County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

APPLICANT: Fresno County Fire Protection District

APPLICATION NOS.: Initial Study No. 8962 and Director Review and Approval No. 4839

DESCRIPTION: Allow the construction and operation of a new 6,069-square-foot Fire Station No. 95 to replace the existing fire station on a 1.51-acre parcel in the AL-20 (Limited Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District. The project includes a three-bay fire station and associated site improvements.

LOCATION: The subject property is located on the south side of Morton Avenue, 472 feet southwest of the intersection of Morton Avenue and Sonoma Avenue, approximately 3.26 miles northwest of the nearest limits of the City of San Joaquin. (APN: 030-150-32T) (25101 W. Morton Avenue) (Sup. Dist. 1).

I. AESTHETICS

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

A. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista; or

B. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway; or

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes to replace an existing fire station with a new 6,069-square-foot, one-story fire station on the same 1.51-acre site. The property will remain in public safety use and will not introduce a new land use. No scenic vistas or scenic resources were identified on or near the project site, and the subject property is not located along a State Scenic Highway. Therefore, the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or substantially damage scenic resources.

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 publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized

area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality; or

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will replace the existing fire station with a new 6,069-square-foot, one-story fire station and associated site improvements, including a secured apparatus yard, paved parking, fencing and gates, a fuel-storage area, emergency generator, ponding basin, and landscaping. The property will continue to be used as a fire station and will not introduce a new or substantially different land use. Therefore, impacts to the existing visual character and quality of public views would be less than significant.

D. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Exterior lighting will be provided at building entrances, parking areas, apparatus circulation areas, the secured yard, fueling area, and other locations necessary for safety, security, and emergency operations. Fixtures will be shielded or directed downward where appropriate to minimize glare and light spill onto adjacent properties and Morton Avenue. The Fresno County Zoning Ordinance, Section 820.3.080 regulates outdoor lighting, and the project will be required to comply with applicable lighting standards. Therefore, impacts related to light and glare would be less than significant.

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY 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 forest carbon measurement methodology in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

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; or

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

Per the 2022 Fresno County Important Farmland Map, Rural Land Mapping Edition, the subject parcel is designated as Farmland of Statewide Importance. However, the 1.51-acre project site is already developed and operated as an existing fire station, and the

proposed project would replace the existing fire station on the same site. The project would not convert any additional Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use. As such, there would be no impact.

B. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The subject parcel is zoned AL-20 (Limited Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) Zone District and is not subject to a Williamson Act Contract. The proposed project will continue the existing fire-station use and will not conflict with the existing agricultural zoning or a Williamson Act Contract; therefore, there would be no impact.

C. Conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production; or

D. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located on land zoned for forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production and, as such, the project will not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use and there would be no impact.

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 forestland to non-forest use?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project proposes to replace the existing fire station on an already-developed 1.51-acre parcel. The proposed improvements will remain within the existing fire-station site and would not result in the off-site conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, there would be no impact.

III. AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

A. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan; or

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; or

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Reviewing Agencies and Departments did not identify concerns indicating that the project would conflict with an applicable Air Quality Plan or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. Project construction may result in temporary minor emissions associated with demolition, grading, construction equipment, material deliveries, and worker vehicle trips. Upon completion, the site will continue to operate as a fire station and will not introduce a new or substantially more intensive land use. The standby generator will operate intermittently for emergency power and routine testing. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

C. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; or

D. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project is not anticipated to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations or result in other emissions that would adversely affect a substantial number of people. Routine fire-station activities will continue at the site, and the standby generator will operate intermittently for emergency power and testing. Paved parking and circulation areas will minimize dust, and no significant odor-producing operation is proposed. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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 or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; or

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; or

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; or

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project site is already developed with an existing fire station; however, construction of the replacement facility will involve grading and other ground-disturbing activities. Development Engineering identified that an intermittent stream may be present within the subject parcel and, based on its review of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wetlands Mapper, that wetlands may be present within or near the subject property. Development Engineering stated that work within or near these features may require

coordination with the appropriate resource agencies. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife reviewed the project and provided no comments or concerns. With compliance with applicable regulatory and permitting requirements, impacts to special-status species, riparian habitat, sensitive natural communities, and state or federally protected wetlands would be less than significant.

