



## STAFF REPORT

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**DATE:** December 9, 2019

**TO:** Sacramento Regional Transit Board of Directors

**FROM:** Laura Ham, VP, Planning and Engineering

**SUBJ:** HOLDING A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE INITIAL STUDY/PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE FOLSOM LIGHT RAIL MODERNIZATION 15 MINUTE SERVICE PROJECT

### RECOMMENDATION

Action – Hold a Public Hearing.

### RESULT OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends that the Board of Directors open the public hearing to take comments on the Initial Study and the Mitigated Negative Declaration. Staff recommends that the Board close the public hearing after receipt of all comments. Written comments may still be submitted at the address and/or e-mail below until the close of the minimum 30-day California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) comment period on December 12, 2019 at 5 PM.

Sangita Arya  
 Sacramento Regional Transit District  
 2811 O Street  
 Sacramento, CA 95816  
 e-mail: [sarya@sacrt.com](mailto:sarya@sacrt.com)

### FISCAL IMPACT

There is no significant fiscal impact with holding a public hearing to take comments.

### DISCUSSION

The Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT) has prepared an Initial Study (IS) and proposes to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the proposed project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines. The IS/MND describes the proposed project and provides an assessment of the project's potential significant adverse impacts on the environment. The IS/MND concludes that the proposed project would not have any significant effects on the environment after implementation of mitigation measures.

The project is on SacRT's "Gold Line" (U.S. Highway 50 corridor), a light rail service that operates between downtown Sacramento and historic Folsom. The proposed

improvements would be at the northeastern end of the corridor in the cities of Rancho Cordova and Folsom and unincorporated Sacramento County. The Folsom project segment is approximately 0.6 mile long, generally between Parkshore Drive and Bidwell Street, and includes the Glenn/Robert G Holderness Station. The Rancho Cordova project segment is approximately 1.2 miles long, generally between Marketplace Lane and Aerojet Road, and includes the Hazel Station. Both segments are along Folsom Boulevard.

SacRT proposes to improve its light rail service to Folsom along its Gold Line. The improvements would allow light rail trains to operate every 15 minutes from the Sunrise Station to the Historic Folsom Station, rather than the current 30 minutes. The improvements are part of the “Folsom Light Rail Modernization Project” that collectively includes new low-floor light rail vehicles, modification to station platforms to accommodate the new vehicles, and addition of new passing tracks and signalization. Current service between the Sunrise Station and the eastern terminus of the Gold Line at the Historic Folsom Station (at Leidesdorff Street and Folsom Boulevard) is impeded because only a single track provides service between these stations. To remedy this operational constraint, the proposed project scope includes “double tracking” (or installing a passing track) in two locations (the project may proceed in phases, with initial installation of just one siding and delayed installation of the second siding; if that is the case, the environmental impacts would be reanalyzed at the time of the second installation to determine whether the criteria for a supplemental environmental document are met); updating the signal system that controls train movements so that trains will be able to operate inbound and outbound between the Sunrise and Historic Folsom Stations with little or no delay; adding a second loading platform at the Glenn and Hazel Stations; and modifying the existing platforms at these stations to accommodate the new low-floor light rail vehicles.

SacRT has prepared an IS/MND on the proposed project in accordance with the requirements of CEQA and has distributed it for public review and comment as required by CEQA. The purpose of the public hearing will be to solicit comments and testimony regarding the environmental analysis.

# Folsom Light Rail Modernization Double Track Project



Sacramento Regional Transit District  
Board Meeting

December 9, 2019

## Purpose of this Agenda Item

- ▶ Provide overview to the Proposed Project
- ▶ Review the CEQA Process
- ▶ Highlight the results of the CEQA Analysis
- ▶ Solicit comments on the CEQA Analysis
- ▶ Summarize the Next Steps





## Proposed Project Objectives

- ▶ Provide 15-minute headways to the eastern portion of the Gold Line
- ▶ Improve operational flexibility
- ▶ Maintain service if light rail vehicles becomes disabled



# Proposed Project Components

- ▶ Install new double track segments
  - ▶ In Folsom
  - ▶ In Rancho Cordova and unincorporated Sacramento County
- ▶ Install new loading platforms at Glenn and Hazel Stations
  - ▶ Designed for new low-floor vehicles
  - ▶ Also accommodates existing fleet
- ▶ Upgrade signal and circuitry system
  - ▶ Allows more efficient operation of warning devices and crossing gates





# Folsom Project Segment

- ▶ New track between Parkshore Drive and Bidwell Street (0.6 mile)
- ▶ New loading platform at Hazel Station alongside Folsom Boulevard
- ▶ Modification to Folsom/Glenn intersection
- ▶ Retaining wall to protect Folsom Parkway Rail Trail





