# Merced 140 Planada Intersection

In Merced County on State Route 140 in Planada at the intersection of Plainsburg Road
10-MER-140-PM 43.5-43.9
Project ID Number 1020000188
State Clearinghouse Number 2022080002

## Initial Study
## with Negative Declaration

**Volume 1 of 2**


Prepared by the
State of California Department of Transportation

**November 2022**

Caltrans

# General Information About This Document

Document prepared by: Juan C. Torres, Associate Environmental Planner

[The following text has been added since the draft environmental document was circulated.] The Initial Study circulated to the public for 30 days between August 1, 2022, and August 30, 2022. Comments received during this period are included in Appendix B. Elsewhere, language has been added throughout the document to indicate where a change has been made since the circulation of the draft environmental document. Minor editorial changes and clarifications have not been so indicated.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document can be made available in Braille, in large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please write to or call Caltrans, Attention: Haesun Lim, District 6 Environmental Division, 2015 East Shields Avenue, Suite 100, Fresno, California 93726; phone number 559-970-2348 (Voice), or use the California Relay Service 1-800-735-2929 (Teletype to Voice), 1-800-735-2922 (Voice to Teletype), 1-800-855-3000 (Spanish Teletype to Voice and Voice to Teletype), 1-800-854-7784 (Spanish and English Speech-to-Speech), or 711.

State Clearinghouse Number 2022080002
10-MER-140-PM 43.5-43.9
Project ID Number 1020000188

Intersection control improvement on State Route 140 in Planada at the intersection of Plainsburg Road in Merced County

# INITIAL STUDY
# with Negative Declaration

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Public Resources Code

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation
and
County of Merced
Responsible Agency: California Transportation Commission

for, Haesun Lim

Philip Vallejo
Deputy District Director Environmental, District 6
California Department of Transportation
CEQA Lead Agency

11/30/2022
Date

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# Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

**State Clearinghouse Number:** 2022080002

**District-County-Route-Post Mile:** 10-MER-140-PM 43.5-43.9

**EA/Project Number:** EA 10-1M1700 and Project ID Number 1020000188

## Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes a safety improvement project on State Route 140 from post miles 43.5 to 43.9 to improve the intersection control where the route meets Plainsburg Road near Planada in Merced County. State Route 140 at Plainsburg Road is a four-legged intersection with stop-control access along Plainsburg Road and State Route 140. The project proposes to reduce the number and severity of broadside and head-on collisions at this location by improving intersection control.

## Determination

An Initial Study has been prepared by Caltrans, District 10. On the basis of this study, it is determined that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

- The project will have "No Impact" on the following resources: Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forest Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utility and Service Systems, and Wildfire.

- The project will have a "Less Than Significant Impact" on the following resource with the implementation of the proposed minimization measures:

    - **Hazardous Waste—**A Lead Compliance Plan and the appropriate project Standard Special Provisions/Nonstandard Special Provisions will be edited for the project and provided during the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) phase.

for, Haesun Lim

Philip Vallejo
Deputy District Director Environmental, District 6
California Department of Transportation

11/30/2022
Date

# Table of Contents

# Chapter 1 Proposed Project

## 1.1 Introduction

State Route 140 is a west-to-east corridor that begins at Interstate 5, west of the City of Gustine in Merced County, and ends at the Yosemite National Park boundary near El Portal in Mariposa County. It goes through the flat agricultural land of the San Joaquin Valley through Merced County and continues southeast through the foothills of Mariposa County.

State Route 140 is a year-round highway serving the Cities of Gustine and Merced and the communities of Planada, Catheys Valley, Mariposa, Midpines, Briceburg, and El Portal. Along this corridor are various nature and recreational areas, including the San Luis National Wildlife Refuge, Kesterson National Wildlife Refuge, Sierra National Forest, and Yosemite National Park.

Except for a short, four-lane section through the City of Merced, State Route 140 is a two-lane conventional highway for its entire length. A route break of 1.9 miles occurs in the City of Merced, where State Route 140 runs concurrently with State Route 99. State Route 140 also runs concurrently with State Route 49 through a portion of Mariposa County, from the South Junction of State Route 49 through the North Junction of State Route 49. State Route 140 passes through flat terrain in Merced County, changes into rolling terrain in Mariposa County, and then changes into mountainous terrain as it approaches Yosemite National Park and Yosemite Valley.

This intersection project is in the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy for Merced County Association of Governments as a regionally significant project and is listed on the Tier 1 project list.

## 1.2 Purpose and Need

### 1.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the project is to reduce the number and severity of broadside and head-on collisions at the intersection of State Route 140 and Plainsburg Road through intersection control improvements.

### 1.2.2 Need

During a five-year period, from July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2020, 14 collisions have occurred at this intersection, where no traffic signals exist. This pattern of broadside collisions has been identified at the intersection due to motorists' failure to yield.

While the proposed project was in development, the Caltrans Traffic Operations/Maintenance crew installed a four-way stop at the intersection to bring a temporary measure of more traffic control to the intersection until a permanent solution could be implemented.

## 1.3 Project Description

State Route 140 and Plainsburg Road form a four-legged intersection with stop-control access (currently, stop signs at all four legs of the intersection). At this intersection, State Route 140 is a two-lane undivided roadway that goes in an east-west direction through the town of Planada. The roadway has two 12-foot-wide travel lanes with 8-foot-wide shoulders. Eastbound State Route 140 has an existing designated left-turn lane, and westbound State Route 140 has an existing two-way left-turn lane. A bike lane exists along State Route 140 on the eastern leg of the intersection in both directions. See Figure 1-1 for the project vicinity map and Figure 1-2 for the project location map.

**Figure 1-1 Project Vicinity Map**

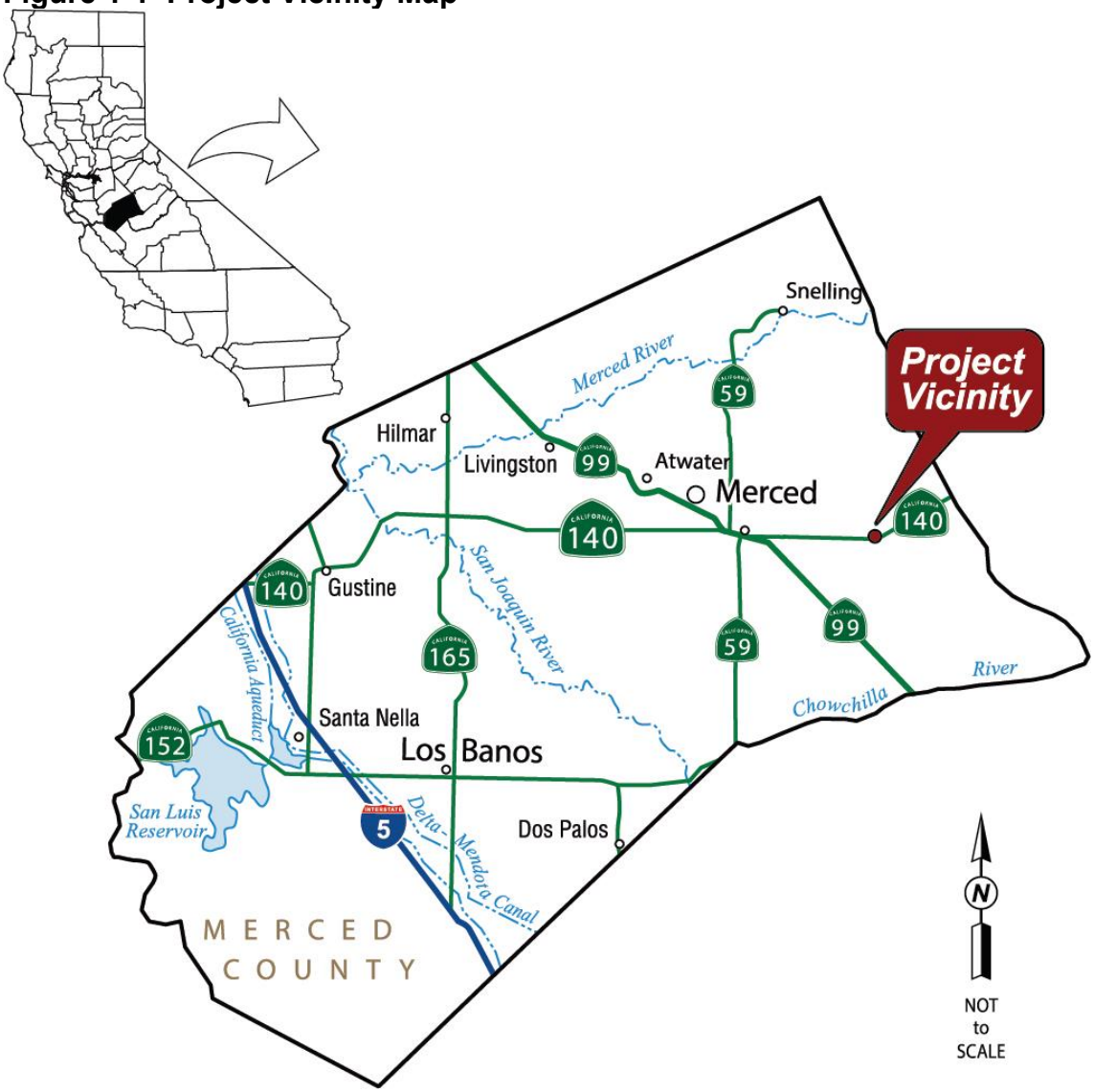
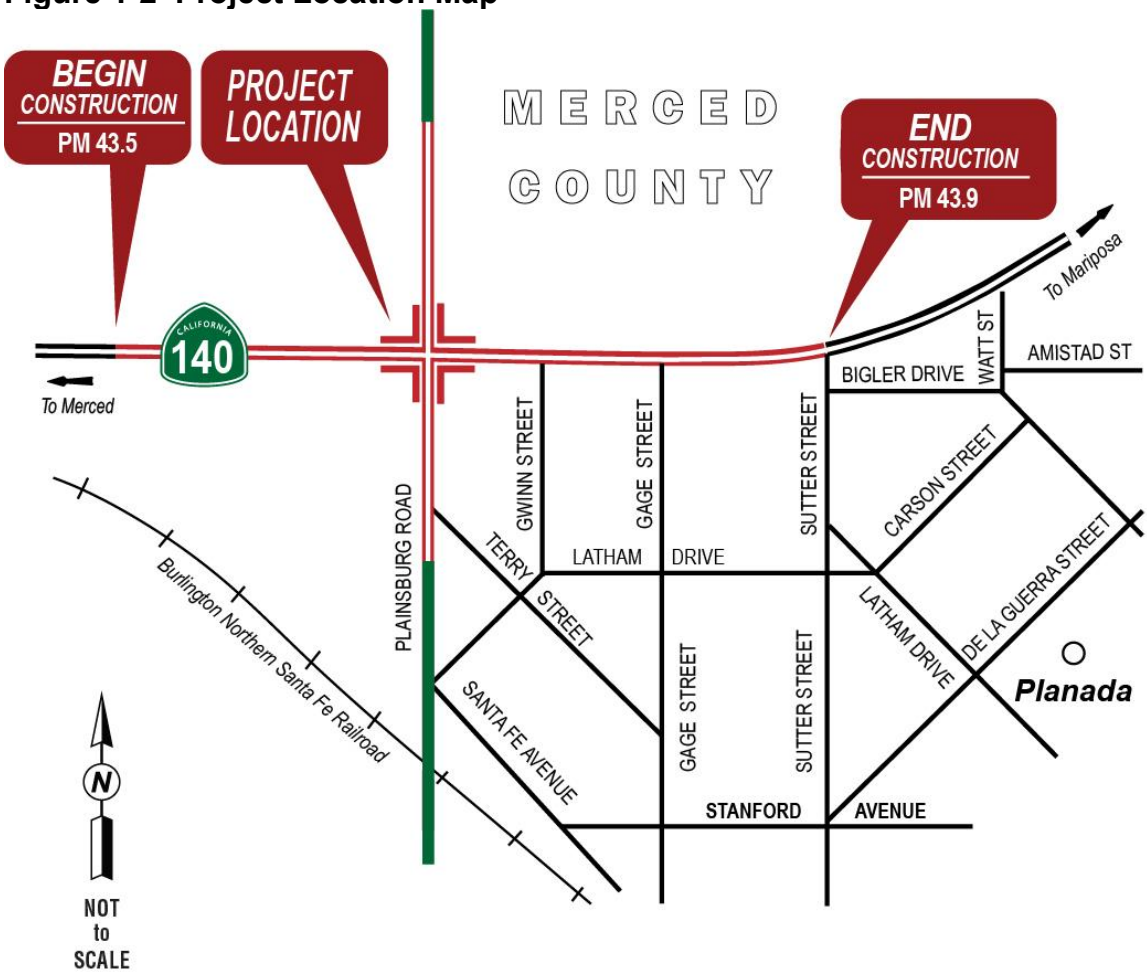


