

Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
Stonebrook Street Culvert Project

Prepared for:



City of Visalia
315 E. Acequia Ave.
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Prepared by:



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PROJECT INFORMATION

Introduction

This document is the Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration on the potential environmental effects of the proposed Stonebrook Street Culvert Project (Project). The City of Visalia (City) will act as the Lead Agency for this project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines.

Project title

Stonebrook Street Culvert Project

Lead agency name and address

City of Visalia
315 E. Acequia Ave.
Visalia, CA 93291

Contact person and phone number

Brandon Smith, Principal Planner
(559) 713-4359

Project sponsor's name/address

Same as Lead Agency.

Project location

The Project is located in southern Visalia in Tulare County, California. Project construction will occur from the existing portion of S. Stonebrook Street, south of its intersection with W. Caldwell Avenue, and will extend over Packwood Creek to intersect with W. Cameron Avenue. Project implementation will affect approximately 290 linear feet of Packwood Creek. This Project is for the construction of the culvert over Packwood Creek with the associated headwalls and this evaluation does not include construction of roadway improvements. The entire Area of Potential Effect (APE) is approximately 2.0 acres, although the most intensive ground disturbance would occur on approximately 0.6 acres. See Figures 1 and 2 for Project location.

General Plan Designation

Regional Commercial / Commercial Mixed Use, with the portion surrounding Packwood Creek designated as Conservation.

Zoning

Regional Commercial / Mixed Use Commercial, with the portion surrounding Packwood Creek zoned as Quasi-Public.

Project Description

The City of Visalia proposes to construct a culvert over Packwood Creek. The culvert will provide the infrastructure necessary to construct a future north-south roadway between W. Caldwell Avenue and W. Cameron Avenue. The purpose of this Project is to improve vehicle transportation access in the area and the Project was identified in the City's General Plan (2014) and corresponding Environmental Impact Report. Project implementation will affect approximately 290 linear feet of Packwood Creek and will involve widening the channel above and below the culvert, grading within the channel, construction of structures in the creek bed, placement of concrete rip-rap on the creek bed downstream of the culvert, and installation of an erosion control blanket on the upper channel banks upstream and downstream of the proposed culvert. The following structures will be constructed in the creek bed:

- 94 linear feet of 8X12 double box culvert per Caltrans Standard Plan D81;
- 53 linear feet of 13-foot high type "B" wingwalls per Caltrans Standard Plan D84;
- 26 linear feet of 8-foot high type "B" wingwalls per Caltrans Standard Plan D84;
- A concrete headwall structure for erosion control from two (2) pumps with 12" and 15" pipes. This system is a backup for the storm drain ponding basin in the area.

Surrounding Land Uses/Existing Conditions

The land proposed for the extension of S. Stonebrook Street consists of ruderal/developed lands occupied by a portion of a paved pedestrian trail, lined with planted trees and shrubs. The area around Packwood Creek is highly maintained and consists of levees containing irregular seasonal flows and sparse vegetation. Surrounding land uses include commercial businesses and residential homes, with a large vacant parcel to the south of the proposed Project site. The future extension of S. Stonebrook Street will connect W. Caldwell Avenue and W. Cameron Avenue, which are major east-west roadways.

Tiering and Documents Incorporated by Reference

The City has determined that an Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration is the appropriate environmental document for the proposed Project. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15152, the Initial Study is tiered from the City's General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report (State Clearinghouse #2010041078) that was certified in 2014. The General Plan EIR analyzed the general effects of buildout in the Project area, including the construction of Stonebrook Street, to accommodate existing development and projected growth. The tiering of the environmental analysis for the Project allows the Initial Study to rely on the General Plan EIR for: (1) a discussion of general background and setting information for environmental topic areas; (2) overall growth-related issues; (3) issues that were evaluated in sufficient detail in the General Plan EIR, and for which there is not significant new information, a change in circumstances, project changes, or new significant environmental impacts requiring further analysis; and (4) long-term cumulative impacts. The purpose of the Initial Study is to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the Stonebrook Street Culvert Project with respect to the analysis in the General Plan EIR, and to determine what level of additional environmental review, if any, is appropriate. Based on this evaluation, the Project will require a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

This Initial Study refers to and incorporates information from the City's General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report (State Clearinghouse #2010041078) that was certified in 2014. Where relevant environmental information is applicable, it has been noted in this Initial Study. The General Plan Update EIR and associated documents may be examined at the City of Visalia Community Development Department, 315 E. Acequia Avenue, Visalia, CA 93291.

Other Public Agencies Involved

- San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
- California Department of Fish & Wildlife
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- State of California Native American Heritage Commission

Tribal Consultation

A Tribal Cultural Resource (TCR) is defined under Public Resources Code section 21074 as a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of size and scope, sacred place, and object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either included

and that is listed or eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historic Resources or in a local register of historical resources. In addition, the City of Visalia, acting as the Lead Agency, supported by substantial evidence, can choose at its discretion to treat the resource as a TCR. As discussed herein, under Section V, Cultural Resources, criteria (b) and (d), no known archeological resources, ethnographic sites or Native American remains are located on the proposed Project site. As discussed under criterion (b) implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would reduce impacts to unknown archaeological deposits, including TCRs, to a less than significant level. As discussed under criterion (d), compliance with California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 would reduce the likelihood of disturbing or discovering human remains, including those of Native Americans. The City has determined that the proposed Project does not meet the City's criteria to conduct additional Tribal consultation.

