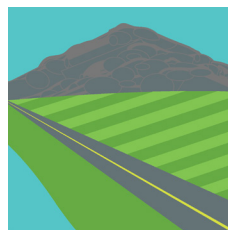


# Initial Study / Environmental Checklist

## 2019 Tehama County Regional Transportation Plan

January 2019



**TCTC**  
TEHAMA COUNTY  
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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# Initial Study / Proposed Negative Declaration

for the

2019 Tehama County  
Regional Transportation Plan

Report Prepared For:

Tehama County Transportation Commission  
9380 San Benito Avenue  
Gerber, CA 96035-9701



Report Prepared By:



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Initial Study / Environmental Checklist

Tehama County

2019 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN



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Initial Study / Proposed Negative Declaration

For the

Tehama County  
2019 Regional Transportation Plan

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9380 San Benito Avenue  
Gerber, CA 96035-9701

Report Prepared by Green DOT Transportation Solutions



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# Introduction

## Project Title

Tehama County 2019 Regional Transportation Plan

## Lead Agency Name and Address

Tehama County Transportation Commission  
9380 San Benito Avenue  
Gerber, CA 96035-9701

## Contact Person and Phone Number

Tim McSorley, Executive Director  
(530) 385-1462

## Project Sponsor's Name and Address

Tehama County Transportation Commission  
9380 San Benito Avenue  
Gerber, CA 96035-9701

## Project Location and Setting

The project area consists of the entire County of Tehama. Tehama County is located in the northern Sacramento Valley, approximately halfway between Sacramento and Oregon. Tehama County is bounded by Shasta County to the north, Trinity and Mendocino counties to the west, Glenn and Butte counties to the south, and Plumas County to the east (see Figure 1). The western boundary of Tehama County is located in the Pacific Coast Range, and the eastern boundary is in the Cascade Mountains. The county is approximately 2,950 square miles and 1,887,807 acres. The topography consists of rolling foothills, fertile valleys, flat-topped buttes, and vast rangelands. Tehama County is bisected by the Sacramento River Valley, a 20-mile-wide swath through the central portion of the county and contains large amounts of national forests in the hills and mountains to the east and west.

There are two major north-south highways (Interstate 5 and State Route 99) and one major east-west highway (State Route 36) in Tehama County that serve regional traffic. Interstate 5 (I-5) traverses north-south through the middle of the Sacramento Valley providing direct access to the cities of Red Bluff, Corning, and points beyond. State Route (SR) 99 enters Tehama County on the southeastern side from Butte County and connects to Los Molinos before terminating in Red Bluff. State Route 36 (SR 36) traverses the County in an east-west direction and connects Tehama County to Nevada in the east and the coast to the west.

There are three incorporated cities in Tehama County: Corning, Red Bluff, and Tehama. In 1856, the City of Red Bluff was established as the county seat. Its location along the Sacramento River made it an ideal location to serve as a transportation hub to export agricultural and lumber products by steamships up and down the river. Corning, the second largest city in the County, was incorporated in 1907. Corning serves as an agricultural hub for olives, plums, almonds, walnuts, and peaches, as well as cattle and sheep. The City of Tehama, established in 1846, is the oldest and smallest incorporated city at approximately 0.8 square miles. Tehama was originally established as a trading hub due to its proximity to the Sacramento River.

## General Plan and Zoning

There are a variety of General Plan Land Use designations applicable throughout the entire County, which includes the entire project area. The proposed project was designed to be consistent with the General Plans of Tehama County, Red Bluff, Corning, and Tehama. The Circulation Elements from each of these general plans were used as a reference during the development of the Tehama County 2019 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The proposed project is consistent with each of these general plans and does not include any proposed changes to the above-referenced general plans.

The Tehama County General Plan provides direction for the future growth of the County in the next twenty years. The Purpose and Vision of this document includes ensuring that agriculture remains one of the primary uses of land in Tehama County. The General Plan also supports the development and maintenance of an efficient, safe and effective road system. The Transportation and Circulation Element establishes the following goals:

1. To provide for the development and long-range planning of Tehama County's roadway system and for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the County.
2. For those lands deemed appropriate for commercial and industrial uses, improve access to road, rail, and air transportation in a cost-effective manner to facilitate their economic development.
3. To promote the maintenance and improvement of aviation facilities within the parameters of compatible surrounding land uses.
4. To encourage, support, and provide for a comprehensive system of facilities for nonmotorized transportation.
5. To promote, encourage, and support a safe and efficient public transportation system, which includes both bus and rail services to increase mobility to life line services, help reduce congestion, improve the environment, and provide viable non-automobile means of transportation throughout Tehama County.
6. To maintain a balanced freight transportation system to provide for the safe and efficient movement of goods.

The City of Red Bluff General Plan outlines similar goals, stating that the intent of the Circulation Element of the General Plan is to provide for the efficient transportation of people and goods throughout the Red Bluff Sphere of Influence.

The goal of the City of Corning General Plan Circulation Element is to provide an efficient, balanced and maintained road circulation system that, not only serve the needs of vehicular traffic, but must also serve the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians, in particular school children.

The goals of each Plan are reinforced in the RTP, which recognizes that future development should occur in areas that have low public service costs, will have the least negative environmental effect, and will not displace or endanger the County's critical natural resources. This approach will also result in lower improvement costs and increased operational efficiency of the existing transportation system because projects will be sized to reflect more compact growth closer to existing or planned services. This will help the County achieve any established greenhouse gas (GHG) targets.

There are a variety of zoning designations applicable throughout the entire County, which includes the



entire project area. The proposed project was designed to be consistent with the zoning codes of Tehama County and each of the incorporated cities.

### **Project Description**

The Tehama County Transportation Commission (TCTC) is designated the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Tehama County. The TCTC last updated the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) in 2015.

The RTP serves as the planning blueprint to guide transportation investments in the County involving local, State, and Federal funding over the next 20 years. The State and the County are at a pivotal moment in creating a new transportation pattern integrated with land use planning. Regions across California have been asked to develop plans for more efficient land use and development to reduce vehicles miles traveled (VMT). This focus is making its way into rural areas as well. Planners generally agree that reducing congestion, commute times, and VMT will lead to reduced carbon emissions while improving the quality of life.

Between 2000 and 2010, the Tehama County population increased by approximately 1.3% annually. The California DOF estimates that the predicted Tehama County 2019 population of 64,804 will increase to approximately 72,485 by the horizon year of this RTP, 2039. This represents a projected average annual increase of 0.59% between 2019 and 2039. The TCTC sees an opportunity in slow growth, as future RTP updates can wisely invest available funding in the transportation system. The County can become an even better place to live and work by integrating transportation improvements with land use planning.

Transportation improvements proposed in the 2019 RTP are categorized as short range (0-10 years) or long range (11-20 years). This RTP focuses on developing a coordinated and balanced multimodal regional transportation system that is financially constrained to the revenues anticipated over the life of the plan (2039). This update must be consistent with the 2017 Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines, which requires inclusion of program-level outcome-based performance measures and close ties to the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP).

### **Purpose of the Plan**

As defined by the 2017 RTP Guidelines, the purpose of the regional transportation plan is to accomplish the following objectives:

- Providing an assessment of the current modes of transportation and the potential of new travel options within the region;
- Projecting/estimating the future needs for travel and goods movement;
- Identification and documentation of specific actions necessary to address regional mobility and accessibility needs;
- Identification of guidance and documentation of public policy decisions by local, regional, state and federal officials regarding transportation expenditures and financing;
- Identification of needed transportation improvements, in sufficient detail, to serve as a foundation for the: (a) Development of the Federal State Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP, which includes the STIP), (b) Facilitation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/404 integration process and (c) Identification of project purpose and need;

- Employing performance measures that demonstrate the effectiveness of the system of transportation improvement projects in meeting the intended goals;
- Promotion of consistency between the CTP, the RTP and other plans developed by cities, counties, districts, California Tribal Governments, and state and federal agencies in responding to statewide and interregional transportation issues and needs;
- Providing a forum for: (1) participation and cooperation and (2) facilitation of partnerships that reconcile transportation issues which transcend regional boundaries; and,
- Involving community-based organizations as part of the public, Federal, State and local agencies, California Tribal Governments, as well as local elected officials, early in the transportation planning process so as to include them in discussions and decisions on the social, economic, air quality and environmental issues related to transportation. The TCTC prepared this 2019 RTP based on these objectives consistent with the 2017 RTP Guidelines (adopted January 18, 2017).

