

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

State Route 99 And Whitelock Parkway Interchange Improvements Project Availability of Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

Date: September 6, 2022

To: Public Agencies and Interested Parties

From: California Department of Transportation

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for State Route 99 and Whitelock Parkway Interchange Improvements Project

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in coordination with the City of Elk Grove (City), will prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), compliant with Section 15161 of the State CEQA Guidelines (Division 6 of Chapter 3 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, hereinafter the “CEQA Guidelines”), for the State Route 99 and Whitelock Parkway Interchange Improvements Project (also known as “the Project”). In accordance with Section 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines, Caltrans has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to provide the Office of Planning and Research, responsible and trustee agencies, and other interested parties with sufficient information describing the Project and its potential environmental effects.

The NOP will be circulated for a 30-day public review and comment period that begins on September 6, 2022, and ends on October 7, 2022, at 5:00 pm. Caltrans welcomes public input during the review period. If Caltrans has not received either a response or a well-justified request for additional time by a responsible agency by the end of the review period, Caltrans may presume the responsible agency has no response (CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b)(2)).

Please provide any written comments that you would like Caltrans to consider, along with the name of the appropriate contact person in your agency, to either of the contacts shown below by October 7, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

Tom Metcalf
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Environmental Planner
Caltrans, District 3
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Comments may also be submitted via email at tmetcalf@elkgrovecity.org or caitlin.greenwood@dot.ca.gov. All comments must be received no later than October 7, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. For more information, please visit the Project website at

https://www.elkgrovecity.org/city_hall/departments_divisions/public_works/capital_improvements/whitelock_interchange

PROJECT LOCATION

The SR-99 and Whitelock Parkway Interchange Improvements Project (Project) limits on SR-99 begin approximately 0.5 mile south of the Grant Line Road Interchange and extend approximately 3.3 miles north to the Elk Grove Boulevard Interchange (See Exhibit A).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in cooperation with the City of Elk Grove (City), proposes to construct improvements at State Route 99 (SR-99) and Whitelock Parkway (Whitelock) including a new interchange in the City of Elk Grove, California. Caltrans is the lead agency under CEQA.

The SR-99 and Whitelock Parkway Interchange Improvements Project limits on SR-99 begin approximately 0.5 mile south of the Grant Line Road Interchange and extend approximately 3.3 miles north to the Elk Grove Boulevard Interchange. The proposed Project consists of a new interchange, High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) carpool lanes, and a pedestrian overcrossing of SR-99 from just south of the Grant Line Road Interchange to the Elk Grove Boulevard Interchange. The Project also includes improvements to various local roads, specifically portions of Whitelock Parkway, Lotz Parkway, East Stockton Boulevard, and West Stockton Boulevard, with intersection modifications to accommodate traffic circulation. Auxiliary lanes connecting to the new interchange are also being considered.

The Project alternatives are constrained due to the adjacent Elk Grove Regional Park, Elk Grove Historical Society Museum, and existing SR-99. Multiple potential alternatives were identified in the Project Study Report-Project Development Support (PSR-PDS) approved by Caltrans in February 2020. There are six build alternatives proposed for the SR-99 and Whitelock Parkway Interchange Improvements Project. Three main build alternatives exist, and each contains an option to realign SR-99, which leads to the following six build alternatives: Alternative 1A: Realign SR-99 with Tight Diamond; Alternative 1B: Tight Diamond (no realignment); Alternative 2A: Realign SR-99 with Diverging Diamond; Alternative 2B: Diverging Diamond (no realignment); Alternative 3A: Realign SR-99 with Tight Diamond with Roundabouts; and Alternative 3B: Tight Diamond with Roundabouts (no realignment). Each of these alternatives will be further evaluated and any viable alternatives which meet the Project's purpose and need will be presented to the public for comment during the CEQA environmental process. Additional alternatives may also be identified and evaluated in the environmental documentation.

Currently, Elk Grove Boulevard experiences traffic congestion that is projected to increase due to planned development in the City. In addition, Caltrans plans to widen SR-99 in the future to

provide HOV lanes. The proposed Project is needed since Whitelock Parkway does not provide direct vehicle access to the west side of SR 99, there is a gap in access for pedestrians or bicyclists to connect the areas west of SR 99 to the Elk Grove Regional Park on the east side of SR 99, effective bus transit services require direct freeway access, and the existing roadway network system has inadequate capacity to accommodate existing traffic patterns, future traffic volumes, and planned and approved economic development and the resulting increase in traffic. The purpose of the Project is to improve system linkage, improve access for pedestrians and bicyclists, promote ride sharing and use of high occupancy vehicles, such as carpool, vanpool, bus services, and provide congestion relief in order to improve traffic flow and mobility.

Permanent right-of-way acquisitions, drainage improvements, temporary construction easements, and utility relocations will be required to accommodate the proposed Project. Partial acquisition and minor modifications to Elk Grove Regional Park may also be considered to accommodate the proposed improvements.

The Project will utilize local, state, and federal funds, as such it requires compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The lead agency for both CEQA and NEPA compliance is Caltrans.

