



# Resource Management Agency

## COUNTY OF TULARE AGENDA ITEM

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

LARRY MICARI  
District One

PETE VANDER POEL  
District Two

AMY SHUKLIAN  
District Three

EDDIE VALERO  
District Four

DENNIS TOWNSEND  
District Five

**AGENDA DATE:** March 18, 2025

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 Dewberry Engineers Inc. for the Avenue 56 Permanent Restoration Improvements Project near Alpaugh

### **REQUEST(S):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve an agreement with Dewberry Engineers Inc. to provide Professional Engineering Services for the Avenue 56 Permanent Restoration Improvements Project, near the community of Alpaugh, in an amount not to exceed \$1,192,743, effective March 18, 2025 through January 31, 2030.
2. Authorize the Chair to sign the Agreement.

### **SUMMARY:**

The County of Tulare (County) experienced a series of severe rainstorms beginning in January of 2023, causing significant and widespread flooding and damage to critical transportation infrastructure. Avenue 56 was submerged in widespread flood waters in the project area due to the continuous rain events over this region in January and March of 2023. The flooding required the closure of the roadway, which created major consequences and even life-threatening conditions for citizens residing in the rural community of Alpaugh.

Due to this historic flooding, Avenue 56 and several surrounding roads were under water and access to Alpaugh was cut off from the north, south, and east. As a result, an initial detour of 95 miles was established to access State Route (SR) 43, the main north-south route in the region. After the first week of flooding, the remaining access route to Alpaugh, from the west, was also forced to close prompting an evacuation order for the community. As a result of inundation, an emergency opening project was undertaken to elevate Avenue 56, by an average of five feet, from 0.5 miles east of SR 43 to the privately

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operated railroad tracks located approximately 1.75 miles west of SR 43. The work was primarily performed by CalFire contract crews who were tasked to perform the work as part of disaster response efforts. This initial response work involved placing fill material, Rock Slope Protection (RSP) to bridge saturated native material and earth fill to establish the new roadway grade, as well placing several culverts to allow the conveyance of water beneath the elevated section.

Following completion of the initial response work performed to elevate the roadway, County Road Yard crews were dispatched to the site to place 3 layers of chip seal to provide a dust free wear surface. This technique was utilized as a temporary short-term solution to provide an all-weather driving surface to improve the safety of the site. Approximately 12-months after installing this chip seal surfacing, County staff observed several areas of surface failure as a result of traffic loading on the temporary surfacing. To ensure the residents of Alpaugh continue to have reliable access, the County developed a construction bid package which included placing a single lift of Hot Mix Asphalt (HMA) over the entire segment. This work is currently scheduled to take place in March of 2025 depending on suitability of weather conditions. All costs associated with initial response work have been captured as part of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Emergency Relief Program and County staff are working to seek reimbursement for completed work through the grant program. These costs are separate from the costs estimated for the Permanent Restoration aspect of the project.

While the emergency restoration work noted above allowed for the restoration of temporary access to the community of Alpaugh, there remains several immediate concerns along the corridor, including the following.

- Irregular/rough surface
- Narrow lanes, no shoulders
- Steep side slopes (not meeting clear recovery standards)
- Heavy truck traffic causing damage to roadway surfacing

Permanent Restoration (PR) work will provide additional embankment fill material to restore the roadway to a condition that matches pre-disaster function and safety standards, including a 28-foot-wide paved ride surface and eight (8) feet gravel shoulders. Beyond the graded shoulder, import material will be provided to maintain a traversable grade of 4:1 which is a required safety feature based on AASHTO guidelines for this type of roadway and associated design speeds. Work will also include extending an irrigation culvert and installation/modification of Corrugated Metal Pipe (CMP) culverts used to control water balance.

The County is the lead agency for the Avenue 56 Permanent Restoration Improvements Project (Project). A consultant team, led by Dewberry Engineers Inc., will coordinate the environmental clearance and engineering efforts upon approval of this agreement.