# Rancho Cordova Project Segment

- ▶ New track between Marketplace Lane and Aerojet Road (1.2 miles)
- ▶ New loading platform at Hazel Station alongside Folsom Boulevard
- ▶ Realignment of UPRR track
- ▶ Sliver of land acquisition from Aerojet property



## Light Rail Vehicles

- ▶ Low-floor Vehicles - doors on low-floor cars are level with the street, which eliminates the need for elevated platforms at light rail stops



# Benefits of the Project



Provides 15-minute service



Allows SacRT to double the number of trains between Sunrise and Historic Folsom Stations



Reduces existing delays at the track crossings



Provides flexibility to move disabled vehicles onto double track segments and maintain mainline service



Implements high priority improvement in SacRT TransitAction Plan



Supports and complements local plans to create a transit-oriented, complete street corridor along Folsom Boulevard



Supports SACOG MTP/SCS to enhance transit availability and reduce greenhouse gas emissions

# CEQA Overview

## Purpose

- Provide environmental information *before* taking action

## Documentation

- *Initial Study* - determine whether an EIR is necessary
- No EIR if impacts can be reduced to less than significant
- Use CEQA Guidelines significance thresholds
- *Mitigated Negative Declaration* - decision document supported by Initial Study



# CEQA Overview

## Public Process

- Optional public scoping meetings
  - ⑩ - Folsom Community Center on April 17, 2019
  - ⑩ - Rancho Cordova City Hall on June 20, 2019
- - Postcards sent to property owners
- Notices of Initial Study availability and Mitigated Negative Declaration
  - - Mailed
  - - Posted at city and county offices
  - - Placed in local libraries and at SacRT
- 30-day review period (Nov 13 - Dec 12)
- Optional public meeting to receive comments (tonight)
- Board action anticipated in January 2020

# CEQA Analyses Summary (Bold italicized topics have significant impacts requiring mitigation)

Resource Topic	Issue(s)	Significance	Mitigation
Aesthetics	Adverse effect on scenic vista, scenic resources, visual character or views; substantial new light and glare	LTS	None
Agriculture / Forestry	Loss of agricultural or forestry resources	NI	None
<b><i>Air Quality</i></b>	Increase in air pollutants and exposure to substantial pollutant concentrations during construction	LTS with mitigation	Standard SMAQMD control measures
	Operational air emissions; odors	LTS	None
<b><i>Biological Resources</i></b>	Adverse effect on special-status species or sensitive habitats	LTS with mitigation	Preconstruction surveys, construction avoidance buffers
	Conflict with local policies/ordinances/plans (tree loss)	LTS with mitigation	Tree replacement
<b><i>Cultural Resources</i></b>	Adverse change to historical or archeological resource; disturbance to human remains	LTS with mitigation	Standard procedures to address unanticipated discoveries
Energy	Wasteful, inefficient use of energy; conflict with state/local plan	LTS	None
Geology /Soils	Substantial risk from geotechnical, soil, or seismic hazards	LTS	None
	Loss of unique paleontological resource	LTS with mitigation	See cultural resources

Significance conclusions: NI - No Impact; LTS - less than significant; LTS with mitigation - less than significant with implementation of recommended mitigation measure(s)

# CEQA Analyses Summary (Bold italicized topics have significant impacts requiring mitigation)

Resource Topic	Issue(s)	Significance	Mitigation
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Substantial emissions; conflict with state/local plan	LTS	None
<b><i>Hazardous and Hazardous Materials</i></b>	Exposure to existing environmental contamination	LTS with mitigation	Phase I and II environmental assessments; health/safety plan; avoid ongoing remediation activities
	Other hazards - release of hazardous materials, impede emergency response, exposure to wildfire hazards	LTS	None
Hydrology and Water Quality	Conflict with state/local regulations, increase erosion and sedimentation, adverse effect to water quality, exposure to flood hazards	LTS	None
Land Use and Planning	Division of an established community; conflict with local policies/ordinances/plans	NI	None
Mineral Resources	Loss of mineral resources	LTS	None
<b><i>Noise</i></b>	Construction noise	LTS with mitigation	Standard construction control measures; public outreach/notices
	Operational noise, vibration, exposure to other noise sources	LTS	None
Population and Housing	Induced unplanned growth; displacement	NI	None

Significance conclusions: NI - No Impact; LTS - less than significant; LTS with mitigation - less than significant with implementation of recommended mitigation measure(s)