### **Project Purpose and Need**

The RTP guidelines require that an RTP “provide a clearly defined justification for its transportation projects and programs.” This requirement is often referred to as The Project Purpose and Need Statement. Caltrans’ Deputy Directive No. DD 83 describes a project’s “Need” as an identified transportation deficiency or problem, and its “Purpose” is the set of objectives that will be met to address the transportation deficiency. For Tehama County, each project by mode in Appendix D of the 2019 RTP includes a qualitative assessment of purpose and need indicating a project’s contribution to system preservation, capacity enhancement, safety, and/ or multimodal enhancements. These broader categories capture the intended outcome for projects during the life of the RTP and serve to enhance and protect the “livability” of residents in the County. The following definitions are used in the RTP document.

**System Preservation** – This category of improvement indicates a project that serves to maintain the integrity of the existing system so that access and mobility are not hindered for travelers. Improvements may include bridge repairs, upgrading of existing rail lines, airport runway repairs, and upgrades to signs and traffic control devices and striping. In addition, because Tehama County is rural and contains several small communities, the lack of maintenance funding has resulted in a large amount of “deferred maintenance” that has actually lapsed into a serious need to “rehabilitate” roadways to maintain system preservation. Rehabilitation entails primarily overlay and/or chip seal work that can also be considered a safety improvement. The majority of road projects listed indicate either “rehabilitation” or “reconstruction” to maintain system preservation.

**Capacity Enhancement** – A capacity enhancement indicates a project that serves to increase traffic flows and to help alleviate congestion and improve LOS. This result may be achieved by adding a lane of traffic, adding a passing lane, and/or adding a turn-out for slow-moving vehicles. Because Tehama County experiences large volumes of truck and recreational traffic on many of its roadways, the ability of vehicles to travel at desired speeds is sometimes restricted. Capacity enhancement projects are designed to increase travel speeds and provide for opportunities to pass slower vehicles safely. Additional capacity can also apply to airport projects where runways are added or extended. The desired outcome is to maintain acceptable LOS on State and regionally significant roads, and adequate capacity at the County’s airports to meet existing and future demand.

**Safety Projects** – Safety improvements are intended to reduce the chance of conflicts between modes, prevent injury to motorists using the transportation system, and to ensure that motorists can travel to their destination in a timely manner. Safety improvements may include roadway and intersection

realignments to improve sight-distance, pavement or runway resurfacing to provide for a smooth travel surface, signage to clarify traffic and aviation operations, congestion relief, obstacle removal so that traffic flows are not hindered, and improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities to promote safe travel to desired destinations. In addition, bridge repairs and reinforcement serve to improve safety. The desired outcome is to reduce the incident of collisions on County facilities and the societal costs in terms of injury, death or property damage.

**Multi-modal Enhancement** – These type of improvements focus on non-auto modes of travel such as bicycling, walking and transit. Projects that are designated as multimodal are designed to enhance travel by one or more of these modes, provide for better connectivity between modes, and to improve non-auto access to major destinations and activity centers. Typical projects include separated bike lanes, shared bike routes, sidewalks, transit amenities, street furniture, and signage.

All projects listed in the Action Element and Appendix D of the RTP fall into one of the following designations. It should be noted that projects within each grouping are for the most part in random order. Consequently, the TCTC, County, and/or Caltrans may change the priority ranking or project scope during the RTP approval process.

- Short Range: RTP improvements represent short-range projects that are fully fundable from anticipated revenue sources, referred to as “constrained”, and will normally be programmed during the first 10 years (0-10 years) of the RTP.
- Long Range: RTP improvements represent long-range projects that are included on the unconstrained or “unfunded” list of projects in Appendix G of the RTP and are planned for programming in the 11-20 year time frame (by the RTP horizon year, 2038).

There are no new roadways proposed as part of the proposed project. The RTP does not directly provide for the implementation of transportation projects and/or facilities. Rather, it identifies necessary improvements in order to provide the best possible transportation/circulation system to meet the mobility and access needs of the entire County.

Due to the regional nature of the RTP, the analysis in this Initial Study focuses on those impacts that are anticipated to be potentially significant on a regional system-wide level. As individual projects near implementation, it will be necessary to undertake project-specific environmental assessments before each project is approved and implemented. Such future environmental review will be required in accordance with CEQA and, if federally funded, NEPA. Adoption of this Initial Study/Negative Declaration and approval of the RTP does not authorize Tehama County or Caltrans, to undertake construction of specific improvement projects identified in the RTP without further environmental review and consideration.

### Regional Goals

The following RTP goals and objectives have been retained and updated from the 2015 RTP. These goals and objectives have been modified to provide consistency with the overall County transportation goals addressed above as well as the new proposed goals contained in the Tehama County General Plan.

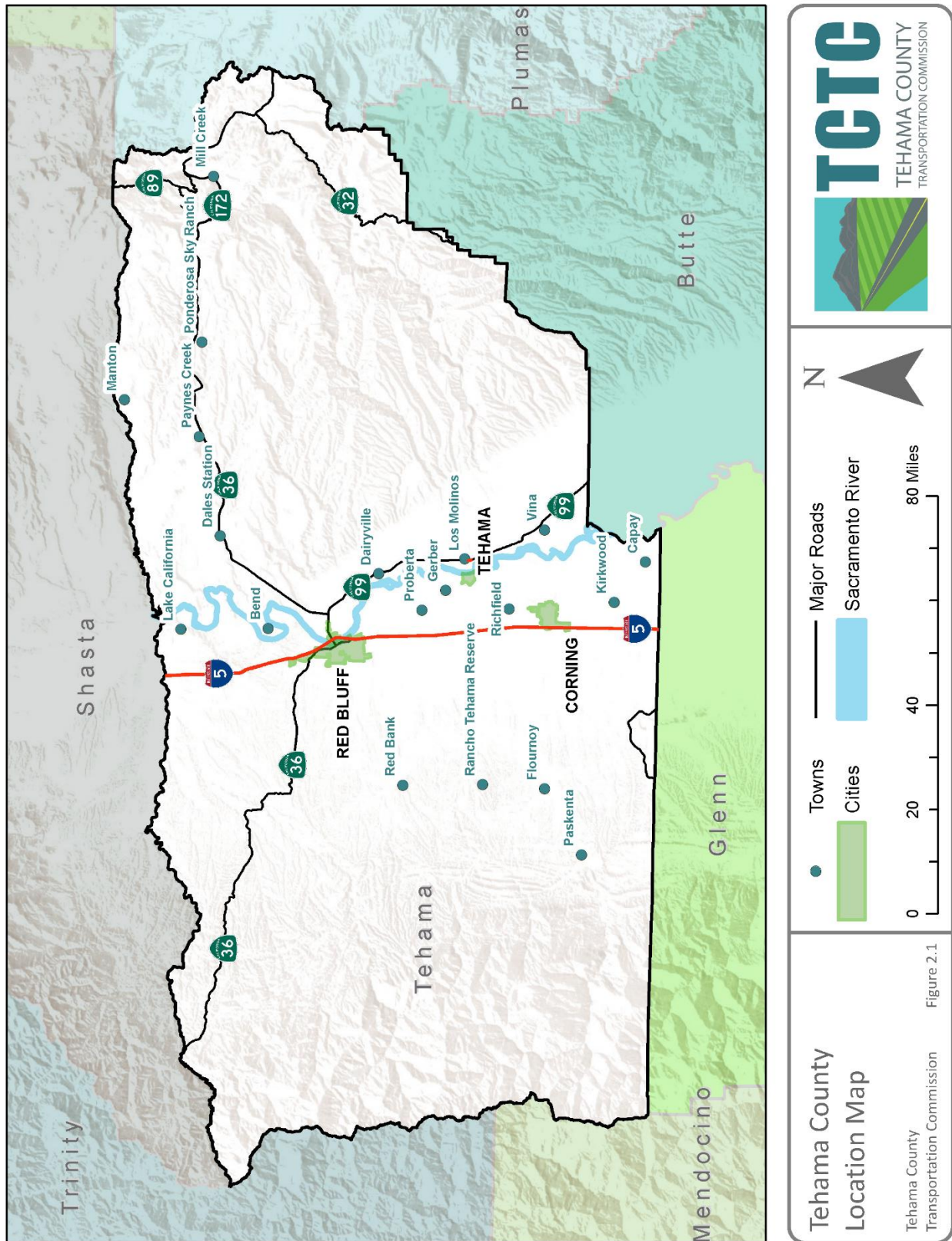
- Goal 1: Provide and maintain a safe and efficient transportation system for the movement of people and goods within the region and connect to points beyond.
  - Objective 1.1: Preserve the existing transportation system with a pavement condition index (PCI) of 68 or better.
- Goal 2: Optimize the use of existing interregional and regionally significant roadways to improve safety, prolong functionality, and maximize return-on-investment.

