



Initial Study

Project Title: Franklin Boulevard Widening Project

Lead Agency Name and Address: CITY OF ELK GROVE
Development Services
8500 Laguna Palms Way
Elk Grove, CA 95758

Project Location: Franklin Boulevard from Elk Grove Boulevard to Poppy Ridge Road, and Elk Grove Boulevard from Franklin Boulevard to railroad overcrossing bridge (see **Figure 1**).

Contact Person: Jed McLaughlin

Phone Number: (916) 231-2235

Date Prepared: July 6, 2005

General Plan Designations: According to the City of Elk Grove General Plan, Elk Grove Boulevard and Franklin Boulevard in the project segments are planned as 6-lane high access control arterials. Poppy Ridge Road is planned as a 4-lane arterial, and Percheron, Noriker, and Blossom Ridge Drives are planned as 2-lane collector streets.

Zoning: The project site is bounded by land zoned as follows: Permanent Agriculture and/or Open Space (AG-80) for the parcel adjacent west of Franklin Boulevard and south of Elk Grove Boulevard. The AG-80 zoning designation includes uses for open space and recreation that permits its current use as a national wildlife preserve. The property north of Elk Grove Boulevard adjacent to the project area is zoned R-5 - single family residential, and the properties adjacent to the east side of Franklin Boulevard are zoned RD-5, RD-7, and SC - Shopping center

Project Description:

Traffic circulation at the Elk Grove/Franklin Boulevard intersection and the segment of Franklin Boulevard between Elk Grove Boulevard and Poppy Ridge Drive has been identified as deficient and mitigation has been required for significant impacts in the EIRs for the Elk Grove General Plan (August 2003) and the East Franklin Specific Plan (August 1999). The need for the proposed Franklin Boulevard widening is acknowledged by the inclusion of this project in the City of Elk Grove Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), and as a Tier 1 (high-priority) project in the 2025 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) prepared by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG).

