



Board Agenda Item 11

DATE: January 8, 2019

TO: Board of Supervisors

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

SUBJECT: Sand Creek Bridge Replacement Project - Initial Study Application No. 7217, State Clearinghouse No. 2017061045

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Adopt Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for the Sand Creek Bridge Replacement Project on Ennis Road, approximately one-third mile south of George Smith Road, near the community of Squaw Valley (Initial Study Application No. 7217, State Clearinghouse No. 2017061045).

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Department of Public Works and Planning, Development Services Division, prepared an Initial Study, which determined that mitigation measures are required to reduce project impacts on the environment to a less than significant level, see Exhibit A. A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) have been prepared for the project, see Exhibits B and C. This item pertains to a location in District 5.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Your Board may choose not to adopt the MND if determined that a significant environmental impact may result from the project then direct the Department to modify the MMRP or prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. The project is eligible for 100% reimbursement under the Highway Bridge Program along with toll credits, which are allocated to local agencies by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to be used in lieu of matching funds the agency would otherwise have to contribute for Federally-funded transportation projects. Sufficient appropriations and estimated revenues are included in the Department's Roads Org 4510 FY 2018-19 Adopted Budget.

DISCUSSION:

According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(c), the purpose of an Initial Study is to provide a preliminary analysis of a proposed action to determine whether a Negative Declaration or an EIR should be prepared. An Initial Study also enables the County to modify a project, mitigating adverse impacts in lieu of preparing an EIR, thereby potentially enabling the project to qualify for a MND. If mitigation measures are required to reduce impacts to a less than significant level, a MND and an accompanying MMRP are prepared. The EIR is required if the Initial Study determines the project may have a significant impact on the environment that cannot be reduced to a less than significant level.

The Initial Study prepared for the Sand Creek Bridge Replacement Project concluded that mitigation measures are necessary to address potential impacts and a MND and accompanying MMRP is required. The recommended action consists of the adoption of the MND in conformance with the provisions of CEQA.

The proposed project would replace the existing 30-foot long, 23-foot wide two-lane functionally obsolete Sand Creek Bridge on Ennis Road with a new two-lane bridge built to current standards. The existing bridge is classified as functionally obsolete due to the narrow winding approaches. As designed, the new structure would be an approximately 100-foot long, 24-foot wide single-span cast-in-place concrete box girder with 24-foot wide approaches. The curves at the approaches would be softened and the bridge would be constructed on a new alignment and raised approximately 10 feet to increase site distance at the bridge. Hummingbird Lane would be realigned near its intersection with Ennis Road to meet current standards. Due to the low average daily traffic and short 4-mile detour length, Ennis Road will be closed during construction. The project is needed to improve public safety at the bridge.

Initial Study Application No. 7217 indicates that impacts from the project, when the mitigation measures in the attached MMRP are incorporated, will not exceed significance thresholds established by regulatory agencies. The MMRP includes mitigation measures to address potential impacts to Biological and Cultural Resources and Land Use and Planning and also lists project notes identifying environmental regulatory and permitting requirements.

A Notice of Intent (NOI) to adopt a MND for the project was originally published in the Fresno Business Journal on June 21, 2017. In response to the Notice, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) requested additional information regarding project impacts to riparian/riverbank habitat, the number of trees to be removed, and the associated revegetation plan. The Department delayed CEQA adoption at the time to respond to CDFW and modify the MMRP to provide more detailed mitigation measures. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15073.5, the Initial Study was recirculated for public comment and a revised NOI was published in the Fresno Business Journal on November 14, 2018.

Based on the Initial Study, the Department has concluded that preparation of an EIR is not required for the project, and recommends adoption of a MND based on the findings of Initial Study No. 7217.

With your Board's approval, the MND will be adopted for the Sand Creek Bridge Replacement Project.

OTHER REVIEWING AGENCIES:

Development of this project was coordinated with Caltrans and Caltrans provides oversight on local projects where Federal funds are allocated.

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Location Map
Exhibits A - C

CAO ANALYST:

Sonia M. De La Rosa