



- **Board of Directors**
Engineering, Operations, and Technology Committee

6/9/2026 Board Meeting

7-9

Subject

Award a \$789,356 contract to Ortiz & Son Inc. to rehabilitate the toe of the slope supporting Basin No. 8 at the Robert B. Diemer Water Treatment Plant; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

Executive Summary

The Robert B. Diemer Water Treatment Plant (Diemer plant) was constructed on a graded plateau that was created by cutting hilltops and filling adjacent ravines. This cut and fill operation created engineered fill slopes which currently support primary hydraulic treatment structures including Flocculation and Sedimentation Basin No. 8. Due to its unique configuration, this basin falls under the jurisdiction of the California Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD). Over successive winter seasons, storm flows have caused erosion and localized slump issues within the crest and the toe of the slope area that support the basin. Consequently, rehabilitation of the slope is needed to address existing damage and mitigate further storm-related erosion. Design for the rehabilitation of the toe of the slope supporting Basin No. 8 is complete, and staff recommends moving forward with construction at this time.

This action awards a \$789,356 contract to Ortiz & Son Inc. to rehabilitate the toe of the slope supporting Basin No. 8 at the Diemer plant. See **Attachment 1** for the Allocation of Funds, **Attachment 2** for the Abstract of Bids, and **Attachment 3** for the Location Map.

Proposed Action(s)/Recommendation(s) and Options

Staff Recommendation: Option #1

Option #1

Award a \$789,356 construction contract to Ortiz & Son Inc. to rehabilitate the toe of the slope supporting Basin No. 8 at the Robert B. Diemer Water Treatment Plant.

Fiscal Impact: Expenditure of \$1.52 million in capital funds. All costs will be incurred in the next biennium and have been previously authorized.

Business Analysis: This option will maintain infrastructure resiliency and compliance with the DSOD operating permit for Basin No. 8 at the Diemer plant.

Option #2

Do not proceed with this project at this time.

Fiscal Impact: None

Business Analysis: This option would increase the risk of further progressive erosion, leading to more costly rehabilitation and, if left unaddressed, destabilization of the slope.

Alternatives Considered

During the feasibility study, staff considered installing a retaining structure to rehabilitate the toe of the slope supporting Basin No. 8. While this option would improve the stability of the lower portion of the slope, heavy equipment and significant excavation would be required, which poses constructability challenges and potential impacts to the integrity of the surrounding terrain. In addition, the DSOD permit would require additional time and extensive geotechnical analysis.

The selected option of backfilling and grading the toe will improve the long-term stability of the slope in a timely manner, while minimizing costs and impacts to the surrounding terrain. This option is exempt from the DSOD permit requirement and will maintain compliance with the DSOD operating permit for Basin No. 8.

Applicable Policy

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 8121: General Authority of the General Manager to Enter Contracts

Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code Section 11104: Delegation of Responsibilities

Related Board Action(s)/Future Action(s)

By Minute Item 51313, dated September 11, 2018, the Board authorized field investigations and conceptual design of improvements to remediate the slope areas of the Diemer plant.

By Minute Item pending, dated April 13, 2026, the Board appropriated a total of \$1.025 billion for projects identified in the Capital Investment Plan for Fiscal Years 2026/27 and 2027/28.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA determination for Option #1:

The proposed action is exempt from CEQA because it involves the repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing public facilities and topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use and no possibility of significantly impacting the physical environment. In addition, the proposed action is exempt from CEQA because it consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes (State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301 and 15304).

CEQA determination for Option #2:

None required

Details and Background

Background

The Diemer plant was placed into service in 1963 with an initial capacity of 200 million gallons per day (mgd) and was expanded in 1969 to its present capacity of 520 mgd. The facility delivers a blend of water from the Colorado River Aqueduct and State Water Project to Metropolitan's Central Pool and an exclusive Orange County service area. The Diemer plant is located on a hilltop within the City of Yorba Linda.

The Diemer plant was originally constructed by removing approximately 55 to 70 feet of native material from on-site ridges and placing the material in adjacent ravines to create a level pad. Several of the slopes at the plant support water-bearing structures that are under the jurisdiction of DSOD, including the ozone contactors, finished water reservoir, and coagulation/sedimentation Basin No. 8. These structures are inspected regularly in accordance with their operating permits, and summary reports are submitted regularly to DSOD.

During a 2015 geotechnical survey with a DSOD representative, inspections revealed that a small mass of soil near the toe of Basin No. 8 had mobilized, slumped, and displaced downslope. Since the affected area is critical to the stability of Basin No. 8, staff engaged a specialized consultant to develop a rehabilitation strategy featuring backfilling and regrading, which subsequently received DSOD approval.

Final design of the Basin No. 8 slope toe rehabilitation is now complete, and staff recommends awarding a construction contract at this time.

