

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: August 20-21, 2026

From: TANISHA TAYLOR, Executive Director

Reference Number: 2.2c.(6), Action

Prepared By: Cherry Zamora
Associate Deputy Director

Published Date: August 7, 2026

Subject: Approval of Project for Future Consideration of Funding – South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor Project, Resolution E-26-58

Recommendation:

Staff recommends the California Transportation Commission (Commission), as a Responsible Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), approve the attached Resolution E-26-58 (Attachment A); accept the Final Environmental Impact Report for the South Fresno State Route 99 (SR 99) Corridor Project (Project) in Fresno County; approve the Project for future consideration of funding; make CEQA Findings (Attachment C); and adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations (Attachment D).

Issue:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is the CEQA Lead Agency for the Project. The Project is located on SR 99 from Post Mile (PM) 12.5 to PM 19.1 in Fresno County. The Project would combine the partial interchanges at North Avenue and Cedar Avenue into a single interchange at North Avenue providing all ramp connections, remove the existing partial interchange ramps at Cedar Avenue, and reconfigure the partial interchange at American Avenue into a full interchange. The project would also replace the existing overcrossing structures at North Avenue and American Avenue.

For all projects that are seeking funding through a program under the purview of the Commission, full compliance with CEQA is required. The Commission will not allocate funds to projects for design, right-of-way, or construction until the environmental document is complete, and the Commission has approved the environmentally cleared project for future consideration of funding.

Background:

On January 30, 2023, Caltrans certified the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Project. Caltrans found that the Project would have significant and unavoidable impacts on climate change. Specifically, the Project would increase greenhouse gas emissions due to projected increases in population along with the implementation of planned development in the area. Construction greenhouse gas emissions would result from material processing, onsite construction equipment, and traffic delays due to construction. Although mitigation would be implemented, such as installation of complete streets features and vegetative barriers, installation of an electric vehicle charging station, replacement of landscaping, use of Intelligent Transportation System elements, idling limitations on delivery and construction equipment, and other construction emission control measures, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

The resource topics that are using mitigation to reduce impacts to less than significant levels are paleontological resources, hazardous waste and materials, and animal species. Mitigation measures include, but are not limited to, creation of a Paleontological Mitigation Plan; providing pre-construction training to all project personnel; construction monitoring and placement of recovered fossils in an approved repository; pesticide and arsenic testing; creation of a Lead Compliance Plan for the handling of lead-impacted soil; reuse of excess soil and/or disposal of excess soil in accordance with Department of Toxic Substances Control requirements; assurance that soil borrow material comes from approved sites; written notification to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District 10 working days prior to any demolition activity; creation of an Asbestos Compliance Plan; surveying buildings and structures for asbestos, and proper laboratory analysis, handling, and disposal of asbestos, if found; adherence to the local air district Indirect Source Review Rule for construction emissions control; dust control; conducting a preconstruction survey for migratory birds, Swainson's hawks, and bats 30 days before the start of construction; establishing minimization efforts and no-work buffer zones for active nests; establishing environmentally sensitive areas to prevent nesting disturbance; suspending work if there is unpreventable nesting activity; removing trees outside of nesting seasons; installing one-way exclusionary devices or deterrents at bat roosts outside of roosting season; and suspending activities if bat roosts may be disturbed by construction activities.

Caltrans approved the Project because it found the benefits outweighed the significant and unavoidable impacts and prepared a Statement of Overriding Considerations pursuant to CEQA.

The Commission, in its independent judgment as a CEQA responsible agency, has reviewed and considered the Final Environmental Impact Report prepared by Caltrans. The Commission's Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations, included in Attachment C and Attachment D, respectively, have been prepared pursuant to CEQA.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Resolution
- Attachment B: Notice of Determination
- Attachment C: California Transportation Commission - Findings

- Attachment D: California Transportation Commission - Statement of Overriding Considerations
- Attachment E: Lead Agency Request for Approval of Project for Future Consideration of Funding Resolution E-26-58
 - Attachment 1: Map
 - Attachment 2: California Department of Transportation -- Findings
 - Attachment 3: California Department of Transportation -- Statement of Overriding Considerations

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Resolution for Future Consideration of Funding

