

Imperial Avenue Extension Project



Community Impact Assessment

Federal Project # STPL-5169(049)
City of El Centro, Imperial County, California
District 11

April 2018



Summary of Major Potential Impacts From Alternatives

The Imperial Avenue Extension Project (project) would not impact the community, because it would not change land use patterns surrounding the project site, would not result in any property displacements, would not preclude future agricultural production on adjacent property, would not adversely affect the existing visual character of the project vicinity, would provide new sidewalks for pedestrians and would improve vehicular circulation access, and would not disproportionately affect minority populations. Because there would be no substantial adverse impact to the community, no avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures would be required.

Potential Impact		Build Alternative	No-Build Alternative
Land Use	Consistency with the El Centro General Plan	Low	No Impact
	Consistency with the County of Imperial General Plan	Low	No Impact
Farmland		Low	No Impact
Growth		No Impact	No Impact
Community Character and Cohesion		No Impact	No Impact
Utilities/Emergency Services		No Impact	No Impact
Relocations	Housing Displacements	No Impact	No Impact
	Business Displacements	No Impact	No Impact
	Utility Displacements	No Impact	No Impact
Environmental Justice		No Impact	No Impact
Traffic and Transportation/ Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities		No Impact	Existing traffic network deficiencies remain.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

This Community Impact Assessment (CIA) was prepared for the Imperial Avenue Extension Project (project) by an authorized agent, in accordance with California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) policies, procedures, and guidance as defined in the Standard Environmental Reference (SER). The information in this document has been prepared to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other substantive environmental laws applicable to the subjects addressed in this document.

The following topics are not addressed in this document, as impacts are not anticipated: Coastal Zone, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Parks and Recreation, Growth, and Community Facilities and Services.

1.1 What is a Community Impact Assessment

The purpose of this report is to provide information regarding social, economic, and land use effects of the project so that final transportation decisions will be made in the public interest. The report is intended to clearly describe the relevant, existing conditions and the potential socioeconomic impacts of the project.

NEPA requires consideration of social and economic impacts of projects in the preparation of environmental documents.

1.2 Regulatory Setting

The following list of existing regulations requires investigation to determine potential direct or indirect impacts to communities from the proposed action:

- NEPA
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Executive Order 12898 - Environmental Justice
- The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA)
- 23 Code of Federal Regulations 652, Accommodation for Pedestrians and Bicyclists

1.3 Assessment Process and Methodology Used

This CIA was prepared to be consistent with Caltrans policy/statements and guidelines, such as the Caltrans Environmental Handbook Volume 4 and the CIA Checklist. This CIA also utilizes data from the United States Census Bureau and presents the results of coordination with the Natural Resources Conservation Service regarding potential impacts related to farmland. This CIA is also based on research and analysis of existing planning documents, effects associated with Right-of-Way (ROW) and Easement acquisitions, an evaluation of community character based on site visits, aerial mapping, Google Earth, etc., and an evaluation of the altered circulation network. Public outreach will be conducted through public

circulation of the California Environmental Quality Act environmental document. Independent interviews will not be conducted as part of this technical study.

