The City of SAN DIEGO
Mayor Todd Gloria

News Release

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City Completes Major Infrastructure Improvements in Rolando and Kensington

FEDERAL WIFIA LOAN SUPPORTS REPLACEMENT OF AGING DRAINAGE PIPES, ADA IMPROVEMENTS AND STREET RESURFACING

SAN DIEGO – Critical stormwater infrastructure repair projects have just been completed in the Rolando and Kensington neighborhoods, improving the reliability of the City's storm drain system and helping reduce the risk of flooding.

The projects were completed ahead of the rainy season as the City continues work across San Diego to strengthen stormwater infrastructure and prepare for potentially heavy rainfall associated with El Niño. Funding for these projects comes from a citywide $733 million federal Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loan, which has supported dozens of stormwater projects citywide. since the loan was secured in 2022.

For the Kensington project, City in-house crews dug trenches along Van Dyke Avenue and Van Dyke Place to remove deteriorating metal storm drain pipes and installed new reinforced-concrete drainage pipes designed for a longer service life.

The upgraded infrastructure will improve stormwater flow to the nearby drainage channel, helping reduce street flooding and improve the reliability of the drainage system. In addition to the storm drain improvements, work crews constructed new ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps to enhance neighborhood accessibility. The affected roadway was restored and resurfaced.

"Every neighborhood deserves reliable infrastructure that keeps people and their homes safe," said Councilmember Sean Elo-Rivera**. "These improvements in Rolando and Kensington are an example of long-term community investments that will replace aging infrastructure, reduce flood risk, and make our streets safer and more accessible for everyone."**
Neighbors will notice some new improvements above ground, including new storm drain manholes, inlets and pedestrian ramps, but many of the improvements are underground. San Diego's stormwater system operates largely out of sight, yet it plays a critical role in reducing flood risk, protecting neighborhoods and keeping communities safe.

“Modernizing our stormwater system is essential to protecting communities across San Diego,” said Stormwater Department Director Todd Snyder. **“This pipe replacement project will improve flood protection and strengthen infrastructure.**

For the Rolando project, in-house crews also dug trenches to remove old metal pipes and installed reinforced-concrete drainage pipes designed for a longer service life. Teams also installed new drain structures, repaired sidewalks and installed ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps. The improvements will make the neighborhood more flood-resilient. The work along Malcolm Drive and Rolando Boulevard is critical to improving safety along the Chollas Creek watershed.

On both projects, the majority of the work was done by City staff, including design by Stormwater Department engineers and construction by in-house crews.

The City’s Stormwater Department has made significant progress in recent years to position stormwater projects for funding. In 2022, the City competed for and won a $733 million federal WIFIA loan to fund numerous stormwater system upgrades across the City. Nevertheless, facing a multi-billion dollar need, funding remains the most significant impediment to modernizing the stormwater system for future generations.

The completion of this infrastructure project underscores the City’s commitment to reducing flood risk and improving water quality. Learn more about San Diego’s stormwater infrastructure at thinkblue.org.

Ahead of the rainy season, and with El Niño weather conditions in the forecast for this fall and winter, the City is taking steps to reduce flood risk in communities across San Diego. Over the past year, Stormwater crews maintained more than 11 miles of channels, prioritizing areas impacted by the 2024 floods and other locations known to experience flooding during heavy rains. The City plans to expand that work to more than 20 miles of channels in this fiscal year.

The City is also encouraging residents to prepare for El Niño by getting their homes and property ready for potentially heavy rains, creating an emergency plan with families and loved ones, and staying informed. Resources and more information are available at sandiego.gov/ElNino.



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