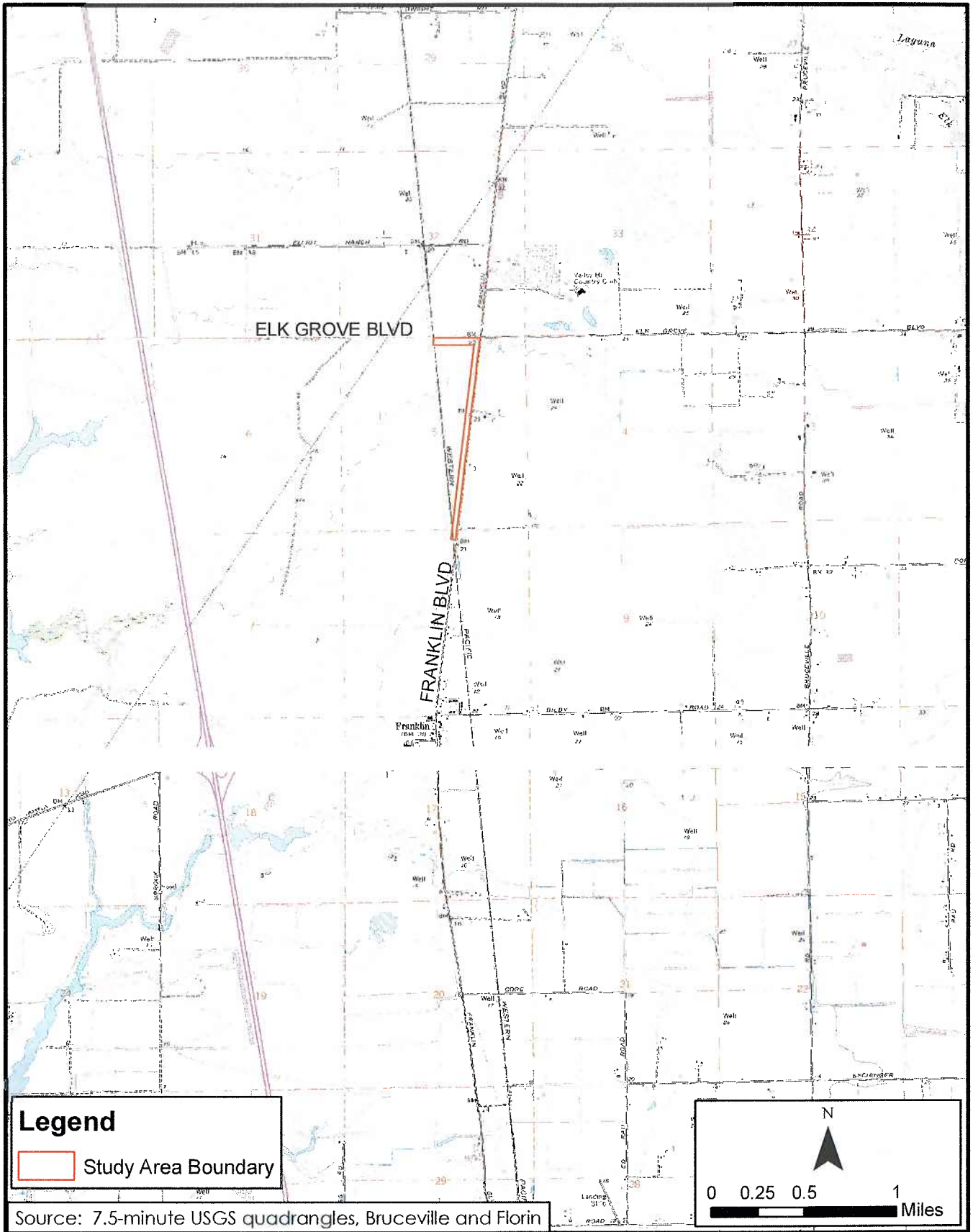
Currently, the 1.1-mile stretch of Franklin Boulevard between Elk Grove Boulevard and Poppy Ridge Road is a 3-lane roadway. The project will widen Franklin Blvd from just south of Poppy Ridge Road to Elk Grove Boulevard to provide for a six-lane arterial with median landscaping and modifications to existing signals (see **Figures 2A and 2B**). Striping to the north of Elk Grove Boulevard will be modified to provide 3 southbound through lanes, dual left turn lanes, and an exclusive right turn lane. Sidewalks on the west side will be provided only at two proposed bus turnout locations, one just south of Percheron Drive, and one just north of Blossom Ridge Drive. As part of this project, curb and gutter will be constructed on the west side and drainage will be

conveyed through a storm drain system. Existing power poles on the west side of Franklin Boulevard will be relocated westward at the back of new curb to accommodate the widening. Utility poles on the west side of Franklin Boulevard will remain within the City's right of way. Improvements to Elk Grove Boulevard will consist of adding one eastbound through lanes and a 6' bike lane on the existing railroad overcrossing structure. This may require re-striping and/or barrier modification, but will not include any widening to the structure itself. Improvements between the railroad overcrossing structure and Franklin Boulevard includes the addition of a third eastbound lane, bike lane, curb & gutter, and a dedicated eastbound to southbound "free right" turning lane onto Franklin Boulevard. Modification of the existing striping on the east leg of the Elk Grove Boulevard/Franklin intersection will be necessary to provide for dual left turns from westbound Elk Grove Boulevard to southbound Franklin Boulevard.

New right of way will be required from the parcel managed by Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge (SLNWR) on the west side of Franklin Boulevard (See Figure 2A & 2B), primarily between the Laguna South Channel, North Drainage Channel and Elk Grove Boulevard, at the two bus turnouts, and a segment just north of Poppy Ridge Road. This right of way would accommodate the free right turn lane from eastbound Elk Grove Boulevard to southbound Franklin Boulevard, and certain areas of road widening and the two bus turnouts. Widening Franklin Boulevard to the east side of the existing roadway is not economically or logistically feasible because it would pave over an easement reserved for a planned sewer interceptor, and would require right of way acquisition from several properties, some of which are already developed.

Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g. permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):

- United States Fish & Wildlife Service
- United States Army Corps of Engineers
- Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region



**City of Elk Grove
Development Services**

**Figure 1
Study Area and Vicinity
Franklin Boulevard Widening Project**





City of Elk Grove
Development Services

Figure 2A
Project Site Map -
Northern Portion

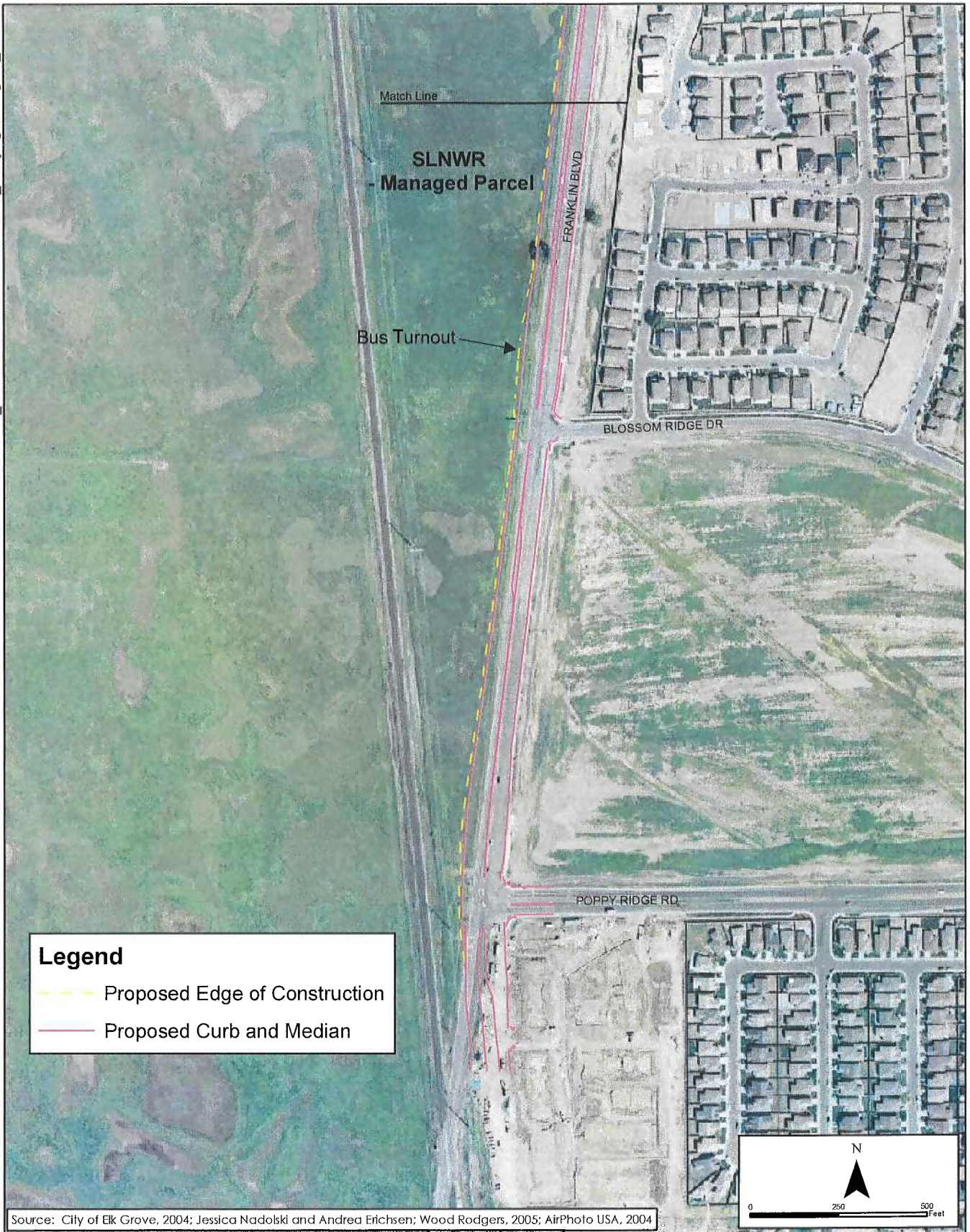


Figure 2B
Project Site Map -
Southern Portion



ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation / Traffic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance | |

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On behalf of this initial evaluation:

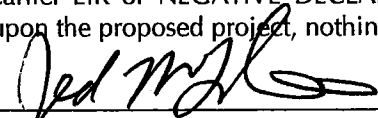
I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

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 prepared.

