



Board Agenda Item 7

DATE: January 6, 2026

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Steven E. White, Director
Department of Public Works and Planning

SUBJECT: Discuss and Provide Direction Regarding North Rio Vista Avenue

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Discuss and provide direction regarding North Rio Vista Avenue.

The County has received numerous complaints regarding truck traffic on N. Rio Vista Avenue since the initiation of construction of the State Route 180 east expansion beginning in 2018. While the Department of Public Works and Planning (Department) has taken actions to address the concerns, complaints continue to be received. As a result, the Department is bringing this matter to your Board for consideration and direction regarding Department options discussed in this Agenda Item. This item pertains to a location in District 5.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

If your Board takes no action, the status quo will remain.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no Net County Cost associated with the recommended action.

DISCUSSION:

The County has received complaints of truck traffic on N. Rio Vista Avenue. The area of concern is the segment of Rio Vista Avenue located between E. State Route 180 and E. Trimmers Springs Road (see Location Map). Rio Vista Avenue is a two-lane local road with 20 feet of pavement width within 40 feet of existing right-of-way. Pursuant to the County's General Plan, local roads can accommodate all types of traffic including trucks as well as provide direct access to abutting properties and connect with other local roads, collectors, arterials, super arterials, and expressways. Local roads are typically developed as two-lane undivided roadways. Access to abutting private property and intersecting streets is also permitted. Rio Vista Avenues is in an area predominantly designated and zoned for exclusive agricultural uses. Land uses in this area include rural homesites, agricultural uses, and the Kings River.

In 2018, the eastward expansion of State Route 180 resulted in disruption of existing traffic patterns and road closures. Rio Vista Avenue was used to reroute traffic while State Route 180 was under construction. When State Route 180 was completed in 2020, it appears that travelers continued to use Rio Vista Avenue instead of other roads including N. Newmark and N. Oliver Avenues.

Since receiving resident complaints beginning in 2018, the Department has taken the following actions:

- In 2021, conducted a traffic engineering analysis which resulted in reducing the speed limit along Rio Vista Avenue from 55 miles per hour (MPH) to 45 MPH, and commencement of enforcement by the California Highway Patrol (CHP).
- In 2022, Department staff conducted a traffic count which measured an average of 20 southbound and 10 northbound daily truck trips.
- In 2020, Department staff contacted Google and requested their GPS routing maps be modified to direct trucks to the intersection of E. State Route 180 and N. Oliver Avenue.
- In 2021, the Department installed signage recommending truck traffic take a different route.
- In 2024, agricultural packing operations were contacted and encouraged to notify their truck drivers to avoid using Rio Vista Avenue.
- In 2024, Department staff met with Caltrans and requested they install signage within their state route right-of-way at the intersection of State Route 180 and Rio Vista Avenue to prohibit truck turns onto Rio Vista Avenue. Caltrans, however, denied the request.
- In 2024, the Department placed an asphalt overlay on Rio Vista Avenue as part of routine maintenance to smooth the road surface to address noise and vibration complaints.

While the County continues to receive complaints, traffic counts show a small percentage of existing traffic on Rio Vista Avenue are trucks.

Options for Board of Supervisors Consideration:

The following options are presented for your Board's consideration and discussion:

Option 1:

Maintain the status quo until the Department completes and your Board approves a truck route study and implementing ordinance. The County General Plan includes policies that commits the County to working with the cities and preparing designated truck routes through areas of the County, including routes for trucks serving certain uses (e.g. solid waste, hazardous materials, industrial materials). Additionally, the State recently passed SB 415 and AB 98 which requires the County to prepare and adopt a local ordinance establishing designated truck routes by January 1, 2028. Preparation of a countywide truck route plan provides the opportunity to comprehensively review and identify appropriate routes for truck within the unincorporated areas of Fresno County. Rio Vista Avenue would be evaluated as part of this transportation planning effort. During the interim, complaining residents would work directly with the CHP to enforce all speed limits violations. Department staff recommends Option 1.

Option 2:

Consider vacating this segment of Rio Vista Avenue. This option would require residents to apply for a vacation of the roadway. The residents would be responsible for application fees and costs, even if the vacation is denied. Upon vacation, Rio Vista Avenue would become a private road owned by adjacent property owners. Once the road reverts to the property owners, it would no longer receive County maintenance. Staff notes that Rio Vista currently provides access to the County's Thorburn River Park which would need to be preserved as part of the vacation process.

Option 3:

Widen Rio Vista Avenue by adding paved shoulders to satisfy current standards to better accommodate existing traffic. For this to occur, a funding source would need to be identified, and additional right-of-way may need to be acquired. Staff notes that a wider road could potentially result in higher traffic speeds.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #47, August 10, 2021

BAI #14, July 13, 2021

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Location Map

CAO ANALYST:

Maria Valencia