



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

LAND USE AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

PALOMA AGUIRRE
First District

JOEL ANDERSON
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER
Third District

MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

DATE: September 10, 2025

02

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

ADVERTISE AND AWARD A CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT FOR CULVERT REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 RESURFACING PROGRAM AND RELATED CEQA EXEMPTION (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

The County of San Diego's (County) Department of Public Works (DPW) maintains over 18,000 drainage culverts throughout unincorporated areas of San Diego County. These culverts direct water beneath and away from roadways, which helps ensure safe transportation, reduces sediment contamination in waterways, and protects roads from expensive damage and public disruption. Maintaining culverts is essential for the overall health of the County's road network and supports the Board of Supervisors (Board) commitment on May 2, 2017 (11) to achieve an average Pavement Condition Index of 70 using Senate Bill 1 funding.

The Board's expanded annual road resurfacing program launched in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017-18 and has consistently included culvert maintenance for roads selected for resurfacing. Each fiscal year, after developing the road resurfacing schedule, DPW staff identify and assess culverts on these roads to determine maintenance needs and conduct outreach to the communities where culvert work is needed to share information on the schedule and approach. This culvert work can be incorporated into resurfacing projects, handled through Job Order Contracts, or managed as separate low bid contracts. Due to cost considerations, convenience factors, and capacity constraints, DPW proposes using a low bid construction contract for culvert maintenance activities on roads in the FY 2025-26 expanded resurfacing program.

Attachment A contains the complete list of culverts associated with the FY 2025-26 expanded road resurfacing program, identifying 48 culverts throughout the County's unincorporated areas that require maintenance. This request seeks approval to advertise and award a construction contract to the lowest bidder for culvert maintenance on County-maintained roads. The estimated project cost is \$3,918,000, which includes a 10% contingency for unexpected conditions during construction, funded through Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation State Gas Tax revenue. DPW plans to advertise and award the contract in Fall 2025, with construction beginning in January 2026 and completing by the end of 2026.

SUBJECT: ADVERTISE AND AWARD A CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT FOR CULVERT REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 RESURFACING PROGRAM AND RELATED CEQA EXEMPTION (DISTRICTS: ALL)

RECOMMENDATION(S)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. Find in accordance with Section 15301(c) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) that the proposed project is categorically exempt from CEQA review because it involves the maintenance of existing culverts involving no or negligible expansion of existing use.
2. Authorize the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting, to advertise and award a construction contract and to take other actions authorized by Section 401 et seq. of the Administrative Code with respect to contracting for culvert repair and replacement.
3. Designate the Director, Department of Public Works, as the County Officer responsible for administering the construction contracts in accordance with Board Policy F-41, Public Works Construction Projects.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The culvert maintenance work proposed in this action is directly related to the County of San Diego (County), Department of Public Works expanded annual road resurfacing program and includes culverts that are associated with this resurfacing work. The road resurfacing program utilizes the most recent version of CalEnviroScreen (4.0) and Healthy Places Index (3.0) GIS layer to identify culverts that are located within underserved communities. Approximately 65% of the culverts on the list are within underserved communities. Road resurfacing and culvert maintenance will improve and protect the condition of the roads and facilitate transit and mobility to underserved communities. County construction contracts are also publicly advertised and competitively bid which helps to stimulate the local economy.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Maintaining existing drainage culverts protects roads and provides benefits to sustainability in terms of economy, environment, social, health and well-being. Maintaining culverts in a timely manner prevents more costly future maintenance efforts, thereby supporting economic sustainability. Functional drainage facilities minimize flooding and promote the safe transit of vehicles and pedestrians, which supports the walkability of communities. The drainage improvements proposed in this action contribute to the County of San Diego's sustainability goals to improve water quality which supports the health and wellbeing of residents by minimizing contaminants in water ways and vectors such as mosquitos that can transmit disease.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Operational Plan in the Department of Public Works Road Fund. If approved, project costs are estimated to be \$3,918,000, including 10% construction contingency. The funding source is Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation State Gas Tax revenue. There will be no change in net General Fund costs and no additional staff years.

SUBJECT: ADVERTISE AND AWARD A CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT FOR CULVERT REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 RESURFACING PROGRAM AND RELATED CEQA EXEMPTION (DISTRICTS: ALL)

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

County of San Diego construction contracts are competitively and publicly bid and help stimulate the local economy by creating primarily construction-related employment opportunities. All workers employed on the public works projects must be paid prevailing wages determined by the California Department of Industrial Relations, according to the type of work and location of the project. The prevailing wage rates are usually based on rates specified in the collective bargaining agreements.

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

Community planning and sponsor groups (Alpine, Bonsall, Crest, Descanso, Fallbrook, Jamual, Julian, Lakeside, North County Metro, Rainbow, Ramona, San Dieguito, Spring Valley, Valle De Oro, Valley Center) in the affected areas have been notified that this matter is being considered today.

