State Route 219 Widening Project

Environmental Assessment/Initial Study

10-STA-219
KP 0.2/7.8 (PM 0.1/4.9)
EA: 0A8700

March 2003

General Information About This Document

What's in this document?

This document is an Environmental Assessment/Initial Study, which examines the potential environmental impacts of alternatives for the proposed project located in Stanislaus County, California. The document describes why the project is being proposed, alternative methods for constructing the project, the existing environment that could be affected by the project, and potential impacts from each of the alternatives.

What should you do?

- Please read this Environmental Assessment/Initial Study.
- We welcome your comments. If you have any concerns regarding the proposed project, please attend the Public Information Meeting and/or send your written comments to Caltrans by the deadline. Submit comments via regular mail to Caltrans, Attn: Eric VonBerg, Central Sierra Environmental Analysis Branch, 2015 E. Shields Avenue, Suite 100, Fresno, CA 93726-5428; submit comments via email to eric_vonberg@dot.ca.gov.
- Submit comments by the deadline: _____.

What happens after this?

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, Caltrans may (1) give environmental approval to the proposed project, (2) do additional environmental studies, or (3) abandon the project. If the project were given environmental approval and funding were appropriated, Caltrans could design and construct all or part of the project.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document is available in Braille, large print, on audiocassette, or computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write to Caltrans, Attn: Eric VonBerg, Branch Chief, for the Central Sierra Environmental Analysis Branch, Caltrans, 2015 E. Shields, Suite 100, Fresno, CA 93726-5428; (559) 243-8250.

State of California
Department of Transportation

10-STA-219
KP 0.2/7.8 (PM 0.1/4.9)

Negative Declaration

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to widen State Route 219 near the city of Modesto in Stanislaus County, California.

The proposed project would upgrade the existing roadway from a two-lane conventional highway to a four-lane conventional highway with the improvement of intersections and addition of a median and clear recovery zone. Project costs for the alternatives studied range from $19,835,000 to $26,707,000 (December 2002). The project is scheduled to begin construction in the summer of 2006.

Determination

Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study, and determines from this study that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

- Impacts to relocated residents would be mitigated by implementation of the Caltrans Relocation Assistance Program in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970.
- Impacts from increased noise levels would be mitigated following Federal Highway Administration guidance under Title 23, Part 772 of the Code of Federal Regulations for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise.
- The project would have no significant effect upon businesses, industry, the economy, employment, agricultural resources, scenic resources, cultural resources, endangered or threatened species, sensitive noise receptors, water quality, air quality, or from seismic exposure. The project would have no significant effect on land use, parklands, recreational facilities, community growth, neighborhoods, residences or educational facilities.

_____ _____

Eric VonBerg
Chief, Central Sierra Environmental Analysis Branch
Central Region Environmental Planning
California Department of Transportation

Date

10-STA-219
KP 0.2/7.8 (PM 0.1/4.9)
EA OA8700

Widening State Route 219 from Two Lanes to Four Lanes

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT/ INITIAL STUDY

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, Public Resources Code
(Federal) 42 USC 4332(2)(C)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Federal Highway Administration, and
THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation

3-14-03
Date of Approval

ERIC VONBERG
Chief, Central Sierra Environmental
Analysis Branch
Central Region Environmental Planning
California Department of Transportation

3/21/03
Date of Approval

Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

Summary

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in cooperation with the City of Modesto, Stanislaus County, and the Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG), is proposing to widen State Route 219 in the city of Modesto and Stanislaus County. The proposed project would upgrade the existing roadway from a two-lane conventional highway to a four-lane conventional highway. In addition, Caltrans would improve intersections and add a median and clear recovery zone. Project costs for the proposed alternatives studied range from $19,835,000 to $26,707,000 (as of December 2002). The project is scheduled to begin construction in the summer of 2006.

Purpose and Need

The volume of traffic and, most notably, the number of trucks traveling the route are higher than the optimum levels recommended for a two-lane conventional highway. The roadway is congested during peak hours and has a high accident rate at intersections where vehicles making left-turns must cross oncoming traffic. The purpose of the project is to provide additional lanes to improve the capacity of the roadway and reduce traffic congestion, improve intersections to improve safety conditions for cross-traffic and left-turning traffic, and to include a median and clear recovery zone to upgrade the roadway to current design standards.

Proposed Alternatives

The proposed alternatives for this project include a no-build alternative and two build alternatives. Both build alternatives would add an additional lane for each direction of traffic, with improvements. The two build alternatives differ in their proposed median widths and direction of widening. Alternative 1 would widen the roadway to the north and provide acquisition of right-of-way for additional lanes to be added in the future, while Alternative 2 proposes a standard median width, with widening to both sides (north and south) of the existing roadway.

Both build alternatives would include the following improvements:

- Intersections would be brought up to current design standards and the following intersections would be studied to determine if traffic signals are needed: Dale Road, Carver Road, and Tully Road.

- Standard crossing arms at the Tidewater Southern Railroad crossing would not be sufficient for the proposed roadway width. Two crossing arms would be required in the median, in addition to the crossing arms placed in the shoulder.
- Utility poles would have to be relocated to create a six-meter (20-foot) clear recovery zone outside the paved shoulder throughout the project limits.
- Lateral drainage ditches would be constructed throughout the length of the project to direct drainage to four retention basins located near Stoddard Road, Dale Road, Carver Road, and State Route 108 (McHenry Avenue).
- Several access alternatives at the Stanislaus Union Elementary School (see maps of the three access alternatives in Appendix A) are proposed as well.

Alternative 1: Widen North

This alternative proposes to widen the existing two-lane highway to four lanes from State Route 99 to State Route 108 (McHenry Avenue). The standard lane width would be 3.6-meters (12 feet) with 3.0-meter (10-foot) outside shoulders and a 18.6-meter-wide (61-foot-wide) unpaved median. The proposed centerline of the roadway would be shifted north of the centerline of the existing highway (see Figure 2-3).

Alternative 2: Widen Symmetrically

This alternative also proposes to widen the existing two-lane highway to four lanes, from State Route 99 to State Route 108 (McHenry Avenue). However, in this alternative, the lane width would be 3.6 meters (12 feet) with 2.4-meter (eight-foot) outside shoulders and a 4.8-meter (16-foot) paved median. The existing centerline of the roadway would be maintained.

No Build Alternative (No Action)

Existing conditions would continue if the No Build Alternative is selected. The route would remain a two-lane highway with features that do not meet current design standards. There would be no median or clear recovery zone. The level of service would continue to deteriorate and the number of accidents would likely increase as traffic volumes continue to rise. The identified transportation needs for the area would not be met.

Impact Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation

Relocation

Some residences and businesses would have to be relocated as a result of the construction of this project. Implementation of the Relocation Assistance Program would minimize these effects as required by law.

Noise

Caltrans recommends noise abatement for the residential subdivision at Sisk Road where a soundwall is recommended to replace an existing wall. Impacts from increased noise levels would be mitigated following Federal Highway Administration guidance under Title 23, Part 772 of the Code of Federal Regulations for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise. Noise abatement for the Stanislaus Union Elementary School is being considered with several of the access alternatives to the school.

Biology

As a precautionary measure, pre-construction surveys would be conducted for special-status species, including Swainson's hawks, redtail hawks, burrowing owls, roosting bats and presence of San Joaquin kit fox. These surveys would support the official finding that there would be no direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on any special-status species as a result of the construction of this project.

Cultural

The Finding of No Adverse Effect is conditional to the establishment of an Environmentally Sensitive Area during the construction phase of the project at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church property.

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List of Abbreviated Terms

AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
ac	acres
ADT	Average Daily Traffic
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
EA	Environmental Assessment
EA:	Expenditure Authorization
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FONSI	Finding Of No Significant Impact
ft	foot/feet
FTIP	Federal Transportation Improvement Program
ha	hectares
IRRS	Interregional Road System
IS	Initial Study
km	kilometer(s)
KP	kilometer post
LOS	Level Of Service
m	meter(s)
mi	mile(s)
MVM	Million Vehicle Miles
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHS	National Highway System
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
OSHA	Occupation Safety and Health Administration
PM	post mile
PM_{10}	Particulate Matter of 10 microns in diameter or smaller
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
STA	Stanislaus County
StanCOG	Stanislaus Council Of Governments
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
TASAS	Traffic Accident Surveillance and Analysis System

Chapter 1 Purpose and Need

1.1 Introduction

State Route 219 is located along the northern edge of the city of Modesto in Stanislaus County, California (see Figure 1-1). The route is a two-lane conventional highway that extends five miles east of State Route 99 to the intersection of State Route 108 (see Figure 1-2). The State Route 219 corridor serves local traffic and is a route for the transportation of goods and services. Additionally, State Route 219 serves as a connector to State Route 99 for Modesto city traffic and for traffic traveling to and from the outlying areas to the east.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in cooperation with the City of Modesto, Stanislaus County, and the Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG), is proposing to widen State Route 219. The project proposes two build alternatives that would upgrade the existing roadway from a two-lane conventional highway to a four-lane conventional highway with proposed improvements to intersections and the addition of a median and clear recovery zone (Figures 1-3 and 1-4). Local planning agencies have designated this project as a high priority in their Regional Transportation Improvement Program, and regional transportation funds have been allocated for this project through construction. Project costs for the alternatives studied range from $19,835,000 to $26,707,000 (as of December 2002). The project is scheduled to begin construction in the summer of 2006.

1.2 Project Background

The history of State Route 219 (Kiernan Avenue) dates back to the early 1870s. The development of the roadway corresponds with the establishment of Salida Station as a stop along the Central Pacific Railroad. Farmers used the route to access the railroad for shipping their crops and for receiving essential supplies and equipment. A Stanislaus County map, dated 1877, shows State Route 219 and Ladd Road as the main county roads in the vicinity, serving the early farms that developed along the Stanislaus River.

As growth and development have occurred within the project area and the greater region, traffic volumes have increased along the State Route 219 corridor. The route is a major corridor for the distribution of goods, as evidenced by the high volume of truck traffic using the roadway. A traffic analysis of the project area identified current traffic patterns

that reflect the movement of traffic between State Route 99 and locations to the north and northeast, where the cities of Riverbank and Oakdale are located, and to the south and southeast, where traffic is traveling through eastern Modesto and beyond. The analysis also identified that traffic volumes would increase within the project area as local planning continues to implement development. Traffic traveling along the State Route 219 corridor appears to be using the roadway to access State Route 99 for destinations north and south of the region while avoiding congested traffic conditions within the city of Modesto.

Today, agriculture is the dominant land use in the project area. However, with the development of the city of Modesto toward the north and the community of Salida eastward, local land use planning decisions have caused the land use to change in character from rural to more urban and developed (see Figures 1-5 through 1-7). Traffic forecasting analysis, using general plan land use information, predicts a substantial increase in the vehicle trips generated along the route as planned development continues to be implemented.

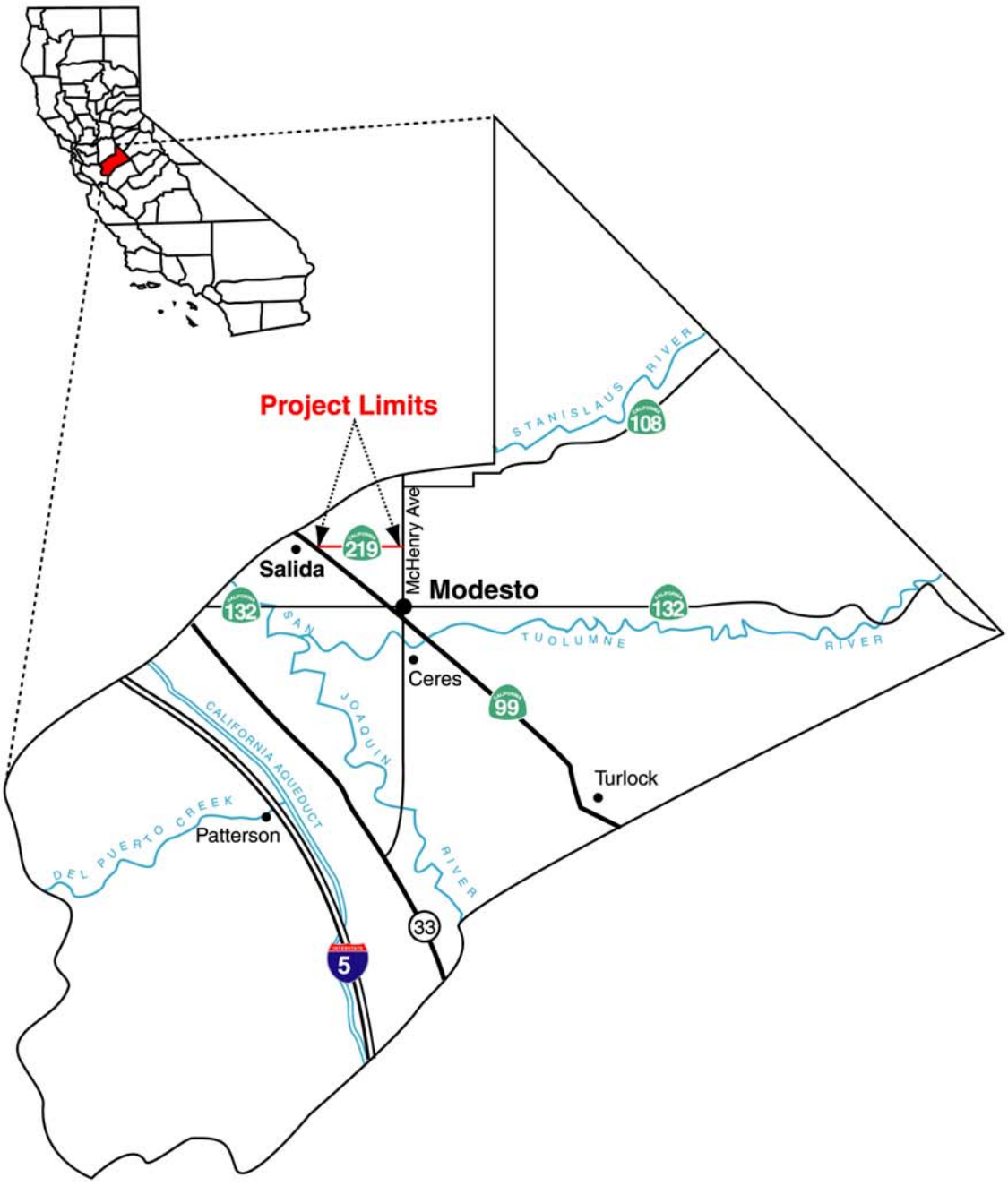
1.3 Purpose and Need for the Project

The purpose of this project is to:

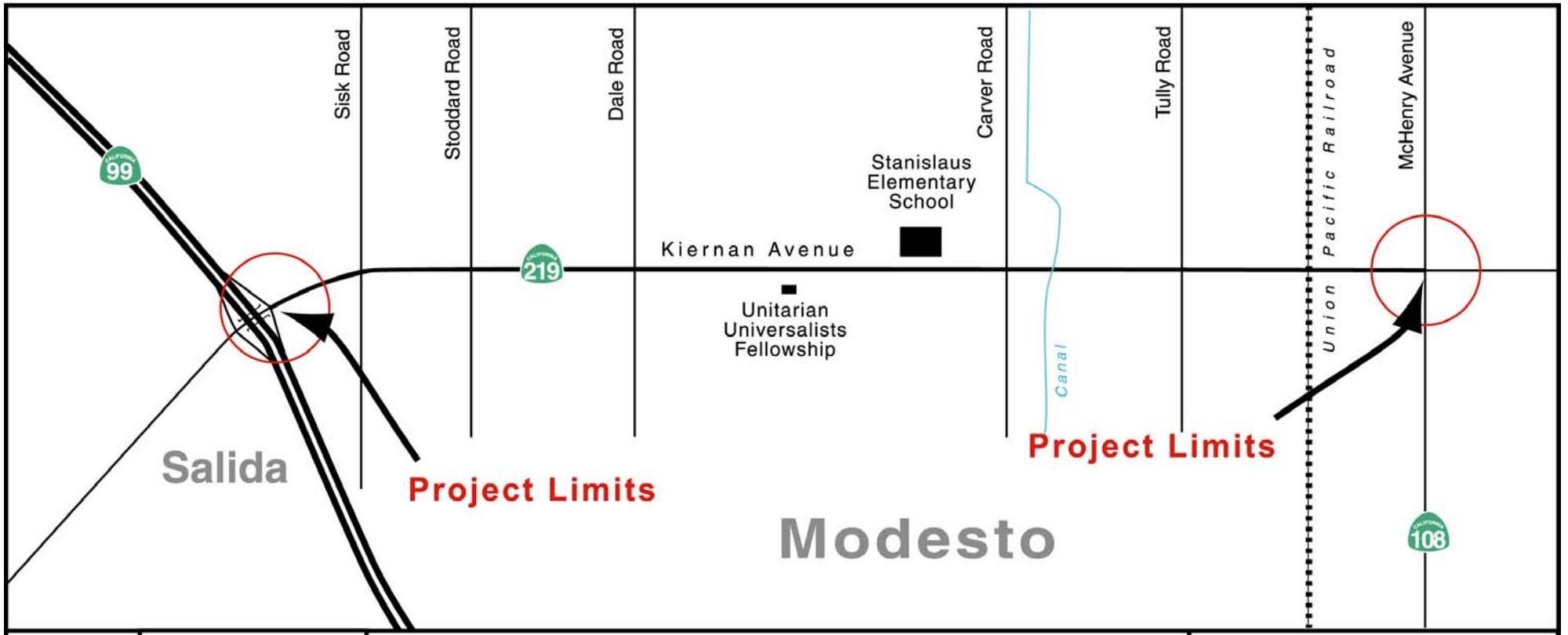
- Widen the two-lane highway to four lanes to reduce congestion and improve the carrying capacity of the highway.
- Add traffic signals and left-turn lanes at intersections to improve the operation and safety of the highway.
- Upgrade the highway to include a median and clear recovery zone that would correspond with current design standards.

The need for this project developed as a result of increasing traffic volumes along the existing State Route 219 corridor. Currently, the highway is congested during peak hours, has a high accident rate, and does not meet current design standards. If no improvements are made, conditions are expected to deteriorate and the road would not provide safe, effective travel through the State Route 219 corridor.

STANISLAUS COUNTY, CA



Caltrans	Figure 1-1	**Project Vicinity** **10-STA-219 PM 0.1/4.9**	N Not To Scale



Caltrans

Figure 1-2

Project Location

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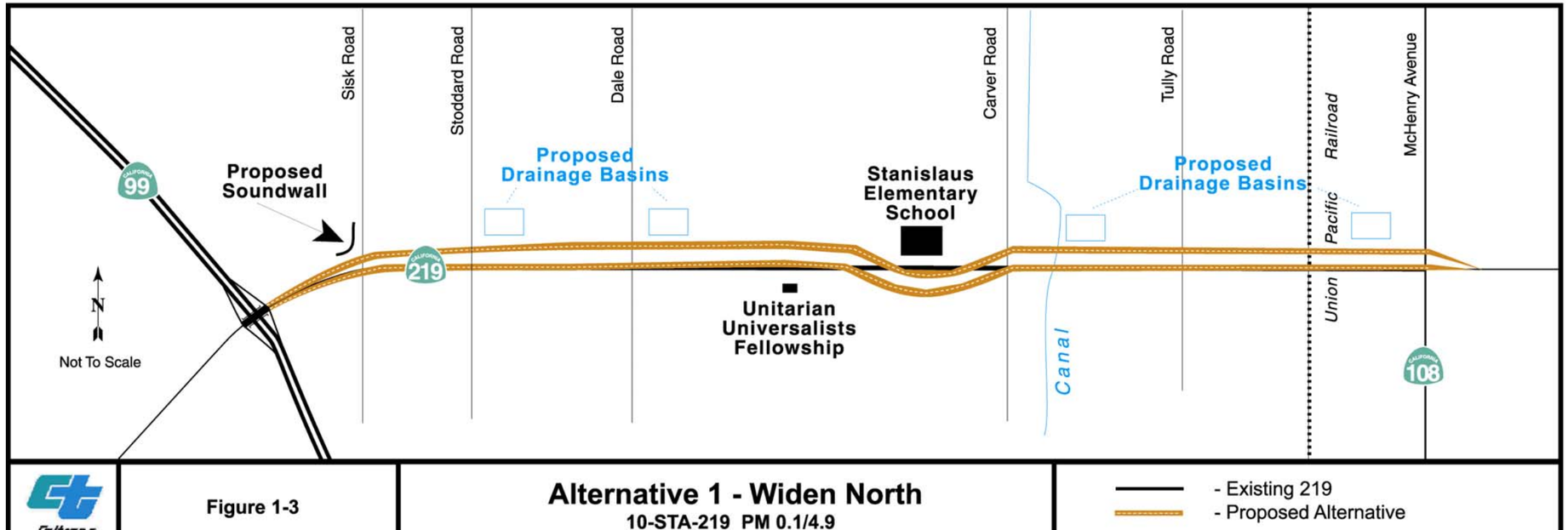
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Stoddard Road
Dale Road
Carver Road
Tully Road
Railroad
McHenry Avenue
Pacific
Union
Canal
Proposed Soundwall
Proposed Drainage Basins
Proposed Drainage Basins
Stanislaus Elementary School
Unitarian Universalists Fellowship
99
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Not To Scale
Caltrans
Figure 1-3
Alternative 1 - Widen North
10-STA-219 PM 0.1/4.9
- Existing 219
- Proposed Alternative

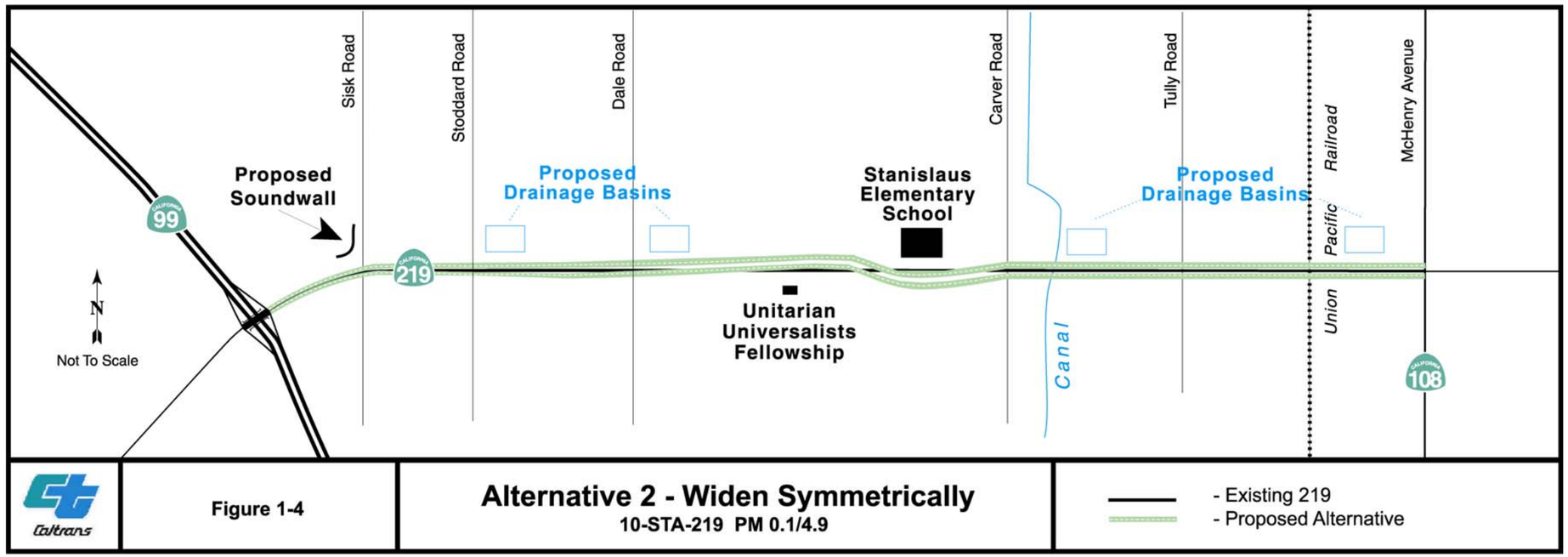
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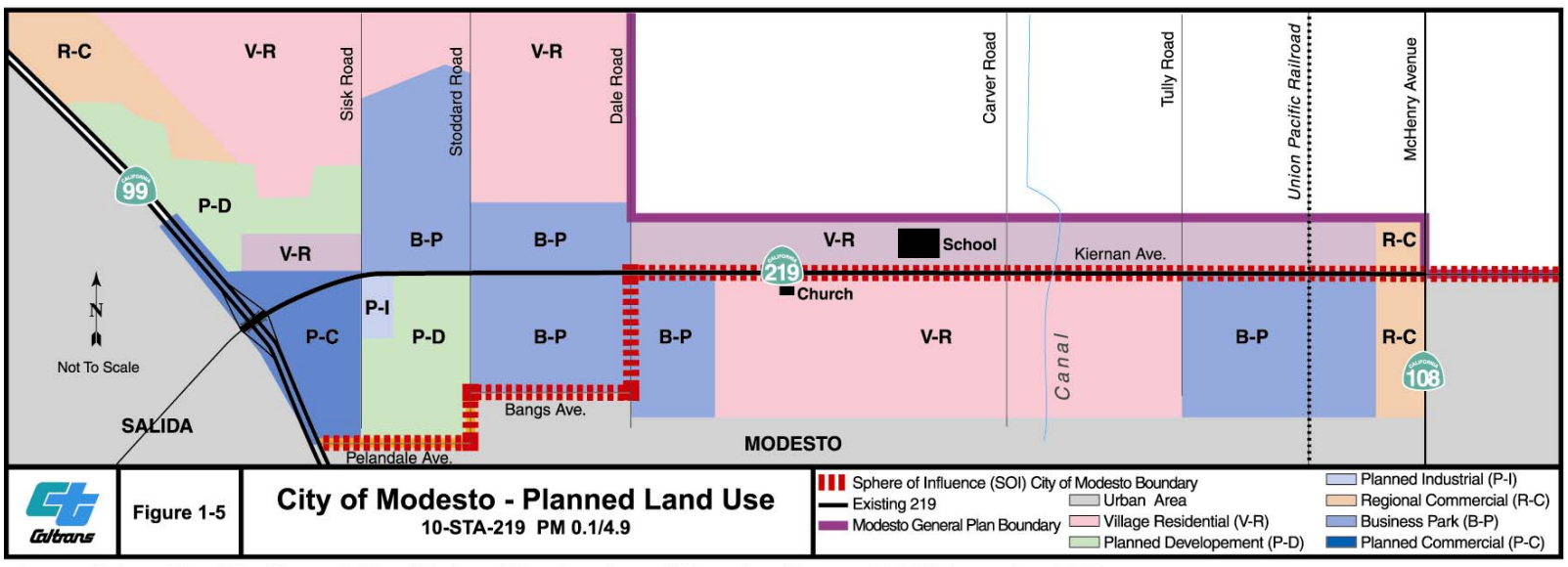
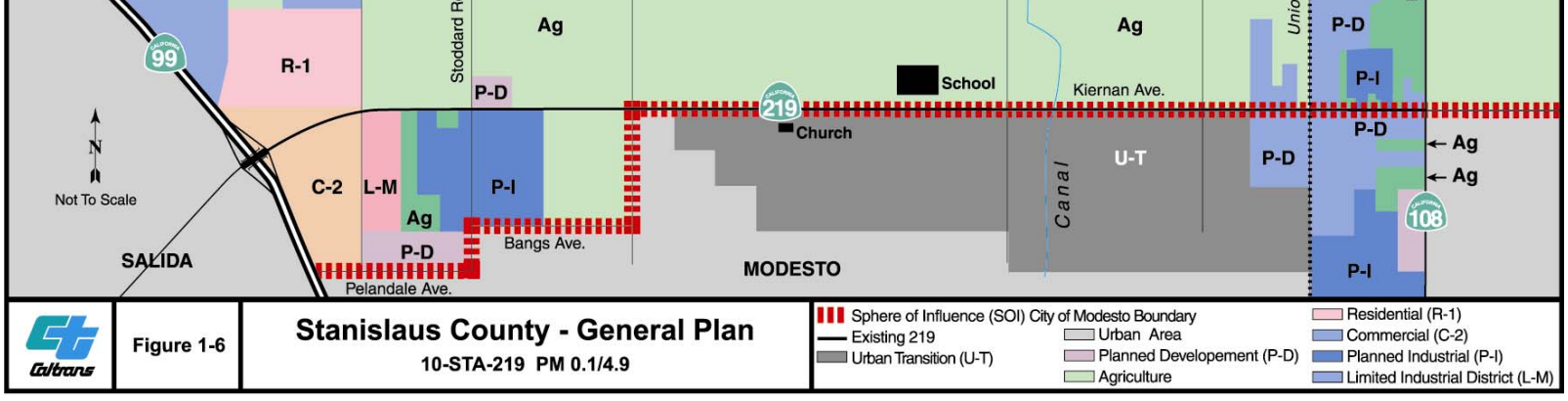
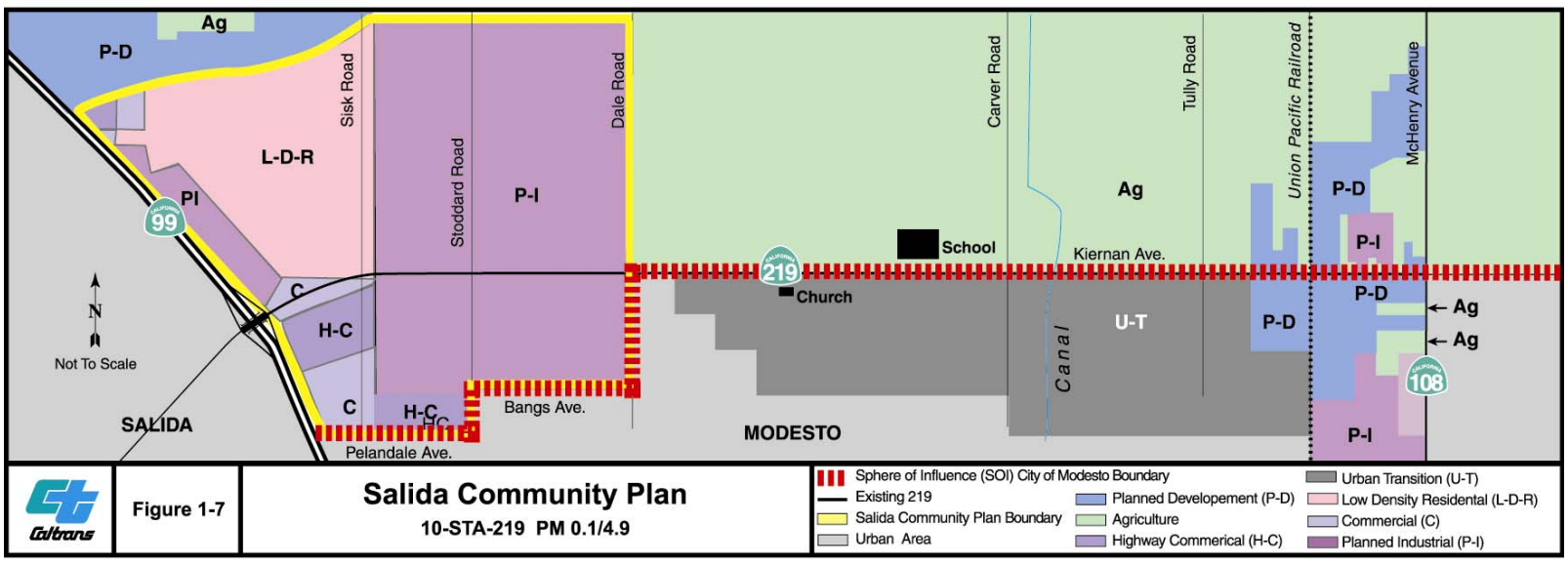
Figure 1-4
Alternative 2 - Widen Symmetrically
10-STA-219 PM 0.1/4.9
- Existing 219
- Proposed Alternative