On June 24, 2024, the Resource Management Agency (RMA) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for qualified firms to provide professional engineering consulting

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services for the Project. On July 19, 2024, RMA received four (4) proposals from interested engineering firms including:

1. Dokken Engineering Inc.
2. Peters Engineering Group
3. 4Creeks Inc.
4. Dewberry Engineers Inc.

The Project is eligible to receive federal funds through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Emergency Relief Program 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 applicable 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 based 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

After reviewing the proposals, the three (3) most qualified firms were shortlisted and interviewed on August 7, 2024. These firms were:

1. Dewberry Engineers Inc.
2. Dokken Engineering Inc.
3. Peters Engineering Group

After considering written proposals and conducting interviews for all potential consultants, Dewberry Engineers Inc. was selected as the top-ranked consultant. The selected Project team consist of the following firms:

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- Dewberry Engineers Inc. – Prime consultant for environmental and civil engineering
- Cornerstone Structural Engineering Group – Subconsultant for structural engineering
- Bennett Engineering + Y&C Transportation – Subconsultant for hydraulics and hydrology
- Bess Testlab Inc. – Subconsultant for utility potholing
- Entech Consulting – Subconsultant for air quality and greenhouse gases
- MGE Engineering – Subconsultant for geotechnical investigations
- UNICO Engineering – Subconsultant for surveying

Upon completing negotiations with Dewberry Engineers Inc., as the prime consultant, a not to exceed amount of \$1,192,742.83 (including optional services) was established as fair compensation for the scope of service required for the Project.

Items of work noted as optional include Task 2: Surveying, Mapping and Right-of Way; Task 9: Assistance during Bidding; and Task 10: Environmental Monitoring & Design Support during Construction. The optional work may be required for the proper development of the Project; these tasks will be carried out as needed and at the direction of County staff.

In addition to the optional tasks described above, this agreement includes an optional extension of the Project limits, adding 3,000-ft of elevated roadway to the east of the current project limits. The implementation of this optional work will be solely dependent upon the County's ability to secure FHWA funding through the Providing Resilient Operations for Transformative Efficient, and Cost-Savings Transportation (PROTECT) Grant program. The County has been awarded funding through the PROTECT grant program as part of the Fiscal Year 22/23 cycle, but the authorization to proceed date remains pending. Currently, the funding is for the original project limits; however, County staff intends to request that the funds be re-allocated to support the extended project limits instead.

Design for the Project is anticipated to take approximately 2.5 years to complete, including roadway design, environmental analysis, and right-of-way acquisition. Following this timeline, construction is anticipated to begin spring 2028 and be completed by fall 2028.

**FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:**

No net County cost to the General Fund. This Project (RMA No. 19610027-002) was approved as part of the 24/25 County Transportation Improvement Program (CTIP). Staff anticipates an 88.53% reimbursement ratio through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Emergency Relief Program. The remaining 11.47% will be covered through local County Road Funds. In the event the County does not receive federal reimbursement, the Project will be entirely funded through local County Road funds.

A summary of the estimated project cost is as follows:

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Preliminary Engineering (including optional services):	\$ 1,192,743
Right of Way:	\$1,245,000
Construction Engineering:	\$1,374,200
Construction:	\$6,592,800
<b>Total Anticipated Project Cost:</b>	<b>\$10,404,743</b>

Anticipated Funding sources for the Project are as follows:

FHWA Emergency Relief Program*:	\$6,744,259
FHWA PROTECT Grant**:	2,211,857
County Local Match:	\$1,448,627
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$10,404,743</b>

\*Staff anticipates receiving an 88.53% reimbursement ratio for FHWA Emergency Relief Program funded work. The remaining 11.47% will be funded through local County Road funds.

\*\*If awarded, the FHWA Protect Grant program will reimburse the County at an 80% ratio. Local County Road funds will be used to fund the remaining 20%.

**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.

**ADMINISTRATIVE SIGN-OFF:**

**/s/ Reed Schenke**

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Reed Schenke, P.E.  
Director

Cc: County Administrative Office

Attachment A: Vicinity Map

Attachment B: Professional Engineering Services Agreement with Dewberry Engineers Inc.