



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 13-0611, **Version:** 2

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Community Development Agency, Transportation Division and the Chief Administrative Office Facilities Division, seeking Board direction regarding the City of Placerville's request for modifications of the Western Placerville Interchange west bound on-ramp. (Est. Time: 15 Min.)

### **Fiscal Impact/Change to Net County Cost**

The funding agreement between the City and the County for the Western Placerville Interchange Phase 1A Project for the County to contribute up to \$1,200,000 in Highway Users Tax funds ("Road Fund") was approved by the Board on October 16, 2012. According to the City, the project cost savings in eliminating a section of the retaining wall is approximately \$347,000 and would be a reduction in the amount of Road Fund the County would be required to contribute under the funding agreement. It is not clear whether the \$347,000 project cost savings includes any added incidental costs to cut a deeper slope and fence relocation, such as project design cost, grading cost, and other construction-related costs. We have requested and are waiting for the City to provide in writing a more comprehensive, detailed estimate of costs and savings for the proposed project modification.

The County will incur certain General Fund costs associated with the project modification. The County estimates the current value of the land take at \$30,000. Conveyance of the buffer space could also potentially lower the market value of the property if County were to sell it in the future. Potential future increase in utility maintenance and replacement costs could approximate \$75,000 due to confined working space in addition to having to request Caltrans' permission to access or encroach beyond its fence line if County requires wider clearance to maintain or repair the lines.

As an alternate to the County's future replacement or realignment of these utilities, the City has proposed relocating the utilities now for approximately \$70,000 (including \$4,000 for County Sheriff sign relocation) during current construction activities. If this option is selected it would reduce the proposed project cost savings to the Road Fund accordingly.

### **Background**

The City and its contractor have proposed the elimination of a section of retaining wall at the base of the slope southeast of the County's offices at 330 and 300 Fair Lane adjacent to the new freeway on-ramp.

The elimination of the proposed retaining wall would require a deeper cut into the existing slope bank bringing the top of cut onto County property.

Communication cabling and a private sewer line run in between the County's property line and an existing retaining wall behind the Sheriff's administration building. California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) will require a fence built within certain distance from the top of the cut bank. The City's proposed fence location, 5 feet from the top of the cut bank, however, will require a variance from the Caltrans standard guidelines to allow sufficient space from the County utilities and the Sheriff's back parking lot retaining wall. At this time the County has not received written confirmation from Caltrans confirming the proposed setback variance for the fence placement.

Current design drawings, a copy of which is attached, reflect that the proposed top of cut will come within 12.5 feet of the County's sewer line servicing the three adjacent buildings and within 7.5 feet of the communication line for the Sheriff's administration building. Proposed Caltrans fencing, if approved by Caltrans, will come within 15 feet of the nearest corner of the Sheriff's rear parking lot retaining wall, 7.5 feet of the County's sewer line and 2.5 feet from Sheriff's communication line.

The proposed project modification will require conveyance of that portion of County property that is currently serving as a buffer space between the freeway and the County buildings. If Caltrans approves the setback variance for the fence placement, the fence line would be closer to the Sheriff's Administration building and access around the facility and to the County's sewer and communication lines would be more restricted, creating less room for future repairs and/or replacement.

### **Reason for Request for Direction**

Staff is seeking Board direction whether to continue negotiations with the City on the proposed construction modification if Caltrans approves the modified fence setbacks. If the Board is interested in pursuing the City's project modification, staff needs direction concerning the replacement and/or realignment of the sewer and communication lines now or deferring it in the future.

If the City is unable to obtain Caltrans approval for the fence setback variance, the land take would extend beyond the County's sewer and communication lines and be much closer against the Sheriff's parking lot retaining wall than currently reflected in the drawings, and staff recommends not pursuing the City's project modification.

### **Action(s) to be taken following Board approval**

1. If the Board is interested in pursuing the City's project modification contingent upon Caltrans' written approval of the fence setback variance, staff will notify City to update the project costs to reflect an accurate accounting of project savings. Staff will return to the Board with the necessary documents for the construction of the project modification, including conveyance of County property (requires 4/5 vote) and an amendment to the funding agreement reducing the County's obligation in the amount of the project cost savings.
2. If Caltrans does not allow fence setback modification staff will notify City of no intention to pursue the project modification.

### **Contact**

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