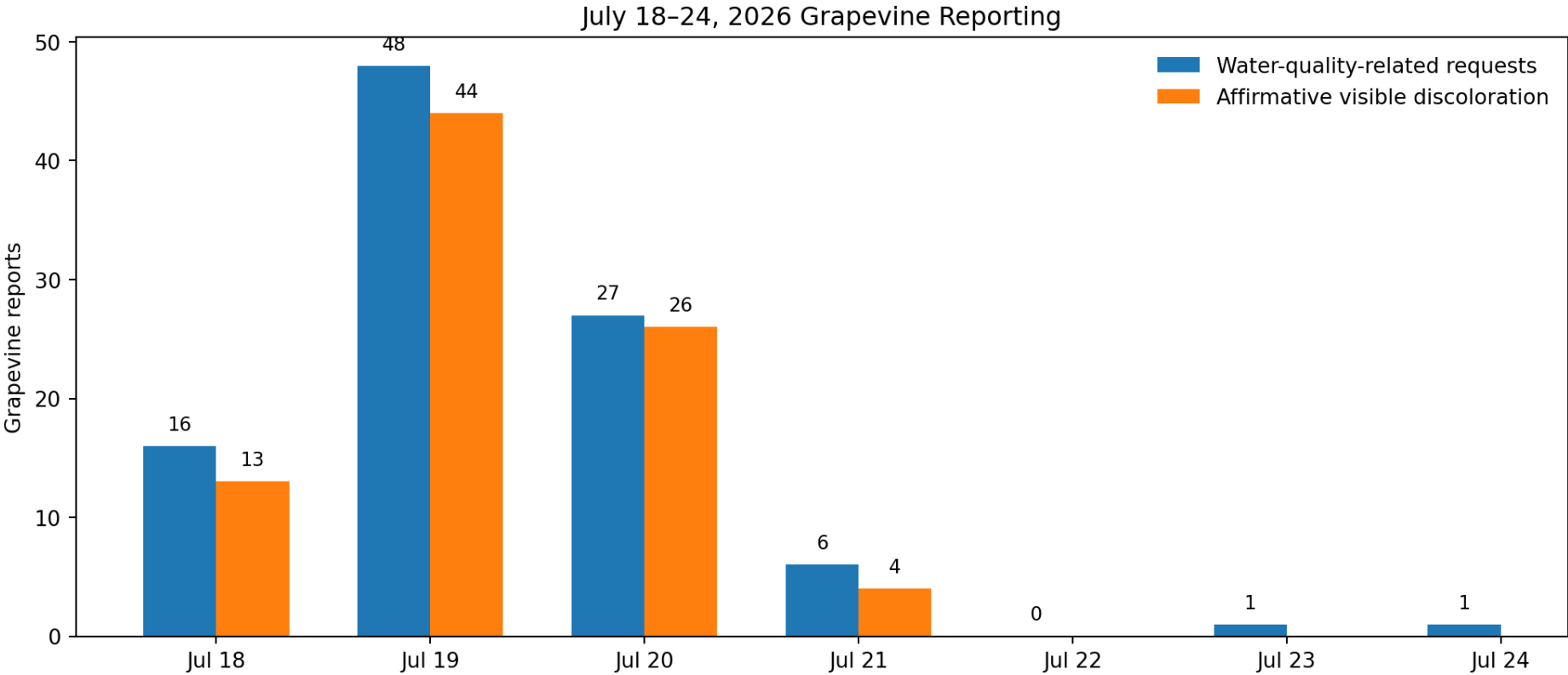
The hydrant event became a system-scale stress test we did not plan.



A major hydraulic disturbance mobilized discoloration across a much broader area than anticipated. Previously cleaned areas were not immune.

Previously cleaned areas were not immune.

Grapevine Reporting Makes the July Event Visible



~4,500 GPM
uncontrolled hydrant flow

97
water-quality-related requests
July 18–21

87
affirmative visible-
discoloration reports

LESSON
Timing and geography do not
prove origin — but they are
powerful evidence of
mobilization.

What We Know Today

595

affirmative visible-
discoloration
records since
Jan. 2024

SEASONAL

strong summer
concentration

SYSTEMWIDE

major events span
many locations

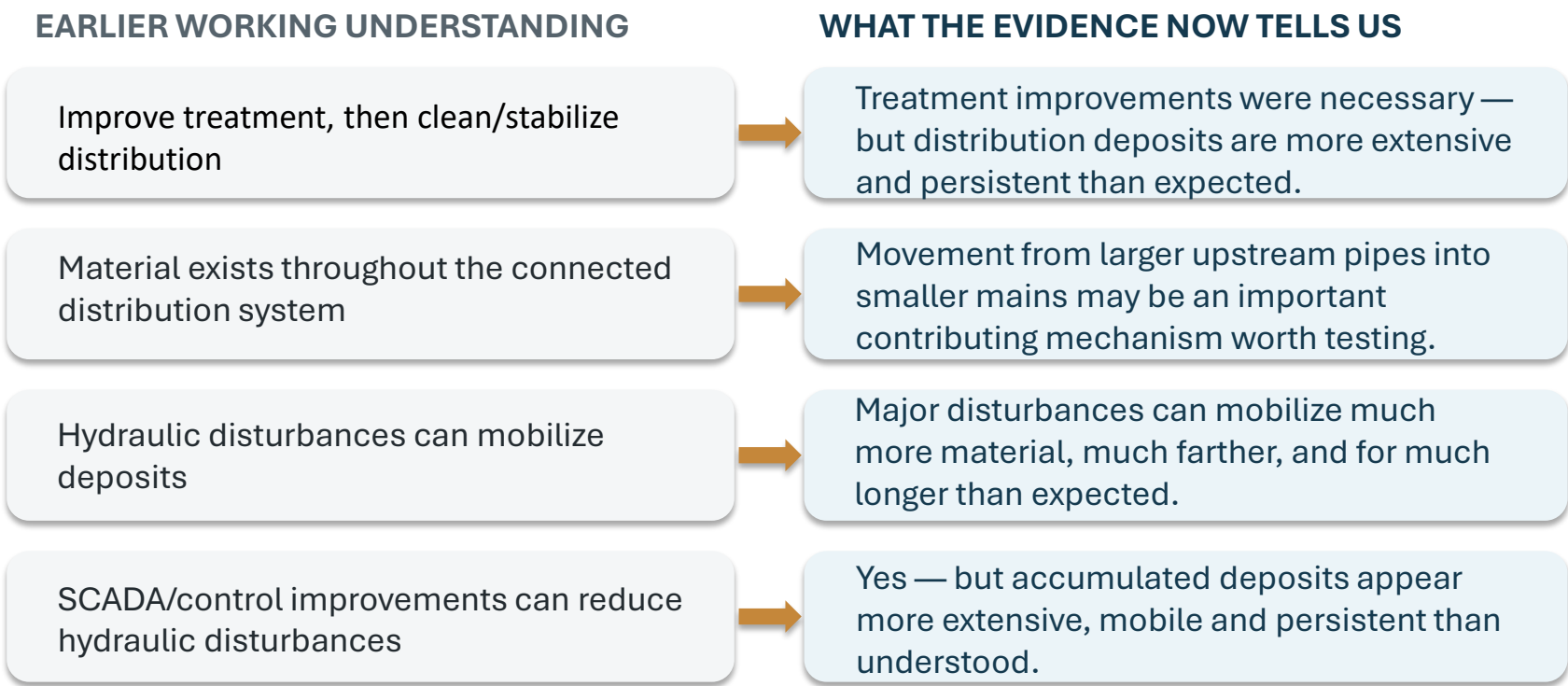
MULTI-FACTOR

no single pipe
material, street
or neighborhood
explains it

There is removable material in the system — and hydraulics can mobilize it.

Evidence supports action. It does not yet establish a single source or cure.

What We Thought → What We've Learned



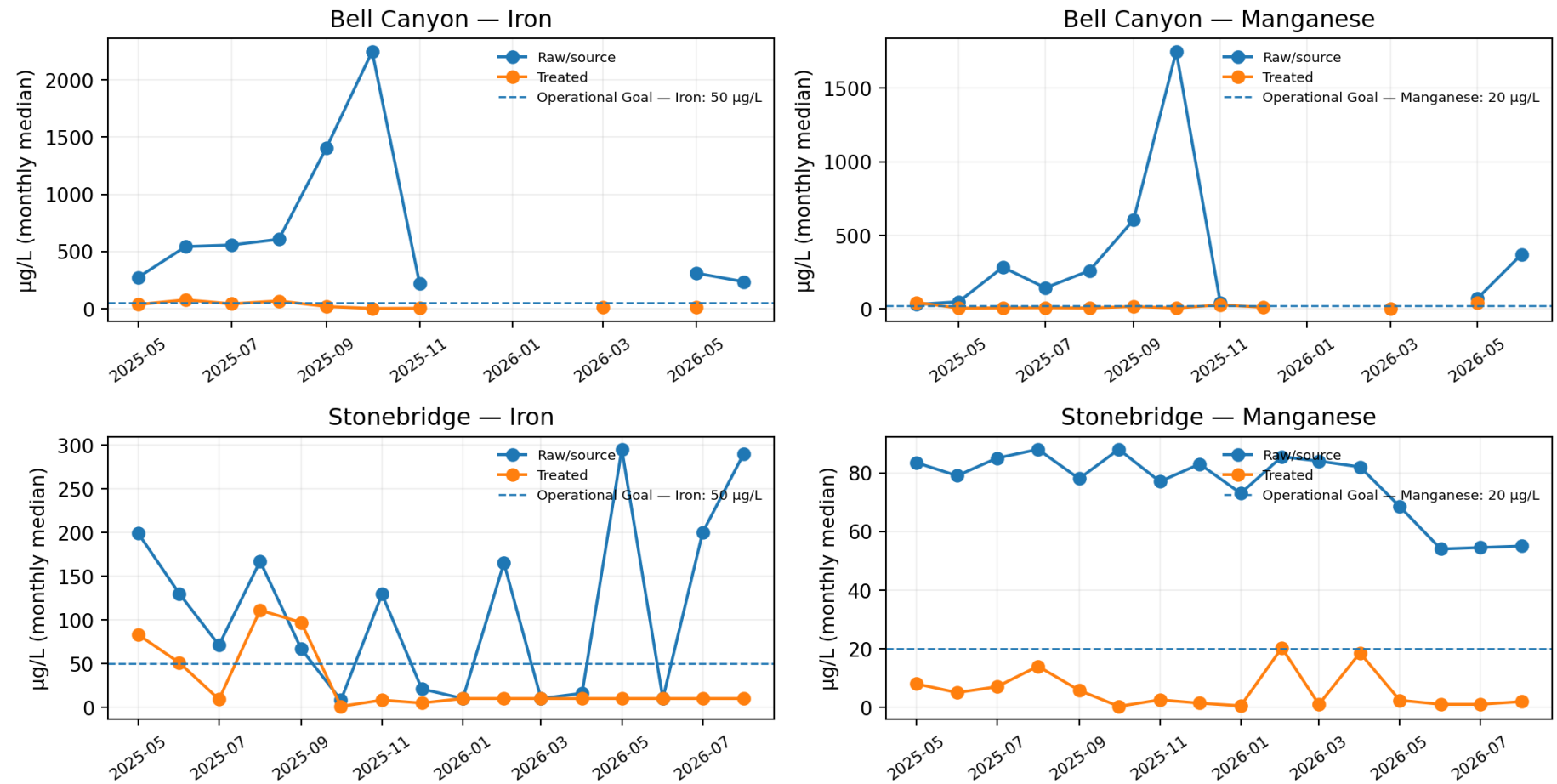
WE KNOW material is in the system.

We don't yet know where all of it originates, how it moves, or what keeps it from returning.

Treatment Improvements Are Working — And That Matters

Raw/source Fe/Mn can be substantial; treatment generally produces substantially lower concentrations.

Raw/Source vs. Treated Iron & Manganese — 2025-2026



Bell Canyon raw-water gap reflects no raw observations in Issam's dataset during that interval.

WHAT THIS TELLS US

Treatment substantially reduces iron and manganese entering distribution.

Treated results are not uniformly below the City's 50/20 operational goals.

Yet customer discoloration persists — treatment improvements alone do not explain what is occurring in distribution.

What We Still Need to Determine

WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

Treatment? Legacy deposits? Corrosion?
Transmission or local mains?

WHAT MOBILIZES IT?

Flow? Velocity? Storage? Source transitions?
Chemistry?

HOW DOES IT MOVE?

Transmission → storage → distribution → customer?

WHAT MAKES IMPROVEMENT LAST?

Cleaning? Operations? Treatment? Rehabilitation?
Combination?

HYPOTHESIS UNDER DISCUSSION

Raised through W/WW Advisory Cmte discussion and Public Comment

Accumulated material in the large-diameter Bell Canyon transmission corridor may be a significant upstream source and transport pathway.

Reasonable hypothesis • Attribution not yet established • Mitigation Program is designed to test it

Why Pipe Diameter and Flow Matter

Same flow → smaller pipe → higher velocity → greater potential to transport or remobilize particulate material.

At 600 gpm: 21" = 0.56 fps → 14" = 1.25 fps → 8" = 3.83 fps → 6" = 6.81 fps

Flow (gpm)	21" velocity (fps)	14" velocity (fps)	8" velocity (fps)	6" velocity (fps)
300	0.28	0.63	1.91	3.40
400	0.37	0.83	2.55	4.54
500	0.46	1.04	3.19	5.67
600	0.56	1.25	3.83	6.81
700	0.65	1.46	4.47	7.94
800	0.74	1.67	5.11	9.08
2000	1.85	4.17	12.77	22.69

Illustrative velocities assume the stated flow passes through a single pipe of the indicated inside diameter. Actual system flows divide among branches and vary with source, storage, demand and system conditions.

Evaluate AND Mitigate

Investigation and physical mitigation proceed concurrently.

EVALUATE

Understand the system

- Systemwide chemistry
- Customer / event sampling
- CCTV + internal inspection
- Sediment / material analysis
- Hydraulic event reconstruction
- SCADA / operational data

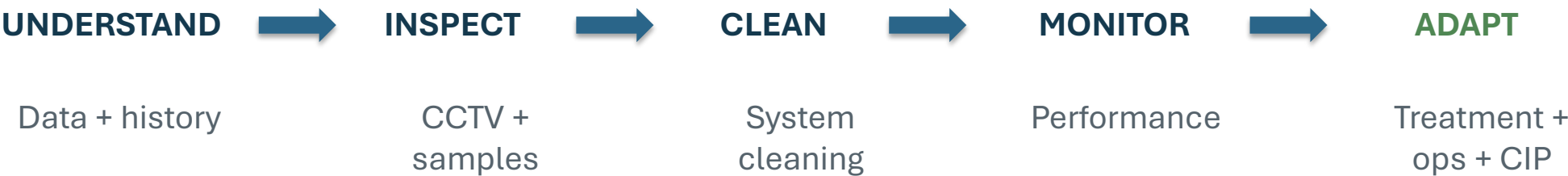
MITIGATE

Reduce the problem now

- Treatment optimization
- Targeted flushing
- Systematic distribution cleaning
- SCADA / control improvements
- Operational changes
- Targeted rehab / replacement where warranted

WE WILL DO BOTH AT THE SAME TIME.

The Mitigation Program



EVIDENCE → ACTION → MEASUREMENT → ADJUSTMENT

Adaptive does not mean indefinite. It means interventions change when the evidence tells us they should.

LOOK INSIDE — Physical Evidence Before Assumptions



CCTV / INTERNAL INSPECTION

- Previously cleaned area
- Persistent problem area
- Connected upstream segment
- Low-report comparison area
- Different materials + hydraulic roles

LOOK FOR

**SEDIMENT • SCALE • CORROSION •
TUBERCULATION • PIPE CONDITION**

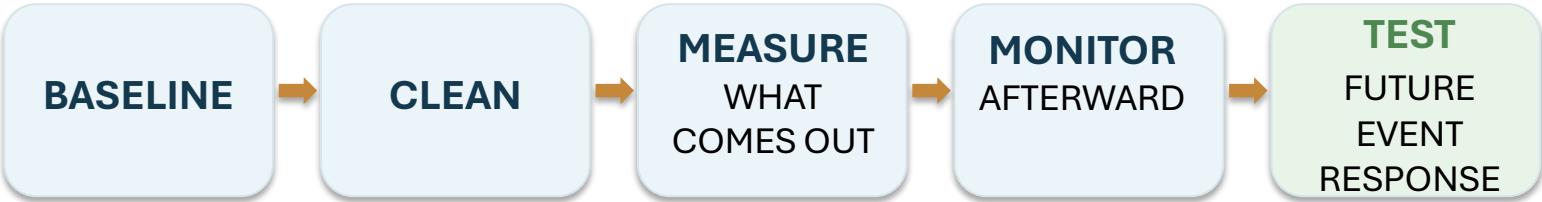
**Collect material. Analyze it. Compare it
to water chemistry.**

CLEAN — And Learn While We Clean



JUNE PILOT

5 days • 37,623 ft (~7.1 miles) •
4–14 in. mains



DID THE IMPROVEMENT LAST?

Clear water immediately after cleaning is encouraging. Durable improvement is success.

Water Quality & Public Health

Compliance, customer acceptability and precaution are related — but they are not the same question.

REGULATORY TESTING

Routine regulatory monitoring occurs at treatment facilities and throughout the distribution system.

Additional sampling responds to customer water-quality concerns.

KNOWN COMPLIANCE HISTORY

The City has publicly noticed HAA5/TTHM compliance issues at specific distribution monitoring locations.

These are distinct from the recurring Fe/Mn discoloration investigation.

DISCOLORATION

Iron and manganese principally involve secondary/aesthetic water-quality standards.

