

ATTACHMENT E

Errata Sheet

INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
ALHAMBRA VALLEY ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (#0662-6R4101)
COUNTY FILE #: CP 11-91

These errata are in response to the MND comments. Changes to the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) noted below are based on comments received and minor corrections made by CCCPWD staff and do not affect the overall conclusions of the Initial Study.

The underlined items have been added and struck out items deleted.

Aesthetics, Page 13, item c):

c) Would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

While the project will not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and surrounding area, the project will require cutting into the existing hillside slope along the north side of the road to accommodate the road realignment. The hillside will either be cut at a 2:1 slope which requires cutting into the base of the slope approximately 20 feet from the new edge of road pavement and removing approximately 4,000 cubic yards of soil from the face of the hillside which will be hydroseeded with a grassland mix which will re-vegetate within the same year construction is completed and therefore will not degrade the visual character of the area. However, if it is determined from geotechnical investigations that this is not a stable option, a concrete retaining wall up to 250 feet long and approximately 10 feet tall will be constructed along the face of the hillside; this option will still require cutting into the base of the hillside approximately 20 feet and removing approximately 1,500 cubic yards of soil. If a retaining wall is constructed, the wall would be designed in a manner that will blend into the hillside and minimize glare. Further, traffic travels at high speeds along this road and therefore, the proposed retaining wall will not appear as a significant change.

The project design also includes removal of up to 30 olive trees from Mr. Powers' parcel and up to 12 mature oak trees within the existing County right-of-way; no grapevines are proposed for removal. Removal of the olive trees and oak trees will not adversely affect the visual experience of visitors to the winery and vineyards and the driving public as the project will remove only a small portion of both the olive and oak trees relative to what exists currently. The remaining rows of olive orchard trees beyond those removed would continue to be visible to the driving public and public visiting the winery and vineyards. Similarly, while the project will remove two small groupings of native oak trees (6 trees per grouping), the majority of the Alhambra Valley corridor, including this section of the corridor, is heavily wooded with oak-bay woodland. Therefore, the view visible to the driving and visiting public will remain essentially unchanged and there will be no significant aesthetic impact due to removal of these trees. Therefore, project impacts will be **less than significant**.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Page 15:

- a) *Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?*

According to the California Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, the parcels surrounding the project area are designated as prime and unique farmlands and grazing land. The parcel containing the vineyard and olive orchard along the north side of project segment are designated as prime farmland and parcels along the south side of the project segment are designated as grazing land (CDC 2010). According to the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, the surrounding parcels are designated as prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance.

The project will require right-of-way acquisitions which consist of slivers of adjacent parcels at several inverting curves in order to straighten the curves and to provide sight distance. The right-of-way acquisitions of designated farmland total approximately ~~0.6~~ 1.3 acres for the cut slope design option or approximately 0.6 ~~2~~ acres for the retaining wall option. The parcels along the north side of the project area total approximately 58 acres and contain a vineyard and olive orchard operated by the Alhambra Valley Ranch. The project will require acquiring ~~approximately 0.2 acre of designated prime farmland (parcel containing the vineyard and olive orchard)~~ which will require removal of up to 30 olive orchard trees; no vines are anticipated to be removed. ~~The designated prime farmland is approximately 58 acres (Alhambra Valley Ranch 2011).~~ The project cannot avoid acquisition of this parcel due to the goal of the project and presence of a creek located immediately adjacent to the south side of the road.

Based on the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Farmland Conversion Impact Rating form (NRCS-CPA-106) for corridor-type projects and the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model, project impacts the proposed right-of-way acquisitions did not exceed the threshold levels and therefore, project impacts will be **less than significant**.

