



REGIONAL INTEROPERABLE NEXT GENERATION
RADIO SYSTEM

AGENDA REPORT

Santa Cruz Regional Interoperable Next Generation (RING) Radio System
RING Executive Committee

Agenda of: September 28, 2026 | Item No. 7a
Subject: **Cost Allocation of Project Management Costs**

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the RING Executive Committee:

1. Approve the allocation of RING Project Management costs, in an amount not to exceed \$200,000 for FY26-27, among the County of Santa Cruz, City of Santa Cruz, City of Watsonville, UC Santa Cruz, City of Capitola, and City of Scotts Valley in the percentages shown in Table 1; and
2. Direct staff to apply the approved percentages in preparing each agency's annual RING cost share.

BACKGROUND:

The Regional Interoperable Next Generation (RING) Radio System is a P25 Phase II public safety radio system being implemented by the County of Santa Cruz, the Cities of Santa Cruz, Watsonville, Capitola, and Scotts Valley, and UC Santa Cruz under the RING Master Service and Governance Agreement. Delivering a system of this scale across multiple agencies and sites requires dedicated project management to coordinate planning, procurement, construction and cutover activities, contract administration, and reporting on behalf of all participating agencies.

Project management is carried as a shared capital cost of the RING project in the RING Projected Fee Schedule, which allocates shared costs among member agencies in proportion to the number of radio units each agency operates. The six agencies covered by this report account for 1,852 member radio units. At the May 11, 2026, RING Executive Committee meeting, staff was instructed to explore and develop a potential cost allocation formula for additional Project Management expenses. This report sets the allocation of those costs among the listed six agencies.

DISCUSSION:

Allocation method. Staff proposes to allocate Project Management costs on the same unit-based methodology used in the fee schedule, so that each agency's share reflects the size of its participation in the system. Each agency's percentage is its member radio units divided by the 1,852 total units of the six agencies (for example, County of Santa Cruz: $1,140 \div 1,852 = 61.56\%$). The percentages in Table 1 are therefore stated so that the six shares total 100 percent.

Annual cap. For FY26-27, the not-to-exceed amount is \$200,000. Each agency's obligation would be its percentage of the Project Management costs actually incurred in that year, up to the cap; if costs are below \$200,000, each agency's share decreases proportionally.

Alternative considered. An equal split of the \$200,000 among the six agencies (\$33,333.33 each) would place a disproportionate burden on the smaller agencies. Under an equal split, for example, the City of Scotts Valley would bear 16.67 percent of the cost while operating 2.16% of the units. A unit-based allocation is consistent with the existing fee schedule and scales with each agency's use of the system.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Requires funding from RING member agencies	☒ Yes ☐ No
Requires a budget adjustment or appropriation	<i>Determined by each agency</i>
Creates an ongoing expenditure commitment	☒ Yes ☐ No

Total Project Management costs charged to the six agencies will not exceed \$200,000 for FY26-27. Table 1 shows each agency's maximum annual share; actual charges will reflect costs incurred.

Table 1. Project Management Cost Allocation (not to exceed \$200,000 per annum)

Member Agency	Radio Units	Allocation %	Maximum Annual Share
County of Santa Cruz	1,140	61.56%	\$123,110.15
City of Santa Cruz	395	21.33%	\$42,656.59
City of Watsonville	175	9.45%	\$18,898.49
UC Santa Cruz (UCSC)	55	2.97%	\$5,939.53
City of Capitola	47	2.54%	\$5,075.59
City of Scotts Valley	40	2.16%	\$4,319.65
Total	1,852	100.00%	\$200,000.00

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Reviewed by: Tammie Weigl, Director Information Services, County of Santa Cruz
Recommended by: Sven Stafford, Deputy County Executive Officer, County of Santa Cruz
Artificial Intelligence Acknowledgement: Artificial Intelligence (AI) contributed to the development of this agenda item



REGIONAL INTEROPERABLE NEXT GENERATION
RADIO SYSTEM

AGENDA REPORT

Santa Cruz Regional Interoperable Next Generation (RING) Radio System
RING Executive Committee

Agenda of: September 28, 2026 | Item No. 7b
Subject: **Consider shared governance models for the RING Radio System, including a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) and a regional General Services Authority (SC GSA)**

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the RING Executive Committee:

1. Receive this report on options for transitioning the RING Radio System to a shared governance model;
2. Direct staff to work with legal counsel to determine the necessary steps to form a standalone JPA for the RING Radio System; and
3. Direct staff to work with legal counsel to review the feasibility of a Santa Cruz Regional General Services Authority (SC GSA) agreement, including the governance-authority and statutory filing questions described in this report;
4. Provide direction on the open policy questions identified below so that staff can return with a recommendation.

BACKGROUND:

RING currently operates under the Master Service and Governance Agreement (MSGA) among the County of Santa Cruz, the Cities of Santa Cruz, Watsonville, Capitola, and Scotts Valley, and UC Santa Cruz, effective June 11, 2026. The MSGA has a 10-year term and contemplates the potential future creation of a Joint Powers Authority (JPA), so that governance can evolve as membership grows and the system matures. Any transition to a JPA would require negotiation, approval from all Member Agencies, and action by the Board of Supervisors.

Under the MSGA, RING has no independent legal existence. The Executive Committee is an advisory commission to the Board of Supervisors, the County contracts for the system and is its insuring and indemnifying party, and the County Information Services Department (ISD), through its Radio Shop Division, operates the system and supports the governance bodies. Nearly every consequential decision, including the budget, fee increases over 10%, special assessments, and admission of new Member or Subscriber Agencies, ultimately requires Board of Supervisors approval.

At the May 11, 2026 RING Executive Committee meeting, staff was directed to explore the potential of forming an umbrella JPA that could own and operate the RING system, as well as other potential future regional programs. A sub-committee was selected, and several meetings occurred resulting in a couple of draft documents.

A draft outline of an umbrella Santa Cruz Regional General Services Authority (Attachment 1) proposes a reusable JPA through which agencies can undertake cooperative Programs. Staff has restated the MSGA within that structure as a draft RING Program Exhibit (Attachment 2), for legal review only. Neither is proposed for execution at this time.

DISCUSSION:

The umbrella concept. The SC GSA would be a separate public entity formed under Government Code §6500 et seq. and designed as a “thin” legal and financial platform: a contracting entity, financing entity, governance platform, and administrative framework with no direct employees or pension obligations unless later authorized. Members belong to the SC GSA itself. Each cooperative undertaking is a Program established by its own Program Exhibit, which acts as that Program’s operating constitution by setting its participants, governance, cost allocation, contracting authority, debt, assets, and withdrawal terms. Participation is optional: an agency may be a Member without joining every Program, and a Program may include Program Participants that are not Members.

A working example of this structure exists in Marin County. The Marin General Services Authority (MGSA) was formed in 2005 as a joint powers authority, evolving from the Street Light Acquisition Authority that Marin County and its municipalities had formed in 1985 to acquire and maintain streetlights countywide. Rather than dissolving that entity, its members expanded it into a general-purpose umbrella JPA, adding the Marin Climate and Energy Partnership in 2007, the MarinMap regional GIS system in 2008, countywide Animal Care and Control Services in 2015, and the telecommunications programs of the dissolved Marin Telecommunications Agency in 2020.

MGSA now administers roughly ten largely unrelated programs — including streetlight maintenance, abandoned vehicle abatement, taxicab regulation, stormwater pollution prevention, and a mediation program — for twelve member agencies (the County of Marin and eleven cities and towns), governed by a JPA board of city and town managers, the county administrative officer, and two public works directors. MGSA shows, in practice, that a single umbrella JPA can take on new cooperative programs over fifteen-plus years without forming a new legal entity each time.

Financial firewall. Each Program in the proposed SC GSA structure would keep separate accounting, reserves, and debt. No Program would be responsible for another Program’s debts or costs, and Program debt would be attributable only to that Program’s participants. For matters solely concerning a Program, the Program Exhibit controls, so the full SC GSA Board would not vote on routine Program business. A Program can also end without dissolving the SC GSA .

RING as a Program. The draft Program Exhibit carries the MSGA forward with limited substantive change. The six current agencies would be the Program Participants. The RING Executive Committee would continue under that name as the Program Governing Committee, with its existing voting rules. ISD would be designated Fiscal Agent and Administrative Agent, each agency would keep its Owned Assets under license, and the MSGA’s withdrawal terms and 10-year term would carry over. Subscriber Agencies correspond to the outline’s “Program Participant that is not an SC GSA Member.” The table below compares the current and proposed arrangements.

Table 1. RING under the MSGA compared with RING as a Program of the Authority

Topic	Today: RING under the MSGA	Proposed: RING as a Program of the SC GSA
Legal status	RING has no independent legal existence. The County contracts for the system and is the insuring and indemnifying party.	RING is a Program of a separate public entity (SC GSA), which serves as the contracting and financing vehicle. Operations could remain delegated to the County.
Executive Committee	An advisory commission to the County Board of Supervisors.	Becomes the Program Governing Committee with delegated authority; continues to be called the RING Executive Committee. Subject to powers reserved to the Authority Board.
Final decisions	Budget, fee increases over 10%, special assessments, and new Member or Subscriber admission ultimately require Board of Supervisors approval.	Rest with the Program Governing Committee under the Program Exhibit. Whether the Board of Supervisors keeps any approval role is an open question.
Voting	One agency, one vote; four of six for budget and service-level changes; two-thirds for special assessments; unanimous for fee increases over 10%.	Carried forward unchanged in the Program Exhibit, separate from the Authority's one-Member/one-vote baseline.
County ISD role	ISD Radio Shop operates the system, manages contracts, and supports the governance bodies.	ISD would be designated Fiscal Agent and Administrative Agent for the Program, making the current role explicit.
Withdrawal and term	24-month notice, continuing fee liability, negotiated buy-out; 10-year term with automatic renewal.	Carried forward in the Program Exhibit, which needs its own withdrawal and term provisions.

What would change. The most significant change is governance authority. Today the Executive Committee recommends and the Board of Supervisors decides. As a Program under the proposed SC GSA, final authority for RING would shift to the Program Governing Committee, subject to the SC GSA Board's limited reserved powers. That is a governance change rather than a renaming, and the governing body of every party would need to approve it. A second decision is contracting: the SC GSA could contract directly for RING, or the Program could delegate operations to the County, preserving the current operating model.

Open policy questions. Staff requests direction on the key question of whether to pursue an umbrella Santa Cruz Regional General Services Authority (SC GSA) as a reusable JPA through which agencies can undertake cooperative Programs, with the RING Program as the first "Program Exhibit," or to focus on a single purpose JPA for RING at this time.

If Executive Committee direction is to proceed with the SC GSA concept, staff recommends forwarding the concept to legal for review and input.

Moving forward, there are three key policy points that would need to be resolved, (1) SC GSA membership: who would be Members of the SC GSA with RING as one of possibly several Programs. This determines SC GSA Board composition. (2) Fire districts: the proposed Program structure allows entities that are not SC GSA Members to become Program Participants with a direct role in Program governance. This concept, which may respond to some of the Fire District's questions about long-term governance than continued Subscriber Agency status, requires legal review. (3) Board of Supervisors role: how much of the current "recommend to the Board" language should become binding Program Governing Committee action, and whether the Board retains any approval role.