1.4 Proposed Project

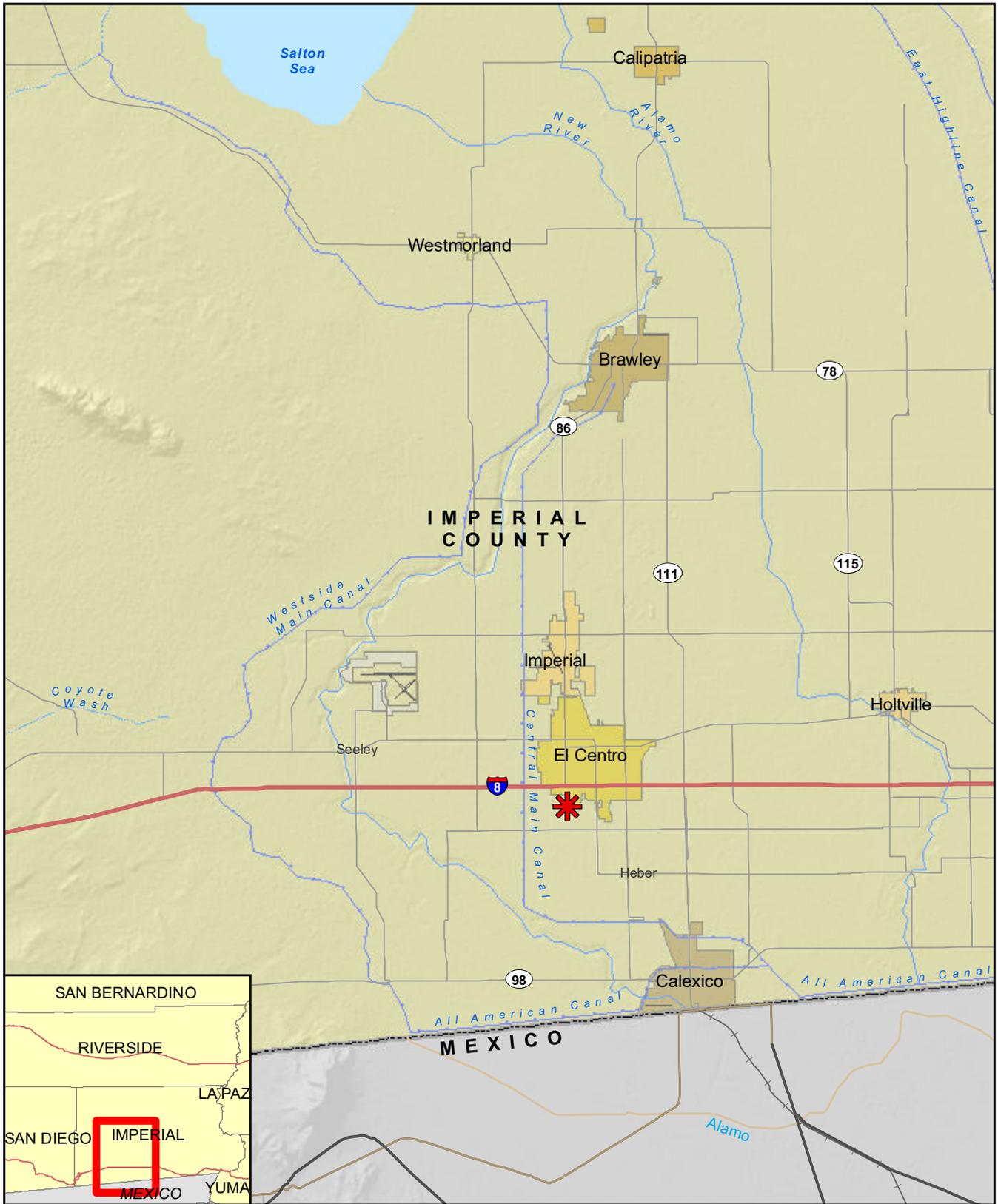
The project would extend Imperial Avenue from Interstate 8 (I-8) to McCabe Road. The project site is located in the southern portion of the City of El Centro (City), Imperial County, California (Figures 1 and 2). The proposed 1.36-mile roadway extension would function as a 4-lane divided arterial (with left turn lane) from I-8 to Wake Avenue, a 2-lane arterial (with left turn lane) from Wake Avenue to Valleyview Avenue and a 2-lane arterial (without left turn lane) from Valleyview Avenue to McCabe Road. The project would introduce a median varying in width from 12 to 14 feet between I-8 and Danenberg Drive, and then consistently 12 feet in width from Danenberg Drive to McCabe Road. The project would construct a 5.5-foot sidewalk along the entire length of the eastern project boundary and would introduce native backing on both sides of the proposed roadway. It is anticipated the project would be phased, and preliminary phasing consists of the following:

- Phase I: I-8 off-ramp to Wake Avenue intersection
- Phase II: Wake Avenue to Danenberg Drive intersection
- Phase III: Danenberg Drive to Valleyview Avenue intersection
- Phase IV: Valleyview Avenue to McCabe Road intersection

The alignment of the proposed roadway extension follows the same linear pathway as the existing portion of Imperial Avenue north of I-8. The project would also construct a 2-lane collector segment to connect the separated segments of Wake Avenue located west and east of the Imperial Avenue alignment, and would also construct intersections with traffic lights. The project would underground an approximately 100-foot segment of the Date Drain south of the future intersection of Imperial Avenue and Wake Avenue. The project would also underground the Dahlia Canal Lateral 1 that runs parallel along the entire eastern edge of the project site. Both undergrounded canals would continue to convey water beneath the project improvements.