BACKGROUND

The Department of Public Works (DPW) maintains over 18,000 drainage culverts in the unincorporated areas of San Diego County (County). Culverts convey water beneath or away from roadways, enhancing safety for motorists, minimizing contaminants and health hazards such as sediment and mosquitos in our water ways, and protecting roadways from costly damage and public inconvenience. Culvert maintenance is a necessary component of maintaining the almost 2,000 miles of County-maintained roads, which provides for the safe conveyance of people and goods throughout the County and supports a robust economy. The proposed culvert maintenance work also supports May 2, 2017 (11), Board of Supervisors (Board) action to achieve an average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of 70 within the County-maintained Road network with funding from the Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation State Gas Tax revenue. PCI is an industry standard rating system used by DPW to rate the condition of roads and track progress toward the Board approved PCI initiative, with a PCI of 0 representing a failed road and a PCI of 100 representing a newly paved road. The expanded annual road resurfacing program initiated by the May 2017 Board action began in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017-18. Since that time, this initiative has included the maintenance of culverts that are associated with roads selected for resurfacing to support the Board approved PCI goal and avoid damage to the County-maintained Road network.

Following the development of the road resurfacing list each fiscal year, DPW staff identify the culverts that are associated with these roads. Each of these culverts is then evaluated by DPW staff based on the severity of rust, holes, and other potential damage that could impact the functionality of the culvert. Culverts identified with significant rust, holes, or other issues requiring maintenance are added to the culvert maintenance list. A thorough design process is implemented for each of these culverts to identify the most cost-efficient maintenance strategy. Culverts requiring maintenance are generally put into one of three industry standard maintenance categories: replacement, lining, or invert paving. Culvert replacement involves completely excavating and replacing the existing culvert. This treatment is typically required when more significant rust, holes, or other issues are present that preclude other treatments. Culvert lining is a process where the existing culvert remains in place and a lining material such as metal, plastic, or fiberglass is installed to protect the existing metal pipe and rehabilitate the culvert to like new condition. Lining is

SUBJECT: ADVERTISE AND AWARD A CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT FOR CULVERT REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 RESURFACING PROGRAM AND RELATED CEQA EXEMPTION (DISTRICTS: ALL)

typically used in situations where minor to moderate degradation is observed or where the depth precludes replacement. Culvert invert paving is a process where a few inches of reinforced concrete are added to the bottom of culverts to fill any holes or voids. Invert paving is utilized for larger culverts where human entry is possible.

Culvert maintenance work associated with road resurfacing has been included as part of the resurfacing projects, advertised in separate construction contracts, or conducted using Job Order Contracting (JOC), a contracting method that is used to allow low bid contractors to conduct a variety of maintenance related activities under a single contract. Each JOC contract is valid for only one year and has a statutory contract limit of \$5 million. JOC contracts have been successful in conducting culvert maintenance work associated with resurfacing in the past but have limited contract capacity, a limited number of construction contractors, and are shared throughout the County for all types of maintenance work. Due to these limitations and to supplement the existing JOC contracts that support DPW's expanded annual road resurfacing effort, DPW is proposing to utilize a low bid construction contract to conduct culvert maintenance activities at culvert locations associated with the road resurfacing list.

There are 48 culverts located throughout the unincorporated areas of the County associated with the FY 2025-26 resurfacing activities that are planned to be constructed as part of this project. The list of culverts and associated details are included in Attachment A.

Prior to the start of construction, project notifications will be provided in English with a statement in each of the threshold languages referring readers to a webpage with the associated notification where Google Translate will provide translation to all threshold languages. A QR code will make webpage access quick and easy for the public. Notification methods such as mailers, doorknob hangers, social media postings, and signage will be provided to residents and businesses in the vicinity of the construction activities. The notifications will describe the nature of the project, construction, traffic control devices such as cones, signage, and flaggers will be used to provide safe pedestrian and vehicular access. County representatives will be on-site throughout the duration of the project and will be available to respond to any project-related inquiries from the public.

This is a request to approve the advertisement and subsequent award of a construction contract to the lowest bidder for culvert maintenance on County-maintained roads. The estimated project cost for County-maintained culverts is \$3,918,000, including a 10% contingency for unforeseen conditions that may arise during construction. The funding source is Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation State Gas Tax. An advertisement and award of the construction contracts is scheduled for Fall 2025. Construction is scheduled to begin in January 2026 and be completed near the end of 2026.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Section 15301(c) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines exempts from CEQA review the "operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use." This exemption includes the maintenance of existing highways, streets, sidewalks, gutters, and bicycle and pedestrian trails.

SUBJECT: ADVERTISE AND AWARD A CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT FOR CULVERT REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE FISCAL YEAR 2025-26 RESURFACING PROGRAM AND RELATED CEQA EXEMPTION (DISTRICTS: ALL)

The key consideration in determining whether this exemption applies is whether the project involves “negligible or no expansion of existing or former use.” The proposed project consists of the award of a culvert maintenance project that is necessary to ensure existing right-of-way facilities continue to function as designed. Therefore, the project is categorically exempt in accordance with Section 15301 of the CEQA Guidelines because it involves the maintenance of existing public culverts involving no or negligible expansion of existing use.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today’s recommendations support the Sustainability, Community, and Equity Strategic Initiatives in the County of San Diego’s 2025-2030 Strategic Plan by utilizing sustainable planning practices that avoid more costly future repairs, focusing on underserved communities, and providing adequate maintenance to ensure safe communities that improve the quality of life of all residents.

Respectfully submitted,



DAHVIA LYNCH

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

A. Department of Public Works Culvert Maintenance List