Statutory considerations. A JPA formed as a separate legal entity shields its Members and Program Participants from its debts and liabilities. Notice of the agreement, and of any later amendment such as adoption of the RING Program Exhibit, must be filed with the Secretary of State within 30 days of its effective date (Government Code §6503.5), and the Authority should not incur indebtedness before that filing, which matters given RING's capital financing. An annual independent audit is required (Government Code §6505), which the MSGA's existing annual audit commitment should satisfy. This report is staff analysis, not a legal opinion; County Counsel or outside JPA counsel should confirm these points.

Alternatives considered. Continuing under the MSGA requires no new entity but leaves the County as the sole contracting and liable party and keeps the Executive Committee advisory. A standalone RING JPA would provide independence but requires forming a new agency for a single system. The umbrella model provides the same independence and lets future Programs be added without forming another JPA.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Requires funding from RING member agencies	☐ Yes	☒ No
Requires a budget adjustment or appropriation	☐ Yes	☒ No
Creates an ongoing expenditure commitment	☐ Yes	☒ No

Receiving this report and directing staff to continue review has no direct fiscal impact. The cost of legal review and JPA formation has not yet been estimated nor a funding source determined. Under the outline, SC GSA-wide administrative costs would be allocated through an approved cost allocation plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Regional General Services Authority JPA Agreement, Rough Outline (9-14)
 2. Program Exhibit A, RING Radio System Program, DRAFT
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Reviewed by: Tamara Vides, City Manager, City of Watsonville RING ExComm Member
Jamie Goldstein, City Manager, City of Capitola RING ExComm Member

Recommended by: Tammie Weigl, Director Information Services, County of Santa Cruz

Artificial Intelligence Acknowledgement: Artificial Intelligence (AI) contributed to the development of this agenda item

Outline — Santa Cruz Regional General Services Authority Joint Powers Authority Agreement

Core Terminology

Authority = the umbrella Santa Cruz Regional General Services Authority.

Member = an agency or other eligible entity that is a member of the Authority itself.

Program = a specific cooperative undertaking conducted through the Authority, such as regional public safety radio, GIS, or other services.

Program Exhibit = the agreement prepared as an exhibit to the Authority JPA establishing and governing a specific Program.

Program Participant = a Member or other eligible entity that participates in a particular Program and assumes the rights and obligations established by that Program's Exhibit.

This distinction is fundamental to the structure. An entity can be a Member of the Authority without participating in every Program. Conversely, a Program may permit participation by an entity that is not a Member of the Authority. For example, UCSC could be a Program Participant in the Regional Public Safety Radio Program without becoming a Member of the Authority or participating in a potential future GIS Program.

ARTICLE 1. FORMATION AND PURPOSE

1.1 Formation

- Formation pursuant to California Government Code §6500 et seq.
- Establishment of separate public entity ("Authority").

1.2 Name

- Santa Cruz Regional General Services Authority.

1.3 Purpose

General purposes may include:

- cooperative procurement;
- infrastructure development and maintenance;
- shared services;
- regional coordination;
- grant administration;
- technology systems;
- communications infrastructure;
- and other lawful governmental functions.

1.4 Nature of Authority

Authority intended primarily as:

- contracting entity;
- financing entity;
- governance platform; and
- administrative framework.

Authority initially shall have:

- no direct employees;
- no independent pension obligations; and
- no general operational departments,

unless later authorized by amendment.

The Authority is intended to function primarily as a legal and financial platform through which participating agencies can undertake cooperative activities. It is not initially intended to become a conventional operating government agency with its own workforce and departments.

ARTICLE 2. AUTHORITY MEMBERSHIP

2.1 Initial Members

List founding agencies.

Membership in the Authority establishes an entity's relationship with the umbrella JPA. It does not, by itself, require participation in any particular Program.

2.2 Admission of New Members

Process for admission:

- eligibility requirements;
- application/joiner process;
- Board approval threshold;
- execution of appropriate membership agreement.

2.3 Withdrawal from Authority

- withdrawal notice requirements;
- continuing liability for existing Authority obligations;
- treatment of debt participation;
- treatment of jointly owned assets;
- continuing obligations under any Program in which the withdrawing Member participates.

Withdrawal from the Authority should not automatically eliminate obligations previously undertaken through a Program or other Authority agreement.

2.4 Suspension or Termination

Circumstances allowing:

- suspension of voting rights;
- removal for non-payment or breach.

Counsel should determine the appropriate legal standards and procedures for suspension or termination.

ARTICLE 3. GOVERNANCE OF THE AUTHORITY

3.1 Governing Board

- one representative per Member agency;
- alternates permitted.

3.2 General Powers of Board

The Authority Board shall have responsibility for matters concerning the Authority as a whole, including:

- proposing establishment of new Programs and Program Exhibits; those new Exhibits would need to be approved by legislative bodies for the relevant Program Participants
- approving the Authority's administrative budget and expenditures not attributable to a specific Program;
- approving amendments to the Master Agreement;
- maintaining the legal existence of the Authority;
- approving Authority-wide policies;
- approving admission of new Members to the Authority;
- other matters expressly reserved to the Authority Board by the Master Agreement or applicable law.

The Authority Board retains some control over whether the umbrella JPA creates a new Program because establishing a new Program could have legal, financial, liability, reputational, or administrative consequences for the Authority as a whole. However, once a Program is established, the Program's Participants should generally control its operation, finances, and governance.

3.3 Baseline Voting

- One Member / one vote for Authority-wide matters;
- quorum and voting thresholds as established by the Master Agreement;
- Program matters shall be governed by the voting rules established in the applicable Program Exhibit.

The "one Member / one vote" rule applies to the Authority itself. It does not necessarily apply to Programs. A Program may use weighted voting, supermajority approval, unanimous consent, voting based on financial participation, or another structure appropriate to that Program.

3.4 Meetings

- Brown Act compliance;
- quorum rules;
- teleconference provisions;

- public meeting requirements as applicable.

3.5 Officers

- Chair;
- Vice Chair;
- Secretary;
- Treasurer/Auditor.

Could allow a contracted fiscal agent.

ARTICLE 4. PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM EXHIBITS

4.0 Definition of Program

"Program" means a specific cooperative activity established pursuant to a Program Exhibit.

A Program shall constitute a financially and operationally separate activity of the Authority, with only those Members and Program Participants identified in the applicable Program Exhibit having financial, governance, operational, or other rights and obligations with respect to that Program.

This is the central structural concept of the Authority. The Authority is the umbrella legal entity; Programs are essentially separate cooperative ventures housed within that entity.

4.1 Establishment of Programs

The Authority may establish separate Program Exhibits for:

- infrastructure;
- services;
- procurement;
- operations and maintenance;
- grant administration;
- technology;
- regional programs; or
- other cooperative activities.

Each Program Exhibit shall identify:

- the purpose and scope of the Program;
- the Program Participants;
- the governance structure (see 4.5);
- cost allocation methodology;
- contracting authority;
- financial obligations;
- debt obligations, if any;
- asset ownership;
- operational responsibilities;
- withdrawal provisions; and
- other provisions necessary to operate the Program.

The Program Exhibit is effectively the "operating constitution" for that particular Program. The master JPA establishes the legal shell and common rules; the Program Exhibit establishes how that particular cooperative undertaking actually works.

4.2 Independent Nature of Programs

Each Program may independently establish:

- Program Participants;
- voting rules;
- cost allocation methods;
- budget;
- debt obligations;
- reserve requirements;
- operational rules;
- contracting procedures;
- asset ownership;
- maintenance responsibilities;
- insurance requirements;
- withdrawal provisions;
- dispute-resolution procedures; and
- other Program-specific rules.

Programs may be substantially different from one another. A regional radio system may require capital financing, infrastructure ownership, weighted voting, and long-term maintenance obligations. A GIS Program may be primarily a service contract with annual operating costs. The Master Agreement should not force these fundamentally different activities into the same governance structure.

4.3 Optional Participation

Participation in one Program shall not require participation in any other Program unless expressly stated in the applicable agreements.

Participation in a Program shall not create any financial, operational, liability, debt, or other obligation with respect to another Program.

This is what allows the Authority to function as a "plug-and-play" regional cooperation platform. A Member can participate in Radio but not GIS, or in GIS but not some other potential service.

4.4 Program Participants That Are Not Authority Members

A Program may permit participation by public agencies or other eligible entities that are not Members of the Authority.

Such entities shall be **Program Participants only** and shall have only those rights and obligations expressly provided in the applicable Program Exhibit.

Participation in a Program shall not, by itself, constitute membership in the Authority.

This provision is particularly important for entities such as UCSC. UCSC could participate in a regional public safety radio system because of its operational need for interoperability, while having no interest in joining the Authority or participating in unrelated municipal programs.

4.5 Program Governing Committee

Each Program shall establish a separate governing committee.

The applicable Program Exhibit shall establish:

- committee membership;
- appointment procedures;
- quorum;
- voting rights;
- voting thresholds;
- authority delegated to the committee;
- budget approval authority;
- contracting authority; and
- other governance procedures.

Each Program may establish:

- technical advisory committee(s);
- working groups;
- weighted voting structures;
- executive committees; or
- other subsidiary governance bodies.

The Program governing committee is not necessarily a separate legal entity. It is a governance body established by the Authority and delegated authority through the applicable Program Exhibit.

4.6 Program Supremacy for Program Matters

For matters solely concerning a Program:

- the applicable Program Exhibit and actions taken pursuant to that Exhibit shall control over general Authority policies or procedures to the extent of any conflict,

except with respect to:

- the Master Agreement;
- matters expressly reserved to the Authority Board;
- applicable law; or
- obligations of the Authority as a whole.

The goal is to prevent the full Authority Board from having to vote on routine matters involving Programs in which some Members do not participate, while preserving the Authority Board's responsibility for the legal entity as a whole.

ARTICLE 5. PROGRAM ADMISSION, WITHDRAWAL, AND CONTINUING OBLIGATIONS

5.1 Program Admission

Each Program Exhibit shall establish:

- eligibility requirements;
- admission procedure;
- voting requirements for admission;
- initial financial obligations;
- treatment of existing assets;
- treatment of existing debt;
- treatment of reserves; and
- treatment of existing contracts.

Admission to a Program is distinct from admission to the Authority. The requirements should be tailored to the particular Program.

5.2 Program Withdrawal

Each Program Exhibit shall establish:

- required notice;
- effective date;
- treatment of unpaid obligations;
- treatment of existing debt;
- treatment of capital assets;
- treatment of vendor contracts;
- treatment of reserves;
- capital replacement obligations; and
- continuing payments or other obligations following withdrawal.

5.3 Continuing Obligations

Withdrawal from a Program shall not relieve a Program Participant of obligations incurred prior to the effective date of withdrawal, except as expressly provided in the applicable Program Exhibit.

