

City of El Cerrito

Active Transportation Plan

Initial Study Checklist



June 2015



Lead Agency:
City of El Cerrito
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Title

Active Transportation Plan

Lead Agency Name and Address

City of El Cerrito
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Contact Person and Phone Number

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Project Location

The Planning Area encompasses the entire 3.7-square mile City of El Cerrito and extends into public right-of-ways in the cities of Richmond and Albany. The City and project boundaries are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: City of El Cerrito in the Context of California and Alameda County



Project Sponsor's Name and Address

City of El Cerrito
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

General Plan Designation

Varies

Zoning

Varies

Project Purpose and Overview

The Active Transportation Plan (ATP, Plan) represents the City of El Cerrito's vision for enhanced bicycle and pedestrian circulation. It is a combination of the Bikeways Master Plan and Pedestrian Master Plan and it serves as an update of the *Circulation Plan for Bicyclists and Pedestrians* (adopted in 2007), which established bicycle and pedestrian networks and project lists throughout the City.

The ATP includes a set of goals, policies, implementation programs for the bicycle and pedestrian network, and related capital projects to help accomplish this vision. The bicycle and pedestrian network only includes areas in the public right-of-way, including sidewalks, portions of streets, public easements, the Greenway, and station areas. The ATP does not address roadway or vehicle travel characteristics. The ATP includes both short- and long term policies and programs through 2035. (Timelines are identified in Table 6-1 of the ATP.)

Project Objectives

The objectives of the ATP are as follows:

- Continue to improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians;
- Update and enhance bicycle and pedestrian networks to encourage more bicycling and walking;
- Build off the ADA Transition Plan and Climate Action Plan;
- Focus on 2007 routes that required additional evaluation;
- Recommend bicycle and pedestrian projects based on recent best practice documents, such as the NACTO Urban Bikeway Guide and the updated AASHTO Guide for the Design of Bicycle Facilities;
- Provide grant-ready projects for which the City can pursue competitive grant funding;
- Establish a citywide crosswalk policy to install, enhance, and remove crosswalks throughout the City; and

- Coordinate directly and provide consistency with the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and Complete Streets Plan (2014), City of El Cerrito Urban Greening Plan (in development), City of Richmond Bicycle Master Plan (2011) and City of Albany Active Transportation Plan (2014).

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) necessitates evaluation of any project that requires discretionary approval by a government agency which may cause an indirect or direct physical change in the environment. These ATP objectives translate into the policies and programs that represent the key components of the ATP and that will serve as the basis for environmental impact analysis of the Project.

Key Components

While many of the ATP policies and programs are conceptual and may be implemented citywide as appropriate and as funding allows, other improvements are specific to certain locations. Moreover, many of the policies and programs in the ATP are existing City policies, having already been adopted as part of the 2007 Circulation Plan for Bicyclists and Pedestrians, Climate Action Plan, Ohlone Greenway Master Plan, or other citywide or area plans. Additionally, the ATP includes adopted projects in other jurisdictions that are relevant to the ATP, such as the new traffic signal at Rydin Road—an improvement which is located in the City of Richmond, as part of the Caltrans Interstate 80 (I-80) Central Interchange Project, and therefore is only analyzed as part of the cumulative analysis in this Initial Study.

The environmental analysis conducted in this Initial Study evaluates Project components to varying degrees, depending on the specificity of the improvement and its potential to create an adverse physical impact. As a result, there are several Project components which may require additional analysis in the future once the improvement measure is further engineered or detailed. These instances are highlighted within the individual environmental topics of the Environmental Checklist section of this Initial Study.

Key components of the ATP are summarized as follows. (Please refer to the ATP chapter number referenced below for the complete list of goals, policies, and programs.)

Goals and Policies (Chapter 2)

The Plan identifies six goals that express the desired outcomes of the vision and objectives described above:

- Goal 1: Support bicycling and walking as being practical, healthy, and convenient in El Cerrito.
- Goal 2: Implement a well-connected active transportation system to attract users of all ages and abilities.
- Goal 3: Incorporate the needs and concerns of bicyclists and pedestrians in all transportation and development projects.
- Goal 4: Support infrastructure investments with targeted bicycle and pedestrian education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation programs.
- Goal 5: Maximize multi-modal connections in the transportation network
- Goal 6: Improve citywide bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Major bicycle policies that help to achieve these goals through capital improvements include expansion of the bicycle network, implementation of a wayfinding program, and installation of capital projects such as bicycle signal detectors. Pedestrian policies include improving crosswalks, installing pedestrian signals, and enhancing safety by reducing vehicle turning speeds (e.g., by reducing corner radii and providing protected signal phasing).

Policy measures also address strategies and programming that do not have physical effects, including: education, information dissemination, monitoring, guidance for future planning documents and development projects, funding, code and law enforcement, and coordination with City departments and other jurisdictions and agencies. With adoption of the Plan, these policy measures would be implemented citywide, as relevant.

Program Recommendations (Chapter 2)

Program recommendations include more specific implementation measures that would be undertaken primarily by City staff and decision-makers. These recommendations address education, safety, maintenance, signal installation and timing modifications, coordination with City departments and regional/State transportation agencies, and revisions to policy documents (i.e., Zoning Ordinance, General Plan) to maintain consistency between these existing documents and the ATP.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Improvements (Chapter 4)

Pedestrian improvements are illustrated in Figure 4-1 and listed in Table 4-1 of the ATP; bicycle improvements are illustrated in Figure 4-2 and listed in Table 4-2 of the ATP. (See Appendix A for details.) These improvements identify specific locations throughout the city and include the following key physical improvements:

- Sidewalk installation, replacement, and repair;

- Curb extensions at corners to reduce crossing distances;
- Pedestrian-activated signals (including Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons with solid red and flashing red phases)
- Additional bike lanes and routes throughout the city;
- One-way cycle tracks (i.e., bike lanes separated from traffic by parallel parking) on San Pablo Avenue which will necessitate a reduced median, and vehicle lane restriping and narrowing (though not lane removal);
- Extension of the multi-use path connecting the Ohlone Greenway and the Richmond Greenway and widening of the Cerrito Creek multi-use Trail; and
- Removing stop controls for bicycles on the Greenway and replacing them with yield control at several locations.

Additionally, the Project includes the following bikeway classification system:

- Shared-Use Path (Class I Bikeway)
- Cycle Tracks (One-Way or Two-Way)
- Buffered Bicycle Lanes
- Bicycle Lanes (Class II Bike Lane)
- Bicycle Boulevard (where bicycles are prioritized through signal timing or other means)
- Bicycle Routes with Sharrows (shared bicycle/vehicular travel lanes)

This Initial Study (IS) analyzes the ATP's potential environmental impacts at a program level, and at a project level where sufficient information about the project is known and available. The IS also identifies those projects where additional information is needed prior to project approval. These designated projects will be subject to supplemental environmental review to determine if potentially adverse project specific impacts could occur that would not be mitigated to a less-than-significant level through the mitigation measures and project modifications contained in this IS, and/or where additional site specific/project-specific measures are needed.

In addition, several of these project components are categorically exempt from CEQA review according to the CEQA Statute (Article 19, Sections 15301, 15033, and 15304). Exemptions are permitted for existing facilities (e.g., streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails), filling of earth into previously excavated land, Class III facilities (bicycle routes) and Class II (bike lanes) that do not require roadway reconfiguration—only painting, striping, signs, maintenance and minor construction such as curb ramps—provided that the

improvement is not subject to exceptions such as location, cumulative impact, and historic resources.

Where sufficient detail is known about Class I and Class II facilities and other improvements that may have physical effects on the environment and that are not identified as categorical exemptions, these improvements are evaluated in this Initial Study. Additional improvement measures are presented as concepts in the ATP that need more analysis or refinement, and therefore may require additional analysis in the future. These measures include: stop-warrant analysis (to determine if stop sign controls are needed) and portions of some focus area projects which require further engineering and therefore may require additional environmental analysis, as discussed in the following section.

Finally, improvements along San Pablo Avenue, such as the cycletrack, have already been documented in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan. This Plan was evaluated for CEQA purposes by the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Draft EIR. Although the Specific Plan's contents are further supported by the ATP, evaluation of its environmental effects is not duplicated in this Initial Study. Rather, this Initial Study evaluates the ATP for consistency with the Specific Plan's adopted policy.

Focus Area Projects and Other Priority Projects (Chapter 5)

The ATP includes nine focus area projects, as well as a set of medium- and low-priority projects. The focus area projects are detailed in Figures 5-1 through 5-9 of the ATP (and provided in Appendix A). The elements of the projects that would create physical changes to the environment are summarized below.

1. BART to Bay Trail Access Improvements: This project seeks to improve pedestrian and bicycle connections between the Plaza Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) Station and the Bay Trail, which runs along the waterfront. Specific improvements include installation of a pedestrian-activated beacon on Carlson Boulevard and the addition of a Class I path along Cerrito Creek, Pierce Street, and Central Avenue, under I-80. This project would require coordination with the City of Richmond, as the project extends through both El Cerrito and Richmond. It would also require additional engineering to determine the alignment of the Class I paths, and as a result would necessitate site-specific environmental analysis.
2. Ohlone Greenway Crossing Improvements: This project seeks to improve mobility, safety, and information/wayfinding along the Greenway. Specific improvements include: curb extensions to reduce crossing distances, and replacement of stop signs

with yield signs on intersecting streets with low traffic volumes (i.e., less than 4,500 vehicles/day) to increase mobility.

3. Citywide Wayfinding: Implementation of this program would create a network of signs throughout the city directing pedestrians and bicyclists to preferred routes, community destinations, and transit connections.
4. Arlington Boulevard Pedestrian Improvements: To improve pedestrian safety on Arlington Boulevard, this project intends to construct sidewalks where there are currently none and install curb extensions and flashing beacons at crosswalks to reduce crossing distances and vehicle speeds, and increase pedestrian visibility.
5. East Side Bicycle Boulevard: This project intends to create a bicycle boulevard running north-south through city (along and near Norvell Street) to improve bicycle access and safety to residential neighborhoods and schools. Improvements include raised intersections and crosswalks, pedestrian-activated beacons, and new bicycle and pedestrian striping.
6. East Side Bicycle Boulevard Wayfinding: The project would provide wayfinding signage for the new bicycle boulevard proposed in Focus Area Project #5, to improve connections to transit and other community destinations.
7. Key Boulevard Improvements: This project seeks to improve connections and enhance safety for bicyclists traveling to the Del Norte BART Station. Portions of Key Boulevard are identified in the ATP as excessively wide for the vehicle volumes on the street. The main physical improvements for this project include curb and sidewalk extensions, removal of four parking spaces, and reduced travel lane widths to decrease the width of the street at certain non-standard intersections (i.e., at the Colon Avenue and Humboldt Street intersections). These improvements are intended to better define a path of travel for bicycles (with either bicycle lanes or sharrows) and to create clearer expectations between bicyclists and vehicles through the large intersection.
8. Fairmount Avenue Improvements: This project intends to improve pedestrian and bicycle connections and enhance safety around the Plaza BART Station, El Cerrito Plaza, and San Pablo Avenue. Key physical improvements include curb extensions and median refuges to reduce crossing distances, raised crosswalks to increase driver awareness, and installation of pedestrian-activated beacons and bicycle “escape ramps” (which connect bicycle lanes to sidewalks to allow for safer turns).
9. Potrero Avenue Improvements: This project seeks to improve bicycle access on one of the few direct east-west bicycle routes through the city. In addition to striping bicycle

lanes and adding sharrows along various portions of Potrero Avenue, the project would reduce vehicle travel lane widths and eliminate or reduce the length of turn lanes to accommodate bicycle lanes and medians. A conceptual plan is also presented to convert one travel lane in each direction into bicycle lanes in each direction and a widened median. If the number of travel lanes or turn lanes are reduced, more detailed implementation plans of this proposal would necessitate site-specific environmental analysis.

