



**CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
DETERMINATION FORM (rev. 06/2022)**

Project Information

Project Name (if applicable): Crosswalks and Flashing Beacons in Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus County

DIST-CO-RTE: MER/SJ/STA-VAR-VAR **PM/PM:** VAR-VAR

EA: 10-1Q520 **Federal-Aid Project Number:** 1023000030

Project Description

This project proposes to improve the connectivity and safety of pedestrian facilities in Merced, Stanislaus, and San Joaquin Counties at various Post Miles. The project scope of work includes installing and reconstructing curb ramps to current ADA standards, install new rectangular rapid flashing beacons and install/upgrade crosswalks, and to install warning where required and/or needed. The proposed improvements anticipate Temporary Construction Easements, possible R/W acquisition, and verification of utilities.

Caltrans CEQA Determination (Check one)

- Not Applicable** – Caltrans is not the CEQA Lead Agency
- Not Applicable** – Caltrans has prepared an IS or EIR under CEQA

Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the project is:

- Exempt by Statute.** (PRC 21080[b]; 14 CCR 15260 et seq.)
- Categorically Exempt. Class 1.** (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15300 et seq.)
 - No exceptions apply that would bar the use of a categorical exemption (PRC 21084 and 14 CCR 15300.2). See the [SER Chapter 34](#) for exceptions.
- Covered by the Common Sense Exemption.** This project does not fall within an exempt class, but it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment (14 CCR 15061[b][3].)

Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief



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Jon Coley

Print Name

Signature

04/08/2025

Date

Project Manager

Jim Benton

Print Name

Signature

4/8/2025

Date



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Caltrans NEPA Determination (Check one)

[X] Not Applicable

Caltrans has determined that this project has no significant impacts on the environment as defined by NEPA, and that there are no unusual circumstances as described in 23 CFR 771.117(b). See SER Chapter 30 for unusual circumstances. As such, the project is categorically excluded from the requirements to prepare an EA or EIS under NEPA and is included under the following:

[X] 23 USC 326: Caltrans has been assigned, and hereby certifies that it has carried out the responsibility to make this determination pursuant to 23 USC 326 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated April 18, 2022, executed between FHWA and Caltrans. Caltrans has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under:

[X] 23 CFR 771.117(c): activity (c)(27)

[] 23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)(27)

[] Activity 27 listed in Appendix A of the MOU between FHWA and Caltrans

[] 23 USC 327: Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, Caltrans has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under 23 USC 327. The environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 USC 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated May 27, 2022, and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

Jon Coley Signature 04/08/2025
Print Name Signature Date

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Jim Benton Signature 4/8/2025
Print Name Signature Date

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): Enter date
Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: Enter date

Briefly list environmental commitments on continuation sheet if needed (i.e., not necessary if included on an attached ECR). Reference additional information, as appropriate (e.g., additional studies and design conditions).



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Continuation sheet:

Air Quality- This project is not expected to cause any operational effects on air pollutants within the project limits.

During construction, the proposed project will generate air pollutants- exhaust from construction equipment and dust which may cause annoyance and complaints from residents along State right-of-way.

Caltrans Standard Specifications pertaining to dust control and dust palliative requirements is a required part of all construction contracts and should effectively reduce and control emission impacts during construction. The provisions of Caltrans Standard Specifications, Section 14-9.02 "Air Pollution Control" and Section 10-5 "Dust Control" require the contractor to comply with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's rules, ordinances, and regulations and statutes that apply to work performed under the contract, including those provided in Government Code § 11017.

If the project disturbs over 5 acres or removes 2,500 cubic yards of soil for at least three days of the project, a Dust Control Plan (DCP) approved by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District will be required for this project.

Biology- There are no significant Biological impacts as long as the scope does not change.

For work that is scheduled for between February 1st and September 30th, a nesting migratory bird/nesting raptor survey would be performed 14 days before the proposed start date of any construction-related activities. Construction work would be approved if a survey of the job site within the 14 days before the proposed start of the construction activity shows an absence of nesting birds.

If activities fail to commence within 14 days, or if there is a halt to the activities with a delay of more than 14 days, another nesting migratory bird/nesting raptor survey must be performed before construction activities can recommence.

If nesting migratory birds or raptors are found during the preconstruction survey or during construction activities, the following Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) buffers will be required in accordance with Measure 14-06.03B (Bird Protection) of the Caltrans 2022 Standard Specification and/or Special Provisions: If any active migratory bird nest is observed, a 100-foot ESA buffer must be implemented and avoided until the young have fledged or a qualified biologist determines that construction may proceed.