- Objective 2.1: Maintain roadways in a manner that balances cost and facility life-cycle.
  - Objective 2.2: Increase the efficient movement of people and goods.
- Goal 3: Strategically improve the interregional and regionally significant roadways to keep people and freight moving safely, effectively, and efficiently.
  - Objective 3.1: Maximize funding available for transportation and mobility improvements in the region.
  - Objective 3.2: Maintain adequate traffic capacity on the core interregional network.
- Goal 4: Align financial resources to meet the highest priority transportation needs.
- Goal 5: Promote transportation improvements that preserve agricultural lands and engage land use coordination that discourages sprawl and leap-frog development, and/or increases in the transportation-system life-cycle costs. \*As denoted in the adopted Blueprint Plan, blueprint Planning shows that changes to local land use patterns could achieve significant benefits to the region's transportation system and air quality.
  - Objective 5.1: Discourage sprawl and land use practices that negatively impact agriculture and the transportation system.
- Goal 6: Create vibrant, people-centered communities.
  - Objective 6.1: Support local governments in implementing pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
  - Objective 6.2: Enhance community health, safety, and well-being.
- Goal 7: Provide an integrated, multimodal range of practical transportation choices.
  - Objective 7.1: Develop an integrated, multimodal range of local transportation choices.
  - Objective 7.2: Develop an integrated, multimodal range of interregional transportation choices.
- Goal 8: Promote public access and awareness in the planning and decision-making processes.
  - Objective 8.1: Utilize a broad range of public participation strategies.
- Goal 9: Practice agricultural, environmental, and resource stewardship.
  - Objective 9.1: Identify and minimize the direct and indirect adverse impacts of transportation on the environment, including but not limited to: agricultural land, air quality, healthy watersheds, and essential wildlife habitat.

### **Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required (e.g., Permits, etc.)**

Tehama County will be the Lead Agency for the proposed project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 15050. No specific permits are required to approve the proposed project. Future permit approvals vary among projects and may include, but are not necessarily limited to: Caltrans, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, US Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, and the California Transportation Commission.

Figure 1: Regional Location Map



## Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

None of the environmental factors listed below would be potentially affected by this project, as described on the following pages.

	Aesthetics		Agriculture Resources		Air Quality
	Biological Resources		Cultural Resources		Geology /Soils
	Greenhouse Gas Emissions		Hazards & Hazardous Materials		Hydrology / Water Quality
	Land Use / Planning		Mineral Resources		Noise
	Population / Housing		Public Services		Recreation
	Transportation/Traffic		Utilities / Service Systems		Tribal Cultural Resources
	Mandatory Findings of Significance				

## Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

X	I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be
	I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
	I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Mathew Boyer, Executive Director

Date

## Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

In each area of potential impact listed in this section, there are one or more questions which assess the degree of potential environmental effect. A response is provided to each question using one of the four impact evaluation criteria described below. A discussion of the response is also included.

- **Potentially Significant Impact.** This response is appropriate when there is substantial evidence that an effect is significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries, upon completion of the Initial Study, an EIR is required.
- **Less than Significant With Mitigation.** This response applies when the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact". The Lead Agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
- **Less than Significant Impact.** A less than significant impact is one which is deemed to have little or no adverse effect on the environment. Mitigation measures are, therefore, not necessary, although they may be recommended to further reduce a minor impact.
- **No Impact.** These issues were either identified as having no impact on the environment, or they are not relevant to the Project.



## Environmental Checklist

This section of the Initial Study incorporates the most current Appendix "G" Environmental Checklist Form, contained in the CEQA Guidelines. Impact questions and responses are included in both tabular and narrative formats for each of the 17 environmental topic areas.

### I. AESTHETICS – WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			X	
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?			X	
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?			X	
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			X	

### SETTING

Tehama County is characterized by rolling foothills, fertile valleys, flat-topped buttes, and vast rangelands. The region's economy is largely dependent on these diverse natural settings, and they are a significant reason why many residents choose to live in Tehama County. The Tehama County General Plan envisions conservation rather than development of open lands, and the RTP aligns with this vision by programming transportation system improvements rather than expansion.

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a-d): Less than Significant.** The proposed project does not entitle, propose, or otherwise require the construction of new roadways. The proposed project includes a variety of roadway improvement projects, which consist primarily of roadway rehabilitation efforts and roadway safety improvements. There are no new roadways proposed as part of the 2019 RTP update, and as such, the proposed project would not lead to indirect population growth as a result of access improvements into areas that are currently undeveloped.

The proposed project identifies roadway and multimodal transportation improvement funding priorities that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in significant or adverse changes to the visual quality of the county, and would not result in the introduction of increased nighttime lighting or daytime glare. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.



## II. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES --WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) 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?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non- agricultural use?				X

### SETTING

According to the Tehama County 2017 Annual Crop Report, the total gross value of Tehama County agricultural production in 2017 was \$381,714,400 which is a new county record and represents a \$46,462,000 increase from 2016 total values. The top five highest value agricultural crops for Tehama County in 2017 were walnuts, almonds, table olives, prunes, and beef cattle.

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a): No Impact.** Implementation of the proposed project would allow for roadway and multimodal transportation improvements throughout the County over the next 20 years. The proposed project would not result in the conversion of any agricultural lands to non- agricultural uses, and as such, would have no impact on any Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide importance. There is no impact and no mitigation is required.

**Response b): No Impact.** The proposed project does not propose any changes to General Plan land use designations or zoning districts, and would have no impact on zoning for agricultural use. The proposed project would not result in conflicts with any Williamson Act contracts, nor would it result in the cancellation of any Williamson Act contracts. Implementation of the proposed project will have no impact on a Williamson Act contract, and no mitigation is required.

**Response c): No Impact.** See responses a) and b) above. The proposed project will have no impact on agricultural lands or operations.

### III. AIR QUALITY -- WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?			X	
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?			X	
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?			X	

#### SETTING

The Tehama County Air Pollution Control District (TCAPCD) is the primary agency responsible for meeting state and federal ambient air quality standards for all criteria pollutants in Tehama County. The District is tasked with regulating stationary sources of air pollution throughout Tehama County. It is located within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin and is governed by a 5-member Board of Directors composed of locally elected officials. The Board oversees policies and adopts regulations for the control of air pollution within the District. The TCAPCD works with other Air Pollution Control Districts within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin to maintain the region's portion of the State Implementation Plan, which is an air quality control plan containing regional emissions inventories, planning documents, and rules and regulations of the air basins as reported by their jurisdictional agencies.

In general, air emission sources in Tehama County are associated with motor vehicles, farming operations, managed burning and disposal, petroleum production and marketing, residential fuel combustion, solvent evaporation, and fugitive dust from unimproved roads and sparsely vegetated or un-vegetated lands (CARB 2012).

The presence of inversion layers can augment the ambient air concentrations of pollutants such as carbon monoxide, ozone, and PM10. Pollutants directly emitted have the ability to stay in an inversion profile without mixing or diluting, which causes an increase in pollutant concentration.

The California Clean Air Act (CCAA) of 1988 requires air districts to endeavor to achieve and maintain the state ambient air quality standards by the earliest practicable date and to develop plans for attaining the state ozone, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide standards.

If a pollutant concentration is lower than the state or federal standard, the area is classified as being in attainment for that pollutant. If a pollutant violates the standard, the area is considered a nonattainment area. If data are insufficient to determine whether a pollutant is violating the standard, the area is designated unclassified. Based on the 2015 Air Resources Board Area Designation Maps the county is

currently in attainment or unclassified for all federal air standards. However, the TCAPCD is designated as in nonattainment for the State PM<sub>10</sub> (coarse particulate matter) and ozone standards (CARB 2017). The district is either in attainment or unclassified for all other monitored air pollutants.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-e): Less Than Significant.** It is the intention of the RTP to rehabilitate the current road base and improve existing and future circulation within the County wherever possible. With this focus, improvements in the RTP may benefit regional air quality by reducing congestion on major roads within the County. Some of the route improvements contemplated in the RTP could have direct impacts on air quality, sensitive receptors, or create objectionable odors on a project-specific basis during construction. The Clean Air Act sets national ambient air quality standards for various air pollutants, including carbon monoxide, ozone, oxides of nitrogen, sulfur dioxide and particulate matter.

