



**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: Planning & Development
Department No.: 053
Agenda Date: August 19, 2025
Placement: Administrative Agenda
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Director(s): Lisa Plowman, Director, Planning and Development
Contact Info: Errin Briggs, Deputy Director, Energy, Minerals & Compliance Division
SUBJECT: Agreement for Services with Environmental Science Associates, for the Preparation of the Imerys Solar Array and Battery Energy Storage System Environmental Impact Report

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: Yes

Risk Management

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve and authorize the Chair to execute an Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor with Environmental Science Associates (Attachment 1) to provide professional services in the preparation of the Imerys Solar Array and Battery Energy Storage System Environmental Impact Report. Services are to be rendered during the period of August 19, 2025 to December 1, 2026 for a base contract amount not to exceed \$343,177.00.
- b) Approve and authorize the Planning & Development Department (P&D) Director, or the P&D Director's designee subject to the Board's ability to rescind this delegated authority at anytime, to:
 - i. Approve up to a 10 percent contingency cost (labor hours) not to exceed \$30,368.00 for services being performed under the Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$373,545.00;
 - ii. Approve changes or additions in the services being performed, provided the contract does not exceed the base contract amount plus the 10 percent contingency identified in the contract; and

- iii. Make immaterial changes in accordance with Section 33 and suspend performance per Exhibit A in the Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor.
- c) Determine that the Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor and the Board of Supervisors' actions are not a project and, therefore, are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(c)(3) and 15378(b)(5).

Summary Text:

The Imerys Solar Array and Battery Energy Storage System Project (Project) is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because the Project is proposed to be located on privately owned land in the State of California. Imerys and the Energy, Minerals, & Compliance Division of the Planning and Development Department (P&D) agree that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required under Section 15163 of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA Guidelines).

P&D initiated a competitive bid process and issued a request for proposals (RFP) for a consulting firm to conduct the environmental review for the Project. Based on the proposals submitted, and the evaluation and interview process, P&D has selected Environmental Science Associates as the project consultant. The Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor (Attachment 1), for a total contract amount not to exceed \$373,545.00, will exceed the \$200,000 cumulative contract threshold, and therefore, requires Board of Supervisors approval. Staff recommends the Board of Supervisors approve the Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor.

Background:

Imerys is proposing the construction and operation of a 14.65-megawatt (MW) fixed-tilt ground mounted solar photovoltaic facility, transmission line, and battery energy storage system (BESS) to provide privately consumed renewable power for Imerys Filtration Minerals at their diatomaceous earth mining facility in Lompoc.

On November 22, 2024, P&D deemed Imerys' application for the proposed Project to be complete for processing. P&D initiated a competitive bid process and issued an RFP on March 24, 2025, and received five proposals by the May 9, 2025 deadline. After the County evaluated the proposals for adequacy, Imerys selected Environmental Science Associates to prepare the EIR document. Tasks involved with the preparation of the environmental documents include, but are not limited to, peer review of technical reports, conduct technical studies and to fill deficiencies in the project analysis, provide independent and objective evaluation of potential project-specific and cumulative impacts, prepare project alternatives and identify mitigation measures to reduce environmental impacts to the extent feasible.

Environmental Science Associates has worked with many local jurisdictions on similar projects. Environmental Science Associates' proposal demonstrated relevant previous experience in the project area and professional qualifications necessary for the satisfactory performance of the services required. Environmental Science Associates proposes subcontracting with TLB Fire Protection Engineering, Inc. to assist in the peer review of the hazards mitigation analysis. TLB Fire Protection Engineering, Inc. has extensive experience preparing hazards mitigation analysis for BESS installations.

Once your Board approves the execution of the Agreement for Services, P&D will oversee the consultant's completion of the EIR process.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: No

Imerys will fully reimburse the County for the consultant costs to prepare and process the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The total cost is not to exceed \$373,545.00, which includes a base amount of \$343,177.00 and a 10% contingency for labor (\$30,368.00). Before work begins, Imerys will provide a one-time deposit of the full amount to Planning & Development (P&D). Any use of contingency funds must be identified by the consultant and approved by the P&D Director (or designee) before work starts.

P&D will invoice Imerys for all staff time necessary to administer the Agreement for Services and related planning actions. There are sufficient appropriations in the Permitting Budget Program in Services and Supplies and Charges for Services to cover the cost of the Agreement for Services for Fiscal Year 2025-26. P&D will have full cost recovery for staff time associated with this project. Any unspent funds shall be returned to the applicant at the time of Contract termination.

Fiscal Analysis:

Funding Source	FY [2025]	Total
General Fund		
State		
Federal		
Fees		
Other	\$373,545.00	\$373,545.00
Total	\$373,545.00	\$373,545.00

Staffing Impacts:

No additional staffing is needed to implement and manage this Agreement.

Special Instructions:

Please forward one original executed Agreement and a copy of the hearing Action Summary to P&D, Hearing Support, Attention: David Villalobos.

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor

Attachment 2: Board Contract Summary

Contact Information:

Katie Nall, Planner, (805) 884-8050

Planning and Development Department