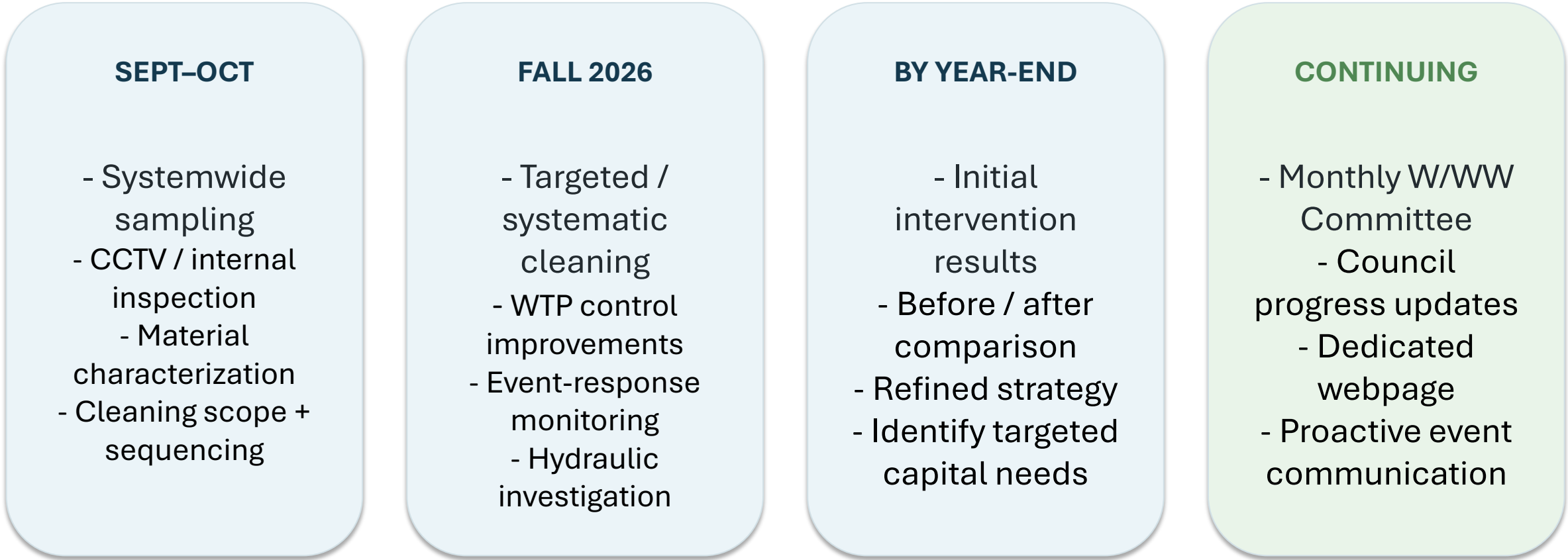
Discoloration alone does not establish unsafe water — but ***the City does not recommend drinking visibly discolored water.***

DISINFECTION BALANCE

Maintain adequate chlorine residual to protect public health ↔ minimize formation of regulated disinfection byproducts (HAA5 / TTHMs)

What Happens Next?

Visible work + measurable results — not another report on the shelf.



Specific contracts, treatment modifications and capital actions return for authorization as appropriate.

How We Hold Ourselves Accountable

SUCCESS = SUSTAINED REDUCTION



↓ frequency and magnitude above Fe 50 / Mn 20 operational goals

If an intervention doesn't produce durable improvement, we change it.

ARE WE PURSUING THE RIGHT STRATEGY?



Evaluation + mitigation proceed concurrently.

No budget authorization requested tonight.

Questions • Direction • Next Steps

City of St. Helena Discolored Water Mitigation Program (Attachment to September 8, 2026 City Council Meeting)

The City has developed substantial evidence indicating that accumulated material within the distribution system contributes to recurring discolored-water events and that significant hydraulic disturbances can mobilize that material. However, the relative contributions of legacy deposits, ongoing pipe corrosion, source/treatment water quality, system chemistry, and operating conditions have not yet been fully quantified. Accordingly, the City will pursue investigation and mitigation concurrently, taking reasonable actions to reduce known problems while continuing to collect and evaluate the information necessary to identify and address underlying causes.

The program architecture

Contains **six interlocking workstreams**, some happening simultaneously rather than sequentially.

Workstream	Question	Immediate activity	Decision it informs
1. Historical Forensics	When and where has discoloration occurred?	Grapevine + constituent reports + GIS + event chronology	Event patterns & susceptible areas
2. Source & Chemistry	What enters the distribution system and under what chemistry?	3-year lab dataset + WTP/SBW + pH/Fe/Mn/turbidity	Treatment/corrosion-control needs
3. Physical Pipe Investigation	What's actually inside the pipes?	Targeted CCTV + sediment/spool analysis	Deposits vs corrosion vs pipe condition
4. Hydraulic Investigation	What causes material to move?	July/August forensic events + model + qualified SCADA	Operational triggers & mitigation
5. Distribution Cleaning	How much removable material exists and can we remove it?	Potential systemwide ZDF	Initial remediation + system characterization
6. Performance Monitoring	Did any of this actually work?	Sentinel monitoring + complaints/events	Long-term strategy

Near-term implementation will prioritize systemwide water-quality characterization, targeted physical pipe inspection, treatment-control/SCADA improvements, development of the distribution-system cleaning scope and performance monitoring during Fall 2026, with findings used to sequence subsequent interventions.

Program Principles / Evidentiary Approach

The Program will use a weight-of-evidence approach. No single source of information (including customer complaints, routine water-quality sampling, CCTV observations, flushing results, hydraulic modeling, SCADA data, or pipe material) will independently be assumed to establish causation. Findings will be developed by comparing independent lines of evidence and identifying where they converge or conflict.

Historical and operational records vary in completeness and reliability. Data will therefore be characterized according to its intended purpose and limitations. Customer reports will be treated as documented observations rather than a complete measure of incidence; GIS proximity will not be assumed to identify the causal main; and SCADA information will be evaluated for reliability before being used for event reconstruction.

The Program is adaptive. Investigative findings may change the sequence, scope, or priority of subsequent activities. Mitigation measures may proceed before every causal mechanism is fully quantified where the available evidence supports reasonable action and where doing so does not unnecessarily compromise the investigation. Accordingly, investigation and physical mitigation activities are intended to proceed concurrently rather than sequentially.

Workstream Program Details

1. Historical Forensics

Historical forensic analysis is substantially underway using the St. Helena Grapevine (cityofsthelena.gov/grapevine) service-request data, constituent correspondence, GIS water-system mapping, Hydrologic flushing records, operational chronologies, and other available records. The objective is not to infer causation from customer complaints, but to establish temporal, geographic, and event-specific patterns that can be compared against physical, chemical, hydraulic, and operational evidence.

Several findings already materially affect the investigation:

- Complaints are strongly event-driven and seasonal
- Different major events produce different network footprints
- Repeat reporters can distort apparent hotspots
- Grapevine understates incidence
- Customer location isn't necessarily the location where material originated

The eventual output is our **2024–26 Discoloration Event Atlas**:

- timeline + major events + spatial footprints + recurring locations + hydraulic/operational correlations.

This answers much of **WHEN and WHERE**.

2. Source Water & Distribution Chemistry

The City has obtained approximately three years of laboratory data, including routine regulatory monitoring and customer-requested testing. This data will be consolidated with available source, treatment, and operational information to establish pre-intervention baseline conditions against which subsequent CCTV, cleaning, operational, and treatment interventions can be evaluated.

The program will build a single chemistry database covering, to the extent available:

Fe | Mn | pH | turbidity | chlorine residual | source/configuration | sample point | date/time

and distinguish:

source → treatment effluent → storage → distribution → customer/event samples

The combined dataset will help evaluate three principal possibilities:”

- Are Fe/Mn predominantly entering the distribution system?
- Are Fe/Mn being generated or released within the distribution system?
- Are both mechanisms occurring?

This is also where pH gets investigated rather than assumed.

A specific pH target should not be presumed to be the appropriate intervention until historical pH, iron/manganese behavior, and observed pipe conditions are evaluated together.

For purposes of evaluating discoloration and distribution-system performance, the City's water-quality team is using aesthetic and operational goals of 50 µg/L for iron and 20 µg/L for manganese. These operational goals are more stringent than California's secondary drinking-water standards of 300 µg/L and 50 µg/L, respectively, and are not regulatory compliance thresholds.

Additionally, phosphate remains a potential intervention rather than a proposed action until the chemistry and pipe evidence support its use.

3. Physical Pipe Investigation

Scope developed for select locations to perform targeted CCTV services. Sent to Hydrologics and National Plant Services for development of proposals for “baseline” CCTV work of approximately 2,900 feet of candidate pipeline.

Perform targeted CCTV work before widespread cleaning when and wherever possible.

The six + alternate locations provide:

- previously cleaned/problem;
- adjacent/problem;
- persistent/problem;
- different-material/problem;
- ACP (Asbestos Cement Pipe) control;
- C900 PVC control;
- Optional backbone

Possible outcomes of “baseline” CCTV work:

- **Crinella clean + upstream dirty**
 - o Transport hypothesis strengthens.
- **Crinella dirty again**
 - o If substantial material is again observed within the previously cleaned Crinella segment, rapid reaccumulation, residual/adhered deposits, and/or ongoing corrosion would warrant further investigation.
- **Problem and control ACP look dramatically different**
 - o Location/hydraulics/source exposure matters.
- **Both look heavily corroded but only one gets complaints**
 - o Pipe condition alone doesn't explain occurrence.
- **Problem and control mains both contain substantial deposits**
 - o Distribution-system accumulation may be more widespread than complaint geography alone suggests.

These alternative outcomes demonstrate why baseline physical inspection is important before drawing conclusions regarding dominant causal mechanisms.

4. Hydraulic/Operational Investigation

The July hydrant event provides an opportunity to evaluate system response following an acute hydraulic disturbance. The August voluntary-conservation period provides a contrasting opportunity to evaluate system response under different source, storage, and operating conditions. Available and qualified SCADA and operational data will be evaluated against each event chronology

There's good external support for the mechanism we're investigating, i.e. high flows can increase wall shear and mobilize accumulated pipe material, producing discoloration and customer complaints.

5. Systemwide Cleaning

Prepare for broader distribution-system cleaning following completion of critical baseline inspection and sampling, refinement of the cleaning scope and establishment of pre- and post-cleaning data requirements.

Prior to commencing widespread distribution-system cleaning, the City will complete or sufficiently advance the following activities so that cleaning does not unnecessarily compromise diagnostic information and the maximum investigative value is obtained from the intervention:

- **Baseline Action:** targeted CCTV and initial chemistry/sampling completed.
- **Scope Action:** reconcile exactly what June cleaned versus what remains.
- **Data Action:** Require standardized electronic run-level data collection as part of future cleaning work.
- **Strategy Action:** Confirm that the proposed cleaning sequence will not unnecessarily compromise source, chemistry, or corrosion investigation..
- **Performance/Data Protocol Action:** define what constitutes a “run” and exactly what gets measured for each:
 - o Run ID | date/time | GIS segments | valve configuration | diameter | material | length | target/actual velocity | GPM | starting/peak/ending turbidity | runtime | gallons | filters | filter weight | chlorine | system pressure | observations | before/during/after photographs where useful.
 - o Utilize City GIS to document mobilized turbidity, filter loading, cleaning, etc. from data.

Possible outcomes that warrant caution:

- flushing can produce immediate water-quality improvement without necessarily producing durable improvement everywhere;
- monitoring during and after flushing is important for determining effectiveness and tailoring future maintenance.

6. Performance Monitoring

Performance monitoring is critical to determining whether interventions produce durable improvement. Before broader cleaning, designate approximately 8–12 representative sentinel locations, including persistent-problem locations, lower-reporting locations, previously cleaned areas, network extremities, and locations near storage/source interfaces.

BEFORE → CLEANING → 30 DAYS → 90 DAYS → 180 DAYS → 1 YEAR

plus sampling after significant hydraulic events.

Measuring three different outcomes:

Physical: sediment/deposit condition, CCTV observations, material removal/filter loading.

Chemical: Fe, Mn, turbidity, pH, residual.

Customer/System Performance: complaint/event frequency, severity, extent, duration and recurrence.

This creates the actual performance standard:

Success is a sustained reduction in the frequency, severity, duration and geographic extent of discolored-water events, not merely clear water immediately following flushing.

Also, track the frequency, magnitude and geographic distribution of iron and manganese results above the City's 50/20 µg/L aesthetic and operational goals before and following major interventions.

Resulting Decision Tree

If systemwide cleaning produces durable improvement: establish periodic proactive cleaning/maintenance based upon measured accumulation rates.

If deposits rapidly return: determine whether source Fe/Mn, corrosion chemistry or operating conditions are replenishing them.

If CCTV shows severe internal corrosion/tuberculation concentrated in particular pipe types/areas: incorporate water-quality risk into CIP replacement prioritization.

If hydraulic events consistently trigger problems despite clean pipes: operating/storage/flow-management changes become a major intervention.

If chemistry points toward corrosion instability: Dr. Najm evaluates treatment/pH and potentially corrosion-control alternatives.

If multiple mechanisms remain significant → develop integrated program.

If systemwide cleaning substantially reduces discoloration but problems recur gradually over time → determine the rate and geography of reaccumulation and establish a risk-based recurring cleaning cycle.

Investigation-and-Mitigation Framework and Philosophy:

UNDERSTAND → INSPECT → CLEAN → MONITOR → ADAPT

UNDERSTAND

Customer reports + water-quality data + operations

Continue analysis of customer reports, historical water-quality information, source/treatment conditions and operational events to refine temporal, geographic, and causal hypotheses.

INSPECT

CCTV + sediment + pipe condition

Conduct targeted CCTV/internal inspection and, where practicable, collect sediment, or pipe material samples before widespread cleaning. Inspection locations will include previously cleaned areas, persistent problem areas, and lower-reporting comparison locations representing different pipe materials and hydraulic roles.

CLEAN

Systematic distribution-system cleaning

Advance systematic distribution-system cleaning while collecting standardized run-level information on flow, velocity, turbidity, runtime, gallons used, filter loading, pressure, and other observations. Cleaning will function both as a mitigation measure and as an opportunity to characterize material removed from the system.

MONITOR

Chemistry + hydraulics + customer experience

Establish baseline and post-intervention monitoring at representative sentinel locations and track physical, chemical and customer/system performance before cleaning and at defined intervals afterward, including following significant hydraulic events.

ADAPT

Treatment + operations + maintenance + capital replacement

Use the combined evidence to refine treatment, operating practices, cleaning frequency, monitoring, and capital priorities. The strategy may change as new evidence clarifies which mechanisms are most important.

Public Comment number 2 - public forum - out of box idea

From Michelle Covell <michelle@covellarchitects.com>

Date Thu 9/3/2026 11:53 AM

To Michelle Covell <michelle@covellarchitects.com>

Public Comment – Water Quality and Distribution System

Dear Mayor and Members of the City Council,

I am speaking as a St. Helena resident, and not in my capacity as a Planning Commissioner nor for the city of SH.

I appreciate that the City is flushing the water distribution system. However, I have some questions about what we are actually testing and what is happening between the treatment plant and residents' faucets.

We have been told that the water is clear and tests safe before it leaves the treatment plant, yet residents are receiving brown water at their homes.

1. Where is the water being tested?

Are the City's reported water-quality samples primarily taken before the water enters the distribution system?

If so, are we currently testing water at residents' taps in areas experiencing brown water? If sediment is entering the water, what is that sediment and has it been tested?

2. What happened during the recent hydrant incident?

The extremely high velocity flow from the hydrant may have disturbed and redistributed sediment within the system.

Has the City evaluated whether that event could have moved sediment into areas that had already been flushed?

3. What is the City's flushing strategy?

I support flushing, but is there a comprehensive plan to systematically flush the entire distribution system?

How will the City measure whether it is actually solving the problem?

4. What does this tell us about the condition of our pipes?

If these pipes are already approaching or beyond their useful life, how much additional service life does flushing realistically provide?

Is flushing a long-term solution, or an interim measure while the City plans for pipe replacement?

And finally, an idea from my husband that I think is worth considering:

If we ultimately need new potable-water pipes, could the existing system potentially be repurposed for recycled or non-potable water for landscape use?

Obviously, there are engineering and regulatory questions to work through, but we already have an extensive network of pipes in the ground.

Perhaps there is an opportunity to replace the infrastructure we need with NEW pipes for drinking water while giving the existing system a second life.

What is happening to that water between the treatment plant and the resident's faucet?

I hope we can figure out the most cost effective and best strategy for fixing this issue in the most timely manner as possible.

Some screen caps from the General Plan below. NOTE

4.4 Goals

The goals of the Public Facilities and Services Element are:

Ensure High-Quality Public Services and Facilities.

St. Helena is committed to investing in and maintaining a high standard of quality for facilities and infrastructure to serve a diverse range of community needs.

Promote Sustainable Standards and Practices.

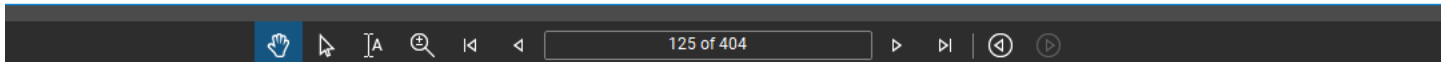
St. Helena is dedicated ^{to} upgrading existing community facilities and infrastructure where possible and setting standards for new improvements that support long-term ecological sustainability and environmental mitigation.

The following policies and actions mandate, encourage, or allow certain initiatives to be pursued throughout the duration of the General Plan. Together, they serve as strategic directions for City staff and partners, highlighting where time and resources should be focused.



PF1.H Ensure that water rates are designed to promote conservation, as well as to ensure that needed capital improvements are made in a timely manner.

ST. HELENA GENERAL PLAN UPDATE 2040



PF1.B Implement the following water system improvements:

- Replace obsolete, undersized water mains to provide more efficient circulation, higher pressures, and lower pipe losses during heavy demand periods.
- Continue service of water mains to reduce unaccounted-for water losses.

4-24 | ST. HELENA GENERAL PLAN UPDATE 2040

PF1.S Provide for capital needs of water and wastewater systems.

Policies

PF2.1 Ensure adequate sewage treatment capacity at the City treatment plant to meet the needs of population growth, taking into account the City's Growth Management System, the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, and the needs of non-residential users.

PF2.2 Require the extension of the City sewer to areas that are dependent upon septic systems prior to approval of future growth in these areas.

PF2.3 Reduce pumping costs and increase plant capacity by mitigating sewer system infiltration problems and explore alternate energy sources.

PF2.4 Increase sewer collection system efficiency by ensuring proper maintenance of sewer pipes.

Thank you.