Individual projects contemplated in the RTP will be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction. Measures, such as construction best management practices (BMPS), may be required for individual projects to reduce temporary short-term construction related impacts to air quality.

The project would not result in any indirect or cumulatively adverse impacts on air quality, as the project would not result in increased vehicle trips within the County or an overall increase in vehicle miles travelled as a result of implementation of the RTP.

The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the air quality plan, or violate any air quality standard.

In 2006, the California State Legislature adopted Assembly Bill (AB) 32 known as the California Global Warming Solutions Act (Section 38560.5 of the Health and Safety Code). The bill establishes a cap on statewide greenhouse gas emissions and sets forth the regulatory framework to achieve the corresponding reduction in statewide emissions levels.

In January 2007, the Legislature asked the CTC to review the RTP guidelines to incorporate climate change emission reduction measures. The request emphasized that RTPs should utilize models that accurately measure the benefits of land use strategies aimed at reducing vehicle trips and/or trip length. The CTC staff established an RTP guidelines work group to assist in the development of “best practices” for inclusion in the RTP Guidelines. The 2017 RTP Guidelines provides several recommendations for consideration by rural RTPAs to address GHG. The following strategies from the 2017 RTP guidelines have specific application to Tehama County.

- Implement operational efficiencies that reduce congestion in vehicle throughput on roadways or improve transit access or other alternative access without physical expansion of the roadways.
- For purposes of allocating transportation investments, recognize the rural contribution towards GHG reduction for counties that have policies that support development within their cities, and protect agriculture and resource lands. Consideration should be given to jurisdictions that contribute towards these goals for projects that reduce GHG or are GHG neutral, such as safety, rehabilitation, connectivity and for alternative modes.
- In setting priorities, consider transportation projects that increase efficiency, connectivity and/or accessibility or provide other means to reduce GHG.
- In setting priorities, consider transportation projects that provide public health co-benefits.

- Emphasize transportation investments in areas where desired land uses as indicated in a city or County general plan may result in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction or other lower impact use.
- Employ “Fix It First” policies to ensure that preventive maintenance and repair of existing transit and roads are the highest priority for spending, to reduce overall maintenance costs, and to support development in existing centers and corridors.

The transportation planning literature recognizes three interrelated components that contribute to transportation emissions reductions. Those components include changes in vehicle technology (cleaner burning engines), alternative fuel sources, and vehicle use. The first two components are typically the responsibility of industry and national governmental interests. RTPAs and local governments have the ability to affect vehicle use by promoting transportation alternatives to the automobile, and by managing the demand for transportation. These efforts typically involve goals and policies and/or projects and programs focused on getting people out of their cars and into non-auto modes of travel (mode shifting).

The following RTP goals are established for Tehama County to increase safety while reducing dependence on the automobile and to promote mode shifting to other forms of transportation.

- Goal 1: Provide and maintain a safe and efficient transportation system for the movement of people and goods within the region and connect to points beyond.
- Goal 2: Optimize the use of existing interregional and regionally significant roadways to improve safety, prolong functionality, and maximize return-on-investment.
- Goal 3: Strategically improve the interregional and regionally significant roadways to keep people and freight moving safely, effectively, and efficiently.
- Goal 4: Align financial resources to meet the highest priority transportation needs.
- Goal 5: Promote transportation improvements that preserve agricultural lands and engage land use coordination that discourages sprawl and leap-frog development, and/or increases in the transportation-system life-cycle costs.
- Goal 6: Create vibrant, people-centered communities.
- Goal 7: Provide an integrated, multimodal range of practical transportation choices.
- Goal 8: Promote public access and awareness in the planning and decision-making processes.
- Goal 9: Practice agricultural, environmental, and resource stewardship.

The effectiveness of efforts by the RTPA to provide transportation alternatives and to implement TDM and TSM policies and strategies can be measured in terms of reductions in VMT or the expected growth in VMT. VMT reductions correlates directly with reductions in GHG emissions.

Caltrans reports VMT by County on an annual basis (Figure 2). Although the daily vehicle mileages for the Cities of Red Bluff, Corning, and Tehama have decreased between 5%-25% between 2010 and 2016, the county-wide daily vehicle mileage has increased by 7.5% during the same time period (Figure 2). this indicates that in-town driving has decreased but commuting between communities within Tehama County and to destinations outside of Tehama County has increased.

Figure 2: Daily Vehicle Miles Travelled

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)					
Place	Lane Miles	2010 Daily VMT	2013 Daily VMT	2016 Daily VMT	Change, 2010 - 2016
City of Red Bluff	75.92	149.57	149.56	129.46	-13.4%
City of Corning	41.82	61.61	61.61	58.26	-5.4%
City of Tehama	5.78	5.37	5.37	4.02	-25.1%
Tehama County	1625.32	2491.59	2412.84	2677.61	7.5%
Source: California Public Road Data 2010, 2013, 2016					

Based on the guidelines established in the 2017 RTP guidelines, the County is not required to run a network travel demand model to estimate VMT. Tehama County falls in the RTP Modeling Improvement Program Category 1, with attainment Air Quality (AQ), slow growth in population and jobs, little or no congestion, and no significant capacity-enhancing projects or limited transit expansion plans or areas of non-attainment due to transport. These counties are not required under federal or state statute or regulation to develop network travel model.

MPOs, RTPAs, and congestion management agencies are organized into travel analysis groups based on federal and state laws. Group A includes Regional transportation planning agencies identified as Isolated Rural Attainment Areas (A1) and Isolated Rural Nonattainment or Maintenance Areas (A2). RTPAs that fall within the A grouping are not required to conduct federal air quality conformity analysis as part of their RTP development. Caltrans is required to perform project-level air quality conformity analysis for regionally significant federal funded projects. Tehama County is within the A grouping and is almost completely identified as A1, with one small area of A2.

The guidelines cite the lack of road congestion and the fact that emission changes from higher-MPG vehicles will continue to help the County comply with future emission caps established by the California Air Resources Board as part of AB 32.

The Tehama County 2019 RTP recognizes that TDM and other non-auto mobility options, including walking, biking and transit, require coordinated land use decisions and improved infrastructure. To this degree, the goals and policies in the RTP are consistent with the City of Red Bluff General Plan, City of Corning General Plan, City of Tehama General Plan, and the Tehama County General Plan to provide a balanced multi-modal transportation system that includes non-auto choices for access and mobility.

The County is committed to implementing these types of policies and strategies that reduce reliance on the automobile and contribute to the reduction of GHG. As such, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to air quality and global climate change, and no mitigation is required.

#### IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES -- WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?			X	
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?			X	
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?			X	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?			X	

#### SETTING

The elevation of Tehama County ranges from 150 feet in the valley floor along the Sacramento River to 9,235 feet atop Brokeoff Mountain. As a result of such major changes in elevation, Tehama County includes a great variety of climatic, soils and geographic conditions which, in turn, influence the distribution, variety, and abundance of the plant and animal species within the county.

The goals identified in the Policy Element of the RTP consider stressors identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan. The State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) identifies separate conservational provinces broken into subzones called ecoregions by the SWAP. Tehama County is within the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada Province, the North Coast and Klamath Province, and the Cascades and Modoc Plateau Province. In the Central Valley and Sierra Nevada Province, Tehama County is classified within the Great Valley and Sierra Nevada Foothills ecoregions; in the North Coast and Klamath Province, Tehama County is classified within the Northern California Interior Coast Ranges ecoregion and the Northern California Coast Ranges ecoregion; in the Cascades and Modoc Plateau Province, Tehama County is classified within the Southern Cascades ecoregion. The SWAP identifies sensitive species, habitat stressors, and suggested conservation goals and actions for each of the ecoregions in California. According to the

SWAP, the major stressors for ecoregions within Tehama County are as follows:

- Agricultural and forestry effluents.
- Annual and perennial non-timber crops.
- Climate change.
- Commercial and industrial areas.
- Dams and water management/use.
- Fire and fire suppression.
- Household sewage and urban waste water.
- Housing and urban areas.
- Invasive plants/animals.
- Livestock, farming, and ranching.
- Logging and wood harvesting.
- Recreational activities.
- Renewable energy.
- Roads and railroads.
- Utility and service lines.

A review was performed of county-wide species using the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB). The information in the species list includes known occurrences and historical occurrences of species listed as threatened, endangered or otherwise protected under policies or ordinances at the local or regional level as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, §15380).

