

Notice of Preparation

Notice of Preparation

To: State Clearinghouse From: City of Los Banos, Department of Public Works
1400 10th Street, #12 411 Madison Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95814 Los Banos, CA 93635
(Address) (Address)

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

City of Los Banos will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an environmental impact report for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials. A copy of the Initial Study (is is not) attached.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

Please send your response to Nirorn Than at the address shown above. We will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

Project Title: Pioneer Road Complete Streets

Project Applicant, if any: N/A

Date: 1/6/2023 Signature: 
Title: Public Works Director/City Engineer
Telephone: 209-827-7056

Reference: California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, and 15375.



CEQA Environmental Checklist

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND

Project Title: Pioneer Road Complete Streets

Lead agency name: City of Los Banos

Address: 411 Madison Avenue
Los Banos, CA 93635

Contact person: Nirorn Than

Phone number: 209-827-7056

Project sponsor's name: City of Los Banos

Address: 411 Madison Avenue,
Los Banos, CA 93635

Project Location: City of Los Banos

General plan description: According to the 2030 City of Los Banos General Plan (General Plan), land uses directly adjacent to the project area include Agriculture/Rural, Civic/Institutional, Commercial, Industrial, Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, and Professional Office (City of Los Banos, 2013).

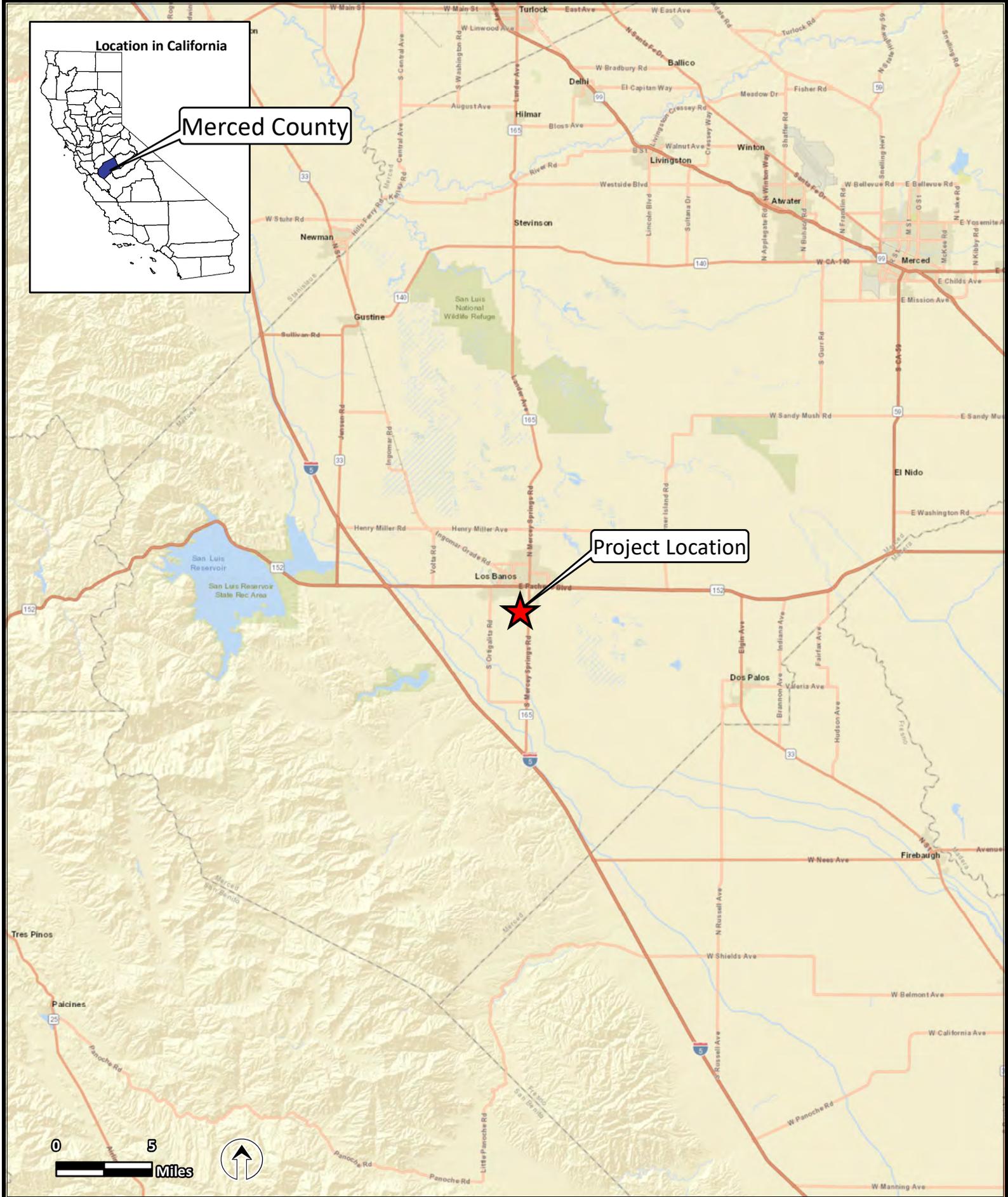
Zoning: Zoning adjacent to the project area includes Low Density Residential, Park, Unclassified District, Open Space, and General Agriculture (Merced County, 2019; City of Los Banos, 2010).

Description of project:

Introduction

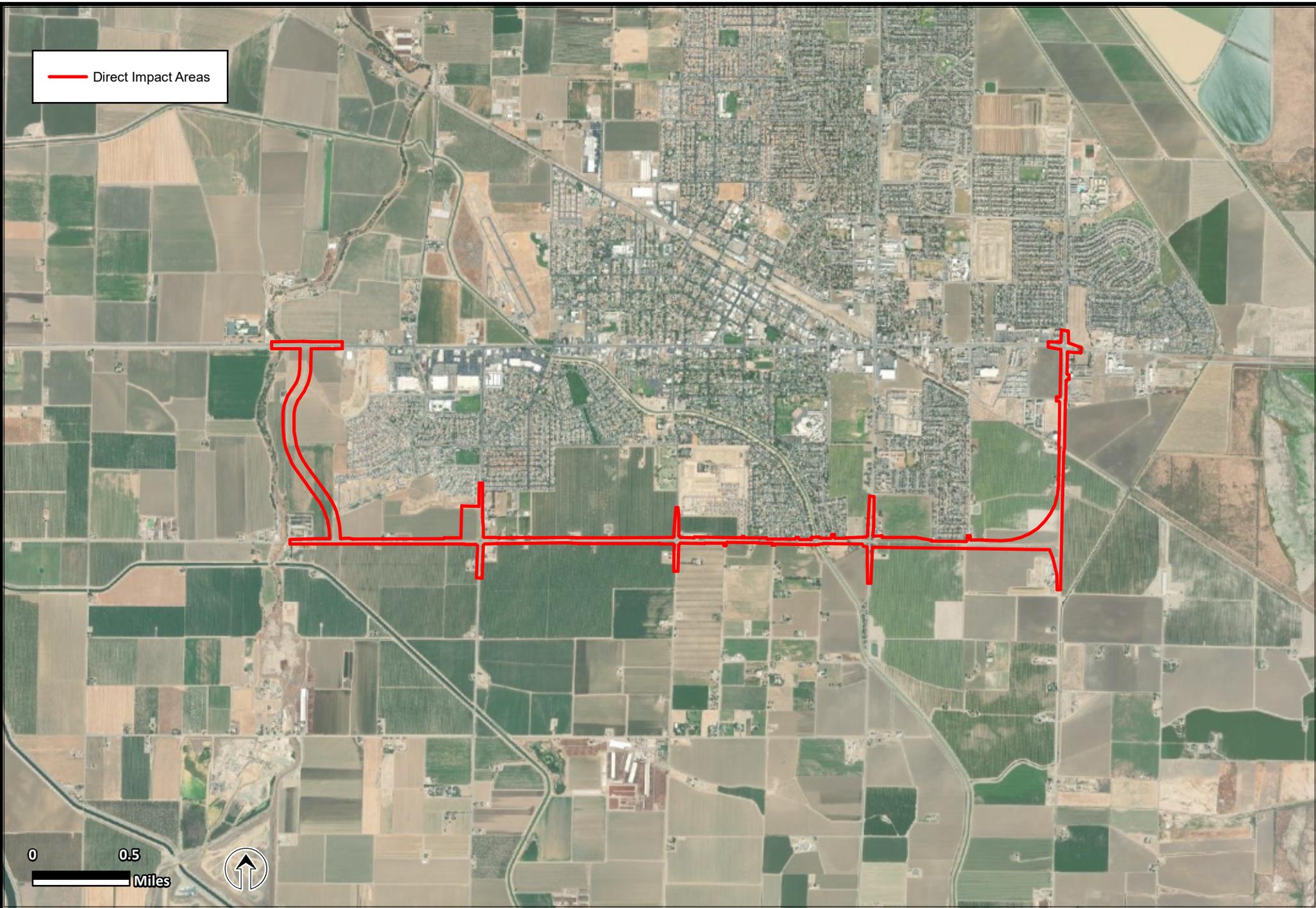
The City of Los Banos (City) proposes to construct an approximately 6.5-mile-long, arterial road with a Class I multi-use path (project). The project is located in the City of Los Banos, in western Merced County (see **Figure 1** Regional Location and **Figure 2** Project Location). The project would include the extension of Pioneer Road to provide a local parallel route to State Route 152 (SR-152), the addition of traffic signals at five intersections, reconstruction of driveways, and a Class I multi-use trail.

The project area would begin at a new signalized intersection on SR-152, approximately 1,700 feet east of the Merced College entrance and east of the Los Banos Creek. From this new intersection, a roadway (preliminarily called East of Creek Road) would be constructed south to connect to an existing segment of Pioneer Road. Project improvements would continue east along the existing Pioneer Road, past SR-165 (Mersey Springs Road). East of SR-165, Pioneer Road would be extended to connect with the existing Ward Road. The project improvements would continue north along Ward Road ending at the existing SR-152/Ward Road signalized intersection.



Sources: ESRI 2020.

**FIGURE 1. REGIONAL LOCATION MAP
Pioneer Road Complete Streets**



**FIGURE 2. PROJECT AREA
Pioneer Road Complete Streets**

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the project is to add, enhance, and improve circulation network choices for local motorists to more efficiently access and leave SR-152. In addition, the project would improve local access and circulation for bicyclists and pedestrians in Los Banos.

The project would address identified operational deficiencies of SR-152 and support the City's Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan. Currently, SR-152 is part of the Interregional Road System and is built to expressway standards, except for the section of SR-152 within the project area which is classified as conventional highway. The existing configuration of SR-152 within the project area operates at a less-than-acceptable level of service (LOS).

Proposed Improvements

The City proposes to construct an approximately 6.5-mile-long, arterial road with a Class I multi-use path in Merced County. The proposed road would begin at a new signalized intersection on SR-152 approximately 1,700 feet east of the Merced College entrance and east of the Los Banos Creek. From this new intersection, East of Creek Road would be constructed south to Pioneer Road. Roadway improvements would then continue east along the existing Pioneer Road past SR-165 (Merced Springs Road). East of SR-165, Pioneer Road would be extended to connect with the existing Ward Road. The project improvements would continue north along Ward Road ending at the existing SR-152/Ward Road signalized intersection.

The entire length of the project would include a 10-foot-wide Class I multi-use trail and the installation of streetlights. Bridge improvements are proposed where Pioneer Road crosses over Main Canal of the Central California Irrigation District (Main Canal).

Improvements would be required on California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) right-of-way (ROW) at the SR-152/East of Creek Road intersection, the SR-152/Ward Road intersection, and the SR-165 (Merced Springs Road)/Pioneer Road intersection. Improvements within Caltrans ROW would be designed to Caltrans Standards. Additional signalized intersections would include the future East of Creek Road/Pioneer Road intersection, Ortigalita Road/Pioneer Road intersection, and Center Road/Pioneer Road intersection. Improvements outside of Caltrans ROW would be designed per City Standards. ROW acquisitions and temporary construction easements (TCEs) would be required to accommodate the proposed improvements. Utilities relocation/removal would potentially be required to accommodate proposed improvements. Excavation to five feet would be needed throughout the project alignment for pavement improvements with deeper excavation needed for the drainage basins, traffic signals, streetlights, and at the Main Canal bridge foundations.

Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required (e.g. permits, financial approval, or participation agreements):

The following permits, reviews, and approvals are anticipated for project construction:

- The project could potentially result in temporary and permanent impacts on waters under jurisdiction of United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE); therefore, a Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 Nationwide Permit would be required.
- The project could potentially result in temporary and permanent impacts on waters under jurisdiction of Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB); therefore, a CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification would be required.
- The project could result in temporary and permanent impacts on waters under jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife; therefore, a California Fish and Game Code Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement is anticipated.

NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION

Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) section 21080.3.1? Yes No

If yes, ensure that consultation and heritage resource confidentiality follow PRC sections 21080.3.1 and 21080.3.2 and California Government Code 65352.4

Note: Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process (See Public Resources Code section 21080.3.2.). Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project. Please see the checklist beginning on Page 8 for additional information.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards and Hazardous Materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources |

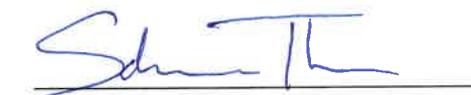
- Noise
- Public Services
- Transportation
- Utilities/Service Systems
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

- Population/Housing
- Recreation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Wildfire

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation (choose one):

- 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, 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 (EIR) 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 EIR 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.

<u>Nirorn Than</u>	<u></u>	<u>1/6/23</u>
Print Name	Signature	Date

CEQA Environmental Checklist

DIST-CO-RTE: 10-Merced County-Route 152
EA/Project No.: EA 10-1M320

PM/PM: n/a

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with the projects indicate no impacts. A NO IMPACT answer in the last column reflects this determination. Where there is a need for clarifying discussion, the discussion is included either following the applicable section of the checklist or is within the body of the environmental document itself. The words "significant" and "significance" used throughout the following checklist are related to CEQA, not NEPA, impacts. The questions in this form are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

AESTHETICS

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	No Impact
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	No Impact
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 a publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact

a). **No Impact.** The General Plan does not identify any scenic vistas in or visible from the project area (City of Los Banos, 2022). Additionally, there are no distinctive landforms surrounding the area. Therefore, there would be no impact related to scenic vistas.

b). **No Impact.** The majority of the project would be located along Pioneer Road. Portions of the project would intersect with SR-152, which has been an officially designated scenic highway since October 25, 1968, from Post Mile (PM) 17.6 to PM 32.5 (California Department of Transportation, 2020a); however, the scenic portion of SR-152 is approximately four miles west of the project and the proposed project would not have an effect on the scenic highway. The project would not be visible from the scenic portion of SR-152 and the scenic portion would not be visible from the project. Therefore, the project would have no impact related to scenic resources.

c). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** The project would introduce new vertical elements at the new and modified intersections located at SR-152. The project would include construction of East of Creek Road on land that is currently used for agriculture. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to changes in visual environment, which would be discussed further in the Visual Impact Assessment and EIR.

d). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** The General Plan Safety and Noise Element has policies related to lighting (City of Los Banos, 2022). The following policy would be applicable to the project:

- LU-P4.14: Require lighting plans for projects proposing exterior lighting. The design review process should be used to evaluate lighting for safety, consistency with dark sky objectives, and potential mitigation to reduce negative impacts on nearby properties.