If an active raptor nest is observed, a 300-foot ESA buffer must be implemented and avoided around the nest until the young have fledged or a qualified biologist determines that construction may proceed.



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Water- There are no long-term water quality impacts anticipated for this project. There are some potential short-term impacts that could occur due to accidental spills or poor management of handling hazardous materials, fuels, and other potential chemicals used during construction activities. These possible risks should be anticipated and addressed in the Design and Construction phase of the project. Appropriate Best Management Practices should be selected and implemented per the Project planning and Design Guide. Before project initiation, the Caltrans Stormwater Unit should be consulted to identify the applicable Best Management Practices for stormwater concerns.

If the project disturbs one acre or more of soil, the following requirements would be required:

1. A Notification of Intent (NOI) is to be submitted to the appropriate Regional Water Quality Control Board at least 30 days before the start of construction.
2. A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) is to be prepared and implemented during construction to the satisfaction of the Resident Engineer.
3. A Notice of Termination (NOT) shall be submitted to the Regional Board upon completion of construction and site stabilization. A project will be considered complete when the criteria for final stabilization in the Construction General Permit are met.

If the project disturbs less than one acre of soil, a Water Pollution Control Plan (WPCP) is required to be prepared by the contractor following the Caltrans 2022 Standard Specification Section 13-1 – Water Pollution.

Visual- No significant visual impacts are anticipated.

Noise- There is no potential for significant long term noise impacts from construction because construction would be conducted in accordance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-8.02. Additionally, the following measures would minimize the temporary noise impacts from construction:

- Do not exceed 86 dBA Lmax at 50 feet from the job site activities from 9:00 p.m. to 6: a.m.
- Equip internal combustion engines with the manufacturer recommended muffler. Do not operate an internal combustion engine on the job site without the appropriate muffler.

Paleontology- Paleontological resources should not be affected. If unanticipated fossil discovery occurs during construction, Standard Specification 14-7.03 of the Caltrans Standard Specifications 2022 Edition identifies the procedures required to protect the resource.



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Hydraulics- Locations 1,2, and 3 should not have a significant impact on the floodplain. Location 4 lies in a special flood hazard zone and is within the 100-year floodplain. However, the location hydraulic study has determined that the work at this location should not have any significant impacts on the floodplain.

Stormwater- There are no significant Stormwater impacts anticipated. If this project disturbs one acre or more of soil then a Stormwater Prevention Pollution Plan (SWPPP) is to be prepared and implemented during construction to the satisfaction of the Resident Engineer.

This project requires a Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP). Measures to avoid or reduce potential impacts to water quality of the project area during construction and the contractor's staging area will be specified in the WPCP. The WPCP is submitted to the Resident Engineer for review and acceptance prior to the start of construction work. The WPCP will incorporate applicable temporary construction site Best Management Practices (BMP's) within the project limits throughout the construction activities.

The following Construction Site Water Pollution Control BMPs are identified:

- Job Site Management
- Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP)
- Water Pollution Control Maintenance Sharing
- Additional Water Pollution Control
- Temporary Concrete Washout
- Temporary Fiber Roll

Cultural- Project has no potential to affect historic properties and no potential to affect historical resources.

Haz Waste-There are at least five closed remediation sites near the project area but the potential to encounter contaminated soil is minimal. There is potential to encounter non-hazardous concentrations of Aerially Deposited Lead (ADL) while working in unpaved areas within the project limits. Based on the information provided, excess soil is not anticipated.

The Caltrans Standard Special Provision, 7-1.02K(6)(j)(iii), which pertains to Earth Material Containing Lead, shall be added to the construction contract. A lead compliance plan prepared by a Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH) is required.

The potential to encounter Asbestos Containing Material is minimal. The project does not propose to affect any painted structure surfaces so potential to encounter lead-based paint is minimal.

Older roadway striping and pavement markings may contain lead and/or chromium at levels above regulatory limits. Based on the information provided in the environmental



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request, the project scope of work includes the removal of white paint striping and pavement markings, the installation of ladder crosswalks, and possible cold plane/overlay or grinding. The Caltrans SSP 84-9.03B, which pertains to Traffic Stripe and Pavement Marking Containing Lead, shall be added to the construction contract.

Two proposed work locations involve the installation of new curb ramps where older signage with wood beams currently exists. Older signage may generate treated wood waste. The Caltrans SSP 14-11.14, Which pertains to Treated Wood Waste, shall be added to the construction contract.