Such obligations may include:

- debt;
- equipment or infrastructure costs;
- vendor contracts;
- capital replacement obligations;
- indemnification obligations;
- contractual termination costs; or
- other commitments.

This is particularly important for capital-intensive Programs. A Participant should not be able to avoid its share of a long-term radio-system obligation simply by withdrawing from the Program.

ARTICLE 6. FINANCE AND FISCAL SEPARATION

6.1 Separate Funds and Accounting

The Authority shall maintain:

- separate accounting for each Program;
- separate reserve accounts;
- separate capital funds where applicable;
- separate accounting for Authority-wide administrative costs.

Financial records shall permit revenues, expenditures, assets, liabilities, and reserves attributable to each Program to be separately identified.

The objective is to make each Program financially transparent and prevent one Program from unintentionally subsidizing another.

6.2 Financial Self-Sufficiency and No Cross-Subsidization

Each Program shall be financially self-contained.

No Program shall be responsible for the debts, obligations, or operating costs of another Program unless expressly authorized by the Master Agreement and approved by the governing bodies of the affected Programs.

Short-term advances or loans between Programs should generally be prohibited except pursuant to a written agreement approved by the governing bodies of both affected Programs and subject to applicable law.

The cleanest model is for each Program to stand on its own financially. Limited inter-Program advances could be useful in unusual circumstances, but allowing routine borrowing between Programs could undermine the financial separation that makes the overall model attractive.

6.3 Administrative Cost Allocation

Authority-wide administrative costs shall be allocated pursuant to:

- an annual cost allocation plan;
- a Program participation formula;
- or another methodology approved by the Authority Board.

The allocation methodology may change as Programs are added, terminated, or modified.

For example, if the Radio Program is initially the only Program, it might bear 100% of the Authority's administrative costs. If a GIS Program is later established, the Authority could allocate those costs 75/25 or according to another agreed formula.

No Program Participant shall be charged Authority-wide administrative costs except pursuant to an approved allocation methodology.

6.4 Fiscal Agent

The Authority may designate any of the following as fiscal agent:

- County;
- Member agency;
- Program Participant;
- outside contractor; or
- other qualified public entity or financial service provider

The applicable agreement shall establish the fiscal agent's:

- scope of authority;
- custody of funds;
- payment authority;
- accounting responsibilities;
- investment responsibilities;
- reporting obligations; and
- compensation.

The fiscal agent is an administrative service provider, not the governing authority of the Program.

6.5 Audits

- annual independent audit;

- Program-level financial reporting as appropriate;
 - separate identification of Program revenues, expenditures, assets, liabilities, and reserves.
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ARTICLE 7. DEBT AND LIABILITY

7.1 Program-Specific Debt

Debt incurred for a specific Program shall:

- be attributable solely to participating Members and/or Program Participants in that Program;
- not constitute debt or an obligation of non-participating Members or Program Participants.

The applicable Program Exhibit shall identify:

- parties responsible for repayment;
- security;
- guarantees, if any;
- reserve requirements;
- repayment methodology;
- consequences of withdrawal; and
- other applicable financing terms.

7.2 Limitation of Liability

No Member or Program Participant shall be liable for:

- debts;
- claims;
- contracts;
- or other obligations

of a Program in which it does not participate,

except to the extent expressly provided in the Master Agreement, applicable Program Exhibit, or otherwise required by law.

The Master Agreement establishes the intended financial firewall, but counsel should ensure that the contractual allocation of liability is consistent with applicable law and the actual structure of each Program.

7.3 Debt Approval

No debt shall be secured by or impose an obligation upon a Member or Program Participant except as expressly provided in the applicable Program Exhibit.

Each Program Exhibit shall establish:

- voting threshold;
- approval process;
- required Member or Program Participant approvals;
- debt authorization procedures;
- security or guarantee requirements.

Different Programs may reasonably require different debt-approval structures. A major regional communications system may require unanimous approval of participating agencies, while a smaller Program might use a supermajority or weighted vote.

7.4 Indemnification

- Master Agreement indemnification framework;
- Program-specific indemnification provisions as appropriate.

7.5 Insurance and Risk Pooling

Authority may procure:

- insurance;
- pooled risk coverage;
- cybersecurity coverage;
- infrastructure protection policies;
- other insurance as specified in Program Exhibits.

Insurance and risk obligations attributable to a specific Program shall, to the extent practicable, be allocated to that Program and its Participants.

ARTICLE 8. CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

8.1 Authority to Contract

Authority may:

- issue RFPs;
- enter vendor agreements;
- hold master service contracts;
- administer grants;
- acquire equipment or infrastructure;
- enter agreements with Members, Program Participants, other public agencies, and private contractors.

The Authority may exercise these powers:

- on behalf of the Authority as a whole; or
- on behalf of a specific Program,

subject to the applicable Program Exhibit and delegated authority.

The Authority is intended to be a legal contracting vehicle. For example, the Radio Program could authorize the Authority to contract with a private entity for system construction while separately contracting with the County for maintenance.

8.2 Delegated Contracting

A Program may delegate:

- contract administration;
- maintenance;
- procurement;
- project management;
- technical support;
- or operational support

to:

- County;
- Member;
- Program Participant;
- vendor;
- another public agency; or
- other qualified contractor.

8.3 Procurement Rules

Authority may adopt:

- uniform procurement policies; or
- Program-specific procurement standards.

Program-specific procurement procedures may be more restrictive than Authority-wide procedures but shall comply with applicable law and mandatory Authority policies.

ARTICLE 9. ASSET OWNERSHIP

9.1 Program-Level Assets

Each Program Exhibit shall define:

- ownership structure;
- maintenance obligations;
- replacement obligations;
- capital replacement funding;
- responsibility for depreciation or replacement reserves, as applicable;
- transfer rights upon withdrawal;
- disposition upon Program termination.

For infrastructure Programs, ownership is only part of the question. The agreement also needs to establish who is responsible for maintaining and ultimately replacing the asset.

9.2 Title to Assets

Assets may be:

- Authority-owned;
- jointly owned;
- owned by one or more Program Participants;
- owned by a third party or vendor;
- leased or licensed to the Authority;
- leased or licensed to Program Participants.

This flexibility is important because different Programs may use very different asset models. A radio system might involve Authority-owned equipment, City/County-owned towers, and vendor-owned software or licenses.

9.3 Disposition

Each Program Exhibit shall establish procedures for disposition of Program assets upon:

- dissolution of the Authority;
- withdrawal of a Member or Program Participant;
- termination of the Program;
- sale or replacement of assets.

ARTICLE 10. ADMINISTRATION

10.1 Administrative Services

The Authority may contract for:

- legal counsel;
- accounting;
- clerical support;
- grant administration;
- fiscal services;
- technical consulting;
- procurement assistance;
- other administrative services.

10.2 No Employees

Unless later amended:

- the Authority shall not directly employ staff.

This preserves the initial "thin JPA" model and avoids creating a new permanent administrative organization before there is a demonstrated need for one.

10.3 Administrative Agent

The Authority may designate:

- a Member agency;
- a Program Participant;
- another public agency;
- a contracted service provider; or
- other qualified entity

to serve as Administrative Agent.

The Administrative Agent shall perform only those functions delegated by the Authority Board or applicable Program governing body.

The agreement establishing the Administrative Agent shall specify:

- scope of authority;
- compensation;
- reporting requirements;
- term;
- termination;
- financial responsibilities; and
- limitations on delegated authority.

The Administrative Agent is intended to provide administrative capacity without creating a separate employee-based bureaucracy. For example, the County could initially provide accounting and contract administration for the Authority and the Radio Program.

ARTICLE 11. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Program disputes shall first be resolved pursuant to the dispute-resolution procedures established in the applicable Program Exhibit.

Disputes concerning the Master Agreement or Authority-wide matters shall be subject to the procedures established in this Article.

This distinction prevents a dispute involving one Program from automatically becoming an issue for every Member of the Authority.

11.1 Informal Resolution

- disputes first referred to designated representatives of the affected parties for good-faith resolution;
- unresolved disputes may be elevated to the applicable Program governing committee;
- Authority-wide disputes may be elevated to the Authority Board.

The final agreement should identify who has authority to resolve each category of dispute. A separate executive committee may be appropriate, but it does not need to be established in the Master Agreement unless there is a demonstrated need.

11.2 Mediation

- Mandatory mediation before litigation, subject to exceptions established by counsel for emergency relief or other circumstances in which immediate judicial action is appropriate.

11.3 Venue and Applicable Law

- California law shall govern the Agreement;
- venue provisions to be established by counsel consistent with applicable law.

ARTICLE 12. DISSOLUTION

12.1 Dissolution of Entire Authority

Process for dissolution of the Authority, including:

- required vote;
- satisfaction of outstanding obligations;
- disposition of remaining assets;
- termination or assignment of contracts;
- final accounting.

12.2 Dissolution of Individual Programs

Individual Programs may terminate without dissolving the Authority.

Termination of one Program shall not affect:

- the legal existence of the Authority;
- other Programs;
- or the financial obligations of other Programs.

This is a fundamental feature of the umbrella structure. The Authority should survive the termination of any individual Program so that the region does not have to recreate a new JPA every time a particular cooperative activity ends.

12.3 Asset and Debt Allocation Upon Dissolution

Upon termination of a Program:

- assets;
- reserves;
- debt;
- contracts;
- liabilities; and
- other obligations

shall be distributed, assigned, or satisfied in accordance with the applicable Program Exhibit.

ARTICLE 13. AMENDMENTS

13.1 Amendment of Master Agreement

Amendments to the Master Agreement shall require the approval threshold established here.

Different approval thresholds may be established for ordinary amendments and amendments affecting fundamental Authority governance, Member liability, financial separation, or other fundamental rights.

The eventual agreement should avoid making every minor amendment require unanimous approval while protecting the basic constitutional structure of the Authority from being changed by a simple majority.

13.2 Amendment of Program Exhibits

Only Program Participants shall vote on amendments to a Program Exhibit, according to the amendment process established in that Program Exhibit.

No amendment to a Program Exhibit shall impose a financial, operational, liability, debt, or other material obligation upon a Member or Program Participant that has not approved such amendment.

An amendment to a Program Exhibit that materially affects the legal obligations, liability, financial position, or authority-wide responsibilities of the Authority shall also require approval by the Authority Board.

The general principle is: the Program Participants control their Program, but they cannot use a Program Exhibit to bind the umbrella Authority or non-participating Members to obligations they did not approve.

STRUCTURAL EXAMPLE

The Authority might initially look like this:

SANTA CRUZ REGIONAL GENERAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

Members

- City of Santa Cruz
- City of Capitola
- City of Watsonville
- County of Santa Cruz
- other participating jurisdictions

PROGRAM A — REGIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY RADIO

Program Participants

- County
- Santa Cruz
- Capitola
- Watsonville
- UCSC
- other participating agencies

Program has its own:

- budget
- cost allocation
- governing committee
- voting rules
- contracts
- debt
- reserves
- assets
- maintenance agreements
- withdrawal rules

PROGRAM B — REGIONAL GIS

Program Participants

- potentially County
- Santa Cruz
- Capitola
- other interested agencies

Program has its own:

- budget
- cost allocation
- governing committee
- voting rules
- contracts
- service standards
- withdrawal rules

UCSC does not participate unless it chooses to.