Figure 1 – Regional Map

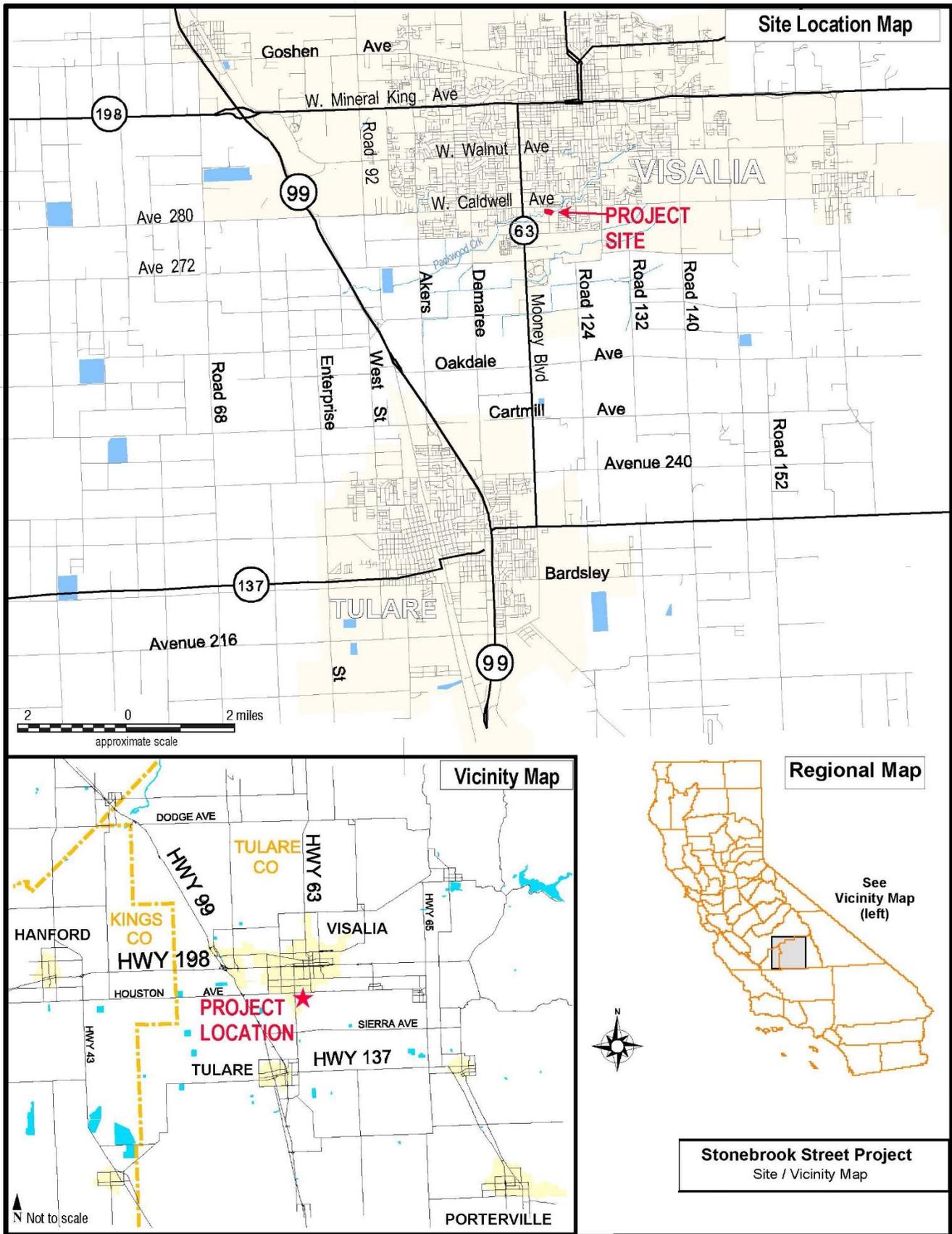


Figure 2 – Project Vicinity Map

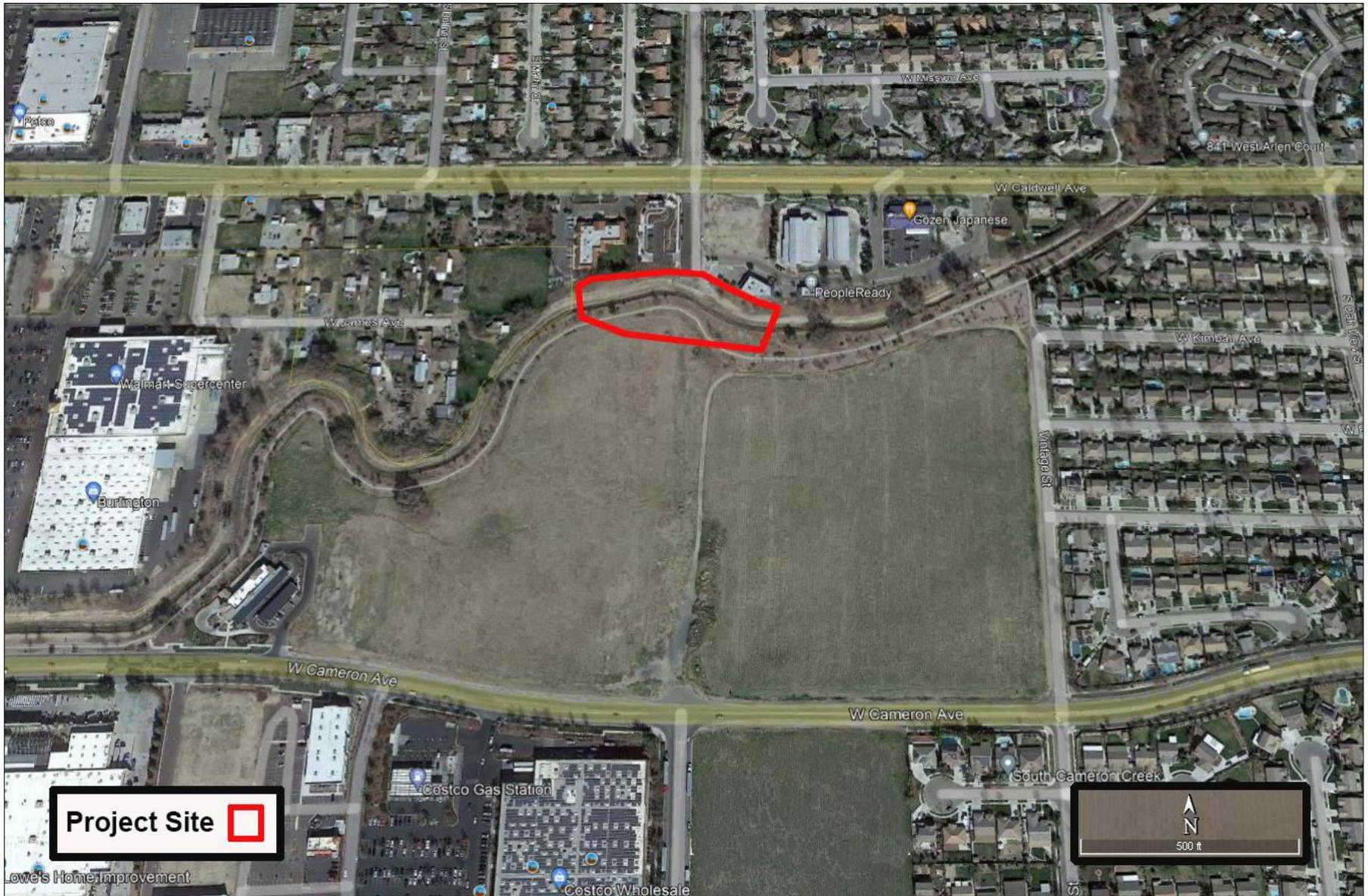


Figure 3 – Project Disturbance Area

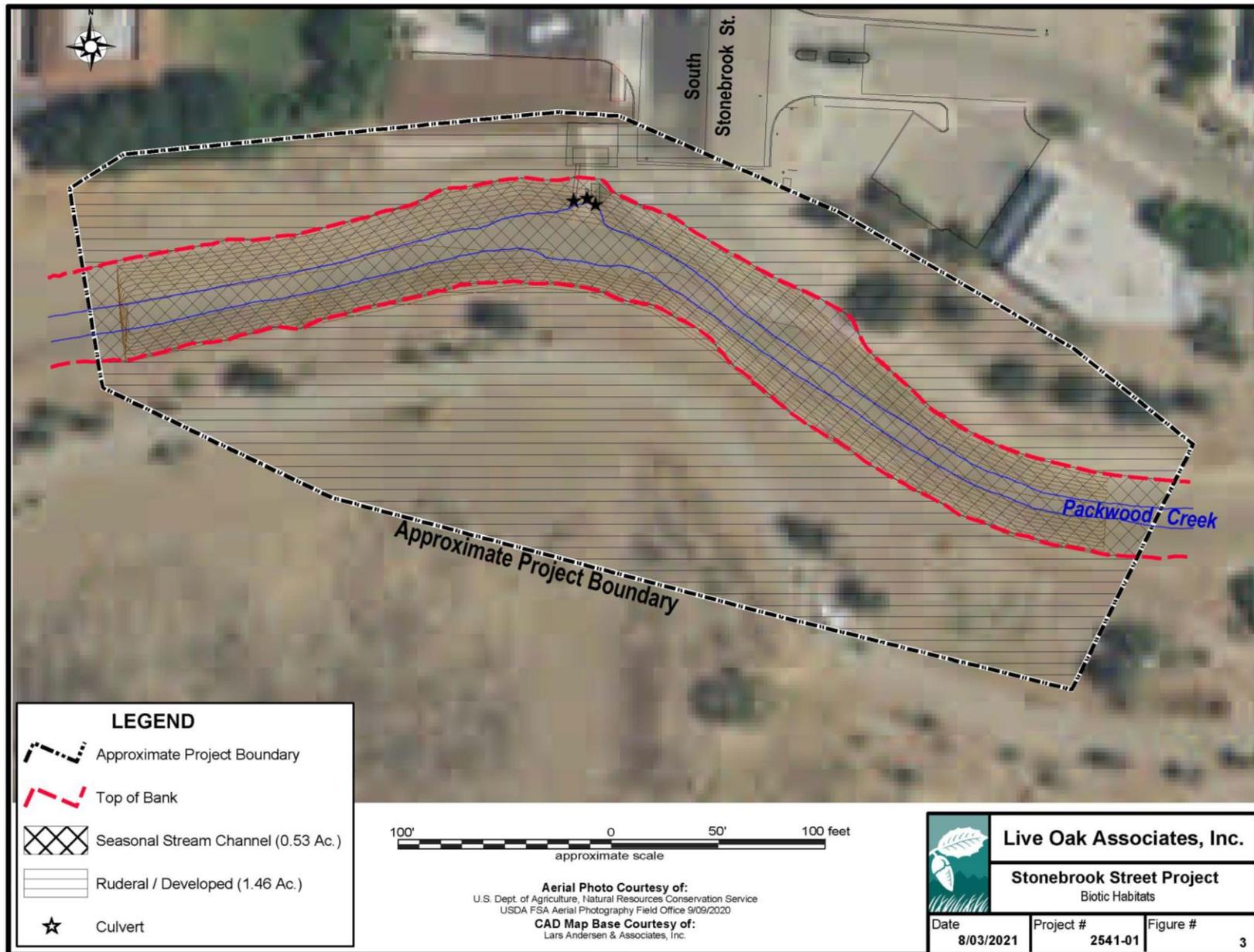
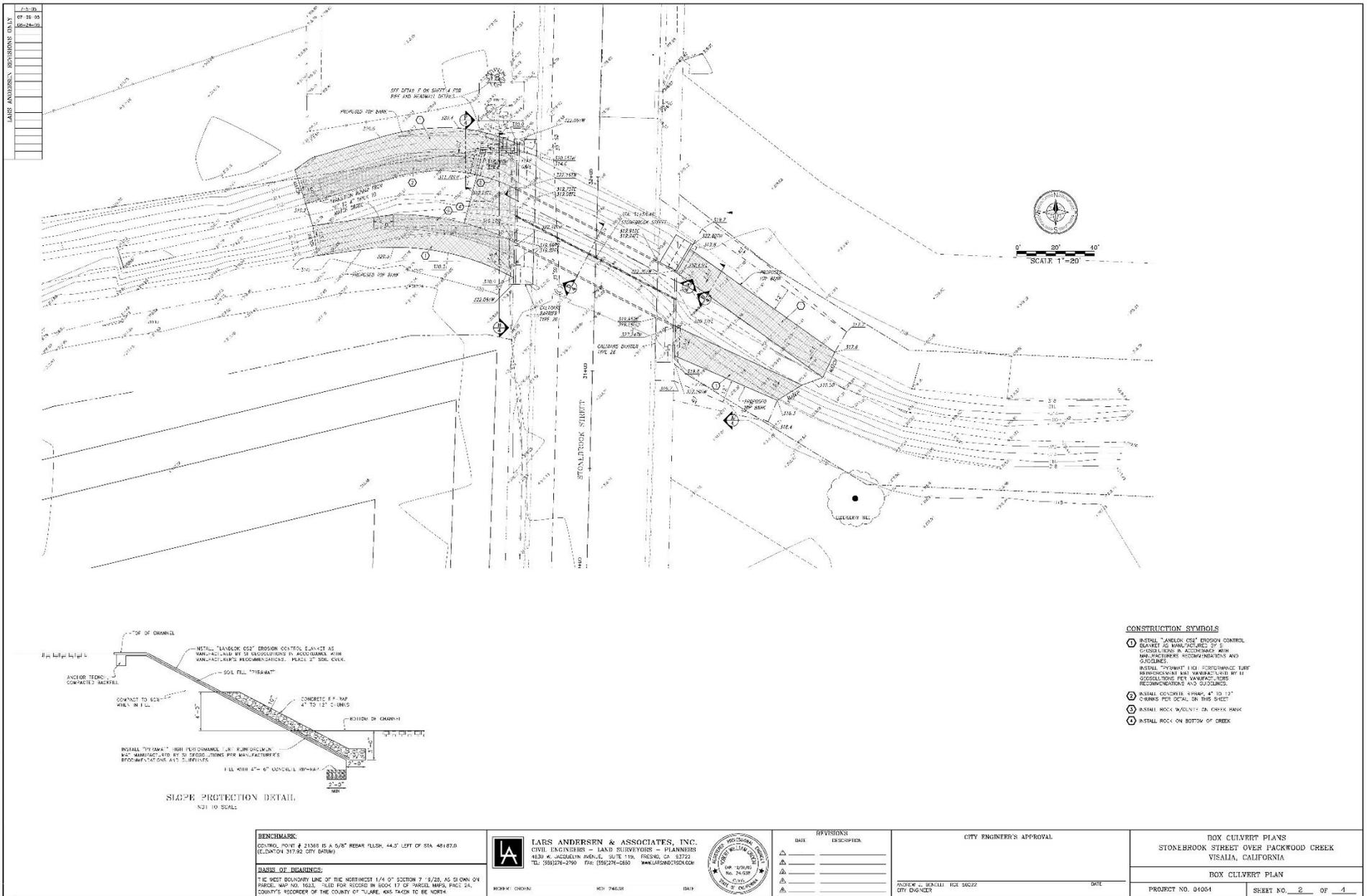


Figure 4 – Project Site Plan



P:\PROJECTS\2024\Stonebrook\Drawings\24-012_Culvert_Plan.dwg

BENCHMARK:
 CONTROL POINT # 21368 IS A 5/8" REBAR TIE-IN, 44.3' LEFT OF STA. 48187.8 (ELEVATION 317.92 CITY DATUM)

BASES OF BEARINGS:
 THE WEST BOUNDARY LINE OF THE NORTHEAST 1/4 OF SECTION 7-9/25, AS SHOWN ON PARCEL MAP NO. 10151, FILED FOR RECORD IN BOOK 17 OF PARCEL MAPS, PAGE 24, COUNTY'S RECORDER OF THE COUNTY OF TULARE, HAS TAKEN TO BE NORTH

LARS ANDERSSON & ASSOCIATES, INC.
 CIVIL ENGINEERS - LAND SURVEYORS - PLANNERS
 4830 N. JOCELEN AVENUE, SUITE 118, FRESNO, CA 93722
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BOOK: 000000 NO: 746508 DATE: 08/20/24

DATE	DESCRIPTION

CITY ENGINEER'S APPROVAL

ANDREW H. HENALI REG. 50022
 CITY ENGINEER

DATE: _____

BOX CULVERT PLANS STONEBROOK STREET OVER PACKWOOD CREEK VISALIA, CALIFORNIA	
BOX CULVERT PLAN	
PROJECT NO. 04054	SHEET NO. 2 OF 4

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this Project, involving at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources
and Forest Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas
Emissions | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards &
Hazardous
Materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water
Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural
Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service
Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory
Findings of
Significance |

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, the project impacts were adequately addressed in an earlier document or there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.