06-Fre-99, PM 12.5/19.1

Resolution E-26-58

- 1.1 WHEREAS**, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has completed a Final Environmental Impact Report pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines for the following project:
- South Fresno State Route 99 (SR 99) Corridor Project: SR 99 in Fresno County. Reconstruct two existing half interchanges to create full interchanges at American Avenue and North Avenue, including reconstruction of existing overcrossings and construction of on- and off-ramps with sidewalks, curbs and gutters, lighting and signalization, and a stormwater system. (PPNO 6288)
- 1.2 WHEREAS**, Caltrans has certified that a Final Environmental Impact Report has been completed pursuant to CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines for its implementation; and
- 1.3 WHEREAS**, the California Transportation Commission (Commission), as a responsible agency, has considered the information contained in the Final Environmental Impact Report; and
- 1.4 WHEREAS**, the project will have a significant effect on the environment.
- 1.5 WHEREAS**, the Commission has made findings as required by California Code of Regulations, section 15096, subdivision (h);
- 1.6 WHEREAS**, the Commission has adopted a Statement of Overriding Considerations (Attachment D) pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15093 and has approved the Project because it found the benefits of the project render the significant impacts acceptable.
- 2.1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Commission does hereby accept the Final Environmental Impact report and approves the above referenced project for future consideration of funding.

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

To: Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: California Transportation Commission
Attn: Cherry Zamora
1120 N Street, MS 52
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 654-4245

Subject: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 of the Public Resources Code.

Project Title: South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor Project

2019039121	John Thomas	(559) 408-4496
State Clearinghouse Number	Lead Agency Contact Person	Area Code/Telephone

Project Location (include county): State Route (SR) 99 from Post Mile (PM) 12.5 to 19.1, in Fresno County.

Project Description: Reconstruct two existing half interchanges to create full interchanges at American Avenue and North Avenue, including reconstruction of existing overcrossings and construction of on- and off-ramps with sidewalks, curbs and gutters, lighting and signalization, and a stormwater system. The project would combine the partial interchanges at North Avenue and Cedar Avenue into a single interchange at North Avenue providing all ramp connections, remove the existing partial interchange ramps at Cedar Avenue, and reconfigure the partial interchange at American Avenue into a full interchange. The project would also replace the existing overcrossing structures at North Avenue and American Avenue.

This is to advise that the California Transportation Commission has approved the above-described project on _____ (☐ Lead Agency/ ☒ Responsible Agency)
August 20-21, 2026, and has made the following determinations regarding the above described project:

1. The project (☒ will/ ☐ will not) have a significant effect on the environment.
2. ☒ An Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
____ A Negative Declaration was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures (☒ were/ ☐ were not) made a condition of the approval of the project.
4. Mitigation reporting or monitoring plan (☒ was / ☐ was not) adopted for this project.
5. A Statement of Overriding Considerations (☒ was / ☐ was not) adopted for this project.
6. Findings (☒ were/ ☐ were not) made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

The above identified document with comments and responses and record of project approval is available to the General Public at: Caltrans District 6, 1352 W. Olive Avenue, Fresno, CA 93728.

PAUL GOLASZEWSKI		Chief Deputy Director California Transportation Commission
<i>Signature (Public Agency)</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Title</i>

Date received for filing at LCI:



Environmental Document: *South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor Project, Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment with Finding of No Significant Impact*

Project Name: South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor Project

DIST-CO-RTE-PM: 06-FRE-SR99-PM 12.5 to 19.1

EA: 06-0H240

EFIS ID: 0600020559

SCH#: 2019039121

**CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
FINDINGS OF FACT**

FOR

**OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS AT NORTH AVENUE AND
AMERICAN AVENUE ON STATE ROUTE 99 (BETWEEN POST MILE 12.5 AND
POST MILE 19.1) IN FRESNO COUNTY**

The following information is presented to comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, title 14, sections 15091 and 15096, and also title 21, section 1501 et seq. Reference is made to the South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor Project, Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR)¹ for the project, which is the basic source for the information.

The following effects have been identified in the EIR as resulting from the project. Effects found not to be significant have not been included.

