



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Submitted on:
(COB Stamp)

Department Name: Public Works/Flood Control
Department No.: 054
Agenda Date: January 27, 2026
Placement: Administrative Agenda
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: 4/5

TO: Board of Supervisors
Board of Directors, Flood Control and Water Conservation District

FROM: Department Director(s): Chris Sneddon, Public Works Director
Contact: Mostafa Estaji, Deputy Director, Transportation
Walter Rubalcava, Deputy Director, Flood Control

SUBJECT: Public Works Director's Report on Emergency Response Actions from Impacts on Flooding and Storms and Continuation of Emergency Actions

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Receive and review a report from the Public Works Director regarding emergency actions taken pursuant to Resolution No. 19-327 and Public Contract Code section 22050 related to emergency operations responding to flooding, storms, debris removal and transportation projects following the recent late December 2025 and early January 2026 (25STM3) storm events and the necessity of the action and the reasons the emergency will not permit delay resulting from competitive solicitation of bids;
- b) Determine that there is a need to continue the emergency actions ordered by the Public Works Director (4/5 vote required);
- c) Direct staff to return to the Board at the next regular meeting, or every 14 days in the case of consecutive weekly regular meetings, to allow the Board to review the emergency action and determine whether there is a need to continue the emergency action, by a 4/5 vote, until the actions are terminated; and
- d) Determine that these emergency actions were found by the Board to be exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(d) and Section 15301(c) on January 13, 2026. A Notice of Exemption was filed

on this basis on January 7, 2026, and the proposed action is within the scope of that Notice of Exemption. Linked here: [County of Santa Barbara - File #: 26-00044.](#)

That the Board of Directors:

- a) Receive and review a report from the Public Works Director regarding emergency actions taken pursuant to Resolution No. 19-327 and Public Contract Code section 22050 related to emergency operations responding to flooding, storms, debris removal of Flood Control facilities and projects following the recent late December 2025 and early January 2026 (25STM3) storm events and the necessity of the action and the reasons the emergency will not permit delay resulting from competitive solicitation of bids;
- b) Determine that there is a need to continue the emergency actions ordered by the Public Works Director (4/5 vote required);
- c) Direct staff to return to the Board at the next regular meeting, or every 14 days in the case of consecutive weekly regular meetings, to allow the Board to review the emergency action and determine whether there is a need to continue the emergency action, by a 4/5 vote, until the actions are terminated; and
- d) Determine that these emergency actions are statutorily exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(c) for actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency. A Notice of Exemption was filed on this basis on January 13, 2026, and the proposed action is within the scope of that Notice of Exemption. Linked here: [County of Santa Barbara - File #: 26-00044.](#)

Summary Text:

This item is on the agenda to receive, review, and continue the emergency actions and work being done related to the late December 2025 and early January 2026 storm events pursuant to the Public Works Director's authority under Resolution No. 19-327.

On December 17, 2019, the Board approved Resolution No. 19-327 pursuant to Public Contract Code section 22050(b)(1) which authorizes the Board by a 4/5 vote to delegate authority to the Public Works Director to take certain actions in the event of an emergency (see Attachment A).

Public Contract Code section 22050(b)(3) and (c)(2), requires the Public Works Department to regularly report on current emergency response work actions ordered by the Public Works Director pursuant to the delegated authority (Attachments B and C). This allows the Board to comply with the statutory requirement to review the emergency action and determine by a four-fifths vote whether there is a need to continue the action.

Following the Board's initial review of the emergency actions, Public Contract Code Section 22050(c)(2) requires the Public Works Department to request that the Board review the emergency action at the next regular meeting, or every 14 days in the case of consecutive weekly regular meetings and determine by a 4/5 vote that there is a need to continue the action until the action is terminated. Public Contract Code Section 22050(c)(3) requires terminating the action at the earliest possible date that conditions warrant so that the remainder of the emergency response can be completed through normal competitive bid procedures.

Disaster response and recovery processes are actively in progress. The extended timeframe of these operations is a result of the extent and severity of damage, the multi-jurisdictional collaboration at some damage sites, and staff's attention to federal procedures and guidelines to maximize reimbursement. Public Works is planning to continue emergency operations with expedited

procurement to ensure public safety and access to roadways and prevent further exacerbation of vulnerable locations across the county.

Discussion:

On December 17, 2019, your Board explicitly authorized the Public Works Director, or designee, to take action whenever an Emergency occurs whether or not the Emergency results in a declared emergency. This Resolution defines Emergency as “a sudden, unexpected occurrence that poses a clear and imminent danger, requiring immediate action to prevent or mitigate the loss or impairment of life, health, property, or essential public services” (Pub. Contract Code § 1102.)

Public Contract Code section 22050(a)(1) provides that in the case of an emergency, a public agency, pursuant to a four-fifths vote of its governing body, may repair or replace a public facility, take any directly related and immediate action required by that emergency, and procure the necessary equipment, services, and supplies for those purposes, without following otherwise-applicable competitive bid procedures. Section 22050(b)(1) authorizes that the Board of Supervisors/Directors, by a four-fifths vote, may delegate, by resolution, to the appropriate county administrative officer, chief engineer, or other nonelected agency officer, the authority to order any Action.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

Preliminary damage estimates for Transportation are currently \$2.7M countywide, with additional assessments ongoing. This work will be funded by reallocating road funds budgeted in FY25/26 for permanent restoration projects from 2023 and 2024 storms. Those projects will be delayed until resources are available to complete that work. Attachment B will be updated as additional work is performed.

Preliminary costs for Flood Control’s emergency response activities related to the late December 2025 and early January 2026 storm events are currently estimated at \$500,000 countywide, with inspections and damage assessments ongoing. Flood Control emergency response costs will be funded using existing appropriations budgeted in various Flood Control funds for Operations and Maintenance (O&M).

Should actual costs begin to exceed available appropriations, staff will return to the Board for consideration and approval of a budget revision.

Special Instructions:

Direct the Clerk of the Board to email a copy of the minute order of these actions to Christina Lopez at clopez@countyofsb.org and to Erik Adelman at eadelman@countyofsb.org.

Attachments:

Attachment A – Resolution No. 19-327

Attachment B – Emergency Work Report - Transportation

Attachment C – Emergency Work Report – Flood Control

Contact Information:

Erik Adelman, PE, Public Works Transportation, Engineering Manager