The project would include constructing a new road and improving an existing road. The existing Pioneer Road does not have overhead streetlights. Improvements would include streetlights along the entire corridor, which would create new sources of lighting. East of Creek Road would also introduce new nighttime light sources from car headlights. However, a lighting plan would be designed in compliance with Policy LU-P4.14 in the General Plan (City of Los Banos, 2022). Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to related to new sources of light, which would be discussed further in the Visual Impact Assessment and EIR.

AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts on agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts on forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact

Question	CEQA Determination
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))?	No Impact
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	No Impact
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?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact

a). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** The project would require conversion of Prime Farmland and Unique Farmland to non-agricultural use (California Department of Conservation, 2016) for the construction of East of Creek Road. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to the conversion of farmland, which would be discussed further in the Farmland Memorandum, AD-1006 form, and EIR.

b). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** The project would require conversion of land zoned as Agriculture to a transportation facility for the construction of East of Creek Road. The construction of this new road would be approximately 6.5 miles in length and require farmland conversion along most of this length in order to widen the roadway. The remaining land would remain zoned for agriculture. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to the conversion of agricultural land, which would be discussed further in the Farmland Memorandum, AD-1006 form, and EIR.

c). **No Impact.** There is no forest or timberland in the project area. Therefore, there would be no impact related to zoning of forest or timberland.

d). **No Impact.** There is no forest land in the project area. Therefore, there would be no impact related to loss of forest land.

e). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** As described in c) and d) above there is no forest land in the project area. Responses a) and b) describe the potential impacts on farmlands. Prime and Unique Farmland would be converted to non-agricultural use and agriculturally zoned land would be converted to transportation facilities. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to farmlands, which would be discussed further in the Farmland Memorandum, AD-1006 form, and EIR.

AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact
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?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact

a). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** The project area is in a rural part of Merced County within the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin (California Air Resources Board, 2014), which is a maintenance area for particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM₁₀), and a non-attainment area for ozone (O₃) and particulate matter 2.5 microns or less (PM_{2.5}) (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2022). Additionally, the project would require concurrence from United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) to confirm that it is not a project of air quality concern (POAQC) and the project would require project level conformity from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

The project would increase roadway capacity during operation which would increase vehicle miles traveled (VMT). An increase in VMT would increase emissions of criteria pollutants. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to an air quality plan, which would be discussed further in the Air Quality Technical Report and EIR.

b). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** Operation of the project could result in a reduction of pollutant emissions, at least in the near-term, due to the reduction of traffic congestion on SR-152 that the project would provide. In the long-term, operation of the project could result in increases in pollutant emissions due to induced traffic through the corridor, which could result in adverse long-term impacts on air quality. Long-term operation of the project may also result in increases in greenhouse gas emissions due to induced traffic through the corridor. Additionally, use of equipment and worker vehicle trips during construction would result in short-term increases of criteria air pollutants from fugitive dust emissions and mobile source emissions, including greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to criteria pollutant emission, which would be discussed further in the Air Quality Technical Report and EIR.

c). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** Sensitive receptors near the project include residents, schools, and parks which are located adjacent to the project. Exhaust generated by off-road, heavy-duty diesel equipment used for construction grading and paving activities would result in short-term, project-generated emissions of diesel particulate matter (DPM). During operation, VMT would increase, which would increase vehicle emissions. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to substantial pollutant

concentrations, which would be discussed further in the Air Quality Technical Report and EIR.

d). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** The project area is located in a rural part of Merced County. Irritating odors are often associated with particulates. Some examples of sources are gasoline and diesel engine exhausts, paint spraying, and street paving. During construction, exhaust emissions from construction equipment, vehicles used to transport materials to and from the site, and worker vehicles could result in potential odor emissions, including volatile organic compounds, carbon monoxide, O₃, nitrogen dioxide, and oxides of sulfur. However, these odors would be temporary and would not affect a substantial amount of people. Following construction, odors from vehicle emissions would be greater than the existing odors emitted prior to project construction. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to odors affecting a substantial number of people, which would be discussed further in the Air Quality Technical Report and EIR.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
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 Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or NOAA Fisheries?	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
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?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	Less Than Significant Impact
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?	No Impact

a). **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** If the proposed project would result in impacts on federally endangered/threatened species or their habitat, Section 7 consultation with the USFWS would be required. If the proposed project would result in take of any state endangered/threatened species, consultation with the CDFW under the California Endangered Species Act would be required.

The CDFW California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), California Native Plant Society (CNPS), and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information and Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system databases were queried for the proposed project. A total of 98 special-status species have been recorded in the overall search area, including the following six federally or state listed threatened or endangered species that have been recorded within five miles of the project area: longhorn fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta longiantenna*), vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus packardii*), giant gartersnake (*Thamnophis gigas*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*), and San Joaquin kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis mutica*) (California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2019). In addition, three species of Special Concern (SSC) have been previously recorded within five miles of the project area, including burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*), and western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*) (California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2019). There is no designated critical habitat for federally endangered or threatened species within the project area. Construction activities including excavating, staging, pedestrian and vehicle movement, and grading could result in direct and indirect impacts on special-status wildlife species.

According to the CNDDDB, CNPS, and USFWS searches, 22 special-status plants have the potential to be in the BSA based on recorded geographical distribution (California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2019). Based on habitat requirements and survey results, there is potential for 13 special-status plant species to be in the BSA. Construction activities including excavating and paving could result in direct and indirect impacts on special-status plant species.

If the potential for any special-status species to be within the project area is identified, avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures would be incorporated into the project design to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate impacts on these species. It is anticipated that with implementation of mitigation measures, the project would have less than significant impacts. Therefore, the project would have less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated related to special status species, which would be discussed further in the Natural Environment Study (NES) and EIR.

b). **Less Than Significant Impacts With Mitigation Incorporated.** A reconnaissance windshield survey of the biological study area (BSA) was conducted on April 17, 2020. Vegetative communities within the project area appear to consist of Agricultural, Ruderal, Cottonwood Riparian Woodland, and Ornamental. These communities, with the exception of the Cottonwood Riparian Woodland, are disturbed due to human activities. The Cottonwood Riparian Woodland community is within the Los Banos Creek and a side drainage adjacent to the creek, which is adjacent to the new signalized intersection and East of Creek Road. Removal of riparian habitat could result in direct and indirect impacts on riparian habitat. It is anticipated that with implementation of mitigation measures, the

project would have less than significant impacts. Therefore, the project would have less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated related to riparian habitats which would be discussed further in the NES and EIR.

c). **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** Based on an aerial imagery search, the USFWS National Wetland Inventory Mapper, and the reconnaissance windshield survey, there are multiple waterways in the project area, including several irrigation ditches, Los Banos Creek, and the Main Canal. The irrigation ditches, canal, and creek are located adjacent to, or cross under, the proposed project area. These waterways may fall under the jurisdiction of the USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW.

