



# Board Agenda Item 34

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DATE: December 15, 2015

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Alan Weaver, Director  
Department of Public Works and Planning

SUBJECT: Houghton Canal Bridge Replacement Project on Chateau Fresno Avenue

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

**Adopt Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for Initial Study Application No. 7005 for the Houghton Canal Bridge Replacement Project located on Chateau Fresno Avenue between State Route 180 and Belmont Avenue, approximately 4.25 miles west of the City of Fresno.**

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) the County prepared an Initial Study which determined that mitigation measures are required to reduce the project's impacts on the environment to a less than significant level. A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) have been prepared for the project and are included as Exhibit A and B.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

The Board may vote not to adopt the MND if the Board determines a significant environmental impact may result from the project. The Board should then direct staff to modify the MMRP or prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no net County cost associated with the recommended action. The project is eligible for funding under the Federal Highway Bridge Program (HBP), which is administered by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The HBP will provide funding for 100% of project costs currently estimated at \$1,346,000.

DISCUSSION:

The County prepares an Initial Study to determine whether a proposed project may have a significant impact on the environment. Based on the findings in the Initial Study, a Negative Declaration, MND, or EIR is prepared. A Negative Declaration is prepared if the Initial Study process determines the project as proposed will not have a significant impact on the environment. If mitigation measures are required to reduce impacts to less than a significant level, a MND and an accompanying MMRP are prepared. An EIR is required if the Initial Study determines that the project may have a significant impact on the environment.

The Houghton Canal Bridge on Chateau Fresno Avenue, located between State Route 180 and Belmont Avenue, is a structurally deficient timber bridge that requires replacement due to its substandard load carrying capacity. The existing two-lane timber bridge, built in 1925, will be replaced with a concrete bridge. A Type Selection Report was completed in May 2015 by the structural engineering consultant designing the project, Hatch Mott MacDonald. The report concluded that the best suited bridge type would be a cast-in-place

pre-stressed concrete slab bridge.

The action before the Board today consists of the adoption of a MND in conformance with the provisions of CEQA for the Houghton Canal Bridge Replacement Project. Initial Study No. 7005 (see Exhibit C) was prepared for this project, in which the existing surrounding environment and the potential impacts associated with the project were evaluated. The Initial Study concluded that mitigation measures are necessary to address potential impacts and a MND is required. There is no evidence that demonstrates the project will have a significant impact on the environment with the implementation of the mitigation measures included in the MMRP.

The MMRP includes mitigation measures to address potential impacts to cultural resources and to address worker safety while handling hazardous materials as follows:

- There are no records of cultural or archaeological resources within the project locations. However, if cultural or archaeological resources or human remains are found during construction, the contractor is required to cease all operations immediately and cannot resume without authorization from a qualified archaeologist, paleontologist or the Fresno County Coroner, as appropriate.
- No disposal of excess soil outside the project area shall be allowed without proper testing for disposal requirements. All construction materials deemed hazardous as identified in the demolition process shall be characterized and disposed of in accordance with current federal, state and local requirements.

Additionally, the MMRP includes Project Notes to facilitate compliance with mandatory/regulatory requirements. The Project Notes address commitments such as testing for asbestos, lead and agricultural chemicals; permitting for work in the canal bed; noise ordinance compliance, and Best Management Practices.

The project will require future Board approval to acquire right-of-way, adopt and advertise construction plans and specifications, and award a construction contract.

OTHER REVIEWING AGENCIES:

Caltrans provides oversight on local projects where federal funds are allocated.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #58, October 28, 2014, Agreement 14-661

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Location map  
Exhibits A - C

CAO ANALYST:

John Hays