

Committee Report

Environment Committee



Committee meeting date: March 11, 2025

For the Metropolitan Council: March 26, 2025

Business Item: 2025-40

Ratification of Declaration of Emergency Repair of Interceptor 1-MH-401C Lilydale Siphon

Proposed action

That the Metropolitan Council ratify the Emergency Declaration for repairs to Interceptor 1-MH-401C Lilydale Siphon in Saint Paul in the amount not to exceed \$7,000,000.

Summary of Environment Committee discussion/questions

- CM Carter asked: When fixing problems or planning in these areas do you have joint meetings to preplan for potential issues?
- Staff responded: The emergency repair will help us find out what's going on and how to plan in the future. We are working closely with Xcel Energy to ensure that their gas lines are operable and that we don't cause any additional problems.
- CM Wulff asked: How long is it going to take to get Siphon C online again and take Siphon A out of service to fix that?
- Staff responded: It will begin on March 17th and take about 8-10 weeks to repair the 20inch which will allow the capacity to finish the design and inspection of the remainder of the facility.
- CM Cederberg asked: Are you going to bring another budget back to the Council to complete Siphon A or is that already in scope?
- Staff responded: If the new project exceeds the Council approval threshold, Business Items will be presented. We will not be sure until the inspection is complete and the scope of work is understood.

Motion by CM Carter, seconded by CM Morales. Motion carried.

Business Item

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Ratification of Declaration of Emergency Repair of Interceptor 1-MH-401C Lilydale Siphon

District(s), Member(s):	District 14, W. Toni Carter
Policy/Legal Reference:	Council Policy FM 14-2, Expenditures for the Procurement of Goods, Services and Real Estate
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Jeff Schwarz, Minneapolis Area Program Manager, 651-325-6378
Division/Department:	Environmental Services

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council ratify the Emergency Declaration for repairs to Interceptor 1-MH-401C Lilydale Siphon in Saint Paul in the amount not to exceed \$7,000,000.

Background

The 1-MH-401 system consists of three siphon pipes, 16" (A), 12" (B), and 20" (C) in diameter. A sewage spill to the surface of Crosby Farm Regional Park from a break of Siphon B was discovered on July 17, 2023. An Emergency Declaration was issued; the spill was cleaned up; a capital improvements project was initiated; and repairs were completed by Spring 2024. In Summer 2024 Siphon C stopped taking flow. When it was dewatered for inspection, sinkholes developed, and it was taken out of service until it could be permanently repaired under the capital project. An electromagnetic survey of Siphon A was attempted on February 18, 2025 to finalize the capital project bid documents, but the survey equipment could not pass through, indicating Siphon A may also be compromised. Investigation by a cathodic protection specialist indicated the pipe breaks are in an area prone to corrosion from stray currents related St. Paul High Bridge Power Plant gas lines crossing over the pipes.

The 1-MH-401 system is currently operating with only Siphons A and B serviceable and the condition of Siphon A suspect. Both siphons need to stay operable to provide daily capacity. Continued operation of Siphon A may develop into an underground leak that could undermine the other siphons and gas mains or cause another surface spill. Emergency repair of Siphon C is required to provide capacity and minimize potential asset damage or release of sewage to the environment.

Rationale

Emergency Declarations exceeding \$175,000 require appropriate Committee and Council ratification.

Thrive Lens Analysis

This action advances the Thrive Outcome of Stewardship. Public financial resources will be invested efficiently and effectively to maintain and restore existing capacity to existing wastewater

infrastructure which protect the region's natural resources.

Funding

The estimated costs for the emergency work is \$7,000,000. This work will be funded out of the 2025 MCES Authorized Capital Program.

Small Business Inclusion

Due to the time-sensitive nature of the Emergency Declaration and the need for immediate work to be performed to protect public health and existing infrastructure, the Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity did not establish a small business goal. The application of a goal would significantly impact the timing of this project.





EMERGENCY DECLARATION FORM

"A declared public emergency is an emergency situation in which the health, safety or welfare of the public or the safety of Metropolitan Council employees or facilities is compromised or potentially compromised and requires immediate action to correct."

I REQUEST THAT A PUBLIC EMERGENCY BE DECLARED, BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING:

Describe the nature of the emergency situation.