If the proposed project would result in impacts on waters under jurisdiction of the USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW, a CWA Section 404 Nationwide Permit Verification from the USACE, CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the RWQCB, and Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the CDFW would be required. However, the project would be designed to comply with the regulatory permits. It is anticipated that with implementation of mitigation measures and compliance of necessary permits, the project would have less than significant impacts. Therefore, the project would have less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated related to state or federally protected wetlands.

d). **Significant and Unavoidable Impacts.** According to the CDFW Biogeographic Information and Observation System Habitat Connectivity Viewer, there are no essential wildlife connectivity areas or natural landscape blocks in the BSA (California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2020). In addition, the project area is not likely used as a regional wildlife movement corridor because the project area and surrounding vicinity are developed with agricultural and residential uses. However, the project area may be used for local wildlife movement and foraging. The new East of Creek Road may inhibit wildlife movement since there was previously no roadway where it is proposed. In addition, the widening of Pioneer Road and an increase of VMT may make crossings for species more difficult. The project would require tree removal and bridge improvements; therefore, bats and migratory birds roosting and foraging may be impacted.

The project may impact nursery sites. Indirect impacts to bats and migratory birds could include noise and vibration, which could result in disturbance and/or roost abandonment. Indirect impacts on native wildlife could include increased noise, vibration, and human activity, which could result in disturbance and den/burrow abandonment. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to migratory or native wildlife, which would be discussed further in the NES and the EIR.

e). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The General Plan Parks, Open Space, and Resources Elements have policies related to biological resources (City of Los Banos, 2022). The following policies would be applicable to the project:

- P-P6.1: Protect species that are federally or state listed as rare, threatened, endangered, or sensitive.

- P-P6.4: Provide wildlife corridors to allow movement of animals and minimize wildlife-urban conflicts.
- P-P6.5: Require project applicants to avoid nests of native birds in active use, in compliance with state and federal regulations. For new development sites where nesting birds may be present, initiate vegetation clearing and construction outside the bird nesting season (March 1 through August 31) or conduct preconstruction surveys by a qualified biologist in advance of any disturbance. If active nests are encountered, establish appropriate buffer zones based on recommendations by the qualified biologist and maintain the buffer zones until any young birds have successfully left the nest.

The proposed project would be designed in compliance with Policies P-P6.1 and P-P6.5. Wildlife corridors may be impacted due to the project. However, the project is included in the General Plan; therefore, impacts to wildlife corridors resulting from the project have been considered and planned for by the City. The project would also comply with Sections 10-1.09 and 10-1.11 of the County’s municipal code which outlines requirements for tree protection and removal. Therefore, the project would have less than significant impacts related to local policies and ordinances.

f). **No Impact.** The proposed project area is not within an approved Habitat Conservation Plan, natural community conservation plan, USFWS vernal pool recovery plan, or a grasslands ecological area. Therefore, the project would result in no impact related to a habitat plan.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to in §15064.5?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	Less Than Significant Impact

a). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** To identify existing conditions related to cultural resources, the project team conducted a records search at the Central California Information Center, analyzed historic USGS topographic maps and historic aerial photography, reviewed county tax assessor parcel data, and reviewed Google Street view imagery for the entirety of the project alignment. There is one known historic property in the project area: the Main Canal. According to the records search results, the Main Canal was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in 2017.

The records search identified several properties in the project area that have been previously evaluated and formally determined ineligible for the NRHP and CRHR by the

SHPO; however, the parcel data, historic maps, and historic aerial photographs indicate that there are other properties in the project area that are over 45 years of age and have not been previously recorded or evaluated as potential historic properties. The Google Street view imagery indicates that some of these unevaluated properties may be exempt under Attachment 4 of the Caltrans Section 106 Programmatic Agreement; however, others would require full evaluation.

The project would include improvements to Pioneer Road over the Main Canal, which would require work within the canal. It is anticipated the project would not diminish the integrity of the property’s location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association or cause an adverse change to the historic property, and work would not have the potential to cause inadvertent physical destruction of or damage to all or part of the historic property. However, further studies would determine if the segment of canal within the APE contains existing historic fabric or if the integrity of the Main Canal would be impacted by the improvements to the bridge. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to cultural resources, which would be discussed further in the Historic Property Survey Report, the Historical Resources Evaluation Report, Finding of Effect, and EIR.

b). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** The project would require excavation and other ground-disturbing activities, including disturbance of some areas that have not been previously disturbed. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to archaeological resources, which would be discussed further in the Archaeological Survey Report and the EIR.

c). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project area is adjacent to the Los Banos Cemetery. Human remains are not anticipated since the project area has been previously disturbed for grading of the existing roadway. However, construction of the project would include ground-disturbing activities that could unearth previously undiscovered human remains interred outside of a formal cemetery, should they be present in the project limits. If any human remains are discovered, all construction activities would cease, and the County Coroner would be contacted. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts on human remains.

ENERGY

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	Less Than Significant Impact

a). **Less Than Significant Impact.** Construction vehicles, worker vehicles, and equipment (e.g., generators) would require the use of fuel (gasoline and diesel); however, energy consumption during construction would be temporary. Project operation would require ongoing energy usage for overhead streetlights and signals at intersections to increase road safety. However, streetlights would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary usage. Therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact on energy resources.

b). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The General Plan Circulation and Parks, Open Space, and Resources Elements have policies related to energy (City of Los Banos, 2022). The following policies would be applicable to the project:

- C-P2.5: Achieve State-mandated reductions in VMT by requiring development and transportation projects to meet specific VMT metrics. In the event a proposed project does not meet these metrics, require measures to reduce the additional VMT associated with the project, consistent with the City’s adopted thresholds.
- P-P11.4: Support federal and State efforts to reduce greenhouse gasses and emissions through local action that will reduce motor vehicle use, support alternative forms of transportation, require energy conservation in new construction, and energy management in public buildings.

The project would improve accessibility to shops, schools, parks, and employment centers. Although, the project would increase total VMT, improvements along Pioneer Road were included in the General Plan and impacts from the project are accounted for. In addition, the project would include multi-modal transportation improvements, which would encourage alternative forms of transportation. Therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact related to local energy plans.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
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.	Less Than Significant Impact
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	Less Than Significant Impact
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	No Impact

Question	CEQA Determination
iv) Landslides?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	Less Than Significant Impact
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?	Less Than Significant Impact
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	Less Than Significant Impact
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
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact

a.i). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The nearest Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault zone is the Ortigalita Fault Zone, located approximately 11 miles west of the project area. The O'Neill Fault Zone, a known fault, is located approximately 5.5 miles west of the project area (California Department of Conservation, 2021). However, the project would be designed to meet current seismic standards. A geotechnical investigation would be conducted to identify the most effective design and materials in reducing potential long-term impacts to the project due to geological hazard. Therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact related to fault zones.

a.ii). **Less Than Significant Impact.** Due to the proximity of the project area to the seismic sources discussed in response a(i) above, ground shaking would be anticipated within the project area in the event of an earthquake from a nearby fault. As discussed in response a(i) the project would be designed to meet current seismic standards and would not increase exposure to existing hazards in the project area. In addition, the project would not increase the chances of seismic ground shaking. Therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact related to seismic ground shaking.

a.iii). **No Impact.** The Los Banos Quadrangle is not mapped as a landslide or liquefaction hazard area by the California Geological Survey (California Department of Conservation, 2021). In addition, the general topography of the project area and surrounding region is flat and not susceptible to landslide or liquefaction. The project would include constructing a 6.5-mile-long, arterial road with a Class I multi-use path. Therefore, the project would have no impact related to seismic-related ground failure.

a.iv). **Less Than Significant Impact.** See discussion response a(i) above.

b). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The following soil units are present in the project area.

