

TAMC to use eminent domain for rail project

By KELLY NIX

THE TRANSPORTATION Agency for Monterey County this week filed five eminent domain lawsuits against property owners, lien holders, and tenants of property in Salinas, where the agency is seeking to build infrastructure as part of a \$70 million Salinas-to-Gilroy rail project.

TAMC filed the complaints in Monterey County Superior Court against the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency and other businesses and individuals, over the Salinas Rail Extension project. The water agency is listed as a “possible lien holder.”

The TAMC project, which will extend Caltrain passenger rail service from Salinas to Gilroy, with connections to other cities, calls for improvements at the current Salinas train station, including an extension of Lincoln Avenue, train layover

facility and bus facility. The transportation agency is seeking the properties in question so it can commence construction in 2018.

The lawsuits, which follow TAMC’s acquisition of several properties near the Salinas train station, indicate TAMC “is vested by law with the authority to exercise the power of eminent domain for the acquisition of real property,” and requests the agency “be granted immediate possession of the property sought to be condemned.”

TAMC executive director Debbie Hale did not return a message, while pollution control agency general manager Paul Sciuto said the agency was not aware of the complaints.

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