Diemer Basin No. 8 Slope Toe Rehabilitation - Construction

The scope of the construction contract includes construction of a small temporary access road; excavation of the existing ground material; keying and benching the existing subgrade; compaction of the ground material; restoration of the toe area with fill and rock riprap; and restoration of the permanent slope access road asphalt pavement. Metropolitan force activities include coordinating access road use by the contractor and Metropolitan staff; providing DSOD inspection support; conducting comprehensive laboratory and field testing of fill material, including frequent, staggered compaction testing to prevent settlement; and soil testing to verify subgrade suitability prior to compaction.

A total of \$1.52 million is allocated for this work. In addition to the amount of the construction contract described above, allocated funds for Metropolitan staff include \$125,000 for submittal review, responses to requests for information, and preparation of record drawings; \$212,000 for Metropolitan force work described above; \$150,000 for construction management and inspection; \$149,000 for contract administration, environmental monitoring, and project management; and \$94,644 for remaining budget. **Attachment 1** provides the allocation of the required funds.


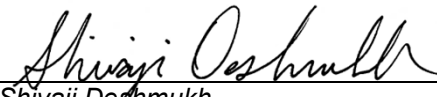
Award of Construction Contract (Ortiz & Son Inc.)

Specifications No. 2097 for rehabilitation of the toe of the slope supporting Basin No. 8 was advertised for bids on March 17, 2026. As shown in **Attachment 2**, five bids were received and opened on April 30, 2026. The low bid from Ortiz & Son Inc. in the amount of \$789,356 complies with the requirements of the specifications. The other bids ranged from approximately \$874,382 to \$1,488,270, while the engineer’s estimate for this project was \$1.2 million. The low bidder has confirmed the validity of its bid and attributes the low bid to its intent to self-perform all of the work. For this contract, Metropolitan established a Small Business Enterprise (SBE) participation level of at least 25 percent of the bid amount. Ortiz & Son Inc. is a certified SBE firm and thus achieves 100 percent participation.

This action awards a \$789,356 contract to Ortiz & Son Inc. to rehabilitate the toe of the slope supporting Basin No. 8 at the Diemer plant. As mentioned above, Metropolitan staff will perform construction management and inspection. Engineering Services’ performance metric target range for construction management and inspection of projects with construction costs less than \$3 million is 12 to 15 percent. For this project, the performance metric for inspection is 15 percent of the total construction cost (\$1,001,356), which includes the construction cost (\$789,356) and Metropolitan force construction (\$212,000).

Project Milestone

May 2027 – Completion of construction

	5/22/2026
_____ Mai M. Hattar Chief Engineer Engineering Services	Date
	5/22/2026
_____ Shivaji Deshmukh General Manager	Date

Attachment 1 – Allocation of Funds

Attachment 2 – Abstract of Bids

Attachment 3 – Location Map

Allocation of Funds for Diemer Basin No. 8 Slope Toe Rehabilitation

	Current Board Action (June 2026)
Labor	
Studies & Investigations	\$ -
Final Design	-
Owner Costs (Program mgmt., envir. monitoring)	149,000
Submittals Review & Record Drwgs.	125,000
Construction Inspection & Support	150,000
Metropolitan Force Construction	212,000
Materials & Supplies	-
Incidental Expenses	-
Professional/Technical Services	-
Right-of-Way	-
Equipment Use	-
Contracts	-
Ortiz & Son Inc.	789,356
Remaining Budget	94,644
Total	\$ 1,520,000

The total amount expended to date for the Diemer plant's Basin No. 8 slope toe rehabilitation is approximately \$1.2 million. The total estimated cost to complete this project, including the amount appropriated to date and funds allocated for the work described in this action, is \$2.72 million.

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Abstract of Bids Received on April 30, 2026, at 2:00 P.M.

**Specifications No. 2097
Diemer Basin No. 8 Slope Toe Rehabilitation**

The work consists of improvement of the toe of the slope supporting Basin No. 8, including construction of a small temporary access road, excavation of the existing ground material, keying and benching of the existing subgrade, compaction of the ground material, restoration of the toe area with fill and rock riprap, and restoration of the access road asphalt pavement.

Engineer’s estimate: \$1,200,000

Bidder and Location	Total	SBE \$	SBE %	Met SBE¹
Ortiz & Son Inc. Buena Park, CA	\$789,356	\$789,356	100%	Yes
Veterans Construction and Design Inc Morgan Hill, CA	\$874,382	-	-	-
Matcon General Engineering Corona, CA	\$950,263	-	-	-
Salsbury Engineering Inc Anaheim, CA	\$977,748	-	-	-
Minako America Corporation Gardena, CA	\$1,488,270	-	-	-

¹ Small Business Enterprise (SBE) participation level established at 25 percent for this contract.

Distribution System