- Pedcat Clay Loam, Leveled, 0 to 2 Percent Slopes

- Pedcat Clay Loam, 0 To 2 Percent Slopes
- Stanislaus Clay Loam
- Stanislaus Clay Loam, Wet
- Woo Loam, 0 To 2 Percent Slopes
- Woo Clay Loam, 0 To 2 Percent Slopes
- Woo Loam, Gravelly Substratum, 0 To 2 Percent Slopes
- Woo-Urban Land, 0 To 2 Percent Slopes

According to the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), all soil units have a moderate soil erosion potential (Natural Resources Conservation Service, 2022). In addition, the General Plan identifies the project area as having a low to moderate soil erosion potential. A geotechnical investigation would be conducted to identify the most effective design and materials to reduce potential geological hazards. Therefore, the project would have less than significant impacts related to soil erosion.

c). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The Los Banos Quadrangle is not mapped as a landslide or liquefaction hazard area by the California Geological Survey (California Department of Conservation, 2021). In addition, the general topography of the project area and surrounding region is flat and not susceptible to landslide, liquefaction, lateral spreading, or collapse. The Merced County General Plan Safety Element has identified Los Banos as lying within a general area prone to ground subsidence (City of Los Banos, 2022). A geotechnical investigation would be conducted to identify the most effective design and materials to reduce potential geological hazards. Therefore, the project would have less than significant impacts related to unstable soil.

d). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The soil units in the project area have a moderate to high shrink-swell potential, except for the Woo Loam, Gravelly Substratum, 0 To 2 Percent Slopes soil unit, which has a low shrink-swell potential (Natural Resources Conservation Service, 2022). However, the project would not include the construction of any new property development or habitable structures that could create substantial risks. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property.

e). **No Impact.** The project would not include any uses, features, or facilities that would generate wastewater; it would not include any septic or wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, the project would result in no impact related to the use of septic tanks or wastewater disposal systems.

f). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** According to the California Department of Conservation (CDOC), the sediments that underlie Los Banos are marine and nonmarine sedimentary rocks from the Pleistocene-Holocene age, formed from 2,580,000 years ago up to present day (California Department of Conservation, 2010). Because of the age of these sediments, project-related ground disturbance could potentially encounter paleontological resources. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to paleontological resources, which would be discussed further in the Paleontological Identification Report/Paleontological Evaluation Report and EIR.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact

a). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** Construction equipment would emit greenhouse gases while in use. However, management practices such as the Diesel In-Use Off-Road regulation, which limits idling time to five minutes, would reduce emissions. In addition, the project would result in increased VMT during operation, which would generate greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions, which would be discussed further in the Air Quality Technical Report and EIR.

b). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** The General Plan Circulation and Parks, Open Space, and Resources Elements have policies related to greenhouse gas emissions (City of Los Banos, 2022). The following policies would be applicable to the project:

- C-P2.5: Achieve State-mandated reductions in VMT by requiring development and transportation projects to meet specific VMT metrics. In the event a proposed project does not meet these metrics, require measures to reduce the additional VMT associated with the project, consistent with the City's adopted thresholds.
- P-P11.4: Support federal and State efforts to reduce greenhouse gasses and emissions through local action that will reduce motor vehicle use, support alternative forms of transportation, require energy conservation in new construction, and energy management in public buildings.
- P-P11.8 Use the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Guidelines for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts for determining and mitigating project air quality impacts and related thresholds of significance for use in environmental documents.

The project would improve accessibility to shops, schools, parks, and employment centers. However, the project would increase total VMT, which is inconsistent with Policies C-P2.5 and P-P11.4. In addition, the project would include multi-modal transportation improvements, which would encourage alternative forms of transportation. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to conflicts with applicable plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
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?	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact
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
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 with Mitigation Incorporated
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	Less Than Significant Impact
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	Less Than Significant Impact

a). **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** Project construction would potentially require the transportation, use, and removal of construction materials and waste that could be hazardous. There is yellow (thermoplastic or paint) traffic striping on Pioneer Road and any unpaved surface soils may have aeriially deposited lead (ADL) due to particulate emissions from historical leaded gasoline usage. The removal of yellow (thermoplastic or paint) traffic striping along Pioneer Road could contain hazardous concentrations of lead (Pb) and chromium. Additionally, ADL could present a potential hazardous waste concern. However, it is anticipated that with implementation of mitigation measures, the project would result in a less than significant impact. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts with mitigation related to hazardous waste, which would be discussed further in the Phase I Initial Site Assessment (ISA) and the EIR.

b). **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** See discussion response (a).

c). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** Mercy Springs Elementary School is located approximately 0.01 mile north of the project area. In addition, Merced Community College is adjacent to the project area. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to emissions of hazardous emissions or handling hazardous materials within 0.25 mile of a school, which would be discussed further in the ISA and the EIR.

d). **No Impact.** According to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) GeoTracker database, there is one Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Clean-up site within the project area, located at Merced Roads Yard, 20925 Pioneer Road. However, the clean-up status has been completed, and the case has been closed (State Water Resources Control Board, 2022). Additionally, according to the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), there are no toxic substance sites located within the project area (Department of Toxic Substances Control, 2022). Therefore, the project would result in no impact related to Government Code Section 65962.5 hazardous waste sites.

e). **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** The Los Banos Airport is located approximately one mile northeast of the project area. The predominant source of existing noise in the project area is vehicle traffic along Pioneer Road, SR-152 (Pacheco Boulevard), and local roadways. Noise impacts associated with the project are anticipated to be primarily associated with short-term construction-related activities and operational impacts such as new roadway traffic.

Construction related activities may exceed the Los Banos Airport Land Use Plan noise thresholds (Merced County Airport Land Use Commission, 2012). Noise levels north of Pioneer Road from Center Avenue to approximately 0.65 mile west of the intersection would be designed to comply with a 45 decibel (dB) maximum interior noise level to agree with the Los Banos Airport Land Use Plan noise threshold. During operation, the project would introduce more pedestrians, cyclists, traffic, and motorists to the area which could increase ambient noise levels. However, this increase would not be substantial.

It is anticipated with implementation of mitigation measures the project would result in a less than significant impact. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts with mitigation on excessive noise in an airport land use plan area, which would be discussed further in the Noise Study Report and EIR.

f). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The General Plan Safety and Noise Element has policies related to emergency response plans (City of Los Banos, 2022). The following policy would be applicable to the project:

- S-P4.1: Maintain a five- to six-minute response standard for fire service within a 1.5-mile radius of a fire station.

