



# County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING  
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

## EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

- APPLICANT:** Christian Montoya, Design Division
- APPLICATION NOS.:** Initial Study No. 7859
- DESCRIPTION:** The project proposes to add paved 8-foot-wide shoulders, shoulder backing, traffic striping, and roadside ditches along both sides of E. Goodfellow Avenue from 0.710 miles east of S. Channel Road to S. Reed Avenue; realign a 1.3-mile segment of the centerline of E. Goodfellow Avenue; add a right-turn pocket on the south side of the intersection of E. Goodfellow Avenue and Riverbend Avenue; and replace or extend up to three existing culverts.
- LOCATION:** The project is located along E. Goodfellow Avenue running approximately 4.007 miles between a point, 0.710 miles east of S. Channel Road to its intersection with S. Reed Avenue.

This is the second circulation of Initial Study No. 7859. This Evaluation of Environmental Impacts was original circulated for public review through the State Clearinghouse between September 1, 2021 and October 1, 2021. A public comment was received during the original circulation period expressed some concern with certain aspects of the project related to Agricultural and Forestry Resources. Initial Study No. 7859 is being recirculated due to project changes in the scope of work and to address the concern expressed during the initial public review period.

The purpose of the proposed project is to reduce particulate matter emissions caused by unstable shoulders adjacent to the roadway of E Goodfellow Avenue. The project consists of adding paved 8-foot-wide shoulders, shoulder backing, and traffic striping along each side of E Goodfellow Avenue from 0.710 mile east of S Channel Road to S Reed Avenue (4.007 miles), in Fresno County. E Goodfellow Avenue is currently a two-lane, undivided rural road with a 24-foot-wide pavement width with an approximate 8-foot-wide maintained dirt shoulder on each side of the road.

Existing right-of-way is 60 feet, approximately centered about the section line; however, the centerline of Goodfellow Avenue does not match with the section line between the Kings River Bridge and Cameron Slough (1.3 mile). Due to this issue, right-of-way acquisition is necessary within that 1.3-mile segment. Acquisition in other areas is necessary to accommodate other project work that cannot be accommodated within the existing right-of-way (e.g., relocating utilities and installing a roadside ditch). Acquisition will occur to perfect existing prescriptive right-of-way and obtain additional right-of-way along Goodfellow Avenue. Partial acquisition is

needed on up to 22 parcels for approximately 3.9 acres of total acquisitions throughout the project limits.

Within the 1.3-mile segment of Goodfellow Avenue between the Kings River Bridge and Cameron Slough, the project may require a realignment and reconstruction. A combination of traditionally paved and oil treated shoulders up to 8 feet on each side of the roadway may occur within the 1.3-mile segment. Roadway excavation work and roadside ditch excavation would occur to a depth of approximately 1 foot. The project would require grading of the roadside ditch.

Utility relocation such as Pacific Gas & Electric electrical poles and overhead utility lines is anticipated; however, further investigation is required. A right-turn pocket on the south side of the intersection of Goodfellow Avenue and Riverbend Avenue may be added due to the volume of truck traffic at the intersection. The project may be built in two phases; the first phase would either extend or replace culverts as appropriate and the second phase would primarily pertain to shoulder widening. Trees or vegetation near the edge of pavement may need to be removed.

Within the project limits, E Goodfellow Avenue crosses the Kings River, Hanke Ditch, the Cameron Slough, an underground channel, Byrd Slough, and Fink Ditch. According to FEMA flood maps, the proposed project intersects the following floodplains: Zone A, Zone AE, Zone X, and a Regulatory Floodway Zone AE. The project would taper shoulder work around structures such as bridges; existing concrete asphalt dikes and guardrails would not be affected by shoulder work. If funding allows, the culverts may be extended or replaced as appropriate. The headwalls at Fink Ditch with two locations (425 feet E/O Rio Vista and Jim Savage Road) and Hanke Ditch near Riverbend Avenue would be relocated.

