

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PLEASE POST FOR 30 DAYS

FROM: City of Fresno Department of Public Utilities — Utilities Engineering & Planning
1626 E. Street
Fresno, California 93721-3604

TO: X Fresno County Clerk
2220 Tulare Street – First Floor Lobby
Fresno, California 93721

_____ Office of Planning & Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 212
Sacramento, California 95812-3044

Project Title: Britten Avenue Sewer Extension Project Planning Study

Project Location: East of South Cherry Avenue, between Central Avenue and American Avenue

Project Location - city: City of Fresno

Project Location - county: County of Fresno

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

Residents of the Britten Avenue Community (Community) are presently relying upon individual septic systems and leach fields for sewage disposal. Water quality samples collected from the taps of three homes in the Community contained nitrate and/or uranium levels meeting or exceeding the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for drinking water. The source for the nitrate is likely residential septic tanks and fertilizer runoff from neighboring agricultural areas, whereas the uranium originates from natural deposits in the groundwater aquifer. Maintaining individual septic systems is also more costly per capita than connection to a regional sewer collection system. Due to the higher per capita cost to maintain the systems and their current age and condition, the Community desires to connect to the City's sewer collection system. Connection to a regional sewer collection system also reduces the chances a leaking septic system may contaminate groundwater and nearby wells.

The Community is identified as a Disadvantaged Community (DAC) under the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Division of Financial Assistance Criteria. As such, the sewer improvements are eligible for 100 percent grant funding through the California State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) Clean Water State Revolving Fund program.

Prior to proceeding with any construction of sewer improvements, a planning study (Project) must be completed. The Project involves documentation preparation, 90% plans, specifications, project cost estimates, and environmental documentation that will address the system's water quality and water distribution deficiencies. The City of Fresno, as the Lead Agency for the Project, is also preparing and submitting a planning application to SWRCB to fund the Project.

Beneficiaries of the project would be:

City of Fresno
Department of Public Utilities
1626 E. Street
Fresno, CA 93706

Name of Public Agency Approving Project:

City of Fresno

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:

City of Fresno
Department of Public Utilities
1626 E. Street
Fresno, CA 93706

Exempt Status: (check one)

- ☐ Ministerial - PRC § 21080(b)(1); CEQA Guidelines §15268
☐ Declared Emergency - PRC § 21080(b)(3); CEQA Guidelines §15269(a)
☐ Emergency Project - PRC § 21080(b)(4); CEQA Guidelines §15269(b) and (c)
☒ Categorical Exemption - §15306, Class 6: Information Collection
☒ Statutory Exemption – PRC § 15262: Feasibility and Planning Studies
☐ Other _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

The Project focuses on information collection, feasibility studies, and planning activities necessary for securing construction funding for the sewer improvements. It is exempt under both categorical and statutory exemptions:

Categorical Exemption

Section 15306 - Information Collection (Class 6): This exemption includes basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities that do not cause significant disturbance to environmental resources. These activities may be conducted solely for information-gathering purposes or as part of a study leading to actions not yet approved, adopted, or funded by a public agency.

Statutory Exemption

Section 15262 - Feasibility and Planning Studies: Projects that involve only feasibility or planning studies for potential future actions that have not been approved, adopted, or funded by an agency, board, or commission are exempt from preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or Negative Declaration. However, consideration of environmental factors is still required. This exemption does not apply to plans that would have legally binding effects on subsequent activities.

The City will use Self Help Enterprises (SHE) to perform the tasks of the Project, which includes preparation of financial, technical, and environmental packages including 90% design plans, construction specifications, project cost estimates, environmental review that will address the system's water quality and wastewater deficiencies, and preparation of an application for construction funding. SHE will also conduct community outreach, and information gathering such median household income, and other demographic information relating to the Community. The Project includes a Preliminary Engineering Report which consists of design and environmental review. The Project is essentially a feasibility study to determine project viability and continuity for construction. These activities involved

in the Project are not expected to trigger new environmental concerns since they involve data collection and document preparation.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Debbie Khounsavath **Full telephone no.** (559) 621-1624

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Printed Name and Title: Debbie Khounsavath, Planner II
Department of Public Utilities—Utilities Engineering & Planning

☒ Signed by Lead Agency

☐ Signed by applicant

If filed/signed by applicant:

Attach certified document of exemption finding ☐ (*check if attached*)