Travis Crawford (Environmental Consultant) on behalf of:

February 7, 2022

Brandon Smith, Principal Planner

Date

City of Visalia

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

I. AESTHETICS

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES

- a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?
- b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?
- c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible

vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and regulations governing scenic quality?

Less than Significant Impact.

Scenic Vistas

A scenic vista is defined as a viewpoint that provides expansive views of highly valued landscape for the benefit of the general public. The Sierra Nevada Mountains are the only natural and visual resource in the Project area. Views of these distant mountains are afforded only during clear conditions due to poor air quality in the valley. Distant views of the Sierra Nevada Mountains would largely be unaffected by the development of the Project because of the nature of the Project (primarily surface-level improvements), distance and limited visibility of these features. The City of Visalia does not identify views of these features as required to be “protected.”

Scenic Highway

The 44-mile stretch of State Route 198 between State Route 99 and Sequoia National Park is classified as eligible for State Scenic Highway status, but is not officially designated. This includes the length of SR 198 within the City’s Planning Area. While the City has not requested official designation, it has evaluated the corridor in the Scenic Highways Element of the existing General Plan and has taken steps to preserve and enhance the corridor’s scenic quality. The main “entrance” to the City is from the west, on Highway 198. Here, agricultural land has been maintained from Plaza Park nearly to Akers Street. The landscape features orchards, fields, and oak trees, and oaks are planted along portions of the roadway itself. As development occurs in the area, a 200-foot conservation buffer will maintain the rural character in that portion of the community.¹ The Project is well outside the 200-foot buffer and there are no other scenic highways in the area that would be impacted by the Project.

Visual Character

Most of the Project components are at ground level and would not impose a significant visual impact, however there are components such as signage and streetlights that could potentially impact the visual character of the surrounding areas. The Project area consists primarily of vacant/disturbed land, recreational trail, and commercial businesses. See photos below:

¹ Visalia General Plan Update EIR (2014), page 3.13-2.



Photo 1: Packwood Creek looking downstream from proposed culvert installation location.



Photo 2: Packwood Creek looking upstream from proposed culvert installation location.



Photo 3: Ruderal/developed area of the site on south side of Packwood Creek.



Photo 4: Ruderal/developed area of the site on north side of Packwood Creek.

Roadway improvements such as those proposed by the Project are typical of City streetscapes and are generally expected from residents of the City. These improvements would not degrade the visual character of the area and would not diminish the visual quality of the area, as they would be consistent with the existing visual setting.

Project construction activities could temporarily impact the visual character of the area, but is not considered significant because the impact is temporary and the contractor must comply with standard construction measures pertaining to maintaining a clean work site both during and after construction.

Light / Glare

The Project may include the installation of street lighting along the proposed extension of S. Stonebrook Street. Nighttime lighting is necessary to provide and maintain safe, secure, and attractive environments; however, these lights have the potential to produce spillover light and glare and waste energy, and if designed incorrectly, could be considered unattractive. Light that falls beyond the intended area is referred to as “light trespass.” Types of light trespass include spillover light and glare. Minimizing all these forms of obtrusive light is an important environmental consideration. A less obtrusive and well-designed energy efficient fixture would face downward, emit the correct intensity of light for the use, and incorporate energy timers.

The increase in lighting would enhance nighttime security for residents and pedestrians in the area and provide safer driving conditions for motorists along the proposed extension of S. Stonebrook Street. The City’s General Plan policies outline standards related to light and glare to reduce impacts from new sources of light. The Project street lights will be designed to adhere to these standards.

Therefore, the Project has a *less than significant impact* on aesthetics.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City’s General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.
2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.

3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

II. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES

- a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?
- b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?
- c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?
- d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?
- e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. The Project site is located in an area of the City that has been developed and is continuing to develop with urban land uses. According to the City's General Plan EIR, there is *Farmland of Local Importance* occurring in the Project area, primarily to the south. However, the area is not designated for agricultural uses and the Project itself is a road and culvert construction project that will not result in the significant loss of agricultural or forest lands, nor would it result in changes to the existing environment that would cause the conversion of farmland or forestland. The Project is intended to improve transportation access between W. Caldwell Avenue and W. Cameron Avenue by implementing the City's General Plan, which identifies the construction of S. Stonebrook Street as a 4-lane collector. As no significant loss or conversion of farmland occurs, there is *no impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City's General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.
2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.

3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

III. AIR QUALITY

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors or adversely affecting a substantial number of people)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES

- a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?
- b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?
- c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed Project lies within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (SJVAB). At the Federal level, the SJVAB is designated as extreme nonattainment for the 8-hour ozone standard, attainment for PM₁₀ and CO, and nonattainment for PM_{2.5}. At the State level, the SJVAB is designated as nonattainment for the 8-hour ozone, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} standards. Although the Federal 1-hour ozone standard was revoked in 2005, areas must still attain this standard, and the SJVAPCD recently requested

an EPA finding that the SJVAB has attained the standard based on 2011-2013 data². To meet Federal Clean Air Act (CAA) requirements, the SJVAPCD has multiple air quality attainment plan (AQAP) documents, including:

- Extreme Ozone Attainment Demonstration Plan (EOADP) for attainment of the 1-hour ozone standard (2004);
- 2007 Ozone Plan for attainment of the 8-hour ozone standard;
- 2007 PM₁₀ Maintenance Plan and Request for Redesignation; and
- 2008 PM_{2.5} Plan.

Because of the region's non-attainment status for ozone, PM_{2.5}, and PM₁₀, if the project-generated emissions of either of the ozone precursor pollutants (ROG or NO_x), PM₁₀, or PM_{2.5} were to exceed the SJVAPCD's significance thresholds, then the project uses would be considered to conflict with the attainment plans. In addition, if the project uses were to result in a change in land use and corresponding increases in vehicle miles traveled, they may result in an increase in vehicle miles traveled that is unaccounted for in regional emissions inventories contained in regional air quality control plans.

The annual significance thresholds to be used for the Project for construction and operational emissions are as follows³:

- 10 tons per year ROG;
- 10 tons per year NO_x;
- 15 tons per year PM₁₀; and
- 15 tons per year PM_{2.5}.

The Project will result in construction emissions as described below.

Short-Term (Construction) Emissions

Site preparation and Project construction would involve excavation, grading, hauling, and various activities needed to construct the Project. During construction, the Project could generate pollutants such as hydrocarbons, oxides of nitrogen, carbon monoxide, and suspended PM. A major source of PM would be windblown dust generated during construction activities. Sources of fugitive dust would include disturbed soils at the construction site and trucks carrying uncovered loads of soils. Vehicles leaving the site could deposit dirt and mud on local streets, which could be an additional source of airborne dust

² San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts. February 19, 2015. Page 28. <https://www.valleyair.org/transportation/GAMAQI-2015/FINAL-DRAFT-GAMAQI.PDF>. Accessed July 2021.

³ San Joaquin Valley Air Control District – Air Quality Threshold of Significance – Criteria Pollutants. <http://www.valleyair.org/transportation/0714-GAMAQI-Criteria-Pollutant-Thresholds-of-Significance.pdf>. Accessed July 2021.

after it dries. PM10 emissions would vary from day to day, depending on the nature and magnitude of construction activity and local weather conditions. PM10 emissions would depend on soil moisture, the silt content of soil, wind speed, and the amount of operating equipment. Larger dust particles would settle near the source, while fine particles would be dispersed over greater distances from the construction site. These emissions would be temporary and limited to the immediate area surrounding the construction site.

The proposed Project construction schedule would last up to twelve months. Emissions were estimated using the *CalEEMod* model, Version 2016.3.2 and assumed a disturbance footprint of up to 2.0 acres. (Note: to provide an overly conservative emission estimate, a construction schedule of 12 months and a disturbance area of 2.0 acres was used for air calculations.). Construction related emissions are shown in Table 1. Refer to Appendix A – Air Emissions Output Table for the full emissions output estimates for construction activities.

**Table 1
Project Construction Emissions in Tons**

Pollutant/ Precursor	Construction Emissions (tpy)	Threshold/ Exceed?
CO	1.36	100/ N
NOx	1.40	10/ N
ROG	0.19	10/ N
SOx	0.01	27/ N
PM₁₀	0.10	15/ N
PM_{2.5}	0.07	15/ N
CO_{2e}	235.78	n/a

As shown in Table 1, construction emissions would be below the SJVAPCD’s threshold for annual construction emissions. However, the SJVAPCD has implemented Regulation VIII measures for dust control related to construction projects, which are applicable to the Project and will be enforced by the City and the City’s contractor.

Long-Term (Operational) Emissions

The Project is being implemented in response to existing and planned growth in the area. An extension of S. Stonebrook Street would provide a major access point to urban areas in southern Visalia and was identified in the City’s General Plan as a future four lane collector. Collectors serve as connectors between local and arterial streets and provide direct access to parcels. The Project itself will improve local roadway operations, but would not generate additional vehicle trips in the area beyond what was already planned for and analyzed in the City’s General Plan EIR. The Project is not therefore considered growth inducing. In addition, there are no stationary source emissions resulting from the Project.

