LIVERMORE
CALIFORNIA

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT **ITEM NO. 5.1**

DATE: September 15, 2026

TO: Chairperson and Members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Steve Riley, Planning Manager

SUBJECT: Hearing to consider a request for a Conditional Use Permit Modification and Site Plan Design Review Modification for a California Water Service (Cal Water) new drinking water well and associated improvements for a treatment facility. The project will include site grading, generator relocation, site piping and a reinforced concrete retaining wall in order to accommodate the proposed facility.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends the Planning Commission adopt resolutions:

1. Finding that the project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Existing Facilities.
2. Approving Conditional Use Permit Modification (CUPM) 26-001, and Site Plan Design Review Modification (SPDRM) 25-012.
3. Directing the Planning Manager to file a Notice of Exemption in accordance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act, subject to project approval.

SUMMARY

The Cal Water Station 23 Project (Project), located at 1043 Geneva Street next to Sunset Park, consists of the installation of a new drinking water well and associated treatment facility improvements, including grading, generator relocation, site piping, and a reinforced concrete retaining wall. Cal Water currently uses the site as a water storage facility (including two large existing water tanks) as authorized by a long-standing Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The General Plan and zoning regulations allow public and quasi-public uses on the site with approval of a CUP. The Project includes a request for approval of a Conditional Use Permit Modification and Site Plan Design Review Modification to expand the facility's capacity and add equipment necessary to provide efficient and reliable public water services.

DISCUSSION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project consists of the installation of a new drinking water well and associated treatment facility

improvements, including grading, generator relocation, site piping and a reinforced concrete retaining wall (see Attachment 2 - Development Plans). Cal Water is proposing the improvements to provide efficient and reliable water service to its Livermore customers. The Project includes the following entitlements:

- Conditional Use Permit Modification (CUPM): Facilitates public and quasi public land use by authorizing a new well and associated improvements for a treatment facility.
- Site Plan Design Review Modification (SPDRM): Ensures the site layout complies with the City's Development Code standards.

PROJECT SITE CONTEXT

The Project site is an existing water storage facility at 1043 Geneva Street. Table 1, below, summarizes the General Plan land use designation, zoning classification, and existing land use on the Project site and surrounding properties. The Project Site is shown in Attachment 1 location map.

	General Plan Designation	Zoning Designation	Existing Land Use
North	Open Space and Parks (OSP)	Arroyo Mocho and Trail	Arroyo Mocho and Trail
South	Open Space and Parks (OSP)	Education and Institution (E)	Sunset Public Park
East	Low Density Residential (LDR) 3	Residential Low Density (RL)	Single Family Residential
West	Open Space and Parks (OSP)	Education and Institution (E)	Sunset Public Park
Subject Site	Open Space and Parks (OSP)	Education and Institution (E)	Water Storage Tank Facility

STAFF ANALYSIS

General Plan Land Use

The Livermore General Plan 2045 designates the site as Open Space and Parks (OSP), which applies to areas intended to remain as permanent or semi-permanent open space due to the presence of natural resources, scenic value, or environmental constraints that limit development potential. The proposed installation of a new drinking water well within an existing, long-established water storage facility preserves the site's current function and maintains a semi-permanent open space, consistent with the land use designation.

Further, the Infrastructure Element provide policy direction to support the facilitation of Public and Quasi Public Uses, including utilities, such as:

- **Goal INF-2.** Provide sufficient water supplies and facilities that meet current and future needs in an efficient and sustainable manner.
- **Policy INF-2.1 Potable Water.** Ensure the availability of potable water for the city’s residents and businesses.
- **Policy INF-2.2 Water Efficiency.** Increase water efficiency in all new development and existing

building stock.

The Project implements these policies by enhancing an existing public utility facility to ensure continued delivery of safe and reliable drinking water. Therefore, the Project is consistent with the General Plan.

Zoning District

The site is zoned Education and Institution (E), which accommodates public and quasi-public uses such as schools, parks, and government facilities. Public service uses, including water utility facilities, require approval of a Conditional Use Permit to ensure compatibility in the E district. The water storage facility was originally approved under a CUP in 1966 (Attachment 6). The Project proposes a Modification to the CUP to authorize the construction of a new drinking water well, consistent with the zoning and Livermore Development Code Chapter 9.

Conditional Use Permit Modification

The Project involves a minor modification to the originally approved water storage facility, consisting of the installation of a new drinking water well and associated treatment facility improvements, including grading, generator relocation, site piping and a reinforced concrete retaining wall. Installation of the new well and associated improvements would not intensify operations beyond typical activity levels.

The Project includes conditions of approval requiring Cal Water to coordinate with all relevant local and regional agencies prior to building permit issuance (Attachment 5). This coordination includes securing applicable temporary discharge permits from the Water Resources Division and working with Zone 7 regarding stream maintenance activities. Therefore, the Project is compatible with the surrounding residential development, subject to the conditions of approval.

Site Plan and Design Review Modification

The E zoning district establishes development standards for height, lot coverage, and setbacks. These standards include minimum side, rear, and front building setbacks of 25 feet. These required setbacks would not be applicable to the proposed equipment.

The maximum allowed lot coverage in the E zone is 50 percent. The Project does not introduce new structures that would contribute to lot coverage and therefore complies with applicable coverage requirements.

The maximum permitted height in the E zone is 35 feet. The Project proposes a 6-foot wrought-iron screening fence for the equipment and a retaining wall to match the color of the existing water tanks, both of which are well below the height limit and fully compliant with the development and design standards.

Additionally, the proposed improvements are situated on the west of the site and screened by existing landscaping and two large water storage tanks to minimize impacts to the surrounding neighbors and eliminate views from the street frontage and adjacent park.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

Staff recommends finding the Project categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Existing Facilities, which applies to a project that consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use, including existing facilities of both investor and publicly-owned utilities used to provide electric power, natural gas, sewerage, or other public utility services.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Location Map
2. Development Plans
3. Resolution - Environmental
4. Resolution - Project
5. Exhibit A - Conditions of Approval
6. Exhibit B - Original Conditional Use Permit

Prepared by: Emily LaDue
Assistant Planner