**Figure 1-2 Project Location Map**




Three project alternatives are proposed: Alternative 1 will construct a roundabout, Alternative 2 will install a traffic signal, and Alternative 3 is the No-Build Alternative. Additional right-of-way and utility relocation would be required. As noted earlier, interim improvements to the intersection were implemented by the Caltrans Field Maintenance crew through Traffic Safety on December 15, 2020—with the installation of stop signs at the intersection.

This project is anticipated to be amended into the 2020 State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) under the Safety Improvements Program (201.010) for delivery in fiscal year 2023/2024.

## 1.4 Project Alternatives

This project contains a number of standardized project measures that are used on most, if not all, Caltrans projects and were not developed in response to any specific environmental impact resulting from the proposed project. These measures are listed later in this chapter under “Standard Measures and Best Management Practices Included in All Build Alternatives.”

### 1.4.1 Build Alternatives

#### *Alternative 1 – Roundabout*

This alternative would construct a single-lane roundabout at the intersection of State Route 140 and Plainsburg Road in the town of Planada. Constructing a roundabout at the intersection would effectively reduce vehicle delay, improve traffic flow, and reduce the potential and severity of broadside collisions.

This alternative was designed to accommodate Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) vehicles, in particular large trucks. For single-lane roundabouts accommodating Surface Transportation Assistance Act trucks, the National Cooperative Highway Research Program recommends an inscribed circle diameter of 130 to 180 feet; this roundabout has been designed to a diameter of 135 feet to accommodate Surface Transportation Assistance Act trucks.

The roundabout has been designed with a 20 to 25 miles per hour entry speed for a single-lane roundabout. Due to the location of the intersection, a high-speed approach design for the splitter island would be used on the eastbound approach. The wider splitter island consisting of reversing curves is required to separate traffic and ensure proper speed reduction when entering the roundabout. The length of the splitter islands will range from 200 to 300 feet and be composed of concrete curb and gutter. The width of the circulating lane would be 20 feet. Preferably, the cross slope of the approach and circulating lane would be 2 percent, sloping outward from the splitter and central island. A 15-foot-wide mountable truck apron would line the inside edge of the roundabout's central island, which would allow the vehicles and their trailers to safely maneuver through the roundabout.

The design of the proposed roundabout will be consistent with National Cooperative Highway Research Program 672 and Highway Design Manual Index 405.10, with no nonstandard features being proposed.

Each approach would require widening for the splitter island and pedestrian crossings, Americans with Disabilities Act elements, and curb and gutter, which would also be included in the project. Bike and pedestrian facilities would also be provided. The bicycle facility would be Type 3, and the pedestrian facility would have Americans with Disabilities Act ramps and sidewalks included for the project.

The total capital outlay cost for this alternative is $4,901,000, broken down as follows:

- Roadway—$4,020,620
- Structures—$0
- Right-of-way—$880,380

### *Alternative 2 – Signalization*

This alternative would add traffic signals to the intersection. To the east and west of the intersection, State Route 140 would be composed of one through right-turn lane and a left-turn lane pocket to Plainsburg Road. To the northbound direction of the intersection, Plainsburg Road would be composed of a shared through right-turn lane and a left-turn lane to enter eastbound State Route 140. To the southbound direction of the intersection, Plainsburg Road would be composed of a shared through right-turn lane and a left-turn lane to enter westbound State Route 140. This alternative would require roadway widening to make it standard for the shoulder and provide enough tapering and decelerating length needed for the dedicated left-turn movement onto Plainsburg Road.

To facilitate bicycle and pedestrian crossing, this alternative will add Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant curb ramps, blended transitions, bike lanes, and crosswalks. In addition, to meet Complete Streets requirements, this project will consider the number of elements and quantities needed to improve mobility for low-income and low-mobility users to and from the town of Planada. This alternative requires additional right-of-way from two parcels west of the intersection.

Improvements to the channelization would require saw-cutting of the pavements and roadway excavation. The new pavements can be placed with hot mix asphalt in two lifts, and the loop detectors can be saw-cut into the first lift, providing a seamless installation. For existing pavement, new trenching for electrical conduits, placements of new loop detectors, and placements of a control box would also be required. Illumination of the intersection would be added to improve visibility, and advanced warning signs and flashing beacons would be included.

The total capital outlay cost for this alternative is $3,529,232, broken down as follows:

- Roadway—$3,014,600
- Structures—$0
- Right-of-way—$514,632

### *Reversible Lanes*

This project does not qualify as a capacity-increasing or a major street or highway realignment project. The concept of reversible lanes is not considered because this project does not involve the following roadway elements: high-occupancy vehicle lanes, ramp metering, California Highway Patrol enforcement activities, highway planting and irrigation, erosion control, noise barriers, and earth-retaining systems.

### 1.4.2 No-Build (No-Action) Alternative

***Alternative 3 – No-Build Alternative***

The No-Build Alternative requires no action to be taken. It would leave the intersection of State Route 140 and Plainsburg Road as it is with existing stop signs. It would not address the need to reduce the number and severity of broadside and head-on collisions at the intersection; it also would not improve the traffic control system at the intersection.

## 1.5 Identification of a Preferred Alternative

[Section 1.5 Identification of a Preferred Alternative has been added since the draft environmental document was circulated.]

The draft Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration was circulated for public review and comment from August 1, 2022, to August 30, 2022. All comments received were considered and are included with responses in Appendix B. Public comments focused on the traffic handling capacity of roundabouts, pedestrian safety, and costs of alternatives.

A total of 69 comments were received. Most of the comment received were against the roundabout alternative. Copies of the original comment letters and documents can be found in Volume 2 of this document.

Following the Public Hearing/information meeting held on August 18, 2022, a request was made by Planada community members to have Caltrans explain their Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) process at a future Planada Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) meeting. Caltrans' staff attended the Planada MAC meeting held on November 9, 2022, providing a presentation on the ICE process and functions of a roundabout intersection.

The team educated the Planada Community on the ICE process and provided updates on the State Route 140/Plainsburg Road intersection control improvement project. Approximately 20 to 25 members from the community were present. At the beginning, a few community members were against the roundabout. The Caltrans team educated the people on roundabout benefits. They shared a video of the State Route 88/Liberty Road roundabout to show how to maneuver through the roundabout including large trucks. The meeting was scheduled for 30 minutes but extended to 2 hours to answer community concerns and educate them on roundabout benefits. In the end, community members were much more comfortable with the roundabout proposal.

