

**CITY OF FRESNO
CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. PW01012**

THE PROJECT DESCRIBED HEREIN IS DETERMINED TO BE CATEGORICALLY
EXEMPT FROM THE PREPARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS
PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 19 OF THE STATE CEQA GUIDELINES.

APPLICANT: Jason Miller, PE
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PROJECT LOCATION: Along Belmont Avenue from Abby Street to Millbrook Avenue (ADA ramp upgrades, sidewalk tree well installation and median reconstruction); beneath SR-180 at Blackstone Avenue (mural), Abby Street (mural), Fresno Street (mural and bus stop), First Street (mural and bus stop) and at the Romain Community Center (mural)

Along Blackstone Avenue and Abby Street business corridors from Belmont Avenue to Olive Avenue (litter abatement) and along Belmont Avenue from Abby Street to First Street (litter abatement)

Webster Elementary School (Beautify Fresno Club establishment and cleanup events) Hidalgo Elementary School (Beautify Fresno Club establishment and cleanup events), Anthony Elementary School (cleanup events)

(City of Fresno Council District 1, 3 & 7)
(County of Fresno Supervisorial District 3)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The City of Fresno, Public Works Department, is proposing the Downtown Fresno Neighborhood Beautification and Cleanup Project (Project) which involves both infrastructure and non-infrastructure components.

The Project is in the Anthony, Webster and Hidalgo Elementary School neighborhoods. The infrastructure component of the project will benefit the community by replacing aging infrastructure, introducing urban greening, improved walkability, enhanced amenities along the Belmont Avenue corridor and at five existing bus stops. The non-infrastructure elements will provide youth service opportunities and help build a sense of

pride among residents.

The infrastructure component will reconstruct the existing median on Belmont Avenue from Abby Street to Millbrook Avenue to include the removal of median curb, gutter and AC, sawcutting, adjustment of water valves and manhole lids to grade, and installation of curb and gutter, landscaping and irrigation in the reconstructed median. Irrigated sidewalk tree wells will be installed along the proposed corridor to complement the existing sidewalk tree wells. Installation of the irrigated tree well will include replacement of existing sidewalk, directional boring and installation of irrigation laterals to serve the irrigated sidewalk tree wells. Forty-two (42) pedestrian ramps, signage and striping will be upgraded to meet current ADA requirements.

Five (5) existing FAX Bus stop locations within the project area, beneath SR-180 at northbound and southbound Fresno Street, at southbound First Street and along westbound Belmont Avenue at Effie Street and at First Street, will be updated to include a new bus shelter, concrete bus stop pad, trash receptacle, seating, bus stop lighting and appurtenances. The existing bus stops at First Street and Belmont Avenue and at southbound Fresno Street and SR-180 currently have a trash receptacle and bench. The existing bus stops at Effie Street and Belmont Avenue and at northbound Fresno Street and SR-180 do not currently have amenities. The existing bus stop at First Street and SR-180 currently has a bench.

The non-infrastructure components include the commissioning of eight (8) murals to be painted by eight (8) local artists, at five (5) locations along SR-180 abutment slopes and columns at Blackstone Avenue, Abby Street, Fresno Street and First Street and on the Romain Park (First Street and E. Harvey Avenue) recreation building to encourage community placemaking and decrease graffiti.

The project includes the hiring of a vendor to provide weekly litter cleanup along the Blackstone Avenue and Abby Street business corridors between Olive Avenue and Belmont Avenue, and along the Belmont Avenue business corridor from Abby Street to First Street, until June 2024. The vendor contract will reduce litter within the project area and may provide employment opportunities for the community.

The project will establish 'Beautify Fresno' Clubs at Webster

and Hidalgo Elementary Schools. The Beautify Fresno Clubs will organize a cleanup or beautification event to be held each semester at each school, for a total of eight (8) Beautify Fresno Club-organized cleanup events.

The City of Fresno's 'Beautify Fresno' program will also organize four (4) volunteer-based cleanup events to be held at Webster (two (2) events), Hidalgo and Anthony Elementary School neighborhoods.

The City of Fresno's 'Beautify Fresno' program will also create and launch two (2), twelve-week (12) long Anti-litter campaigns to include bus wraps on FAX Bus Routes 22 and 33, serving the target area of the CCLLGP award, billboard ads and online social media outreach. One campaign will launch in 2023 and the second in 2024.

This project is exempt under Sections 15301/Class 1 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. None of the exceptions to Categorical Exemptions set forth in the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

EXPLANATION:

Section 15301/Class 1 of the CEQA Guidelines exempts from the provisions of CEQA, projects consisting of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination. The types of "existing facilities" itemized below are not intended to be all-inclusive of the types of projects which might fall within Class 1. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of an existing use. An example of this exemption includes existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities (this includes road grading for the purpose of public safety).

Section 15302/Class 2 consists of replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced, including but not limited to: water main, sewage, electrical, gas, and other utility extensions, including street improvements, of reasonable length to serve such construction.

The Project is consistent with CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15301/Class 1 and 15302/Class 2 categorical exemptions because the project proposes reconstruction and improvements to existing landscaping median and sidewalk, ADA ramps, reinstallation or replacement of signage and striping, painting of eight (8) murals, establishment of Beautify Fresno Clubs at Webster and Hidalgo elementary schools, organization of eight (8) Beautify Fresno Club-hosted events, organization of four (4) City of Fresno-hosted volunteer clean up events at Webster, Hidalgo and Anthony elementary school neighborhoods, coordination of two (2)

twelve week (12) anti-litter campaigns to include bus wraps, billboard ads and social media outreach, execution of a litter abatement contract to include the Blackstone Avenue and Abby Street business corridors from Belmont Avenue to Olive Avenue and the Belmont Avenue business corridor from Abby Street to First Street.

The infrastructure improvements will restore aging infrastructure to its original condition, make minor improvements to meet current requirements and provide improved walkability, comfort, and safety to the community.


The non-infrastructure improvements are focused on restoring the community to its originally intended condition by removing litter, on maintenance of that originally intended condition by educating and motivating community members to take an active role in beautifying Fresno, and on creating community pride.

The proposed improvements, including the non-infrastructure components of the project, are minor, do not constitute an expansion or change of use, and will improve the public right-of-way without increasing road capacity. The proposed project involves negligible expansion of the existing use and will have substantially the same purpose. The Project will align the community with the vision of the Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan as previously adopted by the Council and is aligned with Beautify Fresno's mission to inspire residents to take pride in their community, and to take action to make the City a clean and beautiful place to live.

Based on staff analysis, it was determined that no adverse environmental impacts would occur as a result of the proposed project and none of the exceptions to categorical exemptions set forth in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply to this project. Therefore, a categorical exemption, as noted above, applies to the Project.

Date: April 12, 2023

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