



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER**

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

**Agenda Number:**

**Submitted on:**  
**(COB Stamp)**

**Department Name:** General Services/  
Public Works  
**Department No.:** 063/054  
**Agenda Date:** March 10, 2026  
**Placement:** Departmental Agenda  
**Estimated Time:** 30 MINUTES  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:** <Insert Date>  
**Vote Required:** 4/5

**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** General Services Kirk Lagerquist, Director  
Public Works Chris Sneddon, Director  
**SUBJECT:** Community Workforce Agreement Implementation Update, All Supervisorial Districts.

DocuSigned by:  
Kirk Lagerquist  
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DocuSigned by:  
Chris Sneddon  
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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Other Concurrence:**

As to form: No

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Receive and file a report on the implementation of the Countywide Community Workforce Agreement for the first three County projects that fall within the \$10,000,000 or greater threshold for its use; and
- b) Approve Budget Revision Request #BJE-0010986 (Attachment B); and
- c) Find that the recommended action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to sections 15378(b)(4) and 15378(b)(5) of the CEQA Guidelines, because they consist of administrative and fiscal activities of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment; and that the proposed actions do not constitute "Approval" within the meaning of CEQA Guidelines §15352 as they do not commit the County to a definite course of action in regard to any project

**Summary Text:**

This item presents an update on the implementation of the Countywide Community Workforce Agreement (CWA) following your Board's action on December 2, 2022 approving a CWA, which became effective on September 12, 2023. The report identifies the progress, observations and challenges associated with the implementation of the CWA on the following three projects:

1. Santa Barbara Probation Headquarters
2. Tajiguas Landfill Phase IVA Groundwater Protection System
3. Santa Claus Lane Streetscape Improvements

In addition, the CWA will apply to three upcoming projects: Santa Claus Lane Phase 2, Lower Mission Creek Flood Control Improvements Reach 4, and the Northern Branch Jail expansion.

During negotiations and Board discussion of the CWA approval process, staff was directed to return with an update once implementation was underway on performance related to elements of the CWA. Specifically, this report includes costs of implementation, performance in use of local labor, effects on contractor participation in bidding and bid prices, and dispute resolution.

CWA coordination on the three projects to date is approximately \$250,000. Costs for the next three planned projects are estimated to cost approximately \$370,000. These are direct CWA coordinator costs and do not include staff time. Costs to date for the CWA coordinator are being funded by the General Fund.

All three projects had a limited number of bids and exceeded engineers' estimates for construction. However, this could have been due to market-wide construction cost escalation and limited contractor availability in general, which non-CWA projects are experiencing as well. While some contractors expressed reluctance to bid based on the CWA, understanding whether bid competition and bid prices are related to the CWA would require exercising the rebid option (accepting bids with and without the CWA).

Local labor use fluctuated in the 10%-68% range for these projects. Local labor usage rates are generally higher than this for County non-CWA projects. However, this could be because many high-cost projects require specialized contractors and subcontractors that are not readily available locally. In addition, improvements have been made to labor coordination efforts that may increase this number on future projects.

For comparison, staff reviewed local labor participation for the most recent County project greater than \$10 million that was constructed prior to the implementation of the CWA. For the Regional Fire Communication Center, 27 subcontractors performed scopes of work, of which 16 were from the Tri-County area, providing for a local area resident rate of 59.25%.

Finally, the dispute resolution process has worked on these projects and no projects have been interrupted by labor disputes.

**Discussion:**

As part of this report preparation, the CWA coordinator and construction managers provided information on experiences of how the 'Intent and Purpose' of the CWA are being met as well as lessons learned.

The CWA defines the 'Intent and Purpose' under the following categories:

- Identification and Retention of Skilled Labor and Employment of Local Area Residents
- Project Cooperation
- Workers' Compensation Carve-out
- Peaceful Resolution of All Disputes
- Binding Agreement on Parties

The information below is a summary of the Community Workforce Agreement Progress Report (Attachment A).