Source: "Adopted Land Use Diagram", City of Modesto Urban Area General Plan, adoped August 15, 1995, last updated 1998.
Jurisdiction: South of Sphere of Influence (SOI) Boundary for the City of Modesto.
Route Designation: 6-lane Expressway.



Source: Adopted from a "Stanislaus County General Plan Map", from the Stanislaus County General Plan, last updated 1994.
Jurisdiction: North of Sphere of Influence (SOI) Boundary for the City of Modesto.
Route Designation: Highway/Freeway with lane configuration determined by jurisdictional agency for roadway, i.e., State of California, Department Of Transportation (Caltrans).



Source: Adopted from a "Stanislaus County General Plan Map", from the Stanislaus County General Plan, last updated 1994, and the "Salida Community Plan" last updated 2000.
Jurisdiction: North of Sphere of Influence (SOI) Boundary for the City of Modesto.
Route Designation: Highway/Freeway with lane configuration determined by jurisdictional agency for roadway, i.e., State of California, Department Of Transportation (Caltrans).

1.3.1 Current Conditions

Currently, State Route 219 is a two-lane highway with one lane for each direction of travel. The roadway is congested during the peak hours of the day when travel demand is the greatest. The highway is a major trucking route, with truck traffic contributing to congestion. Typically, large trucks carrying cargo travel slower than cars as they decelerate and accelerate at intersections. With only one lane of travel in either direction, there is no opportunity for traffic to safely pass slower-moving vehicles, such as large trucks.

Fifteen feeder roads currently intersect the highway. Three of these intersections have signals. The remaining 12 intersections are controlled with stop signs. When traffic volumes are high, travelers are forced to wait at the intersections, causing traffic delays. Additionally, vehicles making left turns have to travel across oncoming traffic or into cross-traffic at intersections. High traffic volumes, the lack of left-turn signals and congested conditions at intersections are the major causes of traffic accidents along the route.

In addition, the roadway has no raised median. Only painted striping separates the two directions of traffic. The roadway also has non-standard shoulders, with fixed objects such as utility poles, fences, and orchard trees situated close to the roadway (see cover photograph). There is no safe area where vehicles can pull to the side of the road in case of an emergency.

1.3.2 Supporting Traffic Information

Traffic studies were conducted in the spring of 2000 to identify the existing traffic conditions along the State Route 219 corridor. Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes were collected along the route and were projected into the future using standardized modeling techniques. The traffic volume data was collected by stationing specialists at strategic locations along the route. They counted traffic, identified the traffic mix (cars versus trucks), and determined the direction of traffic at intersections.

Study results showed that the route had an ADT volume of 15,300 vehicles. Traffic volumes are projected to be 19,500 in 2006 (the year of construction) and 33,400 in 2026 (the 20-year planning horizon). These traffic volumes are considered high for this type of roadway and would typically result in traffic congestion and a poor level of service.

Traffic analysis of the ADT data also indicates that trucks using the roadway are 11% of the traffic mix (a ratio of one truck per every 10 vehicles). This percentage of truck volume is considered high for a two-lane conventional highway and greatly affects traffic flow.

A Traffic Accident Surveillance and Analysis System report was prepared to analyze traffic accidents within the project area. This report compiles traffic accident information for any specified section of highway, ramp, or intersection in the State Highway System. The report conducted for this project includes all reported traffic accidents that occurred along State Route 219 between January 1, 1999 and December 31, 2002.

Results from the report show that 226 accidents occurred along the route during the three-year study (Table 1.1). Of the 226 accidents, 126 were rear-end collisions, 53 were broadside collisions, 16 were sideswipes, and 16 were hit objects. Within the project limits, these accidents have typically occurred at intersections or where vehicles were making left turns between intersections.

Table 1.1 Summary of Accidents for State Route 219 in Project Area

Accident Type	Count
Rear-end Collisions	126
Broadside Collisions	53
Sideswipes	16
Hit Objects	16
Other	15
Total Number of Accidents	**226**
Actual Accident Rate (ACC/MVM)	2.11
Average Statewide Accident Rate (ACC/MVM)	1.50

Source: *Traffic Accident Surveillance and Analysis System data recorded between January 1, 1999 and December 31, 2002*

Note: ***ACC/MVM*** = *Accidents Per Million Vehicle Miles*

Other = *Head-on-6, Overturn-3, Auto-Ped-1, Other-5*

Caltrans maintains a database of average accident rates for each type of roadway (freeway, expressway or conventional highway). The actual accident rate of State Route 219 is 2.11 (ACC/MVM). As shown in Table 1.1, this rating is 41% higher than the average statewide accident rate of 1.50 (ACC/MVM) for a similar roadway.

A qualitative measuring system called "Level of Service" (LOS) was used to measure the effectiveness of the roadway to transport vehicles through the corridor. The LOS rating system uses letters A through F to describe and measure service quality. A designation of LOS "A" is used to indicate excellent travel conditions, while LOS "F" indicates very poor, congested travel conditions. According to Caltrans and FHWA standards, an acceptable level of service rating for this type of road is "A" through "C," while ratings "D" through "F" are not acceptable (see Figures 1-8 and 1-9).

Table 1.2 shows the results of the LOS analysis, indicating the existing and projected levels of service for the roadway. The table divides the highway into four route segments and provides an LOS rating for each segment. As shown in the column titled "2000 Existing," all route segments along State Route 219 are currently performing below acceptable standards, except for the segment at the east end of the proposed project where recent improvements have been made.

According to the study results, all route segments would provide a level of service "A" if either of the build alternatives were constructed, while all segments would regress to a level of service "F" as early as 2006 if the project were not built.

Table 1.2 LOS Summary for Route Segments

Route Segments	2000 Existing*	2006 No Build*	2006 Build*	2026 Build* 20-Year Horizon
Sisk Road to Dale Road	D	F	A	B
Dale Road to Carver Road	D	F	A	B
Carver Road to Tully Road	D	F	A	B
Tully Road to McHenry Avenue	C	F	A	C

Note: * LOS ratings are the same for both build alternatives

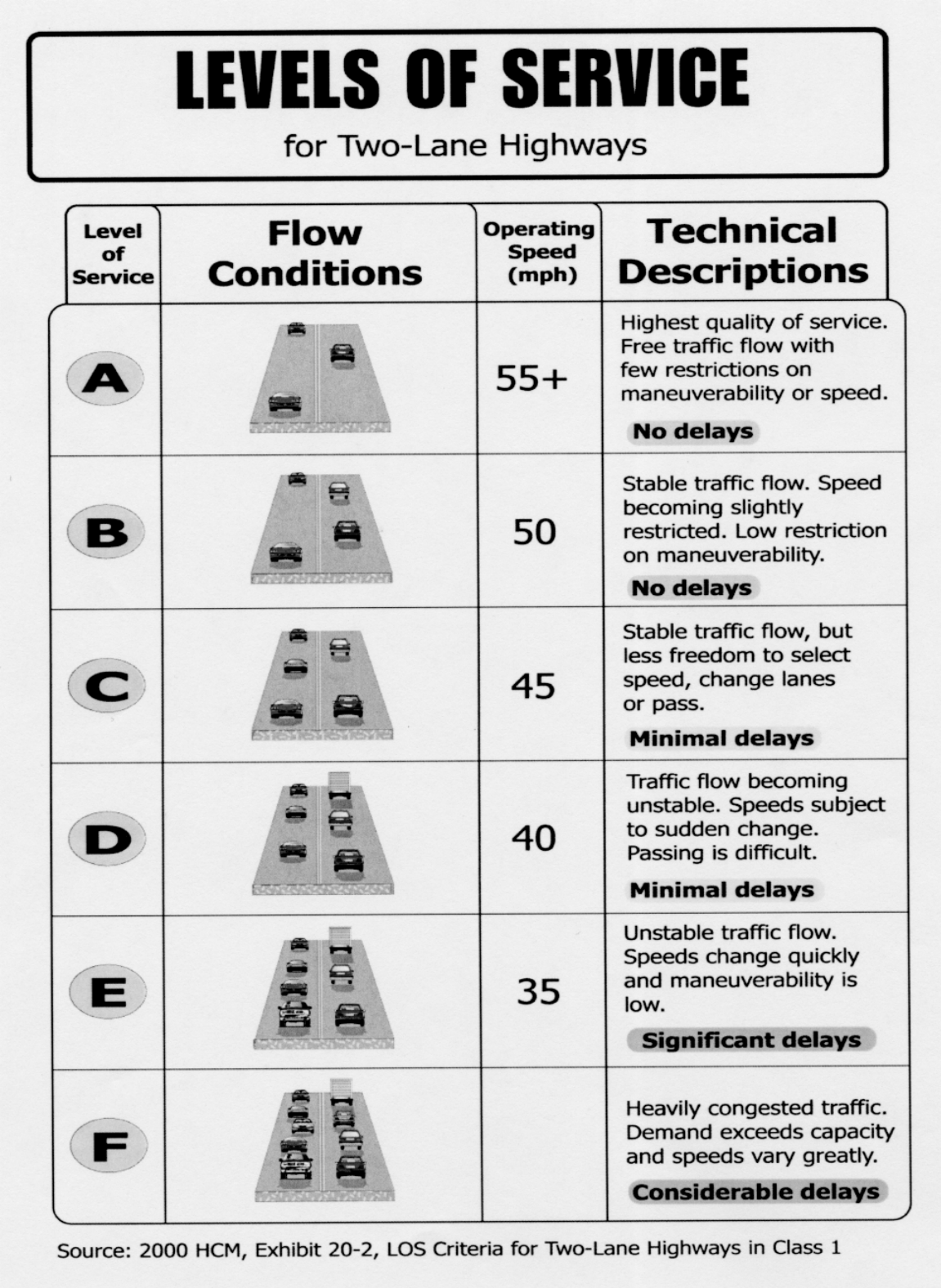


Figure 1-8 LOS for Two-Lane Highways

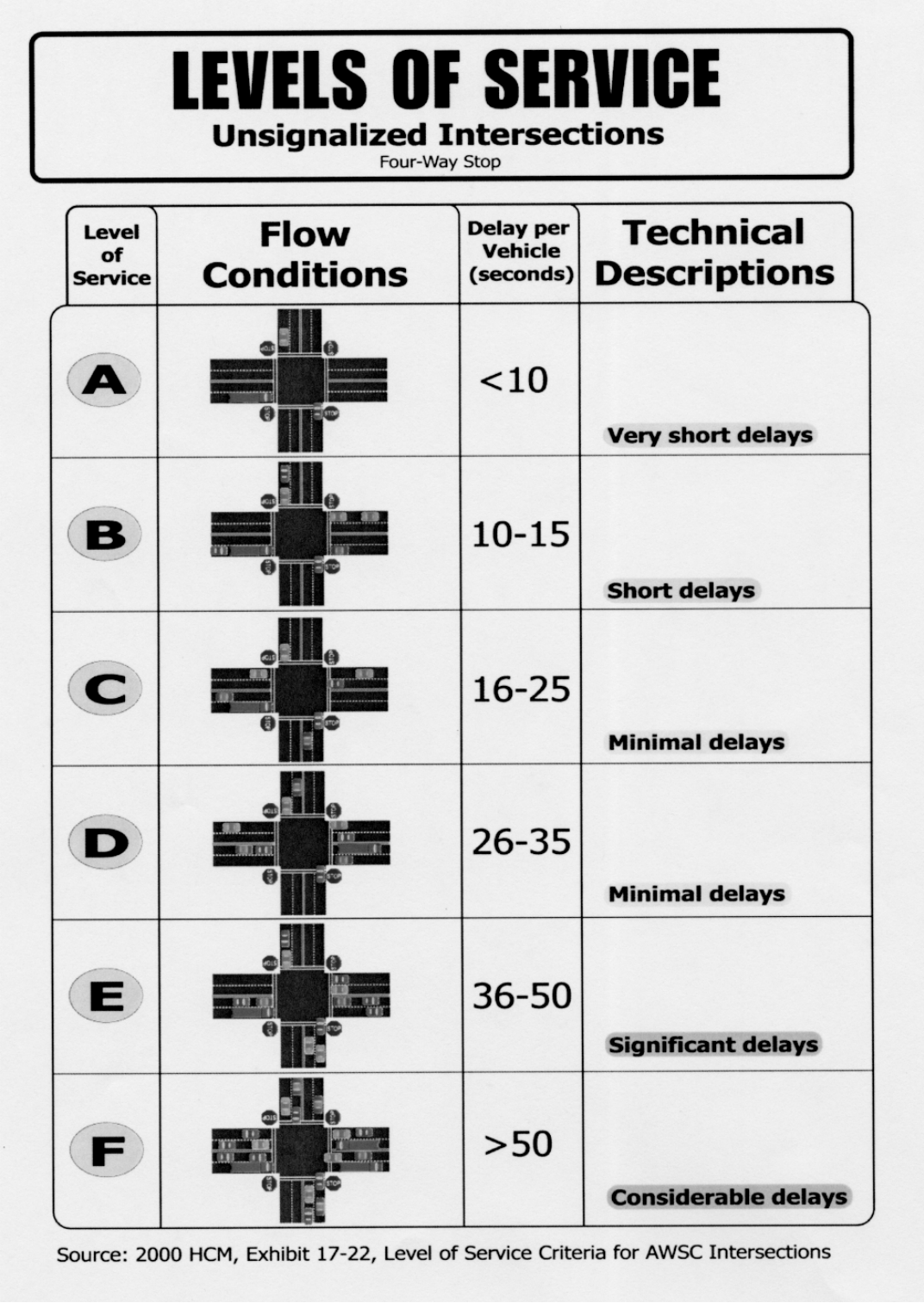


Figure 1-9 LOS for Intersections

In addition to traffic volumes and level of service concerns, State Route 219 has no median or clear recovery zone. Caltrans safety standards indicate that a two-lane conventional highway should have a minimum median width of 3.6 meters (12 feet), which is equal to the width of a standard traffic lane. A median provides space for installing left-turn lanes at intersections and making left turns between intersections.

Standards also indicate that a clear recovery zone is required to provide a safe area, with no obstructions, located beyond the outside edge of the roadway where drivers of errant vehicles can regain control. Caltrans standards for a conventional highway require that in rural areas where no curb and gutter exist, there should be a minimum distance of 11.0 meters (36 feet) between the edge of pavement and any fixed objects. All existing and future areas with curbs would be required to provide 0.5 meters (1.5 feet) of clearance.

1.3.3 Recommended Improvements

Currently, State Route 219 does not provide adequate service to motorists using the roadway. Traffic studies indicate that improvements are needed and if no improvements are made, the poor traffic conditions of the existing roadway would deteriorate further. Caltrans proposes to widen the highway from two lanes to four lanes. The extra lanes would accommodate the traffic volume projected for the next 20 years. The addition of one travel lane for each direction of travel would improve traffic flow and safety conditions along the route by providing motorists with a way to pass slower-moving traffic.

Adding signals and left-turn lanes at intersections is also recommended to reduce traffic congestion, delay, and traffic accidents at intersections. Coordinated signal timing, to allow more vehicles through the intersection, would also reduce congestion at these locations.

Signals control traffic so that vehicles travel through intersections with minimal waiting. Coordination of signal timing, as proposed by Caltrans, would be expected to reduce overall traffic delay throughout the corridor. Intersections that are not eligible for signals would be controlled by two-way stop signs to control traffic entering from intersecting side roads. Traffic traveling along State Route 219 would not be required to stop at these intersections.

Striping left-turn lanes at signalized intersections would provide a safer environment for traffic to make left or U-turns. Left-turn lanes provide a safe area for vehicles to

pull out of the flow of traffic while waiting for the opposite traffic signal to provide a break in the traffic flow.

Lastly, upgrading State Route 219 to include a median and clear recovery zone would bring the roadway up to current safety design standards and provide motorists with areas along the roadway where vehicles could safely move out of the main flow of traffic.

1.4 Project History

An Environmental Assessment/Initial Study for this project was circulated to the public from January 4, 2002 to February 5, 2002. A public hearing was held during this time, and many comments from concerned citizens and local agencies were received. A Finding of No Significant Impact/Negative Declaration was then issued in June 2002. Following the issuance of the final environmental document, the Stanislaus Union School District filed a lawsuit challenging the environmental document. FHWA and Caltrans withdrew their respective decision documents for this project when it was discovered that the previous public notice was missing language notifying the public of Caltrans' intent to adopt a negative declaration. The Stanislaus Union School District then withdrew its suit.

This document is an updated version of the previous document. The information in Chapter 3, Affected Area and Environmental Consequences, has been updated and reformatted to facilitate further discussion of issues raised by the public during the previous circulation of this document.

Chapter 2 Project Alternatives

2.1 Introduction

The proposed widening project would be an interim roadway. The ultimate concept for the route is a six-lane expressway with limited access. To align with this future goal, the current project proposes options under the two build alternatives to accommodate the future addition of two lanes. Construction of the six-lane expressway would be needed when traffic volumes warrant improvement and funding is available. The proposed four-lane roadway is projected to be adequate well beyond the 20-year design standard.

This chapter explains the alternatives that were studied during the environmental studies process for this project. This chapter also includes additional discussion concerning access alternatives to the Stanislaus Union Elementary School, alternatives considered and withdrawn from further study, and other projects in the vicinity of this project.

2.2 Alternatives Description

Caltrans proposes three alternatives for this project: a no-build alternative and two build alternatives. Both build alternatives propose to add an additional lane for each direction of travel, install traffic signals at intersections and provide a median and clear recovery zone. The two build alternatives differ in their proposed median widths and in the direction the existing roadway would be widened. The proposed median width for Alternative 1 is designed to reserve width in the median to accommodate future traffic needs. Alternative 2 proposes a narrower median width, and future widening would have to occur on the outside of the roadway in new right-of-way. The median in Alternative 2 would be paved and would facilitate left-turns in locations between intersections. The direction of widening for each alternative is evident in the naming of the respective alternatives: Alternative 1–Widen North, primarily widens to the north, and Alternative 2–Widen Symmetrically, widens to the north and south from the existing centerline.

Both build alternatives would include the following improvements:

- Intersections would be brought up to current design standards. Additionally, a signal analysis would be completed to determine if traffic signals are needed at the intersections of State Route 219 and Dale Road, Carver Road, and Tully Road.
- Standard crossing arms at the Tidewater Southern Railroad crossing would not be sufficient for the proposed roadway width. Two crossing arms would be required in the median, in addition to the crossing arms placed in the shoulder.
- Utility poles would be relocated to create a 20-foot (six-meter) clear recovery zone throughout the project limits.
- Lateral drainage ditches would be constructed throughout the length of the project to direct drainage to four retention basins located near Stoddard Road, Dale Road, Carver Road, and State Route 108 (McHenry Avenue). See Figures 1-3 and 1-4.
- Several access alternatives are proposed at the Stanislaus Union Elementary School (see section 2.2.4 and Appendix A).

2.2.1 Alternative 1 – Widen North

This alternative proposes to widen the existing two-lane highway to four lanes from State Route 99 to State Route 108 (McHenry Avenue). The lane width would be 3.6 meters (12 feet) with 3.0-meter (10-foot) outside shoulders and a 18.6-meter (61-foot) median (Figure 2-1). The proposed median width requires the acquisition of right-of-way that would allow for future widening of the roadway to an ultimate six-lane roadway. The centerline of the roadway would be shifted north of the existing centerline. The existing two lanes would be used for eastbound traffic. The two new lanes would be used for westbound traffic. This alternative would shift an additional 1.8 meters (six feet) to the north at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church property to avoid any impacts to the property. Right-of-way would not be required on the south side of the highway, except at the Stanislaus Union Elementary School where widening would be restricted to the south of the existing highway to minimize impact to the school.