Michelle Liu Covell

Architect, Partner, Director of Operations, LEED AP
707.968.9280

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1407 Main St. Suite 102 Saint Helena, CA 94574
www.covellarchitects.com

9.4.26

City council, staff, general public,

On August 27th I sat for a brief meeting with Mario Traverso at public works to discuss a theory about non ferrous pipes holding and readily distributing loose debris and rust particulate that is forming on ferrous pipe walls in our water distribution system. During the meeting we discussed the departments current focus on balancing pressure and replacing pipes of different diameters to ease this process. We reviewed maps and discussed that this approach didn't focus on defining a recurring source and the aforementioned theory wasn't something they had been working on. It was a valuable discussion and very informative. For the record Mario is exemplary and all i've spoken with hope he has a long tenure here and continues to move up the chain.

After this meeting I drafted the attached letter summarizing the theory as well as thoughts on where we are and a potential approach moving forward.

A key point around discoloration is that our primary water source from Bell Canyon is fed to town via a large diameter metal pipe a few miles long. The metal pipe sections have a surface area equivalent to about 1.5 football fields. A significant ferrous area, and water flows through it before it gets to town and distributes. There are no public records of this pipe section ever being cleaned.

The attached presentation documents drafted after the meeting illustrate the system pipe segments and focus on the potential of the main supply run originating at Bell Canyon as the primary source of discoloration in our water distribution system. The seemingly random recurrence at different parts of town is simply attributed to having multiple sources feeding into a system that relies on pressure to fill a storage tank located at an elevation higher than the treatment plant itself. All pressure feeds into the system without organized circulation. The effect of this is random but centralized discoloration near the potential primary discoloration source locations. In this case the main large diameter outlets of the Bell Canyon supply lines. This is the basic hypothesis.

Sincerely,

Joshua Parke

9.2.26 9:19am

Water

At every city council meeting, the first agenda item should be the current status of our water infrastructure and what's being done to resolve the issues. This isn't an overstatement; the fact that this isn't happening already is a tragedy. We cannot thrive as a community without clean water.

Most of us are thinking about our water at this point. I've been thinking for a while on a theory that there must be ferrous pipes feeding into non-ferrous pipes in our system, distributing debris and discoloration. To get accurate pipe information, I reached out to public works to see if the city had any records or maps showing pipe materials and diameters.

Based on a GIS pipe segment map, St Helena's water district has three sources and extends from the treatment plant at Bell Canyon reservoir down to the Rutherford pump station. In total, it contains approximately 47 miles of pipe. Of the 47 miles, about 75% is non-ferrous (doesn't rust). That leaves only about 25% that could be rusting and creating the discoloration and debris in the water. If you limit the calculation to city limits, it's even less.

When you look at a map of the water pipes in town, it is glaring how few are metal. The majority don't rust because they are asbestos-cement pipes. If you look specifically at the metal pipe segments and account for the feed from Bell Canyon, only about 17% of the surface area is from pipes smaller than 12" in diameter. This means about 83% of the pipe surface area we have that can rust is large-diameter distribution pipe. My theory is that the source of the issue is the primary large distribution pipe from the treatment plant. This could easily be confirmed with a video inspection of the pipe segments.

Surface area is critical when discussing rusting pipes. Some of you may have seen a photo from town of a cross-section of pipe caked with rust to the point it was nearly closed. More surface area means more potential for more rust. Rust grows and accumulates like barnacles, and it doesn't go away by flushing water over it; it keeps growing. It is my recollection that the discoloration issue began a few years ago, when we received notice that a consultant was using a chemical in the water treatment plant that causes metal to corrode. To date, most of the city's efforts have focused on flushing existing debris or balancing the system's total pressure to minimize disturbance in the pipes rather than determining the primary source of the problem.

By all current reports, the water leaving our treatment plant is now clear. But the neighborhood most severely impacted by water quality issues is Crinella, which is the first neighborhood at the end of the large-diameter supply run from the plant. When the city attempted high-velocity flushing there in June, the problem just came back, even though all the main water supply lines in the neighborhood are made of asbestos cement, which doesn't rust. In fact, a review of a

heat map of discolored water calls from the last year shows that most call locations in town are not directly connected to metal main supply pipes.

I've drafted this letter multiple times now, and there isn't an easy way to cover all this; it's exceptionally difficult to fathom that we are here. It is important to emphasize, though, that there are readily available, feasible solutions. They do, however, require planning. This is one way our town has done things differently than many: when it comes to maintaining our infrastructure, we don't have an asset management plan (different from a strategic plan). Why is that? Because our leaders haven't prioritized one. A list of potential capital improvement projects based on a potentially available budget is not a plan.

Not having an asset management plan is like having an airplane without a maintenance schedule. Maintenance is how you discover little problems before they become big ones. Waiting to fix something until it breaks in this context leads to disaster. Like any complex system of parts, municipal infrastructure needs regular maintenance. Water supply pipes should be cleaned on a schedule and upgraded as they age out. With a plan, you can budget, and if you do, you know what you need when you need it.

For the sake of argument, let's suppose the theory proposed in this letter is true: that the source of the discoloration is our main supply pipe coming directly from the reservoir. If so, balancing the system won't eliminate the problem. Problems need solutions, and solutions need plans. A sound, fast solution and plan would be to pig (an industry technique for descaling) all the pipes throughout the system, starting at the treatment plant, rather than isolating sections in town. Work your way down, then prioritize clearing the ferrous pipes in town first.

Water flushing isn't enough; we've learned that. Clearing the biofilm and all the sediment and rust first, beginning at the source, is what we need to do, and it can be done fast without digging up pipes. After this is done, finalize a plan for which pipes need repair or replacement based on age and deterioration. You can find this out during the process of clearing them.

We need a plan now, and we need to execute it yesterday. It's possible this one may be it, and it's actually not that expensive. People and businesses are suffering from this issue; in order to thrive, we need to fix it. Believe it or not, many places have dealt with it, and there are many feasible paths.

We are special in many ways; not solving this problem shouldn't be one of them.

Joshua Parke

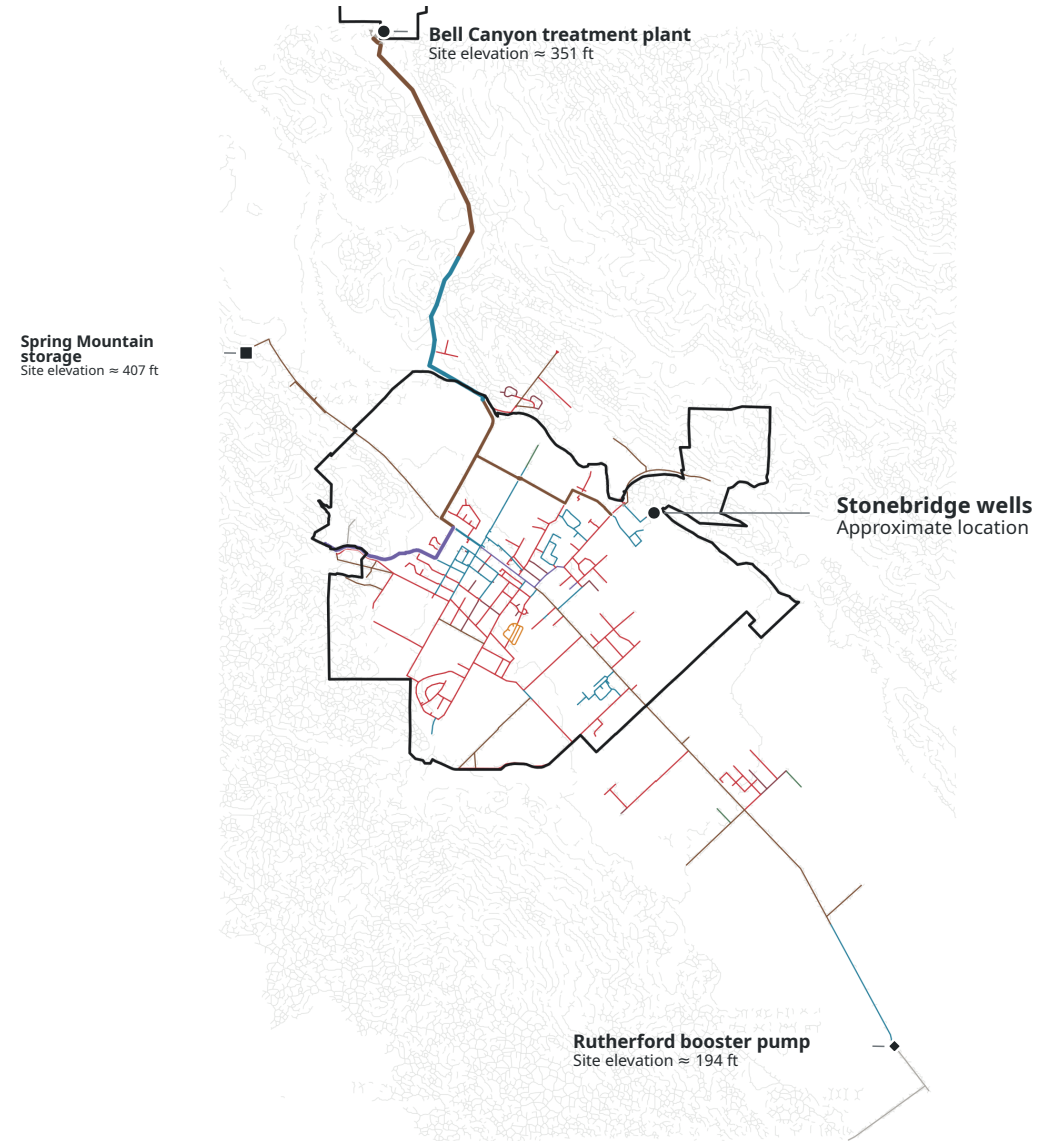
Bell Canyon sediment transmission

Hypothesis: Bell Canyon main sediment transmission is the likely dominant source of systemwide discoloration.

METHOD

Public-record review; September 11, 2025 hydraulic-model GIS; complaint-density mapping; and hydraulic inference. Not a field-condition survey or Dynamic Response Imaging assessment.

Prepared by Joshua Parke | September 2, 2026



Available records point to a likely dominant source

Based on the available public record and pipe map, if the large Bell Canyon mains remain uncleaned and sediment-bearing, they are the most likely dominant source and pathway.

PUBLIC RECORD

City notices document recurrence after flushing, sediment mobilization after rapid production changes, and brown water returning to previously cleaned areas.

HYDRAULIC FIT

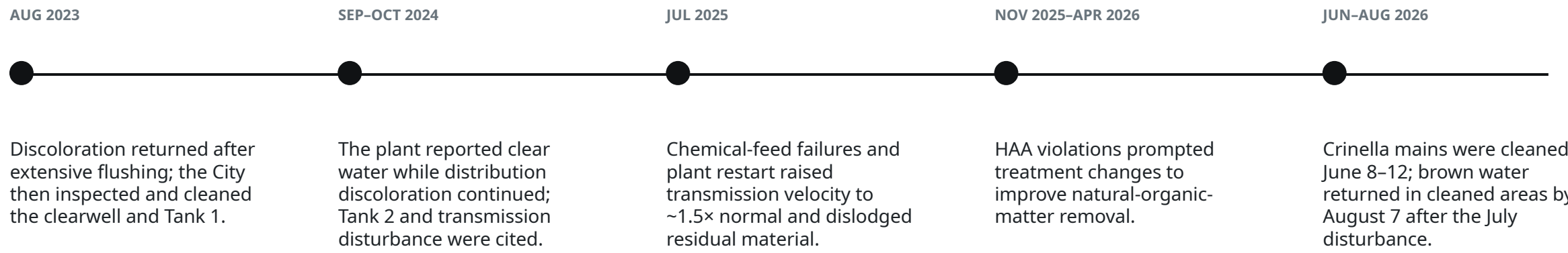
The mapped route places 24- and 14-inch ferrous mains upstream of Crinella. Cleaning local mains leaves that upstream sediment inventory intact.

SPATIAL FIT

Seventy-nine public reports cluster near primary Bell Canyon outlet branches. The Napa corridor lacks a comparable continuous complaint pattern.

No competing source matches the same combination of upstream ferrous inventory, recurrence after downstream cleaning and complaint geography.

Recurrence after flushing points to continued upstream loading



The sequence is consistent with an upstream sediment reservoir repeatedly reloading downstream mains and storage.

Treatment changes can destabilize ferrous scale

The documented treatment train combines oxidants, pH/alkalinity control and a corrosion inhibitor. Feed continuity, dose and velocity determine whether established scale remains stable.

OXIDATION

Chlorine and sodium permanganate

Both raise oxidation potential. They can mobilize iron and manganese and may accelerate metal-scale release when dose, residual or hydraulics change.

Public record: both were used; feed failures and treatment adjustments are documented.

pH AND ALKALINITY

Alum balanced by caustic

Alum consumes alkalinity and can lower pH; caustic raises pH. Variability in their balance can affect corrosion potential and scale stability.

Public record: both were used; finished-water alkalinity and dose history are not disclosed.

CORROSION CONTROL

Orthophosphate

It is intended to form or stabilize protective films on metal. Effectiveness depends on residual, water chemistry and continuity.

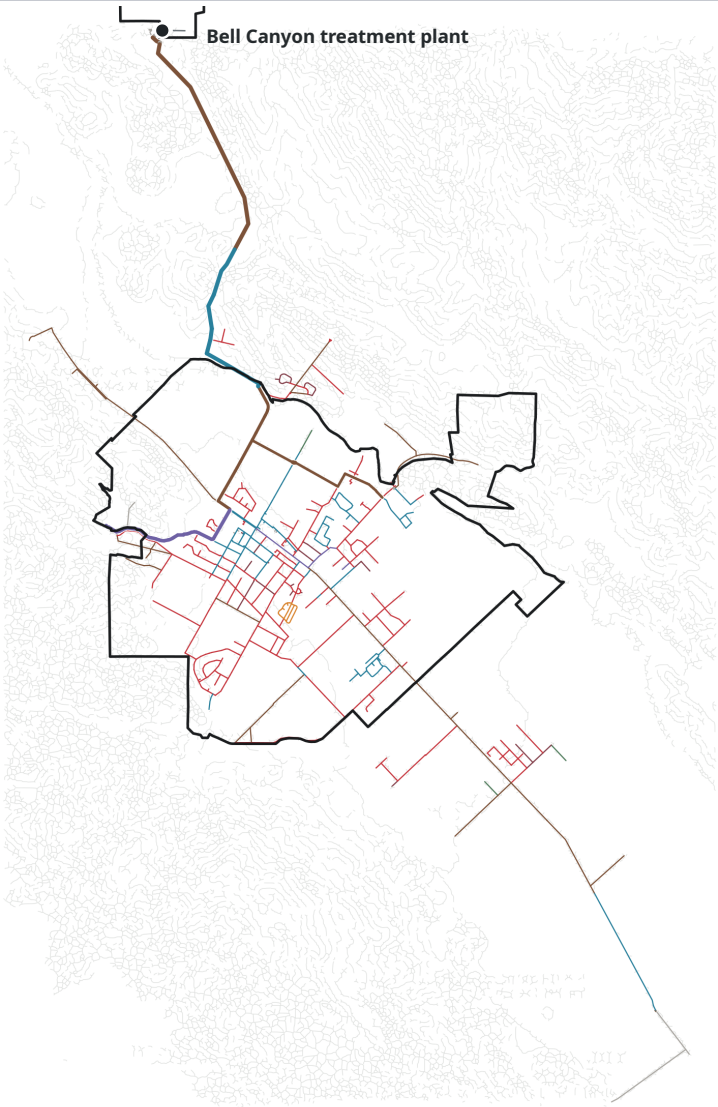
Public record: use is documented; distribution residual history is not publicly available.

MECHANISM

Treatment variability can destabilize ferrous scale; higher transmission velocity can then mobilize released particulate matter.

Taken together, the documented chemistry and velocity changes support a plausible release-and-transport pathway from ferrous transmission mains.

Entire modeled system, with St. Helena city limits retained



NONFERROUS

Red—Asbestos-cement pipe: 19.59 mi
Teal—Polyvinyl chloride pressure pipe: 7.86 mi
Orange—Transite asbestos-cement pipe: 0.65 mi

FERROUS

Brown—Steel pipe: 12.95 mi
Maroon—Cast iron pipe: 1.93 mi
Purple—Ductile iron pipe: 1.72 mi
Green—Galvanized steel pipe: 0.42 mi

OTHER / TOTAL

Gray—Unknown material: 1.62 mi
Light gray—Unspecified material: 0.01 mi
Complete model: 1,153 records | 46.76 mi

Black outline = St. Helena city limits. Full system shown with no geographic or diameter exclusions.

The Bell Canyon steel corridor feeds an all-ACP Crinella interface

01

Bell Canyon outlet

Steel at outlet
included in corridor

02

Transmission

24-in. steel
~8,449 ft

03

Transition

24/18-in. C900
~6,063 ft

04

Town approach

14-in. steel
~4,181 ft

05

Crinella ACP interface

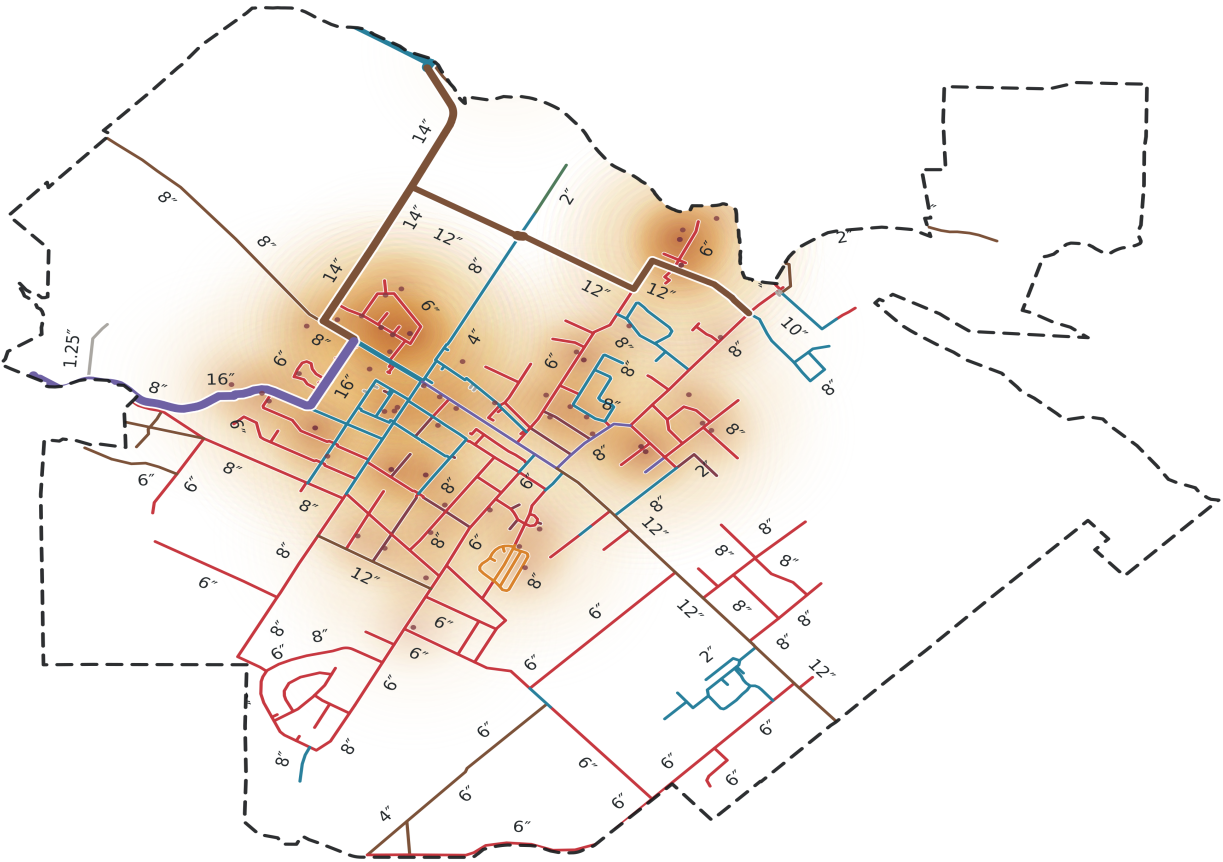
6-in. ACP
32 records | 3,683 ft

Mapped steel corridor: 42 records | 3.66 mi

90,748 ft²
nominal steel interior surface from the Bell Canyon plant outlet to the Crinella ACP interface

The receiving component remains 32 connected 6-in. ACP segments totaling 3,683 ft. No C900 segment occurs in that component; the 14-in. steel approach joins it at model node J-1-1521.

