

Sewer plant out for bid

June construction start expected for \$15 million project

By LINDA WILLIAMS
TWN STAFF WRITER

The Willits City Council authorized sending the new sewer plant project out for bid Wednesday, marking a significant project milestone. The construction package to build the new plant is expected to cost \$15 million. Construction is scheduled to begin in June and be completed by December 2011.

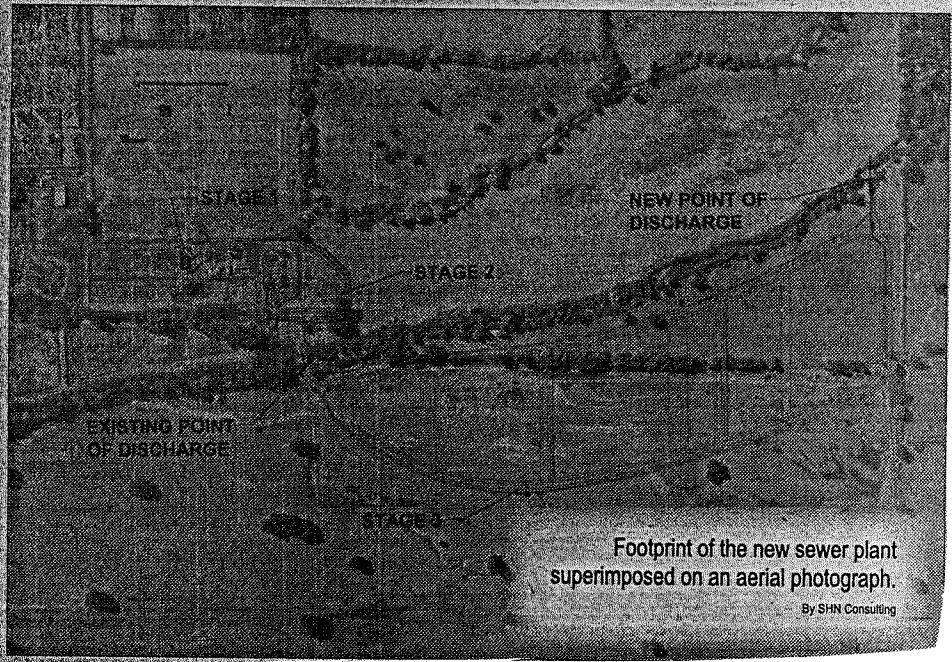
The US Department of Agriculture—the main financier for the plant—finished its review of project plans and specifications and approved them to go out for bid. The city cannot award the contract until it receives a final permit from US Army Corps of Engineers, which the city applied for in June 2008.

Overall cost of the new sewer plant

is estimated at \$25 million, but this includes the cost of the completed phase 1, costs of engineering and other expenses.

Included in the bid package is construction of a mechanical sewer treatment system, and an ultraviolet disinfection system. The mechanical system includes a new activated-sludge process with high-efficiency aeration treatment cells, including advanced nutrient removal systems and two new secondary effluent clarifiers. The treatment system also includes creation of 30 acres of wetlands to store and polish the effluent from the mechanical plant.

About 24 acres of enhancement wetlands will be constructed to compensate
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Footprint of the new sewer plant superimposed on an aerial photograph.

By SHN Consulting

for the loss of existing wetlands, and riparian vegetation will be planted along the banks of Outlet and Mill creeks.

In 2001, the city began making plans to replace the sewer plant because it could not meet North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board dilution requirements of 100 units of water in Outlet Creek for every unit of treated water released into it.

After a year of negotiation, the water board agreed to support a variance of 25 units of creek water to 1 unit of effluent from the wetland system—provided the treated water released was at least as clean as the creek wa-

ter.

The city submitted an environmental impact report in 2003 for a new biological wetland treatment system. In 2006, a variety of agencies rejected the wetlands-only treatment system, contending it would displace too many acres of existing seasonal wetlands. The city regrouped and proposed a half-mechanical, half-wetland system, which was eventually accepted.

The NCRWQCB then allowed a dilution ratio of 10 to 1.

During this timeframe, the price of the treatment system has more than doubled.

- b. Warrant Nos. 14851-14864, Totaling \$45,579.66 – **Approved**
- c. Warrant Nos. 14935-15032, Totaling \$191,161.73 – **Approved**
- d. Building Inspection Activity Reports – February 2010 – **Approved**
- e. Application for Alcoholic Beverage License: Diggers, Inc. (Diggers), Located at 244 S. Main Street in Willits – **Approved**
- ~~f. Appointment to the Willits Airport Commission~~
- g. Appointment to the Willits Cultural Arts Commission – **Approved**
- h. Contract Amendment No. 1 with Water Works Engineers to Include Engineering Support for the Pretreatment Process in the Water Treatment Plant Improvement Project – **Approved**
- i. Contract Amendment No. 1 with Winzler & Kelly to Update the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates, and to Include Bid Support Services for Railroad Avenue Bridge Project – **Approved**

Motion by Kanne/Second by Stranske and carried (3, with Council Members Madrigal and Burton absent) to approve Consent Calendar items (a-e and g-i).

5. RIGHT TO APPEAL – Vice Mayor Hanson read the guidelines for appealing Council decisions.

8A. APPROVAL AND POSSIBLE ACTION AUTHORIZING CITY MANAGER TO PROCEED WITH THE PUBLIC ADVERTISEMENT OF THE WILLITS WASTEWATER TREATMENT PROJECT, STAGES 2 AND 3, SECONDARY TREATMENT AND ENHANCEMENT WETLANDS, PROJECT NO. 2010-02, USDA NO. 04-023-946000454

Paul Cayler, City Manager, introduced the matter, noting that this is the largest public works project the City has implemented. He reviewed the proposed project schedule, noting that the commencement of construction is dependent upon the receipt of suitable competitive bids, receipt of the 404 permit, and receipt of the revised 1600 permit, and requested Council approval to proceed with the public advertisement process.

Motion by Stranske/Second by Kanne and carried (3, with Council Members Madrigal and Burton absent) to authorize the City Manager to proceed with the public advertisement of the Willits Wastewater Treatment Project, Stages 2 and 3, Secondary Treatment and Enhancement Wetlands, Project No. 2010-02, USDA No. 04-023-946000454.

8B. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION AUTHORIZING CITY MANAGER TO SUBMIT THE FINAL CITY OF WILLITS QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM, STATE OF CALIFORNIA (CALTRANS) FOR FINAL APPROVAL

Paul Cayler, City Manager, introduced the matter, briefly reviewing the Quality Assurance Program (QAP), which is required by Caltrans to comply with federal regulations relative to the materials and workmanship that are incorporated into a construction project, ensuring they are in conformance with the contract specifications. He invited Brandi Burtness to respond to any questions from the Council.

Council Member Stranske asked why the QAP is only updated every five years, to which Ms. Burtness clarified that the document may be updated more frequently if there are significant changes in which to incorporate.

Motion by Kanne/Second by Stranske and carried (3, with Council Members Madrigal and Burton absent) approve the submittal of the final City of Willits Quality Assurance Program, State of California (Caltrans), for final approval.