The project is located 1 mile from the nearest fire station. The project would require lane closures and detours on Pioneer Road, Ward Road, and their intersections, which could interfere with emergency response times. The project could potentially cause traffic and emergency response delays due to road closures during construction. According to the

Merced County Emergency Operations Plan, the project area is not identified as an evacuation route (Merced County, 2007) Traffic delays would not impair the Merced County Emergency Operations Plan since a detour route or traffic handling plan would be prepared (Merced County, 2007; California Department of Transportation, 2020). Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts on emergency response plans, which would be discussed further in the Community Impact Assessment and the EIR.

g). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The General Plan identifies the project area as having a low to moderate wildfire potential (City of Los Banos, 2022). Construction equipment and vehicles would require the use of combustible equipment that could create sparks. The presence of construction equipment and fuel sources could temporarily exacerbate fire risk in the project area. However, BMPs including vegetation maintenance would be implemented to reduce the potential for fire hazards in the project area. In addition, the project area is not within a high-risk fire hazard area and construction impacts would be temporary. Project construction and operation would not introduce a substantial increase for potential for wildland fires or expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires in the area. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to wildland fires.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	Less Than Significant Impact
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:	Less Than Significant Impact
(i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	Less Than Significant Impact
(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	Less Than Significant Impact
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	No Impact
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	No Impact

Question	CEQA Determination
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	Less Than Significant Impact

a). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project area is in the RWQCB Central Valley Region (California Waterboards Central Valley, 2022). Bridge improvements would require work in the Main Canal. During construction, there is potential that exposed soils, construction debris, and other pollutants could enter storm water runoff that discharges into the drainage. BMPs, to the maximum extent practicable, would be in place before and during project construction to avoid or minimize any water quality impacts. This may result in impacts on waters under jurisdiction of the USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW, and a CWA Section 404 Nationwide Permit Verification from the USACE, CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the RWQCB, and Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the CDFW would be required. The project would be conducted in compliance with the applicable permits. Therefore, there would result in less than significant impacts related to water quality standards.

b). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project would increase impervious surface area. However, drainage basins would be included in project design and drainage along all roads would be designed to accommodate surface runoff. Infiltration into the soil may be slower, which would increase evaporation and reduce the amount of water infiltrating the soil. However, this would not substantially impact the amount of groundwater recharged into aquifers. Therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact on groundwater supplies.

c.i). **Less Than Significant Impact.** An increase in impervious surfaces could increase the velocity of storm water drainage, which could result in increased erosion or siltation. However, the project would be designed to reduce erosion and siltation to the maximum extent feasible. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to soil erosion.

c.ii). **Less Than Significant Impact.** There are multiple waterways in the project area, including several irrigation ditches, Los Banos Creek, and the Main Canal. The project would include roadway expansion, which would increase impervious surface areas or result in changes in topography in the project area. These changes could affect existing drainage patterns, or the rate or amount of surface runoff during project operation. However, drainage along all roads would be designed to accommodate the surface runoff and would not exceed the drainage capacity. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to surface runoff, which would be discussed further in the Water Quality Assessment Report and EIR.

c.iii). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project would result in an increase of impervious surface which would increase surface runoff. The increase in impervious surface due to the construction of a new road may create a substantial additional source of polluted runoff from vehicles. However, drainage along all roads would be designed to accommodate the surface runoff and would not exceed the drainage capacity. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to surface runoff, which would be discussed further in the Water Quality Assessment Report and EIR.

c.iv). **No Impact.** According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the project area is located within Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) panels 06047C0825G (effective December 2, 2008) and 06047C0850G (effective December 2, 2008). The project is located within Zone X, which are areas determined to be outside of the 0.2 percent annual chance flood, areas of one percent annual chance flood with average depths of less than one foot, or with drainage areas less than one square mile (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2021). The project area is not within a floodplain and flood flows are not expected. Therefore, the project would result in no impact on flood flow.

d). **No Impact.** See discussion response c(iv) above.

e). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The General Plan Parks, Open Space, and Resources Element have policies related to water quality (City of Los Banos, 2022). The following polices would be applicable to the project:

- P-P9.1: Protect the quality of stormwater that discharges into areas in and around Los Banos.
- P-P9.2: Ensure groundwater quality is maintained at a satisfactory level for domestic consumption.

The project would not conflict with any water quality standards set by the General Plan. The project area is located in the Central Valley RWQCB’s jurisdiction, and in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Valley Basin (Water Quality Control Plan) planning area. The RWQCB’s goal for the Water Quality Control Plan is to support the water quality in the Central Valley Basin (Regional Water Quality Control Board Central Valley Region, 2019). The project would be designed to comply with the RWQCB’ Water Quality Control Plan. Standard BMPs, including erosion control measures, would be incorporated into the project to comply with the RWQCB’s Water Quality Control Plan. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to water quality plans.

LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Physically divide an established community?	Less Than Significant Impact
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?	Less Than Significant Impact

a) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project would include constructing a 6.5-mile-long, arterial road with a Class I multi-use path. Partial or full closures of Pioneer Road during construction may impact access for roadway users and nearby residents. Pioneer Road primarily services the adjacent residential neighborhoods; therefore, road closure could divide an established community temporarily. However, a detour route or traffic handling plan would be prepared. Operation of the project would improve local access

and circulation for bicyclists and pedestrians in the city and would not divide the existing community. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to physically dividing an established community, which would be discussed further in the Land Use Technical Study and EIR.

b). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The land uses directly adjacent to the project area include Agriculture/Rural, Civic/Institutional, Commercial, Industrial, Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, and Professional Office (City of Los Banos, 2013). Additionally, portions of the project area would intersect with SR-152 (Pacheco Boulevard). The project would introduce a 6.5-mile-long, arterial road with a Class I multi-use path. Project improvements along Pioneer Road would require ROW acquisitions from parcels adjacent to the roadway. Improvements along Pioneer Road were included in the General Plan and impacts from project are accounted for. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to a land use plan, policy, or regulation, which would be discussed further in the Land Use Technical Study and EIR.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	No Impact
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

a). **No Impact.** According to the General Plan, there are no known significant mineral resources located within the city. In addition, no mineral resources have been historically exploited or are being currently exploited commercially within the city (City of Los Banos, 2022). Therefore, there would be no impact on mineral resources.

b). **No Impact.** See discussion in response (a) above.

NOISE

Would the project result in:

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact

a). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** The General Plan Safety and Noise Element has policies related to noise. The following policy would be applicable to the project:

- S-P8.2: Require a noise study and mitigation measures for all projects that have noise exposure greater than “normally acceptable” levels based on Table 7-3. Require that new multifamily and single-family housing projects, hotels, and motels exposed to a Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) of 60 dB or greater have a detailed acoustical analysis describing how the project will provide an interior CNEL of 45 dB or less, pursuant to Title 24, Part 2, of the California Code of Regulations. These measures may include, but are not limited to, the following actions:
 - Screen and control noise sources, such as parking and loading facilities, outdoor activities, and mechanical equipment;
 - Increase setbacks for noise sources from adjacent dwellings;
 - Install fences, walls, and landscaping that serve as noise buffers;
 - Use forced-air mechanical ventilation and soundproofing materials and double glazed windows, or a combination thereof; and
 - Control hours of operation, including deliveries and trash pickup, to minimize noise impacts.
- S-P8.4: Discourage sound walls, except along freeways, unless they are needed as a measure of last resort. In all other instances, permit sound walls only upon finding that alternative noise attenuation measures are not available. As an alternative to sound walls, use “quiet pavement,” such as rubberized asphalt or open-grade asphalt concrete overlays. Roadway noise reduction of up to 6-7 dBA compared to conventional asphalt overlay may be possible, but the effective lifespan of such pavement should be considered.
- S-P8.5: Protect especially sensitive uses, including schools, hospitals, and senior care facilities, from excessive noise.
- S-P8.6: Require the use of Best Available Control Technology (BACT) to minimize noise from all stationary sources as well as mobile/temporary sources, such as operation of construction equipment.