Therefore, the Project would not increase mobile source emissions beyond what was previously analyzed in the City's General Plan EIR and would not otherwise violate any air quality standards or significantly increase any criteria pollutant and will not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Thus, impacts would be *less than significant*.

d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Less Than Significant Impact. During construction, the various diesel and gas powered vehicles and equipment in use on-site could create localized odors. These odors would be temporary and are not likely to be noticeable for extended periods of time beyond the perimeter of the Project site. In addition, once the Project is operational, there would be no new source of odors that result directly from the Project. Therefore, the impact is *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City's General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.
2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.
3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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c. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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- e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

- f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

RESPONSES

Live Oak Associates, Inc. (LOA) was retained to conduct a reconnaissance survey to describe the biotic resources of the proposed Project site and to evaluate potential impacts to those resources that could result from proposed Project development. Field surveys were conducted on April 19 and 21, 2021. The results of these surveys are summarized herein and the full report is included in Appendix B – *Biological Evaluation: Stonebrook Street Culvert Project* (August 2021).

To evaluate whether the Project may affect biological resources under CEQA purview, Live Oak Associates, Inc.: (1) obtained official lists from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife of special-status species and designated and proposed critical habitat, (2) reviewed other relevant background information such as aerial images and topographic maps, and (3) conducted a field reconnaissance survey of the Project site.

Reconnaissance Survey

Field surveys of the project site were conducted on April 19 and 21, 2021 by LOA ecologist Wendy Fisher. These surveys consisted of walking the project site while identifying the principal land uses and associated plant and animal species, and mapping habitat suitable for special status species and other sensitive biological resources. The surveys also included an investigation of hydrologic features potentially subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and/or Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). Vegetation, soils, and hydrology data was collected at representative sample locations in accordance with USACE guidelines.

Reconnaissance Survey Results

The Project site is centered on Packwood Creek, which is a distributary drainage within the Kaweah River Delta that historically drained into the Tulare Lake. This waterway, like the entire Kaweah River Delta, was historically characterized by extensive riparian, wetland, and aquatic ecosystems that supported large populations of diverse native plants and animals. Agricultural diversions and channelization of waterways have eliminated much of the original riparian habitat of this drainage system, and aquatic and wetland habitats have been greatly degraded from agricultural runoff and controlled flows. Tulare Lake has long been drained and converted to farmland and urban uses.

The Project site is relatively level, with the exception of the linear depression associated with Packwood Creek. The elevation of the site is approximately 320 feet National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD). The project site contains one soil mapping unit: 122: Grangeville sandy loam, drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes (467194). Soils of the site have been significantly disturbed by stream channelization and urban and agricultural activities. As a result, the soils of the project site have no particular significance to biological resources potentially occurring on the site.

Two land uses/biotic habitats have been identified on the project site, comprising ruderal/developed and seasonal stream channel (Figure 5 – Appendix B). Both of these land use/biotic habitats have experienced a high level of human disturbance or modification. A list of the vascular plant species observed on the project site and a list of the terrestrial vertebrates using, or potentially using, the site are presented in Appendices A and B, respectively (See Appendix B).

Ruderal/Developed Land

A majority of the Project site contains ruderal/developed lands heavily influenced by human activities. Such areas consisted of a paved trail, landscaping, and disced field. Ruderal/developed areas of the site contained weedy herbaceous vegetation and planted native trees. Herbaceous vegetation consisted of barnyard barley (*Hordeum murinum ssp. leporinum*), ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), puncturevine (*Tribulus terrestris*), lambsquarters (*Chenopodium album*), Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), redstem filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), small-flowered fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*), and London rocket (*Sisymbrium irio*), among others. A single shrub species, blue elderberry (*Sambucus nigra ssp. caerulea*) occurred in this land use area. Trees in this area of the site consisted of medium sized, planted valley oaks (*Quercus lobata*) and California sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*).

Although the wildlife habitat value of ruderal/developed lands within the project site is relatively low, these lands can support some wildlife species. Amphibians such as Sierran treefrogs (*Pseudacris sierra*) and western toads (*Bufo boreas*) may disperse through ruderal/developed lands during the winter and spring. Common reptiles such as the western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*) and Pacific gopher

snake (*Pituophis catenifer catenifer*) could potentially use ruderal/developed areas of the project site. Avian species expected to occur on ruderal/developed lands of the site include mourning doves (*Zenaida macroura*), northern mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottos*), house finches (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), Brewer's blackbirds (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*), California scrub jays (*Apelocoma californica*), and killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*). A killdeer was found nesting within wood chips used as ground cover in a landscaped area during the field survey. Wintering birds such as yellow-rumped warblers (*Setophaga coronata*) and white-crowned sparrows (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) would occur here, as well. Raptors such as the red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) and American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) commonly forage over open areas and may hunt in ruderal/developed areas of the site.

Small mammals that would be expected to occur on ruderal/developed lands of the site include California ground squirrels (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), Botta's pocket gophers (*Thomomys bottae*), California voles (*Microtus californicus*), house mice (*Mus musculus*), and deer mice (*Peromyscus maniculatus*). Mammalian predators with the potential to occur on ruderal lands of the project site include disturbance-tolerant species such as the raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), and coyote (*Canis latrans*).

Seasonal Stream Channel

Packwood Creek traverses the project site from east to west. The stream channel at this location is an earthen trapezoidal channel modified for flood control purposes. The channel showed evidence of recent scraping, presumably to manage vegetation. The stream is seasonally inundated during the spring and summer months. Vegetation within the seasonal channel was sparse during the field survey due to the recent channel scraping. Vegetation, where present, consisted of annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*), rough cocklebur (*Xanthium strumarium*), annual rabbitsfootgrass (*Polypogon monspeliensis*), Jersey cudweed (*Pseudognaphalium luteoalbum*), seep monkeyflower (*Erythranthe guttata*), and tall flatsedge (*Cyperus eragrostis*).

Amphibians such as the Sierran treefrog and western toad could find breeding opportunity in this habitat when water is present in the spring. Reptiles expected to use the seasonal stream channel of the project site would be the same as those expected in ruderal developed areas but limited to periods when the channel is dry. Birds expected to utilize the seasonal stream channel of the project site would include the species discussed for other habitat types, as well as the black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*), and great egret (*Ardea alba*), assuming amphibian and/or invertebrate prey is present. During dry periods, small mammal and mammalian predator species likely to forage or seek cover in the seasonal stream channel would be similar to those expected in ruderal/developed areas of the site.

Desktop Review

LOA searched the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB) and the CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants for records of special status plant and animal species in the Project area (CNDDDB 2021, CNPS 2021). Regional lists of special-status species were compiled using USFWS, CNDDDB, and CNPS database searches in the nine USGS 7.5-minute quadrangles containing and immediately surrounding the project site (Exeter, Visalia, Monson, Ivanhoe, Cairns Corner, Tulare, Traver, Goshen, and Paige). A local list of special-status species was compiled using CNDDDB records from within 3.1 miles of the Project site. Species that lack a special status designation by state or federal regulatory agencies or other groups were omitted from the final list. Species for which the Project site does not provide habitat were eliminated from further consideration. LOA also referenced *California's Wildlife, Volumes I, II, and III* (Zeiner et. al 1988-1990), *California Natural Diversity Data Base* (CDFW 2021), *The Jepson Manual: Vascular Plants of California, second edition* (Baldwin et al 2012), and *The California Native Plant Society's Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California* (CNPS 2021), Calflora.org, eBird.org and other relevant resources in their research.

Significant Determination

Less Than Significant Impact [a.), b.), c.), e.), and f.)], Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporation [d.)] This Project, which could result in permanent impacts to developed and disturbed land cover and a channelized creek, will not: (1) substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species (criterion a) as developed and disturbed land cover is regionally abundant and ubiquitous; (2) cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels (criterion b) as no such potentially vulnerable population is known from the area; (3) threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community (criterion c) as no such potentially vulnerable communities are known from the area; (4) substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal (criterion d) as no such potentially vulnerable species are known from the area; (5) have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS (criterion f) as no impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community are anticipated; (6) have a substantial adverse effect on wetlands (including, but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means (criterion g) as no impacts to wetlands will occur; or (7) conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan (criterion j) as no such plan has been adopted. Thus, these significance criteria are not analyzed further.

The remaining statutorily defined criteria provided the framework for criteria BIO1 through BIO3 below.

These criteria are used to assess the impacts to biological resources stemming from the Project and provide the basis for determinations of significance:

- **Criterion BIO1:** Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS (significance criterion e).
- **Criterion BIO2:** Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites (significance criterion h).
- **Criterion BIO3:** Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance (criterion i).

Criterion BIO1 - Have a Substantial Effect on any Special-Status Species (Criterion BIO1): Eighteen special status vascular plant species are known to occur in the region (see Table 1 – Appendix B). Due to habitat loss or degradation associated with the high level of human disturbance of the project site, the absence of any present or historically suitable habitat, and/or the site being situated outside a particular species' range, none of these species are expected to occur within the project site. Therefore, the proposed project would not affect regional populations of these species and impacts would be *less than significant*.

Of the 17 special status animal species that potentially occur in the project vicinity, 14 are considered absent or unlikely to occur within the project site due to past and ongoing disturbance of the site and surrounding lands, the absence of suitable habitat, and/or the site being situated outside of the species' known distribution. These species include the vernal pool fairy shrimp, vernal pool tadpole shrimp, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, California tiger salamander, western spadefoot, western pond turtle, Northern California legless lizard, western yellow-billed cuckoo, loggerhead shrike, Swainson's hawk, burrowing owl, Tipton kangaroo rat, San Joaquin kit fox, and American badger (see Table 1 of Appendix B). The project does not have the potential to significantly impact these species through construction mortality or loss of habitat because there is little or no likelihood that they are present.

Three special status animals, the tricolored blackbird, pallid bat, and western mastiff bat, have the potential to forage on the site from time to time but would not breed or roost on the site (see Table 1). Potential foraging habitat on the project site is not uniquely important for these species and similar or higher quality foraging habitat is relatively abundant in the region. Moreover, the site is situated in an urban environment not typical of these species' use patterns. These species would not be vulnerable to

construction-related injury or mortality because, even if one or more individuals were to occur on the site during construction, their high level of mobility would allow them to easily evade any danger. For these reasons, project impacts to the tricolored blackbird, pallid bat, and western mastiff bat are considered *less than significant* under CEQA.

Sensitive Natural Communities are absent from the project site. The site's stream channel is confined by a levee, intensely managed, and immediately adjacent to urban development. As a result, the habitat value of the channel is very low, and the stream channel would not meet the definition of a Sensitive Natural Community.