After evaluating all comments received during the public review for the draft Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration, the project development team, composed of team members from Caltrans, selected Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. As required by the California Environmental Quality

Act, Caltrans will file a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse that will state whether the project will have significant impacts and whether mitigation measures are included as conditions of project approval.

As part of the screening process, equal levels of detail were used to identify and evaluate two build alternatives in this environmental document and associated technical studies. Both build alternatives will reduce the number and severity of broadside and head-on collisions at the intersection of State Route 140 and Plainsburg Road through intersection control improvements.

After the close of the public comment period, the project development team met on September 2, 2022, to discuss the proposed project alternatives. During the meeting, the two build alternatives were discussed relative to any issues raised by the public during the public review period and input from Caltrans' Traffic Safety and Freeway and Highway Operations divisions. Based on public review, evaluation of resource impacts, and Caltrans' functional unit input for the project, it was then determined that Alternative 1 would be the safest alternative to motorists and pedestrians. It was recommended as the preferred alternative.

Alternative 1 was selected as the preferred alternative for the following reasons:

- A roundabout is the safer alternative from a traffic safety analysis perspective. Based on criteria, such as queuing, level of service, greenhouse gas reduction, collision severity, and maintenance, Alternative 1 achieves higher overall results.

- A roundabout is a safer alternative; it can handle traffic with fewer conflict points when compared to a signal. Roundabouts are designed to reduce entry speeds to 30 miles per hour and speeds through the intersection to below 20 miles per hour. Slower speeds provide more time for entering drivers to judge, adjust speed for, and enter gaps in circulating traffic. They also provide more time for all users to detect and correct their mistakes and the mistakes of others.

- In a roundabout, pedestrians need to watch out for only one lane of traffic at a time while crossing. With the roundabout alternative, each approach will have a splitter island, pedestrian crossings, Americans with Disabilities Act elements, and curbs and gutters.

Federal Highway Administration publications on roundabouts state that there are fewer pedestrian-vehicle conflicts at a roundabout when compared to signals. Roundabouts, on the other hand, face two conflicting vehicular movements on each approach and conflict with entering vehicles and exiting vehicles.

At conventional and roundabout intersections with multiple approach lanes, an additional conflict is added with each additional lane that a pedestrian must cross.

## 1.6 Standard Measures and Best Management Practices Included in All Build Alternatives

This project contains a number of standardized project measures that are used on most, if not all, Caltrans projects and were not developed in response to any specific environmental impact resulting from the proposed project.

The following are some of the standardized project measures that are expected on this project:

- Standard specifications dealing with the discovery of unanticipated cultural materials or human remains will be included in the project plans and specifications.
- Construction activities will be managed such that there will be a reduction in the discharge of pollutants to surface waters, groundwaters, and municipal separate stormwater systems.
- The project will comply with air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes.
- [The following text has been updated since the draft environmental document was circulated.] Noise will not exceed the local noise ordinance from the job site from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.
- Equipment used in and around the waterways will be in good working order and free of dripping or leaking engine fluids. All vehicle maintenance will be performed outside of the bed, bank, or channel of the waterways.
- The Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan will include a hazardous spill prevention, control, and countermeasure plan. The plan will include onsite handling rules to keep construction and maintenance materials from entering the river, including procedures related to refueling, operating, storing, and staging construction equipment and preventing and responding to spills. The plan will also identify the parties responsible for monitoring the spill response. During construction, any spills will be cleaned up immediately, according to the hazardous spill prevention, control, and countermeasure plan.
- Discharge from dewatering operations, if needed, and runoff from disturbed areas will be made to conform to the water quality requirements of the waste discharge permit issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- An appropriate seed mix of native species will be planted in disturbed areas upon completion of construction.
- The project will avoid earth or organic material from being deposited or placed where it may be directly carried into a water channel.

## 1.7 Discussion of the NEPA Categorical Exclusion

This document contains information regarding compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and other state laws and regulations. Separate environmental documentation, supporting a Categorical Exclusion determination, has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). When needed for clarity, or as required by CEQA, this document may contain references to federal laws and/or regulations (CEQA, for example, requires consideration of adverse effects on species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species by the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—that is, species protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act).

## 1.8 Permits and Approvals Needed

No permits, licenses, agreements, or certifications are required for project construction.

# Chapter 2 CEQA Evaluation

## 2.1 CEQA Environmental Checklist

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. Potential impact determinations include Significant and Unavoidable Impact, Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated, Less Than Significant Impact, and No Impact. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with a project will indicate that there are no impacts to a particular resource. A "No Impact" answer reflects this determination. The questions in this checklist are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance.

Project features, which can include both design elements of the project and standardized measures that are applied to all or most Caltrans projects, such as Best Management Practices and measures included in the Standard Plans and Specifications or as Standard Special Provisions, are considered to be an integral part of the project and have been considered prior to any significance determinations documented below.

"No Impact" determinations in each section are based on the scope, description, and location of the proposed project as well as the appropriate technical report (bound separately in Volume 2), and no further discussion is included in this document.

### 2.1.1 Aesthetics

Considering the information in the Scenic Resources Evaluation/Visual Impact Assessment dated January 17, 2022, the following significance determinations have been made:

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics |
|---|---|
| a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? | **No Impact** |
| b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? | **No Impact** |

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics |
|---|---|
| c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality? | **No Impact** |
| d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.2 Agriculture and Forest Resources

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.

Considering the information in the Right-of-Way Data Sheet dated July 7, 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forest Resources |
|---|---|
| a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use? | **No Impact** |
| b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? | **No Impact** |

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forest Resources |
|---|---|
| c) Conflict with existing zoning, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))? | **No Impact** |
| d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | **No Impact** |
| e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.3 Air Quality

Considering the information in the Air Quality Memo dated August 31, 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality |
|---|---|
| a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? | **No Impact** |
| b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard? | **No Impact** |
| c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? | **No Impact** |
| d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.4 Biological Resources

Considering the information in the Biological Resources Evaluation Memo dated September 24, 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Biological Resources |
|---|---|
| a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration Fisheries? | **No Impact** |
| b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | **No Impact** |
| c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means? | **No Impact** |
| d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites? | **No Impact** |
| e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? | **No Impact** |
| f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.5 Cultural Resources

Considering the information in the Section 106, CEQA, and Public Resources Code 5024 Compliance-Screened Project Memo dated September 14, 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Cultural Resources |
|---|---|
| a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5? | **No Impact** |
| b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5? | **No Impact** |
| c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.6 Energy

Considering the information in the Air Quality Memo dated August 31, 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Energy |
|---|---|
| a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation? | **No Impact** |
| b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.7 Geology and Soils

Considering the information in the Geologic Hazards Study, Merced Campus Parkway dated June 2001, and the Paleontological Identification Report dated June 7, 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils |
|---|---|
| a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:<br><br>i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the state geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. | **No Impact** |

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils |
|---|---|
| ii) Strong seismic ground shaking? | **No Impact** |
| iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? | **No Impact** |
| iv) Landslides? | **No Impact** |
| b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? | **No Impact** |
| c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? | **No Impact** |
| d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property? | **No Impact** |
| e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater? | **No Impact** |
| f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Considering the information in the Air Quality Memo dated August 31, 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Greenhouse Gas Emissions |
|---|---|
| a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? | **No Impact** |
| b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Considering the information in the Initial Site Assessment and Preliminary Site Investigation dated October 13, 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials |
|---|---|
| a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials? | **No Impact** |
| b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment? | **Less Than Significant Impact** |
| c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school? | **No Impact** |
| d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? | **No Impact** |
| e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area? | **No Impact** |
| f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | **No Impact** |
| g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires? | **No Impact** |

#### *Affected Environment*

The GeoTracker and EnviroStor database searches identified the following hazardous waste sites within the footprint of the project area; because

portions of these properties would be acquired, additional hazardous waste studies became necessary.

**Table 2.1 Hazardous Waste Sites Within Footprint**

| Site Name | Location | Case Status | Closure Date | Current Use |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Exxon Service Station (El Campo Market) | 8935 Highway 140, Planada (southwest quadrant of the project area) | Closed Leaking Underground Storage Tank Site | November 16, 1998, Merced County Environmental Health Division | Source removal, groundwater monitoring |
| Strolling's Service (Dollar General Store) | 9041 Highway 140, Planada (southeast quadrant of the project area) | Closed Leaking Underground Storage Tank Site | July 25, 2006, Merced County Environmental Health Division | Source removal, groundwater monitoring |

### *Environmental Consequences*

*Preliminary Site Investigation—Aerially Deposited Lead*

A Preliminary Site Investigation was conducted in August 2021. The survey involved 12 hand auger borings to a total depth of 3 feet below the ground surface to collect soil samples. Soil samples were collected from each boring at the following intervals: surface to 0.5 foot below ground surface (Layer 1), 1.0 to 1.5 feet below ground surface (Layer 2), and 2.5 to 3 feet below ground surface (Layer 3), totaling 36 soil samples. The borings were located on the northeast, northwest, and southwest quadrant of the State Route 140 and Plainsburg Road intersection. No access agreement was obtained for the property on the southeastern quadrant of the project intersection.

