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Watsonville City Council

City Council Chambers

275 Main Street, Top Floor

Watsonville, CA

January 14, 2025

Honorable Mayor Orozco and City Councilmembers,

The Associated Builders and Contractors Northern California (ABC NorCal) is a trade association representing more than 73,000 construction workers across all trades in Northern California. On behalf of our members who play an integral role in construction projects in Watsonville, we are writing to you in regards to item 9.b under Consent Agenda.

It is understandable and only logical for Watsonville to reject the one bid that came from out of the area, Oakland and 14% over the engineer's estimate for the Harkins Slough Road Overpass Sanitary Sewer Force Main Relocation Project.

Please be cognizant of the fact that the City is undergoing a very similar procedure as the Watsonville Wastewater Treatment Facility Electrical System Hazard Mitigation Project in 2024. In retrospect, we urge you to utilize the experience you gained on that project and rebid the Harkins Slough Road Overpass Sanitary Sewer Force Relocation Project without a Project Labor Agreement (PLA). If based on Staff's recommendation, the project must be incorporated into the larger Harkins Slough pedestrian bridge improvements project, we ask that you bid the entire project without a PLA in spring 2025.

PLAs have proven to be discriminatory against merit shop construction contractors and apprentices, restrict local hire, reduce competition and consequently increase project costs, as is evident in the bid you received that is not from a local firm.

We appreciate that you aim for the best course of action for the development and growth of Watsonville, and we request that you consider another call to bid on this project without a PLA and analyze the results of the bids that you receive. You will see that without a PLA more construction firms, regardless of their affiliation to any entity will be able to bid on this crucial project at costs based on or close to the engineer's estimate.



ABC NorCal would like to help create a healthy and fair environment for all stakeholders, construction workers, apprentices and contractors to participate in major projects. We thank you for considering our request.

Regards,

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Government Affairs Specialist

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