The ATP also includes a set of medium- and low-priority projects that would be implemented if time and funding resources become available or, implemented opportunistically, such as in coordination with an adjacent development project. The projects include many of the same types of measures described for the focus area projects, but for lower priority locations. Improvements include: striping for bicycle lanes and routes, sidewalk repair and installation (where sidewalks are currently missing), crosswalk enhancements, directional signage, stairway steps and handrail upgrades, and extended park trail connections. Traffic calming features on Lincoln Avenue include refining traffic signal timing and “flipping” stop signs (i.e., alternating the stop-controlled and free-flowing directions) to prioritize bicycles.

Crosswalk Policy (Appendix A)

The Crosswalk Policy describes conceptual policies, considerations, and a range of implementation measures for crosswalk enhancement, installation, and removal, in order to improve accessibility and safety. It is a tool for decision-makers to identify the appropriate improvements for specific pedestrian crossing locations.

Consistency with State Guidelines

The Active Transportation Program was created within the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in 2013, consolidating several existing federal and state transportation programs for pedestrian and bicycle transportation. Per the 2014 State requirements, conforming plans needed to have 17 key elements, as described in Appendix C of the ATP in order to be eligible for State Active Transportation Program funding. The El Cerrito ATP satisfies these requirements.

Construction

Construction would be fairly limited in scale and duration for individual projects, though the Project as a whole would continue to be implemented through 2035 when the ATP sunsets. Construction activities would include limited grading related to multi-use trail projects;

excavation to approximately 3-foot depth for curb extensions and median and sidewalk installation; underground utility and storm drain relocation; and removal or relocation of trees.

The ATP does not include construction of substantial above-ground structures and therefore no pile driving is proposed. Above-ground construction would include installation of posts for wayfinding signage, transit shelters, benches, and overhead poles for pedestrian signals. No buildings would be constructed as a result of the Project. Construction activities would primarily be within the public right-of-way including streets, curbs, sidewalks, park trails, and hillside stairs.

The number of travel lanes may be temporarily reduced at intersections for a period of approximately two to four weeks, while curb extensions and/or medians are installed at various locations. During the installation of raised crosswalks for Focus Area Project #5: East Side Bicycle Boulevards (at approximately three intersections) and as part of Focus Area Project #8 on Fairmount Avenue (at approximately six intersections), street closures and detours may be required for one to two-week periods during installation. Improvements to stairs and handrails would likely require temporary or intermittent closure of staircases for a two to four-week periods.

Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

The City of El Cerrito is located in the East Bay region of the San Francisco Bay Area. It is the southernmost jurisdiction in Contra Costa County, surrounded by the City of Richmond to the west, unincorporated Contra Costa County to the north and east, and the City of Albany (in Alameda County) to the south. I-80 runs north-south near the western edge of the city. The East Bay Regional Park District's Wildcat Canyon Regional Park is located east of the city.

Several other agencies have jurisdiction and/or operations that coincide with the ATP and implementation of its policies and programs. San Pablo Avenue, which runs parallel to I-80, is the main north-south route along the western edge of the city. Also known as State Route 123, San Pablo Avenue is maintained by Caltrans. The Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit) provides local, express, and transbay regional bus service throughout the city and offers connections to points in the East Bay and greater region. BART provides regional train service throughout the East Bay and the region, and has two stops in El Cerrito—the Plaza and Del Norte stations.

Requested Applications and Other Participating Agencies

Lead Agency	
City of El Cerrito	City Council would be responsible for adoption of the ATP, and funding approval through the capital improvements program process and grant programs
Responsible Agencies	
Caltrans	Would be a responsible party for any projects that necessitate an encroachment permit for work on San Pablo Avenue within the State Route 123 section.

Other public agencies whose approval may be required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):

City of Richmond

City of Albany

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

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

- Aesthetics
- Biological Resources
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Land Use/Planning
- Population/Housing
- Transportation/Traffic
- Agriculture and Forestry
- Cultural Resources
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- Mineral Resources
- Public Services
- Utilities/Service Systems
- Air Quality
- Geology/Soils
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Noise
- Recreation
- Mandatory Findings

Determination. (To be completed by the Lead Agency.)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature

6/25/15

Date

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A. AESTHETICS				
Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Affected Environment

The Project would be implemented on public rights-of-way and other public locations (i.e., BART station areas and parks) that are already developed with urban uses, primarily residential neighborhoods and commercial retail development. Some project improvements, such as those to the Greenway, Arlington Boulevard, and park trails, would be implemented along and/or within parks and open spaces.

Discussion

a) *Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?*

Less Than Significant. The El Cerrito General Plan identifies the following scenic resources in the city: views to the west—of San Francisco and San Pablo Bays, Marin County, San Francisco, and Albany Hill; and views to the east—of the East Bay Hills and ridgelines of Wildcat Canyon Park.¹ The following General Plan policy addresses vistas:

Policy CD1.7: Views and Vistas. Preserve and enhance major views and vistas along major streets and open spaces, providing areas to stroll and benches to rest and enjoy views.

¹ City of El Cerrito, 1999. *General Plan Community Development and Design Element*: 4-28.

The Project helps to implement this policy by adding streetscape improvements, and new or improved walking and biking routes that would expand locations where views can be seen. New trail connections within and along public parks, including Arlington Park, Canyon Trail Park, and Hillside Natural Area would provide beneficial impacts by adding public viewpoints of scenic vistas.

The Project does not include substantial constructed features (e.g., buildings or towers) that would affect existing views, but street trees and street lighting would be installed as part of streetscape improvements and other pedestrian network improvements. These improvements are identified as pedestrian-scaled and therefore are not anticipated to be tall enough to obstruct views or to create an adverse effect on scenic vistas such as views of the Bay or of the hillsides. As a result, the potential for the Project to have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista is less than significant.

b) *Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway?*

No Impact. The portions of I-80 and I-580 visible from the Planning Area are not designated as Scenic Highways, according to California Scenic Highway mapping system. As a result, the Project would not substantially damage scenic resources within a State Scenic Highway and no impact would occur.

c) *Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?*

Less Than Significant. The Project would change the appearance of the public rights-of-way in the city with: additional lane striping for bicycles; new multi-use paths, landscaping, lighting, crosswalks, sidewalks, signage, and pedestrian signals; modifications to corner curbs (i.e., curb extensions or bump-outs) and medians; and repairs to sidewalks. The General Plan includes the following policies regarding visual character and quality related to public rights-of-way and pedestrian and bicycle facilities:

Policy CD 2.4: Multi-Modal Transportation Network. Ensure that streets, paths, and bikeways contribute to the system of a fully connected transportation network to all major destinations in the City. The design of these streets and pathways should encourage pedestrian and bicycle uses by being spatially defined by buildings, trees, lighting, and street furniture. Pedestrian and bicycle pathways and auto routes should be compatible.

Policy CD 3.11: Streetscape Design. Streetscape design (street trees, lighting, and pedestrian furniture) should be used to lend character and continuity with commercial districts and residential neighborhoods.

Additionally, the General Plan identifies and seeks to protect “sacred places” including the large rock outcropping at the top of Cutting Boulevard, Cerrito Creek, landmark businesses and historic resources.²

The Project would enhance access to the “sacred places,” but is not expected to adversely impact these resources. Project improvements described above would improve the overall appearance of public rights-of-way by upgrading existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, adding sidewalks and signage where they are currently missing, and installing new infrastructure, paint, and landscaping. As a result, the Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the city and the impact would be less-than-significant.

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

Less Than Significant. The Project would create new street lighting, flashing beacons, and other pedestrian-activated signals that would create new potential sources for light and glare in the city.

As indicated in the ATP, full-time overhead or post-mounted flashing beacons are not recommended. Beacon signals would be pedestrian-activated through a push-button or passive detection. Therefore, these beacons would only flash temporarily when activated and are not anticipated create light or glare beyond that of a standard traffic light.

Further, lighting of bicycle and pedestrian facilities will be limited to that required for safety. The installation of flashing beacons and their visibility are guided by the Caltrans Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and Caltrans Standards. Whenever possible, lighting will be directed down onto the facility itself and will not spill over onto adjacent land uses.

² City of El Cerrito, 1999. *General Plan Community Development and Design Element*: 4-28.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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B. AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST 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. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significantly environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state’s inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in forest protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. 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 a non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Governmental Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The proposed project is located in an urbanized area and is not shown as agricultural land on the State of California Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program Map 2010. There is no land under Williamson Act contract or forest zoned land in the City of El Cerrito. The proposed project would not cause or induce the conversion of forest land and agricultural land because the City is already urbanized. Therefore, the project would have no impact on agricultural and forest resources.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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C. 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Affected Environment

The Project is located in the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin, which is regulated by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and the Bay Area 2010 Clean Air Plan—the most recent clean air plan adopted by BAAQMD in September 2010.

Discussion

- a) *Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?*

Less Than Significant. The Project would not affect population or employment growth. As a result, it would not result in growth that exceeds growth estimates of the Bay Area 2010 Clean Air Plan³ and would not generate emissions beyond what have been accounted for in the Clean Air Plan. Rather, the Project would contribute to fulfilment of the objectives of the Clean Air Plan by encouraging biking and walking trips. It would potentially reduce vehicle

³ Bay Area Air Quality Management District, 2010. *Bay Area 2010 Clean Air Plan.*

trips and therefore have a beneficial impact by helping to reduce emissions of greenhouse gas, particulate matter, and other pollutants. The Project's potential to conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Clean Air Plan would be less than significant.

- b) *Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?*

Less Than Significant. Ambient air quality standards have been established at both the State and federal level. The Bay Area Air Basin is considered a non-attainment area for ground-level ozone and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) under both the Federal Clean Air Act and the California Clean Air Act. The area is also considered non-attainment for respirable particulate matter (PM₁₀) under California standards, but not national standards.⁴

The BAAQMD Air Quality Guidelines do not have quantified thresholds related to direct and indirect criteria pollutant emissions resulting from plan implementation (as opposed to project implementation). Instead, proposed plans must show consistency with current air quality control measures and show that the plan's projected vehicle miles traveled increase would be less than or equal to its projected population increase. Operation of the Project is expected to increase bicycle and pedestrian trips, thereby potentially reducing vehicle trips and associated greenhouse gas emissions, in particular air pollutants associated with motor vehicle use (ground level ozone and PM₁₀). It would not generate additional population. Therefore, the Project would not exceed BAAQMD thresholds.

Effects on air quality would be limited to temporary construction impacts. Air pollutants would be generated from construction equipment operations and fugitive dust caused by ground disturbance during project construction (e.g., curb extensions and construction of sidewalks, medians, etc.). However, these impacts would not be of such quantity or duration to exceed BAAQMD thresholds. Therefore, implementation of the Project would have beneficial air quality impacts during operation of the Project and would result in less-than-significant impact on violation of air quality standards.

⁴ Bay Area Air Quality Management District, 2015. "Air Quality Standards and Attainment Status." http://hank.baaqmd.gov/pln/air_quality/ambient_air_quality.htm. Accessed April 9, 2015.

- 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)?*

Less Than Significant. As described in the response in *Section C.b*, above, the Project would have a beneficial impact on air quality compared to existing conditions and therefore would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant with non-attainment status (i.e., ozone, PM2.5, and PM10).

- d) *Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?*

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation. Sensitive receptors in the Planning Area include children, students, and seniors in such locations at local schools, day cares, and the Open House Senior Center. Potential impacts during construction and operation phases on the Project are analyzed below.

During operation of the Project, pedestrians and bicyclists in close proximity to locations where truck traffic is plentiful—namely, I-80 and to a lesser extent San Pablo Avenue—would be temporarily exposed to outdoor toxic air contaminants, particularly fine particulate matter from diesel truck exhaust. Focus Area Project #1 and improvements along Cutting Boulevard, both create bicycle facilities under the I-80 freeway in order to connect to destinations, including the Bay Trail. (While only a small portion of the City’s boundary extends across and along I-80, the ATP connects the Project’s improvements to the City of Richmond’s planned improvements which lie closer to the I-80.) The cycletrack on San Pablo Avenue would likewise temporarily expose bicyclists to toxic air contaminants.

Cancer risk and PM2.5 exposure are based on chronic or long-term exposures. Since bicyclists and pedestrians would be short-term, these impacts do not apply; they would not be exposed to these emissions long enough to be adversely exposed. For example, the cancer risk impacts are based on nearly continuous lifetime exposures (i.e., 70 years), while PM2.5 impacts are based on annual exposures.