The project is anticipated to result in less than 0.1 acres of permanent impact to Packwood Creek, a water of the State and potential water of the U.S. Such a small-scale impact to a highly modified and maintained seasonal stream is not considered significant under CEQA. However, appropriate permits from the RWQCB, USACE, and CDFW will be required prior to project disturbance of these areas. These consist of the following permits/approvals:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Section 404 (Clean Water Act)
- Regional Water Quality Control Board – Section 401 Water Quality Certification
- California Fish & Wildlife – Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

Criterion BIO2 - Interfere Substantially with Native Wildlife Movements, Corridors, or Nursery Sites:

Packwood Creek within the project site could provide for the movements of some locally occurring, common terrestrial wildlife species when the channel is dry and some locally occurring aquatic species when wet. However, construction of the proposed culvert would not create an insurmountable barrier to wildlife movement as the channel will remain open during construction, and the culverts are large enough to be easily passible by wildlife after construction. Furthermore, open ground and an established trail will remain immediately south of the culvert construction for additional terrestrial wildlife movement. Common locally occurring species are expected to utilize the creek channel in the same manner as before project buildout. Therefore, the project will result in a *less than significant* effect on wildlife movement corridors.

However, the project site contains suitable nesting habitat for a number of avian species protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and related state laws. A killdeer was observed nesting on the ground within the project site during LOA's field investigation. Trees and shrubs on the site offer additional nesting habitat for some bird species adapted to urban environments. If birds were to be nesting on or adjacent to the project site at the time of construction, project-related activities could result

in the abandonment of active nests or direct mortality to these birds. Construction activities that adversely affect the nesting success of migratory birds or raptors, or result in mortality of individual birds constitute a violation of state and federal laws and would be considered a significant impact under CEQA.

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would ensure that the impact to nesting birds remain *less than significant*:

- **Mitigation BIO-1 (Avoidance).** In order to avoid impacts to nesting or migratory birds and raptors, construction will occur, where possible, outside the nesting season, or between September 1 and January 31.
- **Mitigation BIO-2 (Pre-construction Surveys).** If construction must occur during the nesting season (February 1-August 31), a qualified biologist will conduct preconstruction surveys for active migratory bird and raptor nests within 10 days of the onset of these activities. Nest surveys will include all areas on and within 500 feet of the project site, where accessible. Inaccessible areas will be surveyed using binoculars or a spotting scope. If no active nests are found within the survey area, no further mitigation is required.
- **Mitigation BIO-3 (Nest Monitoring).** Should any active nests be discovered in or near proposed construction zones, prior to initiation of construction activities a qualified biologist will conduct a survey to establish a behavioral baseline of all identified nests. Once construction begins, the qualified biologist will continuously monitor nests to detect behavioral changes resulting from the project. If behavioral changes occur, the work causing that change will cease and CDFW will be consulted for additional avoidance and minimization measures.
- **Mitigation BIO-4 (Establish Buffers).** If continuous monitoring of identified nests by a qualified wildlife biologist is not feasible, a minimum no-disturbance buffer of 250 feet around active nests of non-listed bird species and a 500-foot no-disturbance buffer around active nests of non-listed raptors will be established. These buffers will remain in place until the breeding season has ended or until a qualified biologist has determined that the birds have fledged and are no longer reliant upon the nest or parental care for survival. Variance from these no disturbance buffers is possible when there is compelling biological or ecological reason to do so, such as when the construction area would be concealed from a nest site by topography. A qualified wildlife biologist will advise and support any variance from these buffers and notify CDFW in advance of implementing a variance.

Compliance with the above mitigation measures would reduce impacts to nesting raptors and migratory birds to a less than significant level under CEQA and ensure compliance with state and federal law.

Criterion BIO3 - Conflict with any Local Policies or Ordinances Protecting Biological Resources, such as a Tree Preservation Policy or Ordinance: A number of relatively small, planted valley oak trees were identified on the site. These trees appear to be protected by City of Visalia's Oak Tree Mitigation Policy (2007), which was developed pursuant to Visalia Municipal Code. The onsite oaks are outside the development footprint and their removal is not anticipated. As a result, the project is in compliance with City policies pertaining to oaks. Additionally, the project is in compliance with other City policies pertaining to biological resources. No known Habitat Conservation Plans are in effect for the area.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City's General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.
2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.
3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES

- a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?
- b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?
- c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation. Refer to Appendix C - Cultural / Historic Resource Information Memorandum for more information pertaining to this topic.

The Project Area of Potential Effect (APE) is approximately 2-acres and consists of a highly maintained stretch of Packwood Creek that supports irregular seasonal flows and little vegetation, and is confined by levees. The proposed project entails construction of a box culvert over Packwood Creek and the modification of approximately 290 linear feet of the creek channel to accommodate the culvert. The surrounding area is comprised of ruderal/developed lands that contain a stretch of paved recreational trail and planted trees and shrubs. It should be noted that the entire Project APE consists of land that has been previously graded/formed to its current configuration. The heavily developed area has been disturbed through various activities including from housing developments, large retail shopping centers, and intense maintenance of the Packwood Creek channel and surrounding area. These developments required

extensive ground disturbance and grading activities which has left the existing APE void of natural or undisturbed areas.

As part of the City's General Plan Update, a records search was conducted through the California Historical Resources Information System at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center. According to the search, there have been 152 archaeological investigations that had been performed in the City. Seven archaeological resources were identified, however, none are located on or near the Project APE. Due to resource protection concerns, the locations of the seven archaeological resources are not disclosed.⁴

The City maintains a Local Register of Historic Structures, which features approximately 340 buildings, including residential, commercial, civic, and religious structures. These are classified in three categories: exceptional, focus, and background structures. Exceptional structures or sites are those having preeminent historical, cultural, architectural, archaeological, or aesthetic significance, considered candidates for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Currently, four of these buildings have national and State historic designation: the Bank of Italy Building on East Main Street; the U.S. Post Office on West Acequia Avenue; Hyde House on South Court Street; and the Pioneer statue in Mooney Grove Park. None of these are located near the Project APE.

There are no structures that will require demolition for Project implementation to occur. See Figure 2 for the aerial depiction of the Project disturbance area.

Although no other cultural or archaeological resources, paleontological resources or human remains have been identified in the Project area, the possibility exists that such resources or remains may be discovered during Project site preparation, excavation and/or grading activities. Mitigation Measures CUL – 1 and CUL – 2 will be implemented to ensure that Project will result in *less than significant impacts with mitigation*.

Mitigation Measure CUL – 1. Archaeological Resources.

Should evidence of prehistoric archeological resources be discovered during construction, the contractor shall halt all work within 25 feet of the find and the resource shall be evaluated by a qualified archaeologist. If evidence of any archaeological, cultural, and/or historical deposits is found, hand excavation and/or mechanical excavation shall proceed to evaluate the deposits for determination of significance as defined by the CEQA guidelines. The archaeologist shall submit reports, to the satisfaction of the City, describing the testing program and subsequent results.

⁴ Visalia General Plan Update EIR (2014), page 3.12-3.

These reports shall identify any program mitigation that the Project proponent shall complete in order to mitigate archaeological impacts (including resource recovery and/or avoidance testing and analysis, removal, reburial, and curation of archaeological resources).

Mitigation Measure CUL – 2. Human Remains.

In order to ensure that the proposed Project does not impact buried human remains during Project construction, the Project proponent shall be responsible for on-going monitoring of Project construction. Prior to the issuance of any grading permit, the Project proponent shall provide the City with documentation identifying construction personnel that will be responsible for on-site monitoring. If buried human remains are encountered during construction, further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains shall be halted until the Tulare County coroner is contacted and the coroner has made the determinations and notifications required pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. If the coroner determines that Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5(c) require that he give notice to the Native American Heritage Commission, then such notice shall be given within 24 hours, as required by Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5(c). In that event, the NAHC will conduct the notifications required by Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. Until the consultations described below have been completed, the landowner shall further ensure that the immediate vicinity, according to generally accepted cultural or archaeological standards or practices where Native American human remains are located, is not disturbed by further development activity until the landowner has discussed and conferred with the Most Likely Descendants on all reasonable options regarding the descendants' preferences and treatments, as prescribed by Public Resources Code Section 5097.98(b). The NAHC will mediate any disputes regarding treatment of remains in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 5097.94(k). The landowner shall be entitled to exercise rights established by Public Resources Code Section 5097.98(e) if any of the circumstances established by that provision become applicable.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City's General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in

the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.

2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.
3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?
- b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

RESPONSES

- a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?
- b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed Project involves construction of a box culvert over Packwood Creek and the modification of approximately 290 linear feet of the creek channel to accommodate the culvert. During construction, the Project would consume energy in two general forms: (1) the electricity and fuel energy consumed by construction vehicles and equipment; and (2) bound energy in construction materials, such as asphalt, steel, concrete, pipes, and manufactured or processed materials such as lumber and glass. Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards would provide guidance on construction techniques to maximize energy conservation and it is expected that contractors and the Project Sponsors have a strong financial incentive to use recycled materials and products originating from nearby sources in order to reduce materials costs. As such, it is anticipated that materials used in construction and construction vehicle fuel energy would not involve the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy.

Operational Project energy consumption would be minimal, as the box culvert does not require energy once it is installed. Operational energy would also be consumed during each vehicle trip associated with the proposed use for maintenance or otherwise.

As discussed in Impact XVII – Transportation/Traffic, the proposed Project is intended to accommodate existing and projected growth in the area. Adopted federal vehicle fuel standards have continually improved since their original adoption in 1975 and assists in avoiding the inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary use of energy by vehicles.

As discussed previously, the proposed Project would be required to implement and be consistent with existing energy design standards at the local and state level, such as Title 24. The Project would also be subject to energy conservation requirements in the California Energy Code and CALGreen. Adherence to state code requirements would ensure that the Project would not result in wasteful and inefficient use of non-renewable resources due to building operation.

Therefore, any impacts are *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv. Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the most recently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

adopted Uniform Building Code creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

- e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?
- f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

RESPONSES

- a-i. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.
- a-ii. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?
- a-iii. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
- a-iv. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed Project site is not located in an earthquake fault zone as delineated by the 1972 Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map Act.

Visalia is located in a seismically stable region of the State. No active faults are known to exist in the Planning Area; the major, historically active fault systems—the San Andreas Fault and the Owens Valley Fault Group—are located 75 and 125 miles to the west and east, respectively. As a result, the risk of surface rupture is very low. The City has very little elevation change; therefore, the risk of landslides is minimal. No specific liquefaction hazard areas have been identified in the City’s Planning Area; however

the potential for liquefaction is recognized throughout the San Joaquin Valley in locations where the water table is high. Ground shaking is considered the greatest seismic hazard in the City's Planning Area. Low levels of shaking, with less frequency, would be expected to damage weaker masonry buildings, and very infrequent, large earthquakes could cause strong shaking. Given the distance to major faults, the region is considered to have a relatively low ground shaking hazard.⁵

The Project site is underlain by Grangeville sandy loam, drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes (See Biological Evaluation – Appendix B). The elevation of the Project site is approximately 320 feet National Geodetic Vertical Datum.