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 the earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.



 Signature

July 6, 2005

 Date

Jed McLaughlin – Environmental Planner

 Printed Name

City of Elk Grove – Development Services

 For

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
3.1 AESTHETICS Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION OF IMPACTS

a) *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?*

No Impact. There are no identified scenic vistas within or in the vicinity of the project site, and therefore, the proposed project would have no substantial adverse effects on a scenic vista. No roadway in the area is designated as a State scenic highway. The nearest State highway is Interstate 5, approximately 2.0 miles west of the project site.

b) *Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?*

Less than Significant. The project will involve filling small areas of wetlands and other natural habitat in the extreme northeastern corner and eastern portions of land managed as part of the Stone Lakes Natural Wildlife Refuge. Although SLNWR is identified in the Elk Grove General Plan as a significant natural feature, impacts from this project will not result in substantially damaging or degrading the visual character or quality of the site, including the existing Laguna South Channel, Northern Drainage creek or its associated wetlands and riparian habitat.

The project would involve removing seven Valley Oak trees presently along the western side of Franklin Boulevard. These trees have trunk diameters ranging from 19 to 41 inches and are considered in "fair" health according to the City's preliminary arborist report. These trees meet the criteria for protection or replacement under the City of Elk Grove's Tree Ordinance. Transplanting any of these trees is not feasible due to the cost and low survival rates for transplanted trees of similar size and species. The trees are spread out along a two-third mile stretch of Franklin Boulevard north of Blossom Ridge Drive in close proximity to the utility poles, resulting in canopy pruning in some trees. None of these trees are particularly stately or scenic. Thus, removing these trees and replacement on site with in-kind trees in numbers equivalent to the inches of diameter removed would not significantly affect a scenic resource. As the mitigation oak trees in the median of Franklin Boulevard and

eastern portion of the SLNWR-managed parcel grow taller over many years they could potentially affect residents' views of the SLNWR that is across the street from their homes.

There are no identified rock outcroppings or historic buildings within or in the vicinity of the project site.

- c) *Would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?*

Less than Significant. The project will preserve the existing natural habitat of the adjacent SLNWR and the 15-100 foot wide landscape corridors separating Elk Grove and Franklin Boulevards and the existing residential developments. The project would create a 12-foot wide landscaped median on Franklin Boulevard. Utility power poles would be moved approximately 4 feet to the west, farther away from the residential development on the east side of Franklin Boulevard. As stated above, the removal of the seven oak trees and planting young oak trees in the median following guidelines by the City of Elk Grove Tree Ordinance would constitute a less than significant impact to visual resources.

The existing traffic controls at the intersections of Franklin Boulevard and Percheron, Noriker, and Blossom Ridge Drives and with Poppy Ridge Road would have a less than significant impact on the visual character of these intersections. The roadway improvements proposed as part of the project include the widening of Franklin Boulevard on the west side and Elk Grove Boulevard on the south side at the western approach to the intersection which would not impact the visual character of the area. These improvements would be considered a less than significant impact to visual resources in the project area.

- d) *Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?*

Less than Significant. The project would not introduce substantial new sources of light and glare, or adversely affect nighttime views in the project area. Street lighting on decorative poles exists along the south side of Elk Grove Boulevard, and would not be moved for this project. Existing traffic signal lights would be moved slightly at all intersections to accommodate the road improvements. The project will install a row of street lighting alongside the west side of Franklin Boulevard. To minimize night time glare effects to the adjacent wildlife refuge, street lights along the west side of Franklin Boulevard would be designed to direct light away from the SLNWR open space by using "cobra head" style directional lighting (250 watt bulb on a 30 foot, galvanized, steel pole with 8 foot mast arm) with glare shields. All proposed lighting, including the traffic signal lights, would be subject to City of Elk Grove Development Standards, which require roadway lighting to be constructed to minimize adverse affects to day or nighttime views. As such, the proposed improvements would not significantly increase light and glare sources over existing levels, nor would it significantly impact nighttime views.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>3.2 AGRICULTURE RESOURCES In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997), prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:</p>				
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION OF IMPACTS

- a) *Would the project 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?*

No Impact. The project site does not include any Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland. The land bordering Franklin Boulevard to the east and south of Percheron Drive is shown as Farmland of Statewide Importance and Farmland of Local Importance, according to the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program 2002 Map of Sacramento County Important Farmland. However, these adjacent properties have been designated for residential use according to the East Franklin Specific Plan Land Use Diagram. These parcels are currently developed as single family residential. This issue will not be discussed further in the EIR/EA.

