

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

Notice of Exemption

Contra Costa County Community Development Department
651 Pine Street, 4th Floor - North Wing, McBrien Administration Building
Martinez, CA 94553-0095

Telephone: (925) 313-2190

Contact Person: Kimani Birden - Public Works Dept.

Project Description, Common Name (if any) and Location: **Vasco Road – Camino Diablo Intersection Improvements Project**, County File: **0662-6U4012 CP# 08-102**

Project Description: This project is necessary to reduce the northbound queue during the evening rush hour traffic, to warn drivers of the queuing ahead on Vasco Road at the Camino Diablo intersection, and reduce the westbound queue on Camino Diablo during the morning peak rush hour traffic. These improvements are also needed to help reduce the number of collisions related to queuing on Vasco Road at the Camino Diablo intersection. The project consists of improvements to the Camino Diablo and Vasco Road intersection to allow for improved efficiency and reduced congestion. Improvements will consist of: 1) adding two right-turn lane pockets: (a) from northbound Vasco Road to Camino Diablo Road, and (b) from west bound Camino Diablo Road to Vasco Road, and 2) modifying traffic signals and adding signage, including advance illuminated warning signs on the Vasco Road approaches (Figure 2). On northbound Vasco Road, a 12-foot wide right-turn pocket with an 8-foot shoulder will be constructed. The new right-turn pocket will begin 580 feet from the through lane stop bar. The existing through-right lane will be converted to a through lane. The existing through and left-turn-only lanes will not change. After construction, the lane configuration on northbound Vasco Road, from left to right, will be as follows: left-turn only, through, right-turn only, and an 8-foot wide shoulder. On westbound Camino Diablo Road, a 12-foot wide right-turn pocket with an 8-foot shoulder will be constructed. The new right-turn pocket will be 570 feet to match the existing left-turn-only lane. The existing through-right-turn lane will be converted to a through-left-turn lane. After construction, the lane configuration on westbound Camino Diablo Road, from left to right will be as follows: left-turn only, through-left, right-turn only, and an 8-foot shoulder. In order to accomplish the improvements, some cut and fill will be required on some of the roadway shoulders; the excavation will create an excess of cut soil, which will be disposed of off-site in an appropriate upland area. As an alternative to the cut and fill, a retaining wall may be constructed. Roadway drainage facilities associated with the improvement will require relocation of concrete ‘V’ ditches, an edge drain and the edge drain cleanouts, installation of a reinforced concrete pipe culvert extension, and modifications to existing drainage facilities. During construction, utility poles, traffic signal poles, and traffic signal boxes will be relocated or new signals installed, traffic signals will be modified, and illuminated advance warning signs will be installed. Asphalt concrete cold-planing (grinding) will be conducted to ensure an adequate depth of new asphalt is applied. The project is located within the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) inventory area and is a covered project (Road Safety Improvements). The appropriate HCP Development Fee will be paid to the HCP Conservancy when the construction contract is awarded. A habitat assessment of the project area was conducted by qualified biologists (Condor Country, Inc. and Nomad Ecology) to determine the potential presence of special-status species and sensitive habitats, including wetlands. No wetlands were identified within the project area. Based on the records search and field work (covering both spring and fall flowering seasons), no sensitive plant species were identified. No trees will need to be removed as a result of this project. Although no sensitive animal species were identified in the project area, marginal habitat is present in the general project area for several sensitive species. In order to ensure no impact to the species the following HCP avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented as part of the project description:

1) Preconstruction surveys for San Joaquin kit fox, western burrowing owl, Townsend’s big-eared bat, Swainson’s hawk and golden eagle will be conducted. If these species are identified within the project impact area, HCP-required construction monitoring and avoidance measures will be followed. 2) Silt fencing or other sediment trapping BMPs will be installed down-gradient from construction activities to minimize the transport of sediment off site. 3) The project area will be fenced to keep wildlife out of the construction zone, as appropriate. 4) Implementation of permanent BMPs for long-term erosion prevention and sediment control, including minimizing the amount of disturbed area and preserving existing vegetation to the maximum extent possible. 5) Daily trash removal from the site will ensure the area is maintained in a clean condition. 6) Fueling and maintenance of equipment at designated areas (disturbed, ruderal, or non-sensitive areas) 7) The site will be watered regularly to minimize the impact of dust on adjacent vegetation and wildlife habitats, if warranted. 8) Following completion of the project, any exposed areas will be seeded with a mix including native grasses prior to winter rains. The project area was also reviewed via detailed records search and pedestrian survey by a qualified archeological consultant (Condor Country Consulting Inc.). Based on the records search and field work, no archeological resources or architectural structures will be directly or indirectly impacted by the project. Commute traffic patterns have been analyzed during project planning, and in order to ensure that traffic impacts are minimized, no work on westbound Camino Diablo will occur between 6:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. and no work on eastbound Camino Diablo and northbound Vasco Road will occur between 3:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. During non-commute times only, one lane of traffic will be closed for construction with flagmen controlling traffic during construction activities. At least one lane of traffic will be open at all times during construction activities and emergency vehicles will have access at all times. During construction, lanes will be narrowed and shoulders may be utilized for through traffic in order to accommodate the necessary construction activities while still allowing for efficient traffic flow. As Vasco Road and Camino Diablo experience the majority of vehicle trips during the work week, no weekend limitations will be enforced. Although unlikely, some nighttime work may be conducted in order to minimize traffic impacts as a result of construction activities. Although all road widening is anticipated to occur within the road right of way, right of way acquisition may be necessary in order to accommodate the cut slopes and/or the retaining wall. Additional real property transactions may be necessary. Utility relocations will be necessary in support of the project.

Project location: The project is located at the intersection of Vasco Road and Camino Diablo in the eastern Contra Costa County area near the Town of Byron (Figs.1-3).

This project is exempt from CEQA as a:

- ☐ Ministerial Project (Sec. 15268)
- ☒ Categorical Exemption, *Class 1(c)*
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 15269(a))
- ☐ Other Statutory Exemption, Section
- ☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 15269(b) or (c))
- ☐ General Rule of Applicability *Section 15061 (b) (3)*

for the following reason(s): The project consists of the minor alteration of existing public facilities; pursuant to section **15301 (c)** of the CEQA guidelines.

Date: _____ By: _____ Community Development Department Representative

AFFIDAVIT OF FILING AND POSTING

I declare that on _____ I received and posted this notice as required by California Public Resources Code Section 21152(c). Said notice will remain posted for 30 days from the filing date.

Signature _____ Title _____

Department of Fish and Game Fees Due

☐ EIR - \$2,768.25

☐ Neg. Dec. - \$1,993.00

☒ County Clerk - \$50

☒ Community Development Dept. - \$25

Total Due: \$ _____

Total Paid \$ _____

Receipt #:

Applicant:
Public Works Department
255 Glacier Drive
Martinez, CA 94553
Attn: Kimani Birden
Environmental Section

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