



MEMORANDUM

TO: Biola Community Services District Board of Directors
FROM: Gary D. Horn
DATE: May 21, 2020
RE: DWR Recharge Project and Drainage Basin Excavation

BACKGROUND

The Biola CSD was awarded a grant from the State Department of Water Resources (DWR) to construct a pipeline and enlarge an existing storm drain basin to facilitate groundwater recharge. The recharge water will come from the Fresno Irrigation District (FID) Herndon Canal that runs along the north side of Shaw Avenue. The new pipeline will be installed in Third Street from G Street to Shaw Avenue. The new pipeline will connect at the intersection of Third Street and G Street to the existing storm drain system that discharges to the existing basin. The District owns five acres of land that contains the existing basin on the easterly portion. The project scope included the full excavation of the basin. The total amount of the grant is \$705,000.

The goal of the project is to recharge enough water to replenish the amount that Biola CSD pumps from the ground. That amount is 150 acre-feet (a-f) per year.

SITUATION

The environmental review of the project has been completed and is under review by DWR. The design for the improvements has also been completed. The original plan was to install the new pipeline in the dirt shoulder on the west side of Third Street. During the design phase we discovered that there have been several underground telephone and communication lines installed by Sebastian and Verizon that prevented the placement of the new pipeline in the dirt area. Consequently, the pipeline will have to be constructed under the westerly edge of the pavement, and the pavement over the pipeline replaced. The additional cost for the paving work is estimated at \$175,000. Other cost increases since the application was submitted will add an additional \$25,000 to the projected cost, for a total additional cost of \$200,000.

One way to reduce the cost of the project is to eliminate the excavation of the basin from the bids. The basin can be excavated by contractors who need soil for construction projects. We have been contacted by one contractor who does work in Kerman, Mendota and Firebaugh, and will need soil for those projects within the next couple of years. Eliminating the basin excavation will reduce the budget shortfall to \$100,000. Basin excavation costs are hard to estimate because it will depend on finding a contractor who needs dirt at the time of the bid. Allowing the dirt to be removed over a longer period of time will allow the contractor to take the dirt at no cost to the District in exchange for grading the basin.

Since the actual construction costs will not be known until after the bids are received, we have requested an additional \$100,000 from DWR as a contingency for the project. This will bring the total project cost to \$805,000.

We are waiting to hear from DWR regarding the scope and budget changes.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the Board directs the staff to allow contractors to excavate the remainder of the drainage basin at no charge in exchange for grading the basin to the design for the ultimate basin.