



Legislation Text

File #: 18-0669, **Version:** 1

Community Development Services, Department of Transportation, recommending the Board consider the following actions related to the Hanks Exchange Road at Squaw Hollow Creek - Bridge Replacement Project, CIP 77135:

- 1) Adopt the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan; and
- 2) Approve the Project as described in the CEQA Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration.

FUNDING: Highway Bridge Program (99%) and Regional Surface Transportation Program (1%).
(Federal Funds)

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Community Development Services, Department of Transportation (Transportation), recommends the Board adopt the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan and approve the Hanks Exchange Road at Squaw Hollow Creek - Bridge Replacement Project (Project), Capital Improvement Program (CIP) 77135, as described in the CEQA Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND).

The recommended Board actions are based on the following findings:

- A) The CEQA document, on file with the Clerk of the Board and on Transportation's website, <https://www.edcgov.us/Government/dot/Pages/ceqa.aspx>, was prepared pursuant to Public Resources Code §21000 et seq., and State CEQA Guidelines.
- B) There is no substantial evidence that the Project, as mitigated, will have a significant effect on the environment.
- C) The IS/MND for the Project reflect Transportation's independent judgment and analysis, as lead agency for the County.

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

Transportation proposes to replace the existing functionally obsolete bridge (No. 25C0053) over Squaw Hollow Creek on Hanks Exchange Road, located approximately 0.4 miles south of Pleasant Valley Road. Hanks Exchange Road is a local rural road with a two-way travel lane that has an average daily traffic count of about 1,245 trips near the project area. The existing bridge over Squaw Hollow Creek was constructed in 1930 and is considered functionally obsolete per Caltrans Standards with a sufficiency rating of 30.7 out of 100.

Purpose: The purpose of the project is to improve traffic safety conditions on a public roadway and comply with current County and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Guidelines by: (1) replacing a functionally obsolete bridge built in 1930 with a new structure that meets current standards and (2) widening the road geometry approaching the bridge from both south-bound and north-bound directions. The overall project objective is to improve safety and traffic operations along Hanks Exchange Road. County staff presented this project and the recommendation for replacement at a public community meeting held on May 12, 2014 at Gold Oak Elementary School.

CEQA: Transportation is the CEQA lead agency and prepared the IS/MND to consider the significance of potential impacts resulting from the Project in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines (14 CA Administrative Code, §14000 et seq.). Adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan would complete the CEQA portion of the environmental phase toward ultimate delivery of the Project. Because this is a federally funded project, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has designated California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as the lead agency to administer the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Categorical Exclusion, utilizing the required studies completed by Transportation as lead agency for the County. At this time, NEPA is not yet approved. Request for approval of NEPA follows CEQA.

Project Description: Transportation proposes to remove and replace the existing functionally obsolete single span bridge built in 1930, with a standard two-lane bridge approximately 32 feet wide and 60 feet long. The new bridge would have two 12-foot wide travel lanes with shoulders on each side. The new bridge would be located west of the existing bridge, which would shift the road further away from the driveway entrance to the adjacent Fausel Ranch property. The bridge structure type has not been determined. The foundation of the new bridge may consist of cast-in-drilled-hole piles or spread footings, which will be determined based on the results of a geotechnical study. The bridge abutments would be located on the banks of Squaw Hollow Creek and would not be in the active channel. Rock slope protection may be placed around the new abutment to protect them from scouring and erosion. It is anticipated that the excavation for the abutment would not exceed 20 feet (approximate) below the existing ground surface.

The Project plans to widen bridge roadway approaches from 18 feet to 30 feet to align with the new bridge width and may need to realign the approaches. Approximately 400 - 430 feet of Hanks Exchange Road would be reconstructed on both the south and north sides of the new bridge. As part of this realignment, cut and fill would be required along the new roadway, and fences, utilities, and drainage ditches may be relocated to follow the modified roadway. The driveway to the Fausel Ranch would be modified to match the new roadway and incorporate a segment of the existing roadway between the new roadway and existing driveway. In addition, pavement associated with the old roadway on the south side of the bridge would be removed, and the disturbed area would be restored in coordination with the property owner to match adjacent conditions.

