



## Mitigated Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

**State Clearinghouse Number:** 2021050148

**District-County-Route-Post Mile:** 05-MON-183-PM R8.3 to 9.98

**EA/Project Identification:** EA 05-1H650 and Project ID 0516000118

### Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (known as Caltrans) proposes to address structural deficiencies and improve multimodal travel along State Route 183 (locally known as Merritt Street) through the census-designated town of Castroville in Monterey County from post miles R8.3 to 9.98. The project will rehabilitate the pavement, address essential bridge maintenance needs, and improve multimodal features, including transit stops, sidewalks, driveways, and curb ramps. The project will also install new Intelligent Transportation System features and improve aesthetics, bicycle network continuity, and pedestrian safety. More specifically, the project will:

- Rehabilitate, through cold planing and asphalt overlay, the pavement to improve the ride quality and prevent further deterioration.
- Address the maintenance needs of the State Route 183/State Route 156 Separation Bridge (Bridge Number: 44-0185) through concrete spall repair and deck and crack sealing to prevent water intrusion into existing cracks.
- Improve accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act to address deficiencies within the project limits where feasible.
- Reconstruct existing and construct new sidewalks, driveway tie-ins, curb ramps, extended curbs, crosswalks, and pedestrian crossing aids to improve access and connectivity for pedestrian users.
- Construct bus bays and landing areas, reconstruct existing transit stops, and relocate and combine some transit stops to improve access and connectivity for transit users.
- Delineate Class 2 Bike Lanes at select locations to improve access and connectivity for bicycle users.
- Extend the queuing and maneuvering area at the existing shared through lane and right-turn lane at northbound State Route 183 (Merritt Street) and the eastbound State Route 156 on-ramp, construct striped side street splitter islands in the Merritt Street median at Salinas Street and Haro Street, and construct curb tapers on both sides of Merritt Street between Crane Street and Preston Street to improve vehicular operation and movement through the project corridor.
- Replace existing traffic census stations with upgraded systems and install a closed-circuit television camera system on the traffic signals at the State Route

183 (Merritt Street) interchange with State Route 156 to improve collection and reliability of real-time traffic data for traffic management purposes.

- Widen the existing State highway right-of-way and acquire new right-of-way to construct roadway and multimodal access improvements along State Route 183 (Merritt Street).

State Route 183 (Merritt Street) is a conventional highway that serves as the “Main Street” through Castroville. The narrow right-of-way in this older, suburban setting makes it necessary to acquire permanent (or fee) right-of-way to complete sidewalk, curb ramp, and minor operational improvements; and to obtain Temporary Construction Easements for transitions or tie-ins on nearby property. Approximately 81 parcels will be impacted.

## **Determination**

An Initial Study has been prepared by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 5.

On the basis of this study, it is determined that the proposed action with the incorporation of the identified mitigation measures will not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

Incorporation of the following mitigation measures will ensure that the project will have less than significant impacts on aesthetics:

- Provisions for prescriptive clearing and grubbing and grading techniques will preserve existing vegetation in the State Route 183 (Merritt Street) visual environment.
- The type of metal fencing that will replace existing metal beam guardrails to serve as a pedestrian barrier on the eastbound and westbound State Route 156 ramps will be determined and approved by the Caltrans District 5 Landscape Architecture Branch in consultation with the Caltrans District 5 Traffic Safety Branch in consideration of safety, spatial limitations, project budget, and maintenance requirements. Aesthetic style and details such as color and finish will be selected in consultation with Castroville community representatives. This will ensure that overurbanization of the State Route 183 (Merritt Street) visual environment and State Route 156 scenic views do not occur.
- The type and style of all street furniture, including but not limited to benches, bus shelters, trash cans, light fixtures, tree grates, and bicycle racks, built for the project will be determined and approved by the Caltrans District 5 Landscape Architecture Branch in consideration of safety, spatial limitations, project budget, and maintenance requirements. This will ensure that overurbanization of the State Route 183 (Merritt Street) visual environment does not occur.
- Aesthetic treatment of curb extensions, or bulb-outs, will be determined and approved by the Caltrans District 5 Landscape Architecture Branch in consultation with the Caltrans District 5 Traffic Safety Branch in consideration of safety, spatial limitations, project budget, and maintenance requirements. Specific forms, treatments, materials, textures, colors, and finishes will be selected in consultation with the property owner and for consistency with the

Castroville Community Plan and Caltrans Complete Streets Program policy concepts and design guidance. This will ensure that overurbanization of the State Route 183 (Merritt Street) visual environment does not occur.

- Aesthetic treatment of all retaining walls built for the project will be determined and approved by the Caltrans District 5 Landscape Architecture Branch in consultation with the project's Structures Engineer in consideration of safety, spatial limitations, project budget, and maintenance requirements. Specific forms, treatments, materials, textures, colors, and finishes will be selected in consultation with the property owner and for consistency with the Castroville Community Plan and Caltrans Complete Streets Program policy concepts and design guidance. This will ensure that overurbanization of the State Route 183 (Merritt Street) visual environment does not occur.
- Requirements for the regrading and recontouring of all new construction staging areas and other temporary use areas for construction activities to match the surrounding pre-project topography, as much as feasible following construction, will preserve the State Route 183 (Merritt Street) visual environment.
- The replacement of street trees removed by the Build Alternative at a 1 to 1 ratio will preserve the visual experience of pedestrians along Merritt Street and the small-town character of Castroville. Consultation with Castroville community representatives regarding street tree locations and species and any associated hardscape materials will ensure that these features would be consistent with the State Route 183 (Merritt Street) visual environment and the small-town character of Castroville. Determination and approval by the Caltrans District 5 Landscape Architecture Branch will ensure consistency with the Caltrans Complete Streets Program.

Incorporation of the following mitigation measures will ensure that the project will have less than significant impacts on cultural resources:

- Consultation with the property owners and documentation of the pre-construction and post-construction condition of 10701-10709 Merritt Street and 10685 Merritt Street will allow Caltrans to comply with National Park Service Technical Note Number 3 – Protecting a Historic Structure during Adjacent Construction. Comparing pre-construction and post-construction documentation will allow Caltrans to determine if construction-related activities resulted in any unintended or unforeseen damage and to perform any needed repairs according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- To protect historic resources, the curb, gutter, and sidewalk next to 10701-10709 Merritt Street and 10685 Merritt Street will be saw cut and removed without the use of jackhammers. No vibratory rollers will be used within 25 feet of 10701-10709 Merritt Street and 10685 Merritt Street. The construction contractor will use static rollers at these locations with geogrid to assist with lower compaction rates.

Incorporation of the following mitigation measures will ensure that the project will have less than significant impacts on sensitive noise receptors:

- Equipment noise control requirements for equipment shielding, equipment location, the placement of heavy traffic areas, equipment noise abatement, and

nighttime construction will reduce temporary construction noise and vibration outside designated work areas.

- Administrative measures for the notification of surrounding residents and the public in advance of the construction schedule when construction noise and upcoming construction activities would be likely to produce an adverse noise environment will allow the public to make appropriate plans during construction. Taking appropriate steps to alleviate noise-related concerns if complaints are received during the construction process will eliminate or reduce individual noise impacts as they arise.



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June 28, 2021

Date