

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
INITIAL STUDY OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE

PROJECT NUMBER: WO5201  
CP# 19-34

PROJECT NAME: Walden Green Improvement Project **AB**

PREPARED BY: Laura Cremin, Environmental Services Division DATE: December 26, 2019

APPROVED BY: Telma B. Moreno DATE: 1/6/2020

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Categorical Exemption: §15301 [Class h], §15304 [Class b]  Negative Declaration  
 Environmental Impact Report Required  Conditional Negative Declaration

The project will not have a significant effect on the environment. The recommendation is based on the following: The project consists of the replacement and maintenance of existing landscaping, pursuant to section 15301(h) and 15304(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

What changes to the project would mitigate the identified impacts: N/A

USGS Quad Sheet: Walnut Creek	Base Map Sheet #: L-14	Parcel #: N/A
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GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- 1. Location:** The project is located at Walden Green, a park between Treat Boulevard and Mayhew Way, in unincorporated Walnut Creek in Central Contra Costa County (Figures 1 – 2).
- 2. Project Description:** The purpose of this project is to install and maintain landscaping/hardscaping at Walden Green, a green open space managed by Contra Costa County Public Works (CCCPWD) – Special Districts. The space is comprised of Walden Green I (between Treat Boulevard and Coggins Drive) and Walden Green II (between Coggins Drive and Mayhew Way), which together span an approximately half-mile stretch of the Iron Horse Trail Corridor. The vegetation plan was selected as a way to maintain Walden