- b) *Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?*

No Impact. Parcel APN 132-0020-003, zoned as permanent agriculture/open space (AR-80), would not require rezoning due to this project. The City anticipates acquiring right of way for the portions of this parcel where road widening will occur. Utility pole relocation associated with this project will occur near the back of widened road curb within the City's right of way. There are no parcels in the project site under Williamson Act contract. The proposed project would not disrupt agricultural activities, and does not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. Thus, no further analysis of this issue is required within the EIR/EA.

- c) *Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment, which due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use?*

No Impact. Refer to discussion a) and b) above. Parcels within the project area that are shown on the most recent zoning maps as zoned for Permanent Agriculture (AG-20 and AG-80) are not actually agricultural land, but are resource conservation areas or developed for commercial or residential uses according to land designations described in the approved East Franklin Specific Plan. No areas within the two agriculture-zoned parcels adjacent to the project site are being used as farmland. Thus, the project would not convert farmland to non-agricultural use. Thus, no further analysis of this issue is required within the EIR/EA.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p>3.3 AIR QUALITY Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:</p>				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION OF IMPACTS

a) *Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?*

Less than Significant. The Sacramento region has been designated as a "serious" nonattainment area for the federal 8-hour ozone standard with an attainment deadline of June 2013. A project would be judged to conflict with or obstruct implementation of the regional air quality plan if it would be inconsistent with the growth assumptions, in terms of population, employment or regional growth in Vehicle Miles Traveled. The project is being implemented pursuant to mitigation measures contained in the City's General Plan Circulation Element. The General Plan is guided by regional goals in regards to air quality. The proposed project would not conflict with any of the growth assumptions made in the preparation of these plans nor obstruct implementation of any of the proposed control measures contained in these plans; therefore impacts to air quality plans would be less than significant.

b) *Would the project violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?*

CONSTRUCTION

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated. The proposed project would not require demolition of any existing structure, however it would require equipment for various construction activities, such as the use of heavy equipment that generate dust, exhaust,

and tire-wear emissions and from paints and coatings. Construction activities would temporarily affect local air quality, causing a temporary increase in particulate dust and other pollutants. Uncontrolled dust emissions during construction have the potential to exceed the ambient air quality standards locally.

Air pollution control mitigation measures would be implemented during project construction to reduce PM₁₀ and NO_x emissions to less than significant levels. These issues and mitigation measures will be addressed in the EIR.

OPERATION

Less than Significant. The operation of a roadway widening project is most likely to "violate an air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation" through creation of a carbon monoxide hotspot. New vehicle trips add to carbon monoxide concentrations near streets providing access to the site.

The screening procedure *Transportation Project-Level Carbon Monoxide Protocol* was utilized.¹ for the Franklin/Elk Grove Boulevard and Franklin/Poppy Ridge intersections, which, based on total traffic volume and levels of congestion, are the worst-case intersections that should have the highest levels of carbon monoxide in the project vicinity. Using this screening procedure, the resulting predicted worst-case carbon monoxide concentration for existing conditions and future conditions with the implemented project meet the state/federal ambient air quality standards and predicted concentrations would remain below the state/federal standards after construction of the project. As the project would not cause a violation of either ambient air quality standard, nor contribute substantially to an existing violation, the impact of the project on local carbon monoxide concentrations is considered to be less than significant.