City-limit pipes with on-map diameter labels



MAP KEY

- City limits
- Public-call density
- Report location
- Asbestos-cement pipe
- C900 PVC
- Transite
- Steel
- Ductile iron
- Cast iron
- Galvanized steel
- Unknown / unspecified

DIAMETER NOTATION
6" = modeled nominal diameter. Ordinary strokes are uniform; Bell Canyon feed and connected 16-in. ductile iron use diameter-scaled weight.

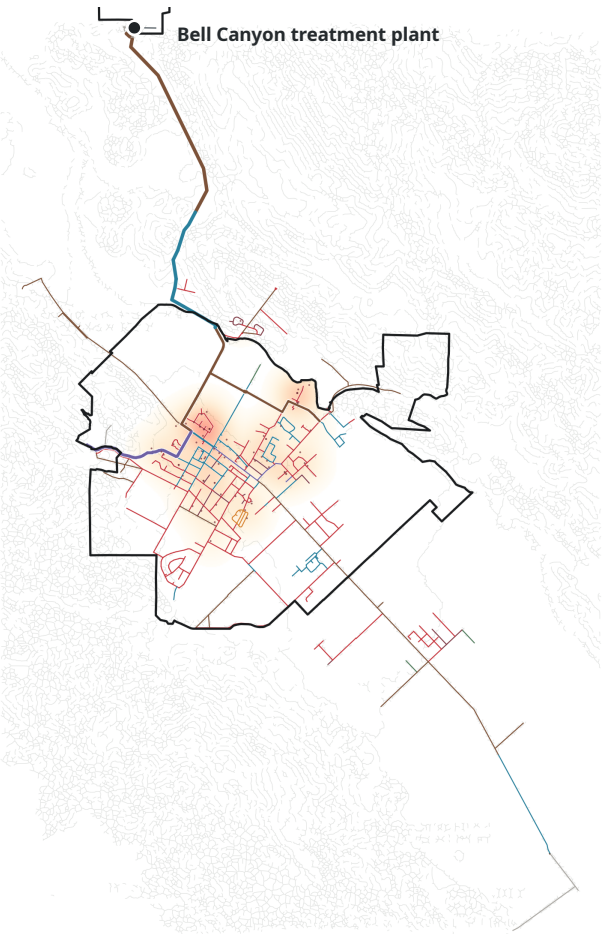
HEAT-MAP UNDERLAY

Amber cores show overlapping report concentrations; the pale outer field shows the surrounding radial fade. Microdots mark individual reports.

Nearest-main comparison: 63 nonferrous, 15 metallic, 1 unknown. Spatial association only.

Diameters are labeled on continuous legible runs; short connector records remain unlabeled where text would obscure the network. Locations are approximate.

Complaints track primary Bell Canyon outlet branches



OBSERVED PATTERN

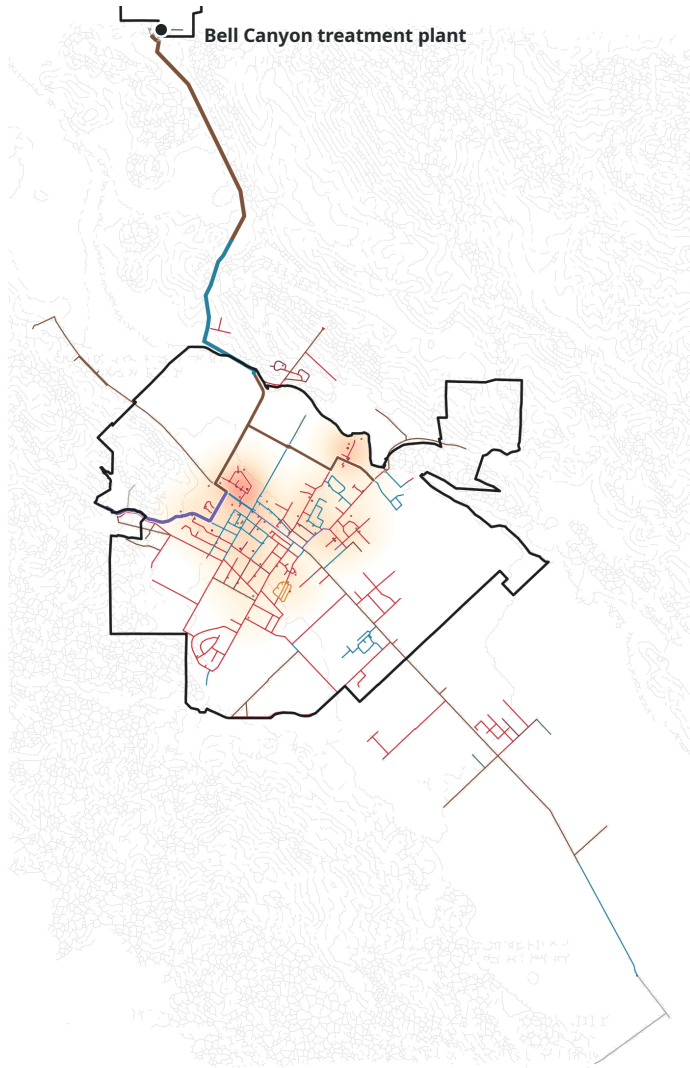
- 79 dated reports concentrate in the northern and central distribution grid.
- No comparable continuous cluster follows the Napa line from the south.
- Repeated hotspots sit near the large Bell Canyon feed's primary branch outlets.

HYDRAULIC INTERPRETATION

At the outlets, flow divides into smaller mains. Solids settle at low velocity and resuspend when source head, tank draw or demand raises wall shear.

The mapped pattern is most consistent with Bell Canyon as the dominant source-pathway.

Dominant Bell Canyon flow divides across the large distribution main



1 Primary steel sediment reservoir

Large-diameter steel sections retain legacy deposition, treatment-derived solids and unstable corrosion scale outside the neighborhood cleaning limits.

2 Continuous downstream loading

Bell Canyon production entrains particulate iron and manganese into tanks, ACP and C900 mains, where low velocity permits redeposition.

3 Hydraulic remobilization

$\Delta H \rightarrow$ higher velocity $\rightarrow$ greater boundary shear (τ_w) $\rightarrow$ entrainment of deposited fines. Source switching, tank draw and demand peaks propagate the remobilized solids into ACP/C900 branches.

Heat map: relative concentration of locations in the publicly available call inventory.

Different source heads redistribute Bell Canyon sediment

Bell Canyon can supply the solids; Napa water, wells and tanks can change the hydraulic grade line that determines where those solids travel, settle and re-enter flow.

BELL CANYON HEAD

Bell Canyon production establishes the northern hydraulic grade and drives flow through the transmission main. Higher discharge increases velocity and particulate transport.

NAPA + WELL HEAD

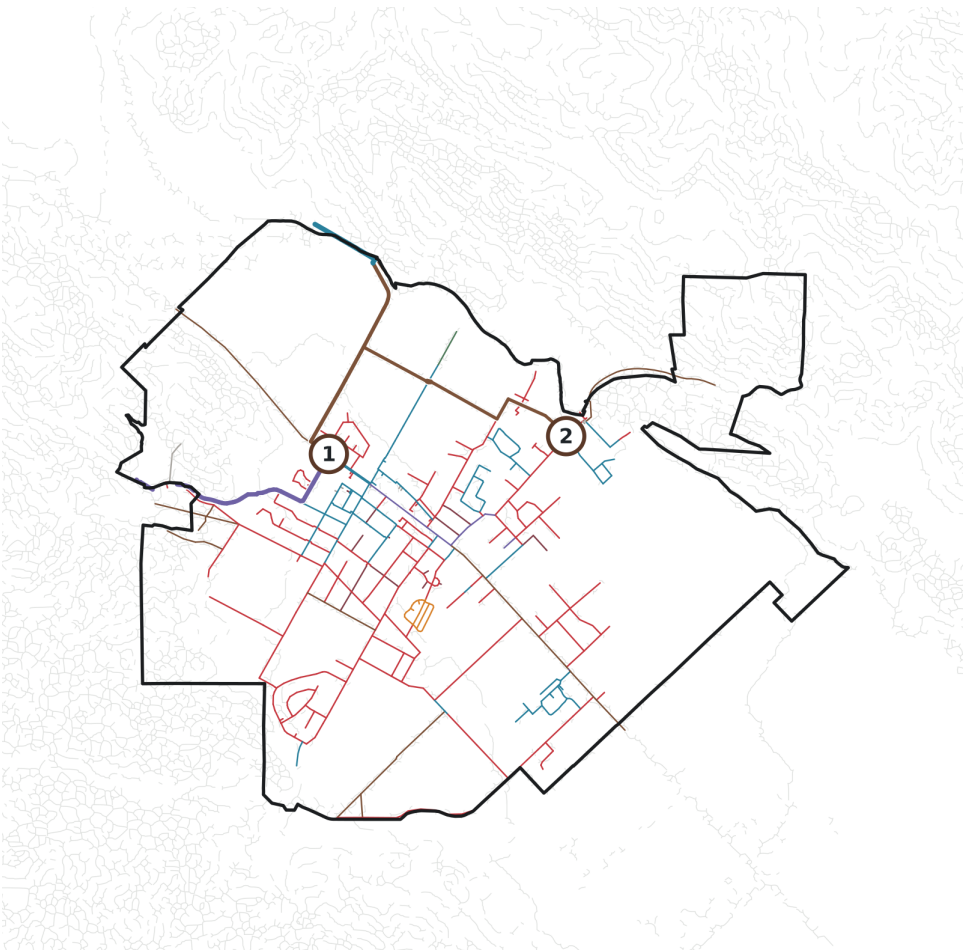
Southern and local pump head can move the flow divide, reverse low-flow branches and push Bell Canyon-derived solids laterally into nonferrous grids.

TANK + DEMAND CYCLES

Tank fill/drawdown and demand peaks change pressure gradients and wall shear. ACP and C900 store settled solids, then release them as velocity rises.

Changing head explains irregular distribution without requiring Napa water or the wells to be the original sediment source.

Nonferrous town mains transmit Bell Canyon pipeline sediment



MAPPED ENTRY POINTS

- 1 Western Bell Canyon outlet: 14-in. steel enters the town grid through 8-in. asbestos-cement and C900 branches
- 2 Eastern Bell Canyon outlet into connected C900 and asbestos-cement branches

Both outlets carry large-main flow and Bell Canyon sediment into smaller receiving mains.

HOW FINE PARTICULATE MOVES

Smooth C900/PVC interiors provide fewer mechanical traps than rough, tuberculated ferrous pipe. Fine suspended solids therefore travel more freely through these nonferrous branches. Older ACP is rougher, but it still receives and conveys Bell Canyon sediment.

Nonferrous mains transmit Bell Canyon-derived iron and manganese particulate; low-flow features store and later remobilize it.

A focused field program can verify the leading source-pathway

01 Document full cleaning history	Confirm the date, method and extent of every documented cleaning of Bell Canyon transmission mains, town mains, clearwells and storage tanks across the full available system record.
02 Reconstruct flow and pressure	Use production, tank-level, pump-head, valve-state, pressure and demand records to reconstruct event-state grade, velocity and direction.
03 Sample sequentially	Sample finished water at the treatment plant outlet, the large main, Tank 1A/2, the Crinella inlet and customer taps under stable and stepped flow.
04 Separate dissolved / particulate	Measure total and dissolved iron and manganese, turbidity, particle-size distribution, mineralogy and corrosion-scale signatures.
05 Run a controlled transient	Increase Bell Canyon flow in controlled steps while monitoring pressure, velocity, wall shear, turbidity and particulate metals downstream. A downstream rise in turbidity and particulate metals would directly validate release and transport from the Bell Canyon main.

CONCLUSION

Sediment transmitted through the Bell Canyon main is the likely dominant source of discoloration in the system.

Based on the available public record and pipe map, one mechanism best fits the evidence: uncleaned large ferrous mains retain sediment upstream; Bell Canyon flow carries it into tanks and nonferrous distribution pipes; and changing source head, tank cycling and demand redistribute and remobilize it. Direct inspection and sequential sampling should be done to confirm attribution.

Public comment item 13.2 - Sept 8, 2026 (note a few more will be coming today)

From Michelle Covell <michelle@covellarchitects.com>

Date Tue 9/8/2026 10:08 AM

To Andrew Bradley <abradley@cityofsthelena.gov>

The opinions expressed herein are mine individually and are not intended to represent the official position of the City of St. Helena or the St. Helena Planning Commission.

Michelle Liu Covell
Resident, Architect

From: Michelle Covell

Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 5:46 PM

To: Paul Dohring <pdohring@cityofsthelena.gov>; Michelle Deasy <mdeasy@cityofsthelena.gov>; Scott Diaz <sdiaz@cityofsthelena.gov>; Andrew Bradley <abradley@cityofsthelena.gov>; Erika Opp <eopp@cityofsthelena.gov>; James McCann <jmccann@cityofsthelena.gov>; Leza Mikhail <lmikhail@cityofsthelena.gov>; Jackie Oneal <joneal@cityofsthelena.gov>; Natalie Bresee <nbresee@cityofsthelena.gov>; Aaron Barak <abarak@cityofsthelena.gov>; Kate Spadarotto <kspadarotto@cityofsthelena.gov>

Subject: For public comment: Scope of General Plan Consistency Review for the Five-Year CIP Regarding the June 2, 2026

To: St. Helena City Council

Scope of General Plan Consistency Review for the Five-Year CIP Regarding the June 2, 2026

Prior to the June 2, 2026 PC hearing, I submitted questions to staff regarding the PC's role in reviewing the Five-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for General Plan consistency. I zoomed with Public Works Director Joe Leach and Planning Director Leza Mikhail to better understand the Commission's responsibilities.

They explained that the Commission's role is limited to verifying that CIP projects are linked to General Plan goals and policies, and does not extend to evaluating project prioritization, sequencing, or broader implementation considerations.

While I appreciate this clarification, I respectfully disagree with this narrow interpretation.

The staff report states:

"General Plan conformity can best be described as furthering the **eventual achievement** of the goals, policies, and infrastructure identified in the General Plan."

In my review, the St. Helena 2040 General Plan:

The St. Helena 2040 General Plan describes itself as a "powerful policy and implementation tool" and notes that General Plan policies serve as strategic directions for City staff and partners, "highlighting where time and resources should be focused." (Chapter 4 – Public Facilities and Services, 4.5 Policies and Implementation) The

General Plan further emphasizes public welfare and safety, as well as water and wastewater infrastructure, as core community priorities. “PF1.H Ensure that water rates are designed to promote conservation, as well as to **ensure that needed capital improvements are made in a timely manner.**”

Taken together, these provisions suggest that General Plan consistency involves more than confirming that projects are linked to policies. It also requires consideration of whether the City's capital investments, timing, and implementation strategy are reasonably advancing the priorities established by the General Plan. This feeds into the “how” and the need for a strategic plan to achieve set goals and objectives.

I recognize that the Planning Commission does not establish budgets, allocate funding, or approve individual projects. However, I believe a meaningful consistency review should consider whether the CIP:

- Prioritizes projects that protect public health and safety.
- Advances critical water, wastewater, and infrastructure needs in a timely manner.
- Reflects general good planning policies to align growth with proper infrastructure and water and wastewater systems
- Provides a realistic path toward achieving adopted goals
- **Avoids repeated deferral of critical projects by directing resources to less critical first through lack of strategic plan**

My concern is that a review limited solely to confirming policy citations risks becoming a procedural exercise rather than a substantive independent evaluation of whether the CIP is actually implementing the General Plan.

My comment is to bring attention to the importance of ensuring that the CIP functions as an effective implementation tool **rather than simply a catalog** of projects.

While it was noted during the hearing that this process has been followed for many years, I believe it is appropriate to re-examine whether the current approach fulfills the intent of the General Plan and provides meaningful oversight. If the Planning Commission's review is limited to confirming that a project has a policy number attached to it, then virtually every CIP could be found consistent regardless of whether critical infrastructure projects are delayed for years. Such a review provides little independent planning analysis and does not test whether the CIP is actually advancing the General Plan's adopted priorities.

For these reasons, I believe future General Plan consistency determinations should include a broader evaluation of whether the CIP's priorities, sequencing, and implementation strategy are aligned with the General Plan's adopted objectives.

In my view, the persistence of unresolved infrastructure needs and recurring project delays suggests that a more substantive review may be warranted.

I believe that determining whether a CIP is consistent with the General Plan requires a broader and more holistic evaluation than confirming policy citations alone.

