



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District

R-14-122  
Meeting 14-27  
October 8, 2014

## AGENDA ITEM 4

### AGENDA ITEM

Contract Amendment to Provide Additional Environmental Review Consulting Services for the Proposed Ridge Vineyards Exchange Project

### GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. J. Powers".

Authorize the General Manager to amend a contract with David J. Powers Associates, adding \$24,750 to the existing contract, for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$128,035, to provide additional environmental review consulting services for the proposed Ridge Vineyards Exchange project.

### SUMMARY

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) is in the process of completing the revised environmental documents for the proposed Ridge Vineyards Exchange Project to address neighbors' concerns about groundwater and other issues that were brought to the District's attention at the end of the initial CEQA review in December 2013 and during subsequent community meetings. On January 8, 2014, the Board of Directors approved an amendment to the contract with David J. Powers Associates for total contract amount of \$103,285, which included \$55,445 the hydrology study. To address the additional comments and concerns raised at four community meetings with the Monte Bello Road neighbors, additional consulting and hydrology testing and analysis services were required, leaving insufficient funds to complete the CEQA review process. Therefore, the General Manager is requesting Board authority to amend the District's current contract in the amount of \$24,750 with David J. Powers Associates (DJPA). The additional cost to amend DJPA's contract would bring the not-to-exceed contract amount to \$128,035. Ridge Vineyards has contributed \$25,000 towards the hydrology study.

### DISCUSSION

A draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the proposed Ridge Vineyards (Ridge) exchange project was circulated for public comment from November 13, 2013 to December 4, 2013. Near the end of the circulation period, a number of Monte Bello Ridge residents raised new concerns regarding groundwater use and other issues. As a result, the General Manager determined the need to revise and expand the environmental review of the project to address the issues raised.

To better understand the concerns of the Monte Bello Road community, the District and Ridge held four public meetings as summarized below:

- December 3, 2013 - District met with neighbors at the Administrative Office
- April 14, 2014 - District held a community meeting at Picchetti Winery, which focused on the hydrology study
- May 19, 2014 - Ridge held a community meeting at their property to discuss their vehicle use of Monte Bello Road and water uses for vineyards
- On June 14, 2014 - District led a site tour of the proposed Ridge Vineyards Exchange Project that included Waterwheel Creek Trail and the Ridge Vineyard facility

At these four community meetings, additional comments and concerns were raised by some community members involving hydrology, traffic, vineyard implementation, and habitat fragmentation. Between February and May 2014, the hydrologist conducted well testing of 34 well sites (19 wells located in the water recharge study area and 15 wells in the adjoining area) to provide a baseline for groundwater conditions and assess the potential groundwater impacts of proposed new vineyard development. Several community members requested additional well tests after the scheduled well test dates were completed requiring the need to schedule additional well tests. The extensive well testing has provided a solid understanding of the hydrology, geology, and differences in aquifers based on rock formations along Monte Bello Ridge. The additional well testing further supported the well testing results in the water recharge study area. The hydrology study will be attached to the CEQA document, which will be circulated for public review in early October.

Due to the extensive well testing and analysis, and the associated research and revisions to the CEQA document completed by the Consultant, insufficient funds remain to complete the CEQA review process, including funds for assistance in preparing responses to public comment following recirculation of the environmental review document and attendance at the upcoming public hearing to answer technical questions.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The Fiscal Year 2014-15 Real Property Department Land Conservation budget contains sufficient funds for the proposed contract amendment.

### **BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW**

This contract amendment could not be reviewed by a Board Committee because of severe time constraints, however the entire Ridge Vineyard Exchange Project has been fully vetted through both the Real Property Committee and the full Board.

### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice was provided pursuant to the Brown Act. Notice was also sent to the interested parties list for the Ridge Vineyards Exchange project, which includes the Monte Bello Road neighbors.

**CEQA COMPLIANCE**

Retention of professional consultants to provide CEQA services does not constitute a project under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as it will not result in a direct physical change in the environment [CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c)(2)].

**NEXT STEPS**

Following approval by the Board, the General Manager would authorize the contract amendment with DJPA to complete the environmental review process for the proposed Ridge Vineyards Exchange Project. The District anticipates re-circulating the environmental document for Board and public review in October 2014. The exchange proposal is anticipated to be presented to the Board in November or December of 2014.

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