



COUNTY OF VENTURA

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SUPERVISOR
VIANEY LOPEZ

Fifth District

KELLY LONG, CHAIR

MATT LAVERE

JEFF GORELL

JANICE S. PARVIN

VIANEY LOPEZ

April 9, 2024

Board of Supervisors
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

SUBJECT: Recommendation of Supervisor Lopez and Supervisor LaVere to Direct the County Executive Officer to Enter into a Contract for Polling Services with EMC Research, Inc. at an Amount Not to Exceed \$75,000 to Assess the Feasibility of a November 2024 Ballot Measure for a Local Affordable Housing Bond; Authorization for the County Executive Officer or Her Designee to Sign the Contract and Any Amendments to the Contract that are within the Not to Exceed Amount.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended our Board direct the County Executive Officer to enter into the attached contract with EMC Research, Inc. for polling services, at a cost not to exceed \$75,000, to assess the feasibility of a November 2024 Ballot Measure for a local affordable housing bond and authorize the County Executive Officer or her designee to sign the contract and any amendments to the contract that are within the not to exceed amount, subject to County Counsel approval as to form.

FISCAL/MANDATES IMPACT:

Fund G001 County Executive Office, Division 1050 – Special Accounts and Contributions

Mandatory: No
Source of Funding: General Fund
Funding Match Required: No
Impact on Other Departments: No

Summary of Revenues and Costs:	FY 2023-24	FY2024-25
Revenues:	\$0	\$0
Costs:		
Direct	\$75,000	\$0
Indirect-Dept	\$0	\$0
Indirect-County CAP	\$0	\$0
Total Cost	\$75,000	\$0
Net County Cost	\$75,000	\$0
Recovered Indirect Costs	\$0	\$0

Sufficient appropriations are available in the FY 2023-24 Special Accounts and Contributions Budget for the costs associated with the recommended actions.

VENTURA COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN:

Strategic Priorities:

- Reliable Infrastructure and Sustainability
- Address Homelessness and Lift Up the Most Vulnerable

The recommendations presented above support the expansion of affordable housing options and availability and support the creation of long-term housing options for persons experiencing homelessness.

BACKGROUND:

On [February 27, 2024](#), our Board received a presentation and unanimously approved actions to implement recommendations in the Ventura County Homelessness Plan (the “Plan”) presented by LeSar Development Consultants in December of last year. Recommendation 1-C on Exhibit 1 recognized the need to advocate for permanent funding to support the development of affordable and extremely affordable housing in our County. In light of the proposed state budget, which is showing significant cuts to housing when compared to previous years, advocacy on its own is not enough. A local measure is even more critical than ever to ensure that resources are available to support local housing developers, and to assist them in seeking increasingly competitive funding at the state level.

According to California Lutheran University’s Center for Economic Research and Forecasting, housing availability remains at a critically low level, with a local shortage of 30,000 units, resulting in low vacancies and higher homeownership and renter costs. Despite these sobering statistics, we have seen the difference that investments in housing can make. The importance of having access to resources under local control to meet this need cannot be understated. This Board’s recent investment of \$30.5M into housing¹ will be leveraged with other federal, state, and local sources and result in 493 new units of affordable and student housing, including 173 units of permanent supportive housing and 39 units of transitional housing dedicated to transition aged youth plus an additional 75 units of new recuperative care beds. A local ballot measure, if approved by voters in the November 2024 election, could create a local, reliable, and dedicated source of funding to address the unmet demand for affordable and extremely affordable housing in our communities. For that reason, we believe it is prudent to conduct polling to assess the feasibility of a potential housing bond, including the potential support and opposition of such a bond measure.

¹ On October 11, 2022, our Board approved the use of \$30.5 million dollars of American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) funds for Housing & Homelessness. On December 13, 2022, our Board approved the reporting and use of ARPA funds as being expended in the form of provision of government services and used for General Fund costs to then provide funding from the General Fund for the list of previously identified ARPA project, including Housing & Homelessness.

DISCUSSION:

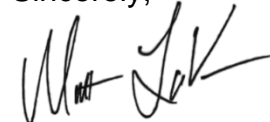
EMC Research, Inc. (EMC) is a certified women-owned national opinion research firm with more than 30 years of experience working with public agencies and cities across the country, and unmatched experience in the State of California. They are actively working on statewide efforts around the potential constitutional amendment to lower the voter threshold for certain local revenue measures and recently conducted preliminary research here in Ventura County around this potential bond measure. EMC is known for crafting insightful research tools, collecting highly accurate data, and providing analysis that answers the key strategic questions and challenges faced by their clients.

The polling performed by EMC would survey the community to understand potential voter support for a local housing bond, strategies to fund the bond, and priorities for the use of potential bond proceeds (e.g., addressing homelessness, supporting first-time homebuyers, workforce housing, farmworker housing, etc.). The survey would also be of sufficient sample size to test support by supervisorial district with survey results presented to our Board in May. At that point, we would determine whether to proceed and if so, direct that bond language be crafted for Board consideration no later than June 18, 2024 for placement on the November ballot if approved by our Board.

Given the relatively tight timeframe to conduct the survey, return to our Board with results, and draft language for the ballot, it is recommended that we authorize the CEO or her designee to enter into the attached contract with EMC for a not to exceed cost of \$75,000 and to sign the contract and any amendments thereto that are within the not to exceed amount, subject to approval as to form by County Counsel. We also direct staff to return to our Board at the earliest opportunity but no later than May 21, 2024, to present the polling results.

This letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, County Counsel and Auditor Controller.

Sincerely,



Matt LaVere
Supervisor, District 1



Vianey Lopez
Supervisor, District 5

Exhibit 1 Contract with EMC Research, Inc.
Exhibit 2 EMC Research, Inc. Scope of Work