PROGRAM C — REGIONAL ABANDONED VEHICLE PROGRAM

Potentially an entirely different group of Participants, governance structure, funding formula, and operational arrangement.

THE GOVERNING PRINCIPLE

The Authority provides the common legal and institutional shell; each Program provides the governance, financing, contracting, and operational structure appropriate to that particular cooperative undertaking.

This is the central concept of the proposed Authority. It is not intended to require jurisdictions to agree in advance on every possible form of regional cooperation. Instead, it creates a reusable legal mechanism through which geographically adjacent agencies can create individual cooperative Programs as opportunities arise, while maintaining separate participation, governance, financing, debt, assets, and obligations for each Program.

PROGRAM EXHIBIT A

REGIONAL INTEROPERABLE NEXT GENERATION (RING) RADIO SYSTEM PROGRAM

A Program Exhibit to the Master Agreement of the
Santa Cruz Regional General Services Authority
established pursuant to California Government Code § 6500 et seq.

DRAFT — restated from the 2025 RING Master Service and Governance Agreement (Final, 11/07/25) for County Counsel / JPA counsel review. Not for execution.

Drafting notes — choices made in converting the MSGA, for your review

1. The **Program Governing Committee** is the outline's Article 4.5 body; it continues to be called the **"RING Executive Committee"** for stakeholder continuity. Change the label throughout if you'd rather standardize on "Program Governing Committee."
2. County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors approval has been **removed** as a separate gate on routine Program actions (new Program Participant/Subscriber admission, fee changes) — those now rest with the Program Governing Committee, on the theory that the County's BOS-appointed representative already carries the County's vote there. Confirm this is the intended shift; it's the biggest structural change from the current MSGA and worth a specific County Counsel read.
3. The 10-year term with automatic renewal (MSGA §5.1) is carried forward unchanged.
4. This Exhibit still contemplates **individual execution by all six Program Participants**, in addition to whatever adoption process the Authority uses for the Master Agreement itself. If the Authority structure is meant to let Program Governing Committee or Authority Board action alone adopt a Program Exhibit, this signature block should be removed.
5. General boilerplate (governing law, notices, severability, no waiver, force majeure, counterparts, authorized signature) is **incorporated by reference** to the Master Agreement rather than restated (Article 13) — Indemnification and Conflict of Interest are kept here because they are genuinely Program-specific. Confirm once the Master Agreement is finalized.
6. Article and section numbers reference the *Gen Services JPA Rough Outline (9-14)* reviewed in September 2026. Cross-references will need to be checked against whatever Master Agreement is ultimately adopted.

Recitals

WHEREAS, the Santa Cruz Regional General Services Authority (the **"Authority"**) is a joint powers authority organized under California Government Code §6500 *et seq.*, established, among other purposes, to serve as an umbrella entity through which its Members and other eligible public agencies may undertake cooperative Programs, each governed by its own Program Exhibit; and

WHEREAS, the County of Santa Cruz, City of Santa Cruz, City of Watsonville, City of Capitola, City of Scotts Valley, and the Regents of the University of California, on behalf of its Santa Cruz campus (each, a **"Program Participant"** and collectively, the **"Program Participants"**), have a mutual interest in maintaining a comprehensive, interoperable public safety communications system to serve the needs of fire, law enforcement, emergency medical services, education, and other public safety and municipal functions within Santa Cruz County; and

WHEREAS, the Program Participants desire to establish the Regional Interoperable Next Generation (RING) Radio System as a Program of the Authority pursuant to Article 4 of the Authority's Master Agreement (the **"Master Agreement"**), with each Program Participant retaining ownership of its respective Owned Assets; and

WHEREAS, this Program Exhibit restates, within the Authority’s Program structure, the Master Service and Governance Agreement previously entered into among these same agencies effective June 11, 2026 (the “**Prior MSGA**”), carrying forward its substantive governance, financial, and operational terms except as modified herein to conform to the Master Agreement, and the Prior MSGA is superseded and replaced by this Program Exhibit as among the Program Participants upon the Effective Date; and

WHEREAS, this Program Exhibit provides clear terms governing asset ownership, Program governance and oversight, financial contributions, operational responsibilities, and capital investments, while allowing the RING Program’s governance structure to evolve as the System grows;

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to Article 4 of the Master Agreement, the Authority and the Program Participants establish the RING Program on the following terms:

Article 1 — Establishment, Purpose, and Scope

1.1 Establishment. The Regional Interoperable Next Generation (RING) Radio System Program (the “Program”) is hereby established as a Program of the Authority pursuant to Article 4 of the Master Agreement.

1.2 Purpose. The purpose of the Program is to develop, finance, operate, and maintain a comprehensive, interoperable P25 public safety radio communications system serving the Program Participants, Subscriber Agencies, and other User Agencies within Santa Cruz County.

1.3 Scope. The Program encompasses: (a) the RING P25 Upgrade Project; (b) ongoing operations, maintenance, and management of the RING Radio System; (c) capital planning and financing for the System; and (d) admission and integration of new Program Participants and Subscriber Agencies, all as further described in this Program Exhibit and the RING Technical and Operational Standards.

1.4 Relationship to Master Agreement. This Program Exhibit is subject to, and shall be interpreted consistent with, the Master Agreement. On matters solely concerning the Program, this Program Exhibit and actions taken under it control over general Authority policy, consistent with Master Agreement §4.6, except with respect to the Master Agreement itself, matters expressly reserved to the Authority Board, applicable law, or obligations of the Authority as a whole.

Article 2 — Definitions

Annual Funding Plan: The strategy developed by the Program Governing Committee that outlines how the RING Radio System will secure the financial resources needed to achieve its goals, including identifying funding sources, amounts, and timing.

Capital Costs: Costs related to capital improvements and acquisitions of capital assets, including hardware and software upgrades, infrastructure enhancements, capital reserves, or other shared infrastructure enhancements as prescribed by the RING Radio System scope of work or other capital improvements approved by the Program Governing Committee.

Capital Fee: A fee charged to Program Participants to recover costs of capital improvements and acquisitions of capital assets, as prescribed by the RING Technical and Operational Standards or approved by the Program Governing Committee.

New Participant Buy-In: The proportional buy-in amount to support funding of Capital Costs paid by a new Program Participant that joins after the Effective Date.

Operational Fee: A fee charged on a recurring basis, at intervals established by the Program Governing Committee, to User Agencies covering their respective portion of the costs of ongoing operations and maintenance (O&M) of the RING Radio System, including County Radio Shop labor, external vendor costs, operating reserves, administrative costs, and related services and supplies.

Outstanding Debt: All remaining principal balances on bonds or other capital financing instruments related to the RING Radio System capital program, but excluding lease obligations or operational financing.

Owned Assets: The infrastructure held by each Program Participant, including but not limited to radio sites, towers, frequencies, shelters/structures, generators, cabling, and power supplies. Use of a Program Participant's Owned Assets by the RING Radio System is subject to a separate license agreement between the County and that Program Participant.

Present Value [of the RING Radio System]: Determined by the County Information Services Department (ISD) at the time a Subscriber Agency formally indicates interest in connecting to the RING Radio System, using a straight-line depreciation method applied to the total original capital investment of the System.

Program Governing Committee (RING Executive Committee): The governing body of the RING Program established pursuant to Master Agreement §4.5, composed of one appointed executive or designee from each Program Participant, as specified in Attachment A. For continuity, the Program Governing Committee continues to be known as the "RING Executive Committee." It provides strategic oversight and approves budgets, Capital and Operational Fees, and policy, financial, and contracting matters concerning the operation, management, and capital planning of the RING Radio System, subject to the reserved powers of the Authority Board under Master Agreement §3.2.

Regional User Group (RUG): An advisory body composed of operational representatives from each Program Participant and Subscriber Agency, as specified in Attachment A, providing input on day-to-day operations, System performance, and user needs.

RING P25 Upgrade Project ("Project"): The major capital project upgrading the current radio system to a next-generation trunked P25 regional radio system, including backhaul, land-mobile radio infrastructure, dispatch consoles, project management, and associated soft costs and warranties.

RING Radio System: The Santa Cruz County Regional Interoperable Next Generation (RING) Radio System, including all associated infrastructure, equipment, and services necessary for public safety, education, and other municipal operational radio communication.

RING Technical and Operational Standards: Contained within Attachment B: Santa Cruz County RFP Next Generation Public Safety Radio System, and Attachment C: EF Johnson (JVC Kenwood) Response to Santa Cruz County RFP #23P-003 dated September 17, 2024.

Subscriber Agency: A public agency, organization, or other authorized entity utilizing the RING Radio System that is not a Program Participant. Admission of Subscriber Agencies is determined by the Program Governing Committee and governed by a separate Subscriber Agreement. A Subscriber Agency is a Program Participant's counterpart under Master Agreement §4.4 (a Program Participant that is not an Authority Member).

Subscriber Connection Contribution: A one-time charge to all Subscriber Agencies at the time they join the RING System, representing their proportional contribution toward the Capital Costs of the RING Radio System.

Technical Advisory Group (TAG): An advisory body composed of technical and operational representatives, as specified in Attachment A, providing recommendations to the Program Governing Committee on technical standards, maintenance, upgrades, cybersecurity, and system performance.

Total User Equipment Count: The total number of User Equipment devices, as of July 1st of each year, from all User Agencies, used in the True-Up Process.

True-Up Process: An annual process reconciling the number of User Equipment devices each User Agency has registered, used to adjust Capital and Operational Fees for the following fiscal year.

User Agency: All agencies, including Program Participants and Subscriber Agencies, that own devices actively using the RING Radio System.

User Equipment: All equipment owned by Program Participants or Subscriber Agencies, including portable, mobile, pager, fixed radio devices, dispatch consoles, and associated equipment intended to operate on the RING System. Each

Program Participant or Subscriber Agency is responsible for procurement, installation, replacement, and insurance of its User Equipment.

Article 3 — Program Participants

3.1 Initial Program Participants. The initial Program Participants are the County of Santa Cruz, City of Santa Cruz, City of Watsonville, City of Capitola, City of Scotts Valley, and the Regents of the University of California, on behalf of its Santa Cruz campus. *(Other agencies, organizations, and authorized entities will be considered for inclusion as Initial Program Participants)*

3.2 Admission of New Program Participants. Eligible public agencies may apply to become Program Participants. Admission requires: (a) application to the RING TAG and recommendation to the Program Governing Committee; (b) approval by the Program Governing Committee; (c) execution of this Program Exhibit or a joinder agreement; and (d) payment of a New Participant Buy-In, calculated based on the current value of the RING Radio System's capital assets and costs incurred to date. New Program Participants assume a proportionate share of capital and operational obligations as determined by the Program Governing Committee.

