

Notice of Determination

Appendix D

To:
[X] Office of Planning and Research
U.S. Mail: P.O. Box 3044 Sacramento, CA 95812-3044
Street Address: 1400 Tenth St., Rm 113 Sacramento, CA 95814

[X] County Clerk
County of: Merced
Address: 2222 M Street Merced, CA 95340

From:
Public Agency: Merced Association of Governments
Address: 369 West 18th St. Merced, CA 95340

Contact: Meg Prince, Senior Planner
Phone: (209) 769-7679

Lead Agency (if different from above):
Address:

Contact:
Phone:

SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resources Code.

State Clearinghouse Number (if submitted to State Clearinghouse): 2021110289

Project Title: Amendment No. 1 - MCAG 2022 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

Project Applicant: Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG)

Project Location (include county): Merced - Countywide

Project Description: This is being filed for an Addendum PEIR to the 2022 RTP/SCS PEIR, which was certified in August 2022. Project Description for the Addendum PEIR is attached

This is to advise that the Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) has approved the above X(Lead Agency or Responsible Agency)

described project on March 16, 2023 and has made the following determinations regarding the above described project.

- 1. The project [X] will [] will not] have a significant effect on the environment.
2. [X] An Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA. [] A Negative Declaration was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures [X] were [] were not] made a condition of the approval of the project.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan [X] was [] was not] adopted for this project.
5. A statement of Overriding Considerations [X] was [] was not] adopted for this project.
6. Findings [X] were [] were not] made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

This is to certify that the final EIR with comments and responses and record of project approval, or the negative Declaration, is available to the General Public at:

https://www.mcagov.org/364/2022-RTP

Signature (Public Agency): [Signature] Title: Executive Director

Date: March 21, 2023 Date Received for filing at OPR: March 21, 2023

Project Description

The Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) has prepared an amendment to the 2022 Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). The 2022 RTP/SCS, adopted on August 18, 2022 by MCAG, included a list financially constrained improvement projects. Amendment No.1 is required to reflect additional passenger rail projects and revised phasing and modeling for various highway improvement projects. The total net change in funding for the passenger rail projects is \$899 million over the 24-year period or between years 2022 and 2046 specifically related to the cost of new passenger rail projects. The additional cost of these passenger rail projects will be addressed by additional funding including Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP), Senate Bill (SB) 1 (TCEP, TIRCP, Congested Corridors, and other related funds), and other (PTA, SRA, Port and Freight, and other).

The Amendment includes the listing of nineteen (19) regionally significant roadway projects, currently reflected in the 2022 RTP/SCS, includes two new modeled projects, and phasing and open-to-traffic changes to existing projects. Details are presented below.

- ✓ Two new projects:
 1. Bellevue Road Realignment/Reconstruction. This is the replacement of existing roadway facility with a new realignment facility
 2. Mercey Springs Road (SR-165) Widening from Pioneer Road to SR-152 (Pacheco Blvd). This project was previously in the big Tier I projects listing in the adopted RTP/SCS
- ✓ Phasing of existing SR-59 Widening and Mission Avenue Widening projects.
- ✓ Changes to open-to-traffic years.

The total number, location and cost of Tier I highway, bicycle and pedestrian, public transit, and aviation projects do not change from those approved as part of the 2022 RTP/SCS.

Amendment to the 2022 RTP/SCS allows the projects to be programmed into the Regional/Federal Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP/FTIP), making them eligible for funding. While the 2022 RTP/SCS has a long-term time horizon where projects are planned to be implemented, federal and state requirements ensure that the Plan is flexible and responsive in the near term. As a result, the 2022 RTP/SCS is both a long-term transportation plan and a planning tool, which can be refined and modified.

This document prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code 21000 *et seq.*, constitutes an Addendum to the 2022 RTP/SCS Program Environmental Impact Report (2022 RTP/SCS PEIR) prepared and certified on August 18, 2022 for the 2022 RTP/SCS, and proposes that the certified 2022 PEIR together with this Addendum serve as the PEIR for the proposed 2022 RTP/SCS Amendment No.1 (Project). This PEIR Addendum outlines the changes to the Project, as analyzed in the 2022



RTP/SCS PEIR, and evaluates whether those changes, or new information or changed circumstances, would require substantial changes to the impacts identified or mitigation measures proposed in the 2022 RTP/SCS PEIR. The proposed project to amend the 2022 RTP/SCS does not create any new significant adverse environmental impacts outside of the scope of the analyses already contained in the previously certified 2022 RTP/SCS PEIR. Since the current proposed project would not generate any new significant adverse environmental impacts or make any existing significant impacts substantially worse, this Addendum to the 2022 RTP/SCS PEIR has been prepared. The 2022 RTP/SCS and 2022 RTP/SCS PEIR can be found at www.mcagov.org.