Notice of Preparation

Date: October 7, 2025

To: Reviewing Agencies, Interested Parties, and Organizations

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the 9th Avenue Interchange, 06-1A200

Caltrans will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency on the scope and content of the environmental information that pertains to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the environmental impact report prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are described below. A copy of the Initial Study (☐ is ☒ is not) attached.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

Please send your response to Caltrans at the address or email shown below. We will also need the name of a contact person in your agency.

Project Title

9th Avenue Interchange

Project Applicant (if any)

Caltrans, District 6

Project Description

The proposed project would construct an interchange at State Route 198 and 9th Avenue in the City of Hanford in Kings County. See Attachment A for the Location Map. Five build alternatives (described below) and one no-build alternative are being considered for this project.

Alternative 1: Cloverleaf Interchange

This alternative proposes to construct a cloverleaf interchange with all ramps on the west side of 9th Avenue, a combination of Type L-7 and Type L-8 interchange. The northwest quadrant would consist of a Type L-8 configuration with a loop off-ramp and a

diamond-type on-ramp for the westbound direction of State Route 198. Left-turn lanes would be constructed along northbound 9th Avenue. The southeast quadrant will consist of a Type L-7 configuration. This alternative also proposes a loop off-ramp and diamond-type ramp for the eastbound direction of State Route 198. The Type L-7 configuration eliminates the need for left-turn storage lanes along the proposed 9th Avenue structure.

A new 9th Avenue overcrossing would be constructed. The new 9th Avenue overcrossing would be a 235-foot-long, two-span (120-foot, 115-foot) structure varying in width from 122.33 to 134.33 feet. The structure would be constructed of either a Cast-In-Place/Prestressed (CIP/PS) box girder with a depth of 4.75 feet or Pre-Cast/Prestressed (PC/PS) wide-flange girders with a depth of 4.88 feet. A 4.0-foot-diameter, multi-column bent within the median of State Route 198 is anticipated. The open-ended short seat abutments are assumed to be founded on piles. The multi-column bent would be founded on pile caps or large-diameter Cast-In Drilled Hole (CIDH) piles. The new overcrossing would accommodate a 3-lane traveled way in each direction, median, two Class II bike lanes and 10-foot sidewalks.

Alternative 2: Partial Cloverleaf Interchange

This alternative proposes to construct a Type L-9 partial cloverleaf interchange. The northwest quadrant would incorporate a State Route 198 westbound on-ramp for 9th Avenue southbound traffic. The northeast quadrant would incorporate a State Route 198 westbound loop on-ramp for 9th Avenue northbound traffic and a State Route 198 westbound off-ramp. The southeast quadrant would incorporate a State Route 198 eastbound on-ramp for 9th Avenue northbound traffic. In the Type L-9 configuration, left turns are eliminated along 9th Avenue.

The new 9th Avenue overcrossing is anticipated to consist of a 220-ft long, 122.33 ft wide, two span (110-ft, 110-ft) structure. It will consist of either a CIP/PS box girder with a depth of 4.50-ft or PC/PS within the median of State Route 198. The open-ended short seat abutments are assumed to be founded on piles. The multi-column bent is assumed to be founded on pile caps or large diameter CIDH piles. The new overcrossing will accommodate a 3-lane traveled way in each direction, median, two Class II bike lanes and 10-foot sidewalks.

Alternative 3A: Spread Diamond Interchange

This alternative proposes to construct a Type L-2 spread diamond interchange. The new 9th Avenue overcrossing is anticipated to consist of either a single- or two-span structure that is 134.33 feet wide. The single-span option is anticipated to have a length of 162 feet and would consist of either a Cast-In-Place/Prestressed (CIP/PS) box girder with a depth of 7.25 feet or Pre-Cast/Prestressed (PC/PS) wide-flange girders with a depth of 7.38 feet. The two-span (83-foot, 83-foot) option is anticipated to have a length of 166 feet and would consist of either a Cast-In-Place/Prestressed (CIP/PS) box girder with a depth of 3.5 feet or Pre-Cast/Prestressed (PC/PS) girders with a depth of 4.25 feet. A 4.0-foot-diameter, multi-column bent is anticipated within the median of State Route 198. The open-ended short seat abutments are assumed to be founded on piles. The multi-column bent is assumed to be founded on pile caps or large-diameter Cast-In

Drilled Hole (CIDH) piles. The new overcrossing will accommodate a 3-lane traveled way in each direction, median, two Class II bike lanes and 10-foot sidewalks.

Alternative 3B: Spread Diamond Interchange with Two Roundabouts at Ramp Terminals

This alternative proposes to construct two multi-lane roundabouts along the 9th Avenue and ramp intersections. The roundabouts would be placed approximately 350 feet south and north of the State Route 198 centerline, and a bypass would be placed at each ramp terminal. At the interchange, 9th Avenue would be a 6-lane facility prior to and after the proposed overcrossing. The structure would consist of 4 lanes. For this alternative, adding loop on-ramps should be studied in the next phase if operational analysis indicates a need for additional ramps.

The new 9th Avenue overcrossing is anticipated to consist of either a single- or two-span structure that is 94.33 feet wide. The single-span option is anticipated to have a length of 162 feet and would consist of either a Cast-In-Place/Prestressed (CIP/PS) with a depth of 7.25 feet or Pre-Cast/Prestressed (PC/PS) wide-flange girders with a depth of 7.38 feet. The precast girder option may require on-site splicing and post-tensioning due to shipping limitations. The two-span (83-foot, 83-foot) option is anticipated to have a length of 166 feet and would consist of either a Cast-In-Place/Prestressed (CIP/PS) box girder with a depth of 3.5 feet or Pre-Cast/Prestressed (PC/PS) wide-flange girders with a depth of 3.88 feet. A 3.0-foot-diameter multi-column bent is anticipated within the median of State Route 198. The new overcrossing would accommodate a 2-lane traveled way in each direction, median, and a shared bike lane and sidewalk.

