

January 29, 2009

Scott Mc Golpin, Director of Public Works
Santa Barbara County Public Works Department
123 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93110-1369

Dear Mr. Golpin:

The 2008-2009 Civil Grand Jury is reviewing a response given to the 2005-2006 Civil Grand Jury report entitled "Flood Control and Water Conservation District", specifically Recommendation #1.

This recommendation reads: "Now that a comprehensive engineering study of the Santa Maria Levee is available, the funding to reinforce the levee should be secured and applied to the solutions in the study report."

The response from the Public Works Department was: "The Public Works Department is already implementing this recommendation." ...

The Grand Jury is ^{previously} requesting an update on the current status of progress on the matter and, if concluded, information documenting and detailing the conclusion and the date completed. Please reply in detail to the Grand Jury at the above address at your earliest convenience, but in any event not later than 30 days from this date.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Ted Sten
Foreman
Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury



Received

FEB 10 2009

Santa Barbara
Grand Jury

Santa Barbara County Public Works Department
Flood Control & Water Agency

February 6, 2009

Mr. Ted Sten, Foreman
Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury
County Courthouse
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

RE: Letter of January 29, 2009 requesting Status of the Santa Maria River Levee

Dear Mr. Sten:

The County Public Works Department is pleased to reply to the questions outlined in your January 29, 2009 letter regarding updated information and a progress report on the 2005-2006 Civil Grand Jury Report entitled "Flood Control & Water Conservation District".

At that time the Public Works Department responded to Recommendation #1 that reads "Now that a comprehensive Engineering Study of the Levee is available, the funding to reinforce the Levee should be applied to the solutions in the report." Public Works responded that we were already implementing this solution.

Since that time, we continue to implement the Recommendation. A number of events have taken place since that time that further puts the repairs of the Levee closer to being achieved.

The Grand Jury Report outlined the issues with the Levee and cited the engineering solutions to the erosion problems. Since that time, Public Works has taken a number of steps to further the progress on this issue, and today we find ourselves potentially months away from starting construction on the Levee if all remaining pieces fall in place.

The following is a list of updates on the Levee since the 2005-2006 Grand Jury Report.

Detailed Engineering Design Alternatives Report

The Public Works Department recognized that prior to preparing final design construction drawings, a review of treatment alternatives would be needed. Rather than wait for the Corps of Engineers, the County hired a recognized Engineering firm (HDR Inc) to review the alternatives and make findings of treatments that are feasible, that is, most effective and lowest cost. In 2007, the County funded and received the final Report (attached on enclosed CD). This report was forwarded to the Corps and was used by the Corps to date and has shortened the amount of technical work the Corps would have to do.

Corps of Engineers Design Deficiency Report

In August of 2008, the Corps of Engineers, using the County's Alternatives Analysis, produced a Design Deficiency Report (attached in the enclosed CD). The Corps report was an important milestone in that the report formalized the problem, the fact that it is a federal responsibility to fix, and calculated costs for the work. This document also served to bolster the requests of the County and the City of Santa Maria for increased funding.

County CEQA Document

In late 2007 and into early 2008, the County began preparations of an environmental document under CEQA. This report was brought to the draft stages. Then, like the HDR Report, the Corps utilized the information contained in the report for the preparation of the federal environmental process (NEPA). The NEPA environmental assessment is scheduled for completion in June of this year, yet one more critical element needed prior to any construction. The County does not have an applicable draft to share at this time, but can provide when available if the Grand Jury desires.

County Construction Plans

Also, in 2008, the County prepared a set of 30% plans for the Levee repairs (plans attached). Since that time, the Corps has assigned an in-house design team and has assumed responsibility for completion of the final design and construction drawings. Final plans are expected in June 2009.

Project Funding Efforts

For the last several years, the County has made a serious effort to secure funding for the Levee repairs, now estimated at \$48 million. The County hired a federal lobbyist and has had the Levee as it Number 1 funding priority at the federal level. In federal fiscal year 2008, approximately \$275,000 was appropriated for the Levee, and this funding helps the Corps conduct the necessary work outlined

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above and this funding was sufficient thanks to the prep work done by the County.

Continuing our efforts, we were please to see that in FY 2009, the Congress had identified \$8.5 million in the Senate Appropriations Bill, and \$6 million in the House Bill, these number have not been reconciled as of yet.

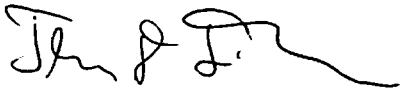
However, the biggest news yet is the potential funding that the Federal Economic Stimulus Package could provide. The US Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District has stated that the Santa Maria River Levee is their Number 1 priority for Stimulus Funding, and as such, could receive tens of millions of dollars through this process.

Conclusions

Since the 2005-2006 Grand Jury report, and the response from Public Works, the Public Works Department has worked tirelessly pushing the need for Levee repairs. Staff has traveled to Los Angeles many times, and has pushed our priorities in Washington DC. As a result of our efforts of proving advanced information, and continuous pressure for funding, this project moves ever closer to construction and staff will continue its pressure and support until it is completed.

If it would be desired, I would be happy to meet with you to discuss these efforts in more detail.

Sincerely,



Thomas D. Fayram
Deputy Public Works Director
Water Resources Division

Enclosures

cc: John Baker, Deputy CEO, w/o enclosures
Scott McGolpin, Public Works Director, w/o enclosures