2.2.2 Alternative 2 – Widen Symmetrically

This alternative also proposes to widen the existing two-lane highway to four lanes, from State Route 99 to State Route 108 (McHenry Avenue). However, in this alternative, the lane width would be 3.6 meters (12 feet) with 2.4-meter (8-foot) outside shoulders and a 4.8-meter (16-foot) median (Figure 2-2). A “Plan Line” would be established for this alternative north and south of the existing highway to

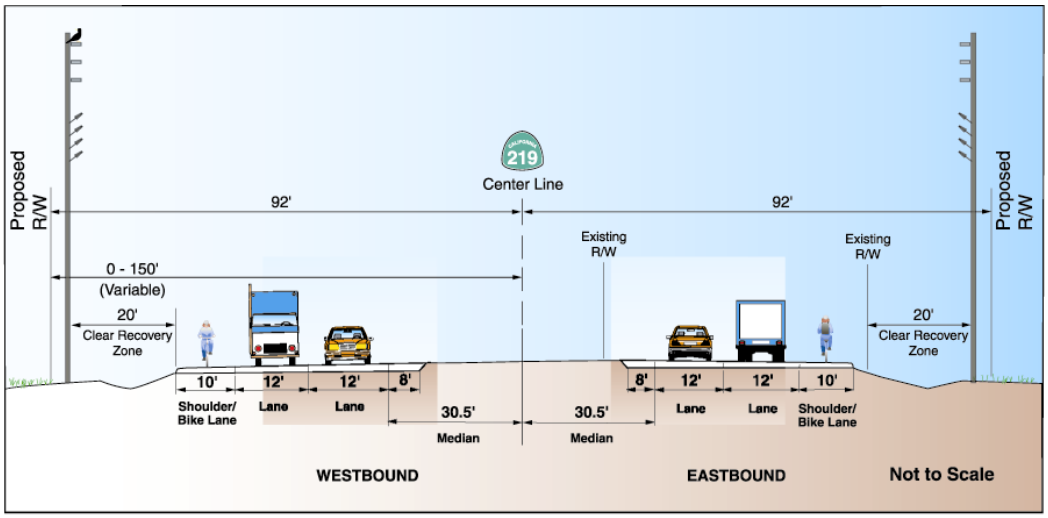


Figure 2-1 Typical Cross Section of Alternative 1

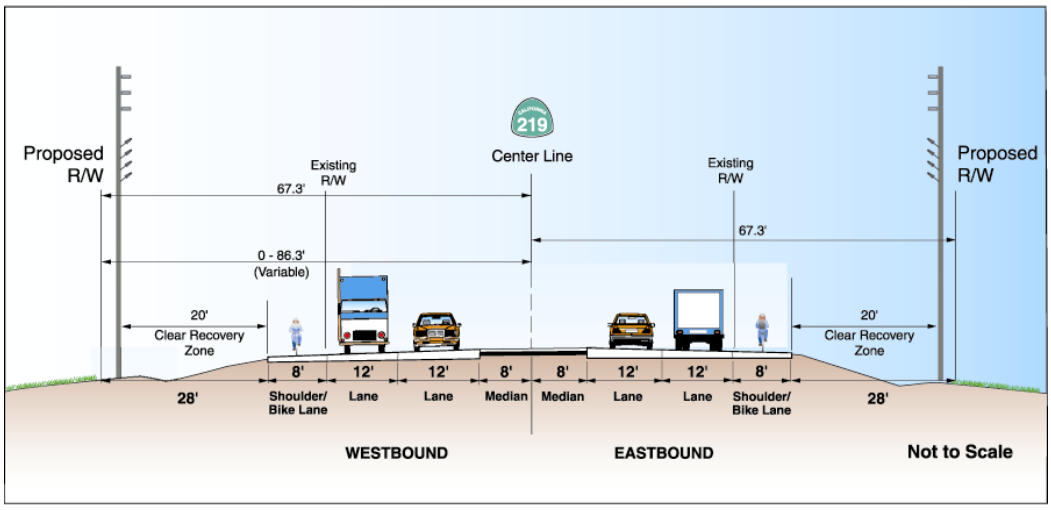


Figure 2-2 Typical Cross Section of Alternative 2

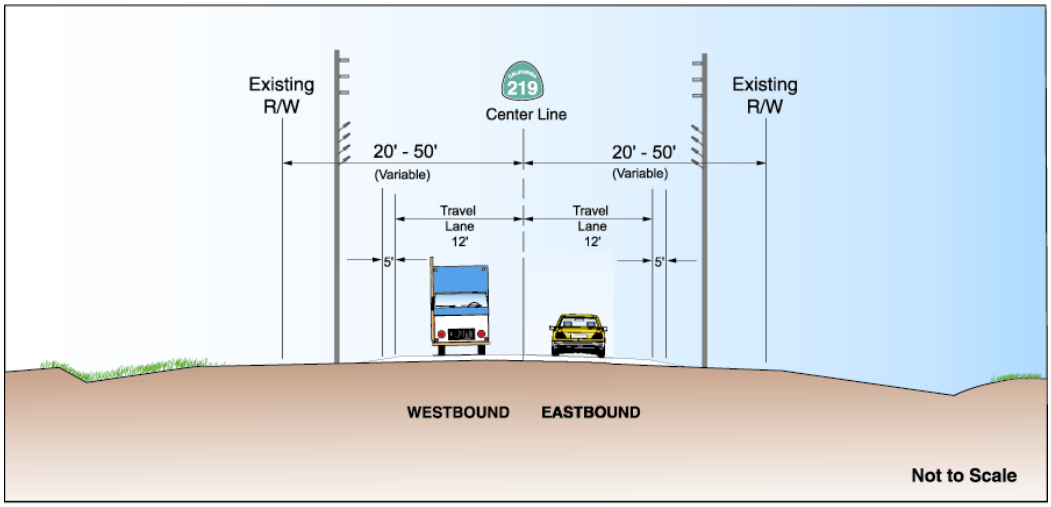


Figure 2-3 Typical Cross Section of Existing Highway

identify right-of-way needed for a future six-lane highway and to prevent development within that boundary. However, only the right-of-way needed for the initial four-lane highway would be purchased. The existing centerline of the roadway would be maintained throughout most of the project area, except in the vicinity of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church, where the alternative would widen to the north at the property to avoid any impacts to the property, and at the Stanislaus Union Elementary School, where widening would be restricted to the south side of the existing highway to minimize impacts to the school. For this alternative, the widening distance from the existing centerline would vary because adequate setback with curb, gutter and sidewalks already exists. Use of existing curb and gutter would minimize impacts to existing infrastructure.

2.2.3 No-Build Alternative

The no-build alternative maintains the existing configuration and conditions of State Route 219. The current roadway is classified as a two-lane conventional highway, consisting of two 3.6-meter (12-foot) lanes with 1.2–meter (4-foot) shoulders (Figure 2.3). The highway runs for five miles with 15 intersections, most of which are controlled with two-way or four-way stop signs. The highway has no median for left turns, and there is no clear recovery area along the highway for motorists to recover when their vehicles are out of control or when they need to pull off the roadway and stop. Forecasting data shows that if the proposed project is not constructed, the roadway would continue to deteriorate and traffic accidents would increase. The identified transportation needs for the area would then not be met.

2.2.4 Access Alternatives to the Stanislaus Union Elementary School

Three access alternatives are proposed at the school to provide safer access in and out of the school property. A variety of features are proposed, including soundwalls, a traffic signal in front of the school, additional bus loading/unloading and an area where parents can drop off students (see Appendix A for maps of Access Alternatives 1-C, 1-G, 1-H).

2.2.5 Alternatives Considered and Withdrawn

Three alternatives were considered and withdrawn in the early stages of the development of this project.

2.2.5.1 Widen State Route 219 from State Route 99 to Dale Road

One alternative that was considered and withdrawn proposed to improve State Route 219 from State Route 99 to the intersection at Dale Road. This alternative was dismissed because it met the project objectives for only a portion of the roadway identified as needing improvement.

2.2.5.2 Moving State Route 219 North to Ladd Road

Another alternative that was considered in the early planning stages of the project was a route running parallel to and north of the existing highway. This alternative would use existing Ladd Road and Patterson Road (State Route 108) into the city of Riverbank. While this route has been used by northeast-bound traffic for many years, this alternative was withdrawn because it would not meet all of the identified transportation needs. Also, this alternative was considered undesirable because it could induce urban growth and development beyond the northern limits set by local planning agencies. Traffic forecasting shows the need for a project in this vicinity when the current general plans have been fully implemented as defined in the City of Modesto Urban Area General Plan and the Salida Community Plan of Stanislaus County.

2.2.5.3 Transportation System Management (TSM)

Due to projected traffic volumes, a Transportation System Management (TSM) alternative, which is appropriate for small operational highway improvements, was determined to be a non-viable solution for meeting the purpose and need of this project.

A TSM alternative identifies improvements that could be implemented on the current transportation facility to maximize the efficiency of the route for relatively low cost. The details of a TSM alternative vary from project to project, depending on the traffic needs in the project area. Some commonly implemented examples are coordinated signal timing, ramp metering, relocations and removal of parking, and adding High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes. These types of improvements did not meet the purpose and need for the project.

2.2.5.4 Widen to the South Side of State Route 219

This alternative was similar to Build Alternative 1 – Widen North, except that the widening would take place primarily on the south side of the existing roadway. This alternative was dropped because of the greater number of residences, businesses, and existing infrastructure that would be affected. Additionally, the Unitarian Universalist

Fellowship Church would have been affected by widening to the south. The church is determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Any effect on the building would trigger Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, which protects historic places and requires that avoidance measures be taken where feasible. Alternatives 1 and 2 are feasible and include measures that avoid impact to the identified historic resource; therefore, this alternative was withdrawn from further consideration.

2.2.6 Projects in the Vicinity

The following highway projects are located near State Route 219 and are currently in the planning stages:

- The State Route 108 Widening Project recently entered the environmental studies phase. This project proposes to widen State Route 108 for 10 miles beginning at the intersection of State Route 219 and ending at the intersection of Oak Avenue in the City of Oakdale. The purpose of the project is to relieve congestion along State Route 108, targeting congested areas within the cities of Riverbank and Oakdale. Currently, the Project Development Team for the State Route 108 project is working to select alternatives to be included for study in the environmental process.
- Stanislaus County Public Works is planning a project to upgrade the intersection of State Route 219 and Stoddard Road. Where applicable, the county project would use this environmental document to assist in providing environmental information for the intersection project.
- Caltrans is currently conducting environmental studies for a project that proposes an interchange upgrade at the intersection of State Route 99 and Pelendale Avenue just south of the project area. That project is proposed in response to traffic modeling data for the area that shows the need for improvements, as well as the widening of State Route 219.

Chapter 3 Affected Area and Environmental Consequences

Caltrans specialists conducted environmental studies to study the proposed project area and identify environmental impacts. Technical reports were produced describing the process and results of the studies. The reports prepared for this environmental evaluation include:

- Natural Environment Study
- Archaeological Survey Report
- Historic Architectural Survey
- Hydrology/Floodplain Report
- Community Impact Assessment
- Relocation Impact Study
- Traffic Study
- Hazardous Waste Report
- Technical Noise Analysis
- Air Quality Report
- Water Quality Report
- Scenic Resource Evaluation

These reports are incorporated by reference into this Environmental Assessment/Initial Study and are available from the Caltrans District 10 office at 1976 E. Charter Way in Stockton, California.

This Environmental Assessment/Initial Study fulfills the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 US 4332 (2)(c) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). For the purpose of meeting both state and federal requirements for environmental compliance, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) California Division Checklist for Draft Environmental Documents was used to prepare and structure this document. The CEQA Environmental Evaluation Checklist (Appendix G) was used to ensure that state compliance was met.

This chapter forms the scientific and analytical basis for the comparisons made between the alternatives, including any anticipated environmental impacts.

3.1 Floodplain/Hydrology, Water Quality, Stormwater

Caltrans conducted a water quality study for the proposed project in the spring of 2000. This study evaluated the potential impacts to surface water and groundwater resources resulting from the widening of State Route 219.

3.1.1 Affected Environment

The project site is located within the San Joaquin River basin watershed. The watershed covers 41,129 square kilometers (15,880 square miles) and includes the entire area that drains into the San Joaquin River. The principal streams in the basin are the San Joaquin River and its larger tributaries: the Cosumnes, Mokelumne, Calaveras, Stanislaus, Toulumne, Merced, Chowchilla, and Fresno rivers. The project does not intersect any river or body of water, with the exception of a small concrete-lined canal that has intermittent water flow. The project proposes a drainage system that prevents drainage into the canal. The nearest surface water to the project area is the Stanislaus River, which is approximately 4.8 kilometers (3.0 miles) to the north.

The climate of the area is characterized by hot, dry summers and cool, moist winters. During the summer, the temperatures range between highs of 32.22 degrees centigrade (90 degrees Fahrenheit) to lows of 10 degrees centigrade (50 degrees Fahrenheit), with the winter highs and lows ranging between 12.78 and 1.67 degrees centigrade (55 and 35 degrees Fahrenheit), respectively. The annual precipitation is about 30.5 centimeters (12 inches). Rain falls from September through May, with most rainfall occurring December through March.

The Modesto basin is the local groundwater basin underlying the project area. The boundaries of the basin are defined by the Stanislaus River to the north and the Toulumne River to the south, with the San Joaquin River to the west and the Sierra Nevada mountain range to the east. Much of the land surrounding the project area is within the Modesto Irrigation District, which operates 55 drainage wells to maintain shallow groundwater levels below crop root zones. Well data near the project area indicates that the water table varies from approximately 8.2 meters (27 feet) to 17.9 meters (59 feet) below the ground surface. The agricultural land in this area is supplied irrigation water through the district's extensive system of irrigation channels.

The City of Modesto supplies municipal water for the town of Salida, the area west of Stoddard Road, adjacent to State Route 219. Generally, private water wells provide potable water east of Stoddard Road for the remaining project area.

3.1.2 Impacts

This project would have no adverse impact to surface water and groundwater resources. The project design proposes a drainage system to collect all runoff from the road, complying with federal and state water quality regulations and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System requirements.

3.1.3 Construction Impacts

During construction, there is the potential that fuel, fluids, and solvents used to operate and maintain equipment may affect the quality of stormwater runoff. Compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit includes measures to reduce potential discharges from construction activities. Plans would need to be made during the design phase to ensure that there would be no direct discharge into any body of water. During the construction phase, the contractor would be responsible for taking steps to eliminate potential impacts (as stated in Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 7-1.01G). If these measures and precautions are implemented, this project would have no adverse effect to water quality during construction.

3.1.4 Mitigation

No mitigation is required.

3.2 Hazardous Waste

An Initial Site Assessment was conducted for 102 properties in the spring of 2000. The purpose was to evaluate the project area for the presence of hazardous waste. The hazardous waste studies included record searches of several databases, literature searches of agency files, site investigations and, when required, invasive boring for testing.

Studies were also conducted for the presence of aerially deposited lead. A total of 237 samples were collected from borings at intersections and at approximately 304.8-meter (1,000-foot) intervals throughout the project area.

Additional hazardous waste studies are required for a parcel of land adjacent to the Stanislaus Union Elementary School where a parking lot, bus and car passenger drop-off area is proposed. The site would be assessed per requirements set by the California Education Code and California Code of Regulations Title 5 and the Department of Toxic Substances Control, Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment Advisory: School Property evaluations, revised September 5, 2001.

3.2.1 Affected Environment

The project study area is primarily made up of older farms that have the potential to contain leaking underground storage tanks and contaminated soil, a result of servicing equipment in the same location of the property through time. There are also several locations where previous businesses, other than farming, have had underground storage tanks, stored equipment and/or fuel. Table 3.1 lists the type of contamination for each of the 11 properties.

Aerially deposited lead can be found in soil next to older highways and along more heavily traveled highways resulting from the past use of leaded gasoline. Studies are performed to identify lead in high concentrations according to California hazardous waste criteria. The soil is tested so that excavated soil can be managed properly in accordance with California Code of Regulations (CCR) Titles 22 and 26 and AB 2784. The results of the aerially deposited lead study are also used to notify the contractor so that proper safety precautions are implemented as required by California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 8, section 1532.1.

The school site property under study is currently an almond orchard. To obtain environmental clearance for the property to be added to the school site, specific requirements must be met that are different than what is required for a Caltrans standard Initial Site Assessment. California Education Code, Section 1713.1, requires school districts to conduct a comprehensive Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment. This assessment, as regulated by the Department of Toxic Substances, and, to the extent feasible, “recognized” environmental conditions in connection with the property under study.

The term “recognized environmental conditions,” as defined by American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards, means the presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances or petroleum products on a property under conditions that

Table 3.1 Properties With Potential Hazardous Waste

PROPERTIES WITH POTENTIAL HAZARDOUS WASTE			
Corresponding Map Number	**Assessor Parcel Number**	**Potential Waste Type**	**Comments**
1	078-07-29-000	Fuel, AST/USTs.	Mobile Oil Corporation used to store fuel. Vista report indicates hazardous waste. Property owner claims compliance with County Health Department Storage Tank Requirements.
2	003-17-29-000	Asbestos, Lead Paint, Oil.	Milk barn made with cinder blocks potential for asbestos and lead paint. Also, minor oil staining.
3	078-36-25-000	Diesel. USTs.	Owner stated tanks were removed 10-20 years ago. Stanislaus County Department of Environmental Resources mentioned leakage at site and was mitigated.
4	078-36-32-000	Unknown.	Stanislaus County Department of Environmental Resources stated that there was groundwater contamination discovered when a preliminary site investigation was done for the CHP building site.
5	003-19-12-000	Waste Oil.	Owner uses waste oil when performing dust control.
6	003-19-06-000	Pesticides.	Have pesticides stored in ASTs. Potential for contamination due to tank leakage.
7	003-09-38-000	Diesel, Leaded and Unleaded Gasoline.	Owner has furniture-refinishing business. Had 3 USTs removed. Did not record with County Health Department.
8	004-68-08-000	Unknown.	Stanislaus County Department of Environmental Resources stated 3 USTs were removed. Some oil contamination with no record of cleanup.
9	046-06-02-000	Weed Oil.	Pesticide is stored on site. Potential for contamination due to leaking or spilled containers.
10	004-68-07-000	Two ASTs.	Two leaking dispensers are underground plumbed with 30 meters distance.
11	046-01-02-000	Unknown	Tanks were removed and soil was excavated and removed within an area of 15m x 18m to 1m depth around discharge outlet area.

UST = Underground Storage Tank. AST = Above ground Storage Tank.
Numbers 1 –11 correspond with property locations in Figures 3-1 and 3-2 Potential Hazardous Waste Sites.

indicate an existing release, a past release, or a material threat of a release of any hazardous substances or petroleum products into structures on the property or into the ground, groundwater, or surface water of the property. This definition is found in the ASTM publication, "Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Process" (Designation: E1527-00). A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment is required for all projects involving state funding for school property acquisition or new construction. Even though the proposed access alternatives would only require 0.40 hectare (one acre) of land, the entire 49-hectare (121.53-acre) parcel would be studied.

3.2.2 Impacts

Investigations identified 11 properties that have the potential to contain hazardous waste contamination. Contaminated soil could exist where sites for underground tanks were reported or for sites where documentation noted contaminated soil with no mention of follow-up measures to remove the soil. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 identify the locations of the 11 properties for each build alternative.

Results from the aerially deposited lead studies show very low concentrations of lead. With such low concentrations, the soil is considered to be non-hazardous and could be managed with no restrictions during construction of the project.

Preliminary results from the Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment of the proposed bus/passenger drop-off and parking lot site indicate one Recognized Environmental Condition, as identified according to the ASTM E1527-00 guidance document. The property has been used as an orchard since the 1920s, so the soil could potentially contain elevated levels of residual pesticides that may pose a threat to human health and the environment. Also, the groundwater beneath the adjacent school has been found to contain detectable concentrations of DCPB, a chlorinated pesticide. There is a potential that the property's groundwater also contains this compound. The assessment is currently being reviewed by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control; the department may require that a Preliminary Endangerment Assessment be performed on the site. Since the scope of the Caltrans project includes asphalt pavement on the entire one-acre bus parking area, and a DCPB filter is currently in position to filter the school drinking water, it is unlikely children would be exposed to the potentially affected soil.

3.2.3 Construction Impacts

There may be instances in which hazardous waste has gone undetected. A note would be placed in the resident engineer's file to alert construction crews to the possibility of undetected hazardous waste and/or soil contamination. If soil discoloration, odor or fumes are encountered during construction, work should be stopped and the resident engineer informed.

3.2.4 Mitigation

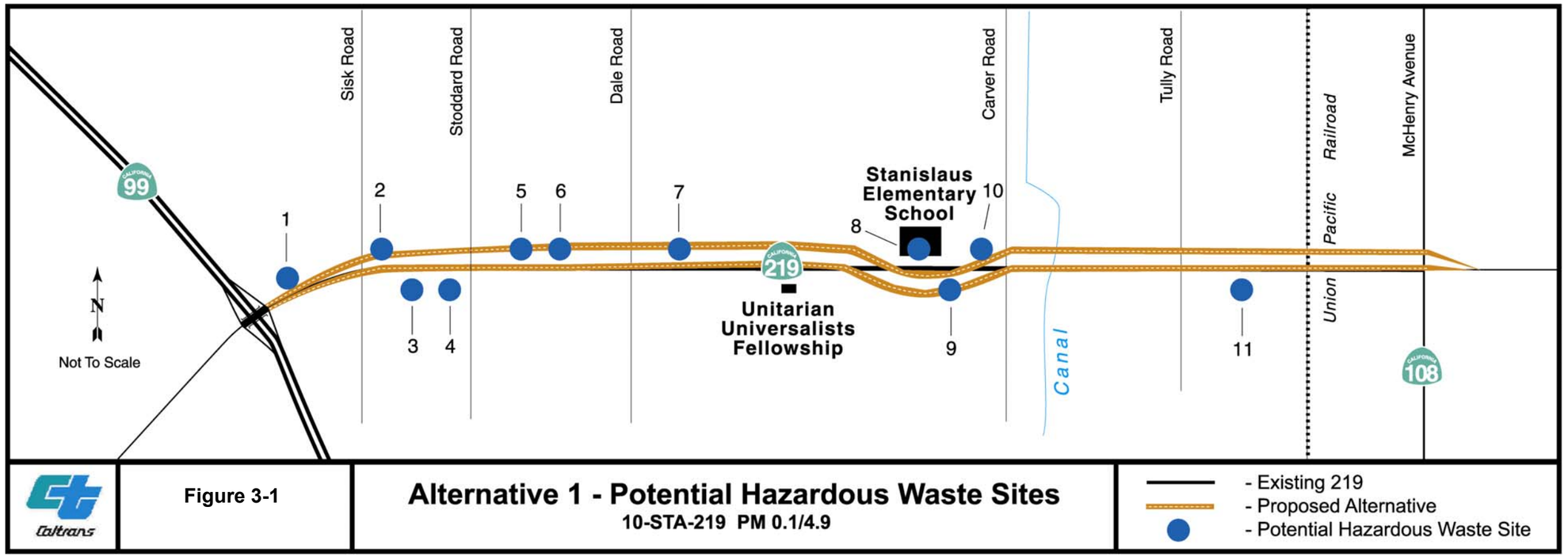
All identified locations with contamination would be cleaned within regulatory limits before highway construction. Results from a Preliminary Endangerment Assessment would determine any required mitigation.

3.3 Air Quality

As required by the Federal Clean Air Act Amendments, National Ambient Air Quality Standards have been established for six potential air pollutants: carbon monoxide (CO), ozone (O_3), suspended particulate matter of 10 microns in diameter (PM10), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), and lead (Pb). Under the California Clean Air Act of 1988, the State of California has developed California Ambient Air Quality Standards that mirror federal regulations, as follows:

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a public health concern because it combines readily with hemoglobin and thus reduces the amount of oxygen transported in the bloodstream. Effects on humans range from slight headaches to nausea to death. State and federal CO standards have been set for both 1-hour and 8-hour averaging times. The state 1-hour standard is 20 parts per million by volume, and the federal 1-hour is 35 parts per million. Both the state and federal standards are 9 parts per million for 8-hour averaging period. Motor vehicles are the dominant source of CO emissions in most areas. High CO levels develop primarily during winter when periods of light wind combine with ground-level temperature inversions. These conditions result in reduced dispersion of vehicle emissions. In addition, motor vehicles emit more CO in cool temperatures than in warm temperatures.

Ozone (O_3) is not emitted directly into the air but is formed by a photochemical reaction in the atmosphere. Ozone precursors, which include oxides of nitrogen and reactive organic gases, react in the atmosphere in the presence of sunlight to form ozone. State and federal standards for ozone have been set for a 1-hour averaging


Sisk Road
Stoddard Road
Dale Road
Carver Road
Tully Road
Pacific Railroad
McHenry Avenue
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99
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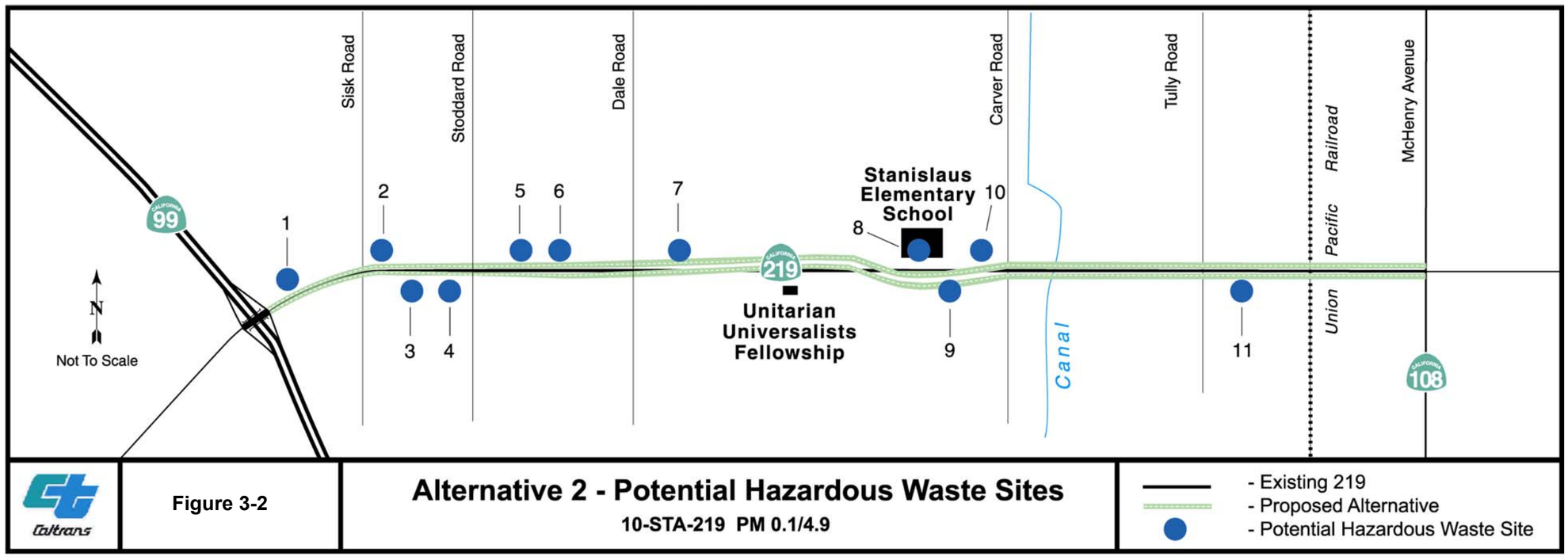
11
Stanislaus Elementary School
Unitarian Universalists Fellowship
N
Not To Scale
Caltrans
Figure 3-1
Alternative 1 - Potential Hazardous Waste Sites
10-STA-219 PM 0.1/4.9
- Existing 219
- Proposed Alternative
- Potential Hazardous Waste Site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Unitarian Universalists Fellowship
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Caltrans
Figure 3-2
Alternative 2 - Potential Hazardous Waste Sites
10-STA-219 PM 0.1/4.9
- Existing 219
- Proposed Alternative
- Potential Hazardous Waste Site

time. The state requires that ozone concentrations not exceed 0.09 parts per million of ozone be produced in a given area in 1 hour. The federal 1-hour ozone standard is 0.12 parts per million not to be exceeded three times in any 3-year period.

Particulate Matter less than 10 microns emissions are generated by a wide variety of sources, including agricultural activities, industrial emissions, dust suspended by vehicle traffic and construction equipment, and secondary aerosols formed by reactions in the atmosphere. The state PM10 standards are 50 micrograms per cubic meters as a 24-hour average and 30 microgram per cubic meter as an annual geometric mean. The federal PM10 standards are 150 microgram per cubic meter as a 24-hour average and 50 microgram per cubic meter as an annual arithmetic mean.

Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2) belongs to a family of highly reactive gases called nitrogen oxides (NOx). These gases form when fuel is burned at high temperatures, and come principally from motor vehicle exhaust and stationary sources such as electric utilities and industrial boilers. A suffocating, brownish gas, nitrogen dioxide is a strong oxidizing agent that reacts in air to form corrosive nitric acid, as well as toxic organic nitrates. It also plays a major role in the atmospheric reactions that produce ground-level ozone (or smog). EPA's health-based national air quality standard for nitrogen dioxide is 0.053 parts per million.

Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2) belongs to the family of sulfur oxide gases (SOx). These gases are formed when fuel containing sulfur (mainly coal and oil) is burned, and during metal smelting and other industrial processes. EPA's health-based national air quality standard for sulfur dioxide is 0.03 parts per million (measured on an annual average) and 0.14 parts per million (measured over 24 hours).

Lead (Pb) is a metal found naturally in the environment as well as in manufactured products. The major sources of lead emissions have historically been motor vehicles and industrial sources. Due to the phase out of leaded gasoline, metals processing is the major source of lead emissions in the air today. The highest levels of lead in air are generally found near lead smelters. Other stationary sources are waste incinerators, utilities, and lead-acid battery manufacturers.

The Federal Clean Air Act Amendments also require that all transportation plans and programs pass the air quality conformity test. Transportation conformity must be determined for all non-attainment area pollutants classified as regional pollutants. These pollutants in the San Joaquin Valley air basin are PM10 and ozone (and their precursors). Project conformity is demonstrated if the project does the following:

- Comes from a conforming plan and program.
- Has the same design concept and scope used for the regional conformity analysis.
- Will not cause localized exceedances of carbon monoxide and/or suspended particulate matter.
- Will not interfere with the timely implementation of Transportation Control Measures called out in the State Implementation Plan.

