

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: March 5, 2013

Reference No.: 2.2c. (9)
Action

From: BIMLA G. RHINEHART
Executive Director

Subject: **APPROVAL OF PROJECT FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF FUNDING
MASTER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND FINDING OF CONFORMITY FOR
THE 2025 CITY OF FRESNO GENERAL PLAN INCLUDING THE NORTH WILLOW
AVENUE BETWEEN EAST BARSTOW AND EAST ESCALON WIDENING PROJECT
(RESOLUTION E-13-19)**

ISSUE:

Should the Commission, as a Responsible Agency, accept the Master Environmental Impact Report (MEIR) and Finding of Conformity (FOC) for the 2025 City of Fresno General Plan including the North Willow Avenue between East Barstow and East Escalon Widening Project (project) in Fresno County and approve the project for future consideration of funding?

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission accept the MEIR and FOC and approve the project for future consideration of funding.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Fresno (City) is the CEQA lead agency for the project. On November 19, 2002 the City adopted a MEIR for the 2025 City of Fresno General Plan which designated North Willow Avenue as a four to six lane super arterial roadway. On June 26, 2009, the City adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for Air Quality Amendment A-09-02 to the General Plan. In 2010 the City prepared a project specific Initial Study pursuant to Public Resources Code 21157.1 and conducted a review of the adequacy of the MEIR pursuant to Public Resources Code 21157.6(b)(1). On May 19, 2011 the City adopted a FOC and made the following findings: the MEIR remains adequate as no substantial changes have occurred with respect to the circumstances under which the MEIR was certified and no new information has become available; the project is a subsequent project fully within the scope of the MEIR and the MND for Air Quality Amendment A-09-02; and with the mitigation imposed, there is no substantial evidence that the project will have additional effects on the environment that were not identified and analyzed in the MEIR.

The project is located in the City of Fresno. The project proposes to widen North Willow Avenue from four to six lanes between East Barstow and Escalon Avenues, for a distance of approximately .75 miles. The project will also construct various roadway improvements including the relocation of existing facilities; installation of curb, gutter, and sidewalk improvements; asphalt paving, installation of street lights and median island improvements; and construction of a multi-purpose trail along the west side of North Willow Avenue.

Impacts that require mitigation measures to be reduced to a less than significant level relate to Transportation and Traffic. Mitigation measures include, but are not limited to: completing a traffic and transportation evaluation; completing a site access evaluation; and incorporating design features to encourage walking, bicycling, and use of public transportation.

On February 7, 2013, the City confirmed that the preferred alternative set forth in the final environmental document is consistent with the project scope of work programmed by the Commission.

The project is fully funded through construction and is estimated to cost \$2,367,000. The project is funded with SLPP (\$965,000) and Local (\$1,402,000) funds. Construction is estimated to begin in fiscal year 2013/14.