The proposed Project involves construction of a box culvert over Packwood Creek and the modification of approximately 290 linear feet of the creek channel to accommodate the culvert. There are no habitable structures or other features associated with the Project that would expose people to substantial seismic-related adverse effects. However, it is anticipated that the proposed Project site would be subject to some ground acceleration and ground shaking associated with seismic activity during its design life. The Project site would be engineered and constructed in strict accordance with the earthquake resistant design requirements contained in the latest edition of the California Building Code (CBC), as well as Title 24 of the California Administrative Code, and therefore would avoid potential seismically induced hazards on planned facilities. The impact of seismic hazards on the Project would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

- b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?
- c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?
- d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the most recently adopted Uniform Building Code creating substantial risks to life or property?

Less than Significant Impact. Construction activities associated with the Project involves some excavation as well as ground preparation work for new pavement and concrete for roadway and curb/gutter/sidewalk. These activities could expose barren soils to sources of wind or water, resulting in

⁵ Visalia General Plan Update EIR (2014), page 3.7-12.

the potential for erosion and sedimentation on and off the Project site. During construction, nuisance flow caused by minor rain could flow off-site. The City and/or contractor would be required to employ appropriate sediment and erosion control BMPs as part of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that would be required in the California National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). In addition, soil erosion and loss of topsoil would be minimized through implementation of the SVJAPCD fugitive dust control measures (See Section III). Once construction is complete, the Project would not result in on-going soil erosion or loss of topsoil. Therefore, there is a *less than significant impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

No Impact. The proposed Project does not include the construction or usage of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. No new septic systems or alternative wastewater disposal systems are proposed and none are required for the Project. There is *no impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Less Than Significant Impact. As identified in the cultural analysis prepared for the Project site, there are no known paleontological resources on or near the site. (See Section V. for more details). Mitigation measures have been added that will protect unknown (buried) resources during construction, including paleontological resources. There are no unique geological features on site or in the area. Therefore, there is a *less than significant impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City's General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in

the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.

2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.
3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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RESPONSES

- a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?
- b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Less Than Significant Impact. Construction of the Project would generate short-term emissions of greenhouse gases. As shown in Table 1, CO2 emissions were determined to be 235.78 tons. If emissions are amortized over a 30-year period to account for their contribution to Project lifetime greenhouse gas emissions, the result is well below the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) presumptive threshold of 25,000 MTCO2e. Construction emissions would therefore have a less than cumulatively considerable contribution to global climate change impacts.

As noted earlier, the Project is being implemented in response to existing and planned growth in the area. Once extended and the box culvert completed, S. Stonebrook Street will provide a major access point to urban areas in southern Visalia. The City’s General Plan identified Stonebrook Street as a future four-lane collector. Collectors serve as connectors between local and arterial streets and provide direct access to parcels. The Project itself will improve local roadway operations, but would not generate additional vehicle trips on Stonebrook Street beyond what was already planned for and analyzed in the City’s General Plan EIR. The Project is not therefore considered growth inducing. Therefore, the Project would not increase mobile source greenhouse gas emissions beyond what was previously analyzed in the City’s General Plan EIR. Because construction of the Project will result in less than significant increases in CO2 emissions, it is therefore not in conflict with any greenhouse gas reducing plans, policies, or regulations. Therefore, there is a *less than significant impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City's General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.
2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.
3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

		Less than Significant		
	Potentially Significant Impact	With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact

response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

- g. Expose people or structures either directly or indirectly to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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RESPONSES

- a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?
- a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Less than Significant Impact. Construction of the Project would require the use and transport of hazardous materials, including fuels, oils, and other chemicals (e.g., paints, lead, adhesives, etc.) typically used during construction. It is likely that these hazardous materials and vehicles would be stored by the contractor(s) on-site during construction activities. Improper use and transportation of hazardous materials could result in accidental releases or spills, potentially posing health risks to workers, the public, and the environment. However, all materials used during construction would be contained, stored, and handled in compliance with applicable standards and regulations established by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). In addition, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) is required for the Project and shall include emergency procedures for incidental hazardous materials releases. The SWPPP also includes Best Management Practices which includes requirements for hazardous materials storage. Therefore, no significant impacts would occur during construction activities.

The use of hazardous materials would be confined to the Project construction period. The Project itself, once constructed, will not contain, use or produce any hazardous materials.

The proposed Project would not create a significant hazard through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, nor would a significant hazard to the public or to the environment through the reasonably foreseeable upset and accidental conditions involving the likely release of hazardous materials

into the environment occur. Therefore, the proposed Project will not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment and any impacts would be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

- c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

No Impact. No schools are located within 0.25 mile of the Project site. This condition precludes the possibility of activities associated with the proposed Project exposing schools within a 0.25-mile radius of the Project site to hazardous materials. As identified in Impacts a. and b. above, the Project would not result in the use or emission of substantial quantities of hazardous materials that would pose a human or environmental health risk. Because of the lack of potential hazardous materials, intervening land uses, and lack of direct impact/access to the school from the Project site, the impact is considered *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

- d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

No Impact. The proposed Project site is not located on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (Geotracker and DTSC Envirostor databases – accessed in July 2021).⁶ There are no hazardous materials sites that impact the Project. As such, *no impacts* would occur that would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

⁶ California Department of Toxic Substances Control. Envirostor Database.

<https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/map/?myaddress=s+stonebrook+street+visalia%2C+ca>. Accessed July 2021.

- e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Visalia Municipal Airport is located approximately 4.8 miles northwest of the Project site. The proposed Project involves construction of a box culvert over Packwood Creek and the modification of approximately 290 linear feet of the creek channel to accommodate the culvert. The Project does not include any above ground structures (other than standard street lighting and railing). The Project will not otherwise conflict with any adopted airport land use plans. Thus, the Project will have *a less than significant impact* on airport safety.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

- f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed Project site will be accessible via the existing roadway, temporary access roads and/or other methods to ensure that emergency access will be maintained throughout construction. The construction contractor will be required to coordinate with the City during construction activities to maintain adequate emergency access. As such, the Project will not interfere with any adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. There is a *less than significant impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

- g. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

No Impact. There are no residences or structures on or near the Project site that would be at increased risk of wildfire due to the Project. There are no wildlands in the area. Once constructed, the road will not create an increased risk of fire. There is *no impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City's General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.
2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.
3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off- site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv. impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES

- a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project has the potential to impact water quality standards and/or waste discharge requirements during construction (temporary impacts) and operation (polluted stormwater runoff due to an increase in impervious surfaces). Impacts are discussed below.

Construction

Although the proposed Project site is relatively small in scale, grading, excavation, removal of vegetation cover, and loading activities associated with construction activities could temporarily increase runoff, erosion, and sedimentation. Construction activities also could result in soil compaction and wind erosion effects that could adversely affect soils and reduce the revegetation potential at construction sites and staging areas.

Three general sources of potential short-term construction-related stormwater pollution associated with the proposed Project are: 1) the handling, storage, and disposal of construction materials containing pollutants; 2) the maintenance and operation of construction equipment; and 3) earth moving activities which, when not controlled, may generate soil erosion and transportation, via storm runoff or mechanical equipment. Generally, routine safety precautions for handling and storing construction materials may effectively mitigate the potential pollution of stormwater by these materials. These same types of common sense, “good housekeeping” procedures can be extended to non-hazardous stormwater pollutants such as sawdust and other solid wastes.

Poorly maintained vehicles and heavy equipment leaking fuel, oil, antifreeze, or other fluids on the construction site are also common sources of stormwater pollution and soil contamination. In addition, grading activities can greatly increase erosion processes. Two general strategies are recommended to prevent construction silt from entering local storm drains. First, erosion control procedures should be implemented for those areas that must be exposed. Secondly, the area should be secured to control offsite migration of pollutants. These Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be required in the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to be prepared prior to commencement of Project construction. When properly designed and implemented, these “good-housekeeping” practices are expected to reduce short-term construction-related impacts to less than significant.

In accordance with the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Program, as discussed in Section 3.5 Geology and Soils, the Project will be required to comply with existing regulatory requirements to prepare a SWPPP designed to control erosion and the loss of topsoil to the extent practicable using BMPs that the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has deemed effective in controlling erosion, sedimentation, runoff during construction activities. The specific controls are subject to the review and approval by the RWQCB and are an existing regulatory requirement.

Operation

The proposed Project would result in a minor amount of new impervious areas associated with the culvert. This will consist of the culvert structure itself, wingwalls and a concrete headwall structure. Total new impervious surface is less than 1/10th of an acre. However, the Project is designed to direct stormwater run-off to the existing storm drain system and will incorporate appropriate pollution prevention and BMPs in accordance with City design standards and RWQCB requirements. The Project would not contribute significantly more runoff or polluted water than produced by the existing roadway and shoulders.

Therefore, the impact is *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

- b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

No Impact. The proposed Project, once operational, will not require on-going use of water and therefore would not affect an aquifer or local water table. Therefore, the Project will have *no impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

- c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:
- i. result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or offsite;
 - ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;
 - iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or
 - iv. impede or redirect flood flows?

Less Than Significant Impact. Packwood Creek traverses the project site from east to west. The stream channel at this location is an earthen trapezoidal channel modified for flood control purposes. The channel showed evidence of recent scraping, presumably to manage vegetation. The stream is seasonally inundated during the spring and summer months.

As identified in Section IV – Biological Resources, the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) has jurisdiction over the bed and bank of natural drainages and lakes according to provisions of Section 1601 and 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code. Activities that may substantially modify such waters through the diversion or obstruction of their natural flow, change or use of any material from their bed or bank, or the deposition of debris require a Notification of Lake or Streambed Alteration. If CDFW determines that the activity may adversely affect fish and wildlife resources, a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement will be prepared. Such an agreement typically stipulates that certain measures will be implemented to protect the habitat values of the lake or drainage in question. Refer to Section IV – Biological Resources for more information pertaining to the required regulatory permits for the Project.