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; or

E. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or

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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The replacement fire station would be constructed on a previously developed public-safety site and would not introduce a new land use into the area. The small project footprint and continued use of the site as a fire station are not expected to substantially interfere with wildlife movement or nursery sites or conflict with local biological-resource policies or an adopted habitat conservation plan. Any work within or near identified stream or wetland features will remain subject to applicable agency clearance requirements. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife reviewed the project and provided no comments or concerns. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

A. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or

B. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5; or

C. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The County provided notice to the four tribes in Fresno County that have requested notification of projects subject to CEQA pursuant to AB 52. One of the tribes, Table Mountain Rancheria, responded that the project is within the Tribe's cultural area of interest and requested that a cultural resources records search be completed for the project site and surrounding one-quarter-mile area. The records search was requested

through the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center at California State University, Bakersfield. Following review of the records search results, Table Mountain Rancheria indicated that it was satisfied with the results and requested notification in the unlikely event that potential cultural resources are identified during project-related activities.

The project will involve ground-disturbing construction associated with replacement of the existing fire station and related site improvements. Mitigation will be implemented to address the potential discovery of previously unidentified cultural resources during construction. With implementation of the mitigation measure below, impacts to cultural resources would be less than significant.

* ***Mitigation Measure(s)***

1. *In the event that cultural resources are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities, all work shall be halted in the area of the find. An Archeologist shall be called to evaluate the findings and make any necessary mitigation recommendations. If human remains are unearthed during ground disturbing activities, no further disturbance is to occur until the Fresno County Sheriff-Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition. All normal evidence procedures shall be followed by photos, reports, video, and etc. If such remains are determined to be Native American, the Sheriff-Coroner must notify the Native American Commission within 24 hours.*

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

A. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation; or

B. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project would replace an older and smaller fire station with a new facility designed for current operational needs. Construction would result in temporary energy consumption associated with construction equipment and vehicle trips. Operational energy use would include building electricity and fuel use, emergency apparatus, and intermittent operation of the standby generator. Because the site will continue to function as a fire station and the new building will be subject to applicable building and energy-efficiency standards, the project would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources or conflict with an applicable renewable-energy or energy-efficiency plan. Impacts would be less than significant.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

A. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

   1. 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; or

   2. Strong seismic ground shaking; or

   3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; or

   4. Landslides; or

B. Result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil; or

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; or

D. Be located on expansive soil as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

   FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

   According to the California Department of Conservation Earthquake Hazard Zone Application (EQ Zapp), the project site is not located within a known earthquake fault zone. Figure HS-8 of the Fresno County General Plan indicates that the project site is not located within a moderate or high landslide hazard area. The subject property is not located in an area identified as being subject to lateral spreading, subsidence, or liquefaction in the Fresno County General Plan Background Report. The project will involve grading associated with construction of the replacement fire station and related site improvements. Development Engineering requires a grading permit for any grading proposed with the project and a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan for construction activities disturbing one acre or more. Construction will also be subject to applicable building and seismic design requirements. Therefore, impacts associated with seismic hazards, soil erosion, and unstable soils would be less than significant.

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?

   FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

   The project proposes a new on-site septic system on a 1.51-acre parcel. The Fresno County Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division states that septic-system density is limited to one system per two acres and that new development on

less than two acres requires a nitrogen-loading analysis by a qualified professional demonstrating that an exception to the density limit can be accommodated. Environmental Health also requires new sewage-disposal systems to be installed under permit and inspection by the Department of Public Works and Planning, Building and Safety Section. With compliance with applicable requirements for the proposed on-site wastewater-disposal system, impacts related to the capability of the site to support the system would be less than significant.

F. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will involve ground disturbance associated with construction of the replacement fire station and related site improvements. No unique paleontological resource, paleontological site, or unique geologic feature was identified in the project materials or agency comments received for the project. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

A. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; or

B. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will replace the existing fire station on the same site and will continue the existing public-safety use. Construction would generate temporary greenhouse gas emissions from construction equipment and vehicle trips. Operational emissions would be associated with employee and visitor vehicle trips, emergency apparatus, building energy use, deliveries, and intermittent operation and testing of the standby generator. The station will normally be staffed by three firefighters and is expected to receive approximately one to two visitors per day. Based on the continued use of the site as a fire station and the limited operational activity, greenhouse gas impacts would be less than significant and the project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

A. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; or

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; or

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The fire station will store routine operational materials including firefighting and emergency medical supplies, cleaning products, normal apparatus fluids, and gasoline. Gasoline will be stored in a 1,000-gallon on-site fuel tank and dispensed from a designated fueling area. Regulated medical waste, sharps, or contaminated materials generated through emergency-response operations will be placed in approved containers and removed by an authorized disposal provider. Environmental Health requires facilities that use or store hazardous materials or hazardous waste to comply with applicable hazardous-material regulations. With compliance with applicable requirements, impacts related to the routine use, storage, transport, or accidental release of hazardous materials would be less than significant.

C. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school; or

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is located approximately 0.3 miles southeast of Tranquillity Elementary School and is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. Therefore, the project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials within one-quarter mile of a school, and no impact would occur.

D. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment; or

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

According to the NEPAssist Database, the project site is not located on a listed hazardous materials site, and the project would not result or create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

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, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area; or

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located within two miles of a public airport or public-use airport. The closest public-use airport is William Robert Johnston Municipal Airport, located approximately 8.7 miles northwest of the project site. Therefore, the project would not

expose people residing or working in the project area to airport-related safety hazards or excessive noise, and no impact would occur.

F. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; or

G. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will continue the existing use of the site as a fire station and will not interfere with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. The Fresno County Fire Protection District requires the project to comply with applicable Fire Code requirements, including emergency access, and Road Maintenance and Operations provided requirements to maintain adequate access along Morton Avenue. The project site is not located within an area identified as having a significant wildland fire risk. Therefore, impacts related to emergency response, evacuation, and wildland fire would be less than significant.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

A. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will involve grading and construction on the 1.51-acre site. Development Engineering requires any additional storm-water runoff generated by the development to be retained on site and requires an engineered grading and drainage plan demonstrating that runoff will be handled without adversely affecting adjacent properties. If construction activities disturb 1.0 acre or more, Development Engineering also requires a Notice of Intent and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan to be filed with the State Water Resources Control Board prior to grading. Environmental Health requirements governing hazardous materials and proper abandonment of wells or septic systems will further protect groundwater quality. Compliance with these requirements would reduce potential impacts to water quality to a less-than-significant level.

B. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Water service will be provided by the Tranquillity Irrigation District. The Operational Statement estimates normal average water use at approximately 500 gallons per day,

with a potential operational peak of approximately 4,500 gallons on a day when the 4,000-gallon water tender requires a complete refill. The Water and Natural Resources Division reviewed the project, confirmed that it will receive community water service from the Tranquillity Irrigation District, and had no further comments. The Tranquillity Irrigation District also reviewed the project and had no comments. Because the project will receive water from an existing community water system rather than a new on-site groundwater source, impacts to groundwater supplies or groundwater recharge would be less than significant.

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:

   i. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site; or

   ii. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site; or

   iii. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or

   iv. Impede or redirect flood flows?

   FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

   The project will add new building, parking, and circulation surfaces and therefore will alter drainage conditions on the site. The site plan includes a proposed ponding basin for storm-water storage. Development Engineering requires an engineered grading and drainage plan with calculations verifying the required and proposed basin storage capacity and requires all additional runoff to be retained on site. Road Maintenance and Operations also requires the proposed driveway approaches along Morton Avenue to avoid disruption of existing roadway drainage. With implementation of the required drainage design and on-site retention, the project would not substantially increase erosion, flooding, or polluted runoff or exceed the capacity of existing drainage facilities.

D. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

   FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

   The project includes on-site fuel storage, a generator, and other materials associated with fire-station operations that will be subject to hazardous-material management requirements. The final grading and drainage design will retain project-generated storm water on site and will be reviewed by Development Engineering. These controls would reduce the potential for release of pollutants associated with inundation to a less-than-significant level.

E. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will receive community water service from the Tranquillity Irrigation District. The Water and Natural Resources Division reviewed the project and had no further comments, and the Tranquillity Irrigation District also reviewed the project and had no comments. Construction and site drainage will be subject to applicable storm-water, grading, drainage, and wastewater-disposal requirements. Therefore, the project is not expected to conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan, and impacts would be less than significant.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

A. Physically divide an established community?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will replace the existing fire station on the same 1.51-acre parcel and will continue the existing public-safety use of the property. The project will not create a new roadway, barrier, or other feature that would physically divide an established community. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The subject property is zoned AL-20 (Limited Agricultural, 20-acre minimum parcel size) and is currently developed and operated as a fire station. The proposed project will continue the same public-safety use and is being reviewed through Director Review and Approval No. 4839. Because the project replaces an existing facility rather than introducing a new land-use pattern, and no conflict with an applicable environmental land-use policy has been identified, land-use and planning impacts would be less than significant.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

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; or

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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project would replace an existing fire station on a previously developed 1.51-acre site. The project does not propose mineral extraction or a change in land use that would interfere with mineral-resource recovery. Therefore, no impact to mineral resources would occur.

XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

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; or

B. Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels; or

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

Construction of the replacement fire station would result in temporary noise and vibration associated with demolition, grading, construction equipment, and vehicle trips. During operation, intermittent noise may be generated by fire apparatus, apparatus-bay doors, equipment testing, emergency-response activities, and the standby generator. The property is already operated as a 24-hour fire station, and routine apparatus testing, washing, and maintenance will occur during daytime hours whenever practicable. Unnecessary engine idling will be minimized, and no permanent outdoor sound-amplification system is proposed. Therefore, noise and vibration impacts would be less than significant.

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 two 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?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project site is not located within two miles of a public airport or public-use airport. The closest public-use airport is William Robert Johnston Municipal Airport, approximately 8.7 miles northwest of the project site. Therefore, the project would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive airport-related noise, and no impact would occur.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

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); or

B. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will replace an existing fire station on the same site and will not include new housing or other development intended to accommodate population growth. The station will normally be staffed by three firefighters under 24-hour shift schedules, and no employee will permanently reside on the property. The project will not displace existing housing or people or induce substantial unplanned population growth. Therefore, no impact would occur.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

A. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically-altered governmental facilities, or the 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 following public services:

1. Fire protection; or

2. Police protection; or

3. Schools; or

4. Parks; or

5. Other public facilities?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The proposed project is itself a replacement public-safety facility intended to modernize the existing Fire Station No. 95. It does not include residential or other growth-generating development that would create a need for new or expanded police, school, park, or other public facilities. Fresno County Fire Protection District reviewed the project and requires compliance with current Fire Code and Building Code requirements during permitting. Therefore, the project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the need for additional governmental facilities, and no impact would occur.

XVI. RECREATION

Would the project:

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; or

B. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

FINDING: NO IMPACT:

The project will replace an existing fire station and does not include residential development or other growth that would increase demand for neighborhood or regional parks or recreational facilities. The project also does not propose recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, no impact would occur.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

A. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities; or

B. Be in conflict or be inconsistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b); or

C. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (*e.g.*, sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (*e.g.*, farm equipment); or

D. Result in inadequate emergency access?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will replace the existing fire station and will normally be staffed by three firefighters, with approximately one to two visitors per day. The Transportation Planning Unit reviewed the project and determined that the proposed project is not expected to have a significant impact on County facilities and had no comments. Road Maintenance and Operations reviewed the proposed access from Morton Avenue and recommended approval of the proposed driveway width due to the fire-station use. Road Maintenance and Operations also requires access points to remain clear of obstructions for visibility, including 10-foot by 10-foot corner cutoffs on each side of the access points, and requires an encroachment permit for work within the County right-of-way. With compliance with applicable access and roadway requirements, the project would not conflict with the circulation system, substantially increase transportation hazards, or result in inadequate emergency access. Transportation impacts would be less than significant.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

A. 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:

1. 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

2. 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 Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.)

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

Under the provisions of Assembly Bill (AB) 52, the County provided notice of the preparation of this Initial Study to the four Native American Tribes in Fresno County that have requested notification of projects subject to CEQA. One of the tribes, Table Mountain Rancheria, responded that the project is within the Tribe's cultural area of interest and requested that a cultural resources records search be completed for the project site and surrounding one-quarter-mile area. The records search was requested through the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center at California State University, Bakersfield. Following review of the records search results, Table Mountain Rancheria indicated that it was satisfied with the results and requested notification in the unlikely event that potential cultural or tribal cultural resources are identified during project-related activities.

The project will involve ground-disturbing activities associated with construction of the replacement fire station and related site improvements. Although no tribal cultural resources were identified through the records search, a Mitigation Measure has been included to address the potential inadvertent discovery of cultural or tribal cultural resources during project-related ground-disturbing activities. With implementation of the mitigation measure, impacts to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant.