The project is included in the Stanislaus County 2001 Regional Transportation Program (RTP) and the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) which have been approved by FWHA/FTA on March 11, 2002. The design concept and scope of the project is consistent with that use in regional emissions analysis and does not cause localized exceedances of carbon monoxide and/or suspended particulate matter (See further discussion in 3.3.2 Impacts section.). The project doesn't interfere with the timely implementation of Traffic Control Measures (TCMs).

3.3.1 Affected Environment

The proposed project is located within the San Joaquin Valley air basin in Stanislaus County, which administers air quality regulations developed at the federal, state, and local levels.

Mountain ranges that border the air basin near the proposed project site influence wind direction and speed, contributing to the entrapment of pollutants in the San Joaquin Valley creating an atmospheric inversion layer. Although these conditions occur frequently throughout the year, they are more frequent and severe in late summer and fall.

In the proposed project area, carbon monoxide, ozone, and PM10 are of particular concern. Under federal standards, Stanislaus County is considered an attainment/unclassified area with respect to carbon monoxide, non-attainment/severe with respect to ozone, and non-attainment/serious with respect to PM10. Under state standards, the county is considered in attainment with respect to carbon monoxide, non-attainment/severe with respect to ozone, and non-attainment with respect to PM10. Attainment means that an area meets the legal limits established for a pollutant.

3.3.2 Impacts

Historical air quality data show that existing carbon monoxide (CO) levels for the project area and the general vicinity do not exceed either the State or the Federal ambient air quality standards. A screening CO hot spot analysis was conducted in areas affected by the proposed project improvements. The proposed project would not result in exceedences above regulatory standards. None of the projected CO concentrations, with or without the project changes, would exceed the State or Federal Standards.

The project is located in an attainment/maintenance area for the federal carbon monoxide standard. Therefore, hot spot analysis is required. The flow chart in the Caltrans' Transportation Project Level Carbon monoxide Protocol for local analysis was used to determine the CO impacts:

Is the project in a CO nonattainment area?- NO

Was the area redesignated as "attainment" after the 1990 clean Air Act?-YES

Has "continued attainment" been verified with the local Air District?-YES

Is the project in an area with approved CO attainment or maintenance plan?-YES.

Are all of the following conditions satisfied?

- *Project does not significantly increase cold start*-YES
- *Project does not significantly increase traffic volumes*-YES
- *Project improves traffic flow*-YES
- *Project does not move traffic closer to a receptor site*-NO (in some places traffic moves closer to receptors)

Since one of the above conditions has not been satisfied, hot spot analysis for CO at Dale Rd and SR 219 signalized intersection was performed. The highest CO measurement (4.5 parts per million) in year 2002 was used as a background. The results of the analysis follows:

A. 1-Hour CO concentrations (parts per million)-State Standard=20 parts per million/Federal =35 parts per million

14.4 Year 2003-Less than State and Federal Standards.

13.8 Year 2010-Less than State and Federal Standards.

13.4 Year 2030-Less than State and Federal Standards.

B. 8-Hour CO concentrations (parts per million)-State Standard = Federal=9 parts per million

7.1 Year 2003-Less than State and Federal Standards.

6.6 Year 2010-Less than State and Federal Standards.

6.4 Year 2030-Less than State and Federal Standards.

Based on the above analysis no significant local impacts would occur as a result of the proposed project. There is no reason to believe that the project would create a new violation or worsen an existing one. Therefore, no mitigation measures are needed.

The proposed improvements are located in a nonattainment area for the federal and State PM10 standards. Therefore, a local hot spot analysis for PM10 for conformity purposes is required. A qualitative PM10 hot spot analysis was conducted and the results show that the project improvements would not result in any violation of PM10 federal standards.

Quantitative Analysis: Since EPA has not released modeling guidance on how to perform quantitative PM-10 hot-spot analysis, such quantitative analysis is not currently required.

Qualitative Analysis: The monitored station located at Turlock-S Minaret Street has not registered any violation in the last three years (2000-2002). (See ARB attachments)

The maximum PM10 concentration monitored and the average of the highest four measurements at Turlock-S Minaret Street station are:

Year	Max.	Average	Percent
2002	70.0	65.0	43.3
2001	148	113	75.2
2000	104	87.5	58.3

The University of California-Davis (UCD) has performed studies for Caltrans indicating that, absent of unusual circumstances or existing conditions (monitored) that are above or within 80 percent of the federal PM10 standard, a transportation facility is unlikely to cause or experience a localized PM10 problem, unless the immediate vicinity is already at or above standard. The percent of PM10 is less than

80% of the federal PM10 standard, therefore, the project is unlikely to cause or experience a localized PM10 problem.

This project will relieve congestion, improve the LOS and reduce overall idling time at intersections. The reduction in idling time would reduce idle emissions of PM-10, thus providing an overall air quality benefit.

The concentrations of PM10 at this site on a daily basis are currently within the standards and future emissions resulting from this project will be low enough that they will not introduce a PM10 problem.

Based on the above, the project would not create a new violation or worsen an existing violation of the PM10 National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS). Therefore, no mitigation measures are required for long-term operational air quality effects.

Stanislaus County is not among the counties listed as containing Serpentine and Ultramafic Rock. Therefore, the impact from naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA) during project construction would be minimal to none.

This project would not cause substantial cumulative impacts to the environment related to regional-scale air pollutants (ozone and PM10). Additionally, there would be no major adverse impacts on ambient carbon monoxide levels.

3.3.3 Construction Impacts

PM10 may increase during construction. Construction vehicles usually generate dust (particulate) emissions during soil-disturbing activities such as clearing, excavating and grading. Construction vehicle traffic would increase the amount of dust from unpaved earth surfaces. In general, construction emissions are short-term and intermittent and do not make a substantial contribution to long-term regional PM10 concentrations. During construction, the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District standards, as well as standard Caltrans construction specifications, would be implemented to reduce particulate matter emissions to a level that is not considerable.

The proposed project is also subject to San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District regulations to control dust emissions from human activities under rule 8020 (Control of Fine Particulate Matter [PM_{10}] from Construction, Demolition, Excavation, and Extraction Activities). Rule provisions require that exposed areas be

stabilized to limit visible dust emissions when no construction activities would take place for seven or more days. Any ground-disturbing activities should use appropriate dust control measures. Visible dust emissions from onsite unpaved roads and offsite unpaved access roads should be limited, and public paved roads adjacent to the construction site should be kept free of mud or dirt.

Dust would be controlled following Caltrans standard construction practices as mentioned above, i.e., spraying water, limiting work on windy days, and erosion control measures are required.

3.3.4 Mitigation

No mitigation would be required.

3.4 Noise

A noise study was conducted in the spring of 2000 and additional studies were conducted in the fall of 2000 and fall of 2002 to assess noise impacts from the proposed project. The first was a general study, conducted by Caltrans noise specialists to collect noise measurements along the route during peak hours. The second study was conducted after Caltrans determined that more specific information was needed at several locations. The third study was conducted at the Stanislaus Union Elementary School in response to new information provided by the school district that required further investigation at the school.

The studies comply with Title 23, Part 772 of the Code of Federal Regulations "Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise" (23 CFR 772) and with Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol. The findings in the noise impact discussion comply with both NEPA and CEQA.

Under 23 CFR 772 and the Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol, noise *abatement* must be evaluated and considered if traffic noise impacts are identified. The Code of Federal Regulations Noise Abatement Criteria are used to make an impacts determination. The interior and exterior noise abatement criteria for the land uses discussed in the Affected Environment section below can be found in Table 3.2 in the column labeled "FHWA Noise Abatement Criterion."

According to the regulations, traffic noise impacts are considered to occur if the design-year traffic noise level approaches (is within 1 dBA of) or exceeds the noise

abatement criteria. The design-year traffic noise level is equal to the predicted noise level at 20-years following completion of construction of the project. A traffic noise impact is also considered to occur if the increase between the design-year noise level and the existing noise level is substantial (at least 12 dBA). According to the Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol, a traffic noise impact can potentially be considered significant if there is a 12 dBA increase between existing and design-year conditions. The need for noise mitigation is considered where substantial noise impacts have been identified.

The determination of which sites to study for interior and/or exterior noise was made following guidance in the Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol. This guidance states: *"Noise abatement is only considered where noise impacts are predicted, where frequent human use occurs, and where a lowered noise level would be of benefit. Primary consideration will be given to exterior areas."* The protocol goes on to state: *"In situations where no exterior activities are affected by the traffic noise, or where the exterior activities are far from, or physically shielded from the roadway and therefore not impacted, the interior criterion shall be used as a basis for noise abatement consideration."*

The decision to implement noise abatement recommendations is based on an overall *feasibility* and *reasonableness* determination as defined in the protocol. *Feasibility* is described as an engineering consideration where design features such as noise barriers are considered along with other factors such as the ability to achieve required noise level reductions. The protocol requires a minimum of 5 dBA noise reduction for noise abatement to be considered feasible. Feasibility may be restricted by topography, access requirements for driveways, the presence of local cross-streets, other noise sources in the area, and safety considerations. *Reasonableness* is more subjective than the determination of feasibility. It implies that common sense and good judgement have been applied in arriving at a decision. The overall reasonableness of noise abatement is determined by considering a multitude of factors including but not limited to: cost of the abatement, absolute noise levels, change in noise levels, noise abatement benefits, date of development along the highway, life cycle of abatement measures, environmental impacts of abatement construction, views of affected residents, and input from the public and local agencies. The *Reasonable* and *Feasible* analysis reported in this document also corresponds with the evaluation of context and intensity required under NEPA and CEQA.

3.4.1 Affected Environment

Noise-sensitive land uses in the project area include a subdivision at the northwest corner of the intersection of State Route 219 and Sisk Road, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church of Stanislaus County, the Stanislaus Union Elementary School, apartments near the intersection of State Route 219 and McHenry Avenue, and scattered residences located along the route.

3.4.2 Impacts

Per Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol, it was determined that the church, school, and apartment complex properties were to be studied for interior noise impacts, while the school and all single-family residences located within 54 meters (180 feet) to 64.5 meters (215 feet) of the outside edge of the roadway were to be studied for exterior noise impacts. Table 3.2 provides a summary of the findings of the noise studies.

Table 3.2 Summary of Noise Findings and Recommendations

Location	Existing Noise Levels	Predicted Noise levels		FHWA Noise Abatement Criterion	Recommended Abatement
Sisk Road	*62-65 dB*	*Alt-1* *66-72 dB*	*Alt-2* *65-72 dB*	*B* *67 dB (Exterior)*	*Soundwalls* *Alt.-1* *2.44 meters high & 610 meters long (8 ft high & 200 ft long)* *Alt.-2* *2.44 meters high & 457.5 meters long (8 ft high & 150 ft long)*
Unitarian Church	*44 dB**	*46 dB**	*48 dB**	*E* *52 dB (Interior)*	*No abatement recommended*
Stanislaus School *Cafeteria* *Kindergarten Play Area*	*58 dB* *65-67 dB*	*Access Alt 1C, 1G, 1H* *60 dB* *68-70 dB*	*Access Alt 1C, 1G, 1H* *61 dB* *69-71 dB*	*E* *52 dB (Interior)* *B* *67 dB (Exterior)*	*Acoustical Insulation/Air-Conditioning or Soundwall 1G or 1H* *Soundwall around K area or Soundwall 1C, 1G, or 1H*
Apartments	*37 dB**	*44 dB**	*43 dB**	*E* *52 dB (Interior)*	*No abatement recommended*

* Interior noise levels. All others exterior.

Results from the noise studies for interior noise impacts indicated that there would be no impacts at the church, the classrooms at the school, or the apartment complex. Noise measurements taken at these sites fell below the 52 dBA criterion for interior noise levels. Therefore, no interior noise abatement would be required at these locations.

However, results from the third study, conducted to investigate interior noise impacts at the school cafeteria, found that the school cafeteria, which is used for instruction, would have noise levels of 58 dBA-Leq[h] with windows and doors open. This exceeds the interior noise abatement criterion by 6 dBA. As a result of the third study findings, noise abatement must be considered for the cafeteria as required by 23 CFR 772. Acoustical insulation/air-conditioning of the cafeteria and construction of a soundwall are two types of abatement that are currently being considered.

Study results for exterior noise impacts indicate that noise levels would be greater than the noise abatement criterion for the outdoor kindergarten play area and outside receptors within 18.29 meters (60 feet) from the outside edge of the nearest lane. Noise abatement measures have therefore been considered for both alternatives at the subdivision near Sisk Road, the outdoor kindergarten play area at the Stanislaus Union Elementary School, and residences adjacent to the roadway.

The noise study results indicate that noise abatement would be feasible for the subdivision at Sisk Road where a soundwall is recommended to replace an existing wall and for the cafeteria and kindergarten play area at the school where acoustical insulation/air-conditioning and soundwalls are being considered. Construction of soundwalls between the highway and adjacent residents are considered not feasible. The soundwall design would require a gap in the wall to provide access to the property. A gap would prevent the wall from achieving the required 5 dBA noise reduction.

Final decisions concerning noise abatement at the school site are pending a decision by the Stanislaus Union School District board to select one of the three proposed access alternatives that include the recommended noise abatement features. Caltrans has been working closely with the school district from the beginning of environmental studies (spring 1999) to present to provide the school with access alternatives that both meet Caltrans safety standards and include features that have been requested by the school board. The final environmental document would include a discussion of the process followed to choose the alternative selected with the

recommended noise abatement features (see Appendix A Access Alternatives for locations of proposed soundwalls).

Abatement has been considered for inside and outside noise impacts at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church property. Caltrans staff have met with church members (spring 1999 to present). During the meetings, several church members expressed concern about existing and future noise levels. The church members explained how they had a long-standing practice of not conducting services during the summer months because of noise and heat. They explained that they had to close all doors and windows to conduct services because of roadway noise and that, without air conditioning, the summer heat was too uncomfortable. Rather than install an air-conditioning system, they decided not to hold services during the summer months when outside temperatures are high.

Caltrans researched possible solutions to this problem throughout the environmental studies process. Consideration was given to soundwalls to abate predicted increases in exterior and interior noise levels. Soundwalls were considered not feasible at the church property because a gap in the wall would be necessary to allow access to the property; the gap would prevent the required minimum noise reduction of 5 dBA. Cultural resource specialists were consulted as noise engineers considered treatments to reduce interior noise such as adding insulation to the walls, modifying the windows and doors, and installing air conditioning. But, after thorough review, it was determined that any modifications to the church property would not be feasible because any change to the building or the landscaping would be considered an "adverse effect" to a historic resource under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended.

To reduce traffic noise at the church property, avoidance measures were implemented early in the environmental process. Both proposed build alternatives veer north of the existing roadway to avoid directly affecting the property. The design adds 2 meters (6 feet) of additional land plus a 2.5-meter (8-foot) shoulder between the church property and the proposed edge of the travel lane, moving roadway noise farther away from the church building.

The conclusions made concerning interior use at the church were based on information provided by church staff as environmental studies have been completed. However, Caltrans received a letter dated November 25, 2002 from church staff. The letter stated that the church members are now holding services year-round and

requested that further studies be conducted inside the church with the doors and windows open. Although specific measurements with church doors and windows open have not been made, previous measurements with doors and windows closed indicated that interior noise levels would exceed 52 dBA with doors and windows open. According to 23 CFR 772, a traffic noise impact is considered to occur at the interior of the church and noise abatement must therefore be considered.

The noise levels at the church are considered to have an effect but not to be substantial under NEPA and CEQA. Per FHWA protocol, the predicted rise in noise levels do warrant consideration of noise abatement. The recommended noise abatement can be implemented as long as it is found to be *reasonable* and *feasible*. As reported previously, a soundwall and modifications to the church building have been considered to reduce noise levels at the church property, but the recommended abatement was considered infeasible because all recommended abatement would have an adverse effect to the historic resource.

Additionally, it has been determined that this project would include the use of open-graded asphalt. This type of surface provides the benefits of allowing water to drain quickly from the roadway and providing better wet-weather traction (reduced hydroplaning, surface spray, nighttime glare, etc.). While open-graded asphalt surfacing provides many safety benefits, studies have shown that it may cause a reduction of traffic noise levels. Many studies indicate that an open-graded asphalt pavement can reduce noise levels upwards of 7 dBA immediately following construction. Studies conducted by the Caltrans indicate a reduction in traffic noise of 4 to 6 dBA is sustainable over time. Accordingly, because open-graded asphalt would be used on this project, traffic noise could be 4 to 6 dBA lower than reported here. Recommendations for noise attenuation did not include the use of open-graded asphalt.

3.4.3 Construction Impacts

Construction of the project would cause a temporary increase in noise. The contractor would be required to comply with all local noise control regulations and ordinances as described for implementation in Caltrans Best Management Practices manual. No substantial construction noise impacts have been identified.

3.4.4 Abatement/Mitigation

Based on the noise studies, Caltrans intends to incorporate noise abatement measures in the form of barriers or acoustical insulation/air-conditioning. This includes:

- A barrier or barriers at the northwest corner of the intersection of 219 and Sisk Road with respective lengths of 45.72 and 60.96 meters (150 and 200 feet) and an average height of 2.44 meters (eight feet);
- Acoustical insulation/air-conditioning at the cafeteria of the Stanislaus Union Elementary School or construction of barrier in front of the school (Soundwall 1G or 1H) with a height of 3.05 to 4.27 meters (10 to 14 feet);
- A barrier at the kindergarten play area at the Stanislaus Union Elementary School with a height in the range of 2.44 to 3.66 meters (8 to 12 feet) or a barrier in front of the school (Soundwall 1C, 1G, or 1H) with a height of 3.05 to 4.27 meters (10 to 14 feet).

The respective average heights of the barriers at the school are pending selection of one of the three proposed Access Alternatives (1C, 1G, and 1H) that include soundwalls. Calculations based on preliminary design data indicate that the barrier(s) would reduce noise levels by 5 dBA. If, during final design, conditions have substantially changed, noise barriers might not be provided. The final decision concerning the noise barriers and acoustical insulation/air-conditioning would be made upon completion of the project design and the public involvement processes.

Currently, negotiations are being held between Caltrans and the Stanislaus Union School District Board to identify an access alternative and noise abatement approach at the school that is acceptable to the school board and meets Caltrans safety standards.

While decisions have been made to implement noise abatement features according to FHWA noise abatement protocal, the impacts identified in this section are not considered substantial under CEQA or NEPA, and do not require mitigation.

3.5 Threatened and/or Endangered Species

Caltrans biologists conducted biological studies during the fall/winter of 1999 and the spring of 2000. A record search and field studies were conducted for sensitive species and habitats within the project area. Information from the Federal Natural Diversity Database, the California Natural Diversity Database, and the Caltrans Sensitive

Species Database was combined with field studies to form the Natural Environment Study. Informal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Federal Highway Administration occurred throughout the studies process.

3.5.1 Affected Environment

The elevation of the project area is between 21.3 meters (70 feet) and 30.0 meters (95 feet). The topography is relatively flat, and the project area consists of cultivated row crops and orchards interspersed with residential and industrial areas. The primary land uses in the area are light industrial, commercial, and agriculture.

The following habitats were identified within the project study area. Ruderal habitats are weedy areas that have been greatly altered from their natural state, due mainly to practices that require the removal of native vegetation through mechanical and/or chemical management. Within the project study area, ruderal habitat occurs along unpaved highway shoulders, weedy areas around buildings, and open fields maintained by disking. Floral species observed within the project area include ripgut grass (*Bromus diandrus*), filaree (*Erodium botrys*), wild radish (*Raphanus sativus*), mustards (*Brassica* spp.), wild oat (*Avena fatua.*), Italian ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*), and yellow star-thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*). The majority of these grasses and forbs are non-native, opportunistic species that quickly and effectively populate new and disturbed areas.

Burrows for the California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*) and valley pocket gopher (*Thomomys bottae*) were observed within these ruderal areas. A pair of red-tailed hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*) was observed nesting in a mature eucalyptus tree growing in a residential backyard next to a ruderal field.

Much of the cultivated agricultural lands within the project area consist of fruit or nut orchards. Orchards in California are typically open, single-tree dominated habitats. Depending on the tree type and pruning methods, they are usually low, bushy trees with an open understory to facilitate their harvest. Cultivated orchards provide poor habitat for most terrestrial wildlife due to disturbance from mechanical harvesting, pesticide application, regular watering regimes, and agricultural burning. However, some common wildlife species, such as the California ground squirrel, do well in cultivated agricultural lands but are considered pests. The yellow-billed magpie (*Pica nuttalli*) and American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) were observed nesting in orchard trees and mature landscaped trees within the project area.

3.5.2 Impacts

The Natural Environment Study indicated that no direct, indirect or cumulative impacts would be expected for any of the species analyzed for this project.

Permits required for this project include a Nationwide Permit (road crossings) from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

3.5.3 Construction Impacts

No construction impacts were identified. However, as a precautionary measure, pre-construction surveys are recommended for roosting bats, nesting Swainson's hawks, San Joaquin kit foxes and burrowing owls before construction of the project. Special provisions would be drafted following approval of the final environmental document to be included in the Plans, Specifications & Estimates package for the contractor to carry out the specified work as prescribed during the construction phase of the project. Table 3.3 shows the pre-construction surveys and brief requirements for the project.

Table 3.3 Summary of Pre-Construction Surveys

Survey	Provisions
Swainson's hawks	Perform pre-construction survey if construction were to occur during the nesting season (March 1 – September 1).
Burrowing owls	If an active burrow were found during construction, construction would need to wait until the burrow is abandoned.
Roosting bats	Before construction, buildings and trees need to be inspected for roosting bats.
San Joaquin kit fox	No sightings have been made in the Salida or Riverbank Quadrangles; however, the range of the San Joaquin kit fox has expanded in recent years and it is recommended that surveys be conducted before construction.

Twelve months before construction, the project manager for the project would contact the assigned biologist for the project to coordinate a schedule for the pre-construction surveys. Surveys for the above-mentioned designated species should be conducted within the 30-day period before any demolition occurs to existing structures, such as houses, barns, and/or silos. See also "Protection Provisions" in Appendix B.

3.5.4 Mitigation

No mitigation is required for this project.

3.6 Community Impact Assessment

A Community Impact Assessment report, which analyzed the community within the project area, was produced for this project. The report identified social and economic effects of the proposed project. A wide range of community issues was examined in this study, including land use consistency and growth inducement, traffic patterns, environmental justice, relocation, farmland, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

The assessment included a literature review of key planning documents for further understanding of the local land use and transportation planning for the project area and the greater region. These documents included the Stanislaus County General Plan, the Salida Community Plan, the City of Modesto Urban Area General Plan, along with their respective environmental impact reports. The Regional Transportation Plan with supporting environmental impact report, the Stanislaus County Regional Expressway Study, and a document describing the Regional Transportation Improvement Program were reviewed, as were the general plans for the nearby cities of Riverbank and Oakdale.

Additional data sources were used to gather information. These included the Census Bureau for population statistics; the Department of Finance website to perform queries to analyze population characteristics; the Stanislaus Council of Governments for statistics on traffic, land use and the community; the California Environmental Resources Evaluation System and Land Use Planning Information Network websites with links to research planning requirements and environmental law; assessor parcel maps to show property boundaries, zoning, and to calculate impacts; and newspaper articles for insight into local views and information concerning the project area. Public meeting reports created to document the attendance, issues presented, and input from the public and interested parties were used as well. Interviews were conducted with planners from the respective planning departments to obtain current planning information, and with property owners and local businessmen/women to assess needs and impacts, and to collect relevant project-related information.

3.6.1 Land Use, Planning, and Growth

Caltrans staff conducted studies to investigate impacts regarding the issues of land use, planning, and growth. Information was gathered throughout the analysis process from the Stanislaus County General Plan, the Salida Community Plan, and the City of Modesto Urban Area General Plan, along with their respective environmental impact

reports. Current maps, provided by both the city and the county, were used to show and confirm the planning concept for the project area.

3.6.1.1 Affected Environment

State Route 219 is located within the planning boundaries for three local planning entities: the City of Modesto, Stanislaus County, and Stanislaus County in coordination with the community of Salida. The northern boundary for the "Sphere of Influence" for the City of Modesto follows the State Route 219 alignment from State Route 108 to Dale Road and functions to define the limits of the planning jurisdiction of the City of Modesto. The land north of the route lies within the planning jurisdiction of the county; the land south of the route lies within the planning jurisdiction of the City of Modesto; land west of Dale Road (north and south of the route) lies within the jurisdiction of Stanislaus County in coordination with the community of Salida. Figures 1-5, 1-6, and 1-7 reflect the planning concept for the project area as seen by each planning entity.

The Stanislaus County General Plan designates the land use for most of the project area as Agriculture (A-2-40), with some Planned Development (P-D) and Planned Industrial (P-I) at the western and eastern ends of the project area (see land use map, Figure 1-6).

The Stanislaus County General Plan includes the Salida Community Plan. The community of Salida is located within the jurisdiction of Stanislaus County and encompasses the western third of the project area, north and south of the route. The land use planning designations for this area are Planned Industrial (P-I), with some Highway Commercial (H-C), Commercial (C), and Low Density Residential (LDR) (see Figure 1-7).

The Salida Community Plan acts as a vision and guide for land use implementation in the area and states that while "*recognizing the importance of agricultural lands, outward expansion of the community is predominantly directed toward the north and east in concert with the northward expansion of the City of Modesto."* Several projects within the Salida Community Plan boundary are examples showing implementation of the outward expansion of development: the new Gregory High School, the River Ranch plan, and a Kaiser hospital and medical complex. Two sites are being considered for the high school: one off Stoddard Road (approximately 32.37 hectares/80 acres) and the other off of Dale Road (44.50 hectares/110 acres). The River Ranch plan proposes to rezone over 809.37 hectares (2,000 acres) to

residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The plan encompasses all of the land between Sisk Road, Stoddard Road, Ladd Road, and State Route 219. A Kaiser medical complex is proposed just south of State Route 219, directly off of Dale Road. The complex would require about 16.19 hectares (40 acres) and would kick-off the planned Kiernan Business Park as defined in the Salida Community Plan and the Modesto Urban Area General Plan. At minimum, specific plans would be required to implement changes to the current agriculture designations as defined in the Stanislaus County General Plan. (On December 19, 2002, the Fifth Appellate District Court ruled against the adoption of the Salida Community Plan Update on the basis of several procedural errors. Per conversations with staff at the Stanislaus County Planning Department, it is unknown at this time how this ruling would affect planning for this area.)

The City of Modesto Urban Area General Plan is divided into Community Planning Districts. The General Planning Boundary for the City of Modesto extends north beyond the city's planning jurisdiction, north of State Route 219, representing a vision for the expansion of the city to the north. The land use designations for the Community Planning Districts along the north side of the route are Planned Commercial (P-C), Regional Commercial (R-C), Business Park (B-P), and Village Residential (V-R). Along the south side of the route, the designations are Planned Commercial (P-D), Planned Development (P-D), Business Park (P-P) and Village Residential (V-R) (see Figure 1-5).