Construction activities could temporarily expose nearby sensitive receptors to pollutant concentrations, principally PM10 and PM2.5, from fugitive dust sources. The relatively short construction period and limited scale of construction for the project components is not expected to result in any health risks to residents or sensitive receptors. The greatest impact from construction activities are those related to the emissions of diesel particulate matter from construction equipment and truck traffic. This is a potentially significant impact. However, implementation of mitigation measure AQ-1 would ensure compliance with BAAQMD best

management practices for fugitive dust control, and would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure AQ-1 – Air Quality Best Management Practices: The construction contractor shall institute a dust control program, which shall be submitted to the City's Public Works Department and approved prior to any construction activity. Elements of the dust and emissions control program shall include, but not be limited to, the following measures:

- During construction, all exposed surfaces (e.g. parking areas, staging areas, soil piles, graded areas, and unpaved access roads) shall be watered at least two times per day to control dust particulates. Cover all hauling trucks or maintain at least two feet of freeboard.
- Pave, apply water at least twice daily, or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers on all unpaved access roads, parking areas, and staging areas.
- Sweep daily (with water sweepers) all paved access roads, parking areas, and staging areas and sweep streets daily (with water sweepers) if visible soil material is deposited onto the adjacent roads.
- Hydroseed or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers to inactive construction areas (i.e., previously graded areas that are inactive for 10 days or more).
- Enclose, cover, water twice daily, or apply (non-toxic) soil binders to exposed stockpiles.
- Limit traffic speeds on any unpaved roads to 15 mph.
- Replant vegetation in disturbed areas as quickly as possible.
- Suspend construction activities that cause visible dust plumes to extend beyond the construction site.
- Post a publically visible sign(s) with the telephone number and person to contact at the Lead Agency regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 48 hours. The Air District's phone number shall also be visible to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.
- The contractor shall provide a plan for approval by the Public Works Department or BAAQMD demonstrating that the heavy-duty (>50 horsepower) off-road vehicles to be used in the construction project, including owned, leased and subcontractor vehicles, will achieve a project wide fleet-average 20 percent NOX reduction and 45 percent particulate reduction compared to the most recent CARB fleet average.
- Clear signage at all construction sites shall be posted indicating that diesel equipment standing idle for more than five minutes shall be turned off. This would include trucks

waiting to deliver or receive soil, aggregate, or other bulk materials. Rotating drum concrete trucks could keep their engines running continuously as long as they were on-site or adjacent to the construction site.

- The contractor shall install temporary electrical service whenever possible to avoid the need for independently powered equipment (e.g., compressors).
- Properly tune and maintain equipment for low emissions.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-1 would represent Best Management Practices recommended by best management practices, and therefore, reduce the potential impact of construction period fugitive dust to a less-than-significant level and also reduce construction period emissions.

e) *Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?*

Less Than Significant. No odors are anticipated during operation of the Project. Odors resulting from the combustion of diesel fuel during construction activities could create localized objectionable odors. The odors would be temporary and localized to the construction site. Therefore, the Project would not create objectionable odors that would affect a substantial number of people.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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D. 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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 US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Affected Environment

The Planning Area is a highly developed urban area. Scattered trees, such as eucalyptus, redwood junipers, palms, cypress, coast live oak, and planted pines and redwoods, and shrubs

exist in the city, most of which are introduced species planted as urban landscaping, providing some minor value to wildlife. There are several above ground creek segments running through the city and in City parks, such as Baxter Creek Gateway Park, the Ohlone Greenway, Canyon Trail, Poinsett, Creekside, and Huber Parks, and along El Cerrito Plaza.

Discussion

- 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?*

Less Than Significant. A recent review of the California Natural Diversity Database in the as part of the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan environmental analysis identified one special-status species that has the potential to occur in the ATP Planning Area: the Alameda whipsnake (*Masticophis lateralis euryxanthus*), a federal and State threatened species. However, based on the urban conditions in the Planning Area, suitable habitat for the Alameda whipsnake does not currently exist in the urban portions of the city where the majority of project improvements would take place. Trail improvements in open spaces and parks would not increase paved areas and effects are not anticipated beyond noise impacts during construction which would be temporary. Moreover, the General Plan requires replacement of any lost habitat through the following policies:

Policy R1.1: Habitat Protection. Preserve oak/woodland, riparian vegetation, creeks, native grasslands, wildlife corridors and other important wildlife habitats. Loss of these habitats should be fully offset through creation of habitat of equal value. Compensation rate for habitat re-creation shall be determined by a qualified biologist.

Policy R1.2: Rare and Endangered Species. Limit development in areas that support rare and endangered species. If development of these areas must occur, any loss of habitat should be fully compensated on-site. If off-site mitigation is necessary, it should occur within the El Cerrito planning area whenever possible, and must be accompanied by plans and a monitoring program prepared by a qualified biologist.

Given the scope of the Project and existing regulations, the Project is not anticipated to have a substantial adverse effect on the Alameda whipsnake's habitat. As a result the Project would have a less-than-significant impact on plant or animal species identified as a candidate,

sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.⁵

- 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 US Fish and Wildlife Service?*

Less Than Significant. The only identified riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community in the City of El Cerrito is the riparian habitat adjacent to Cerrito Creek and Baxter Creek, including a grove of willows along Baxter Creek which is under the regulatory jurisdiction of the CDFW under section 1601 of the California Fish and Game Code. As part of the completed Baxter Creek restoration, any improvements to open water channels (e.g., Cerrito Creek) as part of the ATP would be subject to the Joint Aquatic Resource Permit Application (JARPA) process.⁶ The ATP proposes trails and overpasses at creek locations and therefore would be subject to these regulations.

Additionally, for portions of the ATP that lie within the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, Section 2.05.06.01.01--Creeks will apply. These regulations include standards to: (1) protect or establish riparian corridors, including a minimum 35-foot setback from stream center lines; and, (2) “provide adequate setbacks outside the riparian corridor for creekbed maintenance and pedestrian access”.

Municipal Code chapter 19.12 (Creek Protection Overlay District) also would apply city-wide. These regulations specify permitted uses and development standards for improvements adjacent to the creek to control flood and erosion damages and preserve natural watercourses as an important public asset. As of result of the limited effects of the Project as it relates to riparian habitat and existing regulations, the Project’s impact is anticipated to be less than significant.

- 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?*

No Impact. The City of El Cerrito does not contain any federally protected wetlands.⁷ Therefore, the Project would have no impact on protected wetlands.

⁵ San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan EIR, 2014.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

- 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*

Less Than Significant. The primary wildlife corridors in El Cerrito are within the City's Hillside Natural Area and to a lesser extent along open reaches of the City's creeks in the hills. As described in response to *Section D.a*, trail improvements in open spaces and parks are not anticipated to have impacts during operation of the Project since improvements are limited to unpaved trail development and related site improvements; noise impacts during construction would be temporary and therefore are not anticipated to interfere substantially with the movement of wildlife spaces. The City of El Cerrito does not contain native resident or migratory fish.⁸ As a result, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact on fish or wildlife species.

- e) *Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?*

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation. Construction of focus area projects and build out of the bicycle and pedestrian networks may result in the trimming or removal of trees, shrubs or weedy vegetation, which could provide habitat for nesting birds. The City is in the process of preparing a Tree Preservation Ordinance, but it is not yet completed or adopted. Therefore, while the project would not conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, there are mitigation measures that can be implemented to reduce potential impacts on these resources. Implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2 BIO-3, and BIO-4 would reduce the potential impacts to a less-than-significant level:

Mitigation Measure BIO-1 – Nesting Birds: The removal of trees, shrubs, or weedy vegetation shall be avoided during the February 1 through August 31 bird nesting period to the extent possible. If no vegetation or tree removal is proposed during the nesting period, no further action is required. If it is not feasible to avoid the nesting period, the project applicant shall retain a qualified wildlife biologist to conduct a survey for nesting birds no sooner than 14 days prior to the start of removal of trees, shrubs, grassland vegetation, buildings, grading, or other construction activity. Survey results shall be valid for 21 days following the survey; therefore, if vegetation or building removal is not started within 21 days of the survey, another survey shall be required. The area surveyed shall include all construction sites, access roads, and staging areas, as well as areas within 150

⁸ Ibid.

feet outside the boundaries of the areas to be cleared or as otherwise determined by the biologist.

In the event that an active nest is discovered in the areas to be cleared, or in other habitats within 150 feet of construction boundaries, clearing and construction shall be postponed for at least two weeks or until a wildlife biologist has determined that the young have fledged (left the nest), the nest is vacated, and there is no evidence of second nesting attempts.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2 – Pre-Construction Survey for Bats: A qualified biologist shall conduct pre-construction surveys for bats and suitable bat roosting habitat at work sites where culverts, structures and/or trees would be removed or otherwise disturbed prior to the initiation of construction. If bats or suitable bat roosting habitat is detected, CDFW shall be notified immediately for consultation and possible on-site monitoring.

Mitigation Measure BIO-3 – Tree Replacement: A certified arborist approved by the Public Works Department shall perform fieldwork that includes detailing the number of trees to be removed or affected and preserved within each project site. The results of this fieldwork shall form the basis for the appropriate tree replacement ratio. The findings of the field work and associated recommendations shall be reviewed by the Public Works Director for approval and implementation.

Mitigation Measure BIO-4 – Tree Roots: If trimming of roots greater than two inches in diameter is necessary during construction of the Project, a certified arborist approved by the Public Works Department shall be required to review and approve excavation plans and, if determined to be necessary by the arborist, shall be on site during construction to ensure that trimming does not cause an adverse impact to the trees.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3, and BIO-4 would reduce and/or avoid potential impacts on nesting birds and bats, and therefore, reduce the potential impact of construction of the Project to a less-than-significant level.

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?*

No Impact. There are no habitat conservation plans, natural community conservation plans, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plans that apply in the Planning

Area. Therefore, the Project does not conflict with any adopted habitat conservation plan and would have no impact.⁹

⁹ Ibid.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
E. CULTURAL RESOURCES				
Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Affected Environment

As described in the General Plan, prehistoric archaeological sites in Western Contra Costa County are typically located near historical marsh margins, on terraces along watercourses, and at the base of hills near watercourses. Common prehistoric archaeological resources found at such sites include shell middens and bedrock milling stations. The City of El Cerrito is situated to the east of the general zone where shellmounds have been found. Further from the shoreline and upslope, the likelihood of encountering a classic deposit diminishes. There are five recorded prehistoric archaeological sites within El Cerrito’s boundaries.¹⁰ Focus area projects and the build out of the pedestrian and bicycle networks would take place along existing streets and within disturbed and developed right-of-ways and paths, so they would not affect these recorded sites.

¹⁰ City of El Cerrito, 1999. General Plan Resources and Hazards Element: 7-2.

Discussion

a) *Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?*

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation. See response to *Section E.b* below.

b) *Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?*

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation. In areas where bicycle lanes and pathway improvements are proposed along existing streets and within disturbed and developed right-of-ways and paths, there would be no impact on historical or archaeological resources. In some areas the improvement projects would require grading or ground disturbance that may have an impact on unknown, but potentially present historical or archaeological resources. In order to reduce potential impacts to historical or archaeological resources during construction to a less-than-significant level, Mitigation Measure CUL-1 shall be implemented.

