

Central Services  
**Joan Araujo**, Director

Engineering Services  
**Vacant**, Director

Roads & Transportation  
**Anitha Balan**, Director

Water & Sanitation  
**Vacant**, Director

Watershed Protection  
**Jeff Palmer**, Director

July 23, 2024

Board of Supervisors  
County of Ventura  
800 South Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009

**Subject:** Approval of Cooperative Agreement (Agreement) No. 07-5313, Project No. 0724000027, between the California State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Public Works Agency (PWA) for the Somis Ranch Farmworkers Housing Off-Site Improvements (Project) Located on State Route 34; Authorization for the PWA Director or His Designee to Execute any Amendments to the Agreement, and to Enter into Additional Contracts, as Required to Implement the Agreement, Provided that such Amendments and Additional Contracts are Cost-Neutral to the County; Determination that the Project is Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); Authorization for the Director to Convey to Caltrans, the Real Property Rights Acquired by the County in accordance with the Agreement Upon Completion of the Subject Road Improvements Pursuant to the Agreement; Supervisorial Districts 2 and 3.

**Recommendations:**

1. Approve the Cooperative Agreement (Agreement) No. 07-5313, Project No. 0724000027 (Exhibit 3), between the California State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Public Works Agency (PWA), on behalf of the County, for the Somis Ranch Farmworkers Housing Off-Site Improvements (Project) located on State Route 34.
2. Authorize the PWA Director or his designee to execute any amendments to the Agreement, and any additional contracts, as required to implement the Agreement, subject to County Counsel review and approval as to form, provided that such amendments and additional contracts are cost-neutral to the County.
3. Determine that the Project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines sections 15301 and 15303, and that no unusual circumstances or other exceptions set forth in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 preclude use of these exemptions.



4. Authorize the Director to accept the dedication of, and to subsequently convey to Caltrans upon completion of the Project pursuant to the Agreement, the real property to be acquired for use as a public road right of way.

**Fiscal/Mandates Impact:**

Mandatory: No  
Source of Funding: AMCAL General Contractors  
Funding Match Required: No  
Impact on Other Department(s): No

**Summary of Revenue and Total Costs:**

		<b><u>FY 2024-25</u></b>		<b><u>FY 2025-26</u></b>
Revenue:	\$	110,742	\$	7,246
Costs:				
Direct	\$	87,005	\$	4,833
Indirect – Agency/Dept.	\$	22,240	\$	2,261
Indirect – County CAP	\$	1,497	\$	152
Total Costs	\$	110,742	\$	7,246
Net Costs	\$	0	\$	0
Recovered Indirect Costs	\$	23,737	\$	2,413

**Current Fiscal Year Budget Projections:**

<b>Current 2024-25 Budget Projection for Transportation ISF - Unit 4441</b>				
	Adopted Budget	Adjusted Budget	Projected Budget	Estimated Savings/(Deficit)
Appropriations	\$6,537,964	\$6,537,964	\$6,537,964	\$0
Revenue	\$7,147,600	\$7,147,600	\$7,147,600	\$0
Net Cost	(\$609,636)	(\$609,636)	(\$609,636)	\$0

Sufficient revenue and appropriations are available in the FY 2024-2025 Adopted budget. Revenue and appropriations will be included in the FY2025-2026 budget as appropriate.

**Discussion:**

On February 2, 2021, your Board approved the discretionary land use entitlements for the Somis Farmworker Housing Complex Project. The project is comprised of 360 farmworker dwellings located at 2787 Somis Road north of and adjacent to the City of Camarillo as shown on Exhibit 1 (Vicinity Map) and Exhibit 2 (Location Map).



On February 2, 2021, your Board also certified the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Somis Farmworker Housing Complex Project. Conditions of Approval for this project required widening of State Route 34 (SR-34) between mile markers 15.8 to 16.3 to accommodate two new bus stops and enhancing driveway entrances to the development. The driveway entrances will include two new right turn lanes, one new left turn lane, and a traffic signal at the northeast entrance location.

