



# County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING  
ALAN WEAVER, DIRECTOR

## INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

**1. Project title:**

*Fresno County Regional Bicycle and Recreational Trails Master Plan, Initial Study Application No. 6689*

**2. Lead agency name and address:**

*Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning  
Development Services Division  
2220 Tulare Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Fresno, CA 93721-2104*

**3. Contact person and phone number:**

*Briza Sholars, (559) 600-4207*

**4. Project location:**

*County-wide*

**5. Project Applicant's name and address:**

*Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning, Design Division  
2220 Tulare Street, 6th Floor  
Fresno, CA 93721-2104*

**6. General Plan designation:**

*County-wide. The Fresno County Regional Bicycle and Recreational Trails Master Plan encompasses a variety of locations within the County of Fresno with various General Plan Land Use designations such as: Agriculture, Westside/Eastside Rangeland, Public Lands/Open Space, Foothill/Rural/Mountain Residential, Low/Medium/Medium-High Density Residential, Neighborhood/Office/Community/Central Business/Regional/Highway/Service/Special Commercial, Limited/General Industrial, Public Facilities, Mountain Urban, Rural Settlement Area, Planned Rural Community, and Planned Urban Village.*

**7. Zoning:**

*County-wide. The Fresno County Regional Bicycle and Recreational Trails Master Plan encompasses a variety of locations within the County of Fresno with various Zoning District designations such as: Exclusive Agriculture (AE), Resource Conservation (R-C), Rural Residential (R-R), Single-Family Residential (R-1, A, A, E, EH, B, C), Low Density Multiple-Family Residential (R-2, A), Medium Density Multiple-Family Residential (R-3, A), High Density Multiple-Family Residential (R-4), Neighborhood Shopping Center (C-1), Residential and Professional Office (R-P), Community Shopping Center (C-2), Central Trading (C-4), Regional Shopping Center (C-3), General Commercial (C-6), Commercial and Light Manufacturing (C-M), Light Manufacturing (M-1), General Industrial (M-2), Heavy Industrial (M-3), Limited Agriculture (AL), Rural Settlement (RS), and Planned Village (P-V).*

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIVISION

**8. Description of project: (Describe the whole action involved, including but not limited to later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)**

*This is a County-wide project. The proposed project consists of revising the adopted Fresno County Regional Bicycle and Recreational Trails Master Plan to include the Lost Lake Pedestrian Nature Trail, and the Fancher Creek Bridle Trail, an existing recreation/equestrian trail. These two trails will be included in the next scheduled update of the Transportation and Circulation and Open Space and Conservation Elements of the October 2000 Fresno County General Plan. The conceptual Lost Lake Pedestrian Nature Trail is planned to be minimum of four feet in width and a maximum of ten feet in width and is located within Lost Lake Park, generally along the San Joaquin River (see Exhibit 2). Portions of the Lost Lake Pedestrian Nature Trail will be ADA accessible. The Fancher Creek Bridle Trail is an existing trail that runs along the east side of Fancher Creek from Kings Canyon Road Drive to California Avenue (see Exhibit 3). The rehabilitated Fancher Creek Bridle Trail will be a non-paved recreational trail. The Revised Plan provides the framework for future development of the County's bicycle, pedestrian and recreational trails network and will make the County eligible for local, state, and federal funding for bicycle and/or recreational trail projects. The Revised Plan is intended to guide and influence bikeway, pedestrian and recreational trail policies, as well as programs and development standards within the County of Fresno to provide a safer, more comfortable, convenient, and enjoyable environment for all bicyclists, trail users and pedestrians. Further implementation of specific projects and programs contained in the Revised Plan may require project specific environmental documentation under the California Environmental Quality Act at the time the project is considered.*

**9. Surrounding land uses and setting: Briefly describe the project's surroundings:**

*Fresno County is bordered by Merced and Madera Counties to the north, Kings and Tulare Counties to the south, Mono and Inyo Counties to the east, and San Benito and Monterey Counties to the west. The City of Fresno is the County Seat and houses the largest population within Fresno County.*

*The Valley Floor of Fresno County which is generally located between Interstate 5 (I-5) on the west to the Friant/Kern Canal on the east, is relatively flat, and laced with canals and waterways. County areas east of the Friant/Kern Canal rise in elevation through the foothills to the Sierra Nevada mountain areas covered with reservoirs, lakes, streams, and forests. West of I-5, rolling hills abound at the foot of the California Coastal Mountain range.*

**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:**

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards and Hazardous Materials    | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic             | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions           |

**DETERMINATION OF REQUIRED ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT:**

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment. **A NEGATIVE DECLARATION WILL BE PREPARED.**
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the Mitigation Measures described on the attached sheet have been added to the project. **A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION WILL BE PREPARED.**
- I find the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required
- I find that as a result of the proposed project, no new effects could occur, or new Mitigation Measures would be required that have not been addressed within the scope of a previous Environmental Impact Report.

