



County of Monterey

Item No.4

Board Report

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Legistar File Number: 24-738

November 13, 2024

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- a. Receive a presentation from staff on potential solar projects at Natividad Medical Center at 1441 Constitution Blvd., the ITD building at 1590 Moffett Street, and the County Administrative buildings at 168 W. Alisal Street and 142 W. Alisal Street and options to move forward;
- b. Provide direction to staff; and,
- c. Recommend that this item be considered by the Board of Supervisors.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Capital Improvements Committee:

- a. Receive a presentation from staff on potential solar projects at Natividad Medical Center at 1441 Constitution Blvd., the ITD building at 1590 Moffett Street, and the County Administrative buildings at 168 W. Alisal Street and 142 W. Alisal Street and options to move forward;
- b. Provide direction to staff; and,
- c. Recommend that this item be considered by the Board of Supervisors.

SUMMARY:

On August 13, 2024, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to work with ENGIE Inc., to prepare solar energy projects for the Board to consider at Natividad Medical Center at 1441 Constitution Blvd., the Information Technology Department (ITD) building at 1590 Moffett Street, and the County Administrative buildings at 168 W. Alisal Street and 142 W. Alisal Street. As discussed during that meeting, the County aims to have the projects operational by April 15, 2026, to benefit under the Net Energy Metering 2.0 solar pricing scheme. Staff has continued to develop these projects with ENGIE Inc., KNN Financial Advisors, ARC Alternatives, and various County stakeholders.

Staff are returning to the Capital Improvements Committee to present an update on the siting of the solar arrays and to solicit feedback from the committee. These layouts can be seen in the attached document Solar Layouts 11/7/2024. Across all three sites, these projects will provide 3.7MW of solar power, twenty-six dual port level 2 electric vehicle charging stations (EVCS), 2 dual port Level 3 EVCS, and 48 electric vehicle (EV) capable charging stations at Natividad Medical Center. This number of EVCS was decided to meet code requirements, prepare for County-wide EV adoption, and to take advantage of the economic efficiencies of installing EVCS while necessary concrete and electrical work is taking place for the solar carports. Sustainability Program staff have coordinated with Housing and Community Development (HCD) and Salinas Fire Department to ensure that these layouts consider code requirements. Salinas Fire Department has confirmed that any necessary code deviations meet their needs for permitting and emergency response. The scope of work proceeding to the Board of Supervisors excludes accessibility improvements that will be made to parking stalls at Natividad Medical Center because these engineering decisions will be determined during the final

engineering and permitting process. In the meantime, staff are coordinating to ensure that the proposed layouts and any necessary code exemptions follow code requirements as much as possible.

DISCUSSION:

The planned solar systems will consist of solar carport and rooftop arrays of the following sizes in direct current power: 543kw at the Government Center at 168 and 142 W. Alisal Street offsetting approximately 26% of annual electricity consumption, 448 kW at the ITD building at 1590 Moffett Street offsetting approximately 72% of annual electricity consumption, and 2,721 kW at Natividad Medical Center offsetting approximately 33% of annual electricity consumption. The systems must also include the installation of EVCS to comply with code requirements.

EVCS code requirements are split between the number of parking spaces with installed EVCS and “EV capable” parking spaces. “EV capable” is a readiness provision wherein electrical raceways, panel space, and conduit are provided to make future EVCS installation easier. In general, it is much more cost effective to install EVCS during a solar carport project because much of the underground infrastructure work needs to be done as part of the carport project, and so the EVCS installation is only a marginal cost increase compared to a stand-alone project. To assist departments to comply with the County’s adopted Clean Vehicle Purchasing Policy, (Legistar ID 22-823), and to meet County greenhouse gas reduction goals in the upcoming Municipal Climate Action Plan, the Government Center and ITD building are designed to provide installed EVCS for the full amount of required parking spaces. Foregoing the “EV capable” space option will provide 8 dual port level 2 EVCS at the Government Center and 6 level 2 EVCS at the ITD building. These chargers at the Government Center will provide a key first step in enabling County staff to adopt EVs. Extra conduit will be provided in the southern parking lot arrays to allow for future EVCS installation under the carport arrays. The EVCS at the ITD building are sufficient for ITD to fully transition all department vehicles domiciled at that location to electric vehicles.

Staff have also worked with ENGIE to install two dual port level 3 fast charger EVCS at the Government Center that have been procured as part of the Rural Electric Vehicle grant program in 2023 through a grant with FreeWire Inc as the lead applicant. These chargers were intended to be installed at the Monterey County Free Libraries in Castroville and San Lucas. Unfortunately, FreeWire Inc. declared bankruptcy before these projects could be completed. Staff identified the solar project at the government center as an opportunity to cover unfunded installation costs for these chargers in a larger project that generates savings and provide the County with necessary electric vehicle fast charging. These chargers are intended to be available to the public to generate revenue, public access could be restricted in the future to best meet County fleet needs.

Natividad Medical Center staff have opted to meet code minimum requirements of 12 installed level 2 dual port EVCS and 48 EV capable parking spots due to the sheer number of parking spots affected. Staff have coordinated to site these chargers to be the most advantageous to hospital staff and visitors. The Natividad Medical Center project will need to seek an exemption for accessibility requirements under the hardship determination process. The main driver for this is that solar carports are considered amenities and must therefore provide accessible spaces under them. However, parking lot K on the hospital campus has a steep slope to access the hospital and so there are no existing accessible spots there. Adding accessible parking stalls in this location would be technically and economically infeasible, and so staff are working with HCD to best accommodate accessibility requirements elsewhere on the

campus. These are determinations that will be made during the final engineering and permitting process.

Staff have also worked with Salinas Fire Department to ensure that the carport arrays provide sufficient clearance, a minimum of 13'6" of height, and that solar arrays abutting property lines are permissible. While these projects are under County permitting jurisdiction, Salinas Fire Department is the responding fire department and so the arrays must meet their specifications.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Staff have collaborated with Public Works, Facilities, and Parks, Natividad Medical Center, the District Attorney's Office, Monterey County Free Libraries, and the Information Technology Department, and Contracts Purchasing on this project. County Counsel has reviewed and approved as to form.

On August 13, 2024, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to continue to develop this project for consideration with ENGIE Inc. Staff will proceed to the Alternative Energy & Environment Committee to consider energy savings and greenhouse gas benefits on November 15, 2024. Staff will proceed to the Debt Advisory Committee on November 21, 2024, and the Budget Committee on November 25, 2024, to consider budgetary and financial implications of this project.

FINANCING:

This item has budgetary implications at this time.

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Approved by: Deborah Paolinelli, Assistant County Administrative Officer ext. 5309

Attachments:

Solar Layouts 11/7/2024