The proposed project is consistent with the local transportation planning for the route as shown in the circulation element of both the Stanislaus County General Plan and the City of Modesto Urban Area General Plan. The City of Modesto defines the route as a six-lane expressway. Stanislaus County and the community of Salida classify the route as a highway/freeway, with the lane configuration to be determined by the jurisdictional agency for the roadway, which is Caltrans in this case. Both the City of Modesto and Stanislaus County have adopted resolutions to support the project and the project objectives (see Appendix C).

Planning decisions made for this project and the project area were in response to population statistics that showed rapid growth during the last 10 years and projections that indicated continued population migration into the area. Between 1990 and 2000, the county grew 20%; the cities of Modesto, Riverbank, and Oakdale grew 14%, 85.2% and 29.6%, respectively, while the community of Salida more than doubled. According to the Salida Community Plan Update, the community of Salida is

expected to meet its planned geographic size and projected population by 2015 or before.

The proposed project is intended to meet existing and projected traffic for the local area and the greater region, based on the local planned development and the projected population growth for the area. The project is supported by all of the local planning agencies. If State Route 219 is not improved before planned development builds up along the existing route, necessary future widening would be more costly with respect to impacts to the community and escalating construction costs (see Appendix C).

3.6.1.2 Impacts

Results from the environmental studies conducted show that there are no impacts from this project concerning consistency with local planning for the project area, or inducement of unplanned growth. Stanislaus County, the community of Salida, and the City of Modesto have planned for the improvement of State Route 219 and for development of the project area. Recent activity within the area proves that development is already occurring.

Furthermore, studies show that there are inherent factors that would restrict development along the route. (See the two growth inducement analyses located within the Community Impact Assessment prepared for this project.) Land under Williamson Act contract would be restricted to agricultural uses until Notices of Non-renewal are filed, triggering a required 10-year waiting period before the land could be developed. Necessary infrastructure such as water, sewer, electricity, and roads would take time to be developed. Planning policies currently restrict development until police and emergency response services are put into place. Future requests for new access would not be granted, per Caltrans and resolutions adopted by the City of Modesto and Stanislaus County (see Appendix C).

The project is consistent with planning for the area. No land use changes are proposed with this project, and there are inherent factors limiting the rate of growth along the route. Therefore, it has been determined that the project would not contribute to inducing growth within the project area.

3.6.1.3 Mitigation

No mitigation would be required.

3.6.2 Traffic

Traffic studies were conducted for this project in the spring of 2000, with a subsequent update to the studies in the fall of 2002 to include analysis of the access alternatives proposed at the Stanislaus Union Elementary School.

The studies included collection of data along the route and at the intersections of State Route 219 with 15 local roads. The analyses considered traffic volumes, level of service, traffic delay at intersections, signal timing along the route, and traffic forecasting for 2006 and 2026.

3.6.2.1 Affected Environment

Analysis of the project area identified current traffic patterns that reflect the movement of traffic between State Route 99 and locations to the north and northeast, where the cities of Riverbank and Oakdale are located. Traffic patterns also show traffic traveling between State Route 99 and locations to the south and southeast, where traffic is traveling from Modesto or along the eastern side of Modesto. Traffic traveling along the State Route 219 corridor appears to be using the roadway to access State Route 99 for destinations north and south of the region while avoiding congested traffic conditions within the City of Modesto.

Currently, 15 roads intersect the highway. The most heavily used roads allowing traffic access to and from the route are Sisk Road, Dale Road, Carver Road, Tully Road, McHenry Avenue, and Claribell Road.

3.6.2.2 Impacts

The proposed project is expected to improve conditions for the identified current and future traffic. Improvement of the roadway would increase accessibility for emergency service vehicles such as ambulances, fire trucks and law enforcement vehicles.

All access to properties next to the existing roadway would continue with the proposed project. Access conditions for entering and exiting properties would be improved due to the construction of wider shoulders and additional area to the outside of the roadway that could be used for motorists to pull safely in and out of the traffic flow. Both the City of Modesto and Stanislaus County, along with Caltrans, have agreed that no future requests for new access would be granted (see Appendix C).

It has also been agreed upon between the city, county and Caltrans that left-turns would be prohibited from driveways. Left-turns and U-turns would be allowed only at controlled intersections to provide for safer traffic conditions.

A temporary left-turn lane would be provided at the intersection of State Route 219 and Pentecost Way to allow left turns for eastbound traffic on State Route 219 to Pentecost Way. This left turn would be eliminated after the Pentecost development gets access from State Route 108 (McHenry Avenue). Traffic entering State Route 219 from Pentecost Way would be allowed right turns only.

The proposed access alternatives at the Stanislaus Union Elementary School include a signal in front of the school. Refer to Appendix A Access Alternatives for a description of the access alternatives. The new access alternatives proposed for the school would create safer entering and exiting the property for students, parents, and school employees.

3.6.2.3 Construction impacts

Traffic circulation could be affected during construction of this project. A Traffic Management Plan would be required to direct traffic around activities during construction to minimize potential impacts.

3.6.2.4 Mitigation

No mitigation is required.

3.6.3 Environmental Justice

This project has been developed in accordance with Executive Order 12898, which requires all "*federal actions to address environmental justice in minority populations and low-income populations.*" The Executive Order directs federal agencies to take the appropriate and necessary steps to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse effects of federal or federally funded projects on the health or environment of minority and low-income populations to the greatest extent possible.

3.6.3.1 Affected Environment

State Route 219 crosses the boundaries of five census tracts. The data collected by the Census Bureau within these tracts have been used to identify minority and low-income populations within the project area. The 2000 Census block data within the project area were compared to the 2000 Census data of the County of Stanislaus and

City of Modesto. Population statistics showing race, population numbers, and low income percentages are shown in Figures 3.3 and 3.4.

3.6.3.2 Impact

The comparison between racial groups within the census blocks within the project area and Stanislaus County and the City of Modesto showed no appreciable difference between the project area and the county and the city. The results of the analysis comparing minority populations is shown in Figure 3.3 Summary Comparison of Minority Populations.

The same comparison was done for households above and below poverty level (the 2000 Census information has placed the poverty line at a yearly income of $17,050 for a family of four). The income information comparing the census blocks within the project area to Stanislaus County and the City of Modesto again showed no appreciable difference between the project area and the county and the city. These results are shown in Figure 3.4 Summary Comparison of Low-Income Populations.

Based on the analysis, none of the proposed build alternatives would cause disproportionately high and adverse effects on any minority or low-income populations as discussed in Executive Order 12898 regarding environmental justice.

3.6.3.3 Mitigation

No mitigation is required.

3.6.4 Relocation

Caltrans right-of-way staff conducted a Draft Relocation Impact Study that looked at 97 properties within the project area to identify residential and non-residential units that would potentially need Relocation Assistance Program services (see Appendix E).

All relocated households, businesses, farms and non-profit organizations would receive fair treatment as required by law and according to the Relocation Assistance Program as specified under Public Law 91-646, Uniform Relocation Assistance, and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended. The Relocation Assistance Program was developed to help displaced individuals move with as little inconvenience and expense as possible. Caltrans would strictly comply with all rights and services provided under Public Law 91-646, Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policy Act of 1970. Caltrans relocation programs are

sensitive to the special needs of the handicapped, elderly, and other special groups (non-English speaking people) to ensure that their relocation needs are met.

Programs implemented by Caltrans to meet special needs include the following: bilingual brochures on relocation services, interpreters, determination of people's needs and preferences through interview with displaced individuals, transportation services for those who do not own personal transportation or who cannot drive, information on other state and federal assistance programs, and counseling to minimize hardships.

The Fair Housing Law (Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968) sets forth the policy of the federal government to provide, within constitutional limitations, for fair housing throughout the United States. This act and later acts and amendments make discriminatory practices in the purchase and rental of most residential units illegal if based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap. Caltrans has similar directives against discrimination in its Director's Title VI Policy Statement (Appendix E).

3.6.4.1 Affected Environment

The project area consists of a mix of residential homes, mobile homes, and businesses. Table 3.4 shows a summary of the type and number of units that have the potential to be displaced by each of the proposed alternatives. Alternative 1 has the potential to displace 23 units. Alternative 2 could displace 36 units. The no-build alternative has no relocation impacts and, therefore, would not require relocation services.

3.6.4.2 Impacts

Investigation results indicate that there are sufficient and adequate resources for each potential displacee within the geographical limits as required in the Relocation Assistance Program. Displacement neighborhoods and relocation areas are comparable with current conditions in terms of amenities, public utilities, and accessibility to public services, transportation and shopping. The identified relocation resources are affordable to displacees given the use of the Relocation Assistance Program supplemental housing and rental payments.

COMPARISON OF MINORITY POPULATIONS

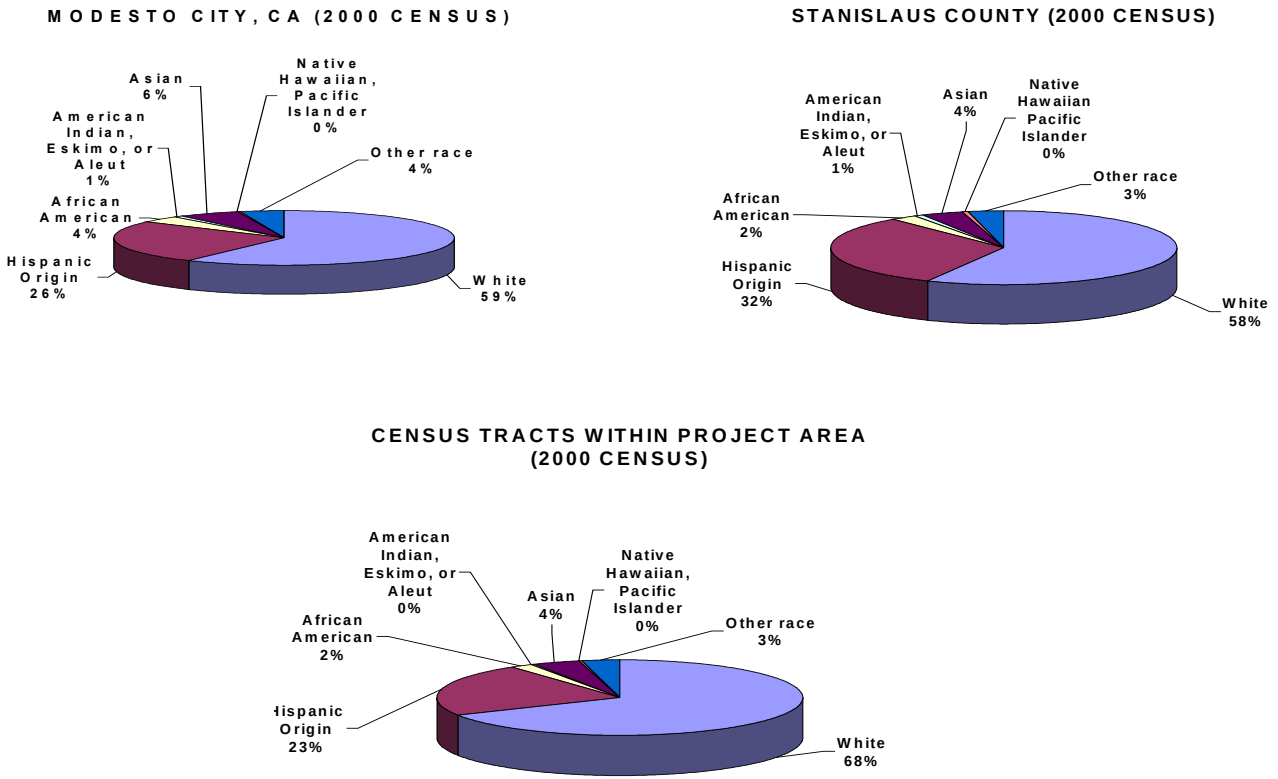

Figure 3-3 Comparison of Minority Populations

*Census Tracts used to compile data: 4.02, 5.01, 5.04, 5.05, 5.06.

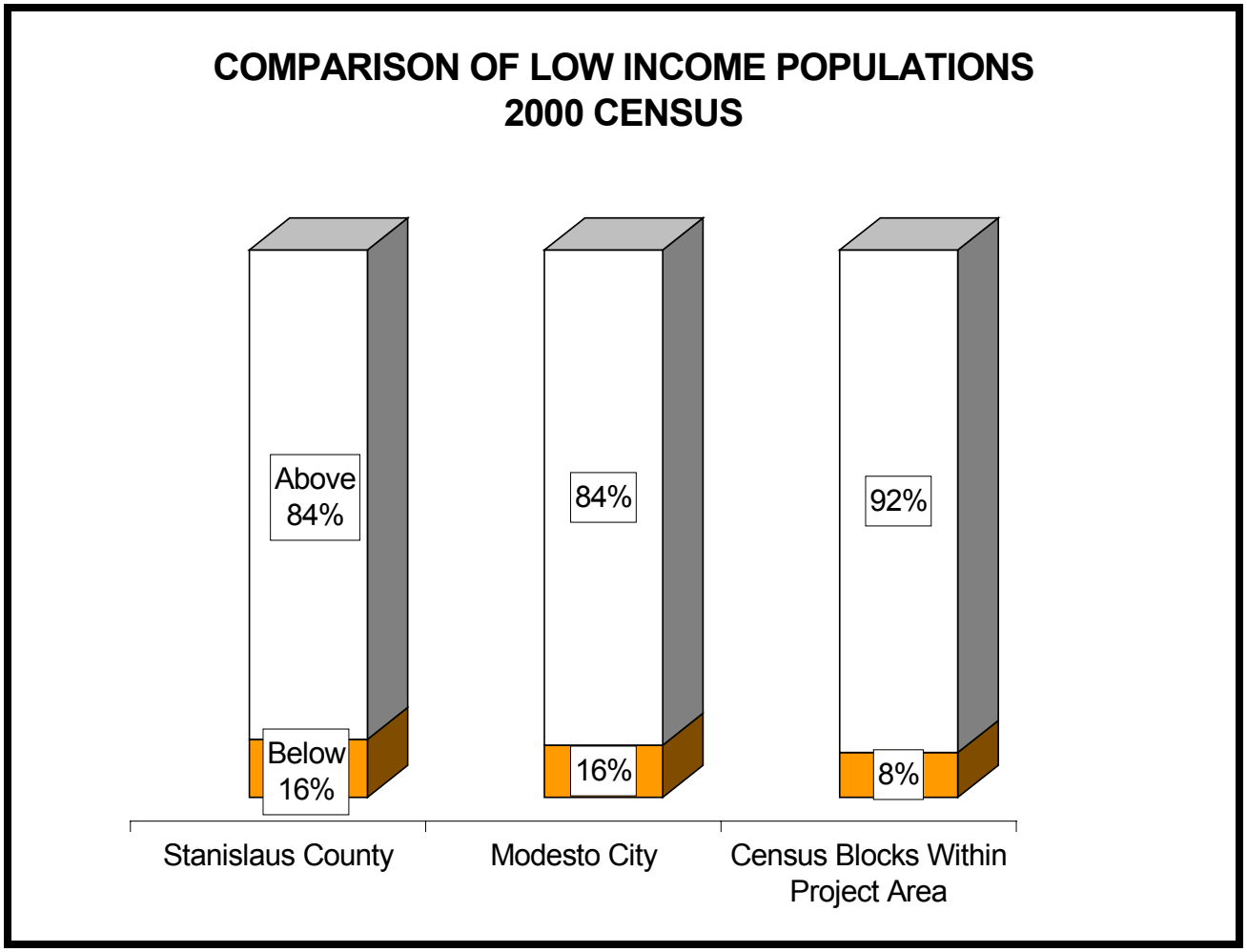

Figure 3-4 Comparison of Low Income Populations

*Census Tracts used to compile data: 4.02, 5.01, 5.04, 5.05, 5.06.

Caltrans has determined that the implementation of the Relocation Assistance Program and the availability of the replacement housing would minimize negative effects, as required by law.

Table 3.4 Summary of Units Displaced

Type of Units Affected	No Action	Alternative 1 Widen North	Alternative 2 Widen Symmetrically
Residential Owners	0	9	11
Residential Tenants	0	6	14
Mobile Homes	0	1	2
Nonprofit	0	0	0
Commercial	0	5	8
Industrial	0	1	0
Agricultural	0	1	1
Total Units	**0**	**23**	**36**
*Total Households	0	16	27
**Total Persons	0	48	81

Notes: Unit = A person or persons qualifying for Relocation Assistance Program services.
**Total Households = (# of Residential Owners) + (# of Residential Tenants) + (# of Mobile Homes).*
***Total Persons = (# of Households) x (2.99 Persons).*

3.6.4.3 Mitigation

No further mitigation is required.

3.6.5 Farmland and Williamson Act Land

Properties within the project area were evaluated to identify impacts to farmland and any farmland under Williamson Act contract pursuant to the Farmland Protection Policy Act (7 USC 4201-4209) and the California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (Williamson Act) (CGC 51290-51295), and local farmland protection policies.

Calculations estimated the amount of farmland proposed for acquisition, using preliminary engineering design showing all properties adjacent to the proposed project. Estimate numbers for land acquisition are therefore high due to the preliminary state of the design for the project. Stanislaus County zoning designations were used to identify properties designated “agriculture.” All properties zoned agriculture are considered farmland for the purposes of this report. Pursuant to the Farmland Protection Policy Act, the Natural Resources Conservation Service has

developed criteria that Caltrans uses for evaluating projects with respect to impacts to the conversion of prime farmland. The Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form–AD 1006 is used for this purpose. In consultation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, a Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form–AD 1006 was prepared and used to analyze both the quality and quantity of the land proposed for acquisition. A map from the Stanislaus County Planning Department was used to identify parcels under Williamson Act contract. Additionally, public comment has been considered as part of the assessment process.

3.6.5.1 Affected Environment

Historically, farming has been central to the political, social, and economic development of the Modesto region and the greater San Joaquin Valley. Long sunny days and an abundance of water and fertile soil combine to provide for some of the best conditions for agriculture in the world. Farming in this region developed as early as the 1830s along the major rivers that act as natural boundaries for the farming region where the project area is located. As farming developed, so did methods for transporting and preserving products from the local area. As a result, during the early 1900s until the present day, Modesto has taken a leading role in the food processing industry within the San Joaquin Valley.

Today, farming is still practiced on approximately 50% of the land where the project is located. The major crops grown in the area are walnuts, almonds and grapes. The area also produces milk and alfalfa from dairy farming. However, land within the project area is projected to continue to develop into urban land uses as Modesto grows to the north and the community of Salida expands east.

Currently, the Modesto City Urban Area General Plan shows the project located within the region designated as "Planned Urbanizing Area" and within the boundary defined for urban use. The adopted policies concerning farmland for this area discuss supporting "*the continuation of agricultural operations as long as possible, until urban development plans are approved.*"

Stanislaus County policies regarding farmland are clear concerning their commitment to protecting agricultural land within the county. All of the land within the project area, and more specifically adjacent to the route (except for one parcel), are currently within the jurisdiction of Stanislaus County. The Stanislaus County General Plan has zoned approximately 75% of this land for agriculture, with the remaining 25% for development. However, other jurisdictional planning has concurrently designated

two-thirds of the county-zoned agricultural land for future development: one-third of the land lies within the sphere of influence of the City of Modesto and is designated as Urban Transition (U-T) for future development; the other one-third lies within the planning boundaries set for the community of Salida and envisioned as Planned Development (P-D) and Planned Industrial (P-I) (see section 3.6.1 Land Use, Planning, and Growth).

The intent for the land use designation of Urban Transition (U-T) in the Stanislaus County General Plan is *"to ensure that land remains in agricultural usage until urban development, consistent with a city's (or unincorporated community's) general plan designation is approved."* The intent for the land designations of Planned Development (P-D) and Planned Industrial (P-I) in the Salida area, as reported in the Salida Community Plan and as adopted by Stanislaus County in August 2000, is that while "*recognizing the importance of agricultural lands, outward expansion of the community is predominantly directed toward the north and east in concert with the northward expansion of the City of Modesto."*

Within the project area, 71 properties adjacent to the route are zoned as agriculture, with two-thirds of this land planned for urban use as previously described. All of the agricultural land in the project area is considered prime farmland, as defined by the Farmland Protection Policy Act as, "*land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, fiber, forage, oilseed, and other agricultural crops with minimum inputs of fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, and labor, and without intolerable soil erosion, as determined by the Secretary. Prime farmland includes land that possesses the above characteristics but is being used currently to produce livestock and timber. It does not include land already in or committed to urban development or water storage."*

Seventeen of the parcels designated for agriculture are enrolled in Williamson Act contracts, with two parcels having submitted "Notices of Non-renewal." The Williamson Act contract is designed to preserve farmland by offering a property tax reduction incentive to property owners who enter their land into a Williamson Act contract. To further provide that the land remain farmland, the act requires property owners to submit a "Notice of Non-renewal" and then wait a required 10-year period before the land is eligible to be used for purposes other than agriculture. However, property purchased for this project would not be required to wait the typical 10-year period because this project complies with sections of the act that determine the contracts null and void upon acquisition of the property. Only that land required for

the project would be taken out of contract. All remaining land would still be subject to the terms of its original contract.

The proposed project lies within the agricultural preserve defined as "all land designated farmland within Stanislaus County," as designated by Stanislaus County, the local governing body responsible for administration within the preserve.

3.6.5.2 Impacts

Both of the proposed build alternatives would require the acquisition of prime farmland and farmland enrolled in Williamson Act contract (see Table 3.5). The proposed project would be directly converting 28.30 hectares (70 acres) of farmland, which is less than one-half of a percent of the total farmland in Stanislaus County.

Table 3.5 Potential Acquisition of Farmland and Williamson Act Land

Land for Potential Acquisition	*No Build Alternative*	*Alternative-1 (Widen North)*	*Alternative-2 [1] (Widen Symmetrically)*
Farmland	*0*	*28.5 hectares (70.55 acres)*	*13.29 hectares (32.84 acres)*
Williamson Act Land	*0*	*14.88 hectares (36.76 acres)*	*4.48 hectares (11.07 acres)*
-Contracted	*0*	*10.43 hectares (25.78 acres)*	*1.17 hectares (2.88 acres)*
-Notice of Non-renewal	*0*	*4.44 hectares (10.98 acres)*	*1.17 hectares (2.88 acres)*

** All numbers are preliminary and are conservatively high estimates*
[1] The numbers for Alternative-2 do not include land that would be required for the ultimate six-lane facility.

The analysis to calculate the amount of land required for acquisition also looked at the remaining size of the parcel and the percentage of the parcel left following construction of the project. Results from the analysis show that the project would require a small percentage of land from each parcel, that most of the remaining land would be sufficient enough for current uses to continue and that, for a majority of the parcels, 90% or greater of the original parcel size would remain.

California Government Code, Section 51290(a), states: "*It is the policy of the state to avoid, whenever practicable, the location of any federal, state, or local public improvements and any improvements of public utilities and the acquisition of land therefore, in agricultural preserves.*" Both build alternatives propose to acquire land that is currently enrolled in Williamson Act contracts (see Table 3.5). However, there is no other land outside the preserve to feasibly relocate the project. It was also determined in the formal notification to the Department of Conservation that this project is considered exempt from making the findings required in Government Code, Section 51292, per 51293(f), as the project meets the requirements of being a State

Highway as described in Sections 301 to 622, inclusive of the Streets and Highways Code as those sections read on October 1, 1965.

A Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form was used to identify potential impacts to farmland for this project. The form requires an evaluation of issues, such as the feasibility of farming the land, the relationship of the land to urban development, and the current and future use of farmland in the project area. A project scoring 160 points or above out of a possible 260 must consider alternatives that avoid or minimize farmland impacts. Scores below 160 are not considered to have a significant impact on farmland. If an agency completing the form determines a rating below 60 points, the form is not submitted to the Natural Resources Conservation Service for further scoring because the total score would not add up to the 160 threshold of significance. For this project, Alternative 1 scored a 44 and Alternative 2 scored 40; both scores are well below 60, and therefore have not been submitted to the Natural Resources Conservation Service for further processing.

Additionally, the Farmland Protection Policy Act and rulings from the Natural Resources Conservation Service frequently state throughout the regulations that "*if a state or local government has, by planning or zoning, designated the use of any tract of prime farmland for commercial or industrial use or residential use*" … "*this action has thereby 'committed' such land to 'urban development,' even though it may not currently be in urban uses*." Rulings from the Natural Resources Conservation Service also state, "*The Act, in defining 'farmland' in section 1540(c)(1), states that 'land already in or committed to urban development or water storage' is not 'prime farmland' for purposes of the Act. This means that an agency need not consider the impact of the project on prime farmland which is either 'already in' urban development or 'committed to urban development'*."

For this project, all local government planning agencies have designated State Route 219 for improvement to a larger facility (see land use mapping, Figures 1-5, 1-6 and 1-7). Additionally, greater than two-thirds of the land next to the project, currently zoned as agriculture, is planned for future development. The project is in agreement with all of the local planning for the project area. Therefore, according to the Farmland Protection Policy Act, because the route is designated to be improved by all planning agencies and most of the land is currently planned for future development, the land should not be considered as "prime" farmland because the local planning agencies have committed the land to urban development.

Concern has been expressed about the ability for farm equipment to continue to function throughout the project area after construction of the proposed project. The improvements proposed for State Route 219 actually provide a safer environment for farm equipment. The project would add wider shoulders and a clear recovery zone to the outside of the travel lanes and add a wider median with no obstructions so farm equipment could maneuver safely and more effectively. The wider roadbed and additional lanes would provide more space for slow-moving equipment to operate, thereby, reducing the potential for vehicles to back-up, which could cause delays and accidents.

Based on the findings listed below, Caltrans determined there would be no substantial impact to farmland resulting from the construction of the proposed project:

- The project scored below the 160-point threshold of significance required by the Farmland Protection Policy Act and the Natural Resource Conservation Service.
- The route is designated for improvement by all jurisdictional planning agencies.
- The land is "committed to urban development" and therefore not considered "prime" farmland, as determined by the Farmland Protection Policy Act and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- The project would require a low percentage of farmland as compared to the total farmland within Stanislaus County.

3.6.5.3 Mitigation

No mitigation is required.

3.7 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

During the environmental studies process, consideration was given to include a non-motorized facility for bicycle travel with this project. The Caltrans Highway Design Manual allows for three types of facilities:

1. CLASS I Bikeway (Bike Path): Provides completely separate right-of-way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with cross-flow minimized.

2. CLASS II Bikeway (Bike Lane): Provides a striped lane for one-way bike travel on a street or highway.

3. CLASS III Bikeway (Bike Route): Provides for shared use with pedestrian or motor vehicle traffic.

It was decided that for this project a CLASS II bike lane would be striped to share the shoulder along the south side of the proposed roadway. It was also decided that a CLASS I bike path would be considered if the route is upgraded to expressway standards in the future.

3.7.1.1 Affected Environment

The existing roadway does not provide for bicycle use. However, the Modesto Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan and the StanCOG Regional Bicycle Action Plan show a planned Class I bike path along State Route 219.

3.7.1.2 Impacts

There would be no negative impacts.

3.7.1.3 Mitigation

No mitigation would be required.

3.8 Historic and Archaeological Resources

Caltrans archaeologist and architectural historian staff studied the project area to determine impacts to archaeological, Native American, historical, and architectural resources. The archaeologist records studies conducted for archaeological, Native American, and historical resources in a document titled the Archaeology Survey Report. The architectural historian documents the studies conducted for architectural resources in a document titled the Historic Architecture Survey Report. Both documents are combined into one document titled the Historic Property Survey Report and sent to the State Historic Preservation Officer for concurrence on the studies conducted and findings made. Because the Archaeology Survey Report found no impacts to resources resulting from the construction of the proposed project, the remainder of the discussion in this chapter will focus on the findings in the Historic Property Survey Report.