Mitigation Measure CUL-1 – Archaeological Resources: If a previously unknown, but potentially significant cultural resource is encountered during clearing, grading and subsurface earthwork activities for any project component, all construction activities within a 100-foot radius of the find shall cease until a qualified archaeologist determines whether the uncovered resource requires further study. The project proponent shall immediately notify the City of El Cerrito Public Works Director and Community Development Director. The project applicant shall include a standard “Inadvertent Discovery Clause” in every construction contract to inform contractors of this requirement. Any previously undiscovered resources found during construction shall be recorded on appropriate California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms and evaluated for significance in terms of California Environmental Quality Act criteria by a qualified archaeologist. Potentially significant cultural resources consist of but are not limited to stone, bone, glass, ceramic, wood, or shell artifacts; fossils; or features including hearths, structural remains, or historic dumpsites. If the resource is determined significant under CEQA, the qualified archaeologist shall prepare and implement a research design and archaeological data recovery plan that will capture those categories of data for which the site is significant. The archaeologist shall also perform appropriate technical analyses, prepare a comprehensive report and file it with the appropriate Information Center (Sonoma State University), and provide for the permanent curation of the recovered materials.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would reduce and/or avoid potential impacts on historic and archeological resources, and therefore, reduce the potential impact of construction to a less-than-significant level.

c) *Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?*

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation. The proposed bicycle/pedestrian improvements do not involve construction which would impact known unique paleontological resources or sites or unique geological features. Although unlikely, in some areas, the proposed bicycle/pedestrian improvement projects would require grading or ground disturbance and therefore may have an impact on paleontological resources. The following mitigation measure shall be applied to the Project to reduce the potential impact.

Mitigation Measure CUL-2 – Paleontological Resources: In the event a fossil is discovered during any earthwork activities for the project components (including those occurring at depths of less than 10 feet), all excavations within 100 feet of the find shall be temporarily halted or delayed until the discovery is examined by a qualified paleontologist, in accordance with Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards. The project applicant shall include a standard “Inadvertent Discovery Clause” in every construction contract to inform contractors of this requirement. The paleontologist shall notify the City of El Cerrito Public Works Director and Community Development Director to determine procedures to be followed before construction is allowed to resume at the location of the find. If the find is determined to be significant and the City determines that avoidance is not feasible, the paleontologist shall design and carry out a data recovery plan consistent with the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards. The plan shall be submitted to the City for review and approval. Upon approval, the plan shall be incorporated into the project.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-2 would reduce and/or avoid potential impacts on paleontological resources, and therefore, reduce the potential impact of construction of the Project to a less-than-significant level.

d) *Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?*

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation. The potential to uncover Native American human remains exists in locations throughout California. Although not anticipated, in some areas, the proposed bicycle/pedestrian improvement projects that involve grading or

ground disturbance could disturb human remains. The following mitigation measure shall be applied to the Project to reduce the potential impact:

Mitigation Measure CUL-3 – Human Remains: If human remains are encountered during earth-disturbing activities for the Project, all work in the adjacent area shall stop immediately and the Alameda County Coroner's office shall be notified immediately. This requirement shall be included in all project construction documents. If the remains are determined to be Native American in origin, the Native American Heritage Commission shall be notified and will identify the Most Likely Descendent, who will be consulted for recommendations for treatment of the discovered remains.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-3 would reduce and/or avoid potential impacts on paleontological resources, and therefore, reduce potential adverse impacts to human remains during construction to a less-than-significant level.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
F. 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:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv. Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Affected Environment

The City of El Cerrito is in the northern portion of the Coast Range geomorphic province of California, which is characterized by northwest-trending mountain ranges and valleys that generally parallel the major geologic structures, such as the San Andreas and Hayward faults. The Hayward fault is the active fault nearest to the city limits. The Hayward fault is a

northwest-trending zone about 51 miles long, which extends from southeastern San Jose through the East Bay communities into San Pablo Bay.

During historic times, well-documented surface creep has occurred along the Hayward fault at average rates ranging from about 0.14 to 0.35 inches per year. Beneath San Pablo Bay, the faulting probably steps right (east) to the Rodgers Creek fault. The proposed bicycle/pedestrian improvements do not involve structures that could be damaged or could injure people directly from fault off-set during a strong earthquake.

Discussion

a) *Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:*

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.*

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Maps published by the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology (1982), most of the city is not located within the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone for the Hayward fault. The project improvements do not involve substantial structures that could be damaged or could injure people directly from fault off-set during a strong earthquake.

ii. *Strong seismic ground shaking?*

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation The entire San Francisco Bay Area is subject to periodic earthquake ground shaking. The potential for strong seismic shaking at the project site is high. Due to their close proximity and historical seismic activity, the Hayward/Rodgers Creek, San Andreas, and Concord/Green Valley faults present the highest potential for severe ground shaking. For example, the Working Group on California Earthquake Probabilities in conjunction with the United States Geological Survey found that there was a 31 percent probability that a magnitude 6.7 or greater earthquake will occur on the Hayward-Rodgers Creek fault system in the next 30 years, a 21 percent probability that a magnitude 6.7 or greater earthquake will occur on the San Andreas fault, and a cumulative 63 percent probability that a magnitude 6.7 or greater earthquake will occur in the San Francisco Bay Region in the next 30 years (USGS 2008).

Unless structures are specifically designed to withstand strong ground motion, proposed bicycle/pedestrian facilities such as bridges and street and railway overcrossings could be damaged. In order to reduce these impacts to a less than significant level, Mitigation Measure GEO-1 shall be implemented:

Mitigation Measure GEO-1 – Geotechnical Investigation: Prior to final design of bicycle/pedestrian improvements that involve significant ground disturbance, and substantial structures such as retaining walls and bridge and overcrossing footings, etc., the City shall complete a geotechnical investigation, consistent with City of El Cerrito requirements, to identify design measures to mitigate impacts associated with poor soil conditions, unstable slopes, landslides, and earthquake related events such as groundshaking and ground failure, and implement those measures in the respective bicycle/pedestrian improvement plans.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation. Liquefaction occurs when loose sand and silt that is saturated with water behaves like a liquid when shaken by a seismic event, potentially resulting in a loss of soil strength and settling or subsidence. In some instances, lateral movements of the ground surface can also occur as a result of liquefaction through a phenomenon known as lateral spreading. Liquefaction and lateral spreading can constitute a significant geologic hazard, causing damage to bridges and other site improvements. In order to reduce these impacts to a less than significant level, Mitigation Measures GEO-1 shall be implemented.

iv. Landslides?

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated. The hillsides in the north and east of El Cerrito are prone to landslides. The City's General Plan discourages development from these areas and the ATP does not propose any development in these areas. However, grading related to new pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure could contribute to the risk of landslides. Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce potential landslide impacts on the site to a less-than-significant level.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Less Than Significant. The sidewalk improvements and bicycle facilities that would be constructed within the paved rights-of-way are unlikely to cause significant soil erosion or loss

of topsoil. The proposed pathway projects that would be constructed on steeper slopes or near creeks have the potential to cause erosion and sedimentation. The City of El Cerrito requires the review of each proposed project component regarding the need to prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to prevent stormwater quality related impacts including erosion and sedimentation during and following construction. Implementation of this existing regulation would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level.

- 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?*

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation. Subsidence or collapse can result from the removal of subsurface water resulting in either catastrophic or gradual depression of the surface elevation of the project site. The Project would not affect groundwater therefore, subsidence or collapse of site soils is not likely. Soils may be subject to liquefaction and landslides, as described above. In order to reduce these potential impacts to a less-than-significant level, Mitigation Measure GEO-1 shall be implemented.

- 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?*

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation. In areas underlain by expansive soils and compacted, engineered fill high shrink-swell soil activity can disrupt or damage paved surfaces as well as the foundations of public access facility structures such as pedestrian bridges. In order to reduce these potential impacts to a less-than-significant level, Mitigation Measure GEO-1 shall be implemented.

- 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?*

No Impact. No septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems would be utilized as part of the Project. The City uses a municipal sewer system.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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G. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Affected Environment

The City of El Cerrito adopted a Climate Action Plan in 2013 to provide guidance for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Plan identifies an emissions reduction target of 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 and 30 percent below 2005 emissions’ levels by 2035. The transportation sector (i.e., vehicle emissions) represents just over half (51%) of all emissions in the city according to the 2005 baseline inventory and therefore transportation is one of the five key strategies for emissions reduction that is outlined in the Climate Action Plan.

Discussion

- a) *Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?*

Less Than Significant. Construction activities (i.e., the use of vehicles and other equipment) related to bicycle and pedestrian facilities would increase greenhouse gas emissions (e.g., carbon dioxide) temporarily during construction. This impact is not considered to be significant given the limited scope and duration of construction for each project component.

During operation, the Project would encourage additional bicycle and pedestrian trips and potentially result in fewer vehicle trips compared to existing conditions which would potentially reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact on directly or indirectly generating greenhouse gas emissions.

- b) *Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?*

Less Than Significant. The City's Climate Action Plan includes the following key goals and objectives related to bicycle and pedestrian facilities:

Goal SC-3: Continue to invest in infrastructure that invites people to walk, bike, and take transit more in El Cerrito.

Objective SC-3.3: Continue implementation of the *Oblone Greenway Master Plan* and create greater connections between the Greenway, San Pablo Avenue and other regional trail networks.

Objective SC-3.4: Expand and improve the City's transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and zero-emission vehicle infrastructure.

Goal SC-5: Develop alternative transportation outreach, education, and incentive campaigns tailored to El Cerrito.

The Project would help to implement these Climate Action Plan objectives by creating programs to add wayfinding signage, trails, sidewalks, bicycle lanes and routes, and other facilities that facilitate bicycle and pedestrian circulation. Therefore, the Project would have a beneficial impact on greenhouse gas emissions' reduction goals. As a result, the potential impact to conflict with applicable emissions reductions plans and policies would be less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
H. HAZARDS				
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Affected Environment

There are a number of automobile service stations and other commercial uses (e.g., dry cleaners) within the Planning Area that store, use and dispose of hazardous materials. The majority of hazardous materials sites within the city are leaking underground storage tank

(LUST) cleanup sites associated with gasoline stations and automobile service uses, as well as activities that use onsite underground storage tanks., based on information from the Department of Toxic Substance's (DTSC) EnviroStor database¹¹ and the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) Geotracker database.¹² A review of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) CERCLIS database indicated no active sites in the city.

Discussion

- a) *Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?*

Less Than Significant. See response to *Section H.b* below.

- b) *Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?*

Less Than Significant. Routine use of hazardous materials as part of the project would be limited to small amounts of maintenance and custodial supplies to clean infrastructure. Depending on the project component, preparation and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), discussed further in Section I: Hydrology and Water Quality, may be required. The SWPPP is designed to reduce the risk of spills or leaks from the reaching the environment, including procedures to address minor spills of hazardous materials. No additional mitigation is required.

The proposed bicycle/pedestrian improvements would not involve the routine transport, use, storage, or disposal of hazardous materials to the extent that a significant public or environmental hazard would occur and would not create conditions which could lead to the accidental release of hazardous substances. Therefore, development and operation of the Project would therefore have a less-than-significant impact.

- c) *Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?*

Less Than Significant. The proposed bicycle/pedestrian improvements would not create the significant emission of hazardous materials or the handling of materials, substances or waste within a quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.

¹¹ Department of Toxic Substances, 2015. Envirostor Mapping Tool. Accessed June 17, 2015.

¹² State Water Resources Control Board, 2015. GeoTracker Mapping Tool. Accessed June 17, 2015.

- 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?*

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation. According to databases maintained by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control and the California State Water Resources Control Board, there are several sites in the City of El Cerrito that are on the Cortese list of hazardous materials sites. Most of these sites are at gas stations along San Pablo Avenue that would not be affected by the surface construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Bicycle/pedestrian improvements that involve the disturbance of soil at or near these hazardous materials could potentially expose people and the environment to hazardous substances. In order to mitigate this impact to a less than significant level, Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 shall be implemented.

Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 - Phase I and II Investigations. Prior to construction of any bicycle/pedestrian improvements that require ground disturbance, hazardous materials sites lists maintained by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) shall be consulted. Where a proposed facility is located adjacent to an identified site, follow up Phase I and as appropriate Phase II hazardous waste site investigations shall be completed. No disturbance of contaminated soil shall be permitted, unless an approved site cleanup and remediation plan has been implemented for the identified hazardous waste site(s).

- e) *For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 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?*

No Impact. See response to *Section H.f* below.

- f) *For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?*

No Impact. The City of El Cerrito is not located within 2 miles of a private or public or a public use airport.