REQUIRED APPROVALS

Approvals for the Project include, but are not limited to:

- Clean Water Act Section 401
- Clean Water Act Section 404
- Clean Water Act Section 402
- Fish and Game Code Section 1602
- Endangered Species Act Section 7
- U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 Section 4(F)
- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act
- Assembly Bill 52 Native American Tribal Coordination
- Right of Way

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

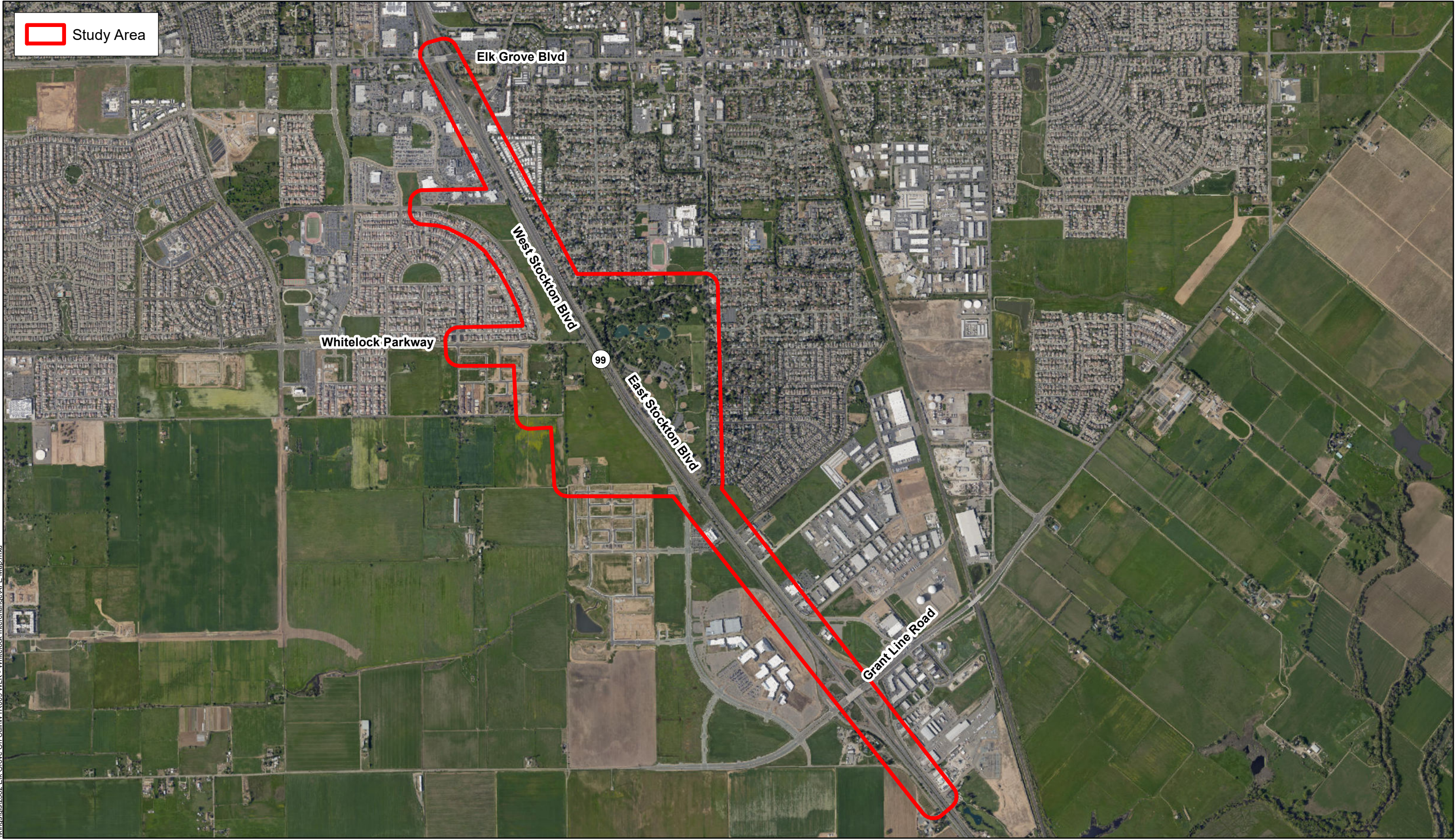
As required by CEQA, the EIR will describe existing conditions and evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed State Route 99 and Whitelock Parkway Interchange Improvements Project and a reasonable range of alternatives, including the No-Project alternative. It will address direct, indirect, and cumulative effects. The EIR will identify feasible mitigation measures, if available, to reduce significant and potentially significant impacts. The following environmental topic areas are preliminarily anticipated to be evaluated in the EIR:

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|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Visual Resources | • Public Services/Facilities |
| • Air Quality | • Hazards & Hazardous Materials |
| • Biological Resources | • Hydrology & Water Quality |
| • Historical Resources | • Transportation & Traffic |

- Archaeological Resources
- Noise
- Traffic Operations Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis

- Agricultural Resources
- Land Use, Community, Climate Change

 Study Area



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Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 5/4/2021; Created By: zachl



0 0.5 1 1.5 Miles

Proposed Study Area

WTR009L
SR-99/Whitlock Parkway Interchange Project
Elk Grove, California