As the city council, I respectfully ask you, what do you want your Planning Commission to do?

If you have appointed them as a Planning Agency and are relying on them to ensure compliance with the General Plan, please provide clarity in this role, methods or measures, that explain the intent and purpose of the review with the mindset that we are stewards of the General Plan.

Sincerely,

Michelle Liu Covell

Resident, not representing my role as a Planning Commissioner

Public comment item 13.2 - Sept 8, 2026

From Michelle Covell <michelle@covellarchitects.com>

Date Tue 9/8/2026 10:15 AM

To Andrew Bradley <abradley@cityofstheleena.gov>

The opinions expressed herein are mine individually and are not intended to represent the official position of the City of St. Helena or the St. Helena Planning Commission.

Note June 2, The CIPS were brought forth to the Planning commission. I highlight important parts below.
It was said during the meeting, please feel free to watch it. Around 7 minutes in.

<https://stheleena.portal.civicclerk.com/event/1518/media>

Note the way the report is presented, versus the way I was told to review it, was very different.

Why this is important? - I read Mr. Parke's submitted comment, and I read this sentence highlighted.

It is a very important sentence. And the video that documents the discussion, the staff report, and the resolution, and "this is how we've done it" is why we are here.

I am experiencing first hand, why we are here.

I've drafted this letter multiple times now, and there isn't an easy way to cover all this; it's exceptionally difficult to fathom that we are here. It is important to emphasize, though, that there are readily available, feasible solutions. They do, however, require planning. This is one way our town has done things differently than many: when it comes to maintaining our infrastructure, we don't have an asset management plan (different from a strategic plan). Why is that? Because our leaders haven't prioritized one. A list of potential capital improvement projects based on a potentially available budget is not a plan.



Agendas Report to the Planning Commission

Agenda Section: PUBLIC HEARINGS

Department: Public Works Department

DATE:	June 2, 2026
FILE NUMBER:	N/A
SUBJECT:	Consideration and proposed approval of a resolution determining that the Fiscal Year 2026/27 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is in conformance with the General Plan

BACKGROUND:

Sections 65401 and 65402 of the California Government Code require that the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) be in conformance with the General Plan. State Law also mandates that this determination of conformance be made by a designated planning agency. For the City of St. Helena, the designated planning agency is the Planning Commission. The purpose of this staff report is to have the Planning Commission make a determination of consistency with the adopted General Plan.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Planning Commission is tasked with reviewing the planned CIP for Fiscal Year 2026/2027 and making the finding that the activities proposed for inclusion in the CIP are in conformance and consistent with the General Plan.

General Plan conformity can best be described as furthering the eventual achievement of the goals, policies, and infrastructure identified in the General Plan. For example, the construction of a roadway would be consistent with the General Plan if the roadway is depicted on the Circulation Element, identified in the goals and policies, or listed as an implementation program/activity.

DETERMINING THAT FISCAL YEAR 2026/27 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM IS IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE CITY OF ST. HELENA GENERAL PLAN

RECITALS

- A. The City of St. Helena adopted its General Plan on May 14, 2019; and
- B. The City Council of the City of St. Helena has designated the City Planning Commission as the planning agency for the City of St. Helena; and
- C. State Law requires that designated planning agencies review their agency's Capital Improvement Program to ensure compliance with the adopted General Plan; and
- D. The City has identified numerous projects within the Capital Improvement Program, including Civic, Streets, Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Improvements for implementation in Fiscal Year 2026/2027; and
- E. On June 2, 2026, the Planning Commission during, a regularly scheduled meeting, considered the projects and programs for Fiscal Year 2026/2027; and
- F. The determination of conformity with the General Plan pursuant to Government Code Sections 65401 and 65402 is not considered a "project" under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 5.1. Consideration and proposed approval of a resolution determining that the Fiscal Year 2026/27 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is in conformance with the General Plan

CEQA Determination: Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

Prepared By: Stephanie Killingsworth, PW Financial Analyst

Recommendation: Adopt the attached resolution determining that Fiscal Year 2026/2027 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is in conformance with the General Plan.

Public Works Director, Joseph Leach, PE presented the item.

Chair Warner opened the meeting for public comment.

No public comments were received.

Chair Warner closed the meeting for public comment.

The commission discussed the project.

Commissioner Autumn Anderson moved to approve the CIP report as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hector Lopez and on roll call carried by the following vote:

AYES: Chair Christopher Warner, Commissioner Autumn Anderson, Commissioner Hector Lopez

NOES: Commissioner Michelle Covell

ABSENT: Vice-Chair Sue Furdek

ABSTAIN: None

RECUSE: None

The opinions expressed herein are mine individually and are not intended to represent the official position of the City of St. Helena or the St. Helena Planning Commission.

Michelle Liu Covell

Resident, Architect

City Council item 13.2 9/8/26

From Tracy McBride <tracymcbride22@gmail.com>

Date Tue 9/8/2026 12:21 PM

To City Clerk <cityclerk@cityofsthelena.gov>

Dear Mayor and City Council members,

I'd first like to thank the City, the dedicated Council members, and the volunteers who are working diligently to solve the City's water issues.

Two items:

1. Please be aware that drinking discolored water is not the only health concern. There is also a concern for anyone with an open/healing wound — such as from surgery — that needs to be washed daily. Using smelly, discolored water for that purpose is unacceptable due to the risk of infections. Our citizens may also be drinking less water, which is necessary for health, because of these water problems.
2. I urge you to replace water pipes whenever street paving is done, to help advance the ultimate solution to the water problem: full pipe replacement.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tracy McBride,

Phone: [510-517-6202](tel:510-517-6202)

email: tracymcbride22@gmail.com

Public comment item 13.2 - Sept 8, 2026 Part 3

From Michelle Covell <michelle@covellarchitects.com>

Date Tue 9/8/2026 12:32 PM

To Andrew Bradley <abradley@cityofsthelena.gov>

Public Comment

The opinions expressed herein are mine individually and are not intended to represent the official position of the City of St. Helena or the St. Helena Planning Commission.

I am including the correspondence below for transparency and to provide context for my comments.

After nearly a year serving as a Planning Commissioner, I have found that the role, responsibilities, applicable handbook, and expectations of the Commission have not always been clear. Yet these are important responsibilities. Those who serve the community, whether for one year, four years, or fifteen, have an obligation to understand the role they have accepted and to take public service seriously.

For a Planning Commissioner, that means understanding the General Plan, the Zoning Code, and the effect that seemingly small words and decisions can have on residents, the community, and the built environment. It also means understanding what it means to serve as a steward of the community and to protect public health and safety.

I believe the same principle applies to City Council.

Our community has deferred strategic planning, capital improvement priorities, and difficult infrastructure decisions for years. At times, it seems that more energy has been devoted to maintaining the appearance of a well-run organization and minimizing legal exposure than to addressing fundamental problems.

But the City Manager/City Council form of government works only when those entrusted with leadership make decisions that protect the health and safety of residents, safeguard public resources, and prioritize basic needs, **including something as fundamental as clean, reliable water.**

I am not including the correspondence below to point fingers at anyone copied on the email. I am including it because it illustrates the level of questioning and discussion surrounding an item that was brought before the Planning Commission as the City's designated planning agency to review for conformance with the General Plan.

The Planning Commission was given approximately three days to review a significant Capital Improvement Program. Rather than having a substantive discussion about the condition of our infrastructure and the City's water system, much of the discussion became focused on what the Commission was "supposed" to do, how the process had been handled previously, and the fact that it had always been done that way.

That concerns me.

The General Plan calls for action to occur in a **timely manner**. "Timely manner" does not mean **eventual achievement**.
Eventual.

If "eventual achievement" becomes the standard we accept as a City, then we should not be surprised that we are where we are today.

And the condition of our water system is a very real consequence.

I am deeply frustrated by having brown water in our community on a regular basis. We are living in the 21st century, in a remarkable community with extraordinarily capable and intelligent people. We should be able to do better.

I also continue to hear the question, "What does the City Attorney say?"

The City Attorney's responsibility is to advise and protect the City from legal exposure. That is an important function. But avoiding litigation cannot become a substitute for solving the underlying problem.

I have also heard discussion of a potential class-action lawsuit. When a CBS reporter asked me about that possibility, my immediate reaction was that **a lawsuit is not going to fix our water system**.

Litigation will consume time, money, and resources. Residents will spend money on legal representation, while City resources, including funds generated through the Water Enterprise—will ultimately be spent defending the City, paying attorneys, settlements, and other legal costs.

That is money that could otherwise be directed toward infrastructure and capital improvements.

And even if a lawsuit succeeds, we would still be left with the same fundamental problem: **we need clean, reliable water**.

That is why I was encouraged to see Mr. Parke's comments and presentation. What he has proposed deserves serious consideration. His hypothesis makes sense to me, particularly the suggestion of scoping the pipeline from Bell Canyon and addressing accumulated sediment at its source.

A **systematic, methodical approach** to understanding where the sediment is coming from and removing it at the source could potentially help keep the distribution system cleaner for longer.

He also pointed out the timing: the Crinella neighborhood was cleaned in June, followed by the bus/fire-hydrant incident and then the return of brown water. That sequence was inefficient as now cleaned pipes have likely been refilled sediment again.

At this point, I believe most residents understand that we have a serious water problem. What we need now is a willingness to work together, ask difficult questions, examine the evidence, and pursue practical solutions.

I also believe that certain public-service roles should require a meaningful level of training before someone assumes those responsibilities.

At a minimum, the General Plan should be read and understood by those making decisions based upon it.

And for City Council, I believe there should be an equally strong expectation that Councilmembers understand the ordinances they are adopting.

During the recent ADU ordinance discussion, it appeared that some Councilmembers were not fully aware of what had previously been adopted.

The City Council adopted an ADU ordinance in 2025, and that ordinance was substantially rewritten in 2026.

The names of most current Councilmembers are on the 2025 ordinance.

For example, under the 2025 ordinance, if an ADU was within 30 feet of a setback, there were specific requirements regarding window frosting or sill height. Those were requirements that this Council had previously approved.

My point is not to embarrass anyone. My point is that **this is how we can do better.**

I am tired of seeing time, money, and public trust lost through confusion, obfuscation, and decisions made without sufficient understanding of the underlying material.

We need to do better. Sure. BUT HOW? How, address mistakes, address protecting the instution over residents, address gaslighting. Acknowledge it for what it is, and hold people accountable.

If you choose to serve this community, please understand the role you have accepted.

Read the documents. Understand the laws, plans, ordinances, and policies. Ask difficult questions.

Challenge assumptions. And most importantly, take the responsibility of public service seriously.

Please—let's do better.

Michelle Liu Covell

Resident with unfinished business.

From: James McCann <jmccann@cityofsthelena.gov>

Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2026 6:40 PM

To: Michelle Covell <michelle@covellarchitects.com>; Leza Mikhail <lmikhail@cityofsthelena.gov>

Subject: RE: Resident Notification - Agenda Published

Michelle- These are good questions.

The CIP GP conformity review is an irregular item for the PC agenda, but you'll see it a few times during your term. Leza and Joe can walk you thru the CIP and the PC's role.

Best,

-Jim

From: Michelle Covell <michelle@covellarchitects.com>

Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2026 5:27 PM

To: Leza Mikhail <lmikhail@cityofsthelena.gov>; James McCann <jmccann@cityofsthelena.gov>

Subject: FW: Resident Notification - Agenda Published

Good Afternoon Leza and James,

Hope you two are well.

I just read your newsletter Leza, two thumbs from me.

I am reviewing the agenda packet for the planning commission on Tuesday.
Just got the notification.

Generally speaking, Is there a minimum number of days the PC should have to review the documents before the PC? **Minimum requirement is 72 hours before the meeting. Staff typically try to post 1 week in advance of the meeting. In this instance, with the short week and staff constraints, we were not able to meet the 1 week goal.** When I joined, I know there was discussion that the PC was to receive the packet a week before the general public, or thereabouts. **The PC and the public receive the agenda packet at the same time. This is a standard practice in the industry.**

We would get it the Friday, and have a full week to review prior to the Tuesday hearing.

I bring this up because I read through the items, and I would need some time to digest the CIP – item 5.1 And perhaps schedule some time to meet with whoever I’m supposed to meet with, I’m not sure if that’s Stephanie Killingsworth, or James, or Leza, or Joe?

For the CIP item, in reviewing the staff report, and the budget spreadsheet. I do have some initial questions that would help guide me in understanding the role of the planning commissioner.

1. Is there an example of a planning commission report/review/meeting, that you could reference? This appears to be a protocol, would like to see an example. **Leza – I’m not sure about the past reports, but I was able to find the link to the last CIP. These are approved by the City Council, typically in a 5-year plan. [CIP Interactive Dashboard | St Helena, CA](#)**
2. It says “once the planning commission makes the finding...” in staff report, do we, commissioners make findings? I remember watching a previous PC, it was clarified something else... by John Ponte. It would just be helpful for me to understand clearly what “makes findings” means, and to what level? **The Planning Commission is reviewing the CIP for General Plan conformance before it is taken to the City Council. Public Works has provided their understanding of the conformance and is bringing this to the Commission for concurrence.**
3. For the CIP budgets, are there any contractor contracts? What are the numbers based on? **Joe will need to respond to this.**
4. Can I see the previous FY CIP? **Please see link in number one above.**
5. For the annual columns, are those costs below signed contracts that are projected to be completed that year? If not, can you clarify what these costs represent? **The Planning Commission is not being asked to look at the financial analysis or projection of the costs, but instead the General Plan conformance. That being said, Joe will need to respond to this particular question.**
6. I would need to understand better each of the CIPs, is there a detailed description of each one? For reference, CIPs are not intended to be detailed scopes of work. **They are, in essence, strategic plans and prioritizations of capital improvement projects that the City Council agrees to fund, based on estimates. They are generally well-budgeted and when staff enter into the contracting and detailed scoping, they work within the authorized budget. The Planning Commission is not being requested to look at or analyze the items or budget. You can certainly still comment on the items though.**
7. Perhaps this level of detail is not in my purview, if so, I would need to understand what my role and responsibility is, in order to serve the task. **Hopefully, I was able to provide a bit more of the role as a Planning Commissioner. 😊**

Can you also elaborate on the resolution, and the mention in the staff report, what the Planning Commission as the “planning agency” means, and what responsibilities are associated? **Joe will need to respond to this. The Planning Commission is reviewing the item for General Plan conformance.**

Can you elaborate to what “ensure compliance” means? (item c) **...ensuring compliance with the items listed and their conformance with the City’s General Plan policies.**

Can you also help me understand what “**Consistent** with the city of SH’s adopted General Plan” means. Is there a definition or scale of what “consistent” means? **There is not a specific definition, but generally speaking, when you review the associated policy with the project term/scope, it must be in line with the policies of the General**

Plan. If when you are reviewing the items, you are curious or concerned, you certainly can request clarification from Public Works/Joe.

Answering these questions will help me better understand, and focus on my review correctly.

Sincerely,

In this case, planning commissioner Covell.

Michelle Liu Covell

Architect, Partner, Director of Operations, LEED AP

707.968.9280

COVELL ARCHITECTS

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Water Discoloration SH City Council 8 Sept items 13.2 and 13.3

I support Garry Rose's concerns regarding the proposed \$500,000 Water Enterprise Fund credit, and I support the **methodical, evidence-based approach** outlined by Joshua Parke.

I understand the desire to provide customers relief. But a rebate does not solve the problem. **The City's priority should be to determine the cause of the discoloration and eliminate it.**

Joshua Parke has offered a useful framework: develop a hypothesis, examine the system data, identify the likely source and pathway, and then **test it through direct inspection, sequential sampling and controlled hydraulic testing**. He is not claiming to have proven the cause; he is proposing a way to determine it.

That is the approach I believe we should pursue.

The Water Enterprise Fund should be focused on **solving the water problem, not simply managing its consequences**. Apart from the significant Proposition 218 and Proposition 26 questions raised by this proposal, **every dollar and every hour of staff time devoted to a broad rebate is a dollar and an hour that cannot be devoted to identifying and correcting the underlying cause.**

A rebate may soften the burden. It does not remove the burden.

The longer the cause remains unresolved, the longer our residents and businesses continue to live with the consequences.

Our goal should not be to make living with discolored water easier. Our goal should be to make discolored water stop.

Daniel Hale



Agenda Report to the City Council

Agenda Section: NEW BUSINESS

Department: Admin

DATE:	September 8, 2026
FROM:	James McCann, Interim City Manager
SUBJECT:	Establishment of a One-Time Water Bill Credit Program and Ongoing Discolored Water Incident Credit Policy in Response to Ongoing Water Discoloration Impacts
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Adopt Resolution approving: 1. The creation of a one-time \$500,000 Water Bill Credit Fund allocated from the Water Enterprise Fund for active utility customers who were on account on or before July 31, 2026, anticipating an approximate \$200 credit per eligible customer account (excluding non-potable/standby account types). 2. The establishment of an ongoing reporting-based Water Bill Credit Policy for active customers who log verified discolored water incidents on the "St. Helena Grapevine" online portal or via direct phone call to City Staff. 3. Authorization for the City Manager, or their designee, to establish administrative guidelines to implement, calculate, and process one-time credits, ongoing usage credits, and damage claims.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	N/A
STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE:	The purpose of this action is to acknowledge and directly alleviate the financial and operational impact experienced by St. Helena water customers due to persistent water discoloration incidents. This report outlines a structured approach to providing immediate relief through a one-time bill credit, establishing an ongoing credit process linked to incident reporting, clarifying customer eligibility, and maintaining resident access to damage claims and existing filter rebates.
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	Total Program Fund Allocation: \$500,000 to be designated from the Water Enterprise Fund reserve balance.

	Funding Source: The primary funding for both the initial \$500,000 allocation and future ongoing credits will be absorbed through accumulated interest earnings within the Water Enterprise Fund, minimizing operational disruptions to planned infrastructure improvement budgets. One-Time Credit Calculation: Distributed among eligible active accounts, staff estimates an upcoming credit of approximately \$200 per eligible account (based on base rate calculations). Account Eligibility Exclusions: Accounts categorized exclusively as fire service, landscape-only service, or "standby" meters are not eligible for the bill credit, ensuring funds directly support accounts heavily impacted by daily indoor potable water use. Ongoing Reporting Credits: Future ongoing credits will be calculated based on the customer's proportional water usage during the specific billing period in which a discolored water event was reported on the St. Helena Grapevine. Administrative Tracking: The deployment of smart meters integrated with the EyeOnWater monitoring platform allows City staff and customers to track high-frequency interval water usage (reported multiple times daily), making credit calculations precise and transparent.
CEQA DETERMINATION:	Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

BACKGROUND:

The City of St. Helena deeply values its residents and business owners and acknowledges the frustration, disruption, and inconvenience caused by ongoing discolored water issues. The City recognizes that clean, clear water is an essential baseline service, and extended periods of aesthetic discoloration carry tangible burdens for our community.