Climate Change

Adverse Environmental Effects:

The project would result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions when completed and during construction. The project would increase greenhouse gas emissions due to projected increases in population along with the implementation of planned development in the area. Construction greenhouse gas emissions would result from material processing, onsite construction equipment, and traffic delays due to construction. These emissions will be produced at different levels throughout the construction phase; their frequency and occurrence can be reduced through innovations

¹ A joint Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared in compliance with both the California Environmental Quality Act and National Environmental Policy Act. This Findings of Fact refers to the EIR, as the California Transportation Commission's role as a responsible agency is limited to considering the EIR.



in plans and specifications and by implementing better traffic management during construction phases.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is firmly committed to implementing measures to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. All construction contracts include Caltrans Standard Specifications Sections 7-1.02A and 7-1.02C, Emissions Reduction, which require contractors to comply with all laws applicable to the project and to certify they are aware of and will comply with all California Air Resources Board emission reduction regulations, and Section 14-9.02, Air Pollution Control, which requires contractors to comply with all air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes. Certain common regulations, such as equipment idling restrictions, that reduce construction vehicle emissions also help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The following measures will also be implemented in the project to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and potential climate change impacts from the project:

- The project would include the installation of a sidewalk and vegetative barrier on the east side of South Cherry Avenue, from Central Avenue to Orange Center Elementary School.
- One Level 2 electric vehicle charging station would be installed within Fresno County.
- The project will include the following Complete Street features: sidewalks, crosswalks, signalization, and wider shoulders. These features will safely accommodate bicycles, support use of non-motorized modes of travel, and fill gaps in the local Active Transportation Network described in the City of Fresno 2014 Active Transportation Plan.
- Any landscaping removed by the project will be replaced following construction of the project.
- The project will replace and install new Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) elements as follows: update existing traffic signals and install traffic monitoring stations, ramp meters, and closed-circuit televisions. Information from these



systems feed back into Caltrans' QuickMap mobile web-based travel alert system.

- Idling will be limited to 5 minutes for delivery and dump trucks and other diesel-powered equipment during construction.
- The contractor will be responsible for submitting a Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Report per Caltrans Standard Specification 14-10.02 so the recycling efforts can be monitored.
- Non-potable water will be used during construction.
- Construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained. All construction equipment will use low sulfur fuel as required by California Code of Regulations Title 17, Section 93114.
- Alternative bridge construction will be used where possible to reduce construction windows.
- High efficiency light-emitting diode lights will be used where lighting is required.
- A construction traffic management plan will be implemented. Construction traffic will be scheduled and routed to reduce congestion and related air quality impacts caused by idling vehicles along local roads during peak travel times.
- EPA Tier 4 rated construction equipment will be used as the project is within an Assembly Bill 617 community.

Even with all these measures the impact of greenhouse gases would be significant and unavoidable because the project would not contribute to statewide greenhouse gas reduction goals.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

Documents or other material which constitute the record of the proceedings upon which the California Transportation Commission's decision is based are available at:

<https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-6/district-6-projects/06-0h240>

Paul Golaszewski

Chief Deputy Director

Signature

Date



Environmental Document: *South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor Project, Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment with Finding of No Significant Impact*

Project Name: South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor Project

DIST-CO-RTE-PM: 06-FRE-SR99-PM 12.5 to 19.1

EA: 06-0H240

EFIS ID: 0600020559

SCH#: 2019039121

**CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS**

FOR

**OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS AT NORTH AVENUE AND
AMERICAN AVENUE ON STATE ROUTE 99 (BETWEEN POST MILE 12.5 AND
POST MILE 19.1) IN FRESNO COUNTY**

The following information is presented to comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, title 14, sections 15091 and 15096, and also title 21, section 1501 et seq. Reference is made to the South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor Project, Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR)¹ for the (Project), which is the basic source for the information.

The California Transportation Commission (Commission), in its independent judgment as a CEQA responsible agency, reviewed and considered the Final EIR prepared by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and finds that the Final EIR contains a complete, objective, and substantiated reporting of the Project's potential impacts.

The following resource topic has been identified as having impacts that are significant and not fully mitigable:

- Climate Change

¹ A joint Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared in compliance with both the California Environmental Quality Act and National Environmental Policy Act. This Findings of Fact refers to the EIR, as the California Transportation Commission's role as a responsible agency is limited to considering the EIR.



Overriding considerations that support approval of this recommended Project are as follows:

The Project would provide a long-term solution to the highly deteriorated pavement and degraded traffic conditions on the existing half interchanges on State Route 99 at American Avenue and North Avenue. The Project would reconstruct the existing interchanges by expanding them to full interchanges and bringing them into compliance with current Caltrans design standards, thereby improving the traffic operations at those locations, adding sidewalks and crosswalks for pedestrians, plus shoulders wide enough for bicycle use.