Alternative 4: Cloverleaf Interchange with Roundabouts at the Ramp Terminals

This is the same project description as Alternative 1 but instead of a signalized intersection at the two ramps there would be roundabouts. The roundabout would have two travel lanes and a shared bike lane and sidewalk in each direction between the roundabouts.

Project Location

The project lies on State Route 198 from post miles R19.1 to R20.5 in Kings County. The project limits encompass the area where 9th Avenue and State Route 198 meet.

See Attachment B for the Location Map.

Probable Environmental Effects of the Project

Based on preliminary surveys and information, Caltrans has identified the following subject areas for analysis in the environmental impact report:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources

- Community Impacts
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise
- Paleontology
- Transportation
- Vehicle Miles Traveled
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Cumulative Effects

Public Scoping Meeting

In addition to distributing this Notice of Preparation, Caltrans will conduct two public scoping meetings for the project. The public is encouraged to attend the public scoping meeting and submit comments on the proposed project. Comments will be accepted until November 7, 2025.

In-Person Meeting

Date: Tuesday, October 14, 2025

Time: 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Where: Hanford City Hall Office Building, Training Room
319 N Douty Street
Hanford, CA 93230

Contact Information

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Signature: *David Johnson*

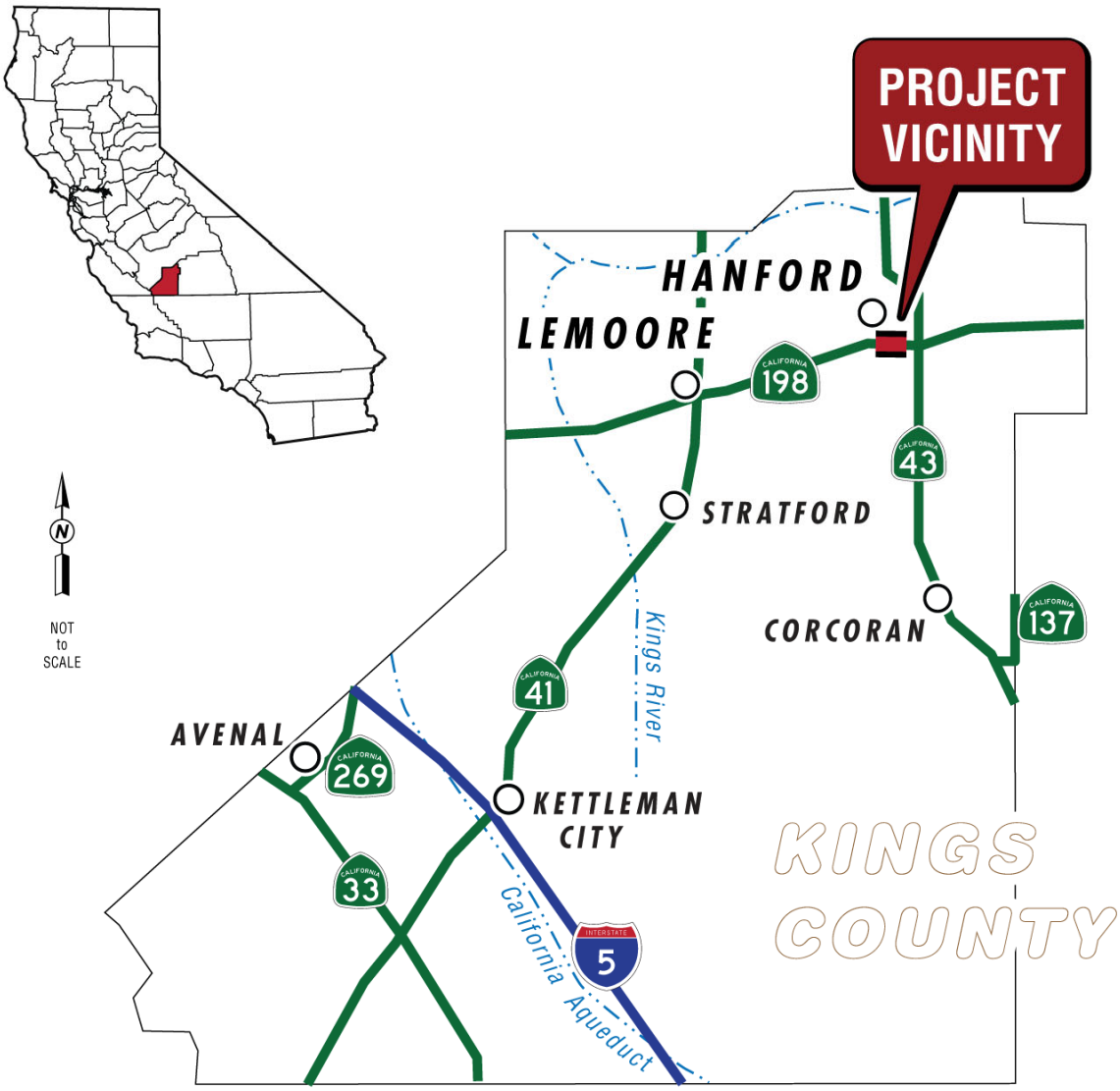
Title: Environmental Office Chief

Attachments:

A. Location Map
B. Vicinity Map

Reference: California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, 15375.

Attachment A: Vicinity Map



Attachment B: Location Map