***Initial implementation phase focused on the following key compliance activities:***

- Collection and Review of Letters of Assent: All contractors and subcontractors performing work under CWA-covered projects were required to submit Letters of Assent confirming their agreement to the terms and conditions of the CWA. These documents were reviewed, logged, and organized to ensure proper alignment with project scopes and timelines.
- Core Worker Documentation: Contractors seeking to employ core workers were required to submit appropriate documentation, including proof of prior employment and residency status, in accordance with CWA guidelines. This ongoing process involves close review and follow-up to ensure eligibility criteria are met.
- Pre-Job Conferences: Pre-job conferences were held with contractors, unions, and County representatives to outline project-specific expectations, review CWA provisions, and confirm reporting and communication protocols. These meetings also served as key opportunities to answer questions and align all parties on compliance responsibilities.

***In the early implementation phases of the County's CWA program, the following key challenges and observations were identified and addressed or noted for improvement:***

- Communication with Stakeholders: Consistent and clear communication, particularly with the Trades Council, has been a challenge during the early phases of implementation. County and Coordinator Initiated regular standing meetings to maintain alignment, share updates, and address issues proactively. When issues arose, the parties relied on the CWA framework to work through them in good faith.
- Record Keeping and Tracking: Maintaining continuous, up-to-date tracking of workforce data has been difficult. Coordinator does not have direct access to certified payroll, requiring tiered requests for information.
- Centralized Data Management: Documentation and reporting materials are stored across multiple systems and platforms. Coordinator worked with project managers to establish a centralized, shared platform.
- Balancing Compliance with Program Goals: Initial implementation phase focused on ensuring compliance with CWA requirements. Future efforts will work to better balance compliance needs with these critical local labor force community-building goals (e.g. Trades Council working on apprenticeship development and training opportunities).

***Project Specific Observations and Challenges:***

Probation HQ:

- Experienced shortage in manpower with union halls (i.e. cement masons, and framers) and, therefore, subcontractors needed to supplement with their own workforce. Providing their own workforce poses challenges with meeting core worker requirements as typically workers don't reside within the tri-counties as most of subcontractors are from southern California and not all are signatories with the unions.
- Experienced delay in schedule due to subcontractors not being knowledgeable of the required 3-week CWA on-boarding process (Process described in Fiscal and Facility Impacts below). Subcontracted work could not begin until this process was completed.
- As the Owner on a project, the CWA limits the ability to supplement labor or implement our contractual language (County General Condition 9.2.4) which allows augmentation of labor force. Without the ability to supplement labor per this standard condition, the inadequate workforce extended the length of the framing scope.

Tajiguas Landfill Phase IVa:

- The prime contractor faced challenges in sourcing local heavy equipment operators, requiring some Teamsters and operators from outside the Tri-County area. This underscores both the progress made toward compliance and the ongoing difficulty in meeting local hire goals when specialized skills are in short supply.
- On rare circumstances, the CWA allows the union to claim work that is not traditionally recognized as the industry standard. The County procured specialty construction quality assurance monitoring services required by the project for geosynthetic installation. Although the procured consultant was qualified to perform this work, the trade unions assert claim over inspection activities, preferring to assign the work. Ultimately, the consultant was allowed to proceed with performing the work, after collaborating with the union, however the resolution resulted in additional labor-related costs beyond those included in the consultant's original proposal.
- When unable to source workers from the unions, there is a challenge for subcontractors to meet the core worker requirement goal as typically their workers are outside of the Tri-County area, and not all subs are in signatory agreements with the union.
- The CWA includes eligible Veterans regardless of residence in the local area participation goal, however the agreement has no formal mechanism to require disclosure of veteran status (considered personal information) for those working on the project. Without voluntary identification, the local area resident participation rate may be difficult to track and be accurately represented.

Santa Claus Lane Streetscape Improvements:

- Similarly to the other projects, the contractor had to become familiar with the CWA requirements, union hiring practices, core worker requirements and reporting expectations. Although the project experienced some administrative delays, the contractor was able to adjust practices to meet the CWA requirements.