- c) *Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?*

CONSTRUCTION

Less than Significant. The Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District's (SMAQMD) Road Construction Emissions Model (Version 5.1) was used to estimate emissions from construction. The model estimates emissions from vehicle and equipment exhausts, fugitive dust, and off-gassing emissions during all phases of construction. Model results show that maximum emissions for project construction activities do not exceed the SMAQMD's construction thresholds of 85 pounds per day for NO_x. Construction impacts on regional ozone air quality would therefore be less than significant.

¹ Garza, Vincente J.; Peter Granly; Daniel Sperling, Transportation Project-Level Carbon Monoxide Protocol. Institute of Transportation Studies, University of California, Davis, Report UCD-ITS-RR-97-21, 1997.

OPERATION

Less than Significant. The project would improve traffic level of service (LOS) in the area by relieving congestion and reducing delays. A change in average vehicle speed would have a subtle effect on vehicle emissions for regional pollutants such as Reactive Organic Gases (ROG), Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x), and particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}). An increase in average vehicle speed generally reduces slightly emissions of ROG, slightly increases emissions of NO_x, and has no effect on emissions of particulate matter. This effect on emissions would generally only occur during peak traffic hours. Additionally, the project, in and of itself, would be growth-accommodating, not growth-inducing, and the pollutant increase associated with construction activities would be temporary and mitigated to a less than significant level; therefore the impact of this project-related change to regional pollutant emissions would be less than significant when compared to the SMAQMD ozone precursor threshold of 65 pounds per day.

- d) *Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?*

Less than Significant. The Elk Grove General Plan considers residences to be "sensitive receptors" in relation to air quality issues. There are residences nearby the proposed construction activities who would be affected by construction equipment exhaust emissions and fugitive dust emissions, however the bulk of the construction emissions would occur at a substantial distance from nearby receptors. Furthermore, these construction-related impacts would be short-term in nature and pollutants from construction equipment dissipate rapidly and construction would not be constant.

The proposed project would improve traffic LOS within the project area and it is expected that the project would operate within acceptable emission levels. Additionally, with implementation of construction mitigation measures discussed further in the EIR, impacts to the adjacent residences are considered to be less than significant.

- e) *Would the project create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?*

Less than Significant. Construction activities would involve the use of a variety of gasoline or diesel powered equipment that emit exhaust fumes. However, these emissions would occur intermittently throughout the workday, and the exhaust odors are expected to dissipate rapidly within the immediate vicinity of the equipment. While some persons who live or walk by the construction site may find these odors objectionable, the infrequency of the emissions, rapid dissipation of the exhaust into the air, and short-term nature of the construction activities would be considered a less than significant impact.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES Would the project:				
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 Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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 wetlands, etc.), through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION OF IMPACTS

- a) *Would the project 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 Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated. During the time period of December 2004 through April 2005, the City of Elk Grove conducted a Biological Resource Evaluation and wetland delineation for the project area. The wetland delineation limits include the entire triangular SLNWR-managed parcel bounded by the UPRR tracks on the west, Elk Grove Boulevard on the North, and Franklin Blvd on the east along the project segment. The SLNWR-managed parcel contains a variety of habitats created as mitigation for previous development projects including: annual grassland, seasonal wetland, riverine, valley foothill riparian, and vernal pool. Several special status species may occur in vernal pools and seasonal wetlands, including fairy shrimp and tadpole shrimp. Elderberry plants that may be habitat for the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle were also observed within the riparian habitat in the area of proposed development. The EIR will focus on the potential environmental effects on biological resources that may occur due to implementation of the project, and on mitigation measures to reduce these impacts to less than significant levels. Mitigation measures may include: avoidance and minimization practices performed during project construction, purchasing USFWS and ACOE mitigation credits for protection or creation of off-site habitat, and purchase of real estate or conservation easements on lands desired by SLNWR as compensation.

- b) *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated. See response IV a above. Vernal pools, elderberry shrubs, and emergent freshwater wetlands would be impacted. The EIR will discuss these impacts and mitigation measures associated with the disturbance of this potentially sensitive natural community within the project area that would reduce the project's impacts to less than significant.

- c) *Would the project 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 wetlands, etc.), through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption or other means?*

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated. See response IV a above. In addition to the jurisdictional wetlands listed above, the project would fill an intermittent roadside drainage ditch along the west side of Franklin Boulevard that is considered a jurisdictional "water of the United States".

