

Proposal

San Benito County

Strada Verde Innovation Park Initiative Evaluation

June 10, 2020



Prepared by
EMC Planning Group

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1.0 Project Understanding

The Strada Verde Innovation Park Voter Initiative (“Strada Verde Initiative”) was submitted to San Benito County, and approved for the collection of voter signatures on May 29, 2020. This citizen’s initiative measure would approve a specific plan for about 2,777 acres located in an unincorporated area of northwest San Benito County, east of U.S. Highway 101 and the Pajaro River and north of State Route 25 and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, approximately seven miles south of Gilroy and nine miles northwest of Hollister, and make conforming amendments to the County’s General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

The County seeks a thorough review and analysis of this initiative according to the provisions of the California Elections Code section 9111.

California Elections Code section 9111 states that during the circulation of a petition or before taking an action, the Board of Supervisors may refer the proposed initiative measure to a county agency or agencies for a report on any or all of the following:

- (1) Its fiscal impact.
- (2) Its effect on the internal consistency of the county's general and specific plans, including the housing element, the consistency between planning and zoning, and the limitations on county actions under Section 65008 of the Government Code and Chapters 4.2 (commencing with Section 65913) and 4.3 (commencing with Section 65915) of Division 1 of Title 7 of the Government Code .
- (3) Its effect on the use of land, the impact on the availability and location of housing, and the ability of the county to meet its regional housing needs.
- (4) Its impact on funding for infrastructure of all types, including, but not limited to, transportation, schools, parks, and open space. The report may also discuss whether the measure would be likely to result in increased infrastructure costs or savings, including the costs of infrastructure maintenance, to current residents and businesses.
- (5) Its impact on the community's ability to attract and retain business and employment.
- (6) Its impact on the uses of vacant parcels of land.
- (7) Its impact on agricultural lands, open space, traffic congestion, existing business districts, and developed areas designated for revitalization.

2.0 Scope of Work

(8) Any other matters the board of supervisor's requests to be in the report.

The report will include an evaluation of certain provisions of the initiative and attached specific plan, including proposed development approval processes, various environmental effects, and on-the-ground effects on existing or need for new or expanded infrastructure.

2.0 Scope of Work

EMC Planning Group will prepare a comprehensive evaluation of the initiative measure.

The following detailed scope of work outlines the tasks and not-to-exceed costs proposed to assist the County with the proposed project. The tasks identified below will be completed as part of the process to prepare the initiative evaluation. This scope of work will be an amendment to the approved scope of work to evaluate the Rural Lands Initiative proposed by Preserve Our Rural Communities (PORC). Some efficiencies will be realized by use of shared information between the two evaluations, but a separate report will be prepared for each initiative. In conducting the analysis for this evaluation, EMC Planning Group and Applied Development Economics, Inc. (ADE) will rely on existing publications, data, and other existing sources readily available or provided by the County. Such sources may include materials associated with development or related applications within the area identified in the General Plan as the Bolsa New Community Study Area.

2.1 ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- Prepare project files and general project administration.
- Manage and coordinate subconsultants.
- Confer, as needed, with County RMA Staff and County Counsel (conference calls), or outside counsel as needed.

2.2 RESEARCH AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Research and Prepare Project Description

- Review the text of the Strada Verde Initiative and the attachments to the initiative, and prepare a summary to serve as a project description for the overall evaluation effort.
- Gather and analyze additional data: review relevant reports, files and related materials such as the initiative, the *San Benito County General Plan*, San Benito County Code, and relevant California Elections Code sections as they relate specifically to the Strada Verde Initiative.

2.0 Scope of Work

- Use the General Plan EIR as a starting point to conduct an environmental assessment of the proposed Strada Verde Initiative. The location of the specific plan was included in the *San Benito County General Plan* and General Plan EIR as a portion of the Bolsa New Community Study Area. The General Plan EIR provides only the highest level cursory environmental review of the New Community Study Areas, because there were no specifics as to the future development within those areas, including precise boundaries, land use types or intensity of development. This task is not intended to replace California Environmental Quality Act review at any level, but is rather intended to provide a thumbnail sketch of environmental issues.