The project would not generate the need for public services or utilities beyond those already existing. The alignment and number of through lanes will not be changed and no adverse construction-related noise activity is anticipated; therefore, no permanent noise impacts are anticipated in the area. Air quality improvement in the project area due to a reduction in vehicle emissions is anticipated. Particulate matter reduction measures will be taken during construction in accordance with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Regulation VIII. The project will not generate the need for public services or utilities beyond those already existing.

#### I. AESTHETICS

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

- A. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; or
- B. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Per Figure OS-2 of the Fresno County General Plan, S. Reed Avenue at its intersection with E. Goodfellow Avenue is designated a scenic drive. However, the proposed improvements will be confined to E. Goodfellow Avenue and have no effect on S. Reed Avenue. Improvements will be constructed at grade and will not affect scenic vistas or other scenic resources.

- C. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Improvements will be at ground level and would not affect the existing visual character of the surrounding area. Public views of the site and its surrounding area would be unaffected.

- D. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

There is no existing or proposed outdoor lighting associated with E. Goodfellow Avenue. There may be lighting on private property, but in relation to the public right-of-way, there will be no new sources of light or glare. There is no expansion of lanes that would increase the number of vehicles traversing the subject right-of-way where an increase in light or glare would occur. Therefore, the project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

## II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to 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 Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to 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 forest carbon measurement methodology in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

- A. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project proposal will result in the acquisition of private land for the purpose of widening the right-of-way to allow construction of the shoulder, a minor realignment of a 1.3-mile segment of E. Goodfellow Avenue, and replacement or extension of three existing culverts. According to the 2016 Fresno County Important Farmland Map produced by the State Department of Conservation, the project sections of E. Goodfellow Avenue front properties that are designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Farmland of Local Importance, Semi-Agriculture and Rural Commercial, and Confined Animal Agriculture. Review of the affected parcels indicate that right-of-way acquisition will affect and convert land from Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance to right-of-way purposes. Additional consideration is made towards the remaining land of designated important farmlands as a result of the project in that the remaining land would still be utilized for agricultural purposes. More so, the project would not result in reducing agricultural utilized land towards non-viability. Therefore, although conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use will occur, the conversion will not result in parcels that would be non-viable for agricultural use and a less than significant impact is determined.

B. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The project will require right-of-way acquisition to perform the design of the project and to perfect the existing right-of-way within a 1.3-mile segment of E. Goodfellow Avenue. As a result of the right-of-way acquisition, there would be no conflict with the underlying agricultural zone district. However, there will be a conflict with land that is Williamson Act Contracted that is planned to be acquired for right-of-way purposes because the proposed right-of-way use is not considered compatible under the Williamson Act Contracts. The land proposed to be acquired for right-of-way will span along parcels fronting E. Goodfellow Avenue. The farmland uses on the entirety of the lands affected by the acquisitions would not change as a result of the project and agricultural uses, operations, and production would persist. The amount of land taken from each parcel would be considered minimal. A mitigation measure is to be implemented to ensure that land under contract is effectively removed from the Williamson Act and as a result would not be in conflict with the Williamson Act.

Under comments received from the California Department of Conservation, the following were considered: analysis of the type, amount, and location of farmland conversion, project compatibility with agricultural preserves/Williamson Act Contract, and compliance with Government Code Section 51291 (Eminent Domain) for projects considered for public acquisition. Review of available records indicate that the project would affect up to nine (9) parcels that are Williamson Act contracted. These identified parcels if affected by right-of-way acquisition would be required to be removed from the Williamson Act Contract due to the proposed use being in conflict with the Williamson Act as noted above. Through implementation of the listed mitigation measure, the project will be compliant with the Williamson Act as the land will be removed from

contract. The removal of land from agricultural use or under Williamson Act Contract is considered less than significant as the right-of-way acquisition is not expected to significantly impact operation of the agricultural land or reduce agricultural operational viability.

\* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *Prior to construction of the project, land under Williamson Act Contract to be acquired for permanent right-of-way purposes will be required to be removed from the Williamson Act Contract through the contract removal process (e.g. Cancellation, Non-Renewal or Public Acquisition Notice).*

C. Conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production; or

D. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The affected parcels and subject right-of-way are not on land zoned or result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

E. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project intends to provide safer conditions on E. Goodfellow Avenue. Though right-of-way acquisition will occur and convert farmland to non-agricultural use, the underlying agricultural zone district will not change and as a result, would not result in further conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use. There are certain non-agricultural uses allowed under the AE (Exclusive Agricultural) Zone District, but would be subject to further environmental review. Therefore, the project would not involve changes in the existing environment that would result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

### III. 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:

A. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan; or

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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will be subject to rules and regulations established by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. Criteria pollutant increases are expected during project construction, but this increase will be temporary in nature. After construction is complete, the project will have a beneficial impact on criteria pollutants due to the reduction of particulate matter being generated by vehicular traffic utilizing the right-of-way and unpaved, dirt shoulders. The project will not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan and would not result in a permanent net increase in criteria pollutants. Therefore, a less than significant impact is seen due to the temporary increase in criteria pollutants created during construction of the project.

- C. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; or
- D. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

There are multiple sensitive receptors in close proximity of the project. These sensitive receptors may be affected by temporary pollutant concentrations and other emissions during project construction. Exposure will be short term and would not adversely affect the identified sensitive receptors. Additionally, once construction is complete, the project would have a beneficial long-term impact through the reduction of particulate matter affected by vehicular traffic using an unpaved, dirt shoulder.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- 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 or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), there are no reported occurrences of a special status-species located within the project site. There are reported occurrences of a species in proximity of the project site, but due to the disturbed nature of the site and surrounding area, it is not likely to be occupied by the reported species.

- 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; or

- 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT:

Wetlands and drainage facilities within or adjacent to the project limits may be subject to regulation of federal laws such as Section 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) as well as state laws such as the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game (CDFG) Code, and the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB). According to the National Wetlands Inventory, there are several water features such as river, slough, or irrigation ditch crossings within the project site. E. Goodfellow Avenue intersects potentially jurisdictional waters and floodways such as the Kings River, Cameron Slough, and Byrd Slough; however, the project will not conduct any work within the bed, bank, or channel of these water features. Right-of-way acquisition and proposed shoulder construction is designed to taper off at these crossings with no expansion or construction proposed on the Kings River, Cameron Slough, or Byrd Slough.

The project proposes to add 8-foot-wide shoulders, shoulder backing, traffic striping, roadside ditches as well as replace or extend up to three existing culverts within the project limits. The proposed project would need to conduct grading, headwall removal or relocation, and vegetation removal to perform culvert replacement or extension work. The three existing culverts are located at the following intersection: 1) Goodfellow Avenue & 425 feet east of Rio Vista Avenue, 2) Goodfellow Avenue & Jim Savage Road, and 3) Goodfellow Avenue & Riverbend Avenue. Culverts 1 and 2 are identified as part of the Fink Ditch system while Culvert 3 is identified as part of the Hanke Ditch system. According to the National Wetlands Inventory, Culverts 1 and 3 are identified as manmade Riverine wetland systems; however, they are primarily used as irrigation ditches and would be considered exempt from Section 404 & 401 of the CWA and CDFW Section 1602 of the CDFG Code.

The exempt determination for Section 404 of the CWA is based on Section 404(f) of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1344), Federal Regulations (33 CFR 323.4(a)(2)), and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulatory guidance letter titled *“Exemptions for Construction or Maintenance of Irrigation Ditches and Maintenance of Drainage Ditches under Section 404 of Clean Water Act.”*

Per Section IV.D.1.a of the State Policy for Water Quality Control: State Wetland Definition and Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Materials to Waters of the State, the Project is excluded from application procedures for regulation of discharges of dredged or fill materials to Waters of the State if Project activities are exempt under Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404(f). As previously stated, the Project falls under CWA Section 404(f) exemptions, therefore, the Project is excluded from application procedures for Section 401 of the CWA.

The exempt determination for CDFW Section 1602 of the CDFG Code is due to the fact that the waterbody is an excavated, manmade agricultural ditch and therefore, does not substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of a stream, river, or lake; substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of the waterbody; use material from any river, stream, or lake, or deposit or dispose of material into a river, stream, or lake.