The CNDDDB County Species List contains 235 total animal and plant species within Tehama County. Of these, 46 animal species are classified by the CDFW as Fully Protected, Species of Special Concern, or Watch List. The CNDDDB species list for Tehama County also contains 14 species legally classified by the State of California as endangered, of which 8 are animals and 6 are plants. 3 animal species are classified by the State as Candidate Endangered and one animal species is Candidate Threatened. There are 8 State-classified Threatened species, all of which are animals. The CNDDDB lists 9 Federally-classified Endangered species under the Federal Endangered Species Act in Tehama County, of which 7 are animals and 2 are plants. There are 10 Federally classified Threatened species, of which 8 are animal species and 2 are plant species. One animal species is Federally classified as a Candidate. Many of the above-listed species are recognized in two or more classifications.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a-f): Less than Significant.** The proposed project does not propose the construction of new roadways in areas of the County that have previously been undisturbed. Nearly all of the roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of rehabilitation efforts, which would occur within the roadbeds of the existing roadways, and would not have the potential to impact any special status species or habitat. Individual projects identified in the RTP that may include the widening of a particular roadway would be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction of the improvements. This future project-level environmental review of individual projects would identify the potential for impacts to any special status species, habitat, or wetlands. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not directly or indirectly impact any biological resources, wetland resources, or conflict with any habitat conservation plan or local ordinance protecting natural and biological resources. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## V. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?			X	
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?			X	
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			X	
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	

### SETTING

Tehama County was formed from parts of Butte, Colusa, and Shasta Counties in 1856. At the time of European settlement, the region was home to two Native American tribal groups: Nomlaki and Yana (Tehama County, 2009).

For approximately 4,500 years, archaeological records state that the Yana and their predecessors occupied the area from the Round Mountains near the Pit River in Shasta County, to Deer Creek in Tehama County. The Nomlaki (Central Wintun) were relative newcomers by comparison, having arrived from the north only 400 years ago. This tribe generally occupied the area spanning 10 miles east of the Sacramento River into the coastal range, in what is now Glenn and Tehama Counties.

There is currently one federally recognized Tribal entity in Tehama County. The Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians of California has headquarters in the City of Corning. In addition, a significant portion of the population of the Greenville Rancheria with headquarters in Plumas County have relocated within Tehama County due to historical changes in the Rancheria's federal recognition status. Cooperative planning between Tribal governments, regional and local agencies and Caltrans was achieved during the planning process of this document.

The first permanent non-indigenous settlers in Tehama County were given land grants by the Mexican government in 1844. The City of Tehama, established in 1846, is the oldest and smallest incorporated city at approximately 0.8 square miles. Tehama was originally established as a trading hub due to its proximity to the Sacramento River. In 1856, the City of Red Bluff was established as the county seat. Its location along the Sacramento River made it an ideal location to serve as a transportation hub to export agricultural and lumber products by steamships up and down the river. Corning, the second largest city in the County, was incorporated in 1907.

Prehistoric and historic resources are valuable to the people of Tehama County in various ways: recreation opportunities, community identity, aesthetic beauty, spiritual importance, and historic interest. Prehistoric, historic, and contemporary cultural resources could be located anywhere within the County. No comprehensive inventory of cultural resource sites within Tehama County exists.

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a-d): Less than Significant.** The proposed project does not entitle, propose, or otherwise



require the construction of new roadways. The proposed project includes a variety of roadway improvement projects, which consist primarily of roadway rehabilitation efforts and roadway safety improvements. The proposed project identifies roadway and multimodal transportation improvement funding priorities that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Nearly all of the roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of rehabilitation efforts, which would occur within the roadbeds of the existing roadways, and would not have the potential to impact any known or previously undiscovered cultural resources. Individual projects identified in the RTP that may include the widening or a particular roadway would be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction of the improvements. This future project-level environmental review of individual projects would identify the potential for impacts to any cultural, historical, paleontological or archaeological resources. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:			X	
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.			X	
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv) Landslides?			X	
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			X	
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off- site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?			X	
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?			X	
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?			X	

## SETTING

Tehama County is exposed to minimal seismic hazards due to its geographic location. Tehama County has been shaped by several earthquake fault zones (California Department of Conservation 2010). However, no displacement has occurred along these faults within the past 200 years and there are no active or potentially active faults within Tehama County. Geologic hazards associated with seismic activity, such as liquefaction and seiche (earthquake generated waves), also have a low probability of occurring within Tehama County, according to the Tehama County General Plan Safety Element. Although no active faults are mapped in the county, there exists the potential for minor, localized earth-shaking events as precursors to eruptive activity of Mount Lassen.

The region of Tehama County may experience earth-shaking activity from seismic events that occur outside the county. A review of seismic activity over the past 100 years is included in the Tehama County

General Plan 1974 Seismic Safety Element and states the following: “The planning area (Tehama County) has experienced only minor earthquakes within the area and secondary impacts from earthquakes centered out of the area. Projections of future impacts from seismic activity are from low to moderate.”

The Tehama County General Plan includes measures that reduce the hazards related to seismic disturbances to the extent possible. Safety Element Goal 4 is “To minimize the threat of personal injury and property damage due to seismic and geologic hazards.” The policies following policies support this goal:

- Policy SAF-4.1 The County shall require that all construction comply with the California Building Code, including the requirements for seismic design.
- Policy SAF-4.2 The County shall require that all new development and redevelopment projects that have the potential for seismic or geological hazards, including liquefaction, landslides, and expansive soils, be subject to geotechnical evaluation prior to approval.
- Policy SAF-4.3 The County shall maintain current information on seismic and geologic hazards.
- Policy SAF-4.4 The County shall incorporate seismic and geologic hazards mitigation measures into County ordinances and procedures.

Areas paralleling the Sacramento River, which contain clean sand layers with low relative densities coinciding with a relatively high water table, are estimated to have generally high liquefaction potential (Tehama County, 2009). Granular layers underlying certain areas in the Sacramento Valley have higher relative densities and thus have moderate liquefaction potential. Localized areas of valley fill alluvium can have moderate to high liquefaction potential. Clean layers of granular materials older than Holocene are typically of higher relative densities and are thus of low liquefaction potential. Areas of bedrock have no liquefaction potential.

Expansive soils have the potential to significantly shrink or swell with changes in moisture content. The type and amount of the silt and clay content in the soil will determine the amount of shrink or swell associated with the various levels of water content. Soils comprising sand and gravel are not expansive soils. Expansive soils are most likely to be found in basins and basin rims, and any structure located on expansive soils can be significantly damaged should the soil suddenly shrink or swell. Regions of expansive soils exist within Tehama County according to the U.S. Geological Survey Swelling Clays Map of the Conterminous United States. In the Coast Range region of western Tehama County soils with high swell potential exist. In the Central Valley region and low Sierra Foothill region of central Tehama County, soils with slight to moderate swell potential exist, while the eastern part of the County consists of soils with little or no shrink-swell clays.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-e): Less than Significant.** Seismicity is directly related to the distribution of fault systems within a region. Depending on activity patterns, faults and fault-related geologic features may be classified as active, potentially active, or inactive. The entire State of California is considered seismically active and is susceptible to seismic ground shaking, however, the most highly active fault zones are along the coastal areas.

*Fault Rupture.* A fault rupture occurs when the surface of the earth breaks as a result of an earthquake, although this does not happen with all earthquakes. These ruptures generally occur in a weak area of an existing fault. Ruptures can be sudden (i.e. earthquake) or slow (i.e. fault creep). The Alquist-Priolo Fault Zoning Act requires active earthquake fault zones to be mapped and it provides special development considerations within these zones. While fault rupture is possible throughout seismically active areas of California, there are no Alquist-Priolo Fault zones within Tehama County.

*Seismic Ground Shaking.* The potential for seismic ground shaking in California is expected. As a result of the foreseeable seismicity in California, the State requires special design considerations for all structural improvements in accordance with the seismic design provisions in the California Building Code. These seismic design provisions require enhanced structural integrity based on several risk parameters. Any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed engineering requirements to ensure structural integrity consistent with the requirements of state law. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from seismic ground shaking.

*Liquefaction.* Liquefaction typically requires a significant sudden decrease of shearing resistance in cohesionless soils and a sudden increase in water pressure, which is typically associated with an earthquake of high magnitude. The potential for liquefaction is highest when groundwater levels are high, and loose, fine, sandy soils occur at depths of less than 50 feet. Area of Tehama County near the Sacramento River are at risk of hazards from liquefaction. Any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed engineering requirements to ensure structural integrity consistent with the requirements of state law. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from liquefaction.

