

## **ATTACHMENT B**

**Statement of Overriding Considerations  
for the New County Jail Facility  
Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (FSEIR)  
07EIR-00000-00003  
08GOV-00000-00004  
07GPA-00000-00011  
State Clearinghouse No. 2007111099**

The Final Subsequent EIR for the New County Jail facility identified project impacts to public services (solid waste disposal and water resources) aesthetic/visual resources and agricultural resources as being significant environmental impacts which are considered significant and unavoidable. The Planning Commission has reported to the Board of Supervisors that the project is consistent with applicable policies of the County's Comprehensive Plan based on a Public Hearing held by the Planning Commission on February 13, 2008. Having balanced the benefits of the project against its significant and unavoidable environmental effects, the Board of Supervisors hereby determines that the project's significant and unavoidable impacts are acceptable in light of the project's benefits. Each benefit set forth below constitutes an overriding consideration warranting approval of the project, independent of the other benefits, despite each and every unavoidable impact.

1. An extensive selection process was used to identify and screen potential jail facility sites that met minimum criteria outlined by the Sheriff's Department. In all, approximately 275 sites within the project region were considered. The proposed project site is the most suitable site of those considered in terms of location, impact avoidance and reduction, and development feasibility.
2. The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department has been directed by a court order that was issued in 1989 to develop additional jail facilities to relieve overcrowded conditions in the existing south county jail. The identification of a feasible development site and the acquisition of that site is a necessary step in complying with the requirements of the court order.
3. During the past ten years, nine Grand Juries have stressed the need for a North County Jail. Those Grand Juries have formally recommended that the Board of Supervisors and the Sheriff's Department take the necessary steps to site, plan, and build a North County Jail.
4. A court ordered cap was placed on the female inmate population of the Main Jail in 1990. Since that time, to comply with the court order, the Sheriff's Department has released numerous female inmates from custody prior to completion of their sentences. On September 22, 1998 the Court ordered the Sheriff's Department to implement a cap on the male inmate population of the Main Jail. It is anticipated that hundreds of male inmates will be released prior to completion of their sentences. The addition of a North County Jail facility will provide beds for inmates that would otherwise be released before their mandated sentences have been complete.

5. Existing overcrowded conditions in the south county jail contribute to safety concerns for inmates and Sheriff personnel. Overcrowded conditions have been identified as a contributing factor to several recent escapes from the south county jail facility.
6. Inmates from the south county jail must be regularly transported to north county courts for appearances. The requirement to transport inmates results in approximately two bus trips each weekday between the north and south county, a round-trip of approximately 140 miles. Implementation of the proposed project would result in the curtailment of bus trips with a corresponding reduction in fuel use and air emissions. A reduction in the need to transport inmates would also minimize potential safety/security risks to Sheriff personnel and the public.
7. Providing additional jail facilities in the north county will minimize the number of vehicle trips that presently occur as a result of inmate visitors who must travel from the north to the south county. Any reduction in visitor-related vehicle trips will result in a corresponding reduction in energy use and air emissions.
8. Regardless of where inmates are incarcerated in Santa Barbara County, they will result in the generation of solid waste that requires landfill disposal. Implementation of the proposed project will not result in an increase in the number of inmates that are housed in Santa Barbara County jails or in the amount of refuse that is generated while they are incarcerated. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a direct increase in the amount of solid waste that is generated by inmates in Santa Barbara County jails that requires landfill disposal.
9. Solid waste from a north county jail facility that would require landfill disposal would be taken to the City of Santa Maria Landfill. It is estimated that this landfill has sufficient disposal capacity to operate until the year 2013. The incremental contribution of additional waste material from a new jail facility to the Santa Maria landfill would be a minor percentage (approximately 0.37%) of the daily amount of refuse that is currently sent to the landfill, but this contribution is considered significant and unavoidable.
10. The site is currently cultivated with irrigated row crops but soils are non-prime. In addition, the balance of the site not being purchased by the County would continue to be viable for agriculture.
11. The proposed project site has been historically used for agriculture but the site is zoned for industrial use and abuts the Mahoney Ranch which is currently being annexed by the City of Santa Maria for urban development.
12. The proposed project site provides sufficient acreage (approximately 50 acres) to accommodate the proposed jail facility while providing substantial building setbacks and buffer areas from the project site perimeter. For example, the endangered California red-legged frog (CRLF) resides in wetlands to the south of the Jail site but resource agencies concur that impacts can be avoided and reduced to a level of insignificance. Likewise, the Agricultural Commissioner agrees that the

project incorporates suitable agricultural buffers. Therefore, the proposed jail facility would not result in significant impacts to, or conflicts with, surrounding agricultural operations.