

ATTACHMENT B: CEQA FINDINGS

Environmental Impact Report SCH# 19974107909

1.1 District Acting as Responsible Agency. As stated in Section 1.5 of the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Blosser-Southeast Specific Plan Amendment (Plan), the City of Santa Maria (City) was the lead agency for the Plan, with principal responsibility for approving the Plan, as well as for “considering the effects, both individual and collective, of all activities involved in [the] project.” (Pub. Res. Code § 21002.1.) The City certified the Supplemental EIR for the Blosser-Southeast Specific Plan Amendment on 15 September 2020.

The Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) is acting as a responsible agency in considering the proposed Cooperative Agreement for Battles Road Drainage Improvements (Agreement). As a responsible agency, the District is “responsible for considering only the effects of those activities involved in a project which it is required by law to carry out or approve.” (Pub. Res. Code § 21002.1.)

1.2 State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 Determination. As lead agency, the City certified the EIR on September 15, 2020 and has conditionally approved the Specific Plan Area 5B Subdivision, also known as Acquistapace Tract Map 6002. As a condition of approval, the City requires the developer to construct certain on-site and off-site storm drain improvements.

The Agreement would provide for the construction and perpetual maintenance of a new drainage facility along Battles Road. The Agreement is the only activity which the District is implementing through approval of the Agreement, and the District is responsible for considering only the effects of the Agreement, and not those aspects of a project that are beyond its purview. The proposed Agreement does not constitute the District’s review or approval of the Blosser-Southeast Specific Plan Area 5B Subdivision as a whole.

The Agreement between the City and the District would implement an action that is within the scope of the EIR approved by the City. The certified EIR indicates that, consistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183, future developments in the project area would not need subsequent environmental review if the actions are within the scope of impacts and mitigation measures as analyzed in the certified EIR. Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, there are no substantial changes in the proposed drainage improvements or the circumstances under which they would be undertaken indicating that the Agreement would cause new or substantially increased environmental effects than those considered in the certified EIR. Also, there is no new information of substantial importance showing that implementing the Agreement would cause or increase any significant environmental effects or additional mitigation measures beyond the scope of the certified EIR.

Because the Supplemental EIR has been determined to be sufficient for the actions contemplated under the Agreement, no further environmental review under Section 15162 is required to approve the Agreement.

1.3 Impacts and Mitigation Identified in the EIR (Section 15091(a)). The EIR prepared and certified by the City for the Blosser-Southeast Specific Plan Amendment identified potentially significant effects on the environment that may occur if actions within the scope of the Plan are implemented. Various feasible mitigation measures were identified to reduce potentially significant environmental impacts to a level of less than significance. Significant and unavoidable impacts were identified in the Air Quality subject analysis. Feasible mitigation measures were identified for the following impact areas: Aesthetics/Visual Resources, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazardous Materials, Noise, and Transportation. By entering into the Agreement, the District would implement construction and long-term maintenance of the subsurface drainage facility only. The District would implement the relevant mitigation measures for construction and operations of the subsurface drainage facility consistent with the EIR. With the exception of any general construction-related mitigation measures associated with subsurface drainage infrastructure, the mitigation measures identified in the EIR are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of a public agency other than the District.

1.4 Location and Custodian of Record of Proceedings. The documents and other materials which constitute the record of proceedings upon which this decision is based are in the custody District's Development Review Engineer located at 130 E. Victoria Street, STE 200, Santa Barbara, CA.