***Workforce Participation Data: A goal of at least 50% of all construction labor hours worked on the project shall be from Local Area Residents (prime residence in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties.***

- Workforce data has been collected from three projects under the CWA.
- Local resident participation rates are calculated using certified payroll reports submitted by the contractors and subcontractors.
- The process for collecting, calculating, and documenting workforce participation data is still being refined. Internal systems for compiling and analyzing this data are in development. This has limited the ability to provide deeper breakdowns, such as participation by trade, classification, or project phase.
- Future reporting periods will benefit from improved data management tools and clearer documentation practices, which will allow for more detailed and reliable workforce insights over time.
- Probation Headquarters project has shown steady improvement over time, with monthly participation levels ranging between roughly 30% and 68%, and overall participation currently at approximately 40%, reflecting upward progress from earlier reporting periods.
- Tajiguas Landfill project has experienced more variability, possibly due to specialized trade requirements and labor availability, with recent monthly participation levels generally ranging between 10% and 30%, and overall project participation trending lower – currently at approximately 25%.
- Santa Claus Lane Streetscape Improvements project concluded with approximately 78% local area worker participation, exceeding the 50% benchmark and demonstrating strong local workforce engagement.

***Alignment with CWA Goals:***

Apprenticeship participation has not yet been consistently emphasized or tracked across projects. Improved integration of apprentices into County-funded projects will help fulfill the CWA's training and career pathway goals. Future efforts will prioritize clearer reporting, closer coordination with unions, and contractor support to ensure apprentices are meaningfully included.

Equitable access has been supported through the hiring hall system required under the CWA, which ensures that qualified workers in the Tri-County region have opportunities to be dispatched to County funded projects. While contractors are permitted to bring in a limited number of core workers, additional hiring is routed through union halls, creating an open and consistent pathway for local workers to participate.

Good faith collaboration has also been a central focus. Early challenges in communication with the Trades Council and contractors have been addressed through regular standing meetings and proactive outreach. These efforts have improved alignment and problem-solving at the project level. Importantly, when disputes have arisen, the parties have relied on the CWA framework to work through them in good faith.

***Lessons Learned:***

- Educate all parties on compliance rules and workforce goals to strengthen compliance and reinforce hiring and training goals.
- Standing meetings and direct coordination with Trades Council and contractors have been essential for resolving issues and maintaining alignment.
- Establish a platform for record keeping to improve efficient reporting and analysis.
- Relying on the CWA framework to resolve disputes promotes collaboration, strengthened relationships and better function of the agreement.
- To help remedy the challenges with sourcing adequate local workforce within various trades, it will be important for the Trades Council and unions to balance their focus on compliance with developing and implementing practical procedures that advance hiring, training, and apprenticeship goals while planning for future projects and their workforce needs.

**Background:**

In April 2019 your Board directed staff to negotiate the use of a Community Workforce Agreement (CWA) on public projects. Since then, staff negotiated with the Tri-Counties Building and Construction Trades Council (TCBT) to develop a template CWA in accordance with the direction of your Board. On February 1, 2021, your Board selected Option 1 out of four potential CWA frameworks. This Option directed staff to utilize your negotiation teams' recommended CWA, with agreement point modifications and exclusions described in that report, for future County capital projects over \$10,000,000 and including rebid provisions. On December 2, 2022, your Board approved a CWA with a term of five years, beginning April 1, 2023, contingent on all the unions signing the CWA. Due to concerns presented by the International Union of Operators and Engineers Local 12 (IUOE) on language associated with their trade, TCBT was unable to secure all signatures. On September 12, 2023, a side letter between the County and the TCBT was approved by your Board to maintain the County's authority and control over construction quality control and quality assurance while addressing IUOE concerns. Based on this side letter, IUOE signed the CWA at which time it became effective to use on projects meeting the defined threshold. Specifically, the side letter clarifies the interpretation of the CWA with regards to contract administration language.

The CWA requires a Community Workforce Coordinator to be designated to actively administer and enforce the obligations of the CWA. On May 21, 2024, a Request for Qualifications and Proposal was solicited for CWA compliance services. Vanir Construction Management Inc. submitted a proposal and was found to be qualified to perform the services. On August 7, 2024, Purchase Order CN9335 was established with Vanir Construction Management Inc. to provide a Community Workforce Coordinator to monitor compliance with the County of Santa Barbara CWA, assist as the authorized representative of the County in developing and implementing the programs referenced in the CWA, and to otherwise implement and administer the CWA for the following County projects: Santa Barbara Probation Headquarters (Project No. 19014), the Tajiguas Landfill Phase IVA Groundwater Protection System (Project No. 24023), and the Santa Claus Lane Streetscape Improvements (Project No. 24024). On May 6, 2025, the original Purchase Order with Vanir Construction, Inc. was transitioned to a Board Contract and further amended on December 16, 2025 to extend compliance services for these same projects at a maximum contract limit of \$248,170.

