

Why Are Taxpayers Paying for Road Improvements to Accommodate Commercial Trucking Yards South of Yuba City?

While we need commercial trucking to bring goods to our community, is it the responsibility of the taxpayers to pay for road improvements to accommodate commercial truck yards in Sutter County?

A Little Background: Major concerns about the numerous commercial truck yards south of Yuba City have been raised for several years by residents and others in the south area. There are 13 existing truck yards and four potential yards on the east side of Highway 99 between Walnut Avenue and O'Banion Road. There are currently over 1200 trucks in existing yards producing an estimated 167 truck trips a day onto Highway 99.

Starting in 2016, residents and others in the area have expressed concern and frustration over a number of truck yard issues, including safety and environmental, to county officials. To address these concerns county supervisors established a Commercial Trucking Issues Ad-Hoc Committee on August 22, 2017.

While many of the concerns were addressed in a Zoning Code amendment passed by the board on June 11 of this year, there are still major concerns regarding safety and costs being borne by the taxpayers.

So far, the trucking yard owners in the area have paid nothing to help resolve the safety issues. The costs to date include:

- A \$423,355 contract with an outside firm to study safety issues at Oswald Road and Highway 99. That study was authorized on October 9, 2018 and has not yet been completed.
- A \$50,000 cooperative agreement with Caltrans in January 2019 for a project study report.
- Installation of "No Parking" signs on Oswald Road at a cost of \$1200.

- Future improvements and paving on Highway 99 and county roads – costs unknown.
- County staff time to work on this issue for the past several years.

And, it has been recently learned there is a potential county plan to route trucks down Railroad to Barry Road, then to the stop light at Barry Road and Highway 99. Barry School sits on the northeast corner and the fire house is located on the southeast corner of the intersection. Not only would this block firetrucks from responding to emergencies, the truck traffic would pose a real safety risk to the kids, parents and faculty at Barry School.

This entire truck situation presents two important questions:

1. Why are taxpayer funds being spent to accommodate trucking yards without any contribution from truck yard owners/operators?
2. Why is the county accepting applications for additional truck yards and making plans to reroute trucks to Barry Road, and possibly Bogue Road, prior to completion of the \$423,335 traffic study?

Pat Miller, President
Sutter County Taxpayers Association