Total lead concentrations ranged from 3.4 to 200 milligrams per kilogram (all Layers). The 95% Upper Confidence Level for the total lead was calculated to be 48.6 milligrams per kilogram (all Layers). Soluble lead was analyzed in 10 samples; soluble lead concentrations ranged from 0.52 to 10 milligrams per liter. The 95% Upper Confidence Level for soluble lead was calculated to be 1.3 milligrams per liter.

The potential of hydrogen (pH) values ranged from 6.4 to 7.4, which is within the range of nonhazardous waste and within the guidance of the Aerially Deposited Lead Agreement (Department of Toxic Substances Control).

Based on the reported concentrations, Soil Layer 1 is classified as Type Com (reuse onsite permitted with proper management or disposal at an offsite Class 2 facility). Soil Layers 2 and 3, as well as any combination of soil layers, are qualified as an unregulated, nonhazardous material and may therefore be reused within the Caltrans right-of-way, relinquished to the contractor, or disposed of as a nonhazardous/nonregulated material. Additional soil sampling may be required by the receiving disposal facility.

*Preliminary Site Investigation—Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons/Volatile Organic Compounds/Lead*

Because no access was granted to the southeastern quadrant of the project area, no soil sampling was done at the property of the Dollar General store. The adjacent property on the southwestern quadrant of the intersection was investigated to a depth of 15 feet below the surface for Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons for gasoline-, diesel-, and oil-range organics, volatile organic compounds (VOCs, benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylenes [BTEX], methyl tert-butyl ether [MTBE]), and lead. There, 12 soil samples were collected at four boring locations at depths of 5 (via hand auger), 10 (via drill rig), and 15 (via drill rig) feet.

The 12 samples were analyzed for Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons for gasoline range organics, benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylenes, and methyl tert-butyl ether; all concentrations were below the laboratory detection limits.

Two samples were analyzed for Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons for diesel- and oil-range organics. Diesel-range organics concentrations were below the laboratory detection limits; oil-range organics concentrations were below the regulatory thresholds by several orders of magnitude (the highest concentration was estimated to be 0.64 milligrams per kilogram, the Regional Screening Level for industrial soils is 30,000 milligrams per kilogram).

Total lead concentrations ranged from 3.3 to 4.1 milligrams per kilogram in the four soil samples analyzed. This range is below the residential soil screening level set forth by the Department of Toxic Substances Control Human and Ecological Risk Office (HERO).

*Conclusions*

Near-surface soils throughout the project area are minimally impacted by aerially deposited lead. Soil Layer 1 is classified as Type Com (reuse onsite permitted with proper management or disposal at an offsite Class 2 facility). Soil Layers 2 and 3, as well as any combination of soil layers, are qualified as unregulated, nonhazardous material.

### *Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures*

A lead compliance plan developed by a Certified Industrial Hygienist is required for the project. Caltrans Standard Special Provisions Section 7-1.02K(6)(j)(iii) Earth Material Containing Lead requires a lead compliance plan when lead concentrations are nonhazardous (with management guidance for Layer 1 soil) or whenever disturbance (e.g., excavation) of earth material (i.e., soil) that could result in lead exposure will occur and disposal in a permitted landfill is not required.

If guardrails, signposts, or other sources of treated wood waste are to be removed during construction, Caltrans Nonstandard Special Provisions Section 14-11.14 – Treated Wood Waste will be included in the bid package.

Residue from the removal of yellow thermoplastic pavement marking and/or yellow-painted traffic stripe may contain lead chromate. Residue produced from the separate removal of any yellow thermoplastic pavement marking and/or yellow-painted traffic stripe may contain heavy metals in concentrations that exceed thresholds established by the Health and Safety Code and 22 California Code of Regulations. If yellow striping will be removed separately, Caltrans Standard Special Provisions Section 14-11.12 will be included in the bid package for proper management of hazardous waste residue and a lead compliance plan. Caltrans Standard Special Provisions Section 36-4 and/or Section 84-9.03B will be included in the bid package for work involving residue from grinding and cold planing that contains lead from paint and thermoplastic material and addresses the need for a lead compliance plan.

The appropriate project Standard Special Provisions and Nonstandard Special Provisions will be edited for the project and provided during the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates phase of the project.

### 2.1.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

Considering the information in the Water Compliance Memo dated May 28, 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality |
|---|---|
| a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface water or groundwater quality? | **No Impact** |
| b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin? | **No Impact** |

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality |
|---|---|
| c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:<br>(i) result in substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite; | **No Impact** |
| (ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding onsite or offsite; | **No Impact** |
| (iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or | **No Impact** |
| (iv) impede or redirect flood flows? | **No Impact** |
| d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation? | **No Impact** |
| e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.11 Land Use and Planning

Considering the information in the 2030 Merced County General Plan, dated December 10, 2013, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Land Use and Planning |
|---|---|
| a) Physically divide an established community? | **No Impact** |
| b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.12 Mineral Resources

Considering the information in the 2030 Merced County General Plan dated December 10, 2013, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Mineral Resources |
|---|---|
| a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state? | **No Impact** |
| b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.13 Noise

Considering the information in the noise compliance study dated July 14, 2021, the following significance determinations have been made: No adverse noise impacts. This project will not likely introduce a potential for long-term traffic noise impacts because it does not increase the number of through-traffic lanes or significantly change alignment as described in Caltrans' Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol. However, during construction, the project would comply with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-8 "Noise Control" regarding construction-related noise.

| Question—Would the project result in: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Noise |
|---|---|
| a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? | **No Impact** |
| b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? | **No Impact** |
| c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.14 Population and Housing

Considering the information in the 2030 Merced County General Plan dated December 10, 2013, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Population and Housing |
|---|---|
| a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? | **No Impact** |
| b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.15 Public Services

Considering the information in the 2030 Merced County General Plan dated December 10, 2013, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Public Services |
|---|---|
| a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:<br>Fire protection? | **No Impact** |
| Police protection? | **No Impact** |
| Schools? | **No Impact** |
| Parks? | **No Impact** |
| Other public facilities? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.16 Recreation

Considering the information in project maps and the 2030 Merced County General Plan dated December 10, 2013, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Recreation |
|---|---|
| a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? | **No Impact** |
| b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.17 Transportation

Considering the information in the project design plans and the 2030 Merced County General Plan dated December 10, 2013, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Transportation |
|---|---|
| a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities? | **No Impact** |
| b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)? | **No Impact** |
| c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? | **No Impact** |
| d) Result in inadequate emergency access? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

Considering the information in the Section 106, CEQA, and Public Resources Code 5024 Compliance-Screened Project Memo dated September 14, 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

| Question: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Tribal Cultural Resources |
|---|---|
| a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or | **No Impact** |
| b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.19 Utilities and Service Systems

Considering the information in the Right-of-Way Data Sheet dated July 7, 2021, the following significance determinations have been made:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems |
|---|---|
| a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects? | **No Impact** |
| b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years? | **No Impact** |

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems |
|---|---|
| c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? | **No Impact** |
| d) Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals? | **No Impact** |
| e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.20 Wildfire

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Fire Hazard Severity Zone mapping tool and Caltrans' Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment mapping tool were used to analyze the project area for fire vulnerabilities. Information from the mapping tools was considered, and the following significance determinations have been made:

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones:

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Wildfire |
|---|---|
| a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | **No Impact** |
| b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire? | **No Impact** |
| c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment? | **No Impact** |

| Question—Would the project: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Wildfire |
|---|---|
| d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes? | **No Impact** |

### 2.1.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

| Question: | CEQA Significance Determinations for Mandatory Findings of Significance |
|---|---|
| a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? | **No Impact** |
| b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.) | **No Impact** |
| c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? | **No Impact** |

# **Appendix A** Title VI Policy Statement

CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY GAVIN NEWSOM, GOVERNOR

**California Department of Transportation**

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September 2022

**NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT**

The California Department of Transportation, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, ensures *"No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."*

Caltrans will make every effort to ensure nondiscrimination in all of its services, programs and activities, whether they are federally funded or not, and that services and benefits are fairly distributed to all people, regardless of race, color, or national origin. In addition, Caltrans will facilitate meaningful participation in the transportation planning process in a non-discriminatory manner.

Related federal statutes, remedies, and state law further those protections to include sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and age.

For information or guidance on how to file a complaint, or obtain more information regarding Title VI, please contact the Title VI Branch Manager at (916) 639-6392 or visit the following web page: https://dot.ca.gov/programs/civil-rights/title-vi.

To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille or in a language other than English, please contact the California Department of Transportation, Office of Civil Rights, at PO Box 942874, MS-79, Sacramento, CA 94274-0001; (916) 879-6768 (TTY 711); or at Title.VI@dot.ca.gov.

TONY TAVARES
Director

"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment"

# **Appendix B** Comment Letters and Responses

[Appendix B has been added since the draft environmental document was circulated.] This appendix contains the comments received during the public circulation and comment period from August 1, 2022, to August 30, 2022, retyped for readability. The comment letters are stated verbatim as submitted, with acronyms, abbreviations, and any original grammatical or typographical errors included. A Caltrans response follows each comment presented. A total of 69 comments were received. Most of the comment received were against the roundabout alternative. Copies of the original comment letters and documents can be found in Volume 2 of this document.

Following the Public Hearing/information meeting held on August 18, 2022, a request was made by Planada community members to have Caltrans explain their Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) process at a future Planada Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) meeting. Caltrans' staff attended the Planada MAC meeting held on November 9, 2022, providing a presentation on the ICE process and functions of a roundabout intersection.