3.3 Subscriber Agencies. Eligible public agencies, organizations, or other authorized entities may apply to become Subscriber Agencies under a separate Subscriber Agreement. Admission requires payment of a Subscriber Connection Contribution as determined by the Program Governing Committee and recommendation for approval by the Program Governing Committee.

3.4 Withdrawal. Withdrawal of a Program Participant or Subscriber Agency is governed by Article 10.

Article 4 — Governance

4.1 Program Governing Committee (RING Executive Committee)

The Program Governing Committee is the governing body of the RING Program and exercises the authority delegated to it under this Program Exhibit and Master Agreement §4.5. The Program Governing Committee will have an oversight role, consulting and advising on operational issues, capital improvements, and budgetary matters, and approving Program actions as set out in this Program Exhibit. The Program Governing Committee will not have direct involvement in day-to-day operations. Composition, voting rules, quorum, meetings, officers, tenure, duties, and bylaws are set out in Attachment A.

4.2 Regional User Group (RING RUG)

An advisory group as defined in Article 2 and Attachment A, meeting at least quarterly to provide input on the operational aspects of the RING Radio System.

4.3 Technical Advisory Group (RING TAG)

An advisory group as defined in Article 2, providing recommendations to the Program Governing Committee regarding O&M standards, protocols, and upgrades, including at a minimum:

- Identification of minimum technical standards for RING Radio System equipment and User Equipment.
- Identification of protocols for the modification of “talk group” assignments and their usage.
- Identification of minimum periodic maintenance standards and schedules for RING Radio System equipment.
- Identification of problem reporting and resolution practices for RING Radio System equipment.
- Identification of security standards, policies, and procedures.

A full account of the RING TAG's roles, duties, and responsibilities is set out in Attachment A.

Article 5 — Cost Allocation, Budget, and Fees

5.1 Annual Budget Process. The County Chief Information Officer (CIO), in consultation with the RING TAG, RING RUG, and Program Governing Committee, will develop a draft budget for the upcoming fiscal year and present it to the Program Governing Committee by January 31st each year, with final approval by the Program Governing Committee by March 31st. The County agrees to include funding in its annual budget consistent with the budget approved by the Program Governing Committee.

5.2 Operational Fee. Calculated annually based on the O&M budget approved by the Program Governing Committee divided by the Total User Equipment Count, setting a per-device charge multiplied by each User Agency's User Equipment Count.

5.3 Capital Fee. Calculated annually based on the Capital Costs budget approved by the Program Governing Committee, minus applicable Subscriber Connection Contributions, divided by the combined User Equipment Counts of all Program Participants, setting a per-device charge multiplied by each Program Participant's User Equipment Count.

5.4 Subscriber Connection Contribution. Assessed as a one-time charge to all Subscriber Agencies at the time they join the RING Radio System, representing the Subscriber Agency's proportional contribution toward existing capital investment. Revenue generated shall be applied directly toward reduction of Capital Costs in the following fiscal year's Capital Fee calculation.

5.5 Program Participant Special Assessments. If unforeseen Capital Costs arise that are not covered by the existing budget, the Program Governing Committee, with input from the RING TAG, RING RUG, and County ISD, may propose a special assessment for each Program Participant, distributed based on the standard cost allocation formula. Special assessments require an affirmative two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Program Governing Committee.

5.6 Cost Allocation and Annual Funding Plan. The Program Governing Committee shall develop and approve an Annual Funding Plan defining cost-sharing formulas for Operational and Capital fees. Any subsequent change that increases a Program Participant's financial obligation by more than 10% requires a unanimous vote of the Program Governing Committee. A true-up process will occur annually to adjust fees based on changes in User Equipment Counts.

5.7 Grants and External Funding. Program Participants and Subscriber Agencies may seek and administer grant or external funding related to their participation in the RING Radio System, subject to the conditions of the applicable grant award; grant compliance, reporting, and audit obligations remain the responsibility of the grant recipient.

5.8 Billing Schedule. The County will invoice each User Agency quarterly, by the 15th of the first month of each quarter, with payment due within forty-five (45) calendar days.

5.9 Delinquency. The County will notify the Program Governing Committee of any delinquency after forty-five (45) days of non-payment. The Program Governing Committee will evaluate the circumstances, review possible remedies, and direct the County as to how to proceed.

5.10 Coverage and Service Assurance. The County will endeavor to provide coverage, service, and maintenance as outlined in the RING Technical and Operational Standards. A User Agency that believes standards are not being met may withhold payment until coverage, service, or maintenance is restored, or a mutual understanding of System limitations is reached.

Article 6 — Fiscal Separation and Fiscal Agent

6.1 Separate Accounting. The County shall maintain separate accounting for the Program, including separate reserve and capital accounts where applicable, distinct from any other current or future Authority Program, consistent with Master Agreement Article 6.

6.2 No Cross-Subsidization. The Program is financially self-contained. No Program Participant shall be responsible for the debts, obligations, or operating costs of another Authority Program, and no other Authority Program shall be responsible for the Program’s debts, obligations, or operating costs, except as expressly authorized by the Master Agreement.

6.3 Fiscal Agent. The County of Santa Cruz, acting through its Information Services Department (ISD), is designated Fiscal Agent for the Program pursuant to Master Agreement §6.4, continuing its current role of invoicing, accounting, investment, and reporting for the Program.

6.4 Administrative Cost Allocation. Authority-wide administrative costs, if any, shall be allocated to the Program pursuant to the Authority’s approved cost allocation plan under Master Agreement §6.3. Until other Authority Programs are established, this provision has no practical effect on the Program’s budget.

6.5 Audits. The County shall arrange for an independent financial audit of the RING Radio System annually. Audit results shall be presented to the Program Governing Committee and provided to each Program Participant’s governing body.

Article 7 — Contracting and Administrative Authority

7.1 Delegation to County. The Program Governing Committee delegates contract administration, operations, maintenance, and administrative support for the Program to the County of Santa Cruz, acting through ISD, as Administrative Agent under Master Agreement §10.3. In that capacity, the County will:

- Operate, maintain, and manage the RING Radio System, including all radio sites, transmission equipment, related infrastructure, and third-party vendor contracts, through the ISD Radio Shop Division;
- Maintain, program, repair, and service User Equipment connected to the System (replacement, purchase, and installation remain each User Agency’s responsibility);
- Provide administrative support for Program committees and prepare annual operating and capital budgets for Program Governing Committee approval;
- Conduct project management for the RING P25 Upgrade Project, including procurement, installation, testing, and deployment, using Capital Fee proceeds; and
- Submit any contract or procurement exceeding \$100,000, or materially affecting a Program Participant’s financial obligations, to the Program Governing Committee for prior review and approval.

7.2 Temporary Access. In emergencies or special circumstances, the County may grant temporary access to the RING Radio System to non-Program Participant, non-Subscriber agencies, approved by the County CIO or designee and limited to the duration of the emergency or event. The County will notify the Program Governing Committee within 48 hours of granting such access.

Article 8 — Asset Ownership and Operational Responsibilities

8.1 Owned Assets. Each Program Participant retains ownership and control of its Owned Assets and contributes their use to the Program’s operations under a separate license agreement with the County. This is consistent with the flexible title options in Master Agreement §9.2 (Authority-owned, jointly owned, Participant-owned, or licensed to the Authority).

8.2 User Equipment. Each User Agency is responsible for procurement, installation, replacement, and insurance of its own User Equipment, and for ensuring it meets the RING Technical and Operational Standards.

8.3 Disposition. Disposition of Program assets upon dissolution of the Program, withdrawal of a Program Participant, or sale or replacement of assets, is governed by Master Agreement §9.3 and Article 10 of this Program Exhibit.

Article 9 — Debt and Liability

9.1 Program-Specific Debt. Outstanding Debt incurred for the Program is attributable solely to the Program Participants and does not constitute debt or an obligation of any other Authority Program or its participants, consistent with Master Agreement §7.1.

9.2 Limitation of Liability. No Program Participant shall be liable for the debts, claims, contracts, or other obligations of any other Authority Program in which it does not participate, consistent with Master Agreement §7.2.

9.3 Debt Approval. No debt shall be secured by or impose an obligation on a Program Participant except as approved under Article 5 of this Program Exhibit (unanimous Program Governing Committee vote for financial-obligation increases exceeding 10%; two-thirds vote for special assessments), consistent with Master Agreement §7.3.

9.4 Insurance. The County shall insure the RING Radio System. Program Participants and Subscriber Agencies shall maintain adequate insurance for their respective Owned Assets and User Equipment. The Authority may later procure pooled risk or cybersecurity coverage for the Program under Master Agreement §7.5, in which case Program-attributable premiums shall be allocated to the Program.

Article 10 — Admission, Withdrawal, and Continuing Obligations

10.1 New Program Participant / Subscriber Admission. Governed by Article 3.

10.2 Withdrawal. Any Program Participant may withdraw from the Program by providing the Program Governing Committee with written notice at least twenty-four (24) months in advance. The withdrawing Program Participant remains responsible for its share of Operational and Capital Fees until the effective date of withdrawal, and has no interest or claim in Program assets absent an approved written agreement to the contrary, except as to its own Owned Assets. A withdrawing Program Participant's payment obligations survive withdrawal and survive termination of this Program Exhibit. A withdrawing Program Participant may negotiate a buy-out agreement with the Program Governing Committee to retire outstanding financial obligations.

10.3 Termination for Cause. The Program Governing Committee may terminate a Program Participant's participation for cause — unlawful or fraudulent activity, failure to comply with this Program Exhibit, or failure to pay required fees — following a six (6)-month notice and cure period; if unresolved, termination becomes effective one (1) year after the initial notice, and the Program Participant remains liable for all Capital and Operational Fees incurred until the effective date of termination.

10.4 Continuing Obligations. Withdrawal from the Program does not relieve a Program Participant of obligations incurred prior to the effective date of withdrawal — including debt, equipment or infrastructure costs, vendor contracts, capital replacement obligations, or indemnification obligations — except as expressly provided herein, consistent with Master Agreement §5.3.

10.5 Term. The initial term of this Program Exhibit is ten (10) years from the Effective Date, with automatic renewal for successive ten-year terms unless terminated as provided herein.

10.6 New Program Participant Integration. Agencies joining after the Effective Date must apply to the RING TAG and Program Governing Committee, pay the New Participant Buy-In, and are subject to ongoing Operational and Capital Fees prorated from the date of entry.

Article 11 — Dispute Resolution

11.1 Program disputes shall first be referred to designated representatives of the affected parties for good-faith resolution, and if unresolved, elevated to the Program Governing Committee, consistent with Master Agreement §11.1.

11.2 Mandatory mediation before litigation applies to Program disputes, subject to the exceptions for emergency relief established by counsel under Master Agreement §11.2. Venue and applicable law are as established in the Master Agreement.

Article 12 — Amendments to this Program Exhibit

12.1 This Program Exhibit may be amended only by a written instrument approved by all Program Participants, consistent with Master Agreement §13.2. No amendment shall impose a financial, operational, liability, debt, or other material obligation on a Program Participant that has not approved it.

