

# Memorandum

**To:** CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

**Date:** June 14, 2010

**From:** BIMLA G. RHINEHART  
Executive Director

**File:** Book Item 2.2c (13)  
Action

**Ref:** Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Visalia Bikeway Plan Update  
(Resolution E-10-54)

**ISSUE:** Should the Commission, as a Responsible Agency, accept the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Visalia Bikeway Plan Update and approve the Santa Fe Bike Path project (project) for future consideration of funding?

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends that the Commission accept the MND and approve the project for future consideration of funding.

**BACKGROUND:** The City of Visalia (City) is the CEQA lead agency for the project. The Visalia Bikeway Plan Update provides for proposed improvements to the existing bikeway facilities including Class I through Class III bike routes. The proposed improvements will fill gaps in the existing system as well as extend the bicycle network for more comprehensive coverage of the City and provide guidance for bikeway development of future roadway projects.

According to the City, the Santa Fe Bike Path is an element of the overall bikeway and is specifically covered in the Visalia Bikeway Plan Update and the MND. The Santa Fe Bike Path project is a Class I bike path and, in isolation, would have qualified for a Categorical Exemption. However, since the MND was already adopted, the City chose to use it to satisfy CEQA requirements.

The City Council certified the MND on March 6, 2006. The City Council found that with mitigation for biological and cultural resources, there is no substantive evidence that the project will have a significant environmental impact. A mitigation monitoring program was prepared to identify the measures to mitigate or avoid the potential significant impacts and to ensure compliance during project implementation.

Mitigation measures include, but are not limited to, avoiding constructing activity that would directly impact the Modoc Ditch and the St. John's River; limiting pruning to non-native species; timing construction and ground disturbing activities to minimize impacts; and consultation with a qualified archaeologist if archaeological or historical resources are uncovered, discovered, or otherwise detected or observed.

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The project is estimated to cost \$555,000 and is programmed with STIP TE (\$406,000) and Local (\$149,000) funds. Construction is estimated to begin in fiscal year 2009/10. On June 14, 2010 the City confirmed that the project scope cleared in the MND is consistent with the project scope programmed in the STIP.

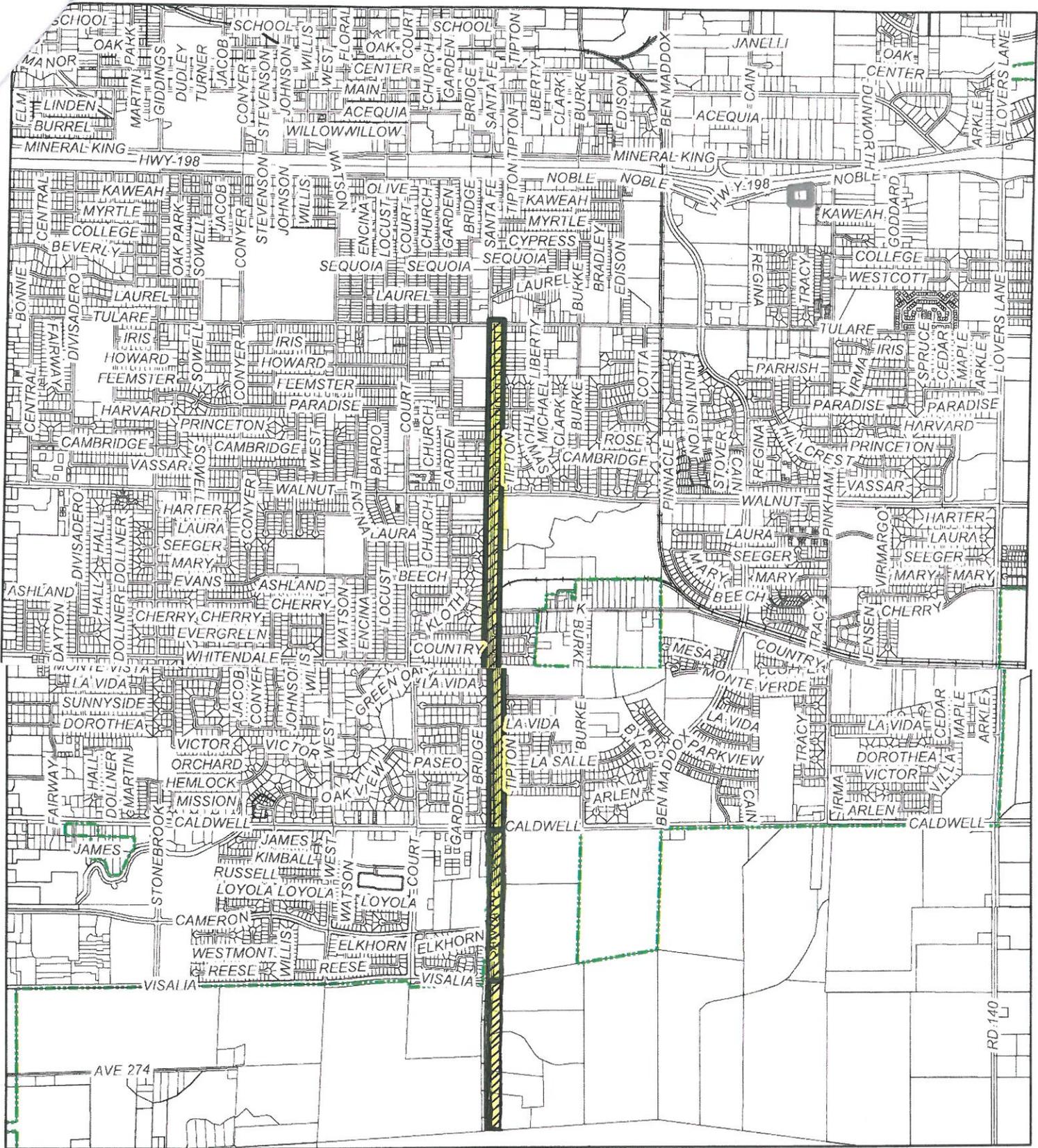
#### Attachments

- Resolution E-10-54
- Project Location

# CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

## Resolution for Consideration of Future Funding 06 – Tulare County Resolution E-10-54

- 1.1 **WHEREAS**, the City of Visalia (City) has completed a Mitigated Negative Declaration pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines for the following:
- Visalia Bikeway Plan Update
- 1.2 **WHEREAS**, the City has certified that the Mitigated Negative Declaration has been completed pursuant to CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines for its implementation; and
- 1.3 **WHEREAS**, the Visalia Bikeway Plan Update provides for proposed improvements to the existing bikeway facilities including Class I through Class III bike routes; and
- 1.4 **WHEREAS**, the Visalia Bikeway Plan Update includes the Santa Fe Bike Path project as an element of the overall Bikeway and is covered in the Visalia Bikeway Plan Update; and
- 1.5 **WHEREAS**, the California Transportation Commission, as a Responsible Agency, has considered the information contained in the Mitigated Negative Declaration; and
- 1.6 **WHEREAS**, with mitigation for biological and cultural resources, there is no substantive evidence that the project will have a significant environmental impact; and
- 1.7 **WHEREAS**, the City Council adopted a Mitigation Monitoring Program for the project; and
- 1.8 **WHEREAS**, the City Council adopted the Mitigated Negative Declaration.
- 2.1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the California Transportation Commission does hereby accept the Mitigated Negative Declaration and approve the above referenced project to allow for future consideration of funding.



# Santa Fe All Purpose Trail



1" = 2,000'