

CITY OF PORTERVILLE

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE BUTTERFIELD STAGE CORRIDOR PROJECT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Porterville (City) plans to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Butterfield Stage Corridor Project (Project). The public hearing will be held at the City of Porterville - City Hall, in the City Council Chambers, located at 291 North Main Street, Porterville, CA 93257, on Thursday, August 17, 2021, at 6:30 pm. Participation in the meeting will also be available via Zoom, login information for the Zoom call will be included in the agenda packet which will post to the City's website on August 13, 2021.

The Project consists of the development of a transportation facility for non-motorized users to provide safe, improved access to education, retail opportunities, job centers, housing and the city's transit center. The facility will utilize roughly nine miles of former Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) right-of-way now owned by the City between Tea Pot Dome Avenue/Avenue 128 to the south and Avenue 196 in Strathmore to the north. The Project's approximately nine mile area of potential effect and has a width of approximately 100 feet (112 acres total). The facility will consist of a Class 1 non-motorized multi-use path that, within the city limit, would also include amenities such as solar lighting, drought tolerant landscaping, drinking water stations, refuse receptacles, benches, wayfinding, and controlled lighted crossings. The Project would consist of a 12-foot paved path meandering through the width of the ROW in a manner best suited to avoid any irregularities of grade and to provide space for the amenities listed above. The project as proposed would facilitate the achievement of General Plan Implementation Policy PSCF-I-14, to "develop a safe and efficient trail network throughout the City that links parks and other key City destinations." Portions of the path that are outside of city limits, would still include the following amenities: solar lighting, drought tolerant landscaping and trash receptacles.

As part of the former UPRR right-of-way, there was a UPRR bridge which crossed the Tule River immediately west of the Main Street Bridge over the Tule River in the City of Porterville. The bridge was previously burned in a fire and the City had the superstructure removed, however the bridge foundation remains. The remaining substructure consists of a total of four concrete piers and a concrete abutment on the south side of the Tule River. Substructure elements are spaced at intervals of approximately 50-feet, resulting in a total distance of 200-feet between the northernmost pier and the abutment to the south. Based upon this information it appears that the northernmost approximately 130-feet of the railroad bridge consisted of timber trestle that was damaged in a fire and subsequently removed. It is assumed that the new bridge would construct new bridge foundations to support the superstructure instead of using the existing bridge foundations. The primary benefit of this approach is that it allows for removal of the existing piers which are within both the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodways, and placing the new foundations outside of the main channel. To provide the required floodway width for the CVFPB and FEMA, this approach will consist of a three-span prefabricated steel truss with span lengths of 140'. This span configuration minimizes the number of piers within the floodways and potentially mitigations some of the permitting issues.

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared, describing the degree of potential environmental impacts of the Project. The District has assessed the potential environmental impacts of this Project and has determined that they will be less than significant with mitigation. Copies of the Initial Study and proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration are on file and available for public review upon written notice to 291 North Main Street, Porterville, CA 93257. The public review period during which the District will receive comments on the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration will begin on July 16, 2021, and end on August 16, 2021. Comments should be in writing, if possible, and addressed to Dawn Marple at Provost & Pritchard, 130 N. Garden Street, Visalia CA 93291, or at dmarple@ppeng.com.

The site has been reviewed in accordance with Government Code Section 65962.5 and is not listed as a hazardous waste or materials site.