



## Staff Report

**TO:** City Council  
**FROM:** Robert L. Vestal, Public Works Director  
**DATE:** July 15, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Public Hearing to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Cherry Channel Drainage Project – Capital Improvement Project No. R-07 in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

---

**Description** Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation and Monitoring Reporting Program for the Cherry Channel Drainage located on the East Side of Cherry Avenue between Cougar Way and Oak Valley Parkway based on a completed Initial Study in compliance with CEQA.

### **Background and Analysis:**

The City of Beaumont has determined that the proposed Cherry Channel Drainage (Project) requires compliance with the guidelines and regulations of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). An Initial Study was prepared resulting in a Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND), which addresses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental effects associated with the proposed Project. The Draft IS/MND is included as Attachment A to this staff report.

This IS/MND has been prepared in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended (Public Resources Code Section 21000 *et seq.*); Section 15070 of the State Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (“CEQA Guidelines”), as amended (CCR, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000 *et seq.*); and applicable requirements of the Lead Agency, the City of Beaumont.

This IS/MND has determined that the proposed Project would result in potentially significant environmental impacts; however, mitigation measures are proposed that would reduce any potentially significant impact to less than significance levels. As such, an IS/MND is deemed as the appropriate document to provide the necessary environmental review and clearance.

### **Project**

The proposed Project site is located along Cherry Avenue, between Cougar Way and

Oak Valley Parkway. Residential communities are located along Cherry Avenue to the northeast, southeast, and southwest. Beaumont Adult School and San Geronio Middle School are located to the west of Cherry Avenue.

An operational and City-owned paved parking lot is located to the east of Cherry Avenue, north of Rover Lane. The parking lot is owned by the City and primarily used as overflow parking for the Community Recreation Center to the south as well as access to the drainage for maintenance purposes. In addition to City use, the parking lot is available for recreational use by the public, such as walking/hiking on the maintenance access roads and unmarked trails within the open space area of an existing Southern California Edison (SCE) easement following the powerlines. Land use designations surrounding the Cherry Avenue channel consist of Single Family Residential, High-Density Residential, Public Facilities, and Open Space.

There are two concrete culvert crossings within the Project site, one at Rover Lane leading into the Community Recreation Center and one providing access to the parking lot. In addition, there are four smaller culverts on the eastern bank of the channel, which collect water from the residential communities to the east.

The proposed Project would line the existing channel with concrete to improve the channel flow conditions to alleviate the increasing level of maintenance by City staff. The existing channel is lined with a turf reinforced geo-mat lining along the side slope and channel bottom. The channel is maintained under an agreement with Cal Fire for weed abatement/vegetation control twice a year after the rainy season in March/April and July/August, prior to the school schedule.

The channel geo-mats have been affected by urban runoff flows, with sections torn or missing over the years. The proposed Project would remove the existing geo-mat lining, wingwall, and riprap within the channel and replace them with concrete along the slopes and channel bottom. The existing headwalls and culverts will remain and be protected in place. The proposed Project would result in reduced maintenance costs and improved flow of runoff to the channel.

### **Environmental Documentation**

The Chambers Group, Inc. prepared an environmental analysis of this proposal to assess the potential impacts that this project would have and mitigation measures that are required to mitigate identified impacts to a level of insignificance, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The areas that were covered within the analysis were: Aesthetics, agriculture and forestry resources, air quality, biological resources, energy, greenhouse gas emissions, land use/planning, population/housing, transportation/traffic, agriculture/forestry resources, cultural resources, tribal cultural resources, hazards/hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, mineral

resources, public services, utilities/service systems, geology/soils, noise, and recreation.

### **Biological Resources**

A multiple species habitat conservation plan (MSHCP) consistency was prepared by Chambers Group in conjunction with this review, and mitigation measures are proposed to be incorporated into the project to reduce impacts to a level of insignificance. The MSHCP Burrowing Owl Survey concluded that no potential burrows or Burrowing Owls were detected, and no further surveys are required. Pre-construction surveys have been included to comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The City is in coordination with the required regulatory agencies to comply with the permitting process with regard to potential impacts to aquatic and riparian resources.

### **Cultural Resources**

A cultural report letter was prepared by Chambers Group, Inc. in conjunction with this review and mitigation measures related to archeological monitoring and discoveries of cultural resources, as shown as MM-CUL-1 through MM-TCR-6 on pages 50 through 54 of Appendix A of the Draft IS/MND. In addition, as shown in MM-TCR-7, the Morongo Band of Mission Indians requests that specific conditions be imposed to protect Native American human remains and/or cremations.