- g) *Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

Less Than Significant. The proposed bicycle/pedestrian improvements are located in a predominantly urban setting mostly along existing rights-of-way. Certain project components

would alter street design, specifically raised crosswalks and pedestrian-activated beacons at unsignalized intersections or mid-block locations. These features could potentially increase the delay of emergency responders by requiring them to slow as they pass through the crosswalk. However, these street design enhancements would be consistent with the City's emergency access standards, and the delay would be minimal and would not be expected to adversely affect emergency response. When such improvements as a buffered bike path are being considered, the police and fire departments are consulted to ensure the necessary road widths, turning radii, emergency vehicle apparatus, and clearance distances are maintained for all emergency vehicles. The implementation of the Active Transportation Plan would not physically interfere with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan and the Project's impact is expected to be less than significant.

- 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?*

Less Than Significant. The potential for grassland or woodland fires is found in the El Cerrito hills. Existing water lines and access for emergency vehicles in this area are considered adequate for fire protection; no additional mitigation is required. Therefore, the potential impact of the Project on wildland fires is considered less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY				
Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding of as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Affected Environment

The City of El Cerrito is located in the San Francisco Bay Hydrologic Region, in the East Bay Plain Subbasin of the Santa Clara Valley Groundwater Basin. This subbasin is a northwest trending alluvial plain bounded on the north by San Pablo Bay, on the east by the contact with Franciscan Basement rock, and on the south by the Niles Cone Groundwater Basin. The East Bay Plain Subbasin extends beneath San Francisco Bay to the west. Several creeks pass through El Cerrito.

The State Water Resources Control Board and nine Regional Water Boards regulate water quality of surface water and groundwater bodies throughout California. In the Bay Area, including the project site, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Board is responsible for implementation the Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan). The Basin Plan establishes beneficial water uses for waterways and water bodies within the region. Runoff water quality is regulated by the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Program (established through the federal Clean Water Act).

Discussion

- a) *Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?*

Less Than Significant. See response to *Section I.d* below.

- 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)?*

Less Than Significant. None of the proposed bicycle/pedestrian improvements are anticipated to affect groundwater supplies. Additional paved surfaces with the potential to slightly reduce groundwater recharge would be evaluated and their impact reduced through the existing local and regional regulations and policy documents described in *Section I.d* below, if necessary. As a result, the Project'

- 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?*

Less Than Significant. See response to *Section I.d* below.

- 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?*

Less Than Significant. The sidewalk improvements and bicycle facilities that would be constructed within paved right-of-ways are unlikely to contribute a substantial change in the amount of impervious surface, cause significant stormwater runoff pollution or violate water quality standards. While ground disturbance for projects outside existing paved rights-of-way associated with construction of any of the project components could cause erosion and sedimentation into waterways, and paving bicycle pedestrian facility surfaces with impermeable materials could increase the rate of runoff also causing erosion and sedimentation, potentially contributing to the violation of water quality standards, focus area projects and build out of the bicycle and pedestrian network would predominantly take place within existing rights-of-way that are already paved; therefore, significant impacts from the Project are not anticipated. Existing local and regional regulations help to reduce potential impacts as discussed below.

Pursuant to Section 402 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, municipal stormwater discharges in the City of El Cerrito are regulated under the San Francisco Bay Region Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit, Order No. R2-2009-0074, NPDES Permit No. CAS612008, adopted October 14, 2009 (MRP). MRP Provision C.3 addresses post-construction stormwater management requirements and requires the City to incorporate site design, source control, and stormwater treatment measures into development projects, to minimize the discharge of pollutants in stormwater runoff and non-stormwater discharges. Under provision C.3.b.ii.(4)(d), sidewalks and trails that are not hydraulically connected to other impervious surface or the stormwater conveyance system and drain to vegetated areas are exempt from water quality treatment requirements. As a result, most project components would be exempt from C.3 requirements.

Still, the City's General Plan requires compliances with State and federal standards to maintain water quality:

Policy R1.6: Runoff Water Quality. Maintain, at a minimum, the water quality levels established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), implement Clean Water Program and NPDES requirements, and achieve the highest possible level of water quality reasonable for an urban environment in City creeks.

The City's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requires the City and permit applicants to address storm water pollution issues in development of private and public projects. A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) must be prepared to address construction related impacts and a Stormwater Control Plan (SCP) must be prepared for all projects that create or replace more than 10,000 square feet of impervious surface.

As part of its standard practice, the City would review each bicycle/pedestrian improvement project prior to construction and determine if the project component requires preparation of a SWPPP. Based on this review, the City would prepare a project SWPPP that includes Best Management Practices (BMPs) to prevent, or minimize stormwater pollution during construction activities. For projects larger than 10,000 square feet, an SCP would specify how the built project would incorporate site design characteristics, landscape features, and BMPs that minimize imperviousness, retain or detain stormwater, slow runoff rates, and reduce pollutants in post-development runoff. Additionally, all projects proposed along creek channels and along the Bay waterfront would require the preparation of an Erosion Control and Revegetation Plan, and a Spill Control and Counter Measures Plan, regardless of whether a SWPPP is technically required or not.

In conclusion, given the Project's limited effect on stormwater and modest changes to pervious surfaces, the Project is anticipated to have a less-than-significant impact on water quality standards and waste discharge requirements, and on existing draining patterns that would result in erosion or flooding.

- 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?*

Less than Significant. Implementation of the cycletracks, which may reduce existing landscape areas, and construction of multi-use paths could marginally increase runoff, although it is not anticipated that the increase would affect the capacity of local drainage systems. As described in the previous section, an SCP would be required for any projects that create more than 10,000 square feet of impervious area in order to address the increase in stormwater runoff and reduce related impacts. Any impacts associated with the additional runoff from paved surfaces that could contribute to existing problems associated with stormwater quality would be identified and mitigated per the City's NPDES permit. As a result the Project would have a less-than-significant impact on runoff and the capacity of drainage systems.

f) *Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?*

Less Than Significant. Erosion and sedimentation from construction related disturbance of some Class I and II bicycle facilities could impact water quality temporarily, however the Project is not anticipated to have a substantial effect on water quality as discussed in the preceding section. A SWPPP would be required to mitigate the impacts of erosion and sedimentation associated with construction related disturbance. Therefore, the potential impact on water quality would be less than significant.

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?*

No Impact. The Project does not place housing within a 100 year flood plain; therefore the Project would have no impact.

h) *Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?*

Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation. Some improvements like bridge crossings could be located within the floodplains of the creeks. Unless properly designed and engineered, these facilities have the potential to block flood flows and/or divert floodwaters out of the creek channels.

The General Plan addresses development adjacent to creeks to reduce potentially flooding impacts:

Policy R1.7: Creek Protection. Preserve riparian vegetation, protect owners and buyers of property from erosion and flooding, and increase public access to the creeks. Lands adjacent to riparian areas should be protected as public or private permanent open space through dedication or easements.

Policy R1.9: Development Near Creeks. For development adjacent to creeks and major drainages, provide adequate building setbacks from creek banks, provision of access easements for creek maintenance purposes and for public access to creekside amenities, and creek improvements such as bank stabilization. Also protect riparian vegetation outside the setback.

In order to further reduce potential impacts due to flooding, implementation of Mitigation Measure HYD-1, shall be required.

Mitigation Measure HYD-1 – Hydraulic Analysis: Prior to final design of any structural bicycle/pedestrian facility, such as a bridge or other structure that is placed within the flow line of a creek, or crosses over a creek, and where the proposed facility has the potential to

block or impede flood flows and alter hydrologic conditions, the project proponent will complete a hydraulic analysis of the site and facility. The objective of the analysis is to verify that the project is in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance and related General Plan Policies, regarding flood protection, protection of creek resources, and water quality protection to determine the proposed sizing, geometry, and elevations of the structures so as to not impact creek hydrology and flood flow conditions. The hydraulic analysis and design recommendations will require review and approvals of the City Engineer.

As a result of implementation of existing regulations and Mitigation Measure HYD-1, the potential impact of the Project would be less than significant.

- i) *Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding of as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?*

No Impact. None of the proposed project components are located in the vicinity of a levee or dam that could fail and cause loss, injury or death. Therefore, the Project would have no impact with regard to flooding as a result of a levee or dam failure.

- j) *Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?*

No Impact. None of the proposed projects are located in the vicinity of areas subject to seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. Therefore, the Project would have no impact with regard to inundation.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
J. LAND USE AND PLANNING				
Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Affected Environment

The Project is located in primarily urban areas in various locations within the City of El Cerrito. While the Project would primarily be constructed in public rights-of way, it would include project components developed adjacent to a range of land uses, including residential, commercial, open space, and public spaces.

Discussion

a) *Physically divide an established community?*

Less Than Significant. The proposed city-wide bicycle/pedestrian improvements would enhance circulation in the City making it easier to travel from one destination to another and would not divide an established community. As a result the project would have a beneficial impact on establishing connections within the community and the potential impact is less than significant.

b) *Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?*

Less Than Significant. The proposed bicycle/pedestrian improvements would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project and adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The

proposed improvements would not change the designated land uses of the City. As identified in the environmental topics throughout this Initial Study, the proposed Plan would facilitate implementation of policies and program of the San Francisco Bay Trail Plan, and El Cerrito's: (1) General Plan, (2) Bikeways Master Plan and Pedestrian Master Plan and (3) Climate Action Plan, and it serves as an update of the Circulation Plan for Bicyclists and Pedestrians. The implementation of mitigation measures in this environmental document and adherence to the requirements in the City's General Plan and Municipal Code would ensure conformance with plans, policies and regulations to avoid or mitigate an environmental effect.

c) *Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?*

No Impact. There are no habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans that apply in the Planning Area. Therefore, the Project does not conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan and would have no impact.

	Potentially Significant	Potentially Significant	Potentially Significant	No Impact
	Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

K. 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 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? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

No Impact. The El Cerrito General Plan does not identify any mineral resources within the city. The proposed bicycle/pedestrian improvements would be located primarily in an already urbanized area and would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or in the loss of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, implementation of the Project would not have an impact on mineral resources.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
L. 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Affected Environment

The Project is located within an already urbanized environment. According to the City’s General Plan, the predominant noise sources in the city are from vehicle and rail traffic, specifically vehicles on I-80 and San Pablo Avenue, and along the BART rail line. Long-term measurements that were taken over a 24-hour period in March 2014 to analyze another project, the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, corroborate the General Plan’s findings regarding existing noise levels at these locations.

Discussion

- 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?*

Less Than Significant. Operation of the Project would not create substantial new noise sources since bicycles and pedestrians create minimal noise and the potential for reducing vehicle trips could reduce noise levels. However, construction of the Project would temporarily increase noise sources due to construction vehicles and equipment. Noise-generating activities would include removal of existing pavement, grading, excavation, and paving. Although construction noise would be localized to specific project site location, businesses and residences would be intermittently exposed to noise throughout the plan horizon as individual projects are constructed.

The City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance include standards and regulations to analyze and reduce potential noise impacts, respectively. Additionally, Mitigation Measure NS-1 is included to further reduce potential impacts. Given the temporary and intermittent nature of the construction activities, and with implementation of these regulations and mitigations, the Project is not anticipated to have a significant impact on noise exposure in excess of established standards.

Performance Standards

El Cerrito's General Plan identifies standards for maximum outdoor noise levels and encourages noise reducing technology in the development of infrastructure:

Policy H3.2: Outdoor Noise Levels. The goal for maximum outdoor noise levels in residential areas is an Ldn [Day-Night Level] of 60 dB [decibels]. This level is a requirement to guide the design and location of future development and is a goal for the reduction of noise in existing development. However, 60 Ldn is a goal that cannot necessarily be reached in all residential areas within the realm of economic or aesthetic feasibility. This goal will be applied where outdoor use is a major consideration (e.g., backyards in single-family housing developments and recreation areas in multi-family housing projects). The outdoor standard will not normally be applied to the small decks associated with apartments and condominiums but these will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Where the city determines that providing an Ldn of 60 dB or lower outdoors is not feasible, the outdoor goal may be increased to an Ldn of 65 dB at the discretion of the Planning Commission.

Policy H3.5: Impacts of BART Noise. If the noise source is BART, then the outdoor noise exposure criterion should be 70 Ldn for future development, recognizing that BART noise is characterized by relatively few loud events.

