



Resource Management Agency

COUNTY OF TULARE AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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District One

PETE VANDER POEL
District Two

AMY SHUKLIAN
District Three

EDDIE VALERO
District Four

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District Five

AGENDA DATE: December 17, 2024

Public Hearing Required	N/A
Scheduled Public Hearing w/Clerk	N/A
Published Notice Required	N/A
Advertised Published Notice	N/A
Meet & Confer Required	N/A
Budget Transfer (Aud 308) attached	N/A
Personnel Resolution attached	N/A
Agreement(s) attached	Yes

CONTACT PERSON: Celeste Perez PHONE: (559) 624-7010

SUBJECT: Approve an Agreement with Cornerstone Structural Engineering Group

REQUEST(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve an agreement with Cornerstone Structural Engineering Group to provide Professional Engineering Services for the Avenue 176 at Road 276 Box Culvert Replacement Project, near the community of Strathmore, in an amount not to exceed \$224,600, effective December 17, 2024 through December 31, 2029.
2. Authorize the Chair to sign the Agreement.

SUMMARY:

The County of Tulare (County) experienced a series of severe rainstorms (atmospheric rivers) beginning in January of 2023, causing significant and widespread flooding and damage to critical transportation infrastructure. This catastrophic flooding caused the destruction of the timber box culvert located on Avenue 176 at Road 276, approximately eight (8) miles southeast of Strathmore, CA. Rapid flows of floodwater surged through the culvert beneath Road 276 with significant velocity, overpowering the structure, and ultimately causing it to collapse. As a result of the timber box failure, a large cross section of Road 276 collapsed as well.

The pre-storm timber box culvert, built in 1920, consisted of treated 8"x 8" wooden timbers with timber plank roof measuring approximately five (5) feet wide x six (6) feet tall x 24 feet long. A replacement structure will likely consist of a reinforced concrete single box culvert with wingwalls, a headwall, and cutoff walls to meet current Caltrans Design Standards.

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The County is the lead agency for the Avenue 176 at Road 276 Culvert Replacement Project (Project). A consultant team, managed by Cornerstone Structural Engineering Group Inc., will lead the engineering effort upon approval of this agreement.

On July 11, 2024, the Resource Management Agency (RMA) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for qualified firms to provide professional engineering consulting services for the Project. On August 2, 2024, RMA received 3 proposals from interested engineering firms including:

1. HDR Engineering Inc.
2. Cornerstone Structural Engineering Group
3. 4Creeks Inc.

The Project is eligible to receive federal funds through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and must meet all federal requirements; therefore, proposals were reviewed based on the following criteria recommended per the Caltrans Local Assistance Procedures Manual (LAPM):

- Experience with similar projects
- Understanding of the work to be performed and project approach
- Quality of staff and demonstrated technical ability
- Capability of developing innovative solutions
- Financial responsibility and availability
- Overall impression and responsiveness

To comply with federal requirements and state law, consultant selection was based solely on qualifications and the criteria described above. Cost and local preference of the consultants were not considered.

The proposals were independently reviewed by a 4-member panel composed of RMA staff. The consultants' proposals were reviewed on the following criteria:

- Understanding of the work to be performed
- Experience with similar projects
- Quality of Staff and demonstrate technical ability
- Capability of developing innovative or advanced techniques
- Familiarity with state and local requirements
- Capacity to perform the work within the anticipated schedule
- Affirmative Socioeconomic Firm Participation

After reviewing the proposals, Cornerstone Structural Engineering Group was selected as the top ranked consultant. The selected Project team consist of the following firms:

- Cornerstone Structural Engineering Group Inc. – Project Management and Structural Engineering Services
- LSA Associates – Environmental and Permitting Services

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Upon completing negotiations with Cornerstone Structural Engineering Group, as the prime consultant, a not to exceed amount of \$224,600 was established as fair compensation for the scope of service required for the Project.

Design of the Project is anticipated to take approximately 1.5 years to complete, including bridge and roadway design, environmental analysis, and right-of-way clearance. Following this timeline, construction is anticipated to begin spring 2026 and be completed by fall 2026.

This Agreement has been approved as to form by County Counsel. The following deviates from County boilerplate:

- Contractor may be relieved of its obligation to defend a claim if it alleges that responsibility for the claim lies with other parties.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:

No net County cost to the General Fund.

This project (RMA No. 00733721-002) was approved as part of the 2023/2024 County Transportation Improvement Program (CTIP). Staff anticipate 93.75% reimbursement ratio through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance Program (Disaster Relief) and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES). The remaining 6.25% will be covered through local County Road funds. In the event the County does not receive federal and state reimbursement, the Project will be entirely funded through local County Roads funds.

A summary of the estimated Project cost is as follows:

Preliminary Engineering:	\$250,000
Right-of-Way Support / Acquisition:	\$10,000
Construction Engineering:	\$123,600
Construction:	\$823,800
Total:	\$1,207,400

To date, FEMA has obligated \$1,042,300 for the project. However, under the FEMA Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide, the final eligible amount for a large project – defined as a project with costs exceeding \$1,000,000 – is based on the actual documented costs incurred to complete the approved scope of work. Therefore, upon completion of the project, it is anticipated that the FEMA Public Assistance Program (Disaster Relief) will reimburse actual expenditures exceeding the initially obligated amount, provided they fall within the eligible scope.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF TULARE STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN:

Safety and Security and Economic Well Being – This project will enhance the safety and security of the public by improving the transportation infrastructure for both the general population in the region and the motorists using this facility.

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ADMINISTRATIVE SIGN-OFF:

/s/ Reed Schenke

Reed Schenke, P.E.
Director

Cc: County Administrative Office

Attachment A: Vicinity Map
Attachment B: Agreement