In preparation for three new projects entering into Design-Build and Construction phases and subject to the CWA, General Services and Public Works have or are preparing to enter into CWA Coordinator

Service contracts. On February 10, 2026, Community Workforce Coordinator services in the amount of \$280,000 were awarded to STV Construction as part of the Construction Management Services Contract for the North Branch Jail Expansion. Public Works staff have received proposals and are coordinating contracts for the Lower Mission Creek Phase 4 and Santa Claus Lane Phase 2 projects in the amounts of \$46,000 and \$44,020 respectively.

Costs for services vary depending on complexity and project duration. Typically, the more trades involved in constructing a project, the higher the cost. In addition, the CWA also applies to the installation of furniture, fixtures or equipment and services such as materials testing, which in turn requires compliance monitoring by a CWA Coordinator.

The Community Workforce Agreement Report (Attachment A) was prepared by the designated Community Workforce Coordinator. Other key observations incorporated into the report were provided by the project managers for each of the aforementioned projects.

### **Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

The implementation of the Community Workforce Agreement has had fiscal and facility impacts. The CWA Coordinator costs for projects completed, in construction and planned total approximately \$620,000. In addition, staff anticipate that due to unrecognized administrative costs for meeting the requirements of the CWA by contractors, subcontractors and other construction services such as inspection and materials testing, that future projects subject to the CWA will show an increase in costs to account for the administrative effort as well union fees.

The summary below illustrates the effort by the contractor to onboard a subcontractor:

1. Provide sub with a copy of the CWA
2. Require the subcontractor to sign a letter of assent – every subcontractor at every tier must sign the letter of assent before starting any work
3. Submit signed copy of the letter of assent to CWC and the Trades Council – must occur 48 hours before starting work or within 48 hours of award, whichever is later
4. Attend the Pre-job conference – all subcontractors must participate in the project’s pre-job conference, which occurs no later than 14 days before starting work
  - a. At this meeting subs must disclose work assignments, review manpower needs, review project rules and owner rules
5. Follow CWA hiring requirements
  - a. Use a union hiring hall referral
  - b. Core worker limits (for non-signatory subcontractors) – subcontractors may bring in up to three core workers initially, and up to a total of six using the alternating referral process
  - c. Local hire requirements – 50% of labor hours must be performed by Local Area residents
    - i. Subcontractors must use the Craft Request Form when requesting workers
6. Execute any required subscription agreements
  - a. If the subcontractor is not signatory to a Master Labor Agreement, they may need to sign trust fund subscription agreements to make fringe benefit contributions

7. Subcontractors must comply with all wage, benefit, salary and drug-testing requirements
8. Subcontractors must maintain required documentation - must keep record and provide core worker qualification proof, local hire tracking, benefit contribution certifications and dispatch records

This three-week process contributes to the overall timeline of the project. Once this process is complete, workforce depending on the number required, may not be readily available, further increasing the timeline for certain trade work to begin.

BJE #0010986 establishes appropriations of \$46,000 in the Public Works So Co. Flood Zone Fund 2610 and of \$44,000 in Public Works Roads Capital Infrastructure Fund 0017 (for a total of \$90,000) for the CWA Coordinator Service contracts related to Lower Mission Creek Reach 4 and Santa Claus Lane Streetscape Improvements. This amount is funded by an operating transfer from General County Programs General Fund for Other Financing Uses from the release of Committed Emerging Issues fund balance.

**Special Instructions:**

Provide a Minute Order to Diana Estorga, 912 W. Foster Road, Santa Maria, CA and email a copy to diestorga@countyofsb.org.

**Attachments:**

**Attachment A** – Community Workforce Agreement Progress Report

**Attachment B** - Budget Revision Request BJE #0010986

**Contact Information:**

Diana Estorga  
Capital Division Chief  
diestorga@countyofsb.org