Green I and II in accordance with available funding. The landscape maintenance fund for Walden Green I was initially based on a redevelopment fund, however, County Redevelopment was disbanded and funds were therefore reduced. Walden Green II was completed in 2018 without designated funding for ongoing maintenance.

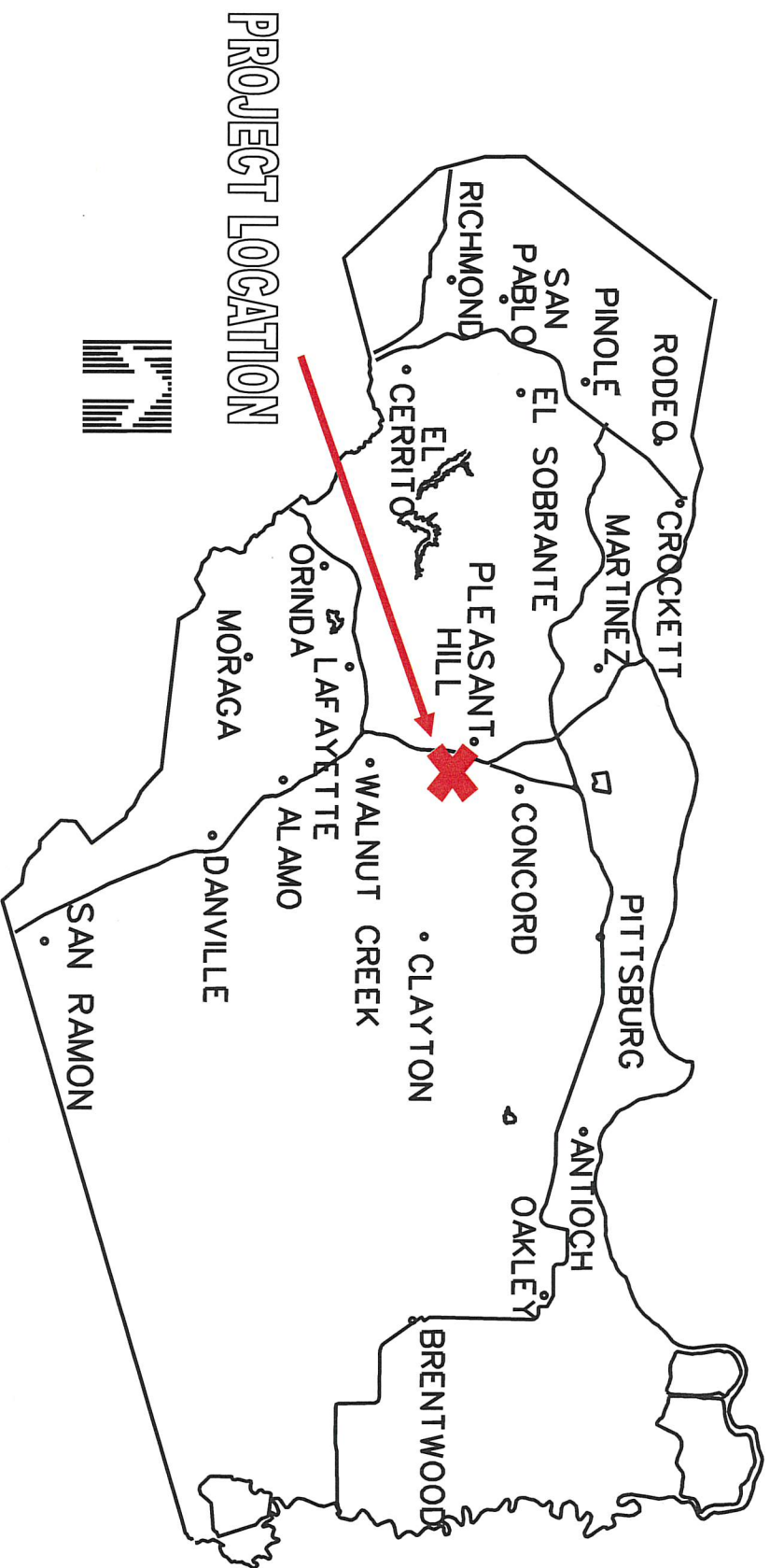
The project will install landscape plants that will require less water and maintenance than the existing vegetation (Figure 3). Walden I and II are approximately 5.2 acres in area, of which approximately 2.8 acres of irrigated lawn will be removed and replaced with low maintenance landscaping/hardscaping. 500 linear feet of non-native shrubs may be removed along the Walden Green I and II spaces to allow better visibility of and along the trail in response to public concerns about safety along the trail corridor. Existing shrubs, bushes, and trees may also be trimmed to increase visibility. The project will remove trees that are in poor condition and those entangled with power lines. Walden I and II contain 166 trees greater than 6-inches in diameter that were evaluated by a licensed arborist. Approximately 31 mature trees and 18 trees with a diameter less than 6-inches will be removed. An arborist report from March 2019 deemed all but three of these trees to have "low" suitability for preservation based the health, age, and structural condition of the tree species and they are expected to continue to decline regardless of treatment. Three trees were rated as "moderate" suitability for preservation, but one was noted to be nearly dead and the other two were young trees in good condition but in locations determined to be a safety concern. Excavation of up to two feet deep is required for root removal.

