



PRESS RELEASE

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Ivanhoe Community Helps the Tulare County Resource Management Agency Break Ground on the Road 160 Sidewalk Improvement Project

On June 18, the Tulare County Resource Management Agency (RMA) broke ground on its Road 160 Sidewalk Improvement Project in Ivanhoe, Calif. Tulare County District 4 Supervisor Eddie Valero and County of Tulare Resource Management Agency (RMA) staff welcomed community members to the event located at the Ivanhoe Drive-In, a site along the construction route down the street from Ivanhoe Elementary School. RMA's Associate Director Michael Washam and Chief Engineer Hernan Beltran-Herrera, along with other county and school officials, broke ground on the improvement project, which will add 19 ADA-compliant curb ramps, an ADA-compliant Tulare County Regional Transit Agency (TCRTA) bus stop, high visibility crosswalks at the intersections of Road 160 and Heather, as well as Road 160 and Ave. 332, which is highly utilized by Ivanhoe Elementary School students. Construction of the project will be approximately two and a half months.

Mr. Washam and Mr. Beltran-Herrera were joined by Executive Director of the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) Ted Smalley and Visalia Unified School District (VUSD) leadership including, VUSD Board Member Paul Belt, Ivanhoe Elementary School Principal Sandra Aguilera, VUSD Administrator of Communications, Outreach, and Strategy Rick Hamilton. Members of the Ivanhoe Community Council, Mayra Becerra and Connie Vela Solorio shared that they advocated for the project for eight years and many other community members also were present to help celebrate the project's initiation.

"Over 300 [students] walk or bike to school daily," Supervisor Valero said. "By providing them with safe and convenient pathways to Ivanhoe Elementary School, we are not only enhancing their daily lives but also instilling in them the values of community and safety."

This project is part of Caltrans's Active Transportation Program (ATP). The ATP was created to encourage and increase the use of active modes of transportation, such as bicycling and walking. The improvements along Road 160 will enhance its daily use for pedestrians and non-motorists by providing a safe and smooth surface that will benefit all community members and the students at Ivanhoe Elementary School by encouraging an active and healthy lifestyle.

"This project was in my dreams years ago," Ms. Vela Solorio said. "It's coming to life. Now, I have grandchildren that are going to the school that I feel are going to be in a better situation than way back then."

At the event, several community members expressed that the project would ensure safer travel for students walking to and from school each day and that the project had been long awaited. According to Mr. Washam, the RMA and County officials have worked on these plans for over eight years through workshops, walk-throughs,

and community meetings. Now, with funding secured and designs finalized, the RMA is making this project a reality.

“Even though it is for the kids, it is for safer routes to school, it also provides a way for our people who use wheelchairs, our parents who don’t have cars, [for them to move] around,” Ms. Becerra said. “It is for the kids essentially, but it's also for the whole community.”

Funding for this project was made available through Senate Bill 1 (SB1) under the 2019 SB1 ATP Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Component as administrated through TCAG. Additionally, County Road Funds are being utilized. The total cost of the project is approximately \$2.4 million.

“The town of Ivanhoe, home to nearly 5,000 wonderful people, is taking a significant step forward in prioritizing the safety and wellbeing of our youth and families,” Valero said. “This project is a testament to our collective dedication to ensuring that our next generation can walk, bike, and live with the peace of mind they deserve.”

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About Tulare County’s Resource Management Agency (RMA)

The County of Tulare’s Resource Management Agency (RMA) provides essential public services to unincorporated communities and supports eight municipalities efficiently and professionally at the heart of California’s Central Valley. The County of Tulare boasts a population of nearly 500,000 and a geography close to 5,000 sq. miles in a central location between the Bay Area and the Los Angeles Metro Area. The County of Tulare is a top-performing agricultural county with plentiful manufacturing, industrial, and commercial possibilities, along with a young workforce, strong school and college districts and regional collaboration across the Central Valley.

The RMA consists of three branches: Public Works, Fiscal Services, and Economic Development & Planning, all supporting several divisions. The Planning and Building Division handles construction inspection, building permits, environmental planning, community plans and zoning codes. The Public Works Division manages roads, bridges, airports, sewers and water facilities. The Fiscal Services Division oversees budgeting, accounting, and human resources, ensuring effective program management. The Grants Division oversees funding opportunities and Forest Health initiatives. The Economic Development Office (EDO) promotes business retention and expansion, jobs creation and tourism through the following channels: [Grow Tulare County](#), [Discover Tulare County](#) and [The Film Commission](#).

The RMA is dedicated to providing excellent customer service and project support for residents, developers, and business owners and is committed to safeguarding the community's health, safety, and environmental resources. To learn more about the County of Tulare’s Resource Management Agency, please visit <https://tularecounty.ca.gov/rma/>.

For media inquiries, please contact RMA Media Specialist Lacey Patrick (LPatrick@tularecounty.ca.gov).