See Mitigation Measure under Section V above.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

A. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects; or

B. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years; or

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; or

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; or

E. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will receive community water service from the Tranquillity Irrigation District. Normal average water demand is estimated at approximately 500 gallons per day, with a potential operational peak of approximately 4,500 gallons on a day when the 4,000-gallon water tender requires a complete refill. The Water and Natural Resources Division reviewed the project and had no further comments, and the Tranquillity Irrigation District also reviewed the project and had no comments. Domestic wastewater will be discharged to a proposed on-site septic tank and leach field. Environmental Health requires a nitrogen-loading analysis for new development on a parcel smaller than two acres and requires the sewage-disposal system to be installed under permit and inspection. Storm-water runoff will be addressed through the proposed ponding basin and required grading and drainage plans. The station will generate ordinary municipal solid waste and recyclables, with a two-cubic-yard refuse container anticipated to be collected approximately once per week. With compliance with applicable water, wastewater, drainage, and solid-waste requirements, impacts to utilities and service systems would be less than significant.

XX. WILDFIRE

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

A. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects; or

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; or

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; or

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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project will replace the existing fire station on the same previously developed site and will continue the existing public-safety use. The project does not propose new permanent roads, fuel breaks, or other infrastructure that would exacerbate wildfire risk. The Fresno County Fire Protection District reviewed the project and requires compliance with applicable Fire Code and Building Code requirements, including requirements related to fire access and fire protection. No reviewing agency identified a wildfire-related concern with the proposed project. Therefore, the project would not substantially impair emergency response, exacerbate wildfire risks, or expose people or structures to significant wildfire-related hazards, and impacts would be less than significant.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

A. 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?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

SEE MITIGATION MEASURE UNDER SECTION V ABOVE.

The project will replace an existing fire station on a previously developed site. Potential biological impacts associated with the intermittent stream and mapped wetlands are addressed through applicable agency clearance requirements and have been determined to be less than significant. Potential impacts to cultural and tribal cultural resources associated with ground-disturbing activities have also been evaluated, and a Mitigation Measure has been included to address the potential inadvertent discovery of cultural or tribal cultural resources during construction. With implementation of the

Mitigation Measure identified under Section V, the project would not substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce fish or wildlife habitat or populations, threaten a plant or animal community, or eliminate important examples of California history or prehistory. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

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)?

   FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

   The project consists of the replacement and modernization of an existing fire station on the same 1.51-acre site and will continue the existing public-safety use. Potential effects associated with construction, drainage, water use, wastewater disposal, hazardous materials, noise, and transportation are addressed throughout this Initial Study. The Transportation Planning Unit determined that the project is not expected to have a significant impact on County facilities, and the Water and Natural Resources Division had no further comments after confirming that the project will receive community water service from the Tranquillity Irrigation District. When considered with past, current, and reasonably foreseeable projects, the project's limited scale would not make its incremental effects cumulatively considerable. Cumulative impacts would be less than significant

C. Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings either directly or indirectly?

   FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

   Potential effects to people associated with construction activity, traffic, noise, hazardous materials, wastewater, drainage, and emergency operations are addressed in the applicable sections of this Initial Study. The project will be subject to applicable County grading, drainage, access, building, fire, wastewater, and hazardous-materials requirements. The project will continue the existing fire-station use and will not establish a new land use or induce substantial population growth. With compliance with applicable regulatory requirements, the project will not cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Impacts would be less than significant.

CONCLUSION/SUMMARY

Based upon the Initial Study prepared for Director Review and Approval No. 4839, staff has concluded that the proposed replacement Fire Station No. 95 will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment with implementation of the identified Mitigation Measure.

The evaluation has determined that the project will result in No Impact to Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, and Recreation.

Potential project impacts related to Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Noise, Transportation, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire have been determined to be less than significant.

Potential impacts related to Cultural Resources, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Mandatory Findings of Significance have been determined to be less than significant with implementation of the identified Mitigation Measure addressing the inadvertent discovery of cultural or tribal cultural resources during ground-disturbing activities.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration is recommended and is subject to approval by the decision-making body. The Initial Study is available for review at 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, street level, located on the southwest corner of Tulare and “M” Street, Fresno, California.

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