Landscaping/hardscaping elements will include mulching, placement of decomposed granite and stone, steel edging to contain these elements, and renovation of the existing irrigation system. Six 650-gallon in ground trash systems may be installed, which hold large volumes of trash in order to reduce trash removal trips. Excavation of up to five feet deep is required to install the trash systems. Other minor alternatives such as removal of broken water fountains, short trail connections, or benches and tables may be implemented. Public outreach about the project will be provided at onsite informational sessions prior to conducting work. At the sessions, CCCPWD staff will describe the scope of work and show before and after renderings of the site. A letter will be sent to residents notifying them of the sessions.

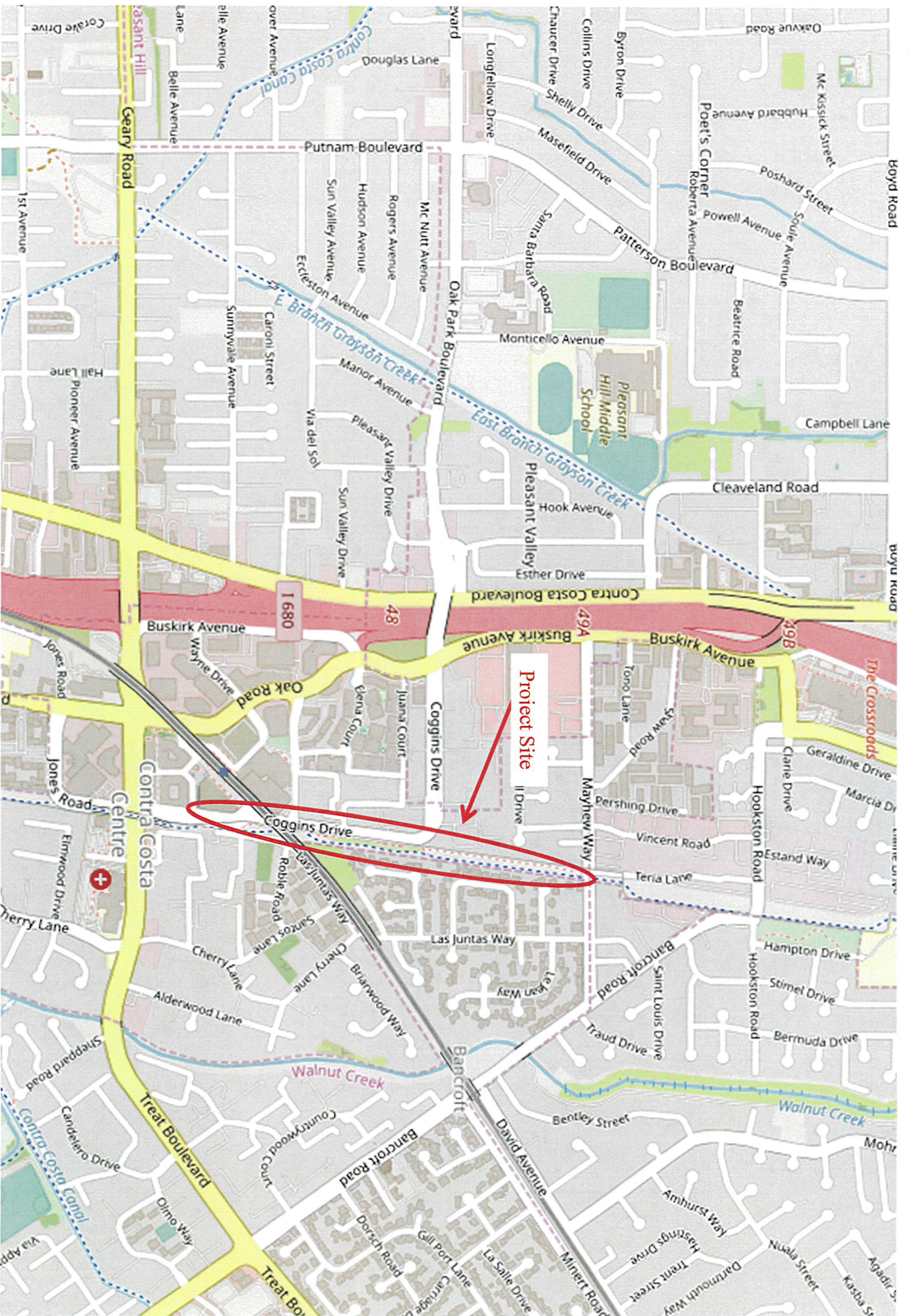
The project will maintain the existing drainage pattern and will not create new impervious areas. Appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented during construction. One lane will be open during construction activities. Emergency vehicles will have access at all times.

- 3. Does it appear that any feature of the project will generate significant public concern?**  
 Yes  No  maybe (Nature of concern):
- 4. Will the project require approval or permits by other than a County agency?**  
 Yes  No
- 5. Is the project within the Sphere of Influence of any city?** Yes, Walnut Creek