Sensitive receptors are located adjacent to the project area, including single-family residential properties, commercial establishments, civic/institutional establishments, and professional office properties. The predominant source of existing noise in the project area is vehicle traffic along Pioneer Road, SR-152 (Pacheco Boulevard), and local roadways. Construction activities could result in noise impacts on sensitive receptors if noise levels were to exceed thresholds outlined in Figure 7-10 in the General Plan (City of Los Banos, 2022).

Noise impacts associated with the project are anticipated to be primarily associated with short-term construction-related activities and from the new East of Creek Road and extension of Pioneer Road. During operation, the project would introduce more pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists to the area which could increase ambient noise levels. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to an increase of noise levels, which would be discussed further in the Noise Study Report and EIR.

b). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** There are no federal, state, or local regulatory standards for construction generated groundborne vibration. However, Caltrans has developed vibration criteria based on potential structural damage risks and human annoyance. Using Caltrans criteria, because sensitive receptors are adjacent to the project area, groundborne vibration could be perceptible and considered unpleasant. In addition, depending on level of vibration and proximity to architecturally fragile structures, the project could result in structural damage. During operation, the project would result in an increase in vibration due to increased vehicle activity. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to groundborne vibration, which would be discussed further in the Noise Study Report and EIR.

c). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** The Los Banos Airport is located approximately one mile northeast of the project area. Noise levels north of Pioneer Road from Center Avenue to approximately 0.65 mile west of the intersection must comply with a 45 decibel maximum interior noise level to comply with the Los Banos Airport Land Use Plan noise threshold. As discussed in response (a) above, the project could result in increased noise levels during construction. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to excessive noise levels near a public airport, which would be discussed further in the Noise Study Report and EIR.

POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Induce substantial unplanned 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)?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact

a). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project would include constructing a 6.5-mile-long, arterial road with a Class I multi-use path. The project would be designed to improve accessibility and circulation within the city, provide a local alternative route, provide congestion relief, improve traffic flow, and provide multi-modal transportation opportunities. Therefore, the project could result in indirect induced growth in the city. However, the project is included in the General Plan; therefore, growth impacts resulting

from the project have been considered and planned for by the City. Therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact related to population growth.

b). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** The new East of Creek Road and improvements to Pioneer Road may involve the displacement of housing units or people. ROW acquisition would be required to complete the project and acquisition of parcels may displace residents. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to displacing people or housing, which would be discussed further in the Community Impact Assessment and the EIR.

PUBLIC SERVICES

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 following public services:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Fire protection?	Less Than Significant Impact
b) Police protection?	Less Than Significant Impact
c) Schools?	Less Than Significant Impact
d) Parks?	No Impact
e) Other public facilities?	Less Than Significant Impact

a). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The General Plan Safety and Noise Element has policies related to emergency response plans (City of Los Banos, 2022). The following policy would be applicable to the project

- S-P4.1: Maintain a five- to six-minute response standard for fire service within a 1.5-mile radius of a fire station.

The project is located 1 mile from the nearest fire station. Road closures and detours during construction could potentially cause access delays. Traffic delays could result in delayed response times for emergency services. According to the Merced County Emergency Operations Plan, the project area is not identified as an evacuation route (Merced County, 2007). However, a detour route or traffic handling plan would be prepared which would maintain acceptable service response times. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts on emergency services, which would be discussed further in the Traffic Study and EIR.

b). **Less Than Significant Impact.** See discussion in response (a) above.

c). **Less Than Significant Impact.** Mercy Springs Elementary School is located approximately 0.01 mile north of the project area. In addition, Merced Community College is adjacent to the project area. As discussed in *Population and Housing*, the project would not result in growth that would require more schools. The project could potentially cause significant delays due to road closures during construction. However, a detour route or traffic handling plan would be prepared which would maintain acceptable service response times. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts on schools, which would be discussed further in the Community Impact Assessment and EIR.

d). **No Impact.** The General Plan Parks, Open Space, and Resources Elements have policies related to recreation. The following policy would be applicable to the project:

- Policy LU-P2.3: Ensure that all Los Banos neighborhoods enjoy convenient access to parks and recreational opportunities.

Six parks are located adjacent or within 0.5 mile of the project area: Cresthills Park, Corridor Greens Park, Lindemann Trail, Rail Corridor Trail, Presidential Park, and HG Fawcett Parkway. As discussed in response I above, the project would not result in levels of growth that would increase the demand for new parks. Road closures and detours during construction could potentially cause access delays. However, a detour route or traffic handling plan would be prepared which would minimize delays.

The project would be consistent with the applicable policy since the project would not remove parks from close proximity to residents. Therefore, the project would result in no impacts related to parks, which would be discussed further in the Community Impact Assessment, Section 4(f) Evaluation, and EIR.

e). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The nearest library is the Los Banos Branch of the Merced County Library located approximately one mile north of the project area. The project would not result in levels of growth that would increase the demand for new other public services such as public libraries. Road closures and detours during construction could potentially cause access delays. However, a detour route or traffic handling plan would be prepared which would minimize delays. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to public facilities, which would be discussed further in the Community Impact Assessment and EIR.

RECREATION

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	Less Than Significant Impact
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

a). **Less than Significant Impact.** Six parks are located adjacent or within 0.5 mile of the project area: Cresthills Park, Lindemann Trail, Rail Corridor Trail, College Greens Park, Presidential Park, and HG Fawcett Parkway. The project would not result in an increased demand for or use of parks. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to the increased use of existing neighborhoods, regional parks, or recreational facilities.

b). **No Impact.** The project would not induce growth and require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, the project result in no impact related to the construction or expansion of recreational facilities.

TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

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

a). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The General Plan Circulation Element has policies related to transportation. The following policies would be applicable to the project:

- C-P1.1: Plan, design, and maintain complete streets in Los Banos, which balance safe access to all users, including drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, and people of all ages and abilities, and which integrates all appropriate modes of transportation into an effectively functioning system.
- C-P2.1: Develop and manage the roadway system to obtain segments at LOS C and intersections at LOS D or better for two-hour peak periods (a.m. and p.m.) on all major roadways and intersections in Los Banos. This policy does not extend to neighborhood streets, freeways, or State highways and their intersections, where Caltrans policies apply. Exceptions to LOS policy may be allowed by the City Council in areas, such as Downtown, where allowing a lower LOS would result in clear public benefits.
- C-P2.5: Achieve State-mandated reductions in VMT by requiring development and transportation projects to meet specific VMT metrics. In the event a proposed project does not meet these metrics, require measures to reduce the additional VMT associated with the project, consistent with the City’s adopted thresholds.
- C-P2.6: Reduce VMT through measures such as improvements to public transportation and carpooling and offering safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists.