Attachment

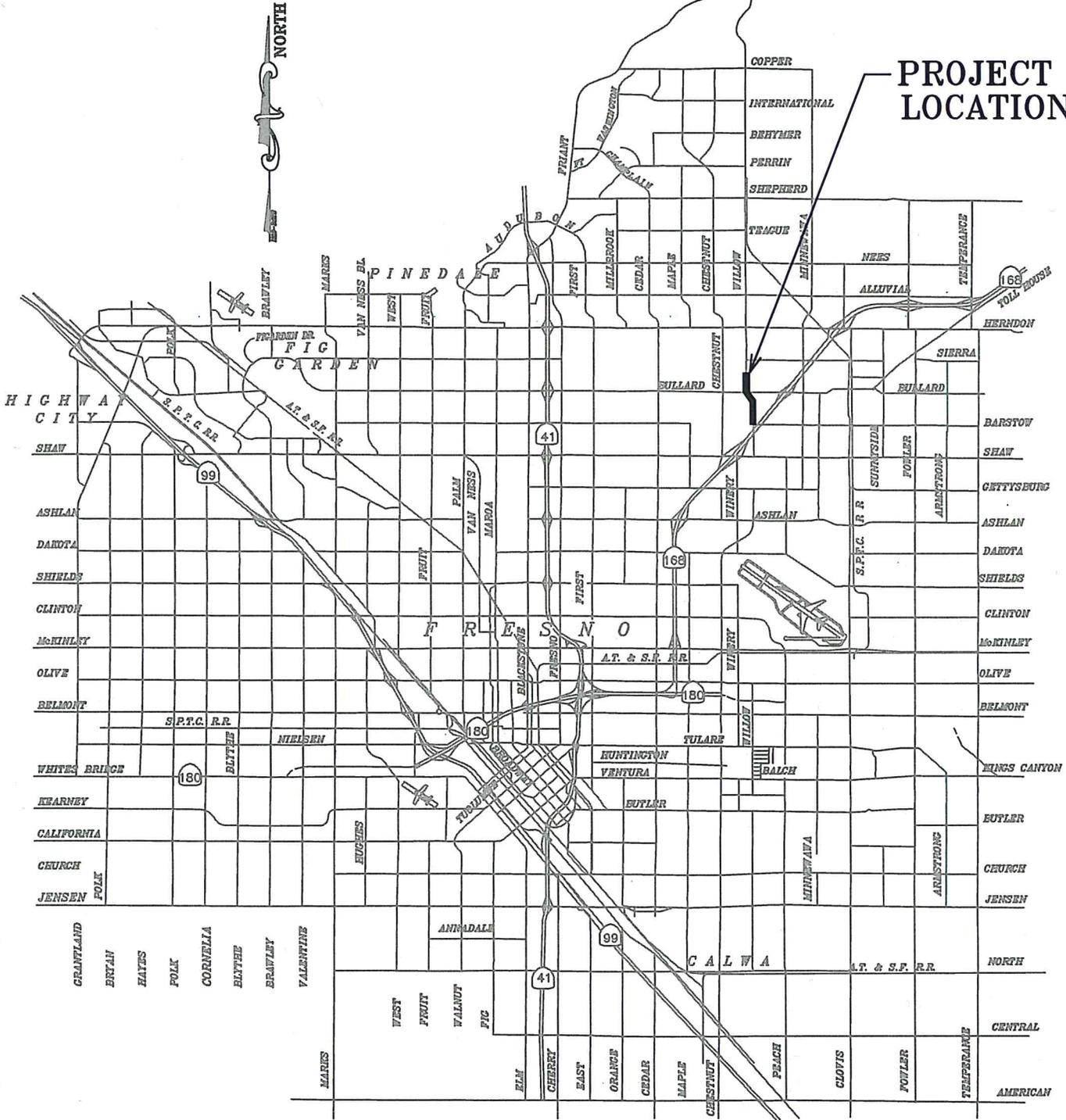
- Resolution E-13-19
- Project Location

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Resolution for Future Consideration of Funding 06 – Fresno County Resolution E-13-19

- 1.1 **WHEREAS**, the City of Fresno (City) has completed a Master Environmental Impact Report and Finding of Conformity pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines for the following project:
 - 2025 City of Fresno General Plan including the North Willow Avenue between East Barstow and East Escalon Avenues Widening Project
- 1.2 **WHEREAS**, the City has certified that the Master Environmental Impact Report has been completed pursuant to CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines for its implementation and that the project is a subsequent project that is fully within the scope of the Master Environmental Impact Report; and
- 1.3 **WHEREAS**, the project will widen North Willow Avenue from four to six lanes between East Barstow and Escalon Avenues, for a distance of approximately .75 miles. The project will also construct various roadway improvements including the relocation of existing facilities; installation of curb, gutter, and sidewalk improvements; asphalt paving, installation of street lights and median island improvements; and construction of a multi-purpose trail along the west side of North Willow Avenue.
- 1.4 **WHEREAS**, the California Transportation Commission, as a Responsible Agency, has considered the information contained in the Master Environmental Impact Report and Finding of Conformity; and
- 1.5 **WHEREAS**, the City found that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment after mitigation; and
- 1.6 **WHEREAS**, the City approved the Master Environmental Impact Report and Finding of Conformity.
- 2.1 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the California Transportation Commission does hereby accept the Master Environmental Impact Report and Finding of Conformity and approve the above referenced project to allow for future consideration of funding.

PROJECT LOCATION



CITY OF FRESNO – DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

**WILLOW AVENUE STREET IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT
FROM BARSTOW AVENUE TO ESCALON AVENUE**

**PROJECT VICINITY MAP
NOT TO SCALE**

**COUNCIL DISTRICT
4**

**DATE:
FEBRUARY 25, 2010**