The Project includes minor changes to the existing stormwater drainage pattern of the area through the installation of the box culvert, asphalt, curb, gutter, sidewalks and related improvements. However, stormwater on the existing and proposed impervious surfaces would be collected via the existing drainage system. As described in impact a. above, the Project would not contribute significantly more runoff or polluted water than produced by the existing conditions and drainage patterns in the surrounding area would not be significantly altered. In addition, the Project would not otherwise degrade water quality. Therefore, the Project will have a *less than significant impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

d. In flood hazard, tsunami or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

Less Than Significant Impact. According to Figure 3.6-1 of the City’s General Plan EIR, the Project site is not within a designated flood zone. Additionally, because the Project involves construction of a box culvert and does not include any housing or structures that would be subject to flooding either from a watercourse or from dam inundation, the risk of damage or release of pollutants is minimal. There are no bodies of water near the site that would create a potential risk of hazards from seiche, tsunami or mudflow. Therefore, the impacts are considered to be *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Less than Significant Impact. The Project is required to comply with all rules, regulations and policies pertaining to water quality (see Response a. above). The Project would not otherwise conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan, as the Project does not require on-going use of water (once constructed). Therefore, any impacts are *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City’s General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.
2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.
3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES

- a. Physically divide an established community?
- b. Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the General Plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

No Impact. The Project has no characteristics that would physically divide the City of Visalia. Stonebrook Street currently exists in two short segments; one to the north of the Project site and one to the south. Connecting these portions of roadway via construction of the box culvert will not divide the community. It is intended to improve traffic flow and pedestrian/bicycle access in the surrounding commercial and residential areas. The Project is consistent with the City’s General Plan and there are no plans that the Project conflicts with. Therefore, there is *no impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City’s General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific

environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.

2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.
3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES

- a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?
- b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

No Impact. There are no known mineral resources in the proposed Project area and the site is not included in a State classified mineral resource zones. Therefore, there is *no impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City’s General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.

2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.
3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

XIII. NOISE

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES

- a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?
- b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Less than Significant Impact. The nearest sensitive noise receptors are the existing residential homes located less than one-quarter mile east, southeast and northwest of the Project area. The homes are separated from the proposed culvert area by vacant land and intervening land uses. Both short-term (construction) and long-term (operational) noise impacts are discussed herein.

Short-term (Construction) Noise Impacts

Proposed Project construction related activities will involve temporary noise sources and are anticipated to begin in Year 2022. Typical construction related equipment include graders, trenchers, small tractors and excavators. During the proposed Project construction, noise from construction related activities will contribute to the noise environment in the immediate vicinity. Activities involved in construction will generate maximum noise levels, as indicated in Table 2, ranging from 79 to 91 dBA at a distance of 50 feet, without feasible noise control (e.g., mufflers) and ranging from 75 to 80 dBA at a distance of 50 feet, with feasible noise controls.

Table 2
Typical Construction Noise Levels

Type of Equipment	dBA at 50 ft	
	Without Feasible Noise Control	With Feasible Noise Control
Dozer or Tractor	80	75
Excavator	88	80
Scraper	88	80
Front End Loader	79	75
Backhoe	85	75
Grader	85	75
Truck	91	75

The distinction between short-term construction noise impacts and long-term operational noise impacts is a typical one in both CEQA documents and local noise ordinances, which generally recognize the reality that short-term noise from construction is inevitable and cannot be mitigated beyond a certain level. Thus, local agencies frequently tolerate short-term noise at levels that they would not accept for permanent noise sources. A more severe approach would be impractical and might preclude the kind of construction activities that are to be expected from time to time in urban environments. Most residents of urban areas recognize this reality and expect to hear construction activities on occasion.

8.36.050 of the City's Noise Ordinance addresses construction activities as they pertain to noise. The Project contractor will be required to adhere to hours of construction between 6:00 AM and 7:00 PM Monday through Friday and between 9:00 AM and 7:00 PM on Saturday and Sunday. However, in order to minimize the timeframe of disruption from construction activities (such as lane closures / detours), the contractor may be allowed to perform some work outside of these established hours at the discretion of the City.

Long-term (Operational) Noise Impacts

The Project is being implemented in response to existing and planned growth in the area. Once extended and the box culvert is completed, S. Stonebrook Street will provide a major access point to urban areas in southern Visalia and was identified in the City's General Plan as a future four-lane collector. Collectors serve as connectors between local and arterial streets and provide direct access to parcels. Project itself will improve local roadway operations, but would not generate additional vehicle trips on Stonebrook Street beyond what was already planned for and analyzed in the City's General Plan EIR. The Project is not therefore considered growth inducing and will not result in noise impacts beyond what was previously analyzed in the City's General Plan EIR.

According to the City's General Plan EIR, major noise sources in Visalia are related to roadways, vehicle traffic, and railroad noises. The area of Project construction is located in a developed area near roadways that are heavily travelled (W. Caldwell Avenue, S. Mooney Boulevard). The City's General Plan EIR, does not have projected traffic noise levels for Stonebrook Street because at the time of the document's adoption, this segment of Stonebrook did not exist. However, the Project site is included in the City's Future Noise Contours.⁷ When future development projects are proposed (such as residential or commercial) in areas within the City's Noise Contours, such developments may require sound attenuation measures such as noise barriers.

The Project involves constructing a box culvert over Packwood Creek that will connect a future extension of Stonebrook Street from the Visalia Parkway (Avenue 276) alignment north to Caldwell Avenue. Noise from the Project will be similar to existing conditions and will generally include noise from vehicles.

According to the City's General Plan:

- Except under special conditions, a change in sound level of 1 decibel (dB) cannot be perceived;
- A 3 dB change is considered a just noticeable difference;
- A 5 dB change is required before any noticeable change in community response would be expected. A 5 dB increase is often considered a significant impact; and
- A 10 dB increase is subjectively heard as an approximate doubling in loudness and almost always causes an adverse community response.

⁷ Visalia General Plan EIR, page 3.10-31, Figure 3.10-3.

Due to intervening land uses and distance, Project implementation is not expected to significantly increase noise levels in the area.

The Project is not therefore considered growth inducing and will not result in significant noise impacts beyond what was previously analyzed in the City's General Plan EIR. Therefore, the impact is considered *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

- e. For a project located within an airport land use plan, or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?
- f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Visalia Municipal Airport is located approximately 4.5 miles northwest of the Project site. However, the Project consists of construction of a box culvert and does not include any above ground structures (other than standard street lighting and railing). The Project will not otherwise conflict with any adopted airport land use plans or expose people to excessive airport noise. Thus, the Project will have *a less than significant impact* from airport noise levels.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City's General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.
2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.
3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- a. Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?
- b. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

RESPONSES

- a. Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?
- b. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. There are no new homes associated with the proposed Project and there are no residential structures currently on-site. The Project is being implemented in response to existing and planned growth in the area. Once extended and culvert construction is completed, Stonebrook Street will provide a major access point to urban areas in southern Visalia and was identified in the City’s General Plan as a future four lane collector. Collectors serve as connectors between local and arterial streets and provide direct access to parcels. The Project itself will provide the infrastructure necessary for future construction of Stonebrook Street between W. Caldwell Avenue and W. Cameron Avenue. Future construction of this road segment will improve local roadway operations, but would not generate additional vehicle trips on Stonebrook Street beyond what was already planned for and analyzed in the City’s General Plan EIR. The Project is not therefore considered growth inducing.

The proposed Project will not affect any regional population, housing, or employment projections anticipated by City of Visalia policy documents. Therefore, there is *no impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City's General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.
2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.
3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

		Less than Significant		
Potentially Significant Impact	With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact	

a. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES

a. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?

No Impact. The proposed Project site will continue to be served by the City’s Fire Department. The nearest station is Fire Station 52, located approximately 0.8 miles northwest of the Project site at 2211 W. Whitendale Avenue. No additional fire personnel or equipment is anticipated to be needed, as the site is

already served by the Fire Station and the Project would not require an increase in fire protection services to serve the Project. There is *no impact*.

Police Protection?

No Impact. The proposed Project will continue to be served by the City's Police Department. No additional police personnel or equipment is anticipated to be needed, as the site is already served by the Police Department and the Project would not require an increase in police protection services to serve the Project. There is *no impact*.

Schools?

No Impact. The direct increase in demand for schools is normally associated with new residential projects that bring new families with school-aged children to a region. The proposed Project does not contain any residential uses. The proposed Project, therefore, would not result in an influx of new students in the Project area and is not expected to result in an increased demand upon District resources and would not require the construction of new facilities. There is *no impact*.

Parks?

No Impact. The Project would not result in an increase in demand for parks and recreation facilities because it would not result in an increase in population. There is *no impact*.

Other public facilities?

No Impact. The proposed Project is not growth inducing and is within the land use and growth projections identified in the City's General Plan and other infrastructure studies. The Project, therefore, would not result in increased demand for, or impacts on, other public facilities such as library services. Accordingly, *no impact* would occur.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City's General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in

the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.

2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.
3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

XVI. RECREATION

Would the project:

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <p>a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>b. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

RESPONSES

- a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?
- b. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

No Impact. The Project has no design, construction or operational characteristics that would necessitate the need for new or expanded facilities related to recreational facilities. There is no housing related or population inducing component of the Project. However, the Project is likely to improve pedestrian and bicycle access along the road segment, thereby resulting in improved recreational opportunities. Therefore, there is *no impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

- The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City’s General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental

impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.

2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.
3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION/
TRAFFIC

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES

- a. Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?
- b. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?
- c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?
- d. Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less Than Significant. The proposed construction of the Stonebrook Culvert and the associated improvements was identified in Table 3.2-5 of the City’s General Plan EIR (certified in 2014) as a planned circulation system improvement project in the City. The Project includes constructing a Culvert over Packwood Creek that will connect a future extension of Stonebrook Street from the Visalia Parkway (Avenue 276) alignment north to Caldwell Avenue. Construction of the Culvert will impact

approximately 290 linear feet of Packwood Creek and entail the widening of the channel both upstream and downstream of the culvert, grading within the channel, construction of various structures in the creek bed, the placement of concrete rip-rap and rock and gunite on the channel banks, the placement of rock on the bottom of the creek downstream of the culvert, and the installation of erosion control blanket on the upper channel banks both upstream and downstream of the culvert. The Project is being implemented in response to existing and planned growth in the area in accordance with the City's General Plan. Once extended and the box culvert is completed, Stonebrook Street will provide a major access point to urban areas in southern Visalia and was identified in the City's General Plan as a future four lane collector. Collectors serve as connectors between local and arterial streets and provide direct access to parcels. The Project itself will provide the infrastructure necessary for future construction of Stonebrook Street between W. Caldwell Avenue and W. Cameron Avenue. Future construction of this road segment will improve local roadway operations, but would not generate additional vehicle trips on Stonebrook Street beyond what was already planned for and analyzed in the City's General Plan EIR. The Project is not therefore considered growth inducing and will not result in additional vehicle traffic impacts beyond what was previously analyzed in the City's General Plan EIR.