- C-P4.1 Develop bicycle lanes, routes, and paths consistent with the Los Banos Bicycle Pedestrian Plan.
- C-P4.7 Ensure that roadway improvement projects address mobility and accessibility for bicyclists and/or pedestrians.
- C-P4.8 Support implementation of the adopted Los Banos Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan in coordination with the County's Regional Bikeway Plan.

The project would include constructing a 6.5-mile-long, arterial road with a Class I multi-use path. The project would be designed to improve local access and circulation for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists in the city; therefore, the project would be consistent with policies C-P1.1, C-P2.1, C-P4.1, C-P4.7, and C-P4.8. The project would provide an alternative local route around the current congestion that exists on SR-152 through the city, which would be inconsistent with policy C-P2.5 and C-P2.6. However, Improvements along Pioneer Road were included in the General Plan and impacts were accounted for. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to circulation system policies, which would be discussed further in the Community Impact Assessment and EIR.

b). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b) outlines criteria for analyzing transportation impacts. Per CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 subdivision (b), transportation projects that reduce, or have no impact on, vehicle miles traveled should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact.

During construction, access would be impacted by temporary road closures. This could result in motorists taking detour routes that would increase VMT temporarily. In addition, the project would increase roadway capacity during operation which would increase VMT. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b), which would be discussed further in the EIR.

c). **Less Than Significant Impact.** Proposed improvements would be designed to meet current safety and geometric standards. The project would include bridge improvements and the addition of a multi-use path that would reduce geometric hazards by providing a safe crossing. Therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact related to geometric hazards.

d). **Less Than Significant.** The project would require lane closures and detours on Pioneer Road, Ward Road, and their intersections, which could interfere with emergency response times. The project could potentially cause traffic and emergency response delays due to road closures during construction. According to the Merced County Emergency Operations Plan, the project area is not identified as an evacuation route (Merced County, 2007) Traffic delays would not impair the Merced County Emergency Operations Plan since a detour route or traffic handling plan would be prepared (Merced County, 2007; California Department of Transportation, 2020). Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts related to emergency access.

TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

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:

Question	CEQA Determination
a) 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	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated
b) 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 with Mitigation Incorporated

a). **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** The project would require excavation to a maximum depth of five feet and other ground-disturbing activities, including disturbance of some areas that have not been previously disturbed. These construction activities could directly impact unknown buried cultural resources. However, tribal cultural resources are not anticipated. If any tribal cultural resources or human remains are discovered, all construction activities would cease, and the County Coroner would be contacted. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impacts with mitigation incorporated related to tribal cultural resources, which would be discussed further in the Archeological Survey Report and EIR.

b). **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** See discussion from response (a) above.

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	Less Than Significant Impact

Question	CEQA Determination
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?	No Impact
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?	Less Than Significant Impact
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	Less Than Significant Impact

a). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** The project could require the relocation and replacement of utilities. All utility relocations would be conducted in coordination with the service providers. Construction activities associated with utilities could result in impacts on unknown buried cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, and biological resources. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to the relocation or construction of utilities, which would be discussed further in the EIR.

b). **Less Than Significant Impact.** Dust control measures would require the temporary use of water resources. However, the project would not involve the construction of any structures or facilities that would require additional water supplies. Therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact related to water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future.

c). **No Impact.** The project would not require wastewater treatment. Therefore, the project would result in no impact related to wastewater treatment capacity.

d). **Less Than Significant Impact.** According to the General Plan, the majority of the City's solid waste is taken to Billy Wright Landfill (City of Los Banos, 2022). This landfill has a remaining capacity of 11,370,000 cubic yards (CalRecycle, 2010). Additional waste is taken to Highway 59 Landfill which has a remaining capacity of 28,025,334 cubic yards (CalRecycle, 2005). Construction would require minimal, short-term solid waste disposal, which would be conducted in compliance with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations. The project could be serviced by either facility adequately. Project operation would not generate substantial waste. A small amount of waste may be generated from routine maintenance of the transportation facility (e.g. cleanup and litter removal); however, this waste would be disposed in compliance with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations and would not be in excess capacity for the local landfill. Therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact related to the generation of solid waste.

e). **Less Than Significant Impact.** See discussion in response (d) above.

WILDFIRE

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

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	Less Than Significant Impact
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?	Less Than Significant Impact
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?	Less Than Significant Impact
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?	No Impact

a). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project would require lane closures and detours on Pioneer Road, Ward Road, and their intersections, which could interfere with emergency response times. The project could potentially cause traffic and emergency response delays due to road closures during construction. According to the Merced County Emergency Operations Plan, the project area is not identified as an evacuation route (Merced County, 2007) Traffic delays would not impair the Merced County Emergency Operations Plan since a detour route or traffic handling plan would be prepared (Merced County, 2007; California Department of Transportation, 2020). Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impact related to emergency access, which would be discussed further in the Community Impact Assessment and EIR.

b). **Less Than Significant Impact.** The General Plan identifies the project area as having a low to moderate wildfire potential (City of Los Banos, 2022). Construction equipment and vehicles would require the use of combustible equipment that could create sparks. However, BMPs including site vegetation maintenance would be implemented to reduce the potential for fire hazards in the project area. The project has a flat topography and would not exacerbate wildfire risks due to slope, prevailing winds, or other factors. The project would not expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. Therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact related to wildland fires.

c). **Less Than Significant Impact.** As discussed in response (b) above the project area has a low to moderate wildfire potential. Construction equipment and vehicles would require the use of combustible equipment that could create sparks. The presence of construction equipment and fuel sources could temporarily exacerbate fire risk in the project area. BMPs including site vegetation maintenance would be implemented to reduce the potential for fire hazards in the project area. However, the project area is not

within a high-risk fire hazard area and construction impacts would be temporary. Project construction and operation would not introduce a substantial increase for potential for wildland fires or expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires in the area. Therefore, the project would result in a less than significant impact related to exacerbating fires with infrastructure.

d). **No Impact.** The general topography of the project area and surrounding region is flat and not susceptible to landslide (California Department of Conservation, 2021). In addition, the project is not located in a flood hazard zone. Therefore, the project would result in no impact related to post-fire landslides or flooding.

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Question	CEQA Determination
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially 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, substantially 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 with Mitigation Incorporated
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)?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	Significant and Unavoidable Impact

a). **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** As discussed in the *Biological Resources* and *Cultural Resources* sections, the project would not substantially degrade the quality of the environment. In addition, the project would comply with all required permits. Impacts to species are not anticipated. As described in the Biological Resources and Cultural Resources sections, implementation of mitigation measures would be implemented to avoid or minimize impacts on resources. Therefore, the project would result in less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated on the quality of the environment, fish or wildlife species habitat, fish or wildlife population, plant or animal communities, number or restricting the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

b). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** Since several issue areas discussed in this IS have potentially significant impacts, the project’s impact could be cumulatively considerable if other projects were to be constructed at the same time. There is potential for projects to be constructed at the same time as the project since the construction

schedule for the project is not known at the time. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts, which would be discussed further in the EIR.

c). **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** It is unknown at this time if potentially significant impacts associated with aesthetics, agriculture, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, public services, transportation, tribal cultural resources, utilities and service systems, and wildfire can be reduced to less than significant through implementation of mitigation measures.

Until the impacts are fully analyzed and mitigation measures are determined, a final impact analysis cannot be made. Therefore, additional analysis is required to determine whether the project could have significant and unavoidable impacts related to effects on human beings, which would be discussed further in the EIR.

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