The Somis Farmworker Housing Off-Site Improvements (Project) along SR-34 will occur on the California State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) road right of way and will require a Caltrans Encroachment Permit to construct the Project. The encroachment permitting process is highly cumbersome and time-consuming; however, the Public Works Agency (PWA) has extensive experience in navigating through this process. For this reason, Caltrans has requested PWA to be the lead applicant on the encroachment permit as well as facilitate all activities needed for the Project in lieu of the developer AMCAL General Contractors.

A Cooperative Agreement between Caltrans and PWA is required to allow the County to proceed as the lead applicant and provide oversight during the permitting and right of way processes. A copy of Cooperative Agreement (Agreement) No. 07-5313, Project No. 0724000027, identifies responsibilities between Caltrans and PWA as it relates to environmental clearances; plans, specifications; estimate; and right of way is shown on Exhibit 3. All costs incurred by PWA to facilitate all work identified in this Agreement will be reimbursed by AMCAL General Contractors.

Since the Final EIR did not specially describe the two new bus stops and enhanced driveway entrances to the development, Caltrans is requiring the Project undergo a separate California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process. The improvements and the basis for their respective CEQA exemptions are listed below:

**SR-34 Widening:** This phase of the Project involves widening the road to allow for added turn lanes, resurfacing existing asphalt within the areas of widening, and extending an existing box culvert to accommodate the widened road. The potential environmental impacts of the road widening were analyzed in the EIR and was found to have no significant environmental impacts. The road widening phase of this project is exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guidelines section 15301(c), because it consists of minor alteration to “[e]xisting highways and streets” and will not have a significant impact on the environment either individually or cumulatively.

**Bus Stops & Traffic Signal Installation:** This phase of the Project involves constructing concrete pads for bus parking (pull out), constructing walkways and bus shelters, installing a traffic signal, striping a new crosswalk, and installing pedestrian push buttons. The bus stops and traffic signal installation phase of this project is exempt from CEQA under CEQA Guidelines section 15303 (e), because it consists of construction of “new, small facilities or structures” within the Caltrans’



right-of-way and will not have a significant impact on the environment either individually or cumulatively.

For these reasons, PWA requests your Board find this Project to be categorically exempt from CEQA. Exhibit 4 is the Project Listing & Description of Road included as part of the environmental clearance package. A categorical exemption is required to initiate the environmental permitting process and Caltrans Encroachment Permit. Upon your Board's approval, a Notice of Exemption will be prepared and filed for the proposed Project.

The widening of SR-34 between mile markers 15.8 to 16.3 will require the acquisition of two small portions of private property for use as the road right of way to construct the Project. Below are the property owners, assessor parcel numbers (APN), and square footages needed for the Project:

Property Owner	APN	Square Footage
Arnold H. Meyerstein Jr Trust	156-0-200-015	8,227
Bell Ranch Investors, LLC	156-0-180-350	1,698

Both property owners have agreed to dedicate portions of their property for public use. Currently the land to be dedicated is zoned Agricultural Exclusive but no crops exist on the portion of the properties. The land is used as a shoulder for SR-34 and a large driveway for the surrounding agricultural fields.

According to the Agreement, PWA will prepare the necessary documents to attain the right of way dedication from two property owners. This property will be transferred to PWA via Quitclaim Deed at no County cost. As soon as the right of way land is dedicated, AMCAL General Contractors can proceed with constructing the two new bus stops and enhanced driveway entrances and install a traffic signal at the northeast entrance location. The construction is tentatively planned for Spring 2025. After completing the Project.

### **Strategic Plan:**

This item contributes to the Board of Supervisors (Board's) 2024-2027 strategic priority to provide:

- III. Reliable infrastructure and sustainability through
  1. Maintain and improve dependable public resources to serve the needs of our diverse communities.
  2. Preserving our agricultural land and natural environment while ensuring housing availability for all residents.
  3. Investing in sustainable infrastructure, renewable energy, and preservation of our natural resources.



This item has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, the Auditor-Controller's Office, and County Counsel.

If you have any questions concerning this item, please contact Anitha Balan at (805) 654-2077.

Sincerely,



Anitha Balan, P.E.  
Director  
Roads & Transportation

Attachments:

- Exhibit 1 – Vicinity Map
- Exhibit 2 – Location Map
- Exhibit 3 – Cooperative Agreement
- Exhibit 4 – Project Listing & Description