Chapter 19.21.050 of the Zoning Ordinance requires preparation of a noise study if uses would produce outdoor noise levels in the conditionally permitted range or above. As described above, the Project is not anticipated to increase noise levels substantially and therefore would not trigger either a noise study.

The Zoning Ordinance also describes performance standards to manage and reduce potential noise impacts. Normally acceptable noise levels are up to 60 dB in residential, commercial, and public facilities, and up to 65 dB in parks and open space areas; conditionally acceptable levels generally range from 75 to 80 dB in these use locations. The Zoning Ordinance requires evaluation of mitigation measures for projects in residential areas under the following circumstances:

- The project would cause the Ldn to increase 3 dBA or more.
- Any increase would result in an Ldn greater than 60 dBA.
- The Ldn already exceeds 60 dBA.
- The project has the potential to generate significant adverse community response.

While the Project is not anticipated to cause an increase in dBA or generate significant adverse community response, it would be implemented locations where the Ldn already exceeds 60 dBA, according to the measurements conducted for the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Draft EIR in March 2014. As a result, in addition to the regulations described above, mitigation measures were evaluated and one mitigation measure is applied to the Project to reduce noise levels during construction, as discussed below.

Existing Noise Reduction Regulations

The General Plan includes the following policy to reduce potential noise impacts:

Policy H3.12: New Noise Reducing Technologies. Support and employ new noise reducing technologies in the development and maintenance of local and regional infrastructure.

Additionally, Chapter 16.03.060 of the Zoning Ordinance regulates construction hours to 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. It requires that construction work be controlled to prevent causing a public nuisance such as noise and vibration.

Mitigation Measure

Implementation of Mitigation Measure NS-1 would further reduce potential noise impacts:

Mitigation Measure NS-1 – Noise Control Best Management Practices: The construction contractor shall institute a noise control program, which shall be submitted to the Public Works Department and approved prior to any construction activity. Construction equipment shall be well-maintained and used judiciously to be as quiet as practical. The following measures, when applicable, are recommended as part of the noise control program to reduce noise from construction activities:

- Equip all internal combustion engine-driven equipment with mufflers that are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment.
- Utilize “quiet” models of air compressors and other stationary noise sources where technology exists.
- Locate stationary noise-generating equipment as far as feasible from sensitive receptors when sensitive receptors adjoin or are near a construction area.
- Prohibit unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines.
- A temporary noise control blanket barrier could be erected, if necessary, along building facades facing construction sites. This mitigation would only be necessary if conflicts occurred which were irresolvable by proper scheduling.
- Route construction-related traffic along major roadways and as far as feasible from sensitive receptors.
- Ensure that construction activities (including the loading and unloading of materials and truck movements) are limited to the hours specified in the Zoning Ordinance or determined in consultation with the Public Works Director.
- Businesses, residences, or noise-sensitive land uses adjacent to construction sites shall be notified of the construction schedule in writing. Designate a “construction liaison” who would be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise. The liaison would determine the cause of the noise complaints (e.g., starting too early, bad muffler, etc.) and institute reasonable measures to correct the problem. Conspicuously post a telephone number for the liaison at the construction site.

Compliance with existing policies and regulations, and implementation of Mitigation Measure NS-1 would reduce the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of established standards and result in a less-than-significant impact.

b) *Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?*

Less Than Significant. Bicyclists and pedestrians would be temporarily exposed to existing noise and vibration sources (primarily from BART and vehicles on roadways) as a result of the Project. These impacts would affect Project components that cross under I-80, across or along San Pablo Avenue and the Greenway. Community members would also be exposed to additional noise and vibration sources temporarily during construction. The City of El Cerrito does not have quantifiable vibration limits that can be used to evaluate the compatibility of land uses with respect to ground-borne vibration, but given the limited nature of construction—no pile driving, or substantial excavation or grading is proposed—vibration impacts are expected to be limited and not substantial. Noise impacts would be regulated by the policies and regulations described in *Section L.b* above.

Moreover, these improvements would be located in an area that is already urbanized, and bicyclists and pedestrians would only be temporarily exposed to noise and vibration sources while passing I-80 or San Pablo Avenue, or as a BART train passes. As a result, the potential impact of exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or noise levels would be less than significant.

c) *A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?*

Less Than Significant. As described in *Section L.a* and *Section L.b* above, the Project would not generate increased noise levels during operation of the Project. Therefore, the Project would not result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels and the potential impact would be less than significant.

d) *A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?*

Less Than Significant. As described in *Section L.a* and *Section L.b* above, the Project would temporarily generate construction noise impacts. Construction would include demolition, grading, or excavation, so the highest noise levels would be generated when heavy equipment is used. A substantial permanent noise increase would occur if the noise level increase resulting from the Project is 3 dBA Ldn or greater. A substantial temporary noise level increase would occur where noise from construction activities exceeds 60 dBA Leq and the ambient noise environment by at least 5 dBA Leq at noise-sensitive uses in the project vicinity for a period greater than one year. A substantial permanent cumulative noise increase would

occur if the project contributed a minimum noise increase of 1 dBA Ldn where cumulative noise levels are anticipated to increase by 3 dBA Ldn or more.

Hourly average noise levels generated by these construction activities would range from 75 dBA to 85 dBA Leq measured at a distance of 50 feet from the center of the active construction area. Construction-generated noise levels drop off at a rate of about 6 dBA per doubling of distance between the source and receptor. According to the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Draft EIR, typical existing noise levels around San Pablo Avenue (one of the noisiest parts of the Planning Area) range from 63 to 79 dBA Leq during the day. Although at times the construction of the Project may exceed the dBA Leq threshold, since construction related to individual project components would occur for a duration of less than one year, the potential impact would be less than significant. Moreover, potential impacts would be mitigated through the regulations, mitigation measure, and policies described in *Section L.a.* As a result, the Project would not result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels and the potential impact would be less than significant.

- e) *For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 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?*

No Impact. The Project is not located within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport. As a result, there would be no impact regarding this significance criterion.

- 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?*

No Impact. The Project is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip. As a result, there would be no impact regarding this significance criterion.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
M. 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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

No Impact. The Project does not involve the construction of any new vehicular roads, sewer and water lines or other utilities which could induce population growth in the City. The proposed bicycle/ pedestrian improvements would serve the existing population and would not add housing or jobs to the City that could have a growth inducing effect. It would not displace any existing housing units or substantial numbers of people, requiring replacement housing elsewhere.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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N. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

- 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Affected Environment

The Project is located within an urban area, which is currently served by existing public fire, police, schools, parks, and related public services.

Discussion

- 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, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities?*

Fire Protection - Less Than Significant. Fire protection for the Project would be provided by the El Cerrito Fire Department. As of 2015, the Fire Department had 37 authorized personnel, including 19 paramedics who provide advanced life support services during emergency medical responses. The El Cerrito General Plan states a goal to maintain an average emergency response time for the first fire engine of less than 6 minutes for 95 percent of all

emergency calls for service, provided adequate financial resources are available.¹³ Additionally, the El Cerrito Fire Department has automatic aid response agreements with the City of Richmond Fire Department, City of Albany Fire Department, City of Berkeley Fire Department, and Contra Costa County Fire Protection District.

The Project includes policies and programs that seek to expand pedestrian and bicycle facilities and increase safety of these alternative modes, including potential conflicts between modes. Still, the Project may result in more calls for first-responder service from the Fire Department related to pedestrian and bicycle injuries and accidents, since the volume of bicyclists and pedestrians is anticipated to increase with implementation of the Project. At the same time, and conversely, the Fire Department may receive fewer calls for service related to vehicle injuries and accidents. As a result, implementation of the Project would not necessitate new Fire Department facilities and therefore would not create substantial adverse physical impacts related to the provision of new or altered Fire facilities and the resulting impact is less than significant.

Police Protection - Less Than Significant. Police protection for the Project would be provided by the El Cerrito Police Department. The Police Department has a response time standard of 5 minutes for Priority 1 and 2 calls (these are calls for service considered emergencies, with the potential for serious injury and/or death) and a staffing service level standard of 1.26 officers per 1,000 residents, according to the General Plan.¹⁴

As described in the Fire protection section above, the Project may result in more calls for service from the Police Department related to pedestrian and bicycle accidents and patrol of new or extended multi-use trails, but potentially fewer calls for service related to vehicle accidents. As a result, implementation of the Project would not necessitate new Police Department facilities and therefore would not create substantial adverse physical impacts related to the provision of new or altered Police facilities. The resulting impact is less than significant.

Schools – No Impact. The Project would not generate new students. As a result, the Project would not have an effect on the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities to maintain acceptable service ratios.

¹³ City of El Cerrito, 1999. *General Plan Public Facilities and Services Element*. 6-29.

¹⁴ City of El Cerrito, 1999. *General Plan Public Facilities and Services Element*. 6-25.

Parks – Less Than Significant. Service ratios, maintenance, construction and operation impacts related to parks and open space are analyzed below.

Service Ratios

The City contains approximately 142 acres of park, open space, and recreation area (not including Ohlone Greenway) in the city. The General Plan states a minimum level of service standard of 5 acres of publicly-owned park land per 1,000 residents.¹⁵ Based on a population estimate of 24,316 in 2013, the current service level is 5.85 acres per 1,000 residents. Therefore the City is currently meeting and exceeding the General Plan standard. The Project would not directly increase the City's population, but it would increase the amount of recreation area, resulting in an increase in the overall service ratio. The Project would increase new trails and multi-use paths by nearly 10 miles, as detailed below:

- 5.8 miles of new park trails (e.g., in the Hillside Natural Area, Arlington Park, and Canyon Trail Park);
- 1.2 miles of improvements to currently impassable trails to make them accessible and usable;
- 0.13 miles of trail and crossing to close the gap between the Richmond and Ohlone Greenways; and
- 2.54 miles of Cycletrack on San Pablo Avenue, between Potrero Avenue and Lincoln Avenue.

Maintenance

The ATP includes policies and recommendations to support the maintenance of both existing and new facilities, including:

- Policy 3-7: Maintain city bicycle and pedestrian facilities as part of the City's maintenance programs.

The implementation section in Chapter 7 of the ATP identifies funding necessary to both build and maintain the proposed bicycle and pedestrian network in order to prevent the deterioration of facilities over time. As a result, although the Project would increase the provision of recreation facilities and the use of existing facilities, policies and funding would prevent the physical deterioration of these facilities. Additionally, although the City does not currently have a parks impact fee, the ATP recommends preparation of a nexus study in order

¹⁵ City of El Cerrito, 1999. *General Plan Public Facilities and Services Element*: 6-13.

to analyze the opportunity for a funding mechanism, such as impact fees, to pay for acquisition and maintenance of open space. Such an outcome would further reduce the potential impact of increased usage and the provision of new facilities.

Construction and Operation

As described in the Project Description, the most intensive construction of the Project would include construction of curb extensions and medians, which would require limited excavation and moving of utilities. New multi-use paths may require some grading and removal of trees which would be determined through additional engineering and subsequent environmental analysis. Operation of the Project would potentially result in more bicycle and pedestrian trips and fewer vehicle trips, which would reduce traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

Conclusion

In summary, the Project would have a beneficial impact on the provision of recreation facilities in the city and would also provide for the maintenance of both existing and new facilities to avoid any potential deterioration due to increased use. The Project would not be expected to result in substantial adverse physical impacts due to temporary construction activities or operation of the Project. As a result, construction of the Project would result in a less-than-significant environmental impact.

Other Public Facilities – No Impact. The Project would have no impact on the provision of or need for other new public facilities, such as City Hall, the El Cerrito Library, or Open House Senior Center.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
O. RECREATION				
Would the project:				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Affected Environment

The City of El Cerrito Recreation Department manages facilities and activities in the City’s parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces. The West Contra Costa Unified School District operates parks and recreation facilities on school sites. The East Bay Regional Parks District manages the 2,427-acre park Wildcat Canyon Regional Park adjacent to the city’s eastern border. The Bay Trail, which runs along the waterfront west of the city, is operated by various cities, counties, park districts and other agencies.