The 1-MH-401 siphon system consists of three conveyance pipes, 12", 16", and 20" in diameter. A surface sewage spill to Crosby Farm Regional Park from a break in the 12" pipe was discovered on July 17, 2023. The spill was cleaned up and the break was repaired under Emergency Declaration in Spring 2024. In Summer 2024, the 20" pipe stopped taking flow. When the 20" pipe was dewatered to attempt inspection, sinkholes developed in the same area the 12" pipe failed, indicating the 20" pipe was also compromised so it was taken out of service. Investigation by a cathodic protection contractor in Fall 2024 indicated the breaks are in an area prone to corrosion related to stray currents from Xcel gas lines crossing over the pipes. An electromagnetic survey of the 16" pipe was attempted on February 18, 2025. The survey equipment could not pass through the pipe, indicating with high likelihood there is also a break in the 16" pipe allowing sewage to spill underground.

Explain why this situation is a present, immediate, and existing emergency.

Flows currently exceed the capacity of the 12" pipe. Flows exceeding the 12" pipe capacity must be directed to the 16" pipe because the 20" is not operable. Continued operation of the compromised 16" pipe will continue to release sewage underground, potentially undermine the repaired 12" pipe and/or the gas mains feeding the St. Paul High Bridge Power Plant, and likely cause another surface spill.

Explain how this emergency does or will affect the healthy, safety, or welfare of the public or the safety of Metropolitan Council employees or facilities.

If a sewage pipe break undermines the gas feeds to the power plant, the loss of power would impact a large portion of the Metropolitan area. If the siphon pipes are undermined, the loss of sewage conveyance would impact services to all of Mendota Heights. While sewage is not currently circulating to the surface of the ground, the loss of untreated sewage adjacent to the Mississippi River could impact aquatic life and affect drinking water.

Describe the supplies or services which must be acquired to remedy this emergency situation, including the estimated cost.

Plans and specifications were prepared in 2024 to CIPP line all three barrels from the north side of the river to the siphon tail house under a capital project. To restore siphon system capacity; prevent undermining of siphon and gas piping; and stop the release of sewage underground as soon as possible, the 20" pipe needs to be repaired through this emergency declaration. The remaining repairs would be bid for construction.

Estimated Cost: 7,000,000

Identify how you chose the contractor(s).

ECl is the preferred contractor because they repaired the 12" pipe under the 2024 Emergency Declaration. They provided value engineering and completed the work in a professional, timely, and cost effective manner which gives them a unique understanding of the excavation, dewatering, gas line crossing, wetland, and repair work required repair the 20" pipe.

I hereby certify that the information presented on this form is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. Copy/paste names/dates out of approved Emergency Declaration Form

Requestor Signature: Schwarz, Jeffrey 2/19/2025, 2:46 PM

Supervisor Signature: Gordon, Adam 2/19/2025, 4:04 PM

Division Director/General Manager Signature: Thompson, Leisa 2/19/2025, 4:16 PM

Signature Date

Based on the above information, an emergency situation exists within the meaning of the Council Procurement Policy. Carrying out the competitive bidding process and the technical requirements of the Council's Procurement Policy and awaiting Council declaration of an emergency and approval for the

purchase of materials or supplies or the making of emergency repairs would significantly and unacceptably delay the commencement of repair work on the above-referenced project. The Metropolitan Council, by its Procurement Policy, has delegated authority to the Regional Administrator to declare an emergency on behalf of the Council in such cases. Therefore, I declare on behalf of the Metropolitan Council, that an emergency exists as described above and that the emergency situation requires the immediate purchase of materials or supplies or the making of emergency repairs. I authorize the General Manager/Division Director named above to let appropriate contracts and make payments for the purchase of materials or supplies or the making of repairs necessary to meet the emergency situation without advertising for bids, without meeting other technical requirements of Council Procurement Policy, and without prior approval of the Council. If the costs to correct the emergency situation total \$100,000 or more, I direct that this emergency declaration and any such contracts and/or payments be presented to the Metropolitan Council for formal ratification at its next meeting.

Regional Administrator Signature: O'Connor, Ryan
Signature

2/20/2025, 4:31 PM
Date