- d) *Would the project 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?*

No Impact. Since all the features involved with the proposed project (i.e. both roadways and power lines) are currently located at the project location manipulation of these areas is not expected to substantially interfere with the movement of wildlife species or interfere with wildlife corridors. In addition no known wildlife nursery sites is located within or adjacent to the project study area. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project is not expected to have an impact on the migration or use of nursery sites by biological resources. Thus, no further analysis of this issue is required within the EIR/EA.

- e) *Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?*

Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated. While 7 oak trees would be removed as part of the project, none of these trees are considered "Landmark Trees", as defined by the City of Elk Grove's Tree Preservation Ordinance. Replacement of these trees will be discussed in the EIR. The project does not conflict with City of Elk Grove General Plan conservation policies because mitigation measures will be implemented to reduce impacts and compensate for lost habitat. The EIR will also demonstrate that alternatives to prevent some impacts to sensitive habitat are not feasible and thus do not conflict with these policies. The project would not conflict with any other local policies protecting biological resources.

- f) *Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan?*

No Impact. (See Section 3.9 Land Use Planning). There are no adopted Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, or other approved local, regional or State habitat conservation plans applicable to the project. SLNWR is in the process of preparing a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for managing the refuge, but the plan has not been completed or approved to date. The South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan, which will encompass the project site, is in the early stages of preparation by Sacramento County, but is not expected to be approved for at least two years. Thus, no further analysis of this issue is required within the EIR/EA.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in § 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION OF IMPACTS

- a) *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in § 15064.5?*

No Impact. Cultural resources staff at the City of Elk Grove prepared an Archaeological and Historic Resources Investigations Report for the Franklin Boulevard Widening Project during August 2004. The report was prepared in an effort to identify archaeological resources and historic properties within the APE for the project. The report is also used to determine project impacts to cultural resources as they pertain to Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines. The report did not identify any historical resources, as defined in § 15064.5, located within the project area. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact on a historical resource. No further analysis of this issue is required within the EIR/EA.

- b) *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?*

Less than Significant. No historical or archaeological resources, as defined in § 15064.5, are located within the project area. Therefore, the proposed project should have no impact on an archaeological resource. However, should a previously unidentified or unanticipated archaeological resource be discovered during project construction, the City of Elk Grove requires the following pursuant to General Plan Archaeological and Paleontological Policy HR-6-Action 2:

The Planning Division shall be notified immediately if any prehistoric, archaeological, or paleontologic artifact is uncovered during construction. All construction must stop and an archaeologist that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards in prehistoric or historical archaeology shall be retained to evaluate the finds and recommend appropriate action.

- c) *Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature?*

Less than Significant. There are no identified unique paleontological resources or sites, or unique geological features located within the project. Therefore, the proposed project should have no impact on a unique paleontological resource or site, or a unique geological feature. However, should a previously unidentified or unanticipated paleontological resource be discovered during project construction, the City of Elk Grove General Plan Archaeological and Paleontological Policy HR-6-Action 2 would be followed.

- d) *Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?*

Less than Significant. The proposed project would be subject to State law regarding the discovery and disturbance of human remains. It is not anticipated that any human remains will be encountered during construction of the proposed project. The project would have minimal excavation. Therefore, potential impacts from the proposed project are considered less than significant.

While it is not expected that human remains would be discovered during project construction, should any previously unidentified or unanticipated human remains be discovered during project construction, the City of Elk Grove requires the following pursuant to General Plan Archaeological and Paleontological Policy HR-6-Action 2:

All construction must stop if any human remains are uncovered, and the County Coroner must be notified according to Section 7050.5 of California's Health and Safety Code. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the procedures outline in CEQA Section 15064.5 (d) and (e) shall be followed.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
3.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death, involving:				
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.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

DISCUSSION OF IMPACTS

- a) *Would the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death, involving:*
 - 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?*

Less than Significant. There are no known faults crossing through the project site or in the vicinity of the project site. The site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo earthquake hazard zone. According to a search using the software program EQFAULT Version 3.0 (Blake, 2000) the nearest active fault to the project site is the Foothills Fault System, which is located approximately 29 miles east of the site. The project would have a less than significant impact concerning fault rupture hazards.

