STATE OF CALIFORNIA
CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

STAFF SUMMARY REPORT: Keith Roberson
MEETING DATE: June 9, 2021

ITEM: 6

Development of the Former Santa Clara All-Purpose Landfill – Status Report

DISCUSSION:
This item will include a presentation by staff on the status of development at the Santa Clara landfill. For the past eight years staff have been reviewing plans and reports associated with a major planned development over the closed municipal landfill in Santa Clara. The 240-acre area, including the landfill, is owned by the City of Santa Clara ("the City") and is located between Levi Stadium and Highway 237. Since closure in 1993-1994, most of the property has been used as a municipal golf course. In 2013, the City partnered with a development firm (Related Development) and proposed changing the land use to a very large mixed-use (primarily commercial with some residential) development built around a "City Center." The project as planned totals over nine million square feet of development.

In 2016, the City certified the Environmental Impact Report and officially approved the development project. The same year, CalRecycle and the County of Santa Clara Department of Environmental Health (in its capacity as the Local Enforcement Agency for waste management) approved the proposed land-use change for the closed landfill. In response to these decisions, the Regional Water Board updated the landfill's Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) in May 2017. The WDRs were updated to:

- recognize the change in land use from a golf course to mixed commercial/ residential use;
- establish new Prohibitions, Specifications, and Provisions to ensure that the approved change in land use can be implemented in a way that protects water quality and will not adversely impact waste containment features of the Landfill; and
- require further studies and the submittal of technical reports that describe how the Dischargers will protect water quality and human and ecological health during and following landfill development.

Since adoption of the WDRs, the development team has been engaged in obtaining required permits, refining the project design, and complying with requirements we set in the WDRs. These required tasks include:

- delineation of jurisdictional wetlands and obtaining a Water Quality Certification;
- supplemental subsurface investigations to help fill data gaps regarding leachate and deeper groundwater, determine the full extent of a known volatile organic compound plume within the landfill footprint, and evaluate the potential effects of landfill penetrations, which are necessary for installing structural support piles; and,
- enhancing the existing groundwater detection monitoring program.

At this point, the development team has accepted the Army Corps' wetlands delineation and is using it in project plans. Water Board staff has approved the supplemental groundwater and leachate investigations, as well as a significantly expanded groundwater monitoring program. We approved an installation method for the structural support piles that we believe will minimize the likelihood of leachate migration into underlying groundwater in 2020 and are currently evaluating a proposed modification of the pile installation method.

Development will begin at the southernmost edge of the property, adjacent to Levi Stadium on a parcel that lies outside the area of waste disposal and then proceed to a 40-acre portion of the landfill. Some preliminary infrastructure, including an access road, has been built over the first part of the landfill that will be developed possibly as early as this year.

Our staff has provided significant technical advice, oversight and permitting for this site, as this is the first large, mixed-use development we have regulated that is being installed directly on a closed landfill. The develop team has been responsive to our expectations and requirements so we continue to be confident and optimistic that this development opportunity for the City will also be safe and prevent pollution in the community.