



General Services 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: April 1, 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	N/A

CONTACT PERSON: Maria Benavides-Lopez PHONE: 559-205-1124

SUBJECT: Tulare County Ordinance Code section 1-03-1301, Local Preference

REQUEST(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Introduce an ordinance to suspend the motor vehicle portion of Tulare County Ordinance Code Section 1-03-1301, Local Preference, through December 31, 2028.
2. Find that the title of the ordinance was included on the published agenda, and that a copy of the full ordinance was made available to the public online and in print at the meeting before the ordinance was introduced.
3. Set the adoption of the ordinance for April 15, 2025.

SUMMARY:

The Purchasing Division of the General Services Agency (GSA) is responsible for procuring vehicles for County departments as approved by the Board of Supervisors. However, since 2021, ongoing manufacturing delays, supply chain disruptions, and high private consumer demand have continued to challenge timely and cost-effective vehicle procurement.

To address these challenges, the Board approved a temporary suspension of the Local Preference requirement for vehicle purchases for ten months, from February 22, 2024, through December 31, 2024. This allowed the County to expand sourcing options beyond Tulare County vendors.

Historically, the Local Preference policy has limited competition, as many out-of-county dealerships have ceased participating in the bidding process. This leaves the County reliant on local vendors, who frequently face inventory shortages, extended waiting times, and order cancellations.

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The Local Preference requirement provides that procurement contracts be awarded to local vendors, defined as those with offices within the County of Tulare when specific requirements are met. Data from Fiscal Years 2023/24 and 2024/25 highlight the impact of Local Preference on bid participation. An average of 4.22 bids were received when Local Preference was applied, compared to 5.44 bids when it was suspended. Expanding the vendor pool has led to increased competition, which may improve pricing and procurement efficiency. However, further analysis is needed to determine whether this broader competition directly results in cost savings and better project outcomes.

To ensure continued procurement efficiency, staff recommend extending the suspension of the Local Preference requirement for vehicle purchases for an additional three years effective upon Board approval through December 31, 2028. This extension will allow the County to broaden vendor participation, reduce procurement delays, and improve purchasing efficiency by mitigating order cancellations and long wait times.

Furthermore, extending the suspension of Local Preference aligns with state-mandated fleet transition requirements, including the phased adoption of electric vehicles (EVs). Given that EV availability is often limited among local vendors, removing Local Preference restrictions allows the County to source compliant vehicles more efficiently while maintaining operational readiness. This added flexibility supports the County's ability to meet state sustainability goals, comply with evolving regulations, and avoid delays in vehicle replacements critical for service continuity.

Additionally, the extended period will provide sufficient time to collect meaningful data on pricing trends, vendor participation, and overall market conditions. At the end of the three-year period, staff will reassess the policy's impact and present findings to the Board for further consideration.

Temporarily lifting Local Preference requirements ensures that the County can adapt to ongoing market fluctuations, enhance operational efficiency, and acquire vehicles in a timely and cost-effective manner. Therefore, taking a data-driven approach, the County can make a well-informed decision on whether to reinstate, modify, or permanently discontinue the Local Preference policy for vehicle purchases.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:

There is no Net County Cost to the General Fund.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF TULARE STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN:

The County's Strategic Business Plan includes the Organizational Performance initiative to improve organizational effectiveness. The recommended Board action helps fulfill this initiative by ensuring the County can obtain resources to provide continuity of services.

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ADMINISTRATIVE SIGN-OFF:

/s/Brooke Sisk

Brooke Sisk
General Services Agency Director

Cc: County Administrative Office

Attachments: Ordinance
Redline version showing amendments