ii) *Strong seismic ground shaking?*

Less than Significant. The project would be designed and constructed in accordance with the requirements of the Uniform Building Code. As a result, the risk of adverse effects from ground shaking would be reduced to a minimum and is considered to be less than significant.

iii) *Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?*

Less than Significant. Liquefaction is most likely to occur in deposits of water-saturated alluvium or similar deposits of artificial fill. Within Sacramento County, the Sacramento downtown area and the Delta are the only areas that are subject to potentially significant liquefaction problems. The City of Elk Grove is not within these areas. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant.

iv) *Landslides?*

Less than Significant. The project site and the surrounding vicinity are relatively flat; therefore, the likelihood of landslides is minimal and less than significant impacts are anticipated.

b) *Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?*

Less than Significant. Grading, cutting, and filling would take place as part of the project construction. It is estimated that project construction would require approximately 7600 cubic yards of excavation, and 2400 cubic yards of fill. These activities would occur primarily in unpaved areas adjacent to the existing roads. Project work will include filling and paving over an earthen roadside drainage ditch adjacent to the west side of the existing Franklin Boulevard. The project would be subject to the City Land Grading and Erosion Control Ordinance and the requirements of the Clean Water Act. Additionally, the soils in the project area are classified as having a low erosion hazard potential, as described above. Because project grading would not involve topographic features that would create an erosion hazard, and almost all topsoil will be paved, the project's contribution to erosion and loss of topsoil would be considered less than significant. This issue will be discussed further in the EIR/EA.

c) *Would the project 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?*

Less than Significant. The project site is relatively flat. Major earth moving activities would not be required to accommodate the project. The City anticipates that fill will be required to achieve the soil subgrade elevation in much of the widening areas. Imported fill materials for the widening phase may consist of clays similar to the native clays but should be free of organic material, rubbish, rubble, and particles greater than four inches in largest dimension. According to the *Pavement Design and Evaluation Report, Franklin Boulevard Widening Project* by Wallace Kuhl & Associates, Inc., March 18, 2005 (Pavement Design Report), a portion of the existing Franklin Boulevard roadway between Percheron and Noriker Drives has settled approximately 2-3 inches, most likely caused by utility trench backfill in this area. Removal of existing pavement and aggregate base, backfilling with new imported fill material, moisture conditioning, and recompaction will occur in this area, and in an area of Franklin Boulevard between the Laguna South Channel culvert and Elk Grove Boulevard, where resistance values calculated from core samples of the existing pavement subgrade collected by Wallace Kuhl indicate a structural deficiency. The slope along the south side of the Elk Grove Boulevard roadway ramp leading to the UPRR overcrossing would not require any major alterations or grading. The construction of the project would not result in unstable earth conditions, significant changes to the geologic substructure or substantially change the topography. The project is not located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable. The project would not result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse. Therefore the proposed project impacts would have a less than significant impact.

- d) *Would the project 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?*

Less than Significant. Soils with high clay content are usually expansive. Minerals in certain clays swell with increased moisture content and then contract during dry periods. The *Soil Survey of Sacramento County, California* (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2004) indicates that the project site contains soils with high clay content, as described in the three mapped soils units within the study area including, Clear Lake clay, partially drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded (map unit 114), San Joaquin silt loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes (map unit 214), and San Joaquin-Galt complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes (map unit 218). However, none of these soil units has been identified as expansive. All roadway improvements from the proposed project would be designed so that grades are constructed in such a way as to prevent water from collecting on or adjacent to pavements, thereby discouraging soil saturation adjacent to the roadbed. Site clearing, site preparation, and all fill material composition and placement will be observed and tested by a qualified geotechnical engineer to verify conformance with recommendations outlined in the Pavement Design Report and the project specifications. Therefore, the project would be considered to have a less than significant impact.

- e) *Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?*

No Impact. Neither septic tanks nor alternative wastewater disposal systems are part of the proposed project. Therefore, there is no impact associated with the proposed project. Thus, no further analysis of this issue is required within the EIR/EA.