Discolored water incidents have recurred over recent years due to a combination of seasonal source water shifts and unanticipated system shocks:

1. **System Disturbances:** Mainline distribution shocks, such as the July 19 bus/hydrant incident, triggered pressure shifts that mobilized legacy sediment throughout the distribution system.
2. **Seasonal Source Dynamics:** Seasonal demand shifts, temperature changes, and turnover in surface water reservoirs create annual water chemistry shifts that disturb naturally settling minerals.

Despite these water clarity challenges, the City remains committed to long-term systemic fixes while offering immediate community support.

Long-Term Infrastructure Improvements

City staff is aggressively working on multi-faceted projects targeting the root causes of water discoloration:

- **Legacy Pipe Rehabilitation:** Mainline cleaning (flushing) and physical replacement of aging cast-iron and mineral-coated pipes running under City streets.
- **Treatment Process Optimization:** Continual updates to Water Treatment Plant operations implemented in close technical coordination with the California Water Quality Control Board's Division of Drinking Water (DDW), our water treatment consultant, and the City's established Water and Wastewater Advisory Committee.
- **Bell Canyon Intake Tower:** Final design phases are concluding for the multi-year project to replace the Bell Canyon Water Intake Tower, positioning the project for full installation on the horizon by late 2027/early 2028.

Current Utility Rate Structure Reference

For context regarding customer bill impacts, St. Helena utility accounts are billed based on fixed base fees (determined by meter size) and volumetric usage measured in Hundred Cubic Feet (HCF), where 1 HCF = 748.05 gallons (cityofstheleena.gov/349/Utility-Billing-Services-Division).

- **Base Fees:** Current monthly base fees range from \$85.35 (standard 5/8" residential meter) to \$4,524.23 (6" commercial meter).
- **Tiered Volumetric Usage Rates:**
 - Tier 1 (1–6 HCF): \$7.55 per HCF
 - Tier 2 (6–7 HCF): \$15.21 per HCF
 - Tier 3 (8+ HCF): \$16.28 per HCF

Existing Water Filter Rebate Program

Established in October 2024 (Resolution 2024-139 - cityofstheleena.gov/336/Water-Conservation-Rebates), the City continues to offer its Water Filter Rebate Program.

- **Residential Accounts:** Single \$150 incentive for eligible filtration devices purchased prior to program implementation, or replacement filters for previously installed units.
- **Commercial Accounts:** \$300 (1–3 sinks), \$400 (4+ sinks), \$400 (commercial restaurants), \$400 (HOA facilities), plus a one-time \$300 rebate for replacement filters on previously acquired devices.

As of August 2026, the City has provided rebates to 18 water customers that have applied for the program, totaling \$2,700. The rebate program was started with a baseline of \$50,000 from the Water Enterprise Fund.

DISCUSSION:

One-Time Bill Credit Program

To provide immediate relief to customers who endured severe discolored water impacts, staff proposes a \$500,000 credit fund to be split over the approximately 2,000 active water

customers.

- **Eligibility Requirements:** Accounts must have been active on or before July 31, 2026.
- **Ineligible Meter/Service Types:** To ensure relief is targeted appropriately to potable domestic and commercial users affected in their day-to-day living and business operations, the following service categories are explicitly excluded from receiving bill credits:
 - Dedicated fire service connections.
 - Landscape-only irrigation service accounts.
 - Dedicated "standby" meters.
- **Credit Value:** Staff is refining the final allocation formula (utilizing base fee weighting and eligible account counts). Eligible active residential customers can anticipate a credit of approximately \$200 applied directly to an upcoming billing cycle.

Ongoing Reporting Credit Program via "St. Helena Grapevine"

To address future discolored water events, staff proposes an ongoing credit structure tied directly to community reporting on the St. Helena Grapevine (cityofsthelena.gov/grapevine) or via phone call to City Staff - Public Works Administration Number: (707) 968-2658 (if leaving a voicemail information should include name, service address, water account number, and contact phone number).

- **Actionable Reporting:** Reporting issues through the St. Helena Grapevine provides real-time geographic data, allowing Public Works to initiate targeted water main flushing to clear localized lines quickly.
- **Direct Customer Assistance:** When an incident is reported, staff responds directly—testing water on-site, sharing technical insights, and guiding the resident through remediation steps.
- **Usage-Based Credit:** Future credits will be credited proportionally against the customer's water usage recorded during the reported discolored water window, leveraged using EyeOnWater (cityofsthelena.gov/912/EyeOnWater-Water-Monitoring) smart meter interval data (standard eligibility restrictions apply).

Property Damage Claims & Property Relief

Customers affected by discolored water who experience property damage (such as stained laundry or damaged water-using appliances) may file a formal damage claim (cityofsthelena.gov/533/Claims) through the City for potential reimbursement alongside applying for the established Water Filter Rebate Program.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

N/A

GOAL:

Miscellaneous/Other

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Presentation - Discolored Water Bill Credit and Policy
2. Resolution - Discolored Water Credit and Incident Policy
3. Ongoing Discolored Water Incident Credit Policy v1
4. Public Comment - Garry Rose
5. Public Comment - Chistopher Warner
6. Public Comment - Daniel Hale

DISCOLORED WATER RELIEF AND INCIDENT POLICY

ITEM 13.3

City Council Meeting – September 8, 2026

Jim McCann, Interim City Manager



SHORT AND LONG-TERM INFRASTRUCTURE FIXES

- **Mitigation Program Discussed in Item 13.2** 💧
- **Pipe Rehab & Plant Optimization** 🔧
 - **Mainline Flushing:** Expanding high-velocity water main flushing to scour accumulated mineral buildup from distribution lines.
 - **Pipe Replacement:** Physical replacement of aging cast-iron and mineral-coated water pipes running beneath City streets.
 - **Process Tuning:** Treatment plant updates in close coordination with California DDW and the Water & Wastewater Advisory Committee.
- **Bell Canyon Intake Tower** 🏗️
 - **Design Phase:** Final design work is concluding on the multi-year project to replace the Bell Canyon Intake Tower.
 - **Multi-Year Capital Investment:** Positions the project for full installation on the horizon by late 2027 or early 2028.
 - **Capital Budget Shield:** Total infrastructure commitments remain protected from bill credit funding sources.

WATER BILL CREDIT PROPOSALS

One-Time Water Bill Credit

- **Fund Allocation:** \$500,000 designated from the Water Enterprise Fund reserve balance for active customers.
- **Interest Reserve Funding:** Funded primarily by accumulated interest earnings in the Water Enterprise Fund, preserving planned capital improvements.
- **Eligibility Cutoff:** Active potable water accounts on or before July 31, 2026 (~2,400 active accounts citywide).
- **Targeted Relief:** Explicitly excludes fire line service, landscape irrigation, and standby meters to focus funds on daily potable use.

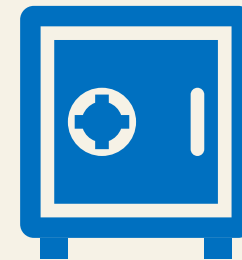
~\$200

Estimated One-Time Credit Per
Eligible Account

WATER BILL CREDIT PROPOSALS

Ongoing Incident Credit Policy

- **48-Hour Grapevine Reporting Requirement:** Customers log discolored water events on the St. Helena Grapevine portal (cityofsthelena.gov/grapevine) or via phone (707-968-2658) within 48 hours.
- **EyeOnWater Smart Meter Integration:** High-frequency interval data retrieved from smart meters precisely measures volumetric consumption during the verified incident window.
- **Volumetric Flushing Offset:** Billing credit offsets usage charges incurred while flushing private lines at 2026-tiered rates (\$7.55 to \$16.28/HCF).
- **Sustainable Funding Source:** Ongoing credits granted under this administrative policy will be absorbed by interest earnings generated in the Water Enterprise Fund.



UTILITY RATES & ELIGIBILITY

Account / Usage Tier	2026 Volumetric Rate	Policy Credit Status	Policy Rationale
Tier 1 Usage (1–6 HCF)	\$7.55 per HCF	Eligible	Offsets domestic line flushing usage
Tier 2 Usage (6–7 HCF)	\$15.21 per HCF	Eligible	Offsets domestic line flushing usage
Tier 3 Usage (8+ HCF)	\$16.28 per HCF	Eligible	Offsets domestic line flushing usage
Fire Service Lines	Dedicated Fire Rates	Excluded	Emergency safety line; no daily potable use
Landscape Irrigation	Dedicated Meters	Excluded	Outdoor non-potable irrigation account
Standby Meters	Dedicated Base Fee	Excluded	Inactive / non-potable standby status

SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Water Filter Rebate Program

- **Established Incentive:** Enacted under Res. 2024-139 with \$50,000 baseline from the Water Enterprise Fund.
- **Residential Tier:** \$150 incentive for new filtration device purchase or replacement filter elements.
- **Commercial Tier:** \$300 (1–3 sinks) to \$400 (4+ sinks, restaurants, HOAs), plus \$300 replacement filter rebate.
- **Current Utilization:** 18 rebates approved totaling \$2,700 through August 2026.

Property Damage Claims

- **Formal Claim Process:** Customers experiencing physical property damage can submit a formal Claim Form to the City Clerk.
- **Covered Losses:** Applies to documented damage such as stained laundry/linens or damaged water appliances.
- **Independent Evaluation:** Evaluated separately alongside bill credit programs for full reimbursement consideration.

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

Recommended Council Action:

Adopt Resolution Approving:

1. The creation of a one-time \$500,000 Water Bill Credit Fund allocated from the Water Enterprise Fund for active utility customers who were on account on or before July 31, 2026, anticipating an approximate \$200 credit per eligible customer account (excluding non-potable/standby account types).
2. The establishment of an ongoing reporting-based Water Bill Credit Policy for active customers who log verified discolored water incidents on the "St. Helena Grapevine" online portal or via direct phone call to City Staff.
3. Authorization for the City Manager, or their designee, to establish administrative guidelines to implement, calculate, and process one-time credits, ongoing usage credits, and damage claims.

METER SIZE BREAKDOWN

Meter Size	Number of Meters	Primary Usage Type
5/8	1,877	Residential
3/4	35	Multifamily – Residential
1	396	Commercial – Multifamily – Residential
1.5	51	Churches – Commercial – Motel/Hotel – Multifamily
2	41	Commercial – Mobile Home – Motel/Hotel – Multifamily – Schools
3	3	Commercial – Multifamily
4	9	Commercial – Industrial – Motel/Hotel – Schools
6	10	Commercial – Industrial – Mobile Home – Motel/Hotel

Other Considerations

- Vineyard Valley has 2 meters (2” and 6”) that support 218 units
- 129 new accounts were created from July 2025 to July 2026

METER SIZE BREAKDOWN

Classification	5/8	3/4	1	1.5	2	3	4	6	Total
Churches	3	0	5	2	1	0	0	0	11
Commercial	125	2	51	9	10	1	2	1	201
Dormitory	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Industrial	7	1	2	2	1	0	2	5	20
Laundry	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Library-Schools	1	0	1	3	5	0	3	0	13
Mobile Homes	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
Motel/Hotel	0	0	0	2	4	0	1	2	9
Multi Family	25	2	39	19	8	2	0	1	96
Multi Unit	40	0	14	1	0	0	0	0	55
Residential	1,676	30	284	11	10	0	1	0	2,012
Total	1,877	35	396	51	41	3	9	10	2,422

ONE-TIME SAMPLE BILL CREDIT OPTIONS

Equal Credit (option 1)

Meter Size	Number of Meters	Bill Credit	Total
5/8	1,877	\$200	\$375,400
3/4	35	\$200	\$7,000
1	396	\$200	\$79,200
1.5	51	\$200	\$10,200
2	41	\$200	\$8,200
3	3	\$200	\$600
4	9	\$200	\$1,800
6	10	\$200	\$2,000
TOTAL	2,422		\$484,400

ONE-TIME SAMPLE BILL CREDIT OPTIONS

Equal Credit (option 2)

Meter Size	Number of Meters	Bill Credit	Total
5/8	1,877	\$206	\$386,662
3/4	35	\$206	\$7,210
1	396	\$206	\$81,576
1.5	51	\$206	\$10,506
2	41	\$206	\$8,446
3	3	\$206	\$618
4	9	\$206	\$1,854
6	10	\$206	\$2,060
TOTAL	2,422		\$498,932

ONE-TIME SAMPLE BILL CREDIT OPTIONS

Meter Size Ratio Credit (option 1)

Meter Size	Number of Meters	Meter Size Ratio	Bill Credit	Total
5/8	1,877	1	\$165	\$309,705
3/4	35	1.2	\$198	\$6,930
1	396	1.6	\$264	\$104,544
1.5	51	2.4	\$396	\$20,196
2	41	3.2	\$528	\$21,648
3	3	4.8	\$792	\$2,376
4	9	6.4	\$1,056	\$9,504
6	10	9.6	\$1,584	\$15,840
TOTAL	2,422			\$490,743

ONE-TIME SAMPLE BILL CREDIT OPTIONS

Meter Size Ratio Credit (option 2)

Meter Size	Number of Meters	Meter Size Ratio	Bill Credit	Total
5/8	1,877	1	\$168	\$315,336
3/4	35	1.2	\$202	\$7,056
1	396	1.6	\$269	\$106,445
1.5	51	2.4	\$403	\$20,563
2	41	3.2	\$538	\$22,042
3	3	4.8	\$806	\$2,419
4	9	6.4	\$1,075	\$9,677
6	10	9.6	\$1,613	\$16,128
TOTAL	2,422			\$499,666

CITY OF ST. HELENA

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-XX

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. HELENA, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING A ONE-TIME WATER BILL CREDIT ALLOCATION OF \$500,000 FROM THE WATER ENTERPRISE FUND AND ADOPTING AN ONGOING DISCOLORED WATER INCIDENT CREDIT POLICY FOR QUALIFYING WATER UTILITY CUSTOMERS

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the City of St. Helena owns and operates a municipal water system providing potable water service to residential, commercial, and institutional customers throughout the community; and

WHEREAS, recurring aesthetic discolored water incidents have impacted water utility customers in recent years, including disturbances resulting from seasonal reservoir dynamics and unforeseen distribution system shocks such as the July 19 main line disruption; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes the inconvenience, disruption, and frustration caused by discolored water events, seeking to express meaningful support through direct financial relief; and

WHEREAS, the City is actively pursuing comprehensive long-term infrastructure solutions, including pipe cleaning and replacement, water treatment process refinements, and the replacement of the Bell Canyon Water Intake Tower; and

WHEREAS, accumulated interest earnings within the Water Enterprise Fund provide reserves can primarily fund a one-time \$500,000 customer relief allocation as well as future ongoing incident credits without compromising planned capital improvement budgets or baseline operations; and

WHEREAS, the recent deployment of smart water meters and the EyeOnWater monitoring platform provides high-frequency usage data that enables transparent and precise credit administration.

RESOLUTION

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of St. Helena as follows:

1. **Recitals:** The Council finds that the above recitals are true and correct and incorporates them into this Resolution.
2. **Authorization of One-Time Credit Fund:** The City Council hereby authorizes and creates a \$500,000 One-Time Water Bill Credit Fund allocated primarily from accumulated interest reserves in the Water Enterprise Fund.
3. **One-Time Credit Eligibility & Parameters:**
 - a. **Eligible Accounts:** Utility customers holding an active potable water service account on or before July 31, 2026.
 - b. **Calculated Credit:** Staff shall apply a target one-time credit of approximately \$200 per eligible account on an upcoming billing cycle, weighted using customer base fees.
 - c. **Explicit Exclusions:** Accounts categorized exclusively as dedicated fireline service, landscape-only service, or "standby" meters are explicitly ineligible for the bill credit.
4. **Adoption of Ongoing Policy:** The City Council hereby adopts the *Ongoing Discolored Water Incident Credit Policy*, attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated by reference.
5. **Administrative Authority:** The City Manager, or their designee, is authorized to establish administrative procedures, publish application forms, adjust final credit distribution mechanics consistent with available funding, and process potential property damage claims resulting from discolored water incidents.

Approved at a Regular Meeting of the St. Helena City Council on September 9, 2026, by the following vote:

Mayor Dohring:	_____
Vice Mayor Deasy:	_____
Council Member Barak:	_____
Council Member Spadarotto:	_____
Council Member Diaz:	_____

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Paul Jamison Dohring, Mayor

Andrew Bradley, City Clerk

EXHIBIT A:

CITY OF ST. HELENA ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

POLICY TITLE: Ongoing Discolored Water Incident Credit Policy

EFFECTIVE DATE: August 21, 2026

DEPARTMENT: Public Works / Utility Billing Services

1.0 PURPOSE

This Policy establishes standard procedures for evaluating and issuing billing credits to active City of St. Helena water utility customers who report verified discolored water incidents via the City's online citizen engagement platform, the St. Helena Grapevine (cityofsthenela.gov/grapevine).

2.0 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- **Active Status:** Must be an active potable water account holder in good standing at the time of the reported incident.
- **Timely Reporting:** The discolored water incident must be logged on the St. Helena Grapevine during or immediately following the occurrence (within 48 hours).
- **Excluded Accounts:** Accounts classified strictly as fire service, landscape-only service, or "standby" meters are not eligible for incident credits under this policy.

3.0 INCIDENT RESPONSE & VERIFICATION

- **Geographic Mapping & Flushing:** Upon receipt of a Grapevine report, Public Works staff will log the incident site to identify localized mineral mobilization and dispatch staff to perform targeted water main flushing in the impacted distribution area.
- **Customer Interaction & Water Testing:** When warranted or requested, Public Works personnel will coordinate directly with the reporting customer to perform on-site water quality testing, verify turbidity levels, and provide guidance on flushing private household plumbing.