Finally, any riparian habitat or wetland identified in the National Wetlands Inventory would not be affected by the proposed project. No other sensitive natural community was identified in the project area. Thus, the scope of work for the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on state or federally protected wetlands, regulatory streams, or designated floodways due to compliance with regulatory agencies such as the USACE, RWQCB, CDFW, and CVFPB.

- 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION  
INCORPORATED:

Trees located within the project site and land proposed to be acquired for right-of-way could potentially be removed. As the removal of trees is anticipated, the potential of affecting nesting birds would be prevalent. Therefore, a mitigation measure is to be implemented to establish procedure for addressing tree removal. With the implementation of this mitigation measure, impacts to wildlife species would be less than significant.

There was no migratory wildlife corridor identified as being affected by the project proposal.

\* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *Trees anticipated for removal should be removed prior to nesting season. The nesting season is from February 1 to September 30. If trees cannot be removed outside the nesting season and are anticipated to be removed during the nesting season, a preconstruction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist. If the survey shows that there is no evidence of active nests, then the tree shall be removed within ten days following the survey. If active nests are located within trees identified for removal, the qualified biologist shall establish an environmentally sensitive area (buffer) around active nests until it is determined the young have fledged the nest. Buffers around active nests will be 250 feet, and 500 feet for active non-listed raptor nests, unless a qualified biologist determines that smaller buffers would be sufficient to avoid impacts to active nests or nesting raptors.*

- E. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or



- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

No local policies or ordinances were identified as being in conflict with the project. No Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state Habitat Conservation Plan was identified as being in conflict with the project proposal.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- A. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or
- B. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or
- C. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The project proposes to improve E. Goodfellow Avenue with the construction of 8-foot-wide shoulders. This project will require acquisition of private property along E. Goodfellow Avenue. Land acquisition will not require the demolition of any buildings. There are no historical or archeological resources identified on or near the project site. Additional ground disturbance related to utility relocation could occur. In considering the past ground disturbance of the site and disturbance related to surrounding agricultural operations and single-family residences, it is unlikely that cultural resources would be present on the project site. A Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) was prepared by LSA for the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) under regulatory responsibility consistent with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The HPSR concluded that no historic properties would be affected by the project as there are no historic properties within the area of potential effect. A supplemental-HPSR (S-HPSR) was developed by LSA for Caltrans after an increase in right-of-way acquisition was necessary for conducting the scope of work. As indicated by the HPSR and S-HPSR, cultural resources are not likely to occur or be affected by the project, however, mitigation measures will be implemented to properly assess and handle cultural resources should they be unearthed during ground-disturbing activities related to the project.

\* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *In the event that cultural resources are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities, all work shall be halted in the area of the find. An Archaeologist shall*

*be called to evaluate the findings and make any necessary mitigation recommendations. If human remains are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities, no further disturbance is to occur until the Fresno County Sheriff-Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition. All normal evidence procedures should be followed by photos, reports, video, etc. If such remains are determined to be Native American, the Sheriff-Coroner must notify the Native American Commission within 24 hours.*

## VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes to construct 8-foot-wide shoulders along E. Goodfellow Avenue. There are no energy impacts in relation to operation of the right-of-way. Vehicular traffic traveling along the right-of-way will not be significantly impacted by the improved right-of-way where significant environmental impacts due to wasteful, inefficient or unnecessary consumption of energy resources would occur. There was no state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency in conflict with the project proposal.

## VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

- A. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
  - 1. 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Per the Earthquake Hazard Zone Application (California Department of Conservation), the project site is not located on a known earthquake fault or rupture of a known earthquake fault.

- 2. Strong seismic ground shaking?
- 3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Per the Fresno County General Plan Background Report (FCGPBR), Fresno County is situated within an area of relatively low seismic activity. Faults and fault systems located on the eastern and western boundaries of Fresno County can result in an earthquake and would cause moderate intensity ground shaking in Fresno County. Per Figure 9-5 of the FCGPBR, the project site is located in an area of 0%-20% peak horizontal ground acceleration assuming a probabilistic seismic hazard with a 10% probability in 50 years. This peak horizontal ground acceleration indicates moderate ground shaking potential. In considering the ground shaking potential, there is not likely going to be seismic-related ground failure.