The Project is in response to growth projected by the City's General Plan and would not generate new vehicle trips in and of itself, therefore it would not result in any new traffic that would exceed the capacity of the street system. Although the Project would not generate new vehicle trips beyond what was analyzed in the City's General Plan EIR, construction of the Project could result in temporary increase in traffic volumes and disruption of traffic flow during construction activities. The Project will likely require lane closures, minor detours and other traffic disrupting activities during construction. However, the Project site will be accessible via the existing roadway, temporary access lanes and/or other methods to ensure that emergency access will be maintained throughout construction. The construction contractor will be required to coordinate with the City during construction activities to maintain adequate emergency access.

Therefore, because the Project is in response to existing and projected development in the area and will not result in additional vehicle traffic impacts beyond what was previously analyzed in the City's General Plan EIR, there is a *less than significant impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City's General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental

impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.

2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.
3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

	Less than Significant		
Potentially Significant Impact	With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact

a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or

ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of the Public Resources Code section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

RESPONSES

- a). Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:
- i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or
 - ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Less than Significant Impact. A Tribal Cultural Resource (TCR) is defined under Public Resources Code section 21074 as a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of size and scope, sacred place, and object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either included and that is listed or eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historic Resources or in a local register of historical resources. In addition, the City of Visalia, acting as the Lead Agency, supported by substantial evidence, can choose at its discretion to treat the resource as a TCR. As discussed herein, under Section V, Cultural Resources, criteria (b) and (d), no known archeological resources, ethnographic sites or Native American remains are located on the proposed Project site. As discussed under criterion (b) implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would reduce impacts to unknown archaeological deposits, including TCRs, to a less than significant level. As discussed under criterion (d), compliance with California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 would reduce the likelihood of disturbing or discovering human remains, including those of Native Americans. The City has determined that the proposed Project does not meet the City's criteria to conduct additional Tribal consultation. Therefore, any impacts to TCR would be considered *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures: No additional measures are required.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES

- a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?
- b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?
- c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?
- d. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?
- e. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Less than Significant Impact. Once operational, the Project will not generate wastewater and therefore does not have the potential to exceed wastewater treatment capacity or requirements of the RWQCB. The Project (once operational) would also not utilize potable water (See Section X – Hydrology & Water Quality for more information pertaining to water use). Since the Project consists of a box culvert and roadway improvements, the Project would not generate solid waste on an on-going basis and therefore would not exceed the capacity of local landfills.

Therefore, the impact is *less than significant*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15152 Findings:

1. The proposed Project (Stonebrook Street construction) was identified and included in the City's General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078) that was certified in 2014. The environmental impacts for this topic were analyzed within the General Plan EIR, but are also being re-examined and updated within this current Initial Study to determine site-specific environmental impacts and because of changes to the CEQA Guidelines and/or changes in the surrounding environmental or regulatory setting that have occurred since the General Plan EIR was certified.
2. Policies and Mitigation Measures from the General Plan EIR addressed Project impacts except where new mitigation is included within this current document.

3. The project site was included within the scope of the City of Visalia General Plan EIR (SCH #2010141078), and cumulative impacts for this topic were adequately addressed in that EIR.

XX. WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

RESPONSES

- a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
- b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?
- c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

- d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

Less Than Significant Impact. Once constructed, the proposed Project will not create an increased risk of fire as there is limited vegetation in the area and the Project itself does not expose people or structures to increased fire risks. Emergency access will be maintained in the area at all times. Therefore, there is a *less than significant impact*.

Mitigation Measures: None are required.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

	Less than Significant		
Potentially Significant Impact	With Mitigation Incorporation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact

a. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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b. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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RESPONSES

a. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict

the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Less than Significant Impact With Mitigation. The analyses of environmental issues contained in this Initial Study indicate that the proposed Project is not expected to have substantial impact on the environment or on any resources identified in the Initial Study. Mitigation measures have been incorporated in the Project to reduce all potentially significant impacts to *less than significant*.

- b. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

Less than Significant Impact. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(i) states that a Lead Agency shall consider whether the cumulative impact of a project is significant and whether the effects of the project are cumulatively considerable. The assessment of the significance of the cumulative effects of a project must, therefore, be conducted in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects. Due to the nature of the Project and consistency with environmental policies, incremental contributions to impacts are considered less than cumulatively considerable. The proposed Project would not contribute substantially to adverse cumulative conditions, or create any substantial indirect impacts (i.e., increase in population could lead to an increased need for housing, increase in traffic, air pollutants, etc.). The impact is *less than significant*.

- c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less than Significant Impact With Mitigation. The analyses of environmental issues contained in this Initial Study indicate that the project is not expected to have substantial impact on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Mitigation measures have been incorporated in the Project to reduce all potentially significant impacts to *less than significant*.

MITIGATION AND MONITORING PROGRAM

This Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) has been formulated based upon the findings of the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the Stonebrook Street Culvert Project. The MMRP lists mitigation measures recommended in the IS/MND for the proposed Project and identifies monitoring and reporting requirements as well as conditions recommended by responsible agencies who commented on the project.

The first column of the Table identifies the mitigation measure. The second column, entitled “Party Responsible for Implementing Mitigation,” names the party responsible for carrying out the required action. The third column, “Implementation Timing,” identifies the time the mitigation measure should be initiated. The fourth column, “Party Responsible for Monitoring,” names the party ultimately responsible for ensuring that the mitigation measure is implemented. The last column will be used by the City to ensure that individual mitigation measures have been monitored.

Mitigation Measure	Party responsible for Implementing Mitigation	Implementation Timing	Party responsible for Monitoring	Verification (name/date)
<p>Mitigation Measure BIO - 1. Avoidance</p> <p>In order to avoid impacts to nesting or migratory birds and raptors, construction will occur, where possible, outside the nesting season, or between September 1 and January 31.</p>	<p>City of Visalia and Construction Contractor</p>	<p>Prior to and during ground disturbance</p>	<p>City of Visalia and Construction Contractor</p>	
<p>Mitigation Measure BIO - 2. Pre-construction Surveys</p> <p>If construction must occur during the nesting season (February 1-August 31), a qualified biologist will conduct preconstruction surveys for active migratory bird and raptor nests within 10 days of the onset of these activities. Nest surveys will include all areas on and within 500 feet of the project site, where accessible. Inaccessible areas will be surveyed using binoculars or a spotting scope. If no active nests are found within the survey area, no further mitigation is required.</p>	<p>City of Visalia and Construction Contractor</p>	<p>Prior to and During Construction</p>	<p>City of Visalia and Construction Contractor</p>	
<p>Mitigation Measure BIO - 3. Nest Monitoring</p> <p>Should any active nests be discovered in or near proposed construction zones, prior to initiation of construction activities a qualified biologist will conduct a survey to establish a behavioral baseline of all identified nests. Once construction begins, the qualified biologist will continuously monitor nests to detect behavioral changes resulting from the project. If behavioral changes occur, the work causing that change will cease and CDFW will be consulted for additional avoidance and minimization measures.</p>	<p>City of Visalia and Construction Contractor</p>	<p>Prior to and During Construction</p>	<p>City of Visalia and Construction Contractor</p>	
<p>Mitigation Measure BIO-4. Establish Buffers</p> <p>If continuous monitoring of identified nests by a qualified wildlife biologist is not feasible, a minimum no-disturbance buffer of 250 feet around active nests of non-listed bird species and a 500-foot no-disturbance buffer around active</p>	<p>City of Visalia and Construction Contractor</p>	<p>Prior to and During Construction</p>	<p>City of Visalia and Construction Contractor</p>	

Mitigation Measure	Party responsible for Implementing Mitigation	Implementation Timing	Party responsible for Monitoring	Verification (name/date)
<p>nests of non-listed raptors will be established. These buffers will remain in place until the breeding season has ended or until a qualified biologist has determined that the birds have fledged and are no longer reliant upon the nest or parental care for survival. Variance from these no disturbance buffers is possible when there is compelling biological or ecological reason to do so, such as when the construction area would be concealed from a nest site by topography. A qualified wildlife biologist will advise and support any variance from these buffers and notify CDFW in advance of implementing a variance.</p>				
<p>Mitigation Measure CUL-1. Archaeological Resources</p> <p>Should evidence of prehistoric archeological resources be discovered during construction, the contractor shall halt all work within 25 feet of the find and the resource shall be evaluated by a qualified archaeologist. If evidence of any archaeological, cultural, and/or historical deposits is found, hand excavation and/or mechanical excavation shall proceed to evaluate the deposits for determination of significance as defined by the CEQA guidelines. The archaeologist shall submit reports, to the satisfaction of the City, describing the testing program and subsequent results. These reports shall identify any program mitigation that the Project proponent shall complete in order to mitigate archaeological impacts (including resource recovery and/or avoidance testing and analysis, removal, reburial, and curation of archaeological resources).</p> <p>Mitigation Measure CUL-2. Human Remains</p>	<p>City of Visalia and Construction Contractor</p>	<p>During Construction</p>	<p>City of Visalia and Construction Contractor</p>	

Mitigation Measure	Party responsible for Implementing Mitigation	Implementation Timing	Party responsible for Monitoring	Verification (name/date)
<p>In order to ensure that the proposed Project does not impact buried human remains during Project construction, the Project proponent shall be responsible for on-going monitoring of Project construction. Prior to the issuance of any grading permit, the Project proponent shall provide the City with documentation identifying construction personnel that will be responsible for on-site monitoring. If buried human remains are encountered during construction, further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains shall be halted until the Tulare County coroner is contacted and the coroner has made the determinations and notifications required pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5. If the coroner determines that Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5(c) require that he give notice to the Native American Heritage Commission, then such notice shall be given within 24 hours, as required by Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5(c). In that event, the NAHC will conduct the notifications required by Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. Until the consultations described below have been completed, the landowner shall further ensure that the immediate vicinity, according to generally accepted cultural or archaeological standards or practices where Native American human remains are located, is not disturbed by further development activity until the landowner has discussed and conferred with the Most Likely Descendants on all reasonable options regarding the descendants' preferences and treatments, as prescribed by Public Resources Code Section 5097.98(b). The NAHC will mediate any disputes regarding treatment of remains in</p>				

Mitigation Measure	Party responsible for Implementing Mitigation	Implementation Timing	Party responsible for Monitoring	Verification (name/date)
<p>accordance with Public Resources Code Section 5097.94(k). The landowner shall be entitled to exercise rights established by Public Resources Code Section 5097.98(e) if any of the circumstances established by that provision become applicable.</p>				