The team educated the Planada Community on the ICE process and provided updates on the State Route 140/Plainsburg Road intersection control improvement project. Approximately 20 to 25 members from the community were present. At the beginning, a few community members were against the roundabout. The Caltrans team passionately educated the people on roundabout benefits. They shared a video of the State Route 88/Liberty Road roundabout to show how to maneuver through the roundabout including large trucks. The meeting was scheduled for 30 minutes but extended to 2 hours to answer community concerns and educate them on roundabout benefits. In the end, community members were much more comfortable with the roundabout proposal.

The following master responses were created to help consolidate responses to similar comments and concerns from individuals.

**Master Response 1:** Thank you for your comment and participation on this project. The four-way stop sign intersection control method that is currently present at the intersection of Plainsburg Road and State Route 140 was installed as a temporary measure by the Caltrans Field Maintenance crew on December 15, 2020, until a permanent solution could be constructed.

The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. As described in Section 1.4.1 of this document, this alternative would construct a single-lane roundabout at the intersection of State Route 140 and Plainsburg Road in the town of Planada. Constructing a roundabout at the intersection would effectively reduce vehicle delay, improve traffic flow, and reduce the number and severity of broadside and head-on collisions.

Alternative 1 was selected as the preferred alternative for the following reasons:

- A roundabout is the safer alternative from a traffic safety analysis perspective. Based on criteria, such as queuing, level of service, greenhouse gas reduction, collision severity, and maintenance, Alternative 1 achieves higher overall results.

- A roundabout is a safer alternative; it can handle traffic with fewer conflict points when compared to a signal. Roundabouts are designed to reduce entry speeds to 30 miles per hour and speeds through the intersection to below 20 miles per hour. Slower speeds provide more time for entering drivers to judge, adjust speed for, and enter gaps in circulating traffic. They also provide more time for all users to detect and correct their mistakes and the mistakes of others.

- In a roundabout, pedestrians need to watch out for only one lane of traffic at a time while crossing. With the roundabout alternative, each approach will have a splitter island, pedestrian crossings, Americans with Disabilities Act elements, and curbs and gutters.

Federal Highway Administration publications on roundabouts state that there are fewer pedestrian-vehicle conflicts at a roundabout when compared to signals. Roundabouts, on the other hand, face two conflicting vehicular movements on each approach and conflict with entering vehicles and exiting vehicles.

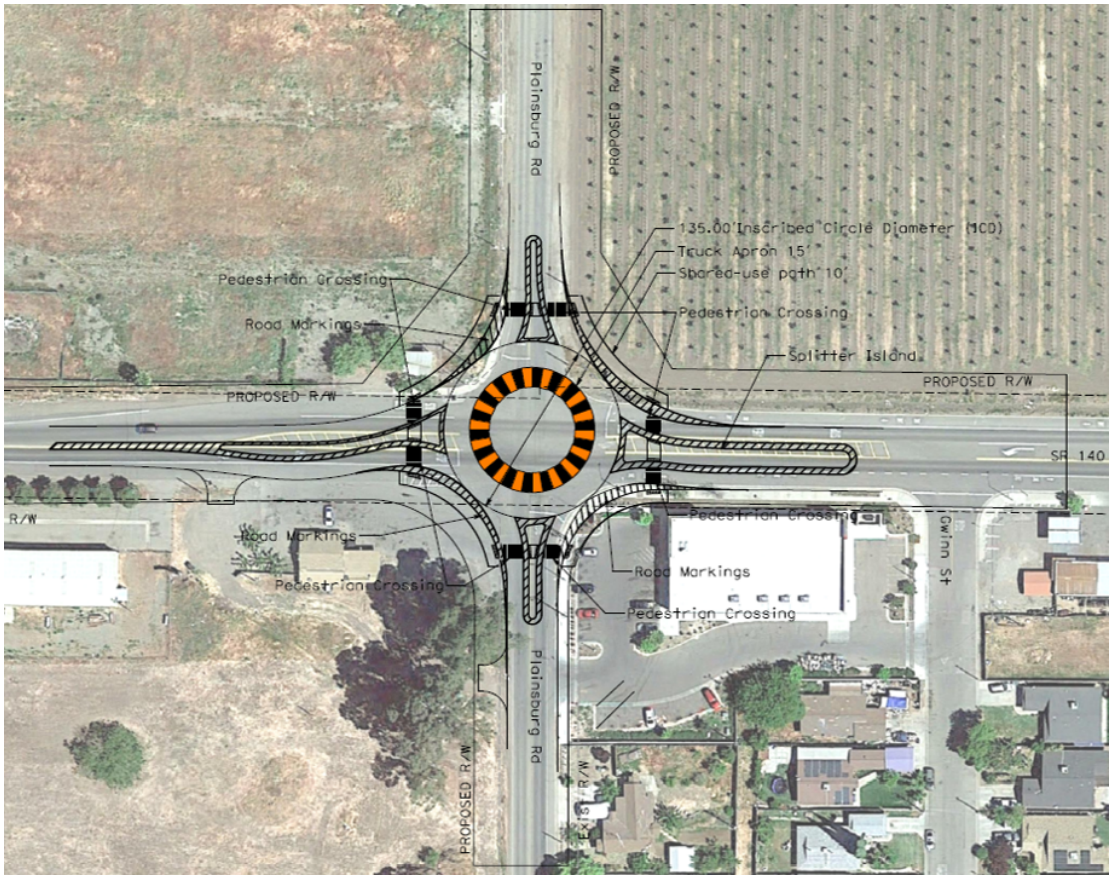
At conventional and roundabout intersections with multiple approach lanes, an additional conflict is added with each additional lane that a pedestrian must cross.

The roundabout is being designed to a diameter of 135 feet to accommodate Surface Transportation Assistance Act truck needs. The roundabout will be designed with a 20 to 25 miles per hour entry speed for a single-lane roundabout. Due to the location of the intersection, a high-speed approach design for the splitter island would be used on the eastbound approach. A wider splitter island consisting of reversing curves is required to separate traffic and ensure proper speed reduction when entering the roundabout. The

length of the splitter islands would range from 200 to 300 feet and be composed of concrete curb and gutter. The width of the circulating lane would be 20 feet. A 15-foot-wide mountable truck apron would line the inside edge of the roundabout's central island, which would allow the vehicles and their trailers, along with buses, to safely maneuver through the roundabout.

Each approach would require widening for the splitter island and pedestrian crossings, Americans with Disabilities Act elements, and curb and gutter treatments, which would also be included in the project. Bike and pedestrian facilities would also be provided. The bicycle facility would be a shared use facility with autos, and the pedestrian facility would have Americans with Disabilities Act ramps, crosswalks, and sidewalks included for the project.

The roundabout was selected through the preparation of an Intersection Control Evaluation summary, per Caltrans Policy Directive 13-02 (Traffic Operations Policy Directive), which was performed at the proposed at-grade state highway intersection to identify the most effective intersection traffic control strategy (i.e., roundabout or traffic signal). Signalized and unsignalized Intersection Design and Research Aid (SIDRA) software package operations tools were also used for assessing the effectiveness of roundabouts at the proposed intersection. Roundabout design and size considerations also reflect the need to accommodate current truck and heavy equipment traffic on local roads. The following represents the anticipated roundabout design:




According to the Federal Highway Administration, roundabouts have been "proven safer and more efficient than other types of circular intersection" (https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/intersection/innovative/roundabouts/). The Federal Highway Administration website provides case studies regarding the effectiveness of roundabouts in California, Colorado, Florida, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, South Carolina, and Vermont. More information can be found at the following website: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/research/deployment/roundabouts.cfm.

**Master Response 2:** A public meeting was held for the proposed project on August 18, 2022, at Planada Elementary School. Notices (English and Spanish) were published in the Merced Sun-Star newspaper on August 1, 2022, notifying the public of the anticipated public meeting and the details related to the public comment period for the project. The notice contained locations where the environmental document could be reviewed, such as the Merced County Public Works, Le Grand Branch Library, Merced County Library, and online at https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-10-projects. The Caltrans District 10 website also displayed the public meeting notice. In addition, notices and information letters (English and Spanish) were distributed to adjacent property owners near the intersection of Plainsburg Road and State Route 140, informing them of the environmental document availability and the scheduling of the public meeting on August 18, 2022.

Social media posts were made on Twitter and Facebook on August 3 and August 16, 2022. On the evening of August 18, Caltrans had a Spanish translator available to field questions and help individuals on a one-on-one basis if necessary. It is Caltrans' intent that all interested parties are continually informed of projects and roadway conditions within their communities. Project updates will periodically be posted on https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-10-projects.

**Public Hearing August 18, 2022:**

**Comment from Antonio Rodrigues**

**Comment 1:**

Add pedestrian safety, cost, detour, affecting my business.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. Construction logistics of the project will have temporary inconveniences, as you have identified. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1, roundabout, as the preferred alternative to address the pattern of broadside and head-on collisions at this intersection. The temporary four-way stop at the intersection in place today will be upgraded to a roundabout, improving operation and safety for both motorists and pedestrians. Section 1.4.1 of the document summarizes Alternative 1.

**Comment from Becky Cowie**

**Comment 1:**

No Roundabout!!! They use these roads to go to Mariposa & Yosemite, fire season unfortunately use these roads. Buses for the school will not be able to make that turn.

Four way stop!! Keep it the way it is!! w/walk ways. Too many accidents will happen with this.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The four-way stop that is currently present was installed as a temporary measure for more traffic control at the intersection until a permanent solution could be implemented. The project development team has identified Alternative 1, as described in Section 1.4.1 of the document, as the preferred alternative. The proposed improvements will include pedestrian sidewalks.