2.3 PREPARATION OF COMPREHENSIVE INITIATIVE EVALUATION

Economic and Fiscal Analysis by ADE

Supplemental work has already been completed for the analysis of the Rural Lands Initiative proposed by PORC to prepare an Economic and Fiscal Analysis for the proposed Strada Verde Initiative.

ADE will evaluate the proposed Strada Verde Specific Plan in terms of the likely market absorption and socioeconomic characteristics of the jobs base it would create. ADE will then estimate the fiscal impacts to the County in terms of added County revenues and costs for public services. The specific plan indicates one of its goals is to ensure the development pays its own way and the fiscal analysis will account for fiscal mitigation measures incorporated into the specific plan. The fiscal analysis will contrast the outcomes under the proposed specific plan with the likely fiscal impact to the County of leaving the project site in the current County General Plan and Zoning designations. This analysis will occur within the context of the provisions in the County General Plan for nodes of commercial and office/R&D development elsewhere in the County and evaluate the likely time frame needed to absorb all of the non-residential development potential under both the existing General Plan and the proposed initiative. ADE's work will build on analysis already underway for the Rural Lands Initiative, including countywide market projections and the development of a fiscal model, neither of which will need to be repeated for the Strada Verde analysis.

Economic and Fiscal Report Review and Integration

EMC Planning Group will review and comment on the draft fiscal analysis, and ADE will incorporate non-fiscal components into the Economic and Fiscal Report. A single report will be prepared to evaluate the Strada Verde Initiative. This report will be separate from the report prepared for the Rural Lands Initiative proposed by PORC.

2.4 IMPACTS ON CONSISTENCY OF THE COUNTY'S GENERAL AND SPECIFIC PLANS

EMC Planning Group will review the Strada Verde Initiative and analyze its impacts on the internal consistency of the County's General Plans, including the housing element, the consistency between planning and zoning, and the limitations on County actions under Section 65008 of the Government Code and Chapters 4.2 (commencing with Section 65913) and 4.3 (commencing with Section 65915) of Division 1 of Title 7 of the Government Code. This analysis will include a thorough review of the General Plan and identification of General Plan policies and/or information that would need to be removed or revised and policies that could no longer be enforced, fulfilled, or supported as a result of the initiative measure. The review will include an analysis of Strada Verde Initiative-proposed changes to the General Plan that are required in order to maintain consistency between the specific plan and the General Plan. EMC Planning Group would also analyze the initiative's impact on the General Plan's consistency with the zoning code.

2.5 IMPACTS ON USE OF LAND

EMC will utilize information from the economic and fiscal analysis to analyze the Strada Verde Initiative's effect on the use of land, the impact on the availability and location of housing, and the ability of the County to meet its regional housing needs.

2.6 IMPACT ON FUNDING FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND EMPLOYMENT

ADE's fiscal analysis will analyze the Strada Verde Initiative's impacts on funding for infrastructure including, but not limited to, transportation, schools, parks, and open space. The report may also discuss whether the measure would be likely to result in increased infrastructure costs or savings, including the costs of infrastructure maintenance to current residents. ADE will also analyze the impact on the community's ability to attract and retain business and employment.

2.7 IMPACTS ON ATTRACTING AND RETAINING BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

ADE's fiscal analysis will analyze the impacts of the Strada Verde Initiative on the County's ability to attract and retain business and employment.

2.8 IMPACTS ON USE OF VACANT PARCELS

EMC Planning Group will use information from the economic and fiscal analysis to evaluate the impacts the Strada Verde Initiative will have on vacant parcels throughout the County.

2.9 IMPACTS ON AGRICULTURAL LANDS, OPEN SPACE, TRAFFIC CONGESTION, EXISTING BUSINESS DISTRICTS, AND DEVELOPED AREAS DESIGNATED FOR REVITALIZATION

The evaluation will take into consideration the impacts the Initiative will have on agricultural lands, open space, traffic congestion, and the effect the initiative will have on existing business districts and developed areas designated for revitalization.