American Avenue

American Avenue is an east-west two-lane local road with a posted speed limit of 55 miles per hour. The existing interchange configuration at American Avenue is a half-diamond interchange with one on-ramp and one off-ramp. A southbound off-ramp on the west side of State Route 99 enables traffic to exit the highway onto American Avenue, and a northbound on-ramp on the east side of State Route 99 enables traffic to head north on State Route 99 from American Avenue. Having only two ramps prevents northbound State Route 99 traffic from exiting the highway at American Avenue, and there is no southbound on-ramp to State Route 99 for traffic leaving American Avenue to head south. A full interchange would provide all four options to enter and exit the highway in one location.

Half interchanges are no longer supported in Caltrans design standards. Half interchanges force vehicles to use local roads to find access to the highway or local destinations. For example, when delivery trucks travel north on State Route 99 to deliver supplies to the Fresno County Juvenile Justice Campus located next to the American Avenue interchange, currently those delivery trucks are unable to exit the highway at American Avenue because the interchange there has no northbound off-ramp. Instead, northbound traffic must exit the highway about 1 mile south at Clovis Avenue, or north at Chestnut Avenue. Once off the highway, vehicles must travel on local roads to get to the campus. Along the way, vehicles must stop at numerous local intersections and at times wait at railroad crossings for trains to pass before reaching the desired destination.

The current American Avenue overcrossing is a two-lane bridge structure. The southbound off-ramp, where it joins American Avenue, is currently controlled with a stop sign. A short section of sidewalk extends along the north side of the American Avenue overcrossing to the end of the bridge deck at each end. There is no lighting, and the existing stormwater system is outdated. The pavement is also old (constructed in 1965) and severely cracked and worn.



North Avenue

North Avenue is an east-west two-lane local road with a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour. The interchange at North Avenue is a half-diamond configuration with two split ramps: two ramps at North Avenue and two opposing ramps at Cedar Avenue. Currently, at North Avenue, there is a southbound off-ramp to exit State Route 99 onto North Avenue and a northbound on-ramp for traffic heading north on State Route 99. Cedar Avenue has the opposing ramps with a southbound on-ramp and a northbound off-ramp.

Split ramps mean that the ramps of a typical full interchange are split between two interchange locations. In this case, they are split 0.33 mile apart. Split access can cause additional out-of-direct travel, which is compounded by the diagonal orientation of State Route 99 crossing the north-south grid of local streets. Finding a path to destinations can be circuitous and disorienting unless drivers know the area well. Drivers then have a difficult time finding a path back to the correct ramps onto the highway, with stop-and-go travel as vehicles stop at numerous local intersections and/or wait at railroad crossings for trains to pass by.

The current North Avenue overcrossing is narrow with a two-lane bridge. The ramps are one lane only. Traffic is controlled with stop signs where the ramps meet North Avenue. Parkway Avenue extends between North and Cedar avenues on the west side of State Route 99, serving as a frontage road to businesses, as well as access to the southbound on-ramp to State Route 99 from Cedar Avenue. On the eastern side of State Route 99, North and Cedar avenues meet east of the overcrossing to form an intersection that is controlled by four-way signalization.

A short section of sidewalk extends along the north side of the North Avenue overcrossing and ends at each end of the bridge deck. There is no overhead lighting. There are traffic signals at the intersections of North and Orange avenues as well as North and Cedar avenues. There is an outdated stormwater system at the interchange. The pavement is old and severely cracked and worn.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Caltrans projects intersecting local city and county road systems must consider including features that align with the local planning goals for bicycles and pedestrians. The current dimensions of the overcrossings are narrow with no additional area for bicyclists and very little space for pedestrians and do not comply with current Caltrans standards. Improved bicycle and pedestrian access is a high priority for the City of Fresno and Fresno County and has been identified as a deficiency in the Project area.

Improved Traffic Circulation



The Project maintains existing facilities. With improvements to local roads and with construction of complete interchanges, the Project would contribute to smoother, more efficient traffic circulation, reduce stop-and-go traffic and lower vehicle emissions through the use of roundabouts and by providing more efficient direct access to and from the highway.

To the extent the significant effects of the Project are not avoided or substantially lessened to a level of insignificance, the Commission, having reviewed and considered the information contained in the Final EIR for the South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor Project, and having reviewed and considered the information contained in the public record, and having balanced the benefits of the Project against the unavoidable effects which remain, finds such unmitigated effects to be acceptable in consideration of the overriding considerations discussed herein.