4. Landslides?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to Figure 9-6 of the FCGPBR, the project site is not located in an area identified as potentially being affected by a landslide risk.

B. Result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

Construction activities such as construction of 8-foot-wide shoulders, 1-foot-deep roadside ditches, and culvert replacement or extension work may have the potential to disrupt soil and cause erosion. The construction Contractor would be required to develop and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) or Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP) to prevent significant erosion impacts within the project limits. The SWPPP or WPCP would outline Best Management Practices (BMPs) that would include erosion control measures to minimize and prevent soil erosion and implement dust control such as, but not limited to, the mitigation measure listed below. These activities will not have an impact in terms of erosion or causing adverse effects on adjacent parcels or the public right-of-way.

\* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. *The Contractor shall include BMPs in the SWPPP or WPCP prepared for the project to minimize and prevent soil erosion as well as implement dust control using BMPs such as, but not limited to:*

- A. Preservation of Existing Vegetation – The construction schedule will be arranged as much as practicable to leave existing vegetation undisturbed until immediately prior to grading. Existing vegetation provides many benefits such as soil stabilization and runoff infiltration. Thus, existing vegetation will be left undisturbed as much as possible. Unnecessary vegetation removal will be prevented by limiting the construction activities to only that absolutely necessary to complete the work.
- B. Fiber Rolls – Temporary fiber roll will be installed and maintained at locations as deemed necessary during construction. Fiber roll shall be

properly installed as shown in the Standard Plans and shall be installed level along parallel contours as shown in the Standard Plans and Specifications. Fiber roll shall be installed and maintained throughout the course of construction, regardless of season. Fiber roll shall be maintained when sediment reaches 1/3 the height of the exposed roll. The Contractor shall be responsible for repairing and replacing any damaged fiber roll. Vehicle and equipment traffic shall be kept off of fiber rolls to prevent damage. Fiber rolls shall be used as needed for sediment controls in storm water flow paths.

- C. Temporary Gravel Bag Berm – Temporary gravel bag berms will be utilized where needed to control run-on and run-off. Temporary gravel bag berms shall also be placed at the edges of open trenches in paved areas as needed to control run-on if rain is anticipated. Gravel bag berms can also be used to control run-on and run-off when changing construction operations need a temporary and flexible alternative to silt fence or fiber roll.
- D. Street Sweeping – Schedule and perform road sweeping and vacuuming as required by the Caltrans Standard Specifications and when deemed necessary based on site observations to keep streets clear of tracked materials and debris.
- E. Wind Erosion Control – Prevent and alleviate dust by applying water, dust palliative, or both per the Caltrans Standard Specifications and by covering active and inactive stockpiles. Water may be applied using water trucks and/or water buffalos.

- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

There was no geologic unit or soil identified on the project site as being unstable that could as a result of the project result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.

- C. 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

According to Figure 7-2 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report (FCGPBR), the project site is potentially on soils exhibiting moderately high to high expansion potential. The project site is already improved with paved right-of-way, with the project proposing to add 8-foot-wide shoulders to the existing paved right-of-way. The project is subject to current building code standards that would take into account existing soil conditions. Although located on potentially expansive soils, the project would have a less than significant impact as there will be no change in the capacity of the right-of-way.

- D. 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; or
- E. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project does not propose development of a septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal system nor would a system be required for the operation of the project. There were no unique paleontological resource or geologic feature identified on the project site.

### VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

A Greenhouse Gas Analysis prepared by Analytical Environmental Services on January 22, 2021 for the proposed project describes the existing regulatory setting and assessment of construction and operation greenhouse gas emissions from the project. The analysis estimates that project construction related emissions would result in 384.94 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Operational emissions are not expected to changes as there will be no change in existing traffic patterns. Under the local regulatory setting, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District does not have an adopted threshold of significant for construction-related GHG emission. Absent of a threshold or any other local or regional plan, the project was analyzed for consistency with the state goals addressed under Assembly Bill 32 and the associated scoping plan. The analysis concluded that the project would not result in substantial emissions of GHG emissions and would have no effect on long term operation. The project does not conflict with the goals and objectives of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's plan or the goals of the State. Therefore, the projects incremental contribution to cumulative GHG emissions would be less than significant.

### VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

- A. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; or
- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will not result in a significant hazard to the public or environment. The project is needed primarily to construct 8-foot-wide shoulders, realign a 1.3-mile segment of the centerline of E. Goodfellow Avenue, and replace or extend up to three existing culverts. As there is no permanent utilization of or disposal of hazardous materials, the project would have no impact.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

There is no existing or proposed school within one-quarter mile of the project site. Great Western Elementary School is located approximately 0.62 miles east of the project site. As noted, the project will not handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials or emit hazardous emissions.

- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to the NEPAssist database, there is a listed hazardous waste facility in close proximity of the project site, which is identified as a leaking underground storage tank (closed case) at Rodriguez Market. The project site is primarily located in the public right-of-way and would not be located on the property of the listed site. The project would not result or create a significant hazard to the public or environment.

- 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT:

The project site is located within the primary review area of the Reedley Municipal Airport. Temporary construction noise resulting from the project would impact residents in vicinity of the project area. Noise contours of the Reedley Municipal Airport indicate that the project is outside of the 65 dB CNEL noise contour. In considering the

temporary nature of the construction noise and that the project site is located outside of the noise contours of the Reedley Municipal Airport, the project will have a less than significant impact on noise generation for people residing or working in the project area.

- F. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; or
- G. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Reviewing agencies and departments did not express concern with the project proposal to indicate the project resulting in impairment of or physically interfering with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan or result in significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

#### X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

- A. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality; or
- B. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will not require the construction of water services or result in increased water usage. Reviewing agencies and departments did not express concern with the application to indicate that construction would result in violation of a water quality standard or waste discharge requirement and result in impeding sustainable groundwater management of the applicable basin.

- 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 result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?
  1. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;
  2. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite?
  3. 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project would result in the addition of impervious surface in the form of an 8-foot-wide paved shoulder along the road right-of-way. Additionally, the project would implement a roadside ditch with a maximum depth of 1 foot to improve the drainage system at the site. The purpose of the roadside ditch is to maintain the minor increase in run-off more effectively into groundwater and to minimize or prevent existing or future flooding issues from encroaching onto adjacent properties and residences. The roadside ditch would be graded using on-site soil and would not redirect flood flows because it does not create or alter flood flows. Therefore, the project is not expected to result in substantial erosion, on-site and off-site flooding, or contribute to runoff water that would exceed capacity of existing facilities. The modified conditions of the roadway within the County's existing and proposed right-of-way would result in a less than significant impact.

4. Impede or redirect flood flows?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

According to FEMA FIRM Panel C2170H and C2190H, the project site is located within multiple special flood hazard designated areas. These flood hazard areas are centered along the rivers and sloughs that the E. Goodfellow traverses and are identified as the Kings River, Cameron Slough, and Byrd Slough. The project does not propose work in the bed, bank or channel of any of these waterways and would not affect the flood flows of the rivers and sloughs that intersect with the subject right-of-way. Shoulder work would taper around bridges along E. Goodfellow Avenue and would not affect the waterways. The addition of the roadside ditch would not impede or redirect any flood flows. As work within the special flood hazard designated areas will not raise the grade, minimal impact to flood flows are expected.

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

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Project inundation due to the flood hazard is expected to result in less than significant impact in terms of the risk of release of pollutants as the only pollutant would be the paved right-of-way. As noted, right-of-way located within the flood hazard would be subject to local and state standards and increased regulation. The project site is not located near a body of water that would indicate an increased risk from tsunami or seiche events.

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:



Reviewing agencies and departments did not express concern to indicate that the project would conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management. As indicated by the project scope, the project will have minimal to no impact on water quality or groundwater management.

## XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

- A. Physically divide an established community?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes to improve an existing roadway through the addition of paved shoulders. Based on the project's location and scope of work, the project would not physically divide an established community.

- 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

General Plan Goal LU-A states "To promote the long-term conservation of productive and potentially productive agricultural lands and to accommodate agricultural-support services and agriculturally-related activities that support the viability of agriculture and further the County's economic development goals."

Several parcels along the project site that are affected by the land acquisition aspect of the project are under Williamson Act Contract. As indicated under Section II.B, a mitigation measure is implemented to ensure that all land under Williamson Act Contract must be removed from contract as the proposed right-of-way use would be incompatible with the Williamson Act. The affected parcels would remove minor portions of land fronting E. Goodfellow Avenue and not otherwise affect any of the existing agricultural operations or other existing uses. Therefore, although impacts to the existing agricultural uses would occur through land acquisition, these impacts are considered less than significant and would not negatively impact the viability of the agricultural operations affected.

## XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- 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; or
- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to Figure 7-7 of the Fresno County General Plan Background Report (FCGPBR) the subject site can potentially be located on identified mineral resource locations. The project's scope includes adding 8-foot-wide paved shoulders, realigning a 1.3-mile segment of the centerline of E. Goodfellow Avenue, and replace or extend three existing culverts within the existing and proposed County right-of-way. The maximum depth of excavation will be for the road reconstruction will be 1 foot. The project is not expected to result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource. Per Figure 7-8 of the FCGPBR, the project site is not located on a principal mineral resource recovery site. A review of the Mines Online map by the California Department of Conservation's Division of Mine Reclamation confirmed that the project limits are not located within or immediately adjacent to any mineral resource recovery sites.

XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

- 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; or
- B. Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will result in a temporary increase of noise levels and vibration due to the construction of the project and use of construction equipment. Once construction is complete, noise levels are expected to return to pre-project conditions. In considering the anticipated, temporary construction noise and vibration levels, the project would follow the Fresno County Noise Ordinance (Fresno County Ordinance Code Chapter 8.40), provided such activities do not take place before six a.m. or after nine p.m. on any day except Saturday or Sunday, or before seven a.m. or after five p.m. on Saturday or Sunday (§8.40.060). In addition, the project will implement Caltrans Standard Specification 14-8.02 (or the most recent standard associated with noise control, if 14-8.02 has been superseded at the time of construction), which limits the project's noise to 86 a-weighted decibels at 50 feet from the job site from 9 P.M. to 6 A.M.

- 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; or

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project site is located within the primary review area of the Reedley Municipal Airport. Temporary construction noise resulting from the project would impact residents

in vicinity of the project area. Noise contours of the Reedley Municipal Airport indicate that the project is outside of the 65 dB CNEL noise contour. In considering the temporary nature of the construction noise and that the project site is located outside of the noise contours of the Reedley Municipal Airport, the project will have a less than significant impact on noise generation for people residing or working in the project area.

#### XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

- 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)?; or
- B. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

There is no increase in capacity of E. Goodfellow Avenue involved with this project proposal. Although land acquisition is proposed, the project will not induce substantial unplanned population growth in the area and would not displace existing people or housing necessitating construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

#### XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

- A. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically-altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically-altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services?
  - 1. Fire protection;
  - 2. Police protection;
  - 3. Schools;
  - 4. Parks; or
  - 5. Other public facilities?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will result in changes to the existing roadway with the inclusion of 8-foot-wide shoulders, shoulder backing, roadside ditches, and three improved culverts. The

project will have no effect on existing public services and would not result in the requirement or provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities that would cause significant environmental impacts in order to maintain acceptable service ratios.

#### XVI. RECREATION

Would the project:

- A. 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; or
- B. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project would not result in increasing the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities that could have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

#### XVI. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

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

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project would allow the County of Fresno to make improvements to existing public right-of-way. The project would not conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system and would not conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b). The project would not increase hazards due to design features and would not result in inadequate emergency access.

#### XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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

1. 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
2. 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The subject application would involve minimal ground-disturbance to improve the existing public right-of-way. Participating California Native American Tribes under the provisions of Assembly Bill 52 were notified of the subject application and given the opportunity to enter into consultation with the County of Fresno on identifying and addressing potential tribal cultural resources. Notified California Native American Tribes did not express concern with the application and did not enter into consultation with the County of Fresno under the provisions of Assembly Bill 52. Mitigation Measures are implemented with this project to address cultural resources in the unlikely event that resources are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities.

\* **Mitigation Measure(s)**

1. See Section V Cultural Resources, A., B., and C. Mitigation Measure #1

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

- 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Per the Project Description, the project could potentially relocate existing utility poles along the subject right-of-way. As land acquisition is also proposed, those utility poles are not expected to be relocated in areas substantially different than their current locations and would still be located within County right-of-way. The relocation of

existing utility poles within the existing and proposed County right-of-way would not generate a need for new sources of electric power or expanded telecommunications facilities.

- B. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will not result in any impact on available water supplies. No increased potable water supply, new water lines, or reliance upon any water supply will occur as a result of this project. Negligible amounts of water may be used for dust control purposes during construction but would be acquired from adjacent sources with existing entitlements to water, and no new entitlements will be required.

- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will not require or result in the construction of a wastewater treatment system because there will be no increase in operational wastewater or wastewater treatment demand. Minor construction-related wastewater may include portable restroom facilities provided by the Contractor for construction workers' use and would be contained within portable toilet facilities then disposed of at an approved site according to regulations. The Contractor or subcontractor would contract with a local service provider to dispose of the wastewater at an approved wastewater treatment plant. The negligible amount of wastewater generated during construction would not affect the wastewater treatment facilities' ability to meet their applicable wastewater treatment requirements.

- 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; or
- E. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT:

Due to the nature of the project, there would only be a potential for generation of construction and demolition debris. No operational solid waste impacts would occur as a result of the project. The realignment of the 1.3-mile segment of E. Goodfellow Ave would result in some construction and demolition debris in the form of pavement and asphalt as well as construction of the new alignment and paved shoulders. Portions of the existing roadway that are removed would be re-used for shoulder backing wherever possible and any remaining solid waste materials would be transported to a permitted

landfill in the County. In compliance with state, federal, and local regulations, materials would be recycled or composted to the extent possible. Therefore, the project will not result in the generation of substantial solid waste, a new waste-generating infrastructure, or result in a conflict with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

## XX. WILDFIRE

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

- A. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects; or
- 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; or
- 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; or
- 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to the Fresno County Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA 2007 Map prepared by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the project site is not located in a state responsibility area or land classified as a very high fire hazard severity zone.

## XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

- A. 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

As discussed in Section IV Biological Resources, the project will not adversely affect special-status species when considering the existing improved nature of the site and

human disturbance associated with the site. There is potential of impact due to land being acquired for right-of-way purposes and possible removal of trees, but associated mitigation measures will ensure that a procedure is implemented and followed to reduce impacts to birds during nesting season.

- B. 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)?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Identified impacts to Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, and Tribal Cultural Resources have been determined to be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures. These impacts were determined to not have cumulatively considerable impacts.

- C. Have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will improve road conditions of E. Goodfellow Avenue with the construction of 8-foot-wide shoulders by reducing potential pollutant concentrations generated from vehicular traffic and increasing the safety. The project will not cause substantial adverse effects on human beings.

## **CONCLUSION/SUMMARY**

Based upon the Initial Study No. 7859 prepared for E. Goodfellow Avenue Shoulder Improvement Project, staff has concluded that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment. It has been determined that there would be no impacts to Aesthetics, Energy, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, and Wildfire.

Potential impacts related to Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use Planning, Noise, and Utilities and Service Systems have been determined to be less than significant. Potential impacts relating to Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, and Tribal Cultural Resources have determined to be less than significant with compliance of recommended Mitigation Measures.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration is recommended and is subject to approval by the decision-making body. The Initial Study is available for review at 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, street level, located on the southwest corner of Tulare and “M” Street, Fresno, California.

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