This alternative is being designed to accommodate Surface Transportation Assistance Act vehicles, in particular large trucks. For single-lane roundabouts accommodating Surface Transportation Assistance Act trucks, the National Cooperative Highway Research Program recommends a circle diameter of 130 to 180 feet; this roundabout has been designed to a diameter of 135 feet to accommodate Surface Transportation Assistance Act trucks and buses.

**Comment from Bessie Castillo**

**Comment 1:**

1st traffic signals with left & right turn lanes. With Highway 140 having more seconds or minutes on signals as it more heavy used, 2nd- four way stop with

turn lanes, right now it has 4 way stop-but no left or right turn lane with make it take longer for traffic to move through area.

I am totally against a roundabout, cost too much & to much traffic on hwy 140 for it & people from areas won't understand it.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The four-way stop that is currently present was installed as a temporary measure for more traffic control at the intersection until a permanent solution could be implemented. The project development team has identified Alternative 1, as described in Section 1.4.1 of the document, as the preferred alternative.

The proposed improvements will include pedestrian sidewalks. Constructing a roundabout at the intersection would effectively reduce vehicle delay, improve traffic flow, and reduce the number and severity of broadside and head-on collisions.

**Comment from Deanna Adame**

**Comment 1:**

No roundabout! Keep 4-way stop w/turning lanes & crosswalks. I've had my business in this community 32 years so I've travel hwy 140 for years. Please consider that we are more rural & what works in a city doesn't work in our small town.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The four-way stop that is currently present was installed as a temporary measure for more traffic control at the intersection until a permanent solution could be implemented. The project development team has identified Alternative 1, as described in Section 1.4.1 of the document, as the preferred alternative. The proposed improvements will include pedestrian sidewalks with crosswalks. Constructing a roundabout at the intersection would effectively reduce vehicle delay, improve traffic flow, and reduce the number and severity of broadside and head-on collisions.

**Comment from Elsa Baeza**

**Comment 1:**

No roundabout! Alternative 2 would be the best option for out town. Hwy 140 is very busy and a roundabout would not work out for pedestrians. In addition Alternative 2 is less estimated capital cost. Looking at the plans less land would also be needed. Most people are more familiar with signal lights. Thank you.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. Your assessment of Alternative 2 as costing less and requiring less land is correct. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from John Martinez**

**Comment 1:**

Let's have a community meeting & discuss this project with the people town of Planada. Or is a done deal?

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. As summarized in Master Response 2, a public meeting was held on August 18, 2022, at Planada Elementary School for the Planada community. Approximately 21 individuals attended the meeting. This coincided with the public circulation period of the environmental document for this project in which public comments were solicited. Caltrans staff were present to address concerns and answer questions from community members. As summarized in Master Response 1, the project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. This, however, is not a done deal at this time. Caltrans District 10 Director Dennis T. Agar will ultimately decide and approve which alternative moves forward upon completion of the Final Project Report, Caltrans' decision document on projects.

**Comment from Justine Rogina**

**Comment 1:**

The roundabout or signal is definitely needed. If a signal is chosen please ensure there a sensors and not just "timed" lights. If there are no sensors people will just run the lights (especially at night when there is less traffic). I personally like the roundabout alternative, but worry about people travelling too fast upon the approach. Thank you for your time.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Luther Cowie**

**Comment 1:**

I talked to some of the representatives and their studies are from towns such as Fresno. We are a small migrant town of about 2,000. We need a question & answer meeting to discuss our concerns. A round-about won't work because people will loose property, emergency vehicles will loose precious time, during harvest season it's going cause lots of traffic, among other things. I seems like Caltrans has their mind made up already & this is just a requirement.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. As summarized in Master Response 2, a public meeting was held on August 18, 2022, at

Planada Elementary School for the Planada community. Approximately 21 individuals attended that evening. This coincided with the public circulation period of the environmental document for this project in which public comments were solicited. Caltrans staff were present to address concerns and answer questions from community members.

As summarized in Master Response 1, the project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative.

**Comment from Maribel Ceja**

**Comment 1:**

No Roundabout!! Based on the information provided Alternative 2 (signalization) would be our best option. Less land would be needed & on addition the cost is less. If we would have to go for a second choice it would be Alternative 3. The stop signs have been working perfectly fine as well. If additional sidewalks will be added then that would be even better. Thank you.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. Your comparison of project cost and land requirement between the proposed build alternatives is correct. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Emailed comment from Supreet Singh**

**Comment 1:**

My name is Supreet Singh. Me and my family own El Campo Market on the corner of Highway 140 and Plainsburg Rd. We were recently made aware of updates that were going to be made to the intersection regarding a roundabout put into place from Mel's Old West to Sutter St. I believe this would significantly impact out business due to the construction and possible blockage from this roundabout into our business. Please let me know if I can discuss the plans with you and get further clarification on the impact to our business and town. Me and my family have owned this business since 1989 and have been a part of the community for over the last 30 years. Please call me at the number below to discuss further.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Project updates will be periodically posted on the Caltrans District 10 website at the following address: https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district10/district-10-projects. You are correct that project construction will result in temporary inconveniences to your business and the motoring public. Caltrans' Right-of-Way staff will be

coordinating with you in the future as the project moves forward to keep you informed and assist in planning out access to your business. Questions regarding the project's schedule and progress can be directed toward Vijay Talada, Caltrans Project Manager, at 916-584-0995.

**Facebook Comment from Alex Thomas**

**Comment 1:**

Against the round about. We are an Agricultural community with lots of big trucks and equipment. However the intersection could be greatly improved with turning lanes.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Alicia Rodriguez**

**Comment 1:**

Thank you will be posting this in our Planada Community Page.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. Any assistance in distributing the project information is greatly appreciated. Project updates will be periodically posted on the Caltrans District 10 website at the following address: https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district10/district-10-projects.

**Comment from Justine Giacalone Rogina**

**Comment 1:**

This is great news! This intersection has been a nightmare for years. I look forward to a safer and more efficient intersection.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Annabell Saldana Alvarez**

**Comment 1:**

This subject was brought up years ago seems the community comments aren't taken in consideration where we had voted no on roundabout. We had

suggested signal lights which I recall “was to expensive” that was the reason of the four way stops which we are perfectly fine with now.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from George Clover**

**Comment 1:**

As someone who uses this intersection twice daily, I am excited to see that Caltrans has a plan developed to supersede the debacle that was created there recently. Hopefully, there will be a comprehensive plan to deal with the flow of traffic, including safety for fold turning and/or preventing encroachment on private property.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Lydia Meraz Flores**

**Comment 1:**

The 4way stop is working. The roundabout is a horrible idea for that area especially in the fog season. Large vehicles travel through that area and it would be even more dangerous with a roundabout. Signal lights would be ideal but the cost I fear would be a issue with budget cuts especially for our community.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. The roundabout design will include lighting and warning signals to warn motorists of approaching the roundabout during clear and foggy conditions.

Alternative 1 was selected as the preferred alternative for the following reasons:

- A roundabout is the safer alternative from a traffic safety analysis perspective. Based on criteria, such as queuing, level of service, greenhouse gas reduction, collision severity, and maintenance, Alternative 1 achieves higher overall results.

- A roundabout is a safer alternative; it can handle traffic with fewer conflict points when compared to a signal. Roundabouts are designed to reduce

entry speeds to 30 miles per hour and speeds through the intersection to below 20 miles per hour. Slower speeds provide more time for entering drivers to judge, adjust speed for, and enter gaps in circulating traffic. They also provide more time for all users to detect and correct their mistakes and the mistakes of others.

- In a roundabout, pedestrians need to watch out for only one lane of traffic at a time while crossing. With the roundabout alternative, each approach will have a splitter island, pedestrian crossings, Americans with Disabilities Act elements, and curbs and gutters.

**Comment from Alicia Rodriguez**

**Comment 1:**

This evening information was some what disappointing. I would like to seen the displays in Spanish, outreach mailers sent to those live in Felix Torres Housing and Bearcreek Village residents. I hope that overall decisions will have a fair opportunity to all residents that use that crossing in their commuting. If Caltrans decisions are only based certain parties. Please don't bother our time inviting residents to these events.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

Alternative 1 was selected as the preferred alternative for the following reasons:

- A roundabout is the safer alternative from a traffic safety analysis perspective. Based on criteria, such as queuing, level of service, greenhouse gas reduction, collision severity, and maintenance, Alternative 1 achieves higher overall results.

- A roundabout is a safer alternative; it can handle traffic with fewer conflict points when compared to a signal. Roundabouts are designed to reduce entry speeds to 30 miles per hour and speeds through the intersection to below 20 miles per hour. Slower speeds provide more time for entering drivers to judge, adjust speed for, and enter gaps in circulating traffic. They also provide more time for all users to detect and correct their mistakes and the mistakes of others.

- In a roundabout, pedestrians need to watch out for only one lane of traffic at a time while crossing. With the roundabout alternative, each approach will have a splitter island, pedestrian crossings, Americans with Disabilities Act elements, and curbs and gutters.

As summarized in Master Response 2, a public meeting was held for the proposed project on August 18, 2022, at Planada Elementary School. Notices presented in both English and Spanish were published in the Merced Sun-Star newspaper on August 1, 2022, notifying the public of the anticipated public meeting and the details related to the public comment period for the project. The notice contained locations where the environmental document could be reviewed, such as the Merced County Public Works, Le Grand Branch Library, Merced County Library, and online at https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-10-projects. In addition, notices and information letters were distributed to adjacent property owners near the intersection of Plainsburg Road and State Route 140, informing them of the environmental document's availability and the scheduling of the public meeting on August 18, 2022.