4.0 CREDIT CALCULATION & ADMINISTRATION

- **Usage Window Evaluation:** Credits will be calculated based on the customer's volumetric water usage recorded during the verified incident window. High-frequency interval data retrieved from the EyeOnWater smart meter system will be utilized to determine consumption during the affected period.
- **Credit Amount:** Qualifying accounts will receive a credit offsetting the volumetric usage charges incurred while flushing private lines or enduring discolored water conditions, calculated using current tiered usage rates (tiered rates as of 2026: \$7.55/HCF for Tier 1, \$15.21/HCF for Tier 2, \$16.28/HCF for Tier 3).

- **Funding Source:** Ongoing credits granted under this policy will be absorbed by first by interest earnings generated within the Water Enterprise Fund.

5.0 DAMAGE CLAIMS & SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMS

- **Property Damage Claims:** Customers experiencing physical property damage attributable to discolored water (e.g., ruined laundry or damaged water appliances) may submit a formal Claim Form to the City Clerk's office for reimbursement consideration.
- **Water Filter Rebates:** Customers remain eligible to apply for the City's Water Filter Rebate Program (\$150 residential / up to \$400 commercial) established under Resolution 2024-139 to offset filtration equipment costs.

City Council Meeting | September 8, 2026 | Item 13.3

Submitted by: Garry L Rose, St. Helena, CA

Dear Mayor Dohring, Vice Mayor Deasy, Council Members Barak, Spadaratto, and Diaz, Acting City Manager McCann, and Director of Public Works Leach.

Establishment of a One-Time Water Bill Credit Program and Ongoing Discolored Water Incident Credit Policy

The City Council and City Staff need to determine whether the proposed One-Time Water Bill Credit Program and Ongoing Discolored Water Incident Credit Policy in Item 13.3 actually meets the original goal. The central questions remain:

- Will this program meaningfully satisfy most water customers?
- Is a \$200 household rebate an acceptable trade-off for reducing Water Enterprise revenue by \$500,000—especially when those same funds could be directed toward fixing the brown water problem itself?

These questions should be answered *before* the City becomes entangled in Proposition 218 and Proposition 26 implications, additional city attorney costs, and staff time required to design, implement, and administer a new credit program.

The program, as described, is not fully defined. The \$500,000 allocation is only the starting point. The cost of the ongoing discolored water credit policy is unknown. The funding source—“accumulated interest reserves in the Water Enterprise Fund”—is not incidental. These reserves exist because water customers pay water rates. They support normal Enterprise operations and maintain required reserves. Using them for rebates will significantly impact already scarce Water Enterprise resources. Investment income is not free money.

A \$200 rebate may help a few households, but the consensus is clear: this is not a substitute for fixing the problem. Item 13.3 should be respectfully withdrawn, acknowledged as a well-intended but misaligned proposal, and replaced with a properly designed program that compensates customers who were *actually* financially harmed by the brown water incident. The Water Enterprise should not be deprived of funds needed to resolve the underlying issue.

There is no practical reason to spend limited Council meeting time debating an item that is not ready for responsible action. If the Council believes the concept does meet the intended goal, then it should be delayed until a full cost analysis is completed.

Respectfully submitted, Garry L. Rose

**Personal Comments of Christopher J. Warner
On Agenda Item 13.3, \$500,000 Water Rate Credit Proposal,
September 8, 2026, St. Helena City Council Meeting**

The following are my personal comments on the “\$500,000 Discolored Water Rate Credit” proposal on the City Council’s September 8, 2026 agenda. (Agenda Item 13.3). My comments are solely personal and not in any public or official capacity for the City.

As a threshold matter, I am not commenting on the merits of the \$500,000 automatic water rate credit (estimated at \$200 each) **proposed to be provided to all St. Helena water customers regardless of whether they have experienced any water quality issues, water discoloration or any other change in water service.**

Throwing \$500,000 of Water Enterprise revenues collected from customers under adopted cost of service rates for no reason related to overall adopted, actual or forecasts costs of service and rates for the Water Enterprise appears to be a **gross violation of utility cost of service ratemaking principles and the cost of service rate case and water rates previously approved and adopted by the City Council.**

However, on these issues, I defer to the comments and recommendations of other members of the public, including other St. Helena water customers and ratepayers as well as members of the St. Helena Water and Wastewater Committee and former members of the St. Helena water rates advisory committee which provided recommendations to the Council for the 2023 Water and Wastewater Cost of Service and Rates study and recommended and adopted cost of service rates.

The review of the merits of the \$500,000 allocation and use of Water Enterprise reserves should not only include evaluation of the merits of using and reducing the reserves for this purpose unrelated to costs of service, but also **the impact of diverting the reserves from use for other priority Water Enterprise projects and expenditures, such as planned pipeline replacement and improved water quality projects**, that may exceed the adopted Water Enterprise budget, including the enhanced and additional water quality operating and capital expenditures identified in Agenda Item 13.2, and on-going capital and operating projects and expenditures that may require modifications to the overall Water Enterprise adopted budgets and emergency increases in water rates to fund the projects and expenditures.

These proposed emergency or unbudgeted uses of the **Water Enterprise reserves** for purposes unrelated to actual or forecast costs **may also be needed for repairs and responses to emergency weather events this coming winter, including responding to potential extreme “El Nino” events affecting the operability and safety of the City’s water and wastewater facilities and services.**

Based on the City’s applicable legal, budget, financial, ratemaking and fiscal policy requirements and without regard to the merits of the proposal, the \$500,000 Discolored Water Rate Credit

proposal and draft policy appear to violate the following requirements unless reviewed and modified by the Council and public in compliance with those requirements:

1. Violation of Adopted FY 2026- 2027 Water Enterprise Budget and Financial Policy Restrictions on Reduction in Forecast Water Enterprise Reserves Below 10 Months (Financial Policy, Section III.J.4; adopted FY 2026 and 2027 budgets).

Without documentation and support for modifications to the City's adopted FY 2026 and 2027 budgets for the Water Enterprise, the Discolored Water Rate Credit proposal would increase the authorized budget for the Water Enterprise by \$500,000 and reduce the forecast adopted emergency reserves for the Water Enterprise by \$500,000 below the forecast minimum 10 months required by the City's Financial Policy and the forecast reserves adopted by the City in its FY 2026 and 2027 budgets.

The proposal argues that sufficient cash interest earnings exist above the forecast budgets to avoid any reduction in the budgeted emergency reserves or other budgeted expenditures for the Water Enterprise. However, the proposal provides no documentation of the forecast or changes in the overall adopted Water Enterprise budget and audited and unaudited financials for FY 2026 and FY 2027 that would result from the proposal or from other changes in forecast Water Enterprise expenditures and revenues since adoption of the FY 2027 Water Enterprise budget and the Council-adopted cost of service rates for the Water Enterprise.

More specifically, the proposal does not include any detailed and overall documentation of unaudited financials or updated financial results or forecasts for the overall FY 2026 and 2027 Water Enterprise budgets, expenditures, revenues, reserves and costs of service to justify the assertion that adequate surplus emergency reserve funds exist to support the \$500,000 increase in the Water Enterprise adopted budget and reduction in the required Water Enterprise reserves below the forecast 10 months reserves for the Water Enterprise adopted by the budgets and required by the City's Financial Policy and adopted Water Enterprise rates.

2. The proposed Discolored Water Rate Credit Policy includes no restriction on eligibility for automatic water rate reductions, no cap on amounts or duration of individual customer rate credits for future water discoloration claims, no restriction on customer damage claims for the same water discoloration incidents covered by both the automatic rate credits and future rate credits, no cap on overall program costs, and no restriction on use of non-reserve Water Enterprise revenues to fund the unlimited, uncapped Water Rate Credits.

Despite the staff proposal's estimate that the Discolored Water Rate Credit Policy will only cost \$500,000 overall and is estimated to be limited to \$200 per customer for the initial, automatic credits, the draft Policy in fact includes no restriction on overall

program cost, no restriction on individual customer rate credits or duration of rate credits for future claims, no restriction or waiver of customer damage claims and no restriction on use of Water Enterprise non-reserve funds to pay for the rate credits. (See Attachments to Staff Proposal, *1. Resolution - Discolored Water Credit and Incident Policy*; *2. Ongoing Discolored Water Incident Credit Policy v1.*)

3. **The proposed Discolored Water Rate Credit Policy includes no detailed, documented fiscal controls to prevent waste, fraud and abuse by customers, and no detailed, documented forecast of the administrative and personnel costs required to implement the hundreds of hours of direct inspection and review of customer applications for future credits; monitoring of the duration of customer eligibility, processing of individual customer rate credits and billing; and audits of program performance and controls.**

The staff proposal for the \$500,000 Discolored Water Rate Credit Policy includes no restriction on providing water rate credits to customers who have not experienced or reported any water discoloration, and no estimate of the costs of administering and implementing the individual customer water incident rate credits authorized beyond the immediate, automatic credits and changes in adopted volumetric rates. This likely includes hundreds of hours of administrative and personnel costs inspecting each customer's water quality and usage; determining and documenting eligibility for each customer's water rate credit; establishing and monitoring the duration of each customer's continued eligibility; processing and billing of each customer's individual, customized water rate reductions; continued monitoring of each customer's continued eligibility for their individual water rate reductions; and internal fiscal controls on the water rate credits to prevent waste, fraud and abuse in customers' claims and eligibility for the water rate reductions.

4. **The proposed Discolored Water Rate Credit Policy violates Proposition 218 and the City's adopted process for changes and increases in water rates. The proposed Discolored Water Rate Credit Policy also unduly discriminates against similarly situated water customers because it provides a special class of water customers with significant reductions in their water rates for reasons other than interruption of their water service while providing no similar rate reductions to other customers who have not experienced discolored, uninterrupted water service or whose discolored water service occurred prior to the effective date of the Discolored Water Rate Credit Policy.**

The proposed Discolored Water Rate Credit Policy would directly reduce the Water Enterprise's tariffed volumetric rates adopted by the City after public hearing to

fully recover the Water Enterprise's forecast costs of service. By so doing, the proposed Discolored Water Rate Credit Policy would create a new special class of customers and shift the forecasts costs of service from that special, new class of customers to all other customers, thus requiring a rate increase to all other customers in violation of Proposition 218's requirement that water rate increases go through a formal public notice and hearing.

In addition, by establishing a new, special class of existing customers with separate rates applicable not only to the immediate, automatic rate credits, but also for all future "water discoloration" claims at a forecast cost of service of at least \$500,000 using Water Enterprise reserves that are otherwise needed to be available for emergencies, the proposed Policy would constitute a material change in existing water customers' rates, rate design, and costs that would discriminate against all other customers without public notice and a public hearing to consider public comments and provide the full documented, cost of service and rate design information and impacts required for adoption of material changes in rates and rate design.

Water Discoloration SH City Council 8 Sept items 13.2 and 13.3

I support Garry Rose's concerns regarding the proposed \$500,000 Water Enterprise Fund credit, and I support the **methodical, evidence-based approach** outlined by Joshua Parke.

I understand the desire to provide customers relief. But a rebate does not solve the problem. **The City's priority should be to determine the cause of the discoloration and eliminate it.**

Joshua Parke has offered a useful framework: develop a hypothesis, examine the system data, identify the likely source and pathway, and then **test it through direct inspection, sequential sampling and controlled hydraulic testing**. He is not claiming to have proven the cause; he is proposing a way to determine it.

That is the approach I believe we should pursue.

The Water Enterprise Fund should be focused on **solving the water problem, not simply managing its consequences**. Apart from the significant Proposition 218 and Proposition 26 questions raised by this proposal, **every dollar and every hour of staff time devoted to a broad rebate is a dollar and an hour that cannot be devoted to identifying and correcting the underlying cause.**

A rebate may soften the burden. It does not remove the burden.

The longer the cause remains unresolved, the longer our residents and businesses continue to live with the consequences.

Our goal should not be to make living with discolored water easier. Our goal should be to make discolored water stop.

Daniel Hale



Agenda Report to the City Council

Agenda Section: NEW BUSINESS

Department: Public Works Department

DATE:	September 8, 2026
FROM:	Ian Dale, Environmental Serv Tech
SUBJECT:	Receive report for FY 2025/2026 City of St. Helena Water Supply Update and Projected Water Demand.
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Receive and File.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	• June 23, 2020, Council adoption of Resolution 2020-72 declaring Phase I Water Emergency. • October 27, 2020, Council adoption of Resolution 2020-107 declaring Phase II Water Emergency. • February 14, 2023, Council adoption of Resolution 2023-16 memorialized the end of the Phase II Water Emergency declared by staff and effective December 2021. • July 1, 2023, Council adoption of Resolution declaring the end of the Phase I Water Emergency retroactively.
STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE:	To provide data for current water supply and projected water demand.
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	None.
CEQA DETERMINATION:	Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

BACKGROUND:

At the February 14, 2023 City Council meeting, a report was presented and discussion ensued related to formally terminating the Phase II Water Emergency via resolution since it had been declared as such in November 2021 and implemented in December 2021. The report detailed the criteria required to both declare and terminate a Water Emergency, most notably that the analysis was to be performed "after the end of the fiscal year" based upon the St. Helena Municipal Code Section 13.04.010.

DISCUSSION:

It should be noted that the 2011 Safe Yield volume of 1,950 AFY includes a 200 AFY increase

in the available water supply from the City of Napa (i.e. increase from 400 AFY to 600 AFY with an option to request an additional 200 AFY). The increase in City of Napa water was memorialized by Amendment No. 3 to the Water Supply Agreement between the City of Napa and the City of St. Helena via Resolution No. 2011-82 adopted on November 8, 2011.

As noted in the February 14, 2023 report, Tables 1, 2, and 3 below are the criteria utilized to determine whether the declaration of a Water Emergency is warranted.

Table 1 - Bell Canyon Reservoir Capacity

Month	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Nov	61.7%	84.0%	100%	74.4%	
Dec	100%	84.1%	100%	100%	
May	82.3%	98.9%	98.2%	96.4%	95.7%

Attachment 1, page 5 depicts the 20-year trend for Bell Canyon capacity. It is essential to note there was only one other time (Dec 2022 to May 2023) where the reservoir was 100% full in December and then over 90% full in May. This dynamic also occurred in December 2024 and May 2025 where the reservoir was 100% full in December 2024 and 96.4% in May 2025 and then again in December 2025 where the reservoir was 100% full and 95.7% full in May 2026. Additionally, it should be noted that the reservoir has been at or above 95% capacity in May only 6 times (2006, 2016, 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026) during the 20-year trend.

Table 2 - Water Production Trend (Bell Canyon, Napa Intertie and Stonebridge Wells)

Values in Acre-Feet, including through June 2026 for FY2025-26, as reported in a separate report on this agenda.

Source	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Bell Canyon	401	264	298	355
Napa Water	562	598	541	494
Stonebridge Wells	283	554	321	251
Totals	1,246	1,416	1,159	1,100

Attachment 1, pages 3 and 4 depict the 15-year trend for **system water production** between the three sources.

Table 3 - Water Demand Trend (i.e. Water Billed)

Values in Acre-Feet, including through June 2026 for FY2025-26, as reported in a separate report on this agenda.

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Water Customers Demand	976	1,032	988	961
Percent Loss (Audit)	15%	15%	15%	15%
Water Demand	1,148	1,214	1,162	1,130

Attachment 1, page 2 depicts the 15-year trend for **total water demand**.

Attachment 1, page 6, the projected available supply in Bell Canyon Reservoir is approximately 1,686AF in June 2027, significantly above the 1,431AF threshold for declaration of a Phase I Water Emergency.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

Not a CEQA Project (CEQA Guidelines §15378)

GOAL:

Goal 3: Pursue Water Security & Sustainable Management of Water Resources

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Attachment 1 - Presentation COSH Water Update_FY25.26_