# CEQA Analyses Summary (Bold italicized topics have significant impacts requiring mitigation)

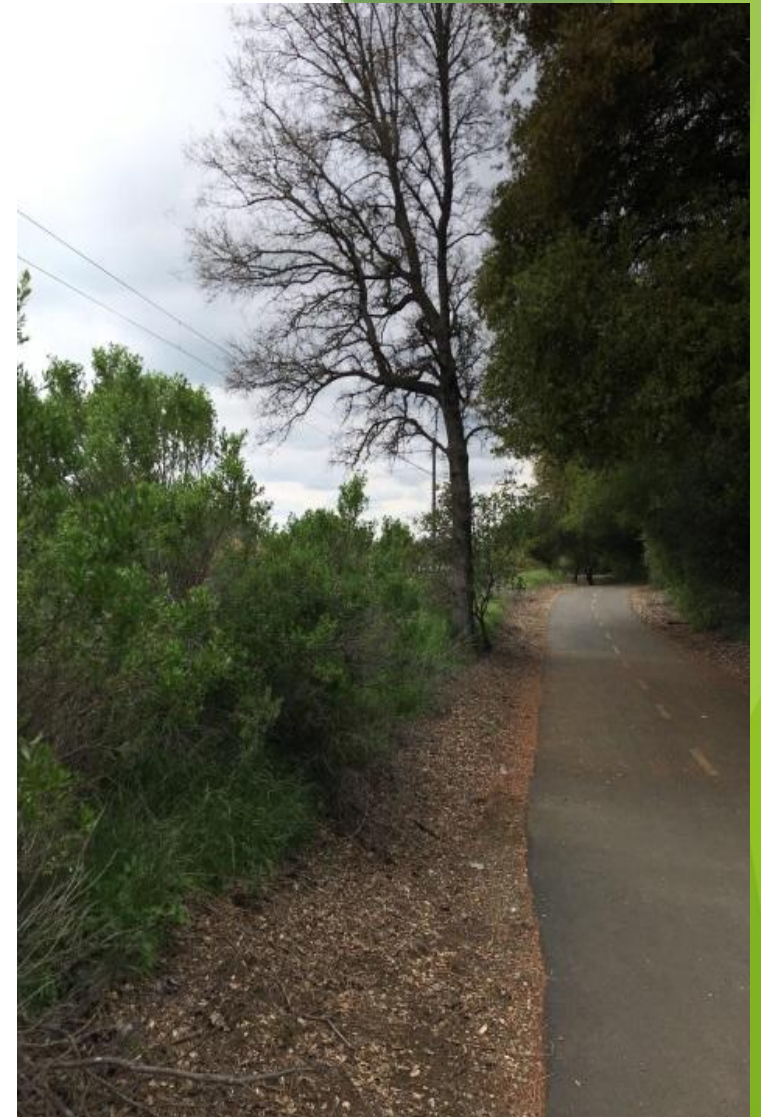
Resource Topic	Issue(s)	Significance	Mitigation
Public Services / Recreation	Physical effects from new or altered public services / community facilities	NI	None
<b><i>Transportation and Traffic</i></b>	Conflict with transportation plan, ordinance, policy	LTS with mitigation	Signal coordination/adjustment to minimize delay
	Construction traffic and hazards; impede emergency access	LTS with mitigation	Standard construction traffic management plan
<b><i>Tribal Cultural Resources</i></b>	Adverse change to tribal cultural resource	LTS with mitigation	See cultural resources
<b><i>Utilities</i></b>	Physical environmental effect from relocation or installation of utilities	LTS with mitigation	See biological and cultural resources and hazardous materials
	Demand for utilities in excess of capacity	NI	None
Wildlife	Impair emergency response, exacerbate wildfire risk, expose people or structures to significant risks	NI	None

Significance conclusions: NI - No Impact; LTS - less than significant; LTS with mitigation - less than significant with implementation of recommended mitigation measure(s)



# Public Review and Comment

- ▶ Accepting written and verbal comments **tonight**
- ▶ Written comments can be submitted up until 5 pm on **December 12, 2019**
- ▶ Submit comments to:
  - Sangita Arya
  - Sacramento Regional Transit District
  - 2811 O Street
  - Sacramento, CA 95812
  - e-mail: [sarya@sacrt.com](mailto:sarya@sacrt.com)
- ▶ Comments/questions will be addressed in writing





## Next Steps

- ▶ Review written and verbal comments on the Draft Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration
- ▶ Prepare responses to comments
- ▶ Revise Draft Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration
  - ▶ Suggestions already offered by City of Folsom
- ▶ Prepare Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
- ▶ SacRT Board meeting to consider revised Initial Study and adoption of Mitigated Negative Declaration