*Landslides.* Landslides include rockfalls, deep slope failure, and shallow slope failure. Factors such as the geological conditions, drainage, slope, vegetation, and others directly affect the potential for landslides. One of the most common causes of landslides is construction activity that is associated with road building (i.e. cut and fill). The projects identified in the RTP consist primarily of roadway maintenance and improvement projects, and would occur within the existing right of way of the County's roadway system. As such, the potential for impacts related to landslides is considered less than significant.

*Lateral Spreading.* Lateral spreading typically results when ground shaking moves soil toward an area where the soil integrity is weak or unsupported, and it typically occurs on the surface of a slope, although it does not occur strictly on steep slopes. Oftentimes, lateral spreading is directly associated with areas of liquefaction. Any future roadway improvements implemented as a result of adoption of the RTP would be subject to detailed engineering requirements to ensure structural integrity consistent with the requirements of state law. As such, implementation of the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact from lateral spreading.

*Erosion.* Erosion naturally occurs on the surface of the earth as surface materials (i.e. rock, soil, debris, etc.) is loosened, dissolved, or worn away, and transported from one place to another by gravity. Two common types of soil erosion include wind erosion and water erosion. The steepness of a slope is an important factor that affects soil erosion. Erosion potential in soils is influenced primarily by loose soil texture and steep slopes. Loose soils can be eroded by water or wind forces, whereas soils with high clay content are generally susceptible only to water erosion. The potential for erosion generally increases as a result of human activity, primarily through the development of facilities and impervious surfaces and the removal of vegetative cover. Future roadway improvement projects would be required to implement measures during construction, including various BMPs, that would reduce potential impacts related to erosion. This is considered a less than significant impact.

*Expansive Soils.* Expansive soils are those that shrink or swell with the change in moisture content. The volume of change is influenced by the quantity of moisture, by the kind and amount of clay in the soil, and by the original porosity of the soil. Tehama County contains regions with expansive soils. Shrinking and swelling can damage roads and structures unless special engineering design is incorporated

into the project plans.

*Septic Tanks.* Implementation of the RTP would not result in the use or expansion of any septic systems. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic, and no mitigation is required.

## VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS -- WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			X	

### SETTING

Between 2000 and 2010, the Tehama County population increased by approximately 1.3% annually. The California DOF estimates that the predicted Tehama County 2019 population of 64,804 will increase to approximately 72,485 by the horizon year of this RTP, 2039. This represents a projected average annual increase of 0.59% between 2019 and 2039. Based on this trend and the guidelines established in the 2017 RTP guidelines, the County is not required to run a network travel demand model to estimate Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). The guidelines cite the lack of road congestion and the fact that emission changes from higher-MPG vehicles will continue to help the County comply with future emission caps established by the California Air Resources Board as part of AB 32.

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a) and b): Less than Significant.** As described above, population growth in Tehama County has been low over the past decade, and this trend is anticipated to continue through 2039. As a result of the County's low historic and projected population growth, increases in VMT are anticipated to remain low as well. The RTP includes numerous goals related to the increase in multi-modal transportation options, which reduce dependence on the automobile, and may subsequently result in decreases in total VMT throughout the County.

The RTP includes goals, policies, and strategies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Tehama County. RTP projects such as roadway and bridge repairs are necessary to maintain a safe regional transportation system and to prevent deterioration of roadways and bridges which may require costlier repairs in the future. These projects will not result in greater traffic volumes along state highways or County roads. To the degree that keeping an existing travel route open avoids travel via longer alternative routes that would accompany a closure, maintaining existing roadways and bridges can help to avoid increases in VMT. The RTP also includes long-term bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects which will create more bicycle and pedestrian friendly communities and potentially further reduce VMT. The RTP also includes public transit elements. By expanding alternative forms of transportation, Tehama County is in-line with statewide climate change goals. The RTP is a programmatic document and the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, therefore there is no potential for significant impact.

# **VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?				X
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?			X	
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?			X	

## **SETTING**

The State of California has adopted U.S. DOT regulations for the intrastate movement of hazardous materials; State regulations are contained in 26 CCR. In addition, the State of California regulates the transportation of hazardous waste originating in the state and passing through the state (26 CCR). Both regulatory programs apply in California. The two State agencies with primary responsibility for enforcing federal and State regulations and responding to hazardous materials transportation emergencies are the CHP and Caltrans. The CHP enforces hazardous material and hazardous waste labeling and packing regulations to prevent leakage and spills of material in transit. Caltrans has emergency chemical spill identification teams at as many as 72 locations throughout the State that can respond quickly in the event of a spill. Additionally, the Tehama County Public Health Department serves the public in an effort to

protect the health and welfare of the general public and environment through prevention and control of disease and pollutants.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-c): No Impact.** A “hazardous material” is a substance or combination of substances that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, may pose a potential hazard to human health or the environment when handled improperly. The proposed project does not propose new development or any use that would result in the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Furthermore, the proposed project would not result in a foreseeable upset, accident, or emission of hazardous materials. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

**Responses d): Less than Significant.** There are two active Hazardous Waste and Substances Site locations in Tehama County that are registered with the Department of Toxic Substances Control and included on the Cortese List. These sites are located in Red Bluff and Corning. Several active Cleanup Program Sites and LUST Cleanup Sites exist in Tehama County according to the Water Board GeoTracker database. Additionally, seven sites in Tehama County are listed by the Water Board as having active Cleanup and Abatement Orders concerning waste that may include hazardous materials. None of the proposed improvements in the RTP would occur within the vicinity of these sites. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

**Response e-f): Less than Significant.** The Action Element of the RTP includes a list of proposed improvement projects related to aviation facilities in the County. The proposed aviation facility improvements consist primarily of rehabilitation efforts, and the implementation of other ancillary improvements such as fencing, lighting, etc. All improvements to aviation facilities within the County identified in the RTP are consistent with the applicable airport land use plans (ALUPs) and would not result in changes to the aviation and flight patterns surrounding County aviation facilities. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

**Response g): Less than Significant.** The proposed project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The improvements identified in the RTP would improve the transportation network in Tehama County, which would serve to improve emergency response times countywide. Construction activities associated with projects identified within the RTP may result in temporary lane closures that may temporarily impede emergency access to certain areas within the County during construction. However, each improvement project, when undertaken, will include measures to ensure that emergency access is not adversely impeded. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic and no mitigation is required.

**Response h): Less than Significant.** Wildfires are a major hazard in the State of California. Wildfires burn natural vegetation on developed and undeveloped lands and include timber, brush, woodland, and grass fires. While low intensity wild fires have a role in the ecosystem, wildfires put human health and safety, structures (e.g., homes, schools, businesses, etc.), air quality, recreation areas, water quality, wildlife habitat and ecosystem health, and forest resources at risk.

The proposed project consists primarily of projects that will improve and rehabilitate roadways throughout the County. Roadway rehabilitation is necessary for improving emergency response and evacuation efficiency. There are no new homes, business or habitable structures proposed as part of the RTP. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in increased risks associated



with wild fires. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?			X	
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?			X	
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?			X	
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			X	
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?			X	
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			X	
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?			X	
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?			X	
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?			X	
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?			X	

### SETTING

According to the Tehama County General Plan, the County's climate is varied due to its diverse geography. Hot, dry summers and temperate winters generally characterize the valley regions, while mountainous areas experience warm, dry summers and colder winters.

Red Bluff, Corning, and other Tehama County communities in the Central Valley received approximately 30

inches of rainfall in the 2017 water year and 15 inches of rainfall in 2018 (National Weather Service 2018). The community of Mineral, located at nearly 5,000 feet elevation, received approximately 100 inches of rainfall in 2017 and 50 inches of rainfall in 2018.

Tehama County's population and economy is dependent upon adequate water supplies. Water is a necessity for agricultural production and economic development and is vitally important to maintaining many of the county's wildlife resources and recreation attractions. Tehama County contains a portion of Black Butte Lake, a flood control and recreation facility located at the border of Tehama and Glenn County. The county's surface water resources also include numerous small reservoirs that were primarily developed for agricultural use.

Tehama County experiences periodic winter storms and thunderstorms that may result in flash floods. Under storm conditions, the region's stream systems pose a significant threat. The Sacramento River crosses the center of Tehama County from North to South and is fed by numerous tributaries beginning in the hills and mountains to the East and West. Tehama County contains numerous 100-year flood hazard areas. Low-lying areas surrounding the Sacramento River and its tributaries are designated by FEMA as Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA), meaning these areas have high potential to flood due to 100-year storms. The entire portion of the City of Red Bluff located east of the Sacramento River is classified as a flood hazard area containing SFHA and moderate flood hazard areas, as are small sections of the western section of Red Bluff. Almost all residences in the City of Tehama are located within a FEMA-designated SFHA Regulatory Floodway. The City of Corning contains several SFHA regions surrounding creeks.