City of St. Helena Water Update Attachment 1

By: Joe Leach, PE
Assistant City Manager
Director of Public Works
City Engineer

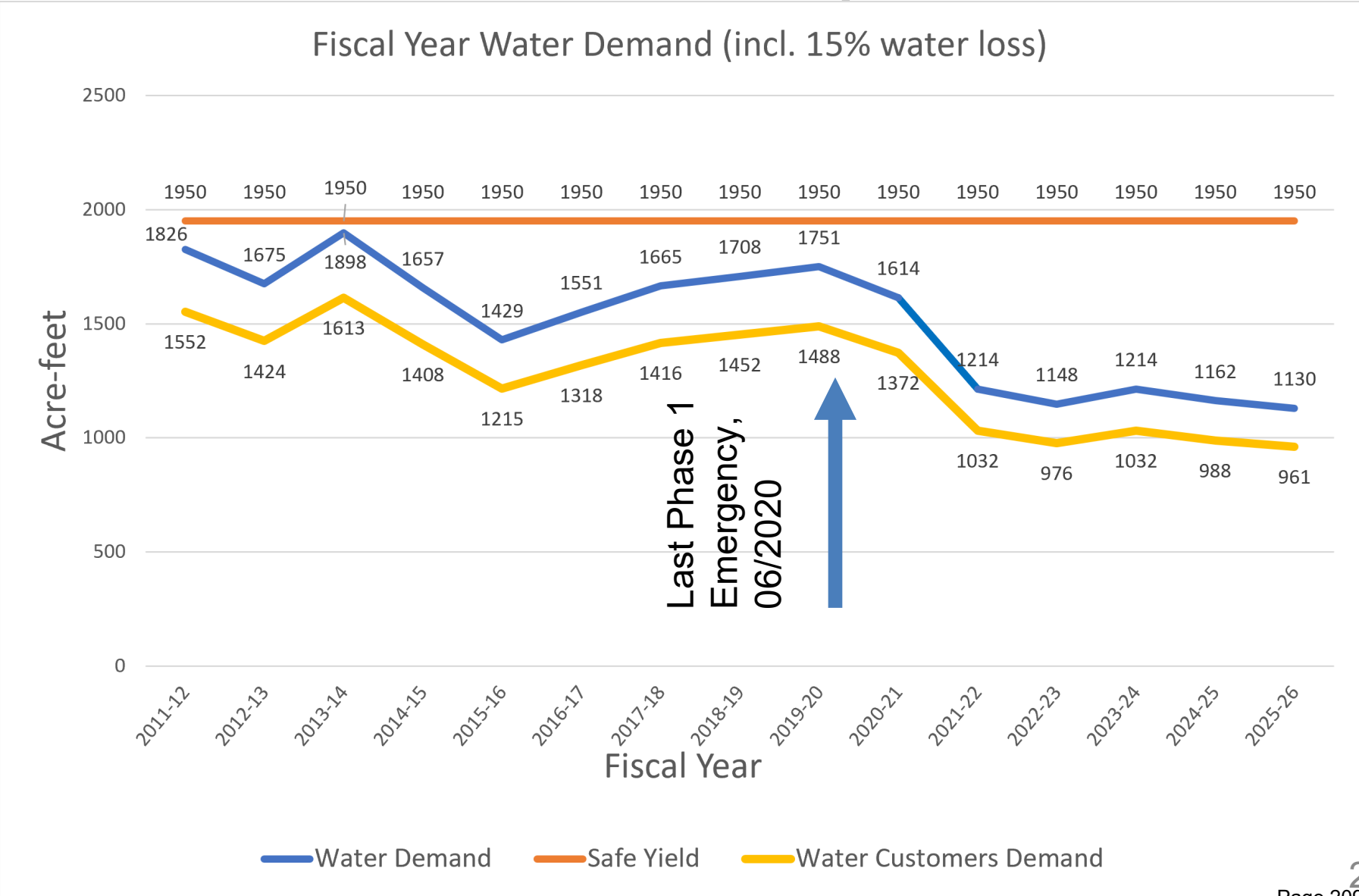
Public Works Department

August 25, 2026



City of St. Helena Water Update

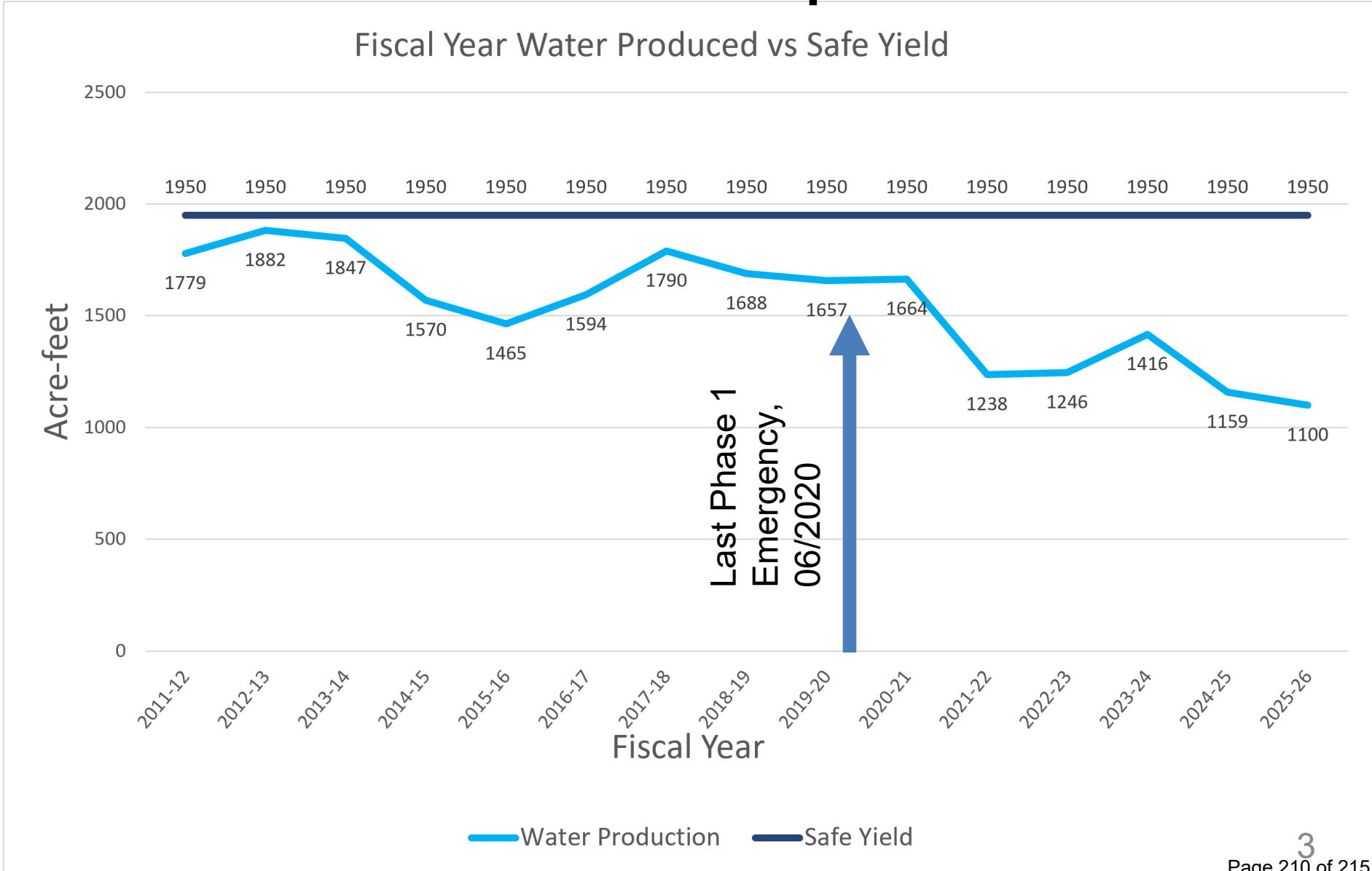
- Fiscal Year water demand incl. 15% “system loss”
- FY2025-26 data complete through June 30, 2026
- Safe Yield (per 2011 study) 1,950AF





City of St. Helena Water Update

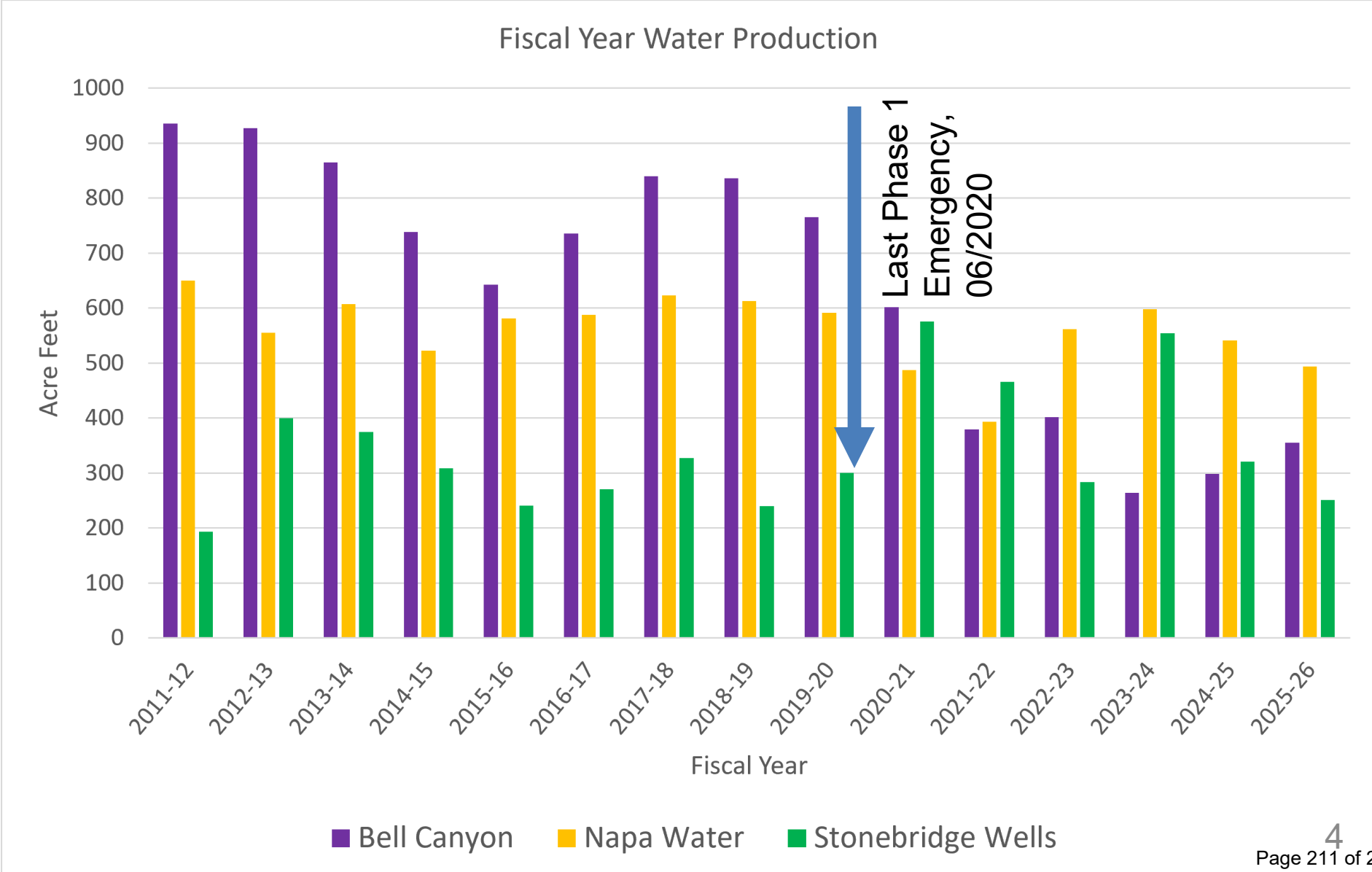
- Fiscal Year water production
- FY2025-26 data complete through June 30, 2026





City of St. Helena Water Update

- Combined Water Source Production since FY 2011-12
- FY2025-26 data complete through June 30, 2026

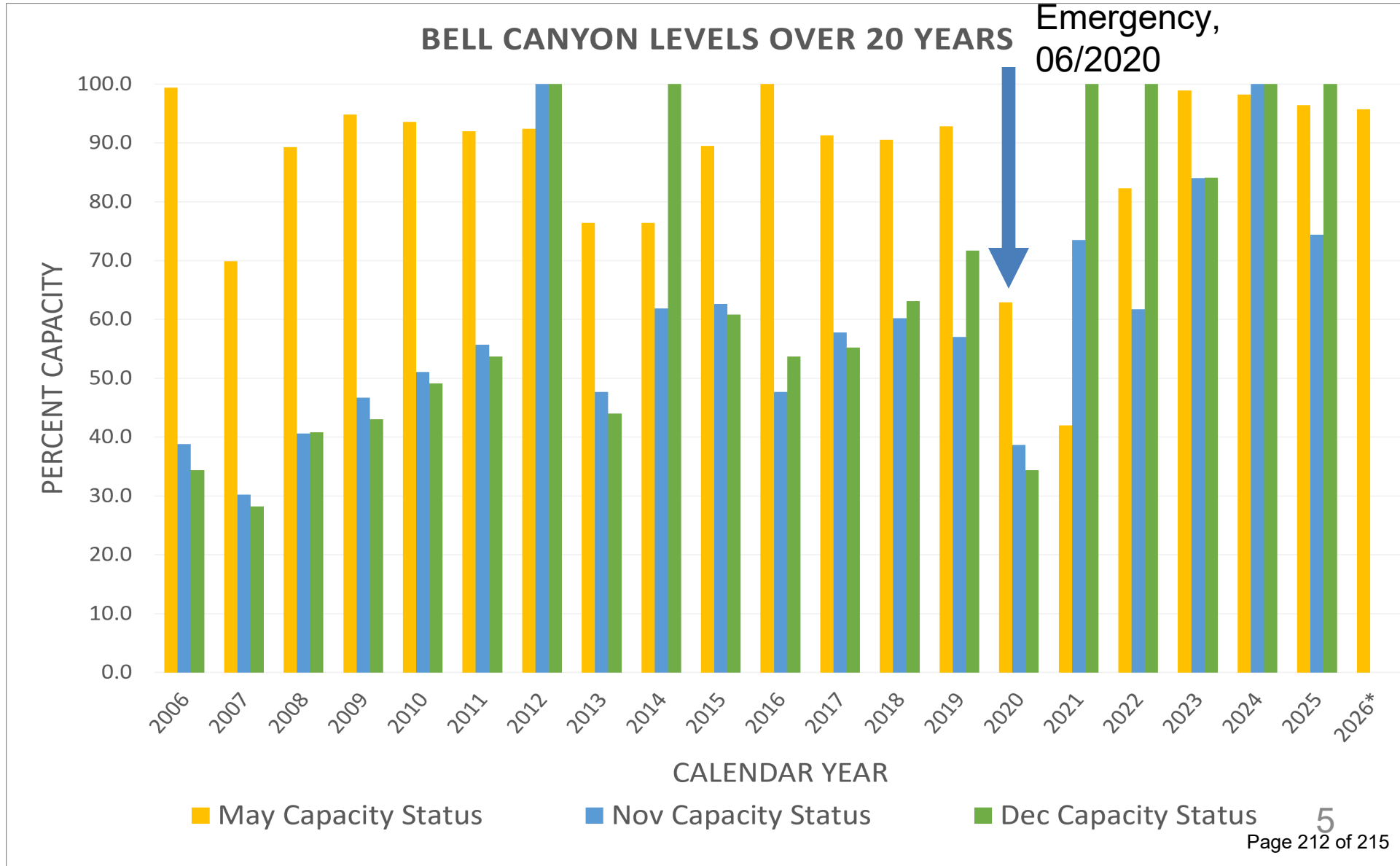




City of St. Helena Water Update

- Bell Canyon Capacity in May, November and December since 2006
- *Data complete through May 31, 2026

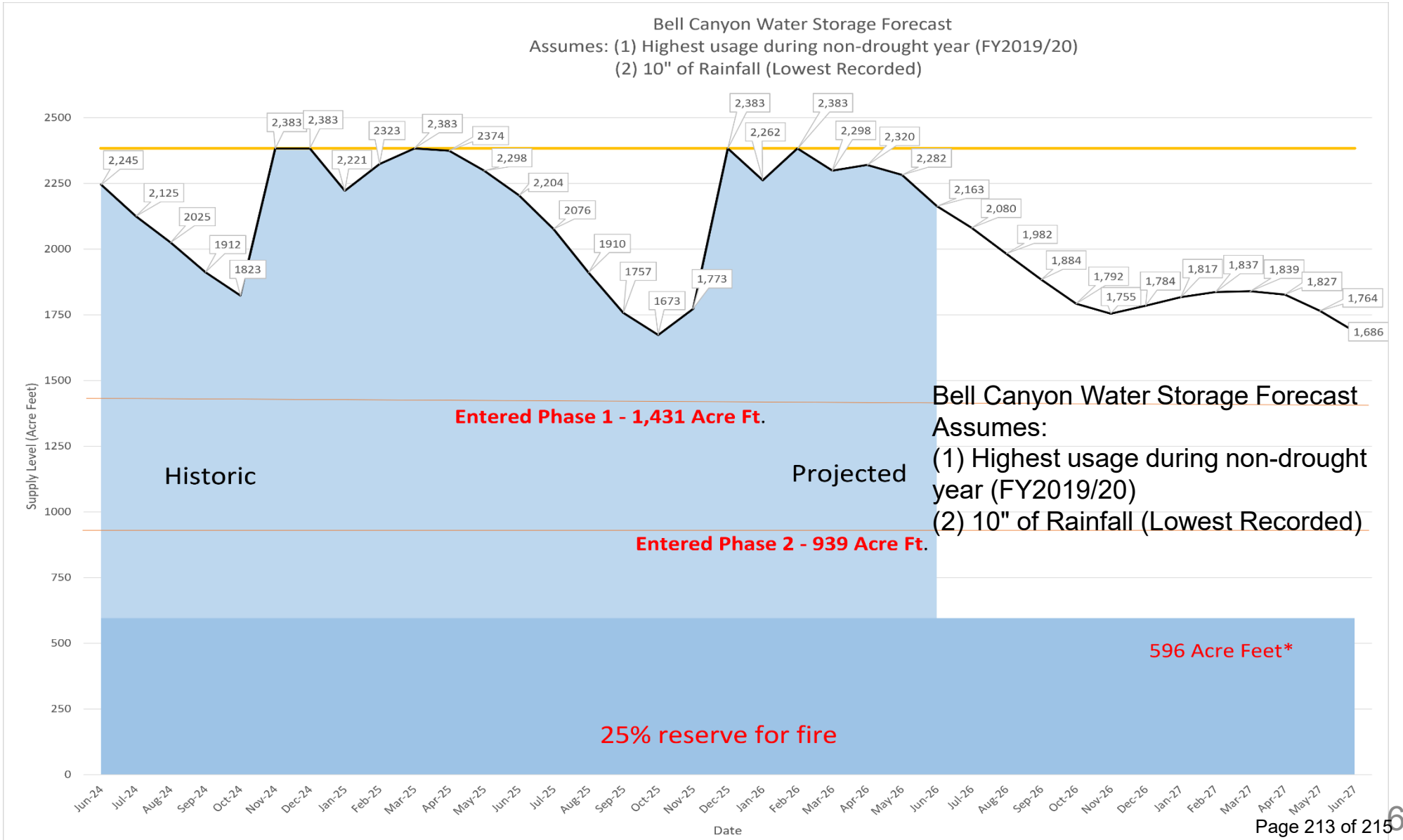
Last Phase 1
Emergency,
06/2020





City of St. Helena Water Update

- Bell Canyon Reservoir Monthly storage
- Projected sufficient supply (1,686AF) beyond June 2027





City of St. Helena Water Update

- Prior to 2007 no City of Napa water was available.
- Post 2011, the City has an annual allocation of 600 acre-feet from the City of Napa with the option to purchase an additional 200 acre-feet per year.
- The 2011 Safe Yield Report assumes limiting the Stonebridge Wells long term average of 450 acre-feet per year. Well usage has been averaging approximately 439 acre-feet/year for the last 5 fiscal years.
- Despite significant staff turnover during the last several years, Water Operations staff continues to equitably balance the supplies.
- Bell Canyon has a projected available capacity of 1,686 acre-feet in June 2027, well above the 1,431 acre-foot level when the Phase I Water Emergency was declared in June 2020.
- It is important to note that the City relies on total water volume availability from all water sources and not just water levels at Bell Canyon to meet system demand.



City of St. Helena Water Update

Director of Public Works Recommendations:

- Continue to conserve Bell Canyon Reservoir water by minimizing water treatment operations at Louis Stralla and utilizing Stonebridge Wells and City of Napa water allocation, adhere to recommendations adopted in the 2011 Safe Yield Report and continue to post monthly updates on the City's website per action provided by the City Council at the August 25, 2026 meeting, Consent Agenda Item 10.4.
- Alert City Council of any changes to the City's water supply and/or drought restrictions that may be set by the State that would impact the City of St. Helena water customers.