Within the boundaries of the study area, 36 properties were evaluated for their potential eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places and for their potential as historical resources for the purposes of CEQA. Only one of the evaluated properties, the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church, at 2172 Kiernan Avenue (Map Reference #20 in the Historic Architectural Survey Report), has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. This property also qualifies as a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA in accordance with

Section 15064.5(a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code.

The State Historic Preservation Officer has concurred with the recommendation that the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church building, originally the Salida Seventh Day Adventist Church, qualifies for the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C as an example of non-residential architecture on the local level of significance representing the period of significance from 1912 to 1915. See Appendix F for the State Historic Preservation Officer concurrence letter with the finding of national register eligibility.

3.8.1 Affected Environment

The Area of Potential Effects was defined in consultation with the Federal Highway Administration. The archaeological Area of Potential Effects extends along State Route 219 from State Route 99 to State Route 108, and includes both existing Caltrans right-of-way and additional proposed right-of-way. The width of the archaeological Area of Potential Effects varies considerably, but generally does not exceed more than 45 meters (148 feet) from the existing centerline. Exceptions can be found at the 12 intersections, four proposed drainage basin locations, and one proposed staging location in the project area, where the archaeological Area of Potential Effects extends to as much as 180 meters (591 feet) from the existing centerline.

The architectural Area of Potential Effects is larger than the archaeological Area of Potential Effects in most areas, generally extending to at least 60 meters (197 feet) from the existing centerline and encompassing the first row of properties next to the existing roadway.

3.8.2 Impacts

The Federal Highway Administration in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer has determined that the proposed project would have no adverse effect on the historic property — the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church. The Finding of Effect is a conditional finding that proposes an Environmentally Sensitive Area be defined and maintained during construction of the project. A copy of the letter from with the State Historic Preservation Officer noting concurrence with the Finding of Effect is located in Appendix F.

In the same letter, the State Historic Preservation Officer has also concurred with the determination that there were no archaeological sites found within the Area of Potential Effects for this project (see letter in Appendix F).

3.8.3 Construction Impacts

Due to a potential for the historic landscaping at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church to be affected during construction, the State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with the recommendation for an Environmentally Sensitive Area to be defined and maintained along the front of the church property during construction of the project. The function of the Environmentally Sensitive Area is to provide temporary protection for the historic landscaping from potential impacts that could occur during construction of the project. Special provisions would be drafted following approval of the final environmental document to be included in the Plans, Specifications & Estimates package for the contractor to carry out the specified work as prescribed during the construction phase of the project.

A Traffic Management Plan is mandatory for all projects and would include temporary alternatives to access properties along the route during construction.

3.8.4 Mitigation

No mitigation would be required.

3.9 Cumulative Impacts

According to CEQA, cumulative impacts result from the "incremental consequences of an action when added to other past and reasonably foreseeable future actions" (40 CFR 1508.7). Cumulative impacts need to be addressed if the project's impact on a resource, combined with impacts from other projects on that resource, may be determined to be significant. Projects not affecting a resource after mitigation cannot be considered to affect that resource cumulatively.

3.10 Proposed Development

Several projects are planned in the project area. Stanislaus County Public Works is planning to upgrade the intersection of State Route 219 and Stoddard Road by installing a traffic signal. A new high school is proposed, Gregory High School, with two sites under consideration: one on Stoddard Road (approximately 32.37 hectares

or 80 acres) and the other on Dale Road (approximately 44.5 hectares or 110 acres). The River Ranch plan proposes to rezone over 809.37 hectares (2,000 acres) to residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The plan encompasses all of the land between Sisk Road, Stoddard Road, Ladd Road, and State Route 219. A Kaiser medical complex is proposed just south of State Route 219, directly off of Dale Road. The complex would require about 16.20 hectares (40 acres) and would kick-off the planned Kiernan Business Park as defined in the Salida Community Plan and the Modesto Urban Area General Plan. The City of Modesto is preparing an update to its general plan to include the proposed planning from the recently adopted (2000) Salida Community Plan, and Stanislaus County is preparing to update its general plan. (On December 19, 2002, the Fifth Appellate District Court ruled against the adoption of the Salida Community Plan Update on the basis of several procedural errors. Per conversations with staff at the Stanislaus County Planning Department, it is unknown at this time how this ruling would affect planning for this area.)

Other state highway improvement projects are also planned in the area. A project to widen State Route 108 from State Route 219 to Oak Avenue in the city of Oakdale is in the planning stages. This project would relieve congestion along State Route 108, targeting congested areas within the cities of Riverbank and Oakdale. Another project proposes to upgrade the interchange of State Route 99 at Pelandale Avenue.

3.10.1 Findings

Other sections of this document have discussed how certain aspects of the proposed project would not lead to cumulative impacts. Section 3.6.1 Land Use, Planning and Growth discusses how this project would not influence growth beyond what is currently planned and discusses the limiting factors to growth in the project area. Section 3.6.5 Farmland and Williamson Act Land discusses how requirements of federal and state laws and use of the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form demonstrate that this project would have no impacts to farmland or Williamson Act Land. Section 3.4 Noise discusses increased traffic noise and how the effects are not substantial. Section 3.6.4 Relocation discusses how implementation of the Caltrans Relocation Assistance Program minimizes these effects as required by law.

Overall, results from the analysis conducted for this project show that the incremental effects of the proposed project, combined with the effects of past, current and probable future projects, are not cumulatively considerable for this project.

Chapter 4 Consultation and Coordination

4.1 Contacts

The following is a list of the contacts made with federal and state agencies, other organizations, and the public that occurred during the environmental study process and the preparation of the environmental document. All comments received from the public and other agencies during preparation of the first environmental document for this project have been considered in the preparation of this document.

4.1.1 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Caltrans initiated informal consultation by phone with Greg Van Stralen, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist, to obtain concurrence that there would be no adverse effects to any Species of Concern or Threatened or Endangered Species as a result of the project.

4.1.2 California Department of Fish and Game

Caltrans initiated several discussions (informally) with Mike Mulligan, Environmental Specialist IV for the California Department of Fish and Game, to negotiate requirements for a 1601 Streambed Alteration Agreement because of project activities near a concrete-lined canal and to discuss considerations for Swainson's hawk, burrowing owls, and the San Joaquin kit fox. A 1601 agreement will not be needed for this project. Pre-construction surveys for the above listed species, however, would be done.

4.1.3 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Kathy Norton, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District Engineer, was contacted to discuss the concrete-lined canal and the necessity for a Nationwide Permit #14.

4.1.4 State Historic Preservation Officer

The Federal Highway Administration consulted with the State Historic Preservation Officer for concurrence defining the boundaries of the Area of Potential Effects, approving the methodologies used to develop the inventory of properties in the Historic Property Survey Report, and regarding the National Register of Historic Places eligibility of resources within the Area of Potential Effects.

4.1.5 Stanislaus Council of Governments, City of Modesto Planning Department, Stanislaus County Public Works Department, Stanislaus Union School District

Representatives from each of these agencies have been continuous members of the Project Development Team: Debra Whitmore from the Stanislaus Council of Governments; Rich Ulm and Dean Phillips from the City of Modesto; David Myers and Chuck Barnes from the Stanislaus County Public Works Department; and Andy Schindler (12/14/99), Roger Frazer, Kathleen Boomer and Steve Betando (one or more of these people attended the Project Development Team meetings since 12/14/99) from the Stanislaus Union School District.

4.1.6 Modesto Irrigation District

Representative Russell Cardoza from the Modesto Irrigation District attended several Project Development Team meetings and gave comments regarding agency concerns.

4.1.7 Stanislaus Union School District

Representatives from the Stanislaus Union School District have continuously attended Project Development Team meetings. Andy Schindler, Roger Frazer, Kathleen Boomer and Steve Betando have provided valuable information concerning the issues of access and noise improvements at the Stanislaus Union Elementary School. Additionally, Caltrans has met, on numerous occasions between January 2001 and May 2002, with the Superintendent Kathleen Boomer and the Stanislaus Union School District Board to present access design options and to obtain input from the school district.

The following list is a compilation of meeting dates to show the level of coordination that has occurred with the Stanislaus Union School District to resolve issues at the school. Additional meetings occurred to resolve issues concerning the school that are not included in this list.

- 12/14/99—Project Development Team meeting first attended by Stanislaus Union School District representatives.
- 10/04/00—Project Development Team meeting.
- 01/16/01—Project Development Team meeting first attended by Kathleen Boomer.
- 04/10/01—Design assigned task to provide design drawings of access alternatives for the following Project Development Team meeting.

- 06/19/01—Project Development Team meeting where Design and Kathleen Boomer discussed details to make additions to design alternatives for access at the elementary school.
- 07/19/01—Meeting in Kathleen Boomer's office to present the first two alternatives for access at the school.
- 08/09/01—Meeting to review design details of two access alternatives.
- 08/13/01—Presentation to Stanislaus Union School District Board of two alternatives to provide access to the school.
- 11/02/01—Meeting to discuss school issues.
- 11/07/01—Meeting with California Highway Patrol to discuss proposed school access alternatives and safety at the school.
- 12/03/01—Meeting at Stanislaus Union Elementary School site to review access issues.
- 01/09/02—Project Development Team meeting.
- 01/17/02—Meeting to discuss Stanislaus School District access issues.
- 01/23/02—Public Hearing.
- 02/22/02—Review public comments to the environmental document and school access issues.
- 03/06/02—Review access alternatives (A-F) to prepare for presentation to Stanislaus Union School District Board.
- 03/08/02—Meeting with Stanislaus County Planning Department to discuss zoning issue at school, where adjacent property owner would agree to sell land for a Carver Road access to school if the County would rezone his property.
- 03/13/02—Project Development Team meeting to identify Preferred Alternative.
- 03/27/02—Meeting to discuss property acquisition and Carver Road access issue with adjacent property owner.
- 04/28/02—Presentation to Stanislaus Union School District Board of most recent alternatives proposed to provide access to the school.
- 05/15/02—Meeting with the Stanislaus County Planning Department to discuss county access issues.
- 05/29/02—Project Development Team meeting including Caltrans upper management, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Stanislaus Union School District to finalize school issues.
- 07/10/02—Special session of the school board to discuss the proposed alternatives.

- 08/19/02—Open meeting with the school board to answer project-specific questions.
- 08/22/02—Meeting to discuss lawsuit filed by the school district.
- 9/17/02—Special session with the school board to further discuss the proposed access alternatives.
- 11/22/02—Project Development Team meeting to discuss the status of the project. Reverend Grace Simon from the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church mentioned that the service schedule at the church has changed to year-round service.

4.1.8 Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church

Several members from the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church attended most of the Project Development Team meetings held for this project. They discussed their concerns about safe access to their property and increased noise. Michael Normoyle, an environmental attorney retained by the Fellowship, attended two of these meetings.

4.2 Public Information Meeting

A public information meeting/open house was held on May 3, 2000, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Stanislaus Union Elementary School, located within the project area. The purpose of the meeting was to acquaint attendees with the proposed alternatives and to get their input.

Information stations containing project maps, graphics, and display boards were located around the room. Caltrans staff and representatives from the Federal Highway Administration, Stanislaus Council of Governments, and the Stanislaus County Planning Department were present to answer questions and receive public input. Attendees were encouraged to write and submit written comments at the public comment station.

Approximately 126 residents and interested parties attended the meeting. Written comments were received from 49 attendees during or following the meeting. Comments from the meeting reflected concerns about the loss of farmland, the loss of real property, noise and access issues relating to the Stanislaus Union Elementary School, noise and access issues involving the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church and suggestions to develop Hammet Road between State Route 99 and McHenry Avenue.

Table 4.1 Summary of Comments shows the total number of comment cards addressing each of the above-mentioned concerns.

Table 4.1 Summary of Comments from May 2000 Public Information Meeting

Concerns	Number of Comments
Loss of Agricultural Land	3
Loss of Real Property	3
School Safety and Noise	5
Hammett Road Suggestions	10
Church Access and Noise	18
Indicated a preference for Alternative 1	9
Indicated a preference for Alternative 2	2
Indicated that neither alternative was acceptable	3
Indicated a preference for the "no build" option	2
TOTAL	55

Note: Written comments were received from 49 attendees during or following the meeting. Several attendee commented on more than one concern.

4.3 Public Hearing (January 23, 2002)

Caltrans held a Public Hearing for the State Route 219 Widening Project on Wednesday, January 23, 2002, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Stanislaus Union Elementary School. The purpose of the meeting was to update the public with engineering, environmental, and right-of-way information, provide copies of the draft environmental document prepared for the project, and obtain public input concerning the project and the draft environmental document. The comments collected at this meeting and collected during the draft environmental document circulation period have been considered in this document.

Caltrans announced the hearing by sending copies of the Public Notice to property owners and businesses within the project area, sending invitation letters to public agencies and elected officials, and publishing the Public Notice in *The Modesto Bee*, *The Riverbank Advisor*, *El Sol*, *The Record*, *The Union Democrat*, *and The Calaveras Enterprise* newspapers.

Caltrans used an open house format for the Public Hearing, whereby the public was invited to attend at any time during the four-hour period. Upon arriving, attendees were asked to sign-in so an attendance record could be maintained and to ensure all interested parties would be added to the project mailing list. Each attendee received an information sheet with a project map showing the limits of the project and its location. Attendees were asked to visit the information stations located around the

room and to view maps, graphic and display boards. Caltrans Project Development Team staff were available at various stations to explain the displays, answer questions, and receive public input. A court reporter was also available to take public comments. Attendees were encouraged to submit written comments on forms provided at the Public Comment station, mail them to Caltrans at a later date, or submit comments to the court reporter at the Public Hearing.

Approximately 191 people attended the hearing, with 20 people submitting comments to the court reporter and 122 people submitting comment cards, emails and letters commenting on the project and the environmental document. Figure 4.1 Summary of Comments provides a pie chart that shows the issues that were raised by the public.

The Public Hearing Report contains copies of all comments received during the public circulation period for the draft environmental document.

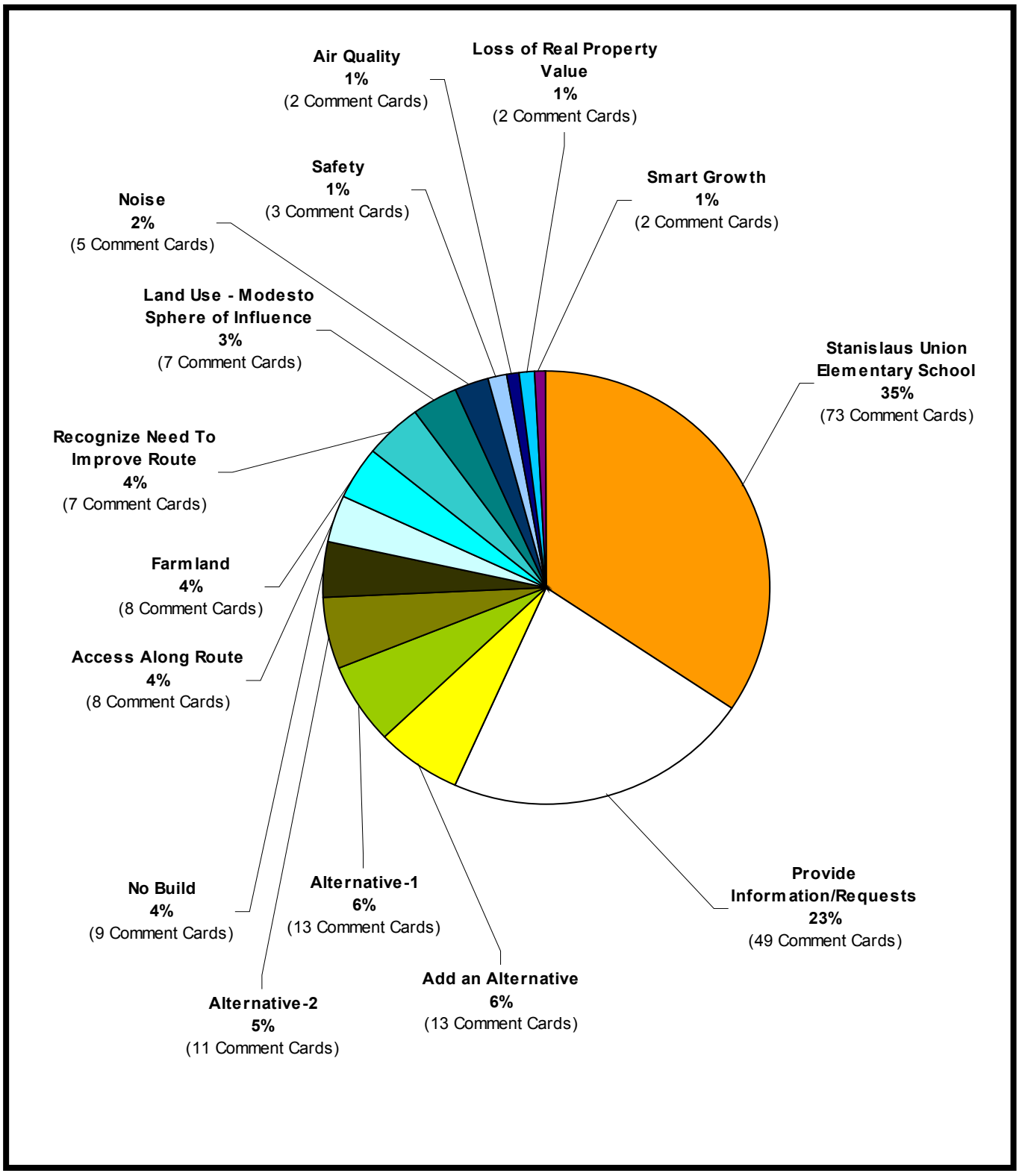

Figure 4.1 Summary of Comments.

The information displayed in the above chart shows a summary of the comments received from the public following a Public Hearing held on January 23, 2002. One hundred and twenty two (122) comment cards, emails, letters, and comments provided to a court reporter were submitted. Some cards had more than one comment. Five letters from agencies commenting on the draft Environmental Document are not represented in this chart. The comment cards submitted by the public were analyzed and individual comments were placed into issue categories. The chart above shows the comment categories, the number of comments made for each category, and percentage of comments in each category compared to the total number of comments (212 comments).

Chapter 5 List of Preparers

This Environmental Assessment/Initial Study and the supporting technical reports and analysis were prepared by the following individuals at Caltrans.

Jim Andrews, Senior Transportation Engineer with 15 years experience working for Caltrans. B.S. and M.S. in Engineering from California State University, Sacramento. Contribution: Conducted oversight for the Caltrans noise study and for the study conducted by Jones and Stokes Associates.

Robert Baca, Assistant Hydraulics Engineer with 2 years environmental impact assessment with Caltrans. B.S. degree in Civil Engineering from Brigham Young University and a M.S. degree in Civil Engineering from Colorado State University. Contribution: Location Hydraulic Study.

Louis Birdwell, Associate Right-of-Way Agent with 10 years experience as a Land and Environmental Agent and 15 years experience as a Right-of-Way Agent with Caltrans. B.A. in Finance from Texas Tech University. Contribution: Oversight on the Draft Relocation Impact Study.

Paula Bogosian, Associate Environmental Planner (Architectural History) with 7 years experience working as an Architectural Historian for Caltrans and 32 years additional experience working as an Architectural Historian. B.A. in Art History from the University of California, Berkeley and a M.S. in Community Development from the University of California, Davis. Contribution: Historic Architectural Survey Report.

Rajinder Brar, Environmental Planner (Hazardous Waste Specialist) with 12 years experience. M.S. degree in Environmental Sciences from California State University, Fullerton and an M.S. degree in Agricultural Sciences from Punjab Agricultural University. Contribution: Hazardous Waste Report.

Abdulrahim N. Chafi, Transportation Engineer (Air Quality and Noise Specialist) with 4 years experience in environmental impact assessment with Caltrans. Ph.D. in Engineering Management from California Coast University. Contribution: Air Quality Report.

David Franke, Project Manager with 14 years experience with Caltrans and 4.5 years with Project Management. B.S. in Civil Engineering from California

Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. Contribution: Project Manager (12/97-1/00).

Gary Fromm, Project Manager with 10 years of experience. B.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of Arizona. Contribution: Project Manager (1/00-3/01).

Mila Gotico, Transportation Engineer with 29 years of experience working on transportation projects for Caltrans. B.S. in chemical engineering from the University of Saint Augustine in the Philippines. Contribution: Executive of Design.

Don Hunsaker, Senior Environmental Planner with 22 years experience in environmental impact assessment. B.S. in Chemistry from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. Doctor of Environmental science and Engineering from the University of California, Los Angeles. Contribution: Overseeing the environmental process (4/99-9/00).

Scott Guidi, Environmental Planner (Biologist) with 3.5 years of experience in the public and private sectors. B.S. in Wildlife Management from the California State University, Humboldt. Contribution: Finalizing the Natural Environmental Study with the Federal Highway Administration.

Long Huynh, Transportation Engineer with 8.5 years of experience. B.S. in Engineering from the University of California, Davis. Contribution: Design of project.

Rich Kester, Landscape Associate with 12 years of experience as a landscape architect. B.A. degree in Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning from Utah State University. Contribution: Visual Assessment Report.

Lefteris Koumis, Transportation Engineer with Caltrans. Contribution: Conducted the original noise study for this project.

Barbara L. Lauger, Associate Environmental Planner (Generalist) with 5 years of environmental impact assessment experience. M.A. in Geography from California State University, Fresno. Contribution: Community Impact Assessment.

Karen Le Blanc, Right-of-Way Agent with 2 years experience working with relocation and right-of-way issues. Contribution: Draft Relocation Impact Study.

Frank Lortie, Associate Environmental Planner (Architectural History) with 8 years experience working as an Architectural Historian for Caltrans and 15 years experience recording and evaluating architectural and historic properties. B.A. in American Government from the University of California, Berkeley; an M.A. in American History from California State University, San Francisco, and advancement to candidacy for a Ph.D. in American History from the University of California, Davis. Contribution: Historic Architectural Survey Report.

Dave Mendoza, Project Manager with 7 years of experience. B.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of the Pacific, CA. Contribution: Project Manager (3/01-9/01).

Thomas Rheiner, Project Manager with Camp Dresser & McKee with 9 years experience. B.S. in Civil Engineering from California State University, San Diego. Contribution: Water Quality Report.

Balhar Sandhu, Project Manager with 7 years experience. B.S. in Civil Engineering from Gulbuga University, India. M.S. in Civil Engineering from California State University, Sacramento. Contribution: Project Manager (9/01-present).

Jane Sellers, Research Writer with 20 years writing/editing experience. B.A. in Journalism from California State University, Fresno. Contribution: Edited Environmental Assessment/Initial Study.

John Sharp, Associate Environmental Planner (Archaeology) with 1.75 years experience of environmental impact assessment and 8 years as a professional archaeologist. M.A. in Cultural Resources Management, Sonoma State University. Contribution: Archaeological Survey Report, Historic Property Survey Report and Native American Coordination.

Raychel Skeen, Associate Environmental Planner (Generalist) with 4 years of environmental planning experience. B.A. in Geography with a minor in Geology from California State University, Humbolt. Contribution: Writer and coordinator for preparation of this EA/IS and FONSI/ND (4/99-present).

Annette Tenneboe, Environmental Planner (Biologist) with 2 years of environmental impact assessment with Caltrans and 11 years total experience as a biologist. B.S. in Biology from California State University, Fresno. Contribution: Natural Environmental Study.

Raymond Tritt, Project Design Engineer with 14 years of experience with Caltrans. B.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of California, Davis. Contribution: Managing the design process (1/00-present).

Jennifer H. Verrone, Senior Environmental Planner with 11 years of experience in environmental planning and land use. B.A. in Political Studies and B.A. in Organizational Sciences, Pitzer College, Claremont, California. Contribution: Overseeing the environmental process (9/00-6/02).

Eric VonBerg, Senior Environmental Planner with 12 years of experience in environmental planning and land use planning. B.A. in Social Ecology from the University of California at Irvine. M.R.P. from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Contribution: Overseeing submittal process of the final environmental document (6/02-present).

Laurie Welch, Graduate Assistant (Architectural History). B.A. in History from the University of California, Davis and currently enrolled as a graduate student in the Public History Master's Program at California State University, Sacramento. Contribution: Historic Architectural Survey Report.

Homer Zarzuela, Transportation Engineer with 12 years of highway engineering experience. B.S.C.E. in Civil Engineering and a B.A. in Architecture from Texas Tech University. Contribution: Traffic Analysis.

Chapter 6 Distribution List

The distribution list represents all of the public officials, local agencies, and interested parties that were sent copies of the environmental document.