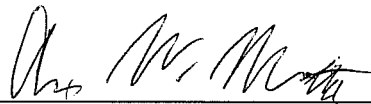
**PERFORMED BY:**



Briza Sholars, Planner

Date: June 7, 2013

**REVIEWED BY:**



Chris Motta, Principal Planner

Date: 6/10/13

**INITIAL STUDY  
ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM  
(Initial Study Application No. 6689)  
(Fresno County Regional Bicycle and  
Recreational Trails Master Plan)**

The following checklist is used to determine if the proposed project could potentially have a significant effect on the environment. Explanations and information regarding each question follow the checklist.

1 = No Impact

2 = Less Than Significant Impact

3 = Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated

4 = Potentially Significant Impact

**I. AESTHETICS**

Would the project:

- 1 a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?
- 1 b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?
- 1 c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?
- 1 d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

**II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES**

Would the project:

- 2 a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency to non-agricultural use?
- 2 b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?
- 1 c) Conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production?
- 2 d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?
- 2 e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

**III. AIR QUALITY**

Would the project:

- 2 a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan?
- 2 b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?
- 2 c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under applicable Federal or State ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?
- 2 d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?
- 2 e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

**IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

Would the project:

- 2 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 Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- 2 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 Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- 2 c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?
- 2 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?
- 2 e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?
- 1 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?

**V. CULTURAL RESOURCES**

Would the project:

- 1 a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Public Resources Code Section 15064.5?
- 1 b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 15064.5?
- 1 c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site, or unique geologic feature?
- 1 d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

**VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

Would the project:

- a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
  - 1 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?
  - 1 ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?
  - 1 iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
  - 1 iv) Landslides?
- 1 b) Result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil?
- 1 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 on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?
- 1 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?
- 1 e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

## VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

- 1 a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?
- 1 b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

## VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

- 1 a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?
- 1 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?
- 1 c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?
- 1 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?
- 2 e) For a project located within an Airport Land Use Plan or where such a Plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?
- 2 f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?
- 1 g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted Emergency Response Plan or Emergency Evacuation Plan?
- 1 h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

## IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

- 2 a) Violate any water quality standards of waste discharge requirements?
- 2 b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?
- 2 c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?
- 2 d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?
- 2 e) 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?
- 2 f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?
- 2 g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a Federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?

- 2 h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?
- 2 i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?
- 2 j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

## X. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

- 1 a) Physically divide an established community?
- 1 b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the General Plan, Specific Plan, local coastal program, or Zoning Ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?
- 1 c) Conflict with any applicable Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan?

## XI. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- 1 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?
- 1 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?

## XII. NOISE

Would the project:

- 1 a) Expose of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local General Plan or Noise Ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?
- 1 b) Expose of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?
- 1 c) Create a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?
- 1 d) Create a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?
- 1 e) Expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels for a project located within an Airport Land Use Plan or, where such a Plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport?
- 1 f) Expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels for a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip?

## XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

- 1 a) Induce substantial 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)?
- 1 b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?
- 1 c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

## XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

- 1 a) 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:

- 1 i) Fire protection?
- 1 ii) Police protection?
- 1 iii) Schools?
- 1 iv) Parks?
- 1 v) Other public facilities?

#### XV. RECREATION

Would the project:

- 1 a) 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?
- 1 b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

#### XVI. TRANSPORTATION / TRAFFIC

Would the project:

- 1 a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?
- 1 b) Conflict with an applicable Congestion Management Program including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the County congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?
- 1 c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location which results in substantial safety risks?
- 1 d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?
- 1 e) Result in inadequate emergency access?
- 1 f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?

#### Documents Referenced:

This Initial Study is referenced by the documents listed below. These documents are available for public review at the County of Fresno, Department of Public Works and Planning, Development Services Division, 2220 Tulare Street, Suite "A", Fresno, California (corner of Tulare and "M" Streets).

- Previously Adopted Fresno County Regional Bicycle and Trails Master Plan
- Fresno County General Plan, Policy Document and Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- Fresno County Zoning Ordinance
- California Vehicle Code
- California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), State Department of Fish and Game
- Important Farmland 2000 Map, State Department of Conservation

#### XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

- 1 a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?
- 1 b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?
- 2 c) Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?
- 2 d) Have sufficient water supplies available to service the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?
- 1 e) 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?
- 1 f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?
- 1 g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

#### XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

- 2 a) Have the potential to 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, 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?
- 1 b) 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.)
- 1 c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?