Paul Golaszewski

Chief Deputy Director

Signature

Date

MEMORANDUM**To:** CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS
CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**CTC Meeting:** August 20-21, 2026**From:** STEVEN KECK, Chief Financial Officer**Reference Number:** 2.2c.(6), Action Item**Prepared By:** Jeremy Ketchum, Chief
Division of Environmental Analysis**Subject:** **APPROVAL OF PROJECT FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF FUNDING
RESOLUTION E-26-58****ISSUE:**

Should the California Transportation Commission (Commission), as a responsible agency, approve the attached Resolution E-26-58?

RECOMMENDATION:

The California Department of Transportation (Department) recommends that the Commission, as a responsible agency, approve the attached Resolution E-26-58.

BACKGROUND:**06-Fre-99, PM 12.5/19.1
Resolution E-26-58**

The attached resolution proposes to approve for future consideration of funding the following project for which a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) has been completed:

- South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor Project: State Route (SR) 99 in Fresno County. Reconstruct two existing half interchanges to create full interchanges at American Avenue and North Avenue, including reconstruction of existing overcrossings and construction of on- and off-ramps with sidewalks, curbs and gutters, lighting and signalization, and a stormwater system. (PPNO 6288)

The project is located on SR 99 from Post Mile (PM) 12.5 to PM 19.1 in Fresno County. The project would combine the partial interchanges at North Avenue and Cedar Avenue into a single interchange at North Avenue providing all ramp connections, remove the existing partial interchange ramps at Cedar Avenue, and reconfigure the partial interchange at American Avenue into a full interchange. The project would also replace the existing overcrossing

structures at North Avenue and American Avenue. The project is currently programmed in the 2026 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Regional Improvement Program. The total programmed amount is \$189,446,000. Construction is scheduled to begin in Fiscal Year 2027-28. The scope, as described for the selected alternative, is consistent with the project scope as programmed by the Commission in the 2026 STIP.

A copy of the FEIR has been provided to Commission staff. Resources in the project area that may be significantly impacted by the project but would have mitigation measures implemented to reduce impacts to less-than-significant include paleontological, hazardous waste and materials, and animal species. Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures will reduce potential effects on paleontological, hazardous waste and materials, and animal species. These measures include, but are not limited to, creation of a Paleontological Mitigation Plan, providing pre-construction training to all project personnel, placement of recovered fossils in an approved repository, and construction monitoring. Further, pesticide and arsenic testing would be conducted, creation of a Lead Compliance Plan for the handling of lead-impacted soil, re-use of excess soil and/or disposal of excess soil in accordance with the Department of Toxic Substances Control, assurance that soil borrow material comes from approved sites, and written notification would be provided to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District 10 working days prior to any demolition activity. Buildings and structures would be surveyed for asbestos, and, if found, asbestos would be collected for laboratory analysis for determining proper handling and disposal; construction operations would adhere to the local air district Indirect Source Review Rule for construction emissions control, dust control, and creation of an Asbestos Compliance Plan. Lastly, a preconstruction survey for migratory birds, Swainson's hawks, and bats would be conducted 30 days before the start of construction, minimization efforts and no-work buffer zones would be established for active nests, environmentally sensitive areas would be established to prevent nesting disturbance, work would be suspended for unpreventable nesting activity, trees would be removed only outside of nesting seasons; for bat roosts identified within impacted structures, one-way exclusionary devices or deterrents would be installed outside of roosting season and if roosts are identified outside of impacted structures that may be disturbed by construction activities, activities would be suspended. Potential impacts associated with the project can all be mitigated to below significant except for climate change impacts, for which a Statement of Overriding Considerations pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act was prepared. Although mitigation would be implemented, such as installation of complete streets features and vegetative barriers, installation of an electric vehicle charging station, replacement of landscaping, use of Intelligent Transportation System elements, idling limitations on delivery and construction equipment and other construction emission control measures, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. As a result, an FEIR was prepared for the project.

Attachments



South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor Project



Project Name: South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor Project

DIST-CO-RTE-PM: 06-FRE-SR99-PM12.5 to 19.1

EA: 06-0H240

EFIS ID: 0600020559

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FINDINGS**

FOR

**PROPOSES OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS AT NORTH AVENUE AND
AMERICAN AVENUE ON STATE ROUTE 99 (BETWEEN POST MILE 12.5 AND
POST MILE 19.1) IN FRESNO COUNTY**

The following information is presented to comply with State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 California Code of Regulations, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15091) and the Department of Transportation and California Transportation Commission Environmental Regulations (Title 21, California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Chapter 11, Section 1501 et seq.). Reference is made to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the project, which is the basic source for the information.