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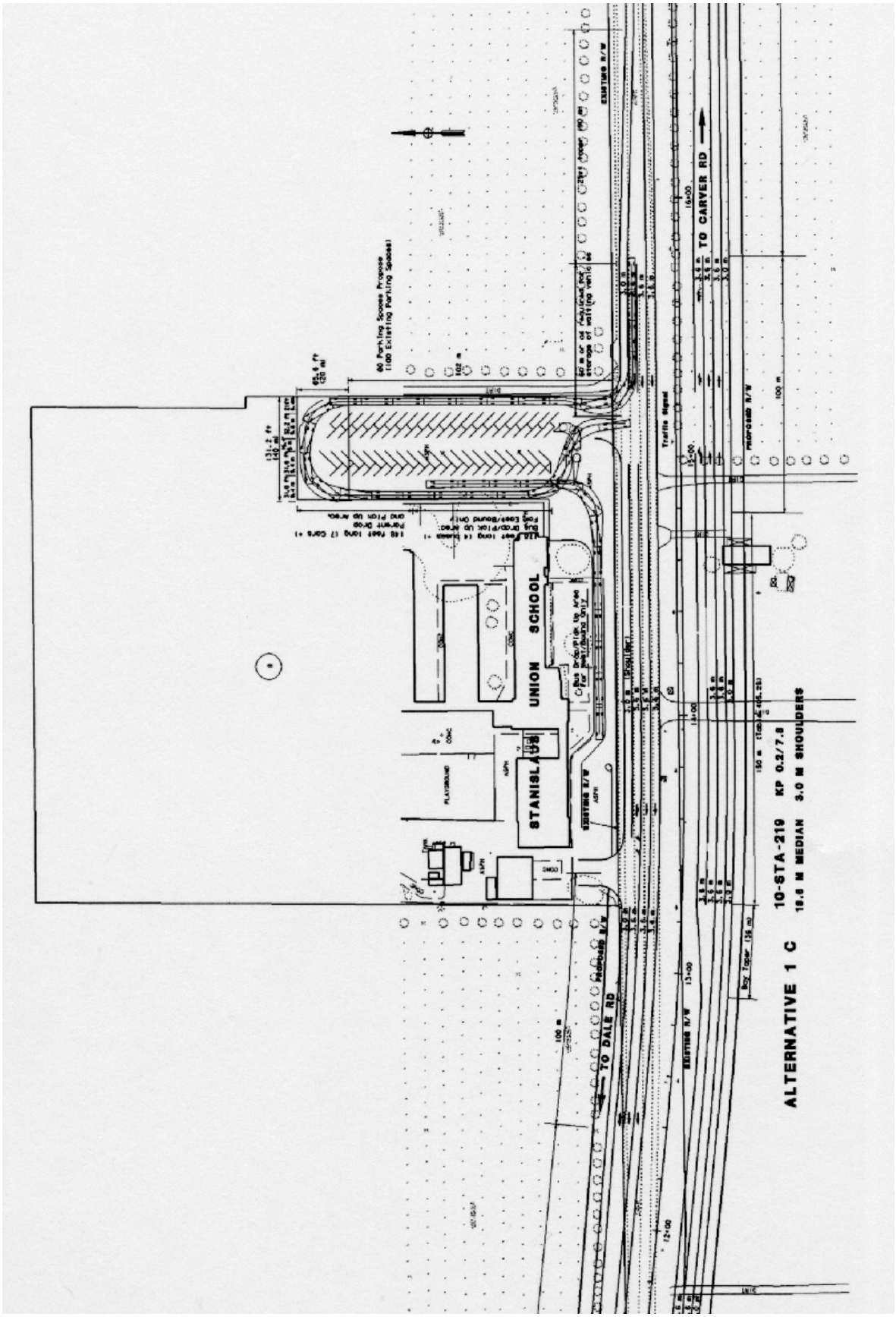
Appendix A Access Alternatives

This appendix shows graphic representations of the alternatives that offer different access points for Stanislaus Union Elementary School.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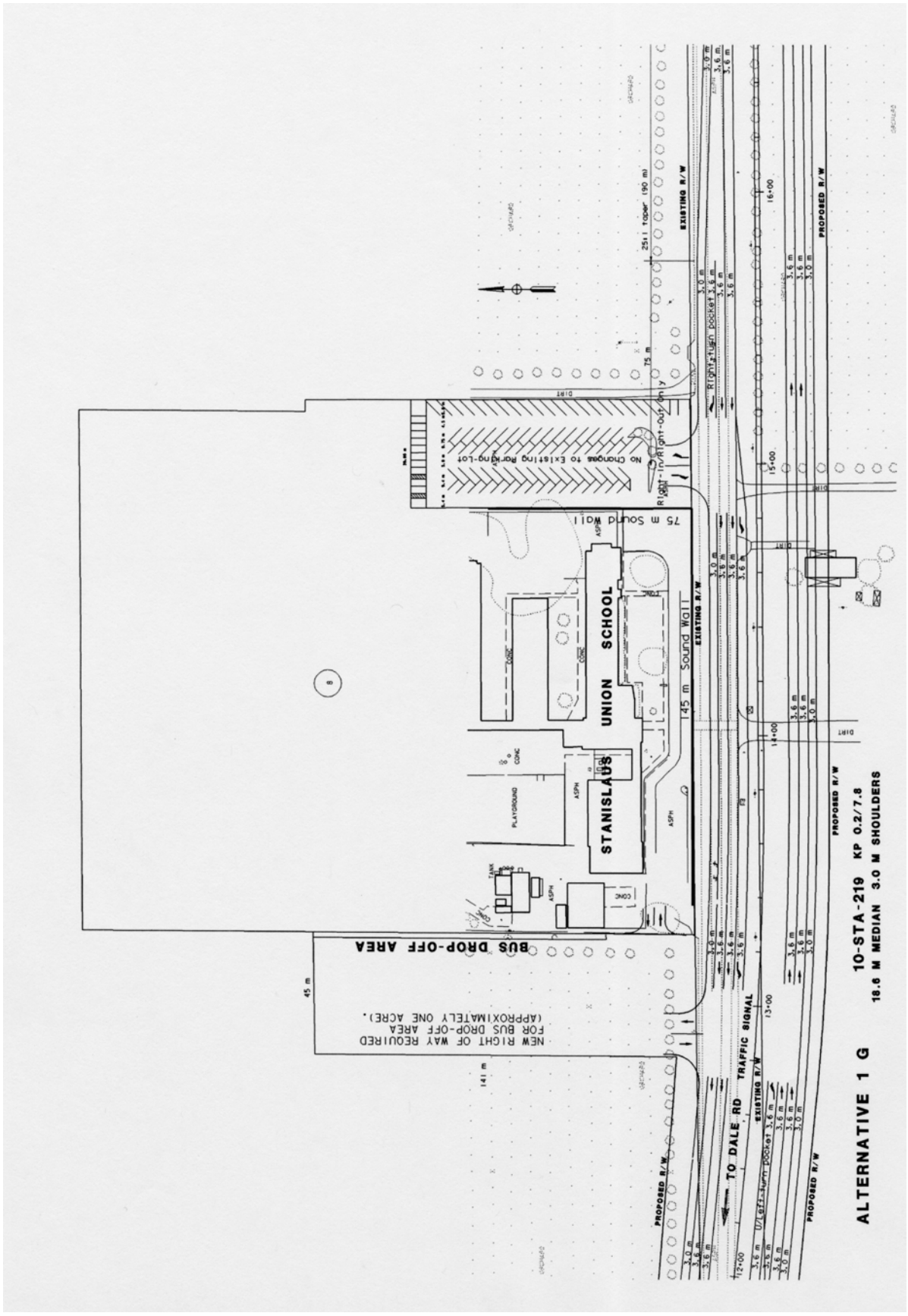
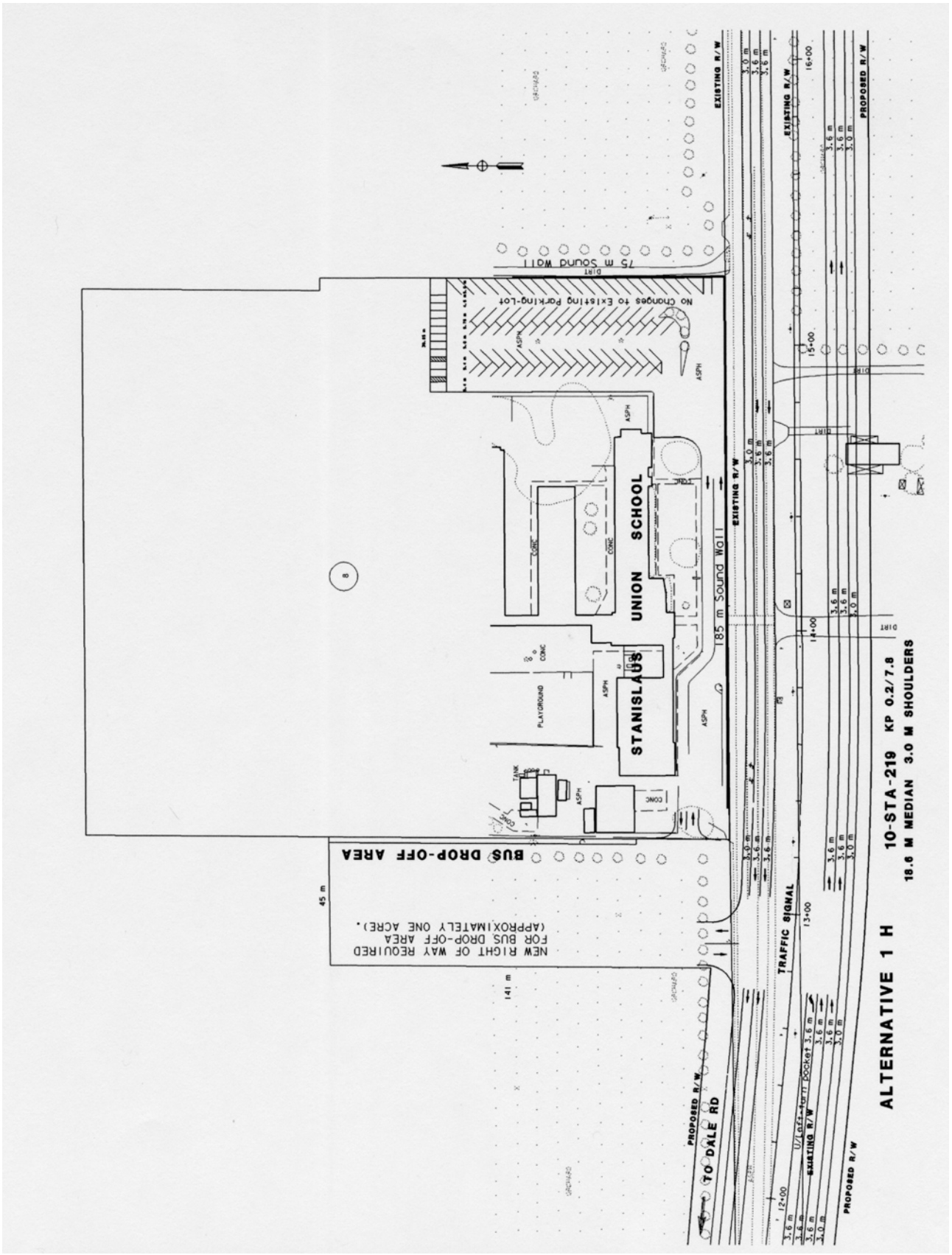
10-STA-219 KP 0.2/7.8
18.0 M MEDIAN 3.0 M SHOULDERS
STANISLAUS UNION SCHOOL
TO DALE RD
TO CARVER RD
Traffic Signal
PLAYGROUND
EXISTING R/W
PROPOSED R/W


ALTERNATIVE 1 G
10-STA-219 KP 0.2/7.8
18.6 M MEDIAN 3.0 M SHOULDERS
UNION SCHOOL
STANISLAUS
145 m Sound Wall
75 m Sound Wall
BUS DROP-OFF AREA
NEW RIGHT OF WAY REQUIRED FOR BUS DROP-OFF AREA (APPROXIMATELY ONE ACRE).
TO DALE RD
TRAFFIC SIGNAL
EXISTING R/W
PROPOSED R/W
No Changes to Existing Parking Lot
Right-in/Right-out only
Right-turn pocket
PLAYGROUND
CONC
ASPH
DIRT
ORCHARD
16+00
15+00
14+00
13+00
12+00
45 m
141 m
75 m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10-STA-219 KP 0.2/7.8
18.6 M MEDIAN 3.0 M SHOULDERS
STANISLAUS UNION SCHOOL
185 m Sound Wall
75 m Sound Wall
No Changes to Existing Parking-Lot
BUS DROP-OFF AREA
NEW RIGHT OF WAY REQUIRED
FOR BUS DROP-OFF AREA
(APPROXIMATELY ONE ACRE).
TO DALE RD
TRAFFIC SIGNAL
EXISTING R/W
PROPOSED R/W
U/Cafe-term pocket
PLAYGROUND
ASPH
CONC
DIRT
141 m
45 m

Appendix B Protection Provisions

This appendix contains the special provisions related to the State Route 219 Widening Project.

BAT PROVISIONS
(RECOMMENDED FOR THE SR 219 WIDENING PROJECT – EA 0A8700)

Introduction

Structures such as buildings and trees within the project footprint will likely require removal. These structures can potentially be utilized by bats as night roosts, day/maternity roosts, and wintering or hibernation roosts. It is recommended that all structures and trees scheduled for removal be inspected prior to demolition activities at the appropriate time of year to identify potential overwintering, day, maternity, hibernation, and night roosts. Demolition of structures while bats are actively utilizing these structures would be considered an adverse effect to the species. Should bats be observed occupying structures scheduled for removal, the following mitigation measures would be necessary for the permanent removal of bats from these structures.

Night Roosts

Night Roosts may be utilized from around sunset to sunrise. In most parts of the state, night roost use will only occur spring through fall. These mitigation measures listed below apply only to the times when the bats are present.

Mitigation (Night Roosts)

If bats are found to be night roosting in structures designated for demolition, then the area surrounding these structures will be designated an ESA until bat removal or avoidance measures are completed. A contractor may be required for bat removal.

To avoid directly impacting night roosting bats, work activities should not occur between sunset and sunrise. Work should not occur within 100 feet of an active roost. Airspace access to and from the structure should remain the same. No clearing and grubbing should occur adjacent to the structure. Lighting should not be used near the structure where it would directly shine on the structure. Colony ventilation and protection should not be altered. Internal combustion equipment such as generators, pumps, and vehicles should not be parked or operated adjacent to the structure.

Mitigation options should include surveying the surrounding area for potential alternative night roosts and building new structures with bat-friendly features.

Day Roosts/Maternity Roosts

Day roost use by bats usually occurs during the spring, summer, and fall in California except in coastal areas, the Central Valley, and some other areas. Some species do not hibernate and therefore use day roosts year round. These measures apply to the times

While bats are present, airspace access to and from the structure should not be eliminated. Colony ventilation and protection should not be altered. Clearing and grubbing should not occur adjacent to the building. Internal combustion equipment such as generators, pumps, and vehicles should not be parked or operated adjacent to the structure. Personnel should not be present directly under the colony, especially during the evening exodus. Vibration and noise adjacent to the structure should be avoided.

It is recommended that demolition occur when the colony is not present. Bats should be excluded from affected work areas in late August. Exclusion should be done selectively and only to the extent necessary to prevent acute morbidity or mortality to the colony.

The magnitude of impacts to hibernation and wintering roosts can be significant from a species and wildlife perspective. Therefore, major impacts such as removal should only be considered if there is no other alternative. In such a case, a bat expert familiar with the particular species must be consulted.

San Joaquin Kit Fox
Standard Protection Provisions

- Project employees are required to attend a training session concerning endangered species and plans to protect them.

- Entrance into areas within the right of way not required for construction activities shall be restricted to the traveled way and associated paved or graded shoulders. Staging, parking, storage, and other project related use areas shall be clearly marked on the ground.

- Project related traffic shall observe a 20 mph speed limit except on roads or highways open for public use.

- At the end of each workday, the contractor shall take measures to prevent the entrapment of kit foxes in all excavated, steep walled holes or trenches more than 2 feet deep. Such measures may include covering excavations with plywood or providing dirt or plank escape ramps from the trenches.

- The contractor shall inspect all pipes and culverts with a diameter greater than or equal to 4 inches before burying, capping, or other use. If a kit fox is discovered during this inspection, the pipe or culvert shall not be disturbed (other than to move it to a safe location if necessary) until after the kit fox has escaped.

- If a kit fox den is discovered, all construction activity within a 150-foot radius of the den will be halted while the den is evaluated. An Environmental Sensitive Area will be established around the den and entry into the area will be restricted.

- The Contractor shall provide closed garbage container where food related trash is generated and the garbage shall be disposed of daily.

- Pets are prohibited on the work site.

- The Contractor shall give full cooperation to the Caltrans District Biologist or their representative. The Contractor shall immediately notify the Engineer of a dead, injured, or entrapped kit fox. A Caltrans Biologist will contact the California Department of Fish and Game and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Any entrapped kit fox shall be permitted to escape.

RAPTOR PROVISIONS

Recommended for the State Route 219 Project, EA 0A8700, Stanislaus County

Portions of the study area provide suitable nesting habitat for various species of raptors including burrowing owl (BUOW), Swainson's hawk (SWHA), and red-tailed hawk. The term "raptors" incorporates both owl and hawk species.

An active red-tailed hawk nest was observed during the Spring 2000 nesting season. The nest was located in a eucalyptus tree at 4124 Kiernan (State Route 219). This eucalyptus tree is located approximately 250-feet south of the existing State Route 219 right-of-way and appears to be outside of the construction footprint. This tree shall be monitored for presence of nesting raptors by a Caltrans biologist a minimum of thirty-days prior to construction activities.

Applicable Federal and State Laws

1. **Federal Law** Raptors are considered migratory bird species. As such they are protected by international treaty under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 (16 U.S.C. 703-711). The MBTA makes it unlawful to take, possess, buy, sell, purchase, or barter any migratory bird listed in 50 C.F.R. Part 10, including feathers or other parts, nests, eggs, or products, except as allowed by implementing regulations (50 C.F.R. 21).

2. **State Law** Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3800 of the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Code prohibit the take, possession, or destruction of birds, their nests or eggs. Implementation of the take provisions requires that project-related disturbance at active nesting territories be reduced or eliminated during the critical phases of the nesting cycle (generally between February 1 and September 15 for all raptors). Construction activities resulting in nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort (e.g. killing or abandonment of eggs or young, or reduced health and vigor of eggs and/or nestlings), loss of habitat upon which the birds depend, or the removal of any active or historic nest trees, is considered "taking" and a violation of Section 2080 of the Fish and Game Code and federal law protecting migratory birds (e.g. MBTA). Such taking could result in fines and/or imprisonment.

Pre-construction Coordination and Surveys

- The Resident Engineer shall contact the assigned Caltrans Project Biologist a minimum of 12 months prior to the start of construction activities.

- A pre-construction survey of a quarter-mile radius around the construction area shall occur no more than 30 days prior to the start of any construction activities.

- A Caltrans biologist shall inform the appropriate DFG personnel of any active or historic raptor nests or owl burrows occurring within a quarter mile of the project footprint.

Avoidance

- Active raptor nests or owl burrows will be marked on a map. A construction-free setback or buffer (Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA)) will be established around each active nest or burrow by means of fencing or conspicuous stakes with flagging until the conclusion of the breeding season. The buffer distance will be determined in consultation with the DFG.

- During construction, a Caltrans biologist shall monitor any active raptor nest and/or owl burrow within a quarter mile of the project footprint for nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort (e.g. killing or abandonment of eggs or young, or reduced health and vigor of eggs and/or nestlings). Nest abandonment or loss of reproductive effort (e.g. killing or abandonment of eggs or young, or reduced health and vigor of eggs and/or nestlings) shall be reported immediately to the appropriate DFG personnel.

- Should nest-building activities begin near an active construction zone a Caltrans biologist shall be notified immediately. The Caltrans biologist shall set up an appropriate ESA around the nest and notify the DFG immediately.

- It is recommended that all tree removal be limited to the dates of September 15 to February 1 in order to avoid the nesting season. Trees occupied by active raptor nests shall not be removed until after the young have fledged and the nest is no longer in use (generally after September 15). The DFG shall be notified prior to the removal of an active or historic nest tree. A Caltrans biologist shall determine when an active nest is no longer in use.

Appendix C Resolutions and Growth Data

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
ACTION AGENDA SUMMARY

DEPT: PUBLIC WORKS **BOARD AGENDA#** C-8

Urgent _____ **Routine** ✓ **AGENDA DATE** JUNE 25, 2002

CEO Concurs with Recommendation YES ___ **NO** ___ **4/5 Vote Required YES** ___ **NO** ✓
(Information Attached)

SUBJECT:

APPROVAL TO SUPPORT THE STATE ROUTE 219 (KIERNAN AVENUE) WIDENING PROJECT BETWEEN STATE ROUTE 99 AND STATE ROUTE 108 (MCHENRY AVENUE)

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. SUPPORT THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (CALTRANS) PROJECT THAT WILL WIDEN STATE ROUTE 219 TO A FOUR LANE FACILITY; AND,

2. SUPPORT CALTRANS RESTRICTIONS THAT LIMIT LEFT TURN MOVEMENT TO SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS AND LIMIT DRIVEWAY ACCESS TO STATE ROUTE 219.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2002-507

On motion of Supervisor Simon **, Seconded by Supervisor** Caruso
and approved by the following vote,
Ayes: Supervisors: Paul, Simon, Caruso, and Chairman Mayfield
Noes: Supervisors: None
Excused or Absent: Supervisors: Blom
Abstaining: Supervisor: None
1) X **Approved as recommended**
2) _____ **Denied**
3) _____ **Approved as amended**
MOTION:

ATTEST: CHRISTINE FERRARO TALLMAN, Clerk By: Deputy **File No.**

1010-08

SUBJECT: APPROVAL TO SUPPORT THE STATE ROUTE 219 (KIERNAN AVENUE) WIDENING PROJECT BETWEEN STATE ROUTE 99 AND STATE ROUTE 108 (MCHENRY AVENUE)
PAGE: 2

DISCUSSION: Caltrans is the lead agency assigned to complete the design and construction of the widening of State Route (SR) 219 between SR 99 and SR 108 (McHenry Avenue) to a 4-lane facility. To improve operations, Level of Service (LOS), and safety while relieving traffic congestion, Caltrans is proposing to limit left turns and to limit access to individual parcels. Caltrans has requested the County of Stanislaus to support the project and to support limited left turns and limited access on SR 219.

Caltrans has stated that all existing signalized intersections (McHenry, Sisk, and Stoddard) and all future signalized intersections (at this time identified as Carver, Dale and Tully) will have full turning movements that will include right and left turns. All remaining intersections will have right-turn only accessibility. However, Caltrans has agreed to allow left turns at the SR 219/Pentecost intersection until a second access is constructed from the developing industrial park to SR 108.

Caltrans and the Stanislaus Union School District are currently discussing the need for left turns at the Stanislaus School. Caltrans staff has assured the Stanislaus Union School District and the SR 219 Project Development Team members that the left turn issue will resolved.

Caltrans has also stated that all existing driveway access may remain, but as development occurs only one access will be allowed per original parcel.

On January 22, 2002, the City of Modesto approved Resolution No. 2002-32 to support Caltrans restrictions to limit left turn movement to designated signalized intersections, and limiting driveway access on SR 219.

POLICY ISSUES: This action is consistent with the Board's policy of providing a safe, healthy community.

STAFFING IMPACT: There is no staffing impact associated with this item.

CB:sm
L:\TPC\Hwy219Resolution.wpd

MODESTO CITY COUNCIL
RESOLUTION NO. 2002-32

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING LIMITED ACCESS ON STATE ROUTE SR219 (KIERNAN AVENUE) FROM SR99 TO SR108

WHEREAS, the State of California, Department of Transportation (Cal Trans) is the lead agency assigned to complete the design and construction of widening SR219 from State Route 99 to State Route 108 (McHenry Avenue) to a 4-lane conventional highway, and

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation has requested the City of Modesto to support limited access and turning movements on the future 4-lane conventional highway, and

WHEREAS, all signalized intersections will have full turning movements that include right and left turns, and

WHEREAS, the City of Modesto Urban Area General Plan designates SR219 as a Class B Expressway defined as a partial access-controlled roadway with signalized intersections at major streets and right-turn only access to collector streets, and

WHEREAS, all remaining intersections will have right-turn only accessibility, and

WHEREAS, all existing driveway access can remain, but as development occurs only one access will be allowed per original parcel, and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Policy Committee met on July 19, 2001, and approved limiting access on SR219,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Modesto that it hereby supports Cal Trans restrictions to limit left turn movement to designated signalized intersections, and limiting driveway access on SR219.

The foregoing resolution was introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of the City of Modesto held on the 22nd day of January, 2002, by Councilmember Frohman, who moved its adoption, which motion being duly seconded by Councilmember Friedman, was upon roll call carried and the resolution adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers: Conrad, Fisher, Friedman, Frohman, Serpa, Smith, Mayor Sabatino

NOES: Councilmembers: None

ABSENT: Councilmembers: None

ATTEST: Jean Zahr
JEAN ZAHR, City Clerk

(SEAL)
APPROVED AS TO FORM:

By _____
MICHAEL D. MILICH, City Attorney

1/22/02 / E&T / D Phillips 2002-32

The following information was presented by the **Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG)** to the 219 project development team in a meeting on September 17, 2002. StanCOG is an agency responsible for identifying necessary improvements to the local road system using a variety of information such as local population statistics and planned land use information for the Modesto area. The proceeding mapping reflects current data which distinguishes areas of growth and effects to local roads resulting from the growth. The following Population map shows the project area located within a zone that is predicted to experience some of the largest growth in the Modesto area and the Level of Service map shows the 219 route failing to provide adequate service if no improvements are made to the route.

Projected Population Growth (attachment 1)

- Using several local, State and Federal sources, StanCOG identifies historical growth patterns and trends from the past 10-20-30 years. These "base" numbers form the foundation of the StanCOG land use projections. At present, StanCOG uses updated information from the 1990 census to calculate 1999 base year data.

- The cities and County are consulted throughout the process to ensure consistency. General Plans of each jurisdiction are utilized as resource documents for all land use projections.

- Various growth formulas are applied to the base numbers to arrive at a high-medium-low growth 25-year projection.

- Population projections are adopted by the StanCOG Policy Board.

2025 Projected Level of Service (attachment 2)

- The StanCOG computerized traffic model utilizes the land use (population, employment and housing) projections, and, applies known travel characteristics throughout an electronic regional roadway network. The resulting traffic data (volume, speed, levels of congestion) can be displayed and analyzed.

- Although the land use projections can be revised, once adopted, these projections remain constant. The roadway network, though, is easily edited to reflect street and road additions, improvements, and in a few cases, deletions.

- For geographical purposes, the land use data is separated into Traffic Analysis Zones, or TAZs. These TAZs were originally census tracts, but have 'evolved' into their own geographic boundaries. Each TAZ has a center-point from which all trips begin and/or end.

- One way to gauge how efficient a roadway operates is to assess its "Level of Service" or LOS. The LOS indicates the amount of congestion on a

specific street or road and designates this congestion from "A" (no congestion) to "F" (very congested).

Level of Service

A = Best conditions, may travel at posted speeds.

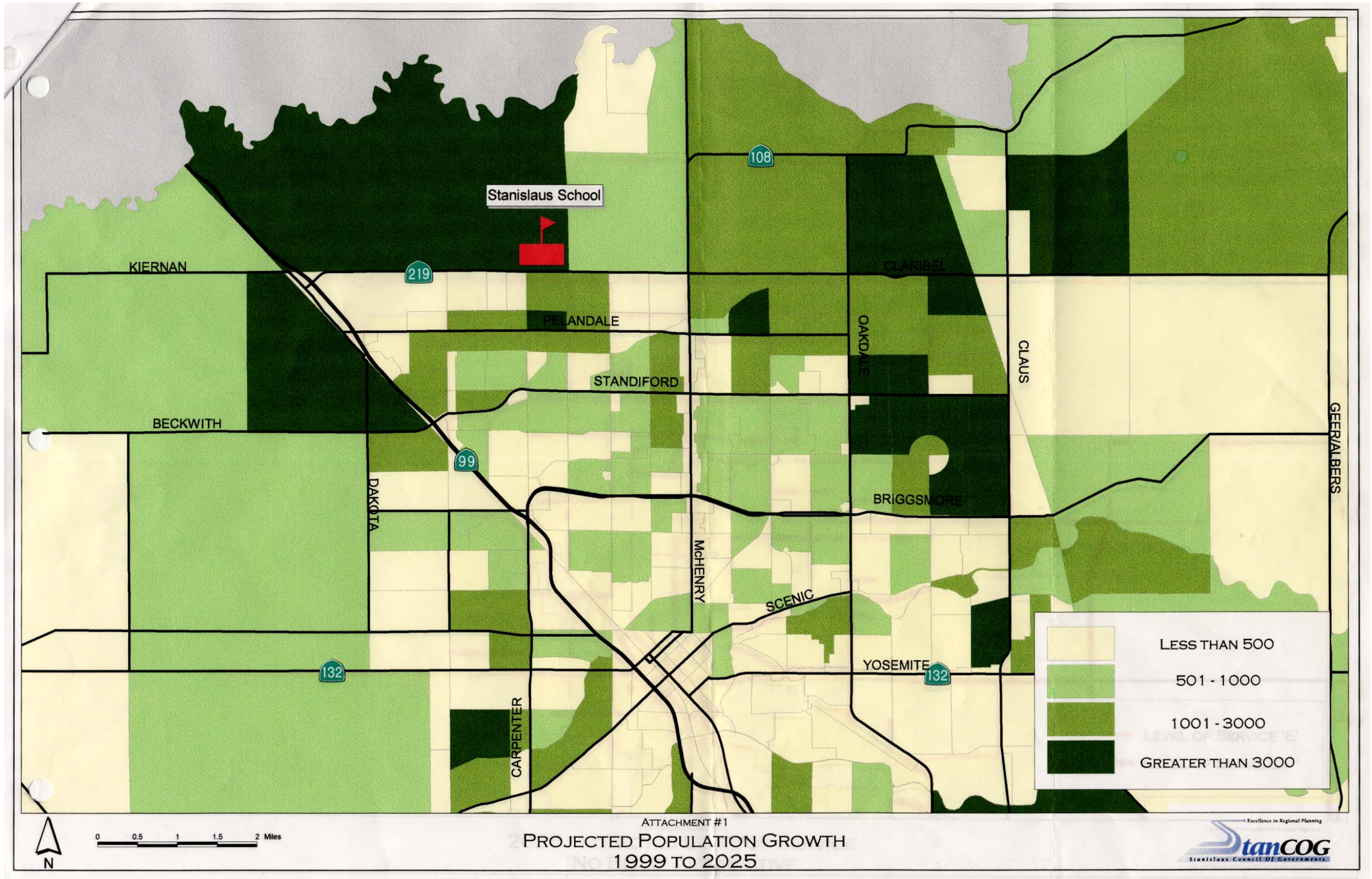
B = More restricted travel movement, but generally able to maintain posted speeds

C = Travel movement becomes more restricted and lane changes require greater care.