Discussion

- 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?*

Less Than Significant. The Project would create improved transportation connections to existing neighborhood and regional parks and therefore could increase usage of these facilities. In particular, Focus Area Project #1: BART to Bay Trail Access Improvements would improve the safety and accessibility of the connection between El Cerrito and the regional Bay Trail and therefore may increase use of the Bay Trail. Increased access to the Bay Trail is one of the goals of bicycling improvements in the ATP.

New bicycle and pedestrian facilities included in the Project would also supplement existing recreational facilities by offering new recreational opportunities and experiences. The ATP identifies funding for both capital improvements and maintenance to prevent deterioration of these facilities. As described in *Section N.a (Parks)* above, implementation of the Project would

not be expected to increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks and recreation facilities to such extent that these facilities would be physically degraded or their substantial physical deterioration would be accelerated. Therefore, the Project would have a less-than-significant impact on the deterioration of existing facilities.

- 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?*

Less Than Significant. As described in *Section N.a (Parks)* and *Section O.a* above, the Project would create new recreation facilities in the form of bicycle lanes and routes, and multi-use paths. Construction of these facilities would include restriping, development of new paths and related temporary construction activities. The General Plan supports development of these facilities:

PR1.14: Bicycles. Implement bicycle route improvements, including signing, striping, paving, and providing bicycle racks.

These facilities would help implement the goals of the General Plan and the Climate Action Plan by expanding bicycle and pedestrian facilities and improving access to parks and open space areas. It is not anticipated that these facilities would have an adverse physical effect on the environment; therefore the potential impact is less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
P. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC				
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with adopted polices, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Affected Environment

The Project would affect public rights-of-way throughout the city with projects that would restripe travel lanes on city streets, sidewalks, and park paths. The Project would not affect travel on highways and freeways; therefore such travel is not discussed further except as it relates to local street intersections with freeway on- and off-ramps. The ATP includes policies and programs that would guide the development and maintenance of pedestrian and bicycle

facilities, as well as strategies for education and safety to encourage community members to walk and bike around the city.

Although not currently included in the CEQA Guidelines' Appendix G Checklist as a significance criterion, parking capacity is evaluated at the end of this section for informational purposes.

Discussion

- a) *Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?*

Less Than Significant. The Project would have a less-than-significant impact on vehicles/streets, transit, bicycle and pedestrian performance standards, and applicable plans and policies as described below.

Streets/Vehicles

Vehicle level of service (LOS) is defined in terms of a letter grade ranging from A to F. LOS A is the best level of operation, representing free flowing conditions, and LOS F is the worst level of operation, representing excessive delays, long vehicle queues, and generally intolerable conditions. The City of El Cerrito's policy calls for achievement of LOS D or better.¹⁶ The Project would not increase vehicle trips on city streets compared to existing conditions, but would potentially reduce vehicle travel by encouraging use of alternate modes by improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities and connections to transit.

Focus Area Project #1: BART to Bay Trail Access Improvements and Focus Area Project #9: Potrero Avenue Improvements require additional design and engineering to determine the specific improvements needed to meet the objective of these project components. As a result, project-level environmental analysis would be required to determine if these improvements would have impacts beyond those addressed in this Initial Study. For Focus Area Project #1, project design and evaluation should consider effects on vehicles accessing the on- and off-ramps to I-80, the potential for signalization and delay, and right-of-way acquisition to create a bike path. For Focus Area Project #9, if the number of travel lanes or turn lanes are reduced, this project component would require additional project design to determine how the lanes

¹⁶ City of El Cerrito, 1999. *General Plan Transportation Element*. 5-4.

would be reconfigured and then related environmental analysis to determine the physical impacts of such a reconfiguration.

Additional project improvements that create physical changes that could affect vehicle performance are analyzed below. Raised crosswalks and pedestrian-activated signals would increase the visibility of pedestrians in crosswalks and are not anticipated to significantly change or affect vehicle mobility or speed. With a pedestrian-activated signal, vehicles may proceed before the end of the pedestrian clearance interval, if the pedestrian has cleared the intersection (i.e., before the flashing signal has stopped). Vehicles may be required to stop for a few seconds longer than at a crosswalk with no beacons, but any delay would be minimal and would not significantly alter LOS.

Moreover, pedestrian-activated signals are generally proposed at locations where there are currently crosswalks and theoretically vehicles should already be stopping for pedestrians in the crosswalk. The one exception is the Project's proposed crosswalk and pedestrian-activated signal on Carlson Boulevard at Adams Street, where there is currently no marked crosswalk. Still, vehicle delay would be similar to the conclusion in the preceding paragraph—the pedestrian-activated beacon would increase delay slightly and only intermittently when the beacon is activated, but not significantly enough to affect LOS.

Curb extensions at crosswalks would be constructed in the parking aisle and therefore would not affect vehicle travel. (Notably, curb extensions are not anticipated to remove parking spaces, since they would be installed at locations that already have parking restrictions in order to maintain sightlines between pedestrians and drivers.) Reduced corner radii may slow vehicles through intersections, but are not anticipated to result in vehicle delay. Sidewalk installation and extension of multi-use paths are similarly not anticipated to affect vehicle performance.

Transit

The City of El Cerrito has taken a step toward making AC Transit more efficient by adopting a Transit First Policy. According to the General Plan, it is the official policy of the City of El Cerrito to encourage public transit among El Cerrito residents and visitors, and expedite the movement of transit vehicles.¹⁷ The Project is aligned with this policy by supporting transit ridership through enhanced and safer bicycle and pedestrian connections to BART stations

¹⁷ City of El Cerrito, 1999. *General Plan Transportation Element*: 5-10.

and AC Transit stops. However, specific project improvements are not anticipated to significantly affect transit performance or operations.

Bicycles/Pedestrians

While the City does not have adopted standards for bicycle and pedestrian facility performance citywide (standards for San Pablo Avenue are discussed below), it does express the following General Plan goals and policies which would be furthered by the Project:

Goal T1: A transportation system that allows safe and efficient travel by a variety of modes and promotes the use of alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle.

Goal T2: A land use pattern that encourages walking, bicycling, and public transit use.

T1.1: Balanced Transportation System. Create and maintain a balanced transportation system with choice of transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and private automobile modes.

T1.3: Bicycle Circulation. Create a complete, interconnected bicycle circulation system. Provide a bicycle system that serves commuter as well as recreational travel. Improve bicycle routes and access to and between major destinations.

T1.4: Pedestrian Circulation. Provide a safe, convenient, continuous and interconnected pedestrian circulation system throughout the City. Ensure safe pedestrian access to local schools.

T3.3: Residential Streets. To discourage cut-through traffic on residential streets, maintain the existing system of arterial and collector streets. Where necessary, employ traffic management techniques to control the speed of vehicles traveling on residential streets, including residential portions of arterial and collector streets.

T3.5: Street Maintenance. Provide high-quality, regular maintenance for existing and future transportation facilities, including streets and dedicated bicycle paths.

Project improvements that would create physical changes are analyzed below. Curb extensions, pedestrian-activated signals and/or raised intersections, and sidewalk installations would have a beneficial impact on pedestrian safety, by reducing crossing distances, enhancing pedestrian visibility, and removing potential conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, respectively. These improvements would have minimal effect on bicycle movement and safety, except that pedestrian-activated signals would potentially reduce conflicts between bicycles and pedestrians by increasing the latter's visibility in the crosswalk.

The extension of multi-use paths would enhance pedestrian and bicycle mobility by expanding connections through the city. Similarly, the installing of cycletracks on San Pablo Avenue and Pierce Street would have a beneficial impact on bicycle safety and mobility (and minimal effect on pedestrians). Along lower volume streets that cross the Greenway, the Project would

replace yield signs with stop signs intended for bicyclists crossing the intersection. This change is intended to enhance the mobility of bicyclists. It would also formalize the existing behavior of bicyclists and therefore would not be anticipated to affect vehicle mobility or the rate or potential for conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

San Pablo Avenue Multi-Modal LOS

Additionally, the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan established multi-modal level of service standards for San Pablo Avenue, specifically Built Environmental Factors (BEF) for transit, bicycling, and walking. While the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Draft EIR already evaluated the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan for CEQA purposes, the ATP further supports implementation of the Plan as described below.

The Transit BEF method involves scoring all the physical elements present at bus stops, such as presence of a bench, shelter, bus bulb, pedestrian-scale lighting, etc., as well as the Pedestrian BEF (described below) for the nearest crosswalk. The Project would help to achieve the High LOS standard for transit identified by the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Draft EIR by supporting bicycle parking, street lighting, reduced block lengths, and wayfinding signs near bus stops.

The Pedestrian BEF method involves scoring the physical pedestrian facilities for both roadway segments and intersections. Factors include sidewalk width and presence of a buffer, and crosswalk enhancements and crossing distance for intersections. The Project would help to attain the High LOS standard for pedestrians identified by the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Draft EIR by installing pedestrian-activated signals, increasing crosswalk frequency, and reducing crossing distances by extended corner curbs.

The Bicycle BEF method involves scoring the physical bicycle facilities for both roadway segments and intersections separately. The segment assessment includes the presence of a designated bikeway, bicycle right-of-way, buffer from the adjacent traffic and parking lanes. At signals, measures include striping design of the bicycle approach to/through the intersection, and the signal phase separation for the bicycle facility. At unsignalized intersections, measures include the striping design, the type of buffer (for buffered facilities), and whether visibility is good or poor (due to parking, landscaping, or other features). The Project would help to achieve the Medium to High LOS standard for pedestrians identified by the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Draft EIR by supporting a one-way cycletrack, bicycle lanes, or bicycle routes on various segments of the corridor to create a continuous bicycle facility.

Construction Impacts

Simultaneous construction of several of the pedestrian and bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements (e.g., construction of curb extensions and medians) under the ATP could result in local, short-term traffic congestion. As described in the Project Description, during the installation of raised crosswalks related to Focus Area Project #5 and #8, there may be temporary and intermittent street closures. Stair and trail improvements within off-street areas may also create short-term closures to park trails and staircases. Additionally, the number of travel lanes may be reduced while curb extensions and/or medians are installed at various locations. As these impacts would be temporary, they are not expected to create significant impacts. However, Mitigation Measure TR-1 would reduce potential construction impacts to a less than significant level:

Mitigation Measure TR-1 – Construction Streamlining: The Department of Public Works shall design and integrate proposed pedestrian and bicycle improvements into overlapping and concurrent roadway and street improvement projects such that construction staging occurs as a single project wherever feasible and potential congestion impacts are minimized to the extent feasible. Where the integration of such projects is infeasible, the City shall schedule the implementation of project component to avoid impacts that would be caused by the simultaneous construction of multiple roadway, street, and bicycle facility projects. Project construction adjacent to school sites should be scheduled for periods when schools are not in session to the extent feasible.□

Conclusion

As a result of the analysis provided above and with the implementation of Mitigation Measure TR-1, the potential impact of the Project to conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system would be less than significant.

- b) *Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?*

Less Than Significant. The Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) serves as the Congestion Management Agency for the County, responsible for preparing the County’s Congestion Management Program (CMP), most recently in 2013. Within the city, the CMP includes I-80 and San Pablo Avenue and sets specific intersection LOS standards for both of

these facilities: LOS F for I-80 between Cutting Boulevard and the Alameda County line; and LOS E for the portion of San Pablo Avenue within El Cerrito.¹⁸

According to the CMP and the Measure J Contra Costa Growth Management Program, only projects that expect to generate more than 100 peak hour vehicle trips are required to prepare a traffic impact analysis that assesses impacts of the proposed development on the regional transportation system. As described in *Section P.a* above, the Project would not increase vehicle trips on city streets compared to existing conditions and therefore does not need to prepare an impact analysis. Additionally, the Project would not have a direct impact on vehicle trips on I-80 and would potentially reduce vehicle trips on San Pablo Avenue. Therefore, the Project is not expected to conflict with the CCTA's CMP and the resulting impact on the CMP and related travel demand measures and standards would be less than significant.

- c) *Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?*

No Impact. No airports are located in the vicinity of the Planning Area. Therefore, the Project would have no impact on air traffic patterns.