12.2 An amendment that materially affects the Authority's legal obligations, liability, financial position, or Authority-wide responsibilities also requires approval by the Authority Board.

12.3 The Program Governing Committee's bylaws (Attachment A) may be amended with 30 days' notice to all Program Participants, by majority vote of the Program Governing Committee.

Article 13 — General Provisions

13.1 Incorporation by Reference. Except as expressly modified in this Article, the general provisions of the Master Agreement — including governing law, entire agreement, notices, construction, headings, severability, no waiver, no third-party beneficiaries, force majeure, authorized signature, and counterpart execution — apply to this Program Exhibit and the Program.

13.2 Mutual Indemnification. The County shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless each other Program Participant, and its officers, officials, employees, volunteers, and agents, from claims, liabilities, losses, damages, and expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees) arising from the County's negligence, willful misconduct, or failure to perform its obligations under this Program Exhibit, except to the extent arising from the sole negligence or willful misconduct of the indemnified Program Participant. Each Program Participant shall likewise indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the County and all other Program Participants for claims arising from its own negligence, willful misconduct, or failure to perform, except to the extent arising from the sole negligence or willful misconduct of the County or another Program Participant.

13.3 Liability Among Program Participants. Each Program Participant agrees not to hold any other Program Participant liable for claims arising from RING Radio System operations, except in cases of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

13.4 Conflict of Interest. Each Program Participant, its representatives, and its advisors shall comply with applicable conflict-of-interest laws already applicable to them. The Program Governing Committee shall adopt a Conflict of Interest Policy requiring disclosure of any personal or financial interest in contracts, vendor proposals, or procurement decisions related to the RING Radio System.

Signatures

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Program Participants have executed this Program Exhibit as of the date of last signature below. *(Other agencies, organizations, and authorized entities will be considered for inclusion as Initial Program Participants and their signature lines added as appropriate)*

County of Santa Cruz

[Authorized Representative's Name]

Title:

Date:

Address:

City of Capitola

[Authorized Representative's Name]

Title:

Date:

Address:

City of Santa Cruz

[Authorized Representative's Name]

Title:

Date:

Address:

City of Scotts Valley

[Authorized Representative's Name]

Title:

Date:

Address:

City of Watsonville

[Authorized Representative's Name]

Title:

Date:

Address:

The Regents of the University of California, on behalf of its Santa Cruz campus

[Authorized Representative's Name]

Title:

Date:

Address:

Attachment A — Detailed Governance Structure

Program Governing Committee (RING Executive Committee)

1. Voting Members

The Program Governing Committee shall be comprised of six (6) voting members as follows:

- City Manager of the City of Santa Cruz or designee
- City Manager of the City of Watsonville or designee
- City Manager of the City of Capitola or designee
- City Manager of the City of Scotts Valley or designee
- Chief of Police of the University of California, Santa Cruz or designee
- The County Executive Officer (CEO) or designee

Each City Manager, County Executive Officer, and Chief of Police, or their designee, will represent their respective jurisdiction in matters relating to the RING Radio System. Each voting member will be appointed by their legislative body.

2. Voting Rules and Quorum

- Each voting member will have one equally weighted vote.
- To be considered present, a voting member must attend the meeting in person or through a compliant remote attendance platform if teleconference attendance is permitted by the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- A quorum will consist of at least four (4) of the six (6) voting members.
- All non-budgetary and non-service level decisions require a simple majority vote of the quorum.
- Budget and service level changes require the approval of at least four (4) of the six (6) voting members.

3. Non-Voting Advisors

Non-voting advisors to the Program Governing Committee will include:

- The Chairperson or Vice-Chair of the RING Technical Advisory Group
- The Chairperson or Vice-Chair of the RING Regional User Group
- The County's Chief Information Officer or designee
- The President of the Santa Cruz County Fire Chiefs' Association
- The Chair of the Santa Cruz County Law Enforcement Chiefs' Association

These non-voting advisors will provide technical expertise and operational input but are not required for the establishment of a quorum or voting.

4. Meetings

- The Program Governing Committee shall meet at least once a year or as deemed necessary.
- All meetings will be conducted in compliance with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- Agendas will be posted at least 72 hours in advance at the physical meeting location and on the RING Radio System website.

5. Election of Officers and Procedures

- The Program Governing Committee will select a Chair and other officers as needed.
- The Program Governing Committee will establish operational procedures and create subcommittees to handle specific issues, consistent with this Program Exhibit and adopted bylaws.

6. Tenure and Replacement of Members

- In the event of removal, resignation, or death of a voting member, the Program Participant responsible for appointing that member shall promptly appoint a successor.
- Voting members shall serve until replaced by their respective appointing Program Participant.

7. Duties of the Program Governing Committee

- Policy Decisions: recommendations and decisions regarding the overall operation, costs, and scope of the RING Radio System, including upgrades, enhancements, and capital improvements.
- Budget Approval: review and approval of the RING Radio System budget, transmitted to each Program Participant's governing body as applicable.
- Service Agreements: authorizing the County to enter into service agreements or contracts supporting the RING Radio System.
- Special Funding: approving cost-sharing mechanisms and special funding for system upgrades or major purchases.
- Audit Requests: receiving financial or performance audits of the RING Radio System accounts, with costs proportionally shared by Program Participants.

8. Bylaws and Amendments

- The Program Governing Committee will adopt bylaws to govern its operations, consistent with this Program Exhibit; bylaws may be amended with 30 days' notice to all Program Participants.
- Bylaw amendments must be approved by a majority vote of the Program Governing Committee.

9. Communication and Transparency

- Members of the Program Governing Committee shall disseminate relevant information and decisions to their respective agencies.
- The Program Governing Committee will ensure that all User Agencies receive timely updates on budget, policy, and operational decisions.

RING Regional User Group

The RING RUG is established as an advisory group to represent the interests of all User Agencies participating in the RING Radio System, providing input on operational aspects and ensuring all stakeholders have a voice in system management and maintenance.

Membership

Approximate membership of 25 individuals, which may include:

- County Departments: Public Works, Parks, General Services Division (GSD)
- Law Enforcement: Sheriff's Office, Probation, District Attorney, each local law enforcement agency
- Fire Services: Representatives from each fire agency
- Program Participants: Public Works, Parks, and Solid Waste representatives from Santa Cruz, Watsonville, Scotts Valley, and Capitola
- Dispatch Services: Representatives from dispatch agencies such as NetCom, Scotts Valley, and UCSC
- Educational Institutions: Representative from UCSC

Meetings occur at least quarterly, administered by County ISD, in compliance with the Ralph M. Brown Act. Reports are submitted quarterly to the Program Governing Committee.

RING Technical Advisory Group

The RING TAG provides technical and operational guidance for the ongoing management and development of the System, advising the Program Governing Committee on technical standards, operational protocols, and implementation of upgrades and maintenance.

Membership

- Law Chiefs' Representative
- Fire Chiefs' Representative
- Sheriff's Office Representative
- Two (2) County ISD Representatives
- City Representatives from Santa Cruz, Watsonville, Scotts Valley, and Capitola
- Santa Cruz Regional 9-1-1 Representative
- UCSC Representative

Consultants or vendor representatives may participate only as non-voting technical advisors. Standby (non-voting) members include GSD (Real Estate) Representative, County Budget Representative, and County-retained consultants as needed.

TAG reviews all vendor change orders exceeding \$100,000, oversees system acceptance testing before go-live, and recommends security standards. TAG strives for consensus; otherwise a majority vote of those in attendance governs its recommendations, which are advisory only — TAG does not have authority to bind the Program Governing Committee.



AGENDA REPORT

Santa Cruz County, California
RING Executive Committee

Agenda of: September 28, 2026 | Item No. 7c
Subject: Comparison of Cost Allocation Models for the RING Radio System

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the RING Executive Committee:

1. Receive this report comparing three cost allocation models for the RING Radio System and their effect on each participant;
2. Provide direction on which models, or combinations of models, staff should develop further; and
3. Direct staff to obtain agency-certified staffing counts and calculate radio system airtime data to replace the planning assumptions used in this report, and to return with a recommendation. No change to the current fee schedule is proposed at this time.

BACKGROUND:

Under Section 4 of the Master Service and Governance Agreement (MSGA), Member Agencies pay Operational Fees and Capital Fees based on the number of user devices connected to the system, and an annual True-Up Process reconciles device counts. Subscriber Agencies pay a one-time Subscriber Connection Contribution toward capital and share in operating costs. The Board of Supervisors report on the MSGA explained that a connection-based model aligns financial responsibility with system needs and avoids distortions from call volume or activity-based models, which do not reflect the fixed-cost nature of radio infrastructure.

The RING Projected Fee Schedule shows total FY30 charges of \$5,294,006 to thirteen participants: six Members and seven Subscribers. This report tests the current model against two alternatives, so the Committee can see how costs would shift among participants before considering any change.

DISCUSSION:

Basis of comparison. All figures use FY30, the first year with full debt service and operating costs. This Fiscal Year was selected only for illustrative purposes. There will be system costs that will need to be collected starting in FY28. The cost pools come directly from the fee schedule: capital costs of \$2,158,566 paid by Members, operations and maintenance (O&M) of \$2,945,386 [RING Warranty = \$1,021,306; Radio Shop = \$1,924,080] paid by all participants, and a \$190,054 Subscriber Connection Contribution. All three models recover the same \$5,294,006 from the same participants, so any increase for one participant is offset by a decrease for another. Table 1 summarizes the three models. The \$190,054 Connection Contribution pool is unchanged in all models, but its allocation among Subscribers is not: Model 1 allocates it by radio counts, while Models 2 and 3 allocate it by staffing, consistent with those models' other components.

Assumptions. Two inputs are planning estimates that agencies should verify. Staffing is an estimate of radio-using personnel (career FTE plus active volunteers) for each participant. Airtime is calculated from each participant's radio-using staffing in each discipline, multiplied by typical push-to-talk minutes per staff member per month: law enforcement 120, EMS 90, fire 60, corrections, probation and district attorney 45,

and public works and other 20 — not from radio counts. Only the relative values matter. Under Model 3 at these assumptions, a Member would pay a capital Connection Charge of about \$49 per radio per month (half the current \$97 per-radio capital rate) plus an O&M Connection Charge of about \$84 per staff member per month (half the current O&M rate spread by staffing, now that both the O&M Connection Charge and air time are calculated from staffing rather than radio counts), plus roughly \$12.00 per capital air-time unit and \$13.55 per O&M air-time unit (one staff member generating one minute of push-to-talk time per month in a discipline). The attached workbook lets staff change any input.