On the evening of August 18, Caltrans had a Spanish translator available to field questions and help individuals on a one-on-one basis if necessary.

It is Caltans' intent that all interested parties are continually informed of projects and roadway conditions within their communities. Project updates will periodically be posted on https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-10-projects.

**Comment from Miguel Martinez**

**Comment 1:**

Round about is a great idea

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Mailed Comment from Al Marino**

**Comment 1:**

This round-about is not going to improve the traffic flow of Yosemite & Plainsburg. Many people in the community are unhappy about the possibility of the project. Many people in Planada don't know about the project.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

As summarized in Master Response 2, a public meeting was held for the proposed project on August 18, 2022, at Planada Elementary School. Notices were published in the Merced Sun-Star newspaper on August 1, 2022,

notifying the public of the anticipated public meeting and the details related to the public comment period on the project. The notice contained locations where the environmental document could be reviewed, such as the Merced County Public Works, Le Grand Branch Library, Merced County Library, and online at https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-10-projects. In addition, notices and information letters were distributed to adjacent property owners near the intersection of Plainsburg Road and State Route 140, informing them of the environmental document's availability and the scheduling of the public meeting on August 18, 2022. On the evening of August 18, Caltrans had a Spanish translator available to field questions and help individuals on a one-on-one basis if necessary.

It is Caltans' intent that all interested parties are continually informed of projects and roadway conditions within their communities. Project updates will periodically be posted on https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-10-projects.

**Comment from Betty Esquivel**

**Comment 1:**

A round-about is a waste of tax payer money. Stop lights is needed for that area. No round-about!!!

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Brian Esquivel**

**Comment 1:**

No round about & the supervisor is not representing us well. If he has questions or comments please have him call me. I have called him multiple times and he has not returned my calls in the past My number is 209-756-8557.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Edward Armentz**

**Comment 1:**

-lack of adequate time for scoping/public comment

-disregard for community issues (Environmental Justice) public hearing was a farce

-CEQA? Was it completed for this project?

-Public education-bilingal didn't occur

-I request all documents re: public involvement per California Records Act.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project limits focus on the immediate boundaries of the State Route 140 and Plainsburg Road intersection as depicted on the image presented in Master Response 1. The project is not adversely impacting disadvantaged communities.

As summarized in Master Response 2, a public meeting was held for the proposed project on August 18, 2022, at Planada Elementary School. Notices were published in the Merced Sun-Star newspaper on August 1, 2022 (in English and Spanish), notifying the public of the anticipated public meeting and the details related to the public comment period on the project. The notice contained locations where the environmental document could be reviewed, such as the Merced County Public Works, Le Grand Branch Library, Merced County Library, and online at https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-10-projects. In addition, notices and information letters (English and Spanish) were distributed to adjacent property owners near the intersection of Plainsburg Road and State Route 140, informing them of the environmental document's availability and the scheduling of the public meeting on August 18, 2022. On the evening of August 18, Caltrans had a Spanish translator available to field questions and help individuals on a one-on-one basis if necessary. It is Caltans' intent that all interested parties are continually informed of projects and roadway conditions within their communities. Project updates will periodically be posted on https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-10-projects. The project is currently within the CEQA process and will conclude upon publication of the final Initial Study with Negative Declaration document, anticipated in mid-November 2022.

The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Information pertaining to your request for documentation will be forwarded to the address contained on the comment card you submitted.

**Comment from Elsa Baeza**

**Comment 1:**

No roundabout! Alternative 2 would be the best option for our town. Hwy 140 is very busy and a roundabout would not work out for pedestrians. In addition

Alternative 2 is less estimated capital cost. Looking at the plans less land would also be needed. Most people are more familiar with signal lights.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. Your assessment of Alternative 2 as costing less and requiring less land is correct. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional details regarding Alternative 1.

Alternative 1 was selected as the preferred alternative for the following reasons:

- A roundabout is the safer alternative from a traffic safety analysis perspective. Based on criteria, such as queuing, level of service, greenhouse gas reduction, collision severity, and maintenance, Alternative 1 achieves higher overall results.

- A roundabout is a safer alternative; it can handle traffic with fewer conflict points when compared to a signal. Roundabouts are designed to reduce entry speeds to 30 miles per hour and speeds through the intersection to below 20 miles per hour. Slower speeds provide more time for entering drivers to judge, adjust speed for, and enter gaps in circulating traffic. They also provide more time for all users to detect and correct their mistakes and the mistakes of others.

- In a roundabout, pedestrians need to watch out for only one lane of traffic at a time while crossing. With the roundabout alternative, each approach will have a splitter island, pedestrian crossings, Americans with Disabilities Act elements, and curbs and gutters.

**Comment from Ericca Castillo**

**Comment 1:**

No Roundabout! Alternative 2 best for town of Planada & Le Grand Mariposa communities who use that intersection everyday.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from John Chavez**

**Comment 1:**

- Will be a definite visual improvement

- Will roundabout be north of intersection?

- Will it be able to handle big rigs with trailers?

- Will traffic move faster than present 4 way light?

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Alternative 1 will be slightly north of the existing intersection. It will be capable of handling large truck traffic while reducing traffic speeds.

Alternative 1 was selected as the preferred alternative for the following reasons:

- A roundabout is the safer alternative from a traffic safety analysis perspective. Based on criteria, such as queuing, level of service, greenhouse gas reduction, collision severity, and maintenance, Alternative 1 achieves higher overall results.

- A roundabout is a safer alternative; it can handle traffic with fewer conflict points when compared to a signal. Roundabouts are designed to reduce entry speeds to 30 miles per hour and speeds through the intersection to below 20 miles per hour. Slower speeds provide more time for entering drivers to judge, adjust speed for, and enter gaps in circulating traffic. They also provide more time for all users to detect and correct their mistakes and the mistakes of others.

- In a roundabout, pedestrians need to watch out for only one lane of traffic at a time while crossing. With the roundabout alternative, each approach will have a splitter island, pedestrian crossings, Americans with Disabilities Act elements, and curbs and gutters.

**Comment from Liseth Rodriquez**

**Comment 1:**

Lights “don’t know what roundabout is”

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. A roundabout is a type of circular intersection with yield control of entering traffic, islands on the approaches, and appropriate roadway curvature to reduce vehicle speeds.

**Comment from Mary Rodriguez**

**Comment 1:**

Drivers refuse to slow down. Drivers not only do not yield to those entered in the roundabout, they become more aggressive in the roundabouts. They all temp to jump in front of the first driver. Car speed of drivers on 140 is not going to cause them to be yielding.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. It is Caltrans' goal to reduce the number and severity of broadside and head-on collisions at this location by improving the intersection control at the intersection of Plainsburg Road and State Route 140.

**Comment from Michelle Esquivel**

**Comment 1:**

To voice that a round-about does not have stops signs! There are people who cross that road daily. I use the stop signs daily on my way to work. I feel safe that I know we need to stop vs. there being a continuous flow of traffic.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

One of the benefits associated with Alternative 1 and the roundabout is the narrowing effect the design has on crosswalks associated with the intersection. Instead of having to cross multiple lanes associated with a signalized intersection and/or stop sign-controlled intersection by a pedestrian, with this roundabout proposal, pedestrians will be crossing only one single lane at a time with their sight distance focused in one direction. The islands included within the design of the roundabout act as refuge spaces for pedestrians as they cross the roadway.

**Comment from Alex Mejra**

**Comment 1:**

Lights

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

Alternative 1 was selected as the preferred alternative for the following reasons:

- A roundabout is the safer alternative from a traffic safety analysis perspective. Based on criteria, such as queuing, level of service, greenhouse gas reduction, collision severity, and maintenance, Alternative 1 achieves higher overall results.

- A roundabout is a safer alternative; it can handle traffic with fewer conflict points when compared to a signal. Roundabouts are designed to reduce entry speeds to 30 miles per hour and speeds through the intersection to below 20 miles per hour. Slower speeds provide more time for entering drivers to judge, adjust speed for, and enter gaps in circulating traffic. They also provide more time for all users to detect and correct their mistakes and the mistakes of others.

- In a roundabout, pedestrians need to watch out for only one lane of traffic at a time while crossing. With the roundabout alternative, each approach will have a splitter island, pedestrian crossings, Americans with Disabilities Act elements, and curbs and gutters.

**Comment from Ceasar Hernandez**

**Comment 1:**

Roundabout

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Elena Ceja**

**Comment 1:**

Signal Lights, Walk + Drive, Don’t know what a round-a-about is, wasn’t aware of meeting.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. A roundabout is a type of circular intersection with yield control of entering traffic, islands on the approaches, and appropriate roadway curvature to reduce vehicle speeds.

Alternative 1 was selected as the preferred alternative for the following reasons:

- A roundabout is the safer alternative from a traffic safety analysis perspective. Based on criteria, such as queuing, level of service, greenhouse gas reduction, collision severity, and maintenance, Alternative 1 achieves higher overall results.

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- In a roundabout, pedestrians need to watch out for only one lane of traffic at a time while crossing. With the roundabout alternative, each approach will have a splitter island, pedestrian crossings, Americans with Disabilities Act elements, and curbs and gutters.

It is Caltans' intent that all interested parties are continually informed of projects and roadway conditions within their communities. Project updates will periodically be posted on https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-10-projects. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Estela Guzman**

**Comment 1:**

"Walker" to Planada, no roundabout, no meeting to her knowledge.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Evangelina Maravilla**

**Comment 1:**

Walk, Signals, "Didn't know of meeting"

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Jessica Garcia**

**Comment 1:**

Stop Light

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Josefina Centeno**

**Comment 1:**

Lights, Driver, People don't respect signs, not contacted for meeting.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Marcos Pantoja**

**Comment 1:**

Stop lights, round a bouts = collisions, people don't look, people don't yield, commercial driver, no meeting knowledge, People do work ag – live where how?