The following significant effects have been identified in the EIR as resulting from the project. Effects found not to be significant have not been included.

Climate Change

Adverse Environmental Effects:

The project would result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions when completed and during construction. The project would increase greenhouse gas emissions due to projected increases in population along with the implementation of planned development in the area. Construction greenhouse gas emissions would result from material processing, onsite construction equipment, and traffic delays due to construction. These emissions will be produced at different levels throughout the construction phase; their frequency and occurrence can be reduced through innovations in plans and specifications and by implementing better traffic management during construction phases.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

Statement of Facts:

Caltrans is firmly committed to implementing measures to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. All construction contracts include Caltrans Standard Specifications Sections 7-1.02A and 7 1.02C, Emissions Reduction, which require contractors to comply with all laws applicable to the project and to certify they are aware of and will comply with all California Air Resources Board emission reduction regulations, and Section 14-9.02, Air Pollution Control, which requires contractors to comply with all air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes. Certain common regulations, such as equipment idling restrictions, that reduce construction vehicle emissions also help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The following measures will also be implemented in the project to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and potential climate change impacts from the project:

- The project would include the installation of a sidewalk and vegetative barrier on the east side of South Cherry Avenue, from Central Avenue to Orange Center Elementary School
- One Level 2, Electric Vehicle charging station would be installed within Fresno County
- The project will include the following Complete Street features: sidewalks, crosswalks, signalization, and wider shoulders. These features will safely accommodate bicycles, support use of non-motorized modes of travel, and fill gaps in the local Active Transportation Network described in the City of Fresno 2014 Active Transportation Plan.
- Any landscaping removed by the project will be replaced following construction of the project.
- Replace and install new Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) elements, as follows: update existing traffic signals and install traffic monitoring stations, ramp meters, and closed-circuit televisions. Information from these systems feed back into Caltrans' QuickMap mobile web-based travel alert system.
- Idling will be limited to 5 minutes for delivery and dump trucks and other diesel-powered equipment during construction.
- The contractor will be responsible for submitting a Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Report per Caltrans Standard Specification 14-10.02 so the recycling efforts can be monitored.
- Non-potable water will be used during construction.

- Construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained. All construction equipment will use low sulfur fuel as required by California Code of Regulations Title 17, Section 93114.
- Alternative bridge construction (ABC) will be used where possible to reduce construction windows.
- High efficiency light-emitting diode (LED) lights will be used where lighting is required.
- A construction traffic management plan will be implemented. Construction traffic will be scheduled and routed to reduce congestion and related air quality impacts caused by idling vehicles along local roads during peak travel times.
- EPA Tier 4 rated construction equipment will be used as the project is within an AB-617 community.

Even with all these minimization and mitigation measures the impact of greenhouse gases would be significant and unavoidable because the project would not contribute to statewide greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Diana Gomez

District Director (or designee)



Signature

1/30/2023

Date

Project Name: South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor Project

DIST-CO-RTE-PM: 06-FRE-SR99-PM12.5 to 19.1

EA: 06-0H240

EFIS ID: 0600020559

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS**

FOR

**PROPOSES OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS AT NORTH AVENUE AND
AMERICAN AVENUE ON STATE ROUTE 99 (BETWEEN POST MILE 12.5 AND
POST MILE 19.1) IN FRESNO COUNTY**

The following information is presented to comply with State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 California Code of Regulations, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15093), and the Department of Transportation and California Transportation Commission Environmental Regulations (Title 21 California Code of Regulations, Division 2, Chapter 11, Section 1501 et seq.). Reference is made to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the project, which is the basic source for the information.

The following impacts have been identified as significant and not fully mitigable:

- Climate Change

Overriding considerations that support approval of this recommended project are as follows:

The project would provide a long-term solution to the highly deteriorated pavement and degraded traffic conditions on the existing half interchanges on State Route 99 at American Avenue and North Avenue. The project would reconstruct the existing interchanges by expanding them to full interchanges and bringing them into compliance with current Caltrans design standards, thereby improving the traffic operations at those locations, adding sidewalks and crosswalks for pedestrians, plus shoulders wide enough for bicycle use.