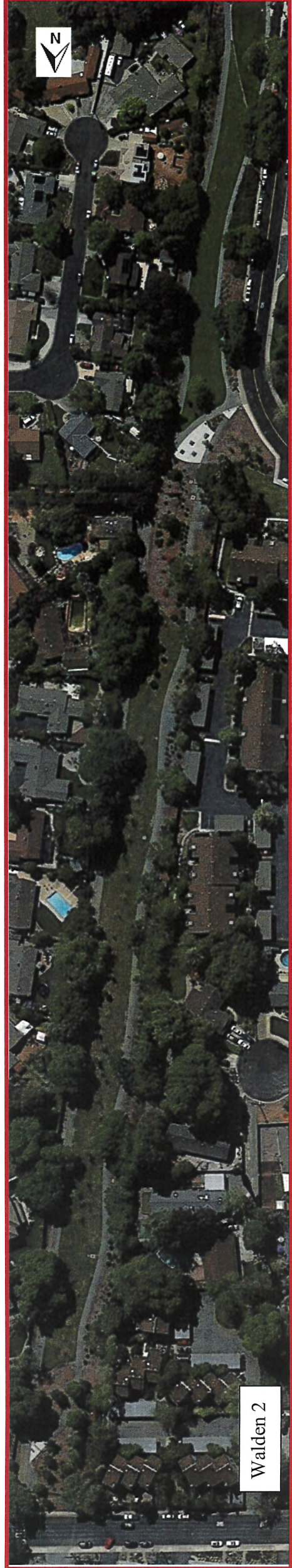
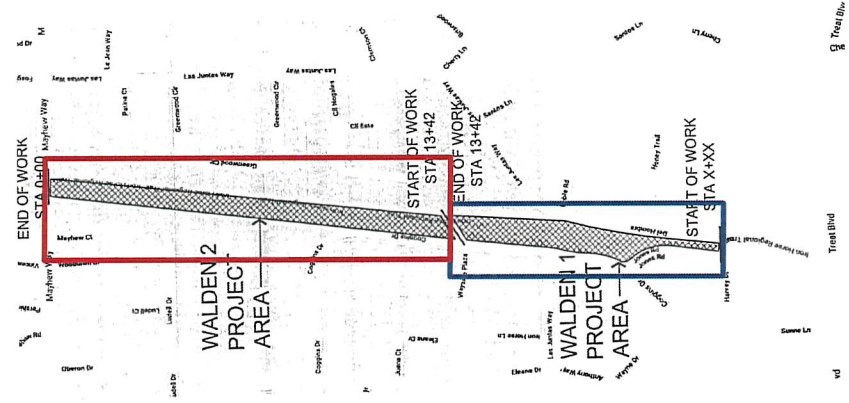
# CONTRA COSTA CALIFORNIA COUNTY



**FIGURE 1: Regional Location Map**  
Walden Green Improvement Project



**FIGURE 2: Project Vicinity Map**  
 Walden Green Improvement Project



**FIGURE 3: Project Vicinity Aerial**  
Walden Green Improvement Project

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT  
**Notice of Exemption**

To:  Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Contra Costa County  
Dept. of Conservation & Development  
30 Muir Road  
Martinez, CA 94553

County Clerk  
County of: Contra Costa

**Project Title:** Walden Green Improvement Project  
Proj. No. WO5201, CP#19-34

**Project Applicant:** Contra Costa County Public Works Department, 255 Glacier Drive Martinez, CA 94553

**Project Location:** The project is located at Walden Green, a park between Treat Boulevard and Mayhew Way, in unincorporated Walnut Creek in Central Contra Costa County.

**Lead Agency:** Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development

**Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:** The purpose of this project is to install and maintain landscaping/hardscaping at Walden Green, a green open space managed by Contra Costa County Public Works (CCCPWD) – Special Districts. The space is comprised of Walden Green I (between Treat Boulevard and Coggins Drive) and Walden Green II (between Coggins Drive and Mayhew Way), which together span an approximately half-mile stretch of the Iron Horse Trail Corridor. The vegetation plan was selected as a way to maintain Walden Green I and II in accordance with available funding. The landscape maintenance fund for Walden Green I was initially based on a redevelopment fund, however, County Redevelopment was disbanded and funds were therefore reduced. Walden Green II was completed in 2018 without designated funding for ongoing maintenance.

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Name of Public Agency Approving Project: **Contra Costa County**

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: **Contra Costa County Public Works Department**

**Exempt Status:**

- Ministerial Project (Sec. 21080(b) (1); 15268;       Categorical Exemption: Class 15301 (h), 15304 (b)  
 Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));       Other Statutory Exemption, Code No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));       Common Sense Exemption [Section 15061 (b)(3)]

**Reasons why project is exempt:** The project consists of replacing existing sidewalks and landscaping, pursuant to section 15301(c) and 15301(h) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Laura Cremin - **Public Works Dept.** Area Code/Telephone/Extension: **(925) 313-2015**

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?  Yes  No

Signature: Laura B. Cremin Date: 1/6/2020 Title: Principal Planner  
**Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development**

Signed by Lead Agency       Signed by Applicant

**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

**Applicant:**

Public Works Department  
255 Glacier Drive  
Martinez, CA 94553

Attn: **Laura Cremin**

Environmental Services Division

Phone: (925) 313-2015

**Department of Fish and Game Fees Due**

- EIR - \$3,343.<sup>25</sup>  
 Neg. Dec. - \$2,406.<sup>75</sup>  
 DeMinimis Findings - \$0  
 County Clerk - \$50  
 Conservation & Development - \$25

Total Due: **\$75** \_\_\_\_\_

Total Paid \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Receipt #: \_\_\_\_\_