New guardrails approximately 75 feet long would be installed adjacent to the bridge abutments on the northwest and southeast sides of the bridge. A retaining wall, approximately 260 feet long, would be installed on the west side of Hanks Exchange Road, south of the existing bridge, to stabilize the hill slope. A drainage ditch would also be constructed along the west side of the proposed retaining wall. The existing property fences on both sides of the road would be relocated, extending approximately 350 feet on the eastern side of the road and approximately 1,900 feet on the western side. A fence may be installed along the top of the retaining wall or west of the proposed drainage ditch. Existing drainage ditches would likely be shifted to follow the modified segment of the road and convey road-side runoff into the creek. In addition, a drainage culvert would be installed under Hanks Exchange Road (north of the new bridge) to convey runoff under the road. The barn on the eastern side of Hanks Exchange Road (north of the bridge) would be left in place; however, the sheds, fence line, and cattle chute on the opposite side of the road would be demolished and properly disposed of to accommodate the roadway modifications.

Construction: The Project is anticipated to start in 2019 or later, once all required approvals and

funding have been obtained. The construction period for the bridge and roadway improvements would take up to 1.5 years and generally take place between April 15 and October 30. Work performed in and around the creek (e.g., diversion dam, bridge construction) would be scheduled during dry months. Utility relocation (e.g., overhead telephone and electrical, underground waterline) may be scheduled within a year prior to bridge construction.

With the exception of occasional short-term closures, the existing bridge would remain open during construction. During closures, one-way reversing traffic would be controlled by flaggers. Access for emergency vehicles through the project area would be maintained at all times.

Mitigation Measures: Mitigation measures have been added to the Project to reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level. The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan is provided as Appendix A of the IS/MND. Implementation of the mitigation measures will reduce potentially significant impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Public Notification: The Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration was advertised in the Mountain Democrat on March 16, 2018, and the entire document was posted on Transportation's website at <https://www.edcgov.us/Government/dot/Pages/ceqa.aspx>. Hard copies were made available at the Transportation office located at 2850 Fairlane Court, Placerville and the El Dorado County Library in Placerville. Individual notices were sent via US Mail to all property owners within the limits of the Project and to relevant agencies. The public review period began on March 16, 2018, and ended on April 15, 2018.

Public Comments: An email was received on March 26, 2018 from one community member expressing support for the Project. An email was received from Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians on February 28, 2018 (during the AB 52 Consultation period) requesting a tribal monitor be on site during ground-disturbing activities. An email was received from United Auburn Indian Community on March 20, 2018 requesting: 1) to be notified immediately if there are any design changes, and 2) requesting that a tribal monitor be on site during all construction activities; and also noting that the project site has a number of native plants that they would like to see propagated and revegetated. A standard letter dated April 9, 2018 was received from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB) providing a general summary of regulatory and permitting requirements as they relate to the protection of water quality.

Response to Comments: No response is necessary for the letter of support from the community member and the standard letter from the CVRWQCB. No new information, no new impacts, and no new mitigation measures were identified as a result of the comments received. No responses to the comments are necessary.

A clarification was added to the IS/MND as a result of the email received from United Auburn Indian Community on March 20, 2018. This clarification is shown as underlined text on page 44 of the final IS/MND. The CEQA Guidelines §15073.5(a) requires that a lead agency re-circulate a negative declaration "when the document must be substantially revised." Recirculation is not required when new information is added to the negative declaration which merely clarifies, amplifies, or makes insignificant modifications to the negative declaration.

Transportation will coordinate with Shingle Springs Band of Miwok and United Auburn Indian Community prior to project construction on a tribal monitor and to evaluate the feasibility for the

propagation and revegetation of native plants that will be disturbed.

ALTERNATIVES

- 1) The Board could choose not to adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, and not approve the Project. Transportation would make adjustments as directed by the Board and bring this item back to the Board at a later date. This could increase project cost and delay delivery.
- 2) The Board could cancel the Project. Transportation would be required to return all federal funds spent thus far.

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Prior to construction, resource agency permits may be required as follows:

- 1) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Section 404 Clean Water Act Nationwide Permit
- 2) CVRWQCB - Section 401 Water Quality Certification
- 3) California Department of Fish and Wildlife - Streambed Alteration Agreement
- 4) El Dorado County Air Quality Management District - Fugitive Dust Plan Approval

County Counsel has reviewed and approved the IS/MND.

CAO RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board approve this item.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Project is included in Transportation's adopted 2017 CIP, which was approved by the Board on June 27, 2017 (Item 25). Adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan and approval of the Project will not result in any change to Net County Cost.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

N/A

TRANSPORTATION FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

- 1) File a Notice of Determination with the office of the County Recorder/Clerk.
- 2) Proceed with the projects through the NEPA clearance process, final design and construction.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Infrastructure

CONTACT

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