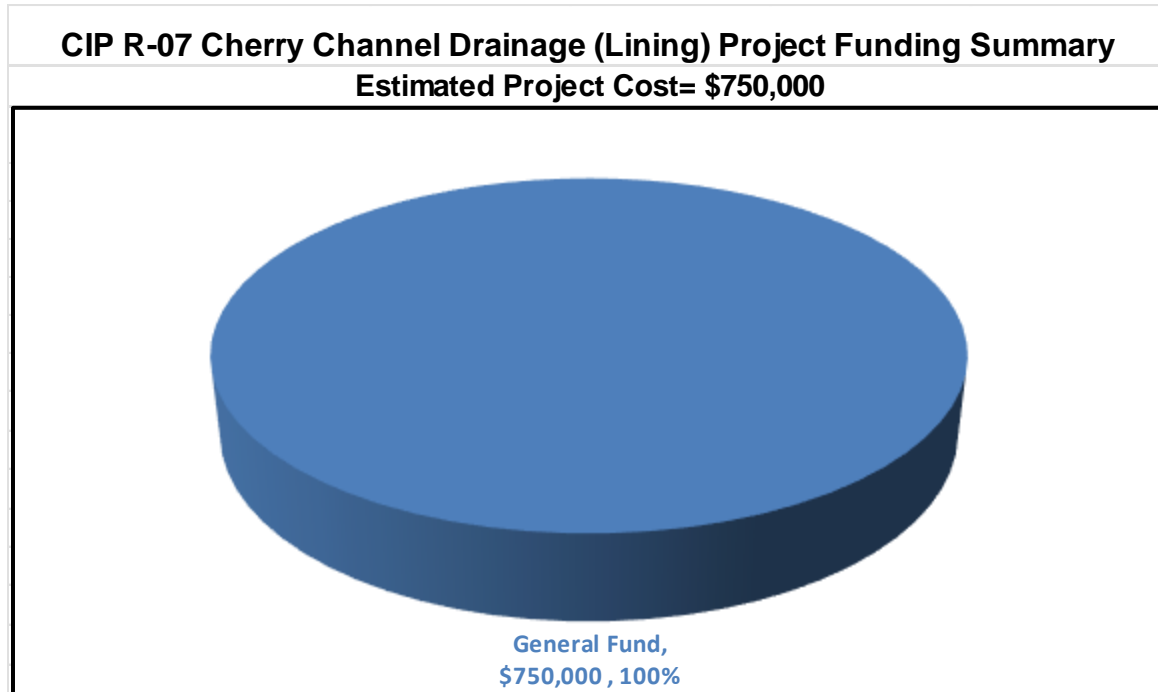
### **Geology and Soils**

A Preliminary Geotechnical Report was prepared by Ninyo & Moore in conjunction with this review, and a mitigation measure was proposed to implement a paleontological resource impact mitigation consistent with CEQA and the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology guidelines, as shown as MM-PAL-1 on page 51 of Appendix A of the Draft IS/MND.

The draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration was circulated for a 30-day public review period from April 10, 2025, through May 10, 2025, and was advertised in the Press Enterprise on April 15, 2025, and April 22, 2025. The proof of publication is included as Attachment B to this staff report. At the time of report preparation, the Planning Department received general comments and recommendations from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). The Chambers Group addressed these comments and recommendations and has incorporated them into the Final MND. No other comments from the public in favor or opposition to the project were received. The proof of publication for the Public Hearing is also included as Attachment C to this staff report. Any comments received prior to the time of the scheduled City Council meeting will be provided at the time of the public hearing.

**Fiscal Impact:**

Costs to prepare this staff report was approximately \$350. The recommended action will not have a fiscal impact on the project budget but is attached below for reference.



**CIP R-07 Cherry Channel Drainage (Lining) Project Budget Summary**

<b>Project Component</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Encumbered</b>	<b>Paid to Date</b>	<b>Remaining Budget</b>
Project Management				
Preliminary Services	\$7,930	\$(7,930)	\$(7,930)	
Environmental	\$180,000	\$(177,254)	\$(151,264)	\$2,746
Design	\$95,000	\$(74,598)	\$(22,001)	\$20,402
Permits	\$22,070			\$22,070
Right-of-Way				
Construction	\$445,000			\$445,000
Construction Management				
Equipment				
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$750,000</b>	<b>\$(259,782)</b>	<b>\$(181,195)</b>	<b>\$490,218</b>

**Recommended Action:**

Hold a public hearing; and

Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation and Monitoring Reporting Program for the Cherry Channel Drainage (Project); and

Direct staff to prepare a Notice of Determination to be filed with the Riverside County Clerk Recorder.

**Attachments:**

- A. Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
- B. Proof of Publication – Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
- C. Proof of Publication – Public Hearing Notice