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

Less Than Significant. The Project includes development of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and features that are intended to make intersections safer for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. Strategies including curb extensions to reduce crossing distances, signage, enhanced crosswalks (e.g., painted, raised, installed with pedestrian-activated beacons), repairs and maintenance of existing facilities, and improved signal timing to meet ADA requirements. As a result, the Project would have a beneficial effect on safety and the potential impact on increasing hazards or incompatible uses would be less than significant.

- e) *Result in inadequate emergency access?*

Less Than Significant. Certain project components would alter street design, specifically raised crosswalks and pedestrian-activated beacons at unsignalized intersections or mid-block locations. These features could potentially increase the delay of emergency responders by requiring them to slow as they pass through the crosswalk. As part of the City's standard process, the Fire Department would review curb bulb-outs and extensions to verify that they

¹⁸ Contra Costa County Transit Authority, 2013. *Contra Costa Congestion Management Program: D-2, D-4.*

can accommodate the turning radius of fire apparatus and new traffic signals would be equipped with “opticom” devices that allow the Fire Department to preempt traffic signals. As a result, these street design enhancements would be consistent with the City’s emergency access standards, and the delay would be minimal and would not be expected to adversely affect emergency response. Therefore, the Project’s impact to emergency access is expected to be less than significant.

- f) *Conflict with adopted polices, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?*

Less Than Significant. The ATP serves as the City’s central policy document to address performance and safety of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and therefore sets these standards. One of the key objections and goals of the ATP is to improve performance and safety of these facilities.

The Project also supports the following policies in the General Plan:

PR1.14: Bicycles. Implement bicycle route improvements, including signing, striping, paving, and providing bicycle racks.

T1.1: Balanced Transportation System. Create and maintain a balanced transportation system with choice of transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and private automobile modes.

T1.3: Bicycle Circulation. Create a complete, interconnected bicycle circulation system. Provide a bicycle system that serves commuter as well as recreational travel. Improve bicycle routes and access to and between major destinations.

T1.4: Pedestrian Circulation. Provide a safe, convenient, continuous and interconnected pedestrian circulation system throughout the City. Ensure safe pedestrian access to local schools.

Implementation Measure 1: Bicycle Master Plan. Prepare a comprehensive Bicycle Master Plan that complies with the 13 elements outlined in the California Bicycle Lane Account (BLA). The Bicycle Master Plan should include an active public input process to develop a comprehensive bicycle circulation and support facilities system; design standards for bicycle facilities; standards for the provision of bicycle support facilities; evaluation of current bicycle education and promotion programs in El Cerrito; analysis of bicycle accidents in El Cerrito; and a capital improvement program. The Bicycle Master Plan should encourage local access to the BART stations by bicycling as an alternative to short-distance driving. Develop a strategic approach to pursuing state and federal funding for bicycle projects, working closely with surrounding jurisdictions and Contra Costa County. Work with the City of Richmond to provide a clear connection between the Ohlone Greenway and the planned Richmond Greenway.

Implementation Measure 10: Pedestrian Circulation Plan. Review existing pedestrian circulation within the City to identify constraints to walking, develop improvement plans at constrained locations (including pedestrian street crossings), and incorporate pedestrian enhancement projects into the City Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Encourage local access to BART stations by walking as an alternative to short-distance driving. Develop new sidewalk width standards consistent with the type and intensity of adjacent land use. Attention should be paid to the issue of tree damage to sidewalks and obstruction of sidewalks by signs... (See General Plan for full text.)

The Project also supports the following Climate Action Plan Policies:

Goal SC-3: Continue to invest in infrastructure that invites people to walk, bike, and take transit more in El Cerrito.

Objective SC-3.2: Maintain and expand an active program of streetscape improvements that enhance the pedestrian environment, character and continuity of residential and commercial districts and create greater connectivity between residential and commercial districts.

Objective SC-3.3: Continue implementation of the *Oblone Greenway Master Plan* and create greater connections between the Greenway, San Pablo Avenue and other regional trail networks.

Objective SC-3.4: Expand and improve the City's transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and zero-emission vehicle infrastructure.

Objective SC-3.5: Collaborate with the West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee, BART, AC Transit, and WestCAT, major employers, and schools to support improvements and greater access to transit facilities throughout El Cerrito.

Goal SC-5: Develop alternative transportation outreach, education, and incentive campaigns tailored to El Cerrito.

The Project seeks to increase the safety and performance of BART and AC Transit facilities, by improving connections to these transit facilities and therefore potentially increasing ridership. Therefore the Project would have a beneficial impact on policies, plans and programs regarding public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, or would potentially increase performance and safety of these facilities, resulting in a less-than-significant impact.

Other Non-CEQA Topic: Parking

For informational purposes, the anticipated parking demand for the Project was considered. The Project would not generate parking demand or substantially alter parking supply. The total number of parking spaces to be removed in the City of El Cerrito to create bicycle facilities and install crosswalk enhancements would be finalized as part of the next design phase. It is

possible that the Project would reduce parking demand by constructing bicycle and pedestrian improvements that increase walking and biking trips and as a result reduce vehicle trips.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Q. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS				
Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Comply with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Affected Environment

The following sub-sections provide an overview of existing conditions related to wastewater, water supply, stormwater runoff, and solid waste and the potential impacts of the Project on these utility and service systems.

Discussion

- a) *Would the project exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?*

No Impact. The City of El Cerrito is located within the jurisdiction boundaries of the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board. The Regional Water Board provides

groundwater protection, wastewater discharge regulation, stormwater basin planning, water quality information, and enforcement. Under the Regional Water Board National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit system, all existing and future municipal and industrial discharges to surface waters within the city would be subject to regulation. The Project would not generate wastewater and therefore would have no impact on wastewater treatment requirements of the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board.

- b) *Would the project 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?*

No Impact. The Project would not generate wastewater demand and therefore would have no impact on water or wastewater treatment facilities or the need for expansion.

- c) *Would the project 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?*

Less Than Significant. The Project does not propose to substantially increase impervious surface areas since most project components would affect portions of the city that are already paved. The majority of project improvements would be constructed within existing paved areas, such as streets and sidewalks and therefore would not substantially affect stormwater drainage. Extending paved multi-use paths related to Focus Area Project #1: BART to Bay Trail Access Improvements, gaps between the Ohlone and Richmond Greenways, and paved trail areas within parks would potentially convert pervious surfaces, such as landscape setbacks, to impervious paved paths. Once specific project designs are determined, subsequent project-level environmental review would be conducted to determine the effects of these project improvements.

Although the Project would not substantially increase stormwater or lead to the need for storm drain facilities, it is possible that during construction of curb extensions or related improvements to corners and streets, storm drains would be reconstructed or altered. The City's Public Works Department would review and inspect all building plans for any alterations to existing storm drains. Changes in drainage resulting from the Project would not require expansion of storm drain facilities.

Additionally, the Project supports the addition of street trees (particularly along San Pablo Avenue and the Greenway), landscaping strips, and stormwater planters in Focus Area #7: Key Boulevard Improvements which would contribute to stormwater management and related pollution prevention. While some project improvements may result in the removal of some existing landscaping and street trees, the City anticipates implementing a tree replacement

program which could provide up to a 1 to 2 replacement ratio for any trees lost. Given the minimal increase in impervious surface, the Project would not require or result in the construction of new or expansion of existing stormwater drainage facilities and the impact on stormwater drainage would be less than significant.

- d) *Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?*

Less Than Significant. The East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) owns, operates and maintains the water distribution system in the City. Both supply and demand vary seasonally and become critical during drought periods which can last several years. EBMUD has water rights and contracts for up to 325 million gallons a day from the Mokelumne River watershed, which provides 90 percent of the water used by EBMUD.¹⁹ For planning purposes and looking to the year 2040, EBMUD's current water supply is sufficient to meet customer needs during normal years, but insufficient to meet demand during single- and multi-year droughts. EBMUD is pursuing a range of strategies to reduce demand and increase supply, including through public outreach, leak fixes, water storage, infrastructure improvements and water conservation measures.

The Project is not anticipated to substantially increase demand for water supplies. In some locations, project improvements may generate a small increase in irrigation for new landscaping, while other projects will reduce existing landscaped medians. As a result, no new water delivery would be required to serve the Project and therefore the impact would be less than significant.

- e) *Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?*

No Impact. The Project would not generate wastewater demand and therefore would have no impact on wastewater treatment capacity.

¹⁹ East Bay Municipal Utility District, 2011. *Urban Water Management Plan 2010*: 1-6.

- f) *Would the project be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?*

Less Than Significant. El Cerrito's solid waste is disposed of at Keller Canyon Landfill in Contra Costa County which has adequate capacity through a schedule closing date of 2050.²⁰ The Project would only generate solid waste temporarily during demolition and construction. There would be no solid waste associated with operation of the Project. As a result, the solid waste associated with the Project's construction would be minimal and would not substantially affect the projected life of the landfill and the potential impact regarding solid waste would be less than significant.

- g) *Would the project comply with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?*

Less Than Significant. The Project would be required to meet federal, state and local solid waste regulations. Therefore, the potential impact is less than significant.

²⁰ California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, 2009. Keller Canyon Landfill Solid Waste Facility Permit.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
R. 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, 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

- a) *Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?*

Less Than Significant. The above analysis identifies potentially significant impacts to Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, and Transportation and Traffic which could degrade the quality of the natural environment. However, each potential impact would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level through implementation of mitigation measures identified within each section.

As described in Section B: Biological Resources, the Project is not anticipated to have an impact on special status plant or wildlife species. Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2 reduce the potential impacts to wildlife species to a less-than-significant level by avoiding and/or surveying for any nesting birds and bats before and/or during construction and responding accordingly.

There are no historic buildings or structures within the area proposed to be affected, since the Project would primarily affect public rights-of-way. Therefore, the Project would not eliminate important examples of major periods of California history or prehistory.

- 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.)*

Less Than Significant. The Project would result in a physical change to the Planning Area by expanding bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and improving connections to existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, parks, and open space available to the community. The Project would be consistent with the City’s General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Cumulatively, the Project combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, as projected in the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan, Urban Greening Plan, Climate Action Plan, and General Plan, would have an incremental impact on the environment. Specifically, the Project could incrementally result in increased use of parks and recreation facilities; bicycle and transit use, and calls for Police and Fire service, as described in the sections above. However, existing policy measures (e.g., in the ATP, General Plan) and mitigation measures in this Initial Study reduce potential cumulative impacts to less-than-significant levels. Although the Project may incrementally contribute to potential cumulative impacts, the Project would not result in significant cumulative impacts.

- c) *Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?*

Less Than Significant. The Project would be generally consistent with local land use and zoning requirements, as well as State and federal requirements, as described in the preceding sections. The Project would not create adverse neighborhood impacts, as the majority of the Project’s potential impacts described in the preceding sections would be present temporarily and intermittently during construction. Operation of the project is not anticipated to create adverse impacts.

Furthermore, the following mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Project to reduce direct and indirect adverse effects on human beings:

- Mitigation Measure AQ-1 reduces air quality impacts through dust abatement measures and construction exhaust.
- Mitigation Measure CULT-3 provides a process to follow in the event that human remains were to be discovered during construction of the Project.
- Mitigation Measure GEO-1 requires a geotechnical assessment to protect users of structural pedestrian and bicycle facilities during seismic events or due to other geotechnical hazards.
- Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 requires site investigations to determine the presence of hazardous materials and the actions for remediation or avoidance.
- Mitigation Measure NS-1 requires implementation of noise control best management practices to reduce noise impacts during construction.

As a result, the Project would not cause substantial adverse effects on human beings and the potential impact is less than significant.

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APPENDIX A

Project Description Details

This appendix includes key improvements of the ATP:

- Pedestrian Network - Figure 4-1 and Table 4-1
- Bicycle Network - Figure 4-2 and Table 4-2
- Focus Area Projects:
 1. BART to Bay Trail Access Improvements
 2. Ohlone Greenway Crossing Improvements
 3. Citywide Wayfinding
 4. Arlington Boulevard Pedestrian Improvements
 5. East Side Bicycle Boulevard
 6. East Side Bicycle Boulevard Wayfinding
 7. Key Boulevard Improvements
 8. Fairmount Avenue Improvements
 9. Potrero Avenue Improvements