Table 1. The three cost allocation models

Model	Cost driver	How it works	Main trade-off
1. Current	Number of radios (units)	Capital and O&M fees are each spread by radio count; subscribers also pay the one-time Connection Contribution.	Simple, predictable, matches the fixed-cost nature of the system; does not recognize differences in use or size.
2. Staffing	Radio-using staffing (FTE plus active volunteers)	Same pools and payers as Model 1, but each pool is spread by staffing instead of radio count.	Reflects agency size and ability to pay; penalizes lean radio deployment and depends on verified counts.
3. Connection Charge + air time	Radios and staffing (reduced Connection Charge) plus airtime by discipline	A Connection Charge set at 50% of the current rates — capital per radio, O&M per staff member; the other 50% of each pool is recovered by air time (staffing x discipline minutes).	Rewards lighter users; needs system usage data, adds billing complexity, and costs are largely fixed regardless of use.

Table 2. FY30 annual charge by participant and change from the current model

Participant	1. Current	2. Staffing		3. Connection + air time	
	FY30 \$	FY30 \$	Change	FY30 \$	Change
Members					
County of Santa Cruz	\$2,761,190	\$2,791,560	+1.1%	\$2,681,195	-2.9%
City of Santa Cruz	\$956,728	\$891,748	-6.8%	\$886,218	-7.4%
City of Watsonville	\$423,867	\$484,646	+14.3%	\$539,025	+27.2%
UC Santa Cruz	\$133,215	\$116,315	-12.7%	\$154,423	+15.9%
City of Capitola	\$113,839	\$116,315	+2.2%	\$149,761	+31.6%
City of Scotts Valley	\$96,884	\$116,315	+20.1%	\$145,682	+50.4%
Members subtotal	\$4,485,723	\$4,516,900	+0.7%	\$4,556,303	+1.6%
Subscribers					
Central FD	\$328,571	\$267,968	-18.4%	\$248,071	-24.5%
Ben Lomond FD	\$88,714	\$80,390	-9.4%	\$74,421	-16.1%
Boulder Creek FD	\$96,928	\$80,390	-17.1%	\$74,421	-23.2%
Scotts Valley FD	\$87,071	\$93,789	+7.7%	\$86,825	-0.3%
Felton FD	\$73,928	\$66,992	-9.4%	\$62,018	-16.1%
Zayante FD	\$100,214	\$66,992	-33.2%	\$62,018	-38.1%
AMR	\$32,857	\$120,586	+267.0%	\$129,929	+295.4%
Subscribers subtotal	\$808,283	\$777,107	-3.9%	\$737,703	-8.7%
Total	\$5,294,006	\$5,294,006	0.0%	\$5,294,006	0.0%

Shading marks changes greater than 10% (red = increase, green = decrease). Under the MSGA, a change that raises any participant's obligation by more than 10% requires a unanimous Committee vote. Figures are illustrative and rounded to the nearest dollar.

Model 2, Staffing. This model shifts cost toward participants with more staff per radio and away from those with radio-heavy deployments. Original calculations mistakenly excluded AMR from O&M cost calculations. That omission has been corrected resulting in a rise in costs for AMR, 267.0% (\$87,729), reflecting its increased staffing relative to its radio count now that it is included in the O&M allocation and its Connection

Contribution is allocated by staffing. Among Members, the City of Scotts Valley would rise 20.1% (\$19,431) and Watsonville 14.3% (\$60,779). Zayante FD would fall 33.2%, Boulder Creek FD 17.1%, and Central FD 18.4%, because their staffing is comparatively lean relative to their radio counts. The model follows agency size rather than system use, so an agency could add radios without raising its share. Because AMR, Scotts Valley, and Watsonville would each rise more than 10%, adoption would need a unanimous vote.

Model 3, Connection Charge plus airtime. Because the O&M Connection Charge, airtime, and the Subscriber Connection Contribution are now all calculated from staffing rather than radio counts, shifts are larger still. Every Member except the County and the City of Santa Cruz would rise more than 10%: Watsonville 27.2%, UC Santa Cruz 15.9%, Capitola 31.6%, and the City of Scotts Valley 50.4%. The County would fall 2.9% and the City of Santa Cruz 7.4%. The fire districts would fall between 0.3% and 38.1%, and AMR would rise 295.4%, reflecting its higher staffing relative to its radio count under the O&M Connection Charge, airtime, and Connection Contribution alike. The result depends on the Connection Charge share: at a 25% share, the City of Scotts Valley would rise about 70.1% and Zayante FD would fall about 40.6%; at a 75% share, the changes shrink to a 30.6% rise and a 35.6% fall. Because Watsonville, UC Santa Cruz, Capitola, Scotts Valley, and AMR would each rise more than 10% at the default 50% share, adoption would need a unanimous vote.

Considerations. The current model is the simplest and most predictable, but it ignores differences in size and use. No alternative changes the County's charge by more than about 2.9% or the City of Santa Cruz's by more than about 7.4%, and together they pay roughly 67% to 70% of the total under every revenue-neutral model. The alternatives mainly move cost among Watsonville, UC Santa Cruz, Capitola, Scotts Valley, and AMR. The O&M Connection Charge, the Subscriber Connection Contribution, and airtime now all depend on staffing rather than radio counts for Models 2 and 3, which requires reliable, agency-verified counts, and it would make annual bills harder to forecast for budgeting. Staff suggests confirming inputs before choosing a direction.

Cost reduction opportunities. The three models compared above are revenue-neutral: each redistributes the same \$5,294,006 among participants rather than reducing it. A meaningful reduction in what participants pay would instead come from outside revenue — grants, earmarks, and other funding sources applied against the capital or O&M pools — or from adding participants to the system, which spreads the same fixed costs across a larger base. Both are already in motion, as described below.

Proposition 64 grant. The County applied for and was awarded \$4.5 million through the state's Proposition 64 Public Health and Safety Grant Program. The program is administered by the state Board of State and Community Corrections and funded by cannabis tax revenue; current program guidance directs priority toward local projects that support enforcement against illegal cannabis cultivation. The award will fund RING radio sites in remote areas of the County where coverage has historically been poor or absent — the same areas that have seen higher illegal cannabis cultivation and enforcement activity. The \$4.5M will be realized as a direct reduction in the capital portion of costs. This amount represents roughly 24% of the anticipated \$18.6M capital expense.

METRO funding. Santa Cruz METRO has recently been awarded an undisclosed amount of funding to join RING and replace its own radio system, purchased in 2010, which has experienced random failures, transmission-device problems, and coverage gaps in Bonny Doon, Davenport, and along Highway 17. Modernizing METRO's system is intended to provide more reliable communications for daily transit operations and improve coordination with other agencies during emergencies, disasters, and major incidents. If METRO's participation is finalized, staff will return to the Committee with a revised cost allocation analysis reflecting METRO's radios, staffing, and share of the capital and O&M pools.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Requires funding from RING member agencies	☐ Yes ☒ No
Requires a budget adjustment or appropriation	☐ Yes ☒ No
Creates an ongoing expenditure commitment	☐ Yes ☒ No

Receiving this report has no direct fiscal impact and no change to the current fee schedule is proposed. If adopted in a future action, all three models would each recover \$5,294,006 in FY30 with different distributions among participants.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. RING Cost Allocation Model Comparison workbook (FY30)
-

Report Prepared by: Jim Frawley, Information Services Department, County of Santa Cruz
Reviewed by: Tammie Weigl, Director Information Services, County of Santa Cruz
Recommended by: Sven Stafford, Deputy County Executive Officer, County of Santa Cruz
Artificial Intelligence Acknowledgement: Artificial Intelligence (AI) contributed to the development of this agenda item

RING Cost Allocation Model Comparison (FY30 reference year) – Revised

Supports the RING Agenda Report "Comparison of Cost Allocation Models." Illustrative analysis for Executive Committee discussion; not a fee schedule.

How to use

Change only the light-blue cells with blue text on the Inputs sheet (cost pools, Connection Charge share, staffing, discipline mix, airtime minutes). Everything else is a formula.

Summary shows each participant's FY30 annual charge under the three models and the change from the current model.

The three models

Model 1 – Current: capital fee and O&M fee spread by radio (unit) counts; subscribers also pay the one-time Subscriber Connection Contribution. O&M is spread across every participant that uses the system, including AMR.

Model 2 – Staffing: same cost pools and same payers as Model 1, but the capital and O&M pools are spread by radio-using staffing instead of radio counts.

Model 3 – Connection Charge + Air Time: same pools and payers; a reduced Connection Charge recovers the share set on Inputs (default 50%) of each pool — capital per radio, O&M per staff member — and the remainder of each pool is recovered by air time (staffing x discipline minutes).

Sources and assumptions

Radio counts for participants are drawn from original cost estimates.

Staffing: planning estimates of radio-using personnel (career FTE plus active volunteers), as revised by staff. NOT independently verified with agencies.

Discipline mix and air time minutes: planning assumptions based on generally recognized relative radio loading by discipline (law enforcement highest, EMS next, fire moderate, public works lowest), as revised by staff. Only the relative values affect results. Air time is calculated from radio-

AMR is now included in the O&M allocation, receiving a share calculated on the same basis as every other participant in each model (radios in Model 1, staffing in Model 2, Connection Charge plus air time in Model 3).

Colors: blue text on light-blue fill = editable input; black = formula. Yellow is not used (RING brand palette).

RING cost allocation models: FY30 annual charge by participant

Participant	Type	1. Current	2. Staffing	3. Connection + air time	Change vs current: 2. Staffing (\$)	3. Conn + air time (\$)	Change vs current: 2. Staffing (%)	3. Conn + air time (%)
County of Santa Cruz	Member	\$2,761,190	\$2,791,560	\$2,681,195	\$30,370	(\$79,995)	1.1%	(2.9%)
City of Santa Cruz	Member	\$956,728	\$891,748	\$886,218	(\$64,980)	(\$70,510)	(6.8%)	(7.4%)
City of Watsonville	Member	\$423,867	\$484,646	\$539,025	\$60,779	\$115,158	14.3%	27.2%
UC Santa Cruz	Member	\$133,215	\$116,315	\$154,423	(\$16,900)	\$21,208	(12.7%)	15.9%
City of Capitola	Member	\$113,839	\$116,315	\$149,761	\$2,476	\$35,922	2.2%	31.6%
City of Scotts Valley	Member	\$96,884	\$116,315	\$145,682	\$19,431	\$48,798	20.1%	50.4%
Central FD	Subscriber	\$328,571	\$267,968	\$248,071	(\$60,603)	(\$80,499)	(18.4%)	(24.5%)
Ben Lomond FD	Subscriber	\$88,714	\$80,390	\$74,421	(\$8,324)	(\$14,293)	(9.4%)	(16.1%)
Boulder Creek FD	Subscriber	\$96,928	\$80,390	\$74,421	(\$16,538)	(\$22,507)	(17.1%)	(23.2%)
Scotts Valley FD	Subscriber	\$87,071	\$93,789	\$86,825	\$6,718	(\$246)	7.7%	(0.3%)
Felton FD	Subscriber	\$73,928	\$66,992	\$62,018	(\$6,936)	(\$11,911)	(9.4%)	(16.1%)
Zayante FD	Subscriber	\$100,214	\$66,992	\$62,018	(\$33,222)	(\$38,196)	(33.2%)	(38.1%)
AMR	Subscriber	\$32,857	\$120,586	\$129,929	\$87,728	\$97,072	267.0%	295.4%
Total		\$5,294,006	\$5,294,006	\$5,294,006	\$0	\$0	0.0%	-

Checks and notes

Model 1 total equals FY30 total in fee schedule (\$5,294,006):

OK

Models 2 and 3 recover the same total as Model 1:

OK

Model 3 air time and the O&M Connection Charge are both calculated from staffing, not radio (unit) counts; the capital Connection Charge remains per radio:

See Airtime and Calc sheets

The Subscriber Connection Contribution is allocated by staffing for Models 2 and 3 (by radio counts for Model 1); the total Contribution pool (\$190,054) is unchanged:

See Calc sheet

Inputs (edit light-blue cells only)

Capital pool paid by Members, FY30 (\$)	\$2,158,566
O&M pool, FY30 (\$)	\$2,945,386
Subscriber Connection Contribution, FY30 (\$)	\$190,054
Model 3: Connection Charge share of each pool	50%

Assumption: 50% recovered per radio (reduced Connection Charge); remainder by air time.