Tehama County is located in the Sacramento River Hydrologic Region. The County contains portions of the Redding Area and Sacramento Valley groundwater basins, as well as several sub basins. The major sources of groundwater in Tehama County include rainfall, infiltration from nearby rivers and streams, and the percolation of applied irrigation water in agricultural areas.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a-j): Less than Significant.** Implementation of the proposed project would result in the improvement and rehabilitation of roadways and transportation infrastructure throughout Tehama County. The project would not result in the development or construction of housing or other habitable structures that would be at risk from flooding events. There are a small number of projects identified within the RTP that may increase the area of impervious surfaces within the County. Such improvements consist primarily of roadway widening to address safety and operational concerns. The amount of impervious surfaces that may be added to the County as a result of project implementation is negligible, and would not result in impacts to groundwater recharge rates. The improvements identified in the RTP would not result in increased uses of ground or surface water and would not directly or indirectly lead to population growth. As such, the project would not result in an increased demand for ground or surface water resources, and would have no impact on these environmental topics.

There is the potential for water quality impacts to occur during construction activities associated with the various projects identified in the RTP. Each project is subject to further project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction. During subsequent environmental review, potential project-specific construction impacts to water quality would be identified, and mitigation measures, in the form of BMPs would be identified and implemented to ensure that impacts to water quality are reduced or avoided. Impacts to these environmental topics are considered less than significant and no mitigation is required.

**X. LAND USE AND PLANNING - *Would the project:***

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X

**SETTING**

Tehama County is characterized by a wide range of existing land uses. Much of the residential development in the county is low-density single-family housing. Tehama County and its incorporated cities each have a General Plan containing policies to guide growth and land use changes.

**RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS**

**Responses a-c): No Impact.** Implementation of the proposed project would result in improvements to the County's transportation network. There are no changes to land uses or land use designations proposed as part of the RTP. The County General Plan was reviewed during preparation of the RTP, and the RTP is consistent with these documents. No housing would be removed as part of the proposed project, and there are no new roadways proposed that would divide an established community. Implementation of the RTP would not conflict with a habitat conservation plan. There are no impacts to land use associated with the proposed project and no mitigation is required.

## XI. MINERAL RESOURCES -- WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X

### SETTING

The Office of Mine Reclamation periodically publishes a list of mines regulated under SMARA that is generally referred to as the AB 3098 List. The Public Contract Code precludes mining operations that are not on the AB 3098 List from selling sand, gravel, aggregates or other mined materials to state or local agencies. The current AB 3098 list (December 27, 2018) indicates that there are 16 mines regulated under SMARA in Tehama County.

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a-b): No Impact.** The proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or mineral resource recovery site. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on this environmental topic.

## XII. NOISE -- WOULD THE PROJECT RESULT IN:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			X	
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	

### SETTING

The major noise sources in Tehama County are related to vehicular traffic on Interstate 5 and State Routes 99, 36, 89, 32, and 172. Other noise sources include overflights from airports, railroad activities, and agricultural operations, and commercial and light industrial uses. Noise policies have been adopted by the Corning Municipal Airport and the Red Bluff Municipal Airport in the Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plans. The Tehama County General Plan Noise Element Policy 1.1 requires acoustical analysis for new projects anticipated to generate excessive noise located adjacent, or near, to noise-sensitive land uses.

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-f): Less than Significant.** Implementation of the proposed project consists primarily of improvements to the existing transportation network in Tehama County. There are no new roadways proposed that would introduce new vehicle trips into areas not currently exposed to mobile noise sources from the existing transportation network. The improvements identified in the RTP would not directly result in increased vehicle trips on the County roadway network, and would therefore, not result in increased noise levels from vehicles travelling on existing roadways and transportation facilities in the County. The improvements to aviation facilities identified in the RTP would not result in increased or expanded flight operations, and would not result in increased noise from aviation sources.

Construction activities associated with the various improvements identified in the RTP could result in short-term temporary noise impacts in the immediate vicinity of the improvements. These noise

increases would be temporary in nature, and construction activities in the vicinity of residences and other sensitive noise receptors would usually be limited to the daytime hours. However, as described throughout this initial study, subsequent environmental review of project-specific impacts would be required prior to approval and implementation of future improvements. This future environmental review would identify the potential for short-term construction noise impacts to sensitive receptors and assign mitigation measures as needed to reduce noise impacts. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

### XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING – WOULD THE PROJECT:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?			X	
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			X	

#### SETTING

The California Department of Finance (DOF) reported the January 2010 population for Tehama County at approximately 63,463. In January 2017 the population increased to 63,949, in January 2018 the County population was estimated at 64,039, and in 2019 total population was 64,804. The average household size was estimated at 2.64 persons per household in 2010.

#### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-c): Less than Significant.** The proposed project consists primarily of the rehabilitation of the existing transportation network in Tehama County. There are no new roadways proposed that would extend vehicular access into areas of the County that are not currently accessible by area roadways. The project would not result in the direct or indirect inducement of population growth. The proposed project includes projects that would occur primarily within the right-of-way of the existing transportation network, and would not displace any persons or housing units. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.



#### XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?			X	
Police protection?			X	
Schools?			X	
Parks?			X	
Other public facilities?			X	

##### SETTING

The Tehama County Fire Department is administered under contract by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire). These two agencies are integrated departments that mutually support each agency's fire suppression and emergency response efforts including providing fire protection, emergency dispatching, specialized training, equipment repair and maintenance, fire prevention, fire safety education and emergency medical responses to the unincorporated areas of Tehama County.

Law enforcement in the unincorporated areas of Tehama County and the City of Tehama is provided by the Tehama County Sheriff's Department, which is located in Red Bluff. The Sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer of the County, with jurisdiction throughout the unincorporated County, the incorporated cities, and State owned property. In Tehama County, the Sheriff's Department and the Office of Emergency Services are combined. The Cities of Red Bluff and Corning operate police departments with jurisdiction throughout the incorporated cities. The California Highway Patrol enforces traffic laws throughout the county.

Tehama County is served by several school districts. Tehama County public schools include 21 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, and 5 high schools (Tehama County 2009). Additionally, there are three private elementary schools and one private Catholic high school in the County. There are also two charter schools in operation. The Shasta College satellite campus in Red Bluff provides post-high school education opportunities for Tehama County residents. Additionally, there are adult education classes and a social recreation program offered at the Red Bluff Community Center.

The Tehama County Parks system is operated and maintained by the Tehama County Parks and Recreation Department. The Parks system consists of nine parks and two public access areas, all of which are maintained by County Parks and Recreation staff. Additionally, there is an abundance of Federal land within the county that can be utilized for recreational purposes.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Response a): Less than Significant.** As described throughout this initial study, the proposed project (adoption of the RTP) consists primarily of the rehabilitation and improvement of the existing transportation network in Tehama County. The projects included in the RTP would not extend roadway infrastructure into areas not currently served, and would not result in the direct or indirect growth of the County's population. As such, the demand for increased public services, including police protection, fire protection, schools, parks and other public facilities would not increase as a result of implementation of the proposed project. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## XV. RECREATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			X	
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?			X	

### SETTING

As discussed previously, the Tehama County Parks system is operated and maintained by the Tehama County Parks and Recreation Department. The Parks system consists of nine parks and two public access areas, all of which are maintained by County Parks and Recreation staff.

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-b): Less than Significant.** As described throughout this initial study, the proposed project (adoption of the RTP) consists primarily of the rehabilitation and improvement of the existing transportation network in Tehama County. The projects included in the RTP would not extend roadway infrastructure into areas not currently served, and would not result in the direct or indirect growth of the County's population. As such, the demand for increased recreational facilities would not increase as a result of implementation of the proposed project. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

**XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) 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?			X	
b) 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?			X	
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?			X	
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?			X	
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?			X	
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?			X	

**SETTING**

Tehama County is served by one federal highway and five state highways. These highways provide the main regional transportation routes for automobiles and trucks. The highway network includes Interstate 5 and State Routes 99, 36, 89, 32, and 172.

The region has approximately 1,230 centerline road miles maintained by the cities and county (Table 2.15). The City of Red Bluff maintains 75.92 miles (6.2%); the City of Corning maintains 41.82 miles (3.4%); the City of Tehama maintains 5.78 miles (0.5%); and Tehama County maintains 1,106.32 miles (89.9%).