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

Alternative 1 was selected as the preferred alternative for the following reasons:

- A roundabout is the safer alternative from a traffic safety analysis perspective. Based on criteria, such as queuing, level of service, greenhouse gas reduction, collision severity, and maintenance, Alternative 1 achieves higher overall results.

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They also provide more time for all users to detect and correct their mistakes and the mistakes of others.

- In a roundabout, pedestrians need to watch out for only one lane of traffic at a time while crossing. With the roundabout alternative, each approach will have a splitter island, pedestrian crossings, Americans with Disabilities Act elements, and curbs and gutters.

Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Noemi Castillo**

**Comment 1:**

Does not walk fast, “walker + hard of seeing”, signals, did not hear of meeting.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Rual Lopez**

**Comment 1:**

Signal lights, Drivers, didn’t know of meeting

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Rosario**

**Comment 1:**

Didn’t know of meeting, sister transports, prefer signal light

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Salvador Aguilar**

**Comment 1:**

Walkers, Don't drive, bus does not enter! (new drivers) 08/13, prefer signal & crosswalk, no meeting awareness.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Alicia Rodriguez**

**Comment 1:**

I am long time volunteer/advocate for my community at least 30 yrs since been living here. I have served on Planada Community Development Corp, Planada Mac 10 years and etc. I have experience of what projects in community can cause when the process isn't done fairly or wisely. I was the leader for 4-way stops been advocating on this project since Sept 2018. We appreciate the four stops after many years of uncontrol intersection. We would like the 140/plainsburg intersection to have signalization with a sensor, pedestrian friendly. There are residents that are permanent residents in Felix Torres & Bear Creek housing total over perm. 100 apartments/30 temorary apartments, some are walkers to their services. Roundabouts don't have "right of way" drivers are to yield before entry, which yield doesn't work well in busy highways, and large oncoming trucks & buses. Fatality sure to happen.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

Alternative 1 was selected as the preferred alternative for the following reasons:

- A roundabout is the safer alternative from a traffic safety analysis perspective. Based on criteria, such as queuing, level of service, greenhouse gas reduction, collision severity, and maintenance, Alternative 1 achieves higher overall results.

- A roundabout is a safer alternative; it can handle traffic with fewer conflict points when compared to a signal. Roundabouts are designed to reduce entry speeds to 30 miles per hour and speeds through the intersection to below 20 miles per hour. Slower speeds provide more time for entering drivers to judge, adjust speed for, and enter gaps in circulating traffic.

They also provide more time for all users to detect and correct their mistakes and the mistakes of others.

- In a roundabout, pedestrians need to watch out for only one lane of traffic at a time while crossing. With the roundabout alternative, each approach will have a splitter island, pedestrian crossings, Americans with Disabilities Act elements, and curbs and gutters.

**Comment from Antonio Rodriguez**

**Comment 1:**

Driver, as is, signals #2, no roundabout, didn't know of meeting.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Elpidio Rosales**

**Comment 1:**

Driver & walk, signals, no meetings – never hears, income/rent increase

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Flor Medina**

**Comment 1:**

Drive, lights, don't know what a round a bout, didn't know of meeting

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Joana Garcia**

**Comment 1:**

Signal lights, drive to school, not familiar & doesn't like roundabout, people don't yield, concern for elders crossing 140-no choice, no meeting was mentioned.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Laura Gaytan**

**Comment 1:**

Against roundabout, driver, didn't hear of meeting

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Leobardo Garcia**

**Comment 1:**

Walker, signal light, what meeting?

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Luis Gallegos**

**Comment 1:**

Lights, People don't stop, driver, walk to DG, roundabout most don't yield & will confuse people, no meetings to his knowledge.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details

regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Maria Duran**

**Comment 1:**

No round a bout, prefers lights, drive, no meeting knowledge, roads not kept-pot holes.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Marlene Lopez**

**Comment 1:**

Signals, driver, didn’t know of meeting

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Rufina Garcia**

**Comment 1:**

Walk only, signals & crosswalk preferred, no meeting knowledge

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Ryan Guererro**

**Comment 1:**

Driver, lights, people do not yield, do not care for round a bout, racer attractions, has never known of meetings.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details

regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Silva Cortez**

**Comment 1:**

Signals, didn't know of meeting

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Anita Segura**

**Comment 1:**

Although I no longer drive I would prefer that a stoplight be placed at the intersection of hwy 140 and Plainsburg Rd. due to the fact that there is still a lot of "foot traffic" crossing Hwy 140 and I believe that a "round-about" would not alleviate that danger.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

Alternative 1 was selected as the preferred alternative for the following reasons:

- A roundabout is the safer alternative from a traffic safety analysis perspective. Based on criteria, such as queuing, level of service, greenhouse gas reduction, collision severity, and maintenance, Alternative 1 achieves higher overall results.

- A roundabout is a safer alternative; it can handle traffic with fewer conflict points when compared to a signal. Roundabouts are designed to reduce entry speeds to 30 miles per hour and speeds through the intersection to below 20 miles per hour. Slower speeds provide more time for entering drivers to judge, adjust speed for, and enter gaps in circulating traffic. They also provide more time for all users to detect and correct their mistakes and the mistakes of others.

- In a roundabout, pedestrians need to watch out for only one lane of traffic at a time while crossing. With the roundabout alternative, each approach will have a splitter island, pedestrian crossings, Americans with Disabilities Act elements, and curbs and gutters.

**Comment from Belen Morales**

**Comment 1:**

Llo ce guero luses noglorieta, Maria Blen de planada calle campos no 259

(Translation: I like the lights, no roundabout,  Maria Blen of plana village apartments no 259)

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Carado Ciseneros**

**Comment 1:**

Lights, (no roundabout) knowledge

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. Please refer to Master Response 2 for details regarding public outreach for the project.

**Comment from Cynthis Huerta**

**Comment 1:**

Stop light

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Eva Dordenas**

**Comment 1:**

Luces por favor

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Eva Vargas**

**Comment 1:**

Lights (Doesn't know what roundabout)

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. A roundabout is a type of circular intersection with yield control of entering traffic, islands on the approaches, and appropriate roadway curvature to reduce vehicle speeds.

**Comment from Juana Guardado**

**Comment 1:**

La luz

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Larry Rodriguez**

**Comment 1:**

After many experiences of witnessing drivers in a confused state when driving in a traffic roundabout. I am very worried for the safety of this roundabout at Plainsburg and highway 140 in Planada California. I personally don't know anyone here in favor of this imposition to my community of 50 years. Very disappointed in local and state government dot caring about what people in Planada area do not want placed here.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

Alternative 1 was selected as the preferred alternative for the following reasons:

- A roundabout is the safer alternative from a traffic safety analysis perspective. Based on criteria, such as queuing, level of service, greenhouse gas reduction, collision severity, and maintenance, Alternative 1 achieves higher overall results.

- A roundabout is a safer alternative; it can handle traffic with fewer conflict points when compared to a signal. Roundabouts are designed to reduce entry speeds to 30 miles per hour and speeds through the intersection to below 20 miles per hour. Slower speeds provide more time for entering drivers to judge, adjust speed for, and enter gaps in circulating traffic. They also provide more time for all users to detect and correct their mistakes and the mistakes of others.

- In a roundabout, pedestrians need to watch out for only one lane of traffic at a time while crossing. With the roundabout alternative, each approach will have a splitter island, pedestrian crossings, Americans with Disabilities Act elements, and curbs and gutters.

**Comment from Mariam Almanza**

**Comment 1:**

Lights “roundabout yield is confusing”

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1. A roundabout is a type of circular intersection with yield control of entering traffic, islands on the approaches, and appropriate roadway curvature to reduce vehicle speeds.

**Comment from Michelle Serena**

**Comment 1:**

Signal lights

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Mike Quiroz**

**Comment 1:**

La luz

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Morrilee Looney**

**Comment 1:**

Light there

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Nayeli Calderon**

**Comment 1:**

Lights luces de senal

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Ricardo Ramirez**

**Comment 1:**

Lights (wife walks)

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Ruby Hernandez**

**Comment 1:**

We need lights cause people like to come & go as they want no stoping. Need stop lights to let them come & go.

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

**Comment from Selena Hernandez**

**Comment 1:**

Lights

**Response to comment 1:** Thank you for your comment. The project development team has recommended Alternative 1 as the preferred alternative. Please refer to Master Response 1 for additional design details regarding Alternative 1.

# List of Technical Studies Bound Separately (Volume 2)

Right of Way Datasheet

Air Quality Report

Noise Study Report

Water Quality Report

Natural Environment Study

Location Hydraulic Study

Cultural Screening Memo

Hazardous Waste Reports

- Initial Site Assessment
- Preliminary Site Investigation

Scenic Resource Evaluation/Visual Assessment

Initial Paleontology Study

To obtain a copy of one or more of these technical studies/reports or the Initial Study, please send your request to:

Haesun Lim
District 6 Environmental Division
California Department of Transportation
2015 East Shields Avenue, Suite 100, Fresno, California 93726

Or send your request via email to: haesun.a.lim@dot.ca.gov
Or call: 559-970-2348

Please provide the following information in your request:

Project title: Merced 140 Planada Intersection

General location information: In Merced County on State Route 140 in Planada at the intersection of Plainsburg Road

District number-county code-route-post mile: 10-MER-140-PM 43.5-43.9

Project ID Number: 1020000188