Air time assumption: PTT minutes per staff member per month (relative values drive results)

120	45	60	90	45	20
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Assumption: illustrative, reflecting broadly recognized relative loading by discipline.

Participant	Type	Radio units	Pays capital (1/0)	Pays O&M (1/0)	Pays connection contribution (1/0)	Staffing (est. FTE + volunteers)	Mix: Law enforcement	Mix: Corrections / probation / DA	Mix: Fire	Mix: EMS	Mix: Transit	Mix: Public works / other	Mix check
County of Santa Cruz	Member	1,140	1	1	-	720	45%	20%	0%	0%	0%	35%	100%
City of Santa Cruz	Member	395	1	1	-	230	40%	0%	30%	0%	0%	30%	100%
City of Watsonville	Member	175	1	1	-	125	62%	0%	38%	0%	0%	0%	100%
UC Santa Cruz	Member	55	1	1	-	30	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
City of Capitola	Member	47	1	1	-	30	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
City of Scotts Valley	Member	40	1	1	-	30	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Central FD	Subscriber	200	-	1	1	100	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Ben Lomond FD	Subscriber	54	-	1	1	30	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Boulder Creek FD	Subscriber	59	-	1	1	30	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Scotts Valley FD	Subscriber	53	-	1	1	35	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Felton FD	Subscriber	45	-	1	1	25	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Zayante FD	Subscriber	61	-	1	1	25	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%
AMR	Subscriber	20	-	1	1	45	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%
Total		2,344				1,455							

Notes

Staffing: planning estimates, not agency-verified. Career FTE plus active volunteers/reserves for fire districts. Replace with certified counts.

Mix: assumed share of each participant's radios by discipline, as revised by staff. County = sheriff/corrections/probation/DA plus public works, parks, general services and OES; cities = police, fire (Santa Cruz, Watsonville), public works/utilities/other.

Air time calculation (staffing by discipline x minutes per staff member per month)

Participant	Type	Staff: Law enforcement	Staff: Corrections / probation / DA	Staff: Fire	Staff: EMS	Staff: Transit	Staff: Public works / other	Air time (min/month)	Share of Member air time	Share of O&M-payer air time
County of Santa Cruz	Member	324.0	144.0	-	-	-	252.0	50,400	56.1%	46.4%
City of Santa Cruz	Member	92.0	-	69.0	-	-	69.0	16,560	18.4%	15.2%
City of Watsonville	Member	77.5	-	47.5	-	-	-	12,150	13.5%	11.2%
UC Santa Cruz	Member	30.0	-	-	-	-	-	3,600	4.0%	3.3%
City of Capitola	Member	30.0	-	-	-	-	-	3,600	4.0%	3.3%
City of Scotts Valley	Member	30.0	-	-	-	-	-	3,600	4.0%	3.3%
Central FD	Subscriber	-	-	100.0	-	-	-	6,000	-	5.5%
Ben Lomond FD	Subscriber	-	-	30.0	-	-	-	1,800	-	1.7%
Boulder Creek FD	Subscriber	-	-	30.0	-	-	-	1,800	-	1.7%
Scotts Valley FD	Subscriber	-	-	35.0	-	-	-	2,100	-	1.9%
Felton FD	Subscriber	-	-	25.0	-	-	-	1,500	-	1.4%
Zayante FD	Subscriber	-	-	25.0	-	-	-	1,500	-	1.4%
AMR	Subscriber	-	-	-	45.0	-	-	4,050	-	3.7%
Total		584	144	362	45	-	321	108,660	100.0%	100.0%

Component calculations by model (FY30, \$)

Participant	Type	M1 Capital	M1 O&M	M1 Contribution	M1 Total	M2 Capital	M2 O&M	M2 Contribution	M2 Total	M3 Capital: connection	M3 Capital: air time	M3 O&M: connection	M3 O&M: air time	M3 Contribution	M3 Total
County of Santa Cruz	Member	\$1,328,707	\$1,432,483	-	\$2,761,190	\$1,334,050	\$1,457,511	-	\$2,791,560	\$664,354	\$605,004	\$728,755	\$683,082	-	\$2,681,195
City of Santa Cruz	Member	\$460,385	\$496,343	-	\$956,728	\$426,155	\$465,594	-	\$891,748	\$230,193	\$198,787	\$232,797	\$224,441	-	\$886,218
City of Watsonville	Member	\$203,968	\$219,899	-	\$423,867	\$231,606	\$253,040	-	\$484,646	\$101,984	\$145,849	\$126,520	\$164,672	-	\$539,025
UC Santa Cruz	Member	\$64,104	\$69,111	-	\$133,215	\$55,585	\$60,730	-	\$116,315	\$32,052	\$43,215	\$30,365	\$48,792	-	\$154,423
City of Capitola	Member	\$54,780	\$59,059	-	\$113,839	\$55,585	\$60,730	-	\$116,315	\$27,390	\$43,215	\$30,365	\$48,792	-	\$149,761
City of Scotts Valley	Member	\$46,621	\$50,263	-	\$96,884	\$55,585	\$60,730	-	\$116,315	\$23,311	\$43,215	\$30,365	\$48,792	-	\$145,682
Central FD	Subscriber	-	\$251,313	\$77,258	\$328,571	-	\$202,432	\$65,536	\$267,968	-	-	\$101,216	\$81,319	\$65,536	\$248,071
Ben Lomond FD	Subscriber	-	\$67,854	\$20,860	\$88,714	-	\$60,730	\$19,661	\$80,390	-	-	\$30,365	\$24,396	\$19,661	\$74,421
Boulder Creek FD	Subscriber	-	\$74,137	\$22,791	\$96,928	-	\$60,730	\$19,661	\$80,390	-	-	\$30,365	\$24,396	\$19,661	\$74,421
Scotts Valley FD	Subscriber	-	\$66,598	\$20,473	\$87,071	-	\$70,851	\$22,938	\$93,789	-	-	\$35,426	\$28,462	\$22,938	\$86,825
Felton FD	Subscriber	-	\$56,545	\$17,383	\$73,928	-	\$50,608	\$16,384	\$66,992	-	-	\$25,304	\$20,330	\$16,384	\$62,018
Zayante FD	Subscriber	-	\$76,650	\$23,564	\$100,214	-	\$50,608	\$16,384	\$66,992	-	-	\$25,304	\$20,330	\$16,384	\$62,018
AMR	Subscriber	-	\$25,131	\$7,726	\$32,857	-	\$91,094	\$29,491	\$120,586	-	-	\$45,547	\$54,891	\$29,491	\$129,929
Total		\$2,158,566	\$2,945,386	\$190,054	\$5,294,006	\$2,158,566	\$2,945,386	\$190,054	\$5,294,006	\$1,079,283	\$1,079,283	\$1,472,693	\$1,472,693	\$190,054	\$5,294,006



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT

701 OCEAN STREET, ROOM 315, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

(831) 454-2030

TAMMIE WEIGL, DIRECTOR

REGIONAL INTEROPERABLE NEXT GENERATION (RING) RADIO SYSTEM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes

Monday, May 11, 2026 1:00pm – 3:00pm Regular Meeting	County Government Center Community Room (Basement) 701 Ocean Street Santa Cruz, CA 95060
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Introductory Items

1. CALL TO ORDER – 1:08 PM

Attendance	Attendee Name
Present	Nicole Coburn, County of Santa Cruz Jamie Goldstein, City of Capitola Matt Huffaker, City of Santa Cruz Mali LaGoe, City of Scotts Valley Tamara Vides, City of Watsonville Steve Walpole, UC Santa Cruz
Absent	Kevin Domby, UC Santa Cruz

2. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

None

3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

1 person addressed the board in chambers

4. ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA (no items)

Regular Agenda

5. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS

None

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

None

7. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Update on potential RING Members and Subscribers
- b. Update on Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and Regional Users Group (RUG)
- c. Update on Funding Opportunities
- d. Update on Land Mobile Radio (LMR) Project Progress
- e. Update on Dispatch Console Progress
- f. Discuss Program Management Expenses

8. ACTION ITEMS

- a. Select Chair and Vice-Chair for Calendar Year 2026

Action:

1. Nominated Nicole Coburn as Chair and Jamie Goldstein as Vice-Chair and approved the use of a rotating schedule for both positions.

Public Comment:

No one addressed the board in chambers

RESULT: **Approved [6 to 0]**

MOTION/SECOND: LaGoe, Huffaker

AYES: Coburn, Goldstein, Huffaker, LaGoe, Vides, Walpole

NAYES: None

ABSTAIN: None

- b. Create Task Force to Explore Joint Powers Authority (JPA) Formation

Action:

1. Approved the creation of a Task Force to explore Joint Powers Authority (JPA) formation and a subcommittee. Participants include Jamie Goldstein and Tamara Vides, with additional participants to be identified at a later date.

Public Comment:

No one addressed the board in chambers

RESULT: **Approved [6 to 0]**

MOTION/SECOND: Huffaker, LaGoe

AYES: Coburn, Goldstein, Huffaker, LaGoe, Vides, Walpole

NAYES: None

ABSTAIN: None

Consent Agenda

Consent items include routine business that does not call for discussion. One roll call vote is taken for all items. Only a Committee Member may pull items from Consent to Regular Agenda. Members of the public must request that a Committee Member pull an item from the Consent Agenda prior to the start of the meeting.

9. No items

Written Correspondence Listing

I. None received

Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at 2:05 PM

Approved: _____
Nicole Coburn, Chair, RING Radio System Executive Committee

Attest: _____
Dalissa Escobar, Clerk of the Board

Date: _____
Note: This set of minutes is scheduled for approval in August 2026.

The County of Santa Cruz does not discriminate based on disability, and no person shall, by reason of a disability, be denied the benefits of its services, programs, or activities. The County Government Center Community Room, located at 701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA, is an accessible facility. If you are a person with a disability and wish to participate in the meeting and require special assistance to participate, please contact the Information Services Department at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting to make arrangements. Persons with disabilities may request a copy of the agenda in an alternative format.