An interregional and regionally significant corridor, Interstate 5 is the backbone of the region's transportation network, carrying upwards of 45,000 trips per day. It is also part of a 1,382 mile north-south travel and freight corridor stretching from the Mexican to Canadian border. Residents rely on the goods movement system to bring consumer goods to the region. The north state acts as a major international trade gateway for the rest of California and the United States. It is designed by the Federal Highway Administration as a Major Freight Corridor and a "Corridor of the Future." I-5 dissects the middle of Tehama County, connecting the cities of Corning and Red Bluff.

State Route 36 is an east/west route in Tehama County. SR 36 west of Red Bluff provides access to federal recreational lands and serves as an alternate route to California's northern coastal areas at its terminus with SR 101. SR 36 east of Red Bluff provides access to Lake Almanor, Lassen Volcanic National Park, and the City of Susanville before terminating at US 395.

State Route 89 is a north/south route that starts at SR 36 in Tehama County, traverses through Lassen Volcanic National Park, and eventually terminates at the intersection with I-5 in Siskiyou County.

State Route 99 is a critical north/south route in California for the movement of people and goods. State Route 99 parallels I-5 and connects Butte and Tehama Counties. SR 99 is the primary connection to the City of Chico in Butte County. SR 99 is the main street of the community of Los Molinos before terminating at the intersection of SR 36 in Red Bluff. The nation relies heavily on this system for access to agricultural products.

In 2017, the California Transportation Commission adopted guidelines for Regional Transportation Planning Agencies for RTP analysis and modeling. This was the first time separate guidelines have been developed for RTPAs and Metropolitan Planning Organizations, recognizing the inherent differences. The 2017 RTP Guidelines for RTPAs formally recognizes that RTPAs are not required to develop Sustainable Communities Strategies as MPOs are. As such, air quality conformity analysis and travel demand models are not required either. Air quality conformity analysis on regionally significant, federally funded projects is performed by the California Department of Transportation in isolated rural nonattainment and maintenance areas.

The 2017 RTP guidelines incorporate California's Senate Bill 743 (SB 743), which requires a change in transportation impact metrics used in the CEQA process from Level of Service (LOS) to Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).

Estimates of countywide VMT for the three most recent years available, 2010, 2013 and 2016, are provided in Table 2.16 of the RTP (**Error! Reference source not found.** of this document). Although the daily vehicle mileages for the Cities of Red Bluff, Corning, and Tehama have decreased between 5%-25% between 2010 and 2016, the county-wide daily vehicle mileage has increased by 7.5% during the same time period (see Table 2.16). this indicates that in-town driving has decreased but commuting between communities within Tehama County and to destinations outside of Tehama County has increased. Based on this trend as well as slight projected population growth, Tehama County is likely to see an increase in VMT by 2038.

## RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-b): Less than Significant.** Implementation of the proposed RTP would result in improvements and rehabilitation to the existing transportation and roadway network in Tehama County.

Although an increase in VMT is likely to occur throughout the lifetime of this RTP, few changes are expected in the ratings of state routes in Tehama County. In 2039, most highway segments are expected to be operating at an acceptable congestion rating.

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in population growth within Tehama County, and would not directly result in increases of VMT. The proposed project would improve traffic flows and operations throughout the County and would not result in VMT that exceeds applicable standards or thresholds. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

**Responses c-f): Less than Significant.** As described throughout this initial study, implementation of the proposed project would assist in the improvement of the County's transportation network across all modes of transit and transportation. The improvements proposed to aviation facilities in the County would not result in an increase in flights or a change in flight patterns. There are policies and programs included in the RTP that would improve public access to transit systems and alternative modes of transit, such as bicycle use. The various roadways improvements identified in the RTP would assist in the delivery of emergency services by improving the local and regional roadway network and eliminating existing design and safety hazards. The RTP and the projects included within were developed after careful review of the General Plan of the County. The RTP is consistent with the circulation element of the General Plan, and would not result in conflicts or inconsistencies with the above referenced plans. This is considered a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

## XVII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES – WOULD THE PROJECT

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of the Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or			X	
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe.			X	

### SETTING

Tehama County has historically been home to two Native American tribal groups, the Nomlaki and Yana. The Yana and their predecessors occupied the area from the Round Mountains near the Pit River in Shasta County, to Deer Creek in Tehama County. The Nomlaki (Central Wintun) generally occupied the area spanning 10 miles east of the Sacramento River into the coastal range, in what is now Glenn and Tehama Counties. There is currently one federally recognized Tribal entity in Tehama County. The Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians of California has headquarters in the City of Corning. In addition, a significant portion of the population of the Greenville Rancheria with headquarters in Plumas County have relocated within Tehama County due to historical changes in the Rancheria's federal recognition status. Prehistoric, historic, and contemporary cultural resources could be located anywhere within the County, as no comprehensive inventory of cultural resource sites within Tehama County exists.

CEQA requires lead agencies to determine if a proposed project would have a significant effect on tribal cultural resources. The CEQA Guidelines define tribal cultural resources as: (1) a site, feature, place, cultural landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American Tribe that is listed or eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, or on a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k); or (2) a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant according to the historical register criteria in Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c), and considering the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. The County provides notices of projects under AB52 to the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice.

### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-b): Less than Significant.** The proposed project does not entitle, propose, or otherwise

require the construction of new roadways. The proposed project includes a variety of roadway improvement projects, which consist primarily of roadway rehabilitation efforts and roadway safety improvements. The proposed project identifies roadway and multimodal transportation improvement funding priorities that will be implemented over the next 20 years. Nearly all of the roadway projects identified in the RTP consist of rehabilitation efforts, which would occur within the roadbeds of the existing roadways, and would not have the potential to impact any known or previously undiscovered cultural resources. Individual projects identified in the RTP that may include the widening of a roadway would be subject to project-level environmental review prior to approval and construction of the improvements. This future project-level environmental review of individual projects would identify the potential for impacts to any cultural resources. This is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

#### **XVIII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS -- WOULD THE PROJECT:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?			X	
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?			X	
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the projects projected demand in addition to the providers existing commitments?			X	
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the projects solid waste disposal needs?			X	
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	

#### **SETTING**

There are 26 water agencies operating throughout Tehama County (Tehama County 2009). During an average year, approximately 59 percent of the total water used by Tehama County comes from groundwater sources. Local surface water sources supply 28 percent of the County's demand. Sacramento River/Central Valley Project (CVP) projects provide 10 percent, while surface water reuse accounts for about 3 percent. Most wells are located in a north-south swath along both sides of the Sacramento River. Over 10,000 wells exist in the County, with approximately 78 percent classified as having domestic usage.



The unincorporated areas of Tehama County are heavily reliant upon on-site septic tank sewage treatment systems. A recent State study, published in 2003, determined dense development that is heavily reliant on septic tank sewage systems is the primary reason that tap water found in some Tehama County homes is high in nitrate levels. The study found that nitrate levels exceed federal and state safety standards in some populated unincorporated areas of the County (Antelope, Hogsback Road, and Los Molinos).

Solid waste management in Tehama County includes one landfill, several transfer stations, and an extensive waste stream diversion program including recycling and composting programs.

#### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a-g): Less than Significant.** The project consists of various roadway and transportation network improvement projects throughout the County. The project would not result in direct or indirect population growth, and as such, would not increase the demand for water supplies or the treatment and/or conveyance of wastewater. The various roadway and infrastructure improvements may require modifications or expansions to existing and future stormwater conveyance infrastructure adjacent to roadways proposed for rehabilitation or modification. As described throughout this initial study, projects identified in the RTP would be subject to project-level environmental review to determine if potential impacts to the County's stormwater detention and conveyance infrastructure may occur. This future project-specific environmental review may include mitigation measures, as appropriate, to avoid or lessen potential impacts to the stormwater infrastructure adjacent to roadway and other improvement projects. Implementation of the projects identified in the RTP would not generate significant amounts of solid waste, and would not result in an exceedance of any landfill's capacity or violate any state, federal or local statutes related to the disposal of solid waste. This is considered a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required.

#### XIX. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?			X	
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?			X	

c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X	
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#### RESPONSES TO CHECKLIST QUESTIONS

**Responses a) - c): Less than Significant.** As described throughout the analysis above, the proposed project will not result in any changes to General Plan land use designations or zoning districts, would not result in annexation of land, and would not allow development in areas that are not already planned for development in the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The proposed project would not result in new adverse environmental impacts. The project would not threaten a significant biological resource, nor would it eliminate important examples California history or prehistory. The proposed project does not have impacts that are cumulatively considerable, nor would it have substantial adverse effects on human beings. Implementation of the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on these environmental topics.

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