- b) *Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?*

The designated prime farmland parcel located along the north side of the project segment is also protected by a Williamson Act contract (Contra Costa County Mapping Center 2011). The project will convert a small portion of this parcel to non-

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agricultural use for the new right-of-way. The conversion does not conflict with the County General Plan goals and policies which is to ensure that existing circulation facilities are improved and maintained by eliminating structural and geometric design deficiencies, giving priority to safety over other factors as well as providing alternative transportation opportunities by constructing on-road bikeway facilities as shown in the County Bikeway Network Plan (Contra Costa County 2005b).

Further, the proposed acquisitions of Williamson Act contracted lands are not based on a lower cost of agricultural preserve rather they are based on traffic accident data. Further, due to the location of the existing road and presence of a creek located immediately adjacent to the south side of the road which is also adjoined by Williamson Act contracted parcels (365-020-036, 037 Serb et al.), there is no other land that is reasonably feasible to implement this public improvement as acquisition of alternate land would not achieve the goal of the safety project. These findings will be formally adopted by the County Board of Supervisors when the CEQA document is adopted. Given the following: 1) both project options fall under significance thresholds using both the federal and state LESA models, 2) the primary consideration for the improvements was not based on the lower cost of the agricultural preserve land, and 3) there is no other land within or outside the preserve on which it is reasonably feasible to locate the public improvement due to other Williamson contracted lands, therefore impacts to Williamson Act contracted lands are less than significant. As required by Government Code Sections 51291(b) and (c), the Director of the California Department of Conservation and the Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development will be notified of the proposed acquisition, and a subsequent notification within 10 working days upon completion of the acquisition. Therefore, project impacts will be **less than significant**.

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 Government Code section 51104(g))?

The project area is not located in a forest or timberland zoned area. Therefore, the project will have no impact.

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

The project area is not located in a forest or timberland zoned area. Therefore, the project will have no impact.

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- e) *Would the project 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?*

The project will not involve other changes in the existing environment that would result in conversion of farmland to non-agriculture use as the project is limited to correcting the design deficiencies for road safety. Therefore, project impacts will be **less than significant**.

Transportation/Traffic, Page 62:

- ~~a) *Would the project cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?*~~

- a) *Would the project 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?*

The project will not cause an increase in traffic to what already exists as the project will not increase the number of travel lanes. Rather, the project will conflict with any transportation plans, ordinances, or policies as the purpose of the project is to improve a segment of an existing road for safety purposes and provide widened shoulders for clear recovery areas. While there will be additional traffic generated during project construction from trucks, the traffic will be temporary and insignificant negligible. Therefore, project impacts will be **less than significant**.

- ~~b) *Would the project exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?*~~

- b) *Would the project 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?*

As discussed above, the project will not conflict with a congestion management program because an increase in traffic to what already exists as the project will not increase the number of travel lanes. Rather, the project will improve a segment of an existing road for safety purposes and provide widened shoulders. While there will be additional traffic generated during project construction from construction-related

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vehicles and increased traffic flow on roads of the proposed detour route during the anticipated two-week full road closure, the traffic increases are temporary and considered ~~insignificant~~ negligible because there are additional alternate routes around the Alhambra Valley Road closure including Highway 4 and Highway 24 to Highway 80. Further, current traffic counts show 45 to 71 peak hour trips in each direction through the project limits. Only a fraction of these temporary trips may be diverted to nearby State highways including SR4 and SR24. Therefore, project impacts will be **less than significant**.

g) Would the project conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks) regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?

The project will not conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs supporting alternative transportation as Alhambra Valley Road has been identified as a planned Class III bicycle facility route between Martinez and Pinole (Contra Costa Transportation Authority 2009b). Class III bicycle facilities share the road with motorists and pedestrians by use of right-of-ways designated with signs or permanent markings. The project will provide wider shoulders and bike route signs to achieve the County goals. Therefore, the project will have **no impact**.

Utilities and Service Systems, Page 65, first paragraph:

Water Supply

The project area is located within the EBMUD water Ultimate sService Boundary area (Contra Costa County 2005I), but is outside of EBMUD's current service area; water service is not readily available to the project area.