

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

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SUMMARY MEMORANDUM

TO: Administrative Committee

FROM: Jon Hopkins, GSA Director *Hop*

DATE: July 22, 2024

SUBJECT: Amador Resource Conservation District (RCD) Additional Space Request

Background: From 2001 to 2004, the County provided office space to NRCS at 42-A Summit Street. In 2004, NRCS rented space at the Quail Hollow complex in Jackson but lost their funding due to federal budget cuts. Following the recommendation of the Ag Commissioner, the County entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Amador Resource Conservation District (RCD) to provide office space at the GSA Building (approximately 500 square feet) to house both its office and the NRCS office. On December 5, 2017, the Board granted an additional 250 square feet for a total of 750 square feet. On May 14, 2019, the Board considered another request from RCD to add space to accommodate additional staffing and approved the increase from 750 square feet to 1005 square feet. The current request from RCD is for another 200 square feet, which is not available without relocating County functions (refer to the request from Amanda Watson dated 7/22/2024).

Subject or Key Issue: To receive input from the Administrative Committee regarding the request for additional space from RCD; attached is a floor plan for reference. The request includes space for four additional employees.

Analysis: While housing multiple agencies in one facility can be beneficial, the building is currently exceeding its original purpose and experiencing increased use, leading to the accelerated deterioration of materials and equipment. Additionally, there are several direct and indirect conflicts between the agencies, including issues related to noise, shared counters and conference rooms, parking, energy use, and in some cases, disrupting County staff's production of work or requiring staff's assistance. As these programs expand and bring more people into the building, the County continues to lose the available resources needed for its intended purpose.

One of the most significant issues is parking constraints. Daily staff and the public must park across Airport Road in a gravel area, which does not comply with ADA standards. During the winter months, staff and the public must navigate a ditch to cross the street, posing a significant challenge. Creative solutions, such as placing a pallet across the ditch, have been observed. Furthermore, increased staffing levels for UCCE and NRCS/RCD have more than doubled, triggering a code analysis for fire and life safety compliance as well as an ADA analysis due to the significant change in occupant load. This would likely necessitate improvements to restrooms and front doors, with limited space to add additional fixtures; hence it is possible that this simply cannot be achieved at this site.

The building was originally designed for one ADA-accessible parking stall. Current usage requires a minimum of two stalls, and there is no safe path of travel for those parking across the street. Conference rooms are also frequently unavailable to the County because UCCE has scheduled in advance classes and trainings.

While the GSA/AG building was compliant when it was built and occupied in 2000, the increased staffing levels have changed this, putting the County at risk.

While these programs serve a valuable purpose, and recognizing that only the Board of Supervisors can determine the public purpose and benefits of cooperative agreements, I question the policy direction that continues to place the County at risk or allocates County space to non-county departments.

Cooperative agreements with organizations sharing space and/or resources usually start out having marginal impacts on the County but eventually non-county organizations grow slowly and, over time leads to separation because the burden of providing space and/or resources overwhelms the other entity that has separate and distinctly different responsibilities.

GSA and RCD have come up with a plan to rearrange the copier and plotter area to accommodate a portion of RCD's request, but the property is currently too small to continue to add more FTEs.

Alternatives: 1) Continue to provide only the 1005 square feet currently used by NRCS/ARCD, or 2) Require NRCS/ARCD to relocate to another property.

Fiscal or Staffing Impacts: County staff frequently respond to individuals seeking out services unrelated to county functions and this would increase with signage at the front door.

4/5ths vote: N/A

Recommendation(s): Rearrange copiers and some file cabinets to allow four (4) RCD file cabinets and one (1) copier into the existing copier and plotter area shown on Attachment A. Discussion regarding alternative locations for UCCE, RCD and NRCS.

c: Chuck Iley, CAO
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