American Avenue

American Avenue is an east-west two-lane local road with a posted speed limit of 55 miles per hour. The existing interchange configuration at American Avenue is a half-diamond interchange with one on-ramp and one off-ramp. A southbound off-ramp on the west side of State Route 99 enables traffic to exit the highway onto American Avenue, and a northbound on-ramp on the east side of State Route 99 enables traffic to head north on State Route 99 from American Avenue. Having only two ramps prevents

northbound State Route 99 traffic from exiting the highway at American Avenue, and there is no southbound on-ramp to State Route 99 for traffic leaving American Avenue to head south. A full interchange would provide all four options to enter and exit the highway in one location.

Half interchanges are no longer supported in Caltrans design standards. Half interchanges force vehicles to use local roads to find access to the highway or local destinations. For example, when delivery trucks travel north on State Route 99 to deliver supplies to the Fresno County Juvenile Justice Campus located next to the American Avenue interchange, currently those delivery trucks are unable to exit the highway at American Avenue because the interchange there has no northbound off-ramp. Instead, northbound traffic must exit the highway about 1 mile south at Clovis Avenue, or north at Chestnut Avenue. Once off the highway, vehicles must travel on local roads to get to the campus. Along the way, vehicles must stop at numerous local intersections and at times wait at railroad crossings for trains to pass before reaching the desired destination.

The current American Avenue overcrossing is a two-lane bridge structure. The southbound off-ramp, where it joins American Avenue, is currently controlled with a stop sign. A short section of sidewalk extends along the north side of the American Avenue overcrossing to the end of the bridge deck at each end. There is no lighting, and the existing stormwater system is outdated. The pavement is also old (constructed in 1965) and severely cracked and worn.

North Avenue

North Avenue is an east-west two-lane local road with a posted speed limit of 45 miles per hour. The interchange at North Avenue is a half-diamond configuration with two split ramps: two ramps at North Avenue and two opposing ramps at Cedar Avenue. Currently, at North Avenue, there is a southbound off-ramp to exit State Route 99 onto North Avenue and a northbound on-ramp for traffic heading north on State Route 99. Cedar Avenue has the opposing ramps with a southbound on-ramp and a northbound off-ramp.

Split ramps mean that the ramps of a typical full interchange are split between two interchange locations. In this case, they are split 0.33 mile apart. Split access can cause additional out-of-direct travel, which is compounded by the diagonal orientation of State Route 99 crossing the north-south grid of local streets. Finding a path to destinations can be circuitous and disorienting unless drivers know the area well. Drivers then have a difficult time finding a path back to the correct ramps onto the highway, with stop-and-go travel as vehicles stop at numerous local intersections and/or wait at railroad crossings for trains to pass by.

The current North Avenue overcrossing is narrow with a two-lane bridge. The ramps are one lane only. Traffic is controlled with stop signs where the ramps meet North Avenue. Parkway Avenue extends between North and Cedar avenues on the west side of State Route 99, serving as a frontage road to businesses, as well as access to the

southbound on-ramp to State Route 99 from Cedar Avenue. On the eastern side of State Route 99, North and Cedar avenues meet east of the overcrossing to form an intersection that is controlled by four-way signalization.

A short section of sidewalk extends along the north side of the North Avenue overcrossing and ends at each end of the bridge deck. There is no overhead lighting. There are traffic signals at the intersections of North and Orange avenues as well as North and Cedar avenues. There is an outdated stormwater system at the interchange. The pavement is old and severely cracked and worn.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Caltrans projects intersecting local city and county road systems must consider including features that align with the local planning goals for bicycles and pedestrians. The current dimensions of the overcrossings are narrow with no additional area for bicyclists and very little space for pedestrians and do not comply with current Caltrans standards. Improved bicycle and pedestrian access is a high priority for the City of Fresno and Fresno County and has been identified as a deficiency in the project area.

Improved traffic circulation

The project maintains existing facilities. With improvements to local roads and with construction of complete interchanges, the project would contribute to smoother, more efficient traffic circulation, reduce stop-and-go traffic and lower vehicle emissions through the use of roundabouts and by providing more efficient direct access to and from the highway.

To the extent the significant effects of the project are not avoided or substantially lessened to a level of insignificance, Caltrans, having reviewed and considered the information contained in the FEIR for the South Fresno State Route 99 Corridor project, and having reviewed and considered the information contained in the public record, and having balanced the benefits of the project against the unavoidable effects which remain, finds such unmitigated effects to be acceptable in consideration of the overriding considerations discussed herein.

Diana Gomez

District Director (or designee)



Signature