



**CITY OF SALINAS
COUNCIL STAFF REPORT**

DATE: MARCH 19, 2019
DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS
FROM: DAVID JACOBS, DIRECTOR
BY: MICHAEL RICKER, ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES PLANNER
TITLE: BORONDA ROAD EXPANSION DESIGN GRANT

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

A motion to approve a Resolution authorizing Mayor Gunter to sign the agreement between Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD) and the City of Salinas, and accepting the MBARD grant in the amount of \$400,000 for the re-design of East Boronda Road.

RECOMMENDATION:

Public Works staff recommend that the City Council approve a Resolution:

- 1) Accepting the \$400,000 grant to fund preparation of a portion of the construction drawings for the re-design of East Boronda Road; and
- 2) Authorizing the Mayor to sign the proposed agreement between MBARD and the City of Salinas.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On September 19, 2018, the Public Works Department learned that their grant application for \$400,000 with the Monterey Bay Air Resources District Board was successful. Funding for local grants come from the State's AB 2766 Motor Vehicle Emission Reduction Grant Program through registration fees collected by the California Department of Motor Vehicles. These funds are intended to help to offset costs incurred by local governments where local budgets cannot cover their full cost of improvement projects. This year's AB 2766 Grant award budget totaled \$1,632,756. Therefore, Salinas received approximately 25% of the total grant money available for the tri-county region.

BACKGROUND:

Salinas has long planned to urbanize some 2,500 farm acres along its former northeastern border. Towards that goal, the City has conducted several steps, including annexation of the land just north of East Boronda Road, commonly referred to as the future growth area (FGA). Plans for the FGA

include approximately 11,500 housing units with nearly 50,000 new residents. Once built this development would become the third largest community in the tri-county area--smaller in population only to the cities of Salinas and Santa Cruz. Projected traffic volumes could exceed 114,000 vehicle trips per day. Given the potential air quality impacts from vehicle emissions, ensuring that this development is both smart and sustainable is critically important.

Conventional roadway design often results in adverse air quality impacts from vehicle emissions. Signalized intersections compress traffic, stall movement and increase air pollutant emissions from vehicle travel, particularly from the idling of stopped vehicles and acceleration/deceleration. Whereas intersection designs employing roundabouts have proven to generate substantially less air pollution.

East Boronda Road is the main arterial servicing the planned development. The Boronda Road Project will occur in three phases. The first phase of the project would include widening of East Boronda Road from just east of Dartmouth Way to approximately 1,900 feet east of McKinnon Street for a total length of approximately 3,500 feet. It would also include a roundabout at the intersection of McKinnon Street and East Boronda Road. Existing agricultural and roadside drainage ditches situated along the north side of East Boronda Road would be relocated to the north to accommodate the roadway widening. The second phase of the project would continue the widening of east Boronda Road from the Phase 1 limit to approximately 1,100 feet east of Natividad Road. It would also include roundabouts at the intersections of El Dorado Drive and Natividad Road. The remainder of the improvements for the last phase of the project include the widening of the bridge crossing over Gabilan Creek and the construction of a roundabout at the intersection of Independence Boulevard and East Boronda Road.

CEQA CONSIDERATION:

The City of Salinas has determined that the proposed action is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378). In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 includes the general rule that CEQA applies only to activities which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Because the proposed action and this matter have no potential to cause any effect on the environment, or because it falls within a category of activities excluded as projects pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378, this matter is not a project. Because the matter does not cause a direct or foreseeable indirect physical change on or in the environment, this matter is not a project. Any subsequent discretionary projects resulting from this action will be assessed for CEQA applicability.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

If approved, this action would support the City Council's Quality of Life Strategic Goal by enabling the City to design a more efficient and environmentally sustainable roadway corridor. For example, without the roundabout design, projected traffic would necessitate that East Boronda Road be widened to six travel lanes and include traffic signals instead of the roundabouts. Approval of the Resolution enables a more sustainable street design using roundabouts.

DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION:

The redesign of Boronda Road is the product of extensive coordination between Public Works staff with Community Development Department staff and project consultants. Further, Public Works environmental staff coordinated with MBARD on the grant. With over 100,000 additional daily vehicle trips projected, inter-departmental and inter-jurisdictional coordination was not just desirable, but a necessity.

FISCAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

Acceptance of the grant would positively affect Salinas' budgetary circumstance. The \$400,000 in grant funds would enable Salinas to reduce its cost proportional to the grant, thus saving the City nearly one-half of a million dollars. Should the City Council approve the Resolution, the Finance Department would be authorized to create a new account to help fund the East Boronda Road redesign.

ATTACHMENT:

Resolution
Agreement with the Monterey Bay Air Resources Board.