D = Speeds begin to decline slightly; roadway feels congested.

E = Facility is congested; travel speeds drop noticeably.

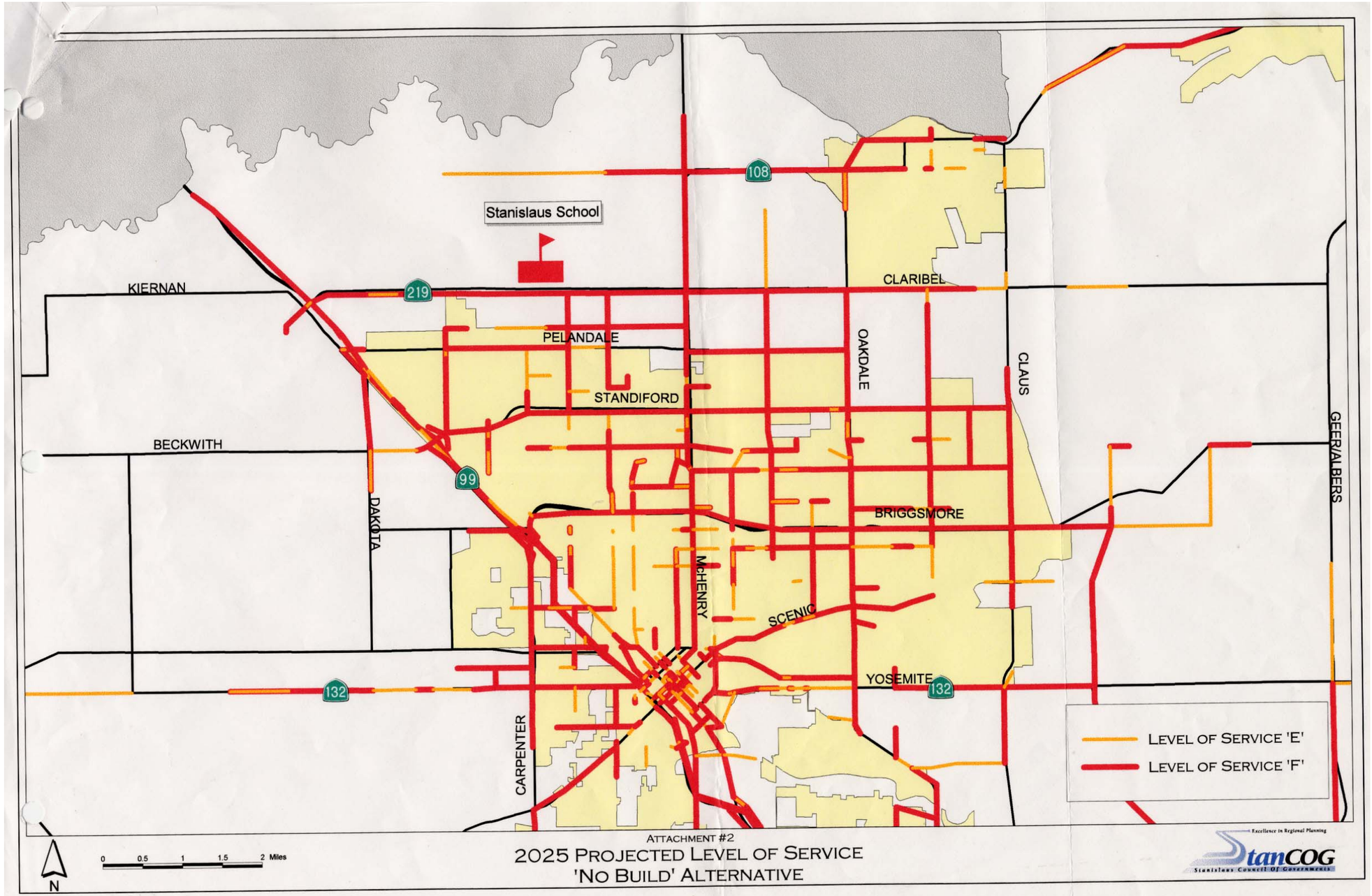
F = Worst conditions; stop-and-go traffic at very slow speeds.



ATTACHMENT #1

PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH
1999 TO 2025

Excellence in Regional Planning
StanCOG
Stanislaus Council Of Governments



ATTACHMENT #2

2025 PROJECTED LEVEL OF SERVICE 'NO BUILD' ALTERNATIVE

Excellence in Regional Planning
StanCOG
Stanislaus Council Of Governments

Appendix D Farmland Conversion Form

U.S. Department of Agriculture

FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING

PART I *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	Date Of Land Evaluation Request 10/7/02
Name Of Project State Route 219 Widening Project	Federal Agency Involved Caltrans/FHWA
Proposed Land Use 4-lane highway	County And State Stanislaus County, California
PART II *(To be completed by NRCS)*	Date Request Received By NRCS

Does the site contain prime, unique, statewide or local important farmland? *(If no, the FPPA does not apply -- do not complete additional parts of this form).* Yes ☐ No ☐		Acres Irrigated	Average Farm Size
Major Crop*(s)*	Farmable Land In Govt. Jurisdiction Acres: %	Amount Of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: %	
Name Of Land Evaluation System Used	Name Of Local Site Assessment System	Date Land Evaluation Returned By NRCS	

PART III *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*	Alternative Site Rating Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly	70.6	32.8		
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly	4.4	2.2		
C. Total Acres In Site	74.9	35.0	0.0	0.0
PART IV *(To be completed by NRCS)* Land Evaluation Information				
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland				
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland				
C. Percentage Of Farmland In County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted				
D. Percentage Of Farmland In Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value				
PART V *(To be completed by NRCS)* Land Evaluation Criterion Relative Value Of Farmland To Be Converted *(Scale of 0 to 100 Points)*	100	100	0	0

PART VI *(To be completed by Federal Agency)* Site Assessment Criteria *(These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(b)*	Maximum Points	Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
1. Area In Nonurban Use	15	7	7		
2. Perimeter In Nonurban Use	10	7	7		
3. Percent Of Site Being Farmed	20	10	10		
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government	20	10	6		
5. Distance From Urban Builtup Area	0	0	0		
6. Distance To Urban Support Services	0	0	0		
7. Size Of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average	10	0	0		
8. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland	25	0	0		
9. Availability Of Farm Support Services	5	5	5		
10. On-Farm Investments	20	5	5		
11. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services	25	0	0		
12. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use	10	0	0		
TOTAL SITE ASSESSMENT POINTS	160	44	40	0	0
PART VII *(To be completed by Federal Agency)*					
Relative Value Of Farmland *(From Part V)*	100	100	100	0	0
Total Site Assessment *(From Part VI above or a local site assessment)*	160	44	40	0	0
TOTAL POINTS *(Total of above 2 lines)*	260	144	140	0	0

Site Selected:	Date Of Selection	Was A Local Site Assessment Used? Yes ☐ No ☐

Reason For Selection:

(See Instructions on reverse side) **Form AD-1006 (10-83)**

This form was electronically produced by National Production Services Staff

Appendix E Title VI and RAP

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
1120 N STREET
P. O. BOX 942873
SACRAMENTO, CA 94273-0001
PHONE (916) 654-5267
FAX (916) 654-6608

July 26, 2000

TITLE VI
POLICY STATEMENT

The California State Department of Transportation under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, ensures that no person in the State of California shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex and national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity it administers.

Jeff Morales

JEFF MORALES
Director

VIII. APPENDIX (Cont'd)
C. Residential Relocation Payments Program (Cont'd.)

Homeowners who have owned and occupied their property for 180 days or more prior to the date of the first written offer to purchase the property, may qualify to receive a price differential payment and may qualify to receive reimbursement for certain nonrecurring costs incidental to the purchase of the replacement property. An interest differential payment is also available if the interest rate for the loan on the replacement dwelling is higher than the loan rate on the displacement dwelling, subject to certain limitations on reimbursement based upon the replacement property interest rate. The maximum combination of these three supplemental payments that the owner-occupant can receive is $22,500. If the total entitlement (without the moving payments) is in excess of $22,500, the Last Resort Housing Program will be used. (See the explanation of the Last Resort Housing Program below.)

Rental Supplement
Tenants who have occupied the property to be acquired by Caltrans for 90 days or more and owner-occupants of 90-179 days prior to the date of the first written offer to purchase may qualify to receive a rental differential payment. This payment is made when Caltrans determines that the cost to rent a comparable "decent, safe, and sanitary" replacement dwelling will be more than the present rent of the displacement dwelling. As an alternative, the tenant may qualify for a down payment benefit designed to assist in the purchase of a replacement property and the payment of certain costs incidental to the purchase, subject to certain limitations noted below under the Down Payment section. The maximum amount payable to any tenant of 90 days or more and any owner-occupant of 90-179 days, in addition to moving expenses, is $5,250. If the total entitlement for rental supplement exceeds $5,250, the Last Resort Housing Program will be used.

In addition to the occupancy requirements, in order to receive any relocation benefits, the displaced person must buy or rent and occupy a "decent, safe, and sanitary" replacement dwelling within one year from the date the department takes legal possession of the property, or from the date the displacee vacates the displacement property, whichever is later.

Down Payment
The down payment option has been designed to aid owner occupants of 90-179 days and tenants with no less than 90 days of continuous occupancy prior to Caltrans' first written offer. The down payment and incidental expenses cannot exceed the maximum payment of $5,250. The one year eligibility period in which to purchase and occupy a "decent, safe, and sanitary" replacement dwelling will apply.

Last Resort Housing
Federal regulations (49 CFR 24) contain the policy and procedure for implementing the Last Resort Housing Program on Federal-aid projects. Last resort housing benefits are, except for the amounts of payments and the methods in making them, the same as those benefits for standard residential relocation, as explained above. Last resort housing has been designed primarily to cover situations where a displacee cannot be relocated because of lack of available comparable replacement housing, or when the anticipated replacement housing payments exceed the $5,250 and $22,500 limits of the standard relocation procedure, because either the displacee lacks the financial ability or other valid circumstances. In certain exceptional situations, Last Resort Housing may also be used for tenants of less than 90 days.

Other Relocation Information
After the first written offer to acquire the property has been made, Caltrans will, within a reasonable length of time, personally contact the displacees to gather important information, including the following:

- Preferences in area of relocation;
- Number of people to be displaced;
- Location of school and employment;

VIII. APPENDIX (Cont'd)
C. Residential Relocation Payments Program (Cont'd.)

- Specific arrangements needed to accommodate any family members' special needs;
- Financial ability to relocate into comparable replacement dwelling which will adequately house all members of the family.

D. The Nonresidential Relocation Assistance Program

The Nonresidential Relocation Assistance Program provides assistance to businesses, farms, and nonprofit organizations in locating suitable replacement property, and reimbursement for certain costs involved in relocation. The Relocation Advisory Assistance Program will provide current lists of properties offered for sale or rent, suitable for a particular business's specific relocation needs. The types of payments available to eligible businesses, farms, and nonprofit organizations are moving and searching expenses, and possibly reestablishment expenses or a fixed in-lieu payment instead of any moving, searching, and reestablishment expenses. The payment types can be summarized as follows:

Moving Expenses
Moving expenses may include the following actual, reasonable costs:

- The moving of inventory, machinery, equipment, and similar business-related property; dismantling, disconnecting, crating, packing, loading, insuring, transporting, unloading, unpacking, and reconnecting of personal property.
- Loss of tangible personal property provides payment for actual, direct loss of personal property that the owner is permitted not to move.
- Expenses related to searching for a new business site, up to $1,000 for reasonable expenses actually incurred.

Appendix F SHPO Letters of Concurrence

STATE OF CALIFORNIA – THE RESOURCES AGENCY GRAY DAVIS, Governor

OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
P.O. BOX 942896
SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001
(916) 653-6624 Fax: (916) 653-9824
calshpo@ohp.parks.ca.gov

November 16, 2000

Reply To: FHWA001020A

Michael G. Ritchie, Division Administrator
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
California Division
980 Ninth Street, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814-2724

Re: Determinations of Eligibility for the Proposed Widening and Upgrade of a Five-Mile Portion of State Highway 219 near Modesto, CA

Dear Mr. Ritchie

You have provided me with the results of your efforts to determine whether there are historic properties located within the area of potential effect (APE) for this undertaking. You have done this, and are consulting with me, in order to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and implementing regulations codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has determined that there are no archeological sites within the APE. Ninety-three properties were identified within the APE. Fifty-five of the properties qualify for treatment under the "Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Evaluation of Post-1945 Buildings, Moved Pre-1945 Buildings, and Altered Pre-1945 Buildings", and the "Interim Guildelines-Post-45 MOU". A grade separation bridge at the State Route 219/99 intersection was determined ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as part of the 1986 Caltrans Bridge Survey. The FHWA has also determined that the following thirty-six properties are not eligible for the NRHP:

- 4337 Kiernan Avenue
- 4124 Kiernan Avenue
- 4107 Kiernan Avenue
- 4101 Kiernan Avenue
- 3812 Kiernan Avenue
- 3612 Kiernan Avenue
- 3513 Kiernan Avenue
- 3406 Kiernan Avenue
- 3342 Kiernan Avenue
- 3237 Kiernan Avenue
- 3243 Kiernan Avenue
- 2866 Kiernan Avenue
- 2819 Kiernan Avenue
- 2706 Kiernan Avenue
- 2349 Kiernan Avenue
- 2248 Kiernan Avenue
- 2224 Kiernan Avenue
- 2206 Kiernan Avenue
- 1737 Kiernan Avenue
- 1643 Kiernan Avenue
- 1601 Kiernan Avenue
- 1540 Kiernan Avenue
- 1443 Kiernan Avenue
- 1420 Kiernan Avenue
- 1348 Kiernan Avenue
- 5026 Tunsen Road
- 5024 Tunsen Road
- 907 Kiernan Avenue
- 824 Kiernan Avenue
- 625 Kiernan Avenue
- 513 Kiernan Avenue
- 501 Kiernan Avenue
- 1931 Kiernan Avenue
- Union Pacific Railroad Track
- Lateral of the Modesto Irrigation District Ditch
- 5043 American Avenue

The FHWA has also determined that the Seventh Day Adventist Church located at 2172 Kiernan Avenue is eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C as a fine example of non-residential architecture on the local level of significance representing the period of significance from 1912 to 1915

Based on review of the submitted documentation, I have the following comments:

1) The project's area of potential effect is defined appropriately.
2) The cultural resource studies conducted to date are adequate
3) The Seventh Day Adventist Church located at 2172 Kiernan Avenue is eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C as a fine example of non-residential architecture on the local level of significance representing the period of significance from 1912 to 1915.
4) None of the other properties within the project's APE are eligible for the NRHP.

Thank you for considering historic properties during project planning. If you have any questions, please call Natalie Lindquist at (916) 654-0631 or e-mail at nlind@ohp.parks.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by

Daniel Abeyta, Acting
State Historic Preservation Officer

STATE OF CALIFORNIA – THE RESOURCES AGENCY
GRAY DAVIS, Governor

OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
P.O. BOX 942896
SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001
(916) 653-6624 Fax: (916) 653-9824
calshpo@mail2.quiknet.com

May 10, 2002

REPLY TO: FHWA020328D

Michael G. Ritchie, Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Region Nine, California Division
980 Ninth Street, Suite 400
SACRAMENTO CA 95814-2724

Re: Finding of Effect – Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church, State Route 219 Widening Project, Salida, Stanislaus County.

Dear Mr. Ritchie:

Thank you for submitting to our office your March 27, 2002 letter and Finding Of Effect (FOE) documentation regarding the proposed widening of State Route (SR) 219 between Post Miles 0.1 and 4.9 near the town of Salida in Stanislaus County. The FOE document evaluates two proposed project alternatives under consideration by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and their potential effects on the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church, a property determined, by consensus, to be eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The basic project will involve the widening of SR 219 from a two-lane conventional highway to a four-lane conventional highway with a wide median and adding left-turn lanes at several intersections. The project is intended to alleviate traffic congestion and improve safety along the route. Details on the two proposed alternatives and their proposed recommendations for avoiding an adverse effect to the property are provided on pages 4 and 5of the FOE documentation.

FHWA is seeking our comments on its determination of the effects the proposed project will have on the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church in accordance with 36 CFR 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. We have considered the recommendations set forth on page 5 of the FOE document and find that they are sufficient to warrant our concurrence in your no adverse effect determination if FHWA agrees to impose them as conditions on the undertaking [36 CFR 800.5(b)]. FHWA may indicate its agreement by executing the signature block below. Our receipt of a copy of this letter bearing your signature will constitute satisfactory evidence of Section 106 compliance by FHWA for this undertaking.

Thank you again for seeking our comments on your project. If you have any questions, please contact staff historian Clarence Caesar at (916) 653-8902.

Sincerely,

Dr. Knox Mellon
State Historic Preservation Officer

I AGREE: 3/6/03

Michael G. Ritchie, Division Administrator Date
Federal Highway Administration

Appendix G CEQA Checklist

The following checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. The CEQA impact levels include potentially significant impact, less than significant impact with mitigation, less than significant impact, and no impact. Please refer to the following for detailed discussions regarding impacts:

CEQA:

- Guidance: Title 14, Chapter 3, California Code of Regulations, Sections 15000 et seq. (http://www.ceres.ca.gov/topic/env_law/ceqa/guidelines/)
- Statutes: Division 13, California Public Resource Code, Sections 21000-21178.1 (http://www.ceres.ca.gov/topic/env_law/ceqa/stat/)

CEQA requires that environmental documents determine significant or potentially significant impacts. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with the project indicate no impacts. A "no impact" reflects this determination. Any needed discussion is included in the section following the checklist.

The words "significant" and "significance" used throughout the checklist are related to CEQA impacts, not NEPA impacts (Unless otherwise noted). CEQA requires that environmental documents determine significant or potentially significant impacts; NEPA does not. Addressing significant or potentially significant impacts in joint CEQA and NEPA environmental documents can be confusing, especially in those instances where the two laws and implementing regulations have different thresholds of significance. Under NEPA, the degree to which a resource is impacted is only used to determine which NEPA document is necessary. Once the federal agency has determined the magnitude of a project's impacts and the level of documentation required, it is the magnitude of the impact that is evaluated in the environmental document, not the degree of significance. For the purpose of the impact discussion in this document, determination of significant or potentially significant impacts is made only in the context of CEQA.

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
AESTHETICS - Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic building within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	☐	☐	☐	X
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	X
AGRICULTURE 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 Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	X	☐
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	X	☐
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	X	☐
AIR QUALITY - Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management 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?	☐	☐	☐	X

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) 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 (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	☐	☐	☐	X
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentration?	☐	☐	☐	X
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☐	X
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 Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	X
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?	☐	☐	☐	X
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?	☐	☐	☐	X
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?	☐	☐	☐	X
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	X

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	X
COMMUNITY RESOURCES - Would the project:				
a) Cause disruption of orderly planned development?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Be inconsistent with a Coastal Zone Management Plan?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Affect life-styles, or neighborhood character or stability?	☐	☐	☐	X
d) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	X
e) Affect minority, low-income, elderly, disabled, transit-dependent, or other specific interest group?	☐	☐	☐	X
f) Affect employment, industry, or commerce, or require the displacement of businesses or farms?	☐	☐	X	☐
g) Affect property values or the local tax base?	☐	☐	X	☐
h) Affect any community facilities (including medical, educational, scientific, or religious institutions, ceremonial sites or sacred shrines?	☐	☐	X	☐
i) Result in alterations to waterborne, rail, or air traffic?	☐	☐	☐	X
j) Support large commercial or residential development?	☐	☐	X	☐
k) Affect wild or scenic rivers or natural landmarks?	☐	☐	☐	X
l) Result in substantial impacts associated with construction activities (e.g., noise, dust, temporary drainage, traffic detours, and temporary access, etc.)?	☐	☐	X	☐
CULTURAL RESOURCES - Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	☐	☐	X	☐

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☐	X
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☐	☐	X
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:	☐	☐	☐	X
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☐	X
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☐	X
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☐	X
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☐	X
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?	☐	☐	☐	X
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.	☐	☐	☐	X
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?	☐	☐	☐	X

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
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?	☐	☐	X	☐
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably forseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	X	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous material, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	X	☐
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?	☐	☐	X	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	X
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?	☐	☐	☐	X
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	X
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?	☐	☐	☐	X
HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY - Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☐	☐	☐	X

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
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)?	☐	☐	☐	X
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?	☐	☐	☐	X
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?	☐	☐	☐	X
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?	☐	☐	☐	X
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	☐	☐	☐	X
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?	☐	☐	☐	X
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	X
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?	☐	☐	☐	X
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	☐	☐	☐	X

LAND USE AND PLANNING - Would the project:

a) 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?	☐	☐	☐	X

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
b) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X
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?				X
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?				X
NOISE - Would the project:				
a) Exposure 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?			X	
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
POPULATION AND HOUSING - Would the project:				
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)?				X
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
	☐	☐	X	☐
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	X	☐
PUBLIC SERVICES -				
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	X
Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	X
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	X
Parks?	☐	☐	☐	X
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	X
RECREATION -				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	X
TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC - Would the project:				
a) Cause an increase in traffic which his substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?				

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact
	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Result in a change in air traffic patters, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	☐	☐	☐	X
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incomplete uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	X
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	X
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	☐	☐	☐	X
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	☐	☐	☐	X
UTILITY AND SERVICE SYSTEMS - Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	☐	☐	☐	X
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?	☐	☐	☐	X
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	X	☐
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☐	☐	☐	X
e) Result in 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?	☐	☐	☐	X
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	☐	☐	☐	X
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	X

	Potentially significant impact	Less than significant impact with mitigation	Less than significant impact	No impact

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE -

a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, or 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?	☐	☐	☐	X
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☐	X	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☐	X

Summary

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in cooperation with the City of Modesto, Stanislaus County, and the Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG), is proposing to widen State Route 219 in the city of Modesto and Stanislaus County. The proposed project would upgrade the existing roadway from a two-lane conventional highway to a four-lane conventional highway. In addition, Caltrans would improve intersections and add a median and clear recovery zone. Project costs for the proposed alternatives studied range from $19,835,000 to $26,707,000 (as of December 2002). The project is scheduled to begin construction in the summer of 2006.

Purpose and Need

The volume of traffic and, most notably, the number of trucks traveling the route are higher than the optimum levels recommended for a two-lane conventional highway. The roadway is congested during peak hours and has a high accident rate at intersections where vehicles making left-turns must cross oncoming traffic. The purpose of the project is to provide additional lanes to improve the capacity of the roadway and reduce traffic congestion, improve intersections to improve safety conditions for cross-traffic and left-turning traffic, and to include a median and clear recovery zone to upgrade the roadway to current design standards.

Proposed Alternatives

The proposed alternatives for this project include a no-build alternative and two build alternatives. Both build alternatives would add an additional lane for each direction of traffic, with improvements. The two build alternatives differ in their proposed median widths and direction of widening. Alternative 1 would widen the roadway to the north and provide acquisition of right-of-way for additional lanes to be added in the future, while Alternative 2 proposes a standard median width, with widening to both sides (north and south) of the existing roadway.

Both build alternatives would include the following improvements:

- Intersections would be brought up to current design standards and the following intersections would be studied to determine if traffic signals are needed: Dale Road, Carver Road, and Tully Road.

- Standard crossing arms at the Tidewater Southern Railroad crossing would not be sufficient for the proposed roadway width. Two crossing arms would be required in the median, in addition to the crossing arms placed in the shoulder.
- Utility poles would have to be relocated to create a six-meter (20-foot) clear recovery zone outside the paved shoulder throughout the project limits.
- Lateral drainage ditches would be constructed throughout the length of the project to direct drainage to four retention basins located near Stoddard Road, Dale Road, Carver Road, and State Route 108 (McHenry Avenue).
- Several access alternatives at the Stanislaus Union Elementary School (see maps of the three access alternatives in Appendix A) are proposed as well.

Alternative 1: Widen North

This alternative proposes to widen the existing two-lane highway to four lanes from State Route 99 to State Route 108 (McHenry Avenue). The standard lane width would be 3.6-meters (12 feet) with 3.0-meter (10-foot) outside shoulders and a 18.6-meter-wide (61-foot-wide) unpaved median. The proposed centerline of the roadway would be shifted north of the centerline of the existing highway (see Figure 2-3).

Alternative 2: Widen Symmetrically

This alternative also proposes to widen the existing two-lane highway to four lanes, from State Route 99 to State Route 108 (McHenry Avenue). However, in this alternative, the lane width would be 3.6 meters (12 feet) with 2.4-meter (eight-foot) outside shoulders and a 4.8-meter (16-foot) paved median. The existing centerline of the roadway would be maintained.

No Build Alternative (No Action)

Existing conditions would continue if the No Build Alternative is selected. The route would remain a two-lane highway with features that do not meet current design standards. There would be no median or clear recovery zone. The level of service would continue to deteriorate and the number of accidents would likely increase as traffic volumes continue to rise. The identified transportation needs for the area would not be met.

Impact Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation

Relocation

Some residences and businesses would have to be relocated as a result of the construction of this project. Implementation of the Relocation Assistance Program would minimize these effects as required by law.

Noise

Caltrans recommends noise abatement for the residential subdivision at Sisk Road where a soundwall is recommended to replace an existing wall. Impacts from increased noise levels would be mitigated following Federal Highway Administration guidance under Title 23, Part 772 of the Code of Federal Regulations for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise. Noise abatement for the Stanislaus Union Elementary School is being considered with several of the access alternatives to the school.

Biology

As a precautionary measure, pre-construction surveys would be conducted for special-status species, including Swainson's hawks, redtail hawks, burrowing owls, roosting bats and presence of San Joaquin kit fox. These surveys would support the official finding that there would be no direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on any special-status species as a result of the construction of this project.

Cultural

The Finding of No Adverse Effect is conditional to the establishment of an Environmentally Sensitive Area during the construction phase of the project at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church property.