2.10 OTHER ITEMS TO BE EVALUATED

EMC Planning Group will review several additional items in considering the proposed Strada Verde Initiative, including: its impact on future County development approvals, future CEQA analysis and compliance requirements; specific plan amendments; access to the site from existing highways; effect on regional circulation system including railroad crossings; suitability of existing and/or need for new or expanded utility infrastructure within or adjacent to the site; and a high level review of applicable environmental topics.

2.11 FINALIZE INITIATIVE EVALUATION REPORT

The draft report will include a summary memo or executive summary prepared by ADE. ADE will submit the draft report to the County RMA staff and County Counsel for review. The County will provide one set of consolidated comments to EMC Planning Group / ADE for incorporation into the evaluation. ADE will prepare a final Initiative Evaluation summary report to be presented to the County Board of Supervisors. The draft and final reports will be submitted electronically. We envision this report to be in the form of a cover memo summarizing salient information from the ADE report and presenting data tables to provide an easily understandable synopsis for the Board.

2.12 PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

EMC Planning Group and ADE will attend one (1) additional meeting to present our findings to the Board of Supervisors in a PowerPoint presentation.

3.0

Schedule and Budget

3.1 SCHEDULE

EMC Planning Group understands that the Strada Verde Initiative evaluation must be finalized by August 1, 2020, with an administrative review draft provided by July 15, 2020. EMC Planning Group will need a contract no later than June 17, 2020 to ensure completion of our work by this date. We understand that there are legislative deadlines in place for this work and that time is of the essence.

3.2 BUDGET

The not-to-exceed budget is presented on the following page. Budget amendment(s) will be required to be approved by County Staff to address tasks not identified in this scope or that are not contained in or exceed the budget.

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Proposal for SBC Strada Verde Initiative Evaluation										
Task	EMC Planning Group Inc.									
Staff	Senior Principal	Principal	Associate Planner	Desktop Publisher	Graphics	Admin./ Production	Total Hours	Total Cost		
Billing Rate (Per Hour)	\$250.00	\$225.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$125.00	\$115.00				
2.1-Administration, Management and Consultation	6.0	4.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	27.0	\$4,880.00		
2.2-Research and Prepare Project Description	3.0	10.0	25.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	41.0	\$7,125.00		
2.3-Fiscal Analysis Review	2.0	4.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.0	\$2,150.00		
2.4-Review for Impacts on Consistency	1.0	4.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	\$4,150.00		
2.5-Analyze for Impacts on Use of Land	1.0	1.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	\$775.00		
2.6-Impact on Funding for Infrastructure and Employment	1.0	1.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	\$775.00		
2.7-Impacts on Attracting and Retaining Business	1.0	1.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	\$775.00		
2.8-Analyze Impacts for Vacant Parcels	1.0	1.0	10.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	15.0	\$2,350.00		
2.9-Analyze Open Space and Agriculture Impacts	1.0	1.0	10.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	15.0	\$2,350.00		
2.10-Other Evaluation Items	3.0	20.0	50.0	2.0	4.0	0.0	79.0	\$13,550.00		
2.11-Preparation Initiative Evaluation (Draft and Final)	1.0	7.0	2.0	2.0	8.0	5.0	25.0	\$4,000.00		
2.12-Preparation of Power Point Presentation and (1) BOS Meeting	11.0	2.0	16.0	3.0	1.0	2.0	35.0	\$6,405.00		
Subtotal (Hours)	32.0	56.0	159.0	7.0	22.0	9.0	Total Hours	Total Cost		
Subtotal (Cost)	\$8,000.00	\$12,600.00	\$23,850.00	\$1,050.00	\$2,750.00	\$1,035.00	285.0	\$49,285.00		
Additional Costs										
Production Costs									\$500.00	
Travel Costs									\$250.00	
Postal/Deliverables									\$25.00	
Miscellaneous									\$2,000.00	
Administrative Overhead 10%									\$277.50	
Total									\$3,052.50	
Subconsultant Fees										
Applied Development Economics, Inc.									\$25,000.00	
Subconsultant Overhead 10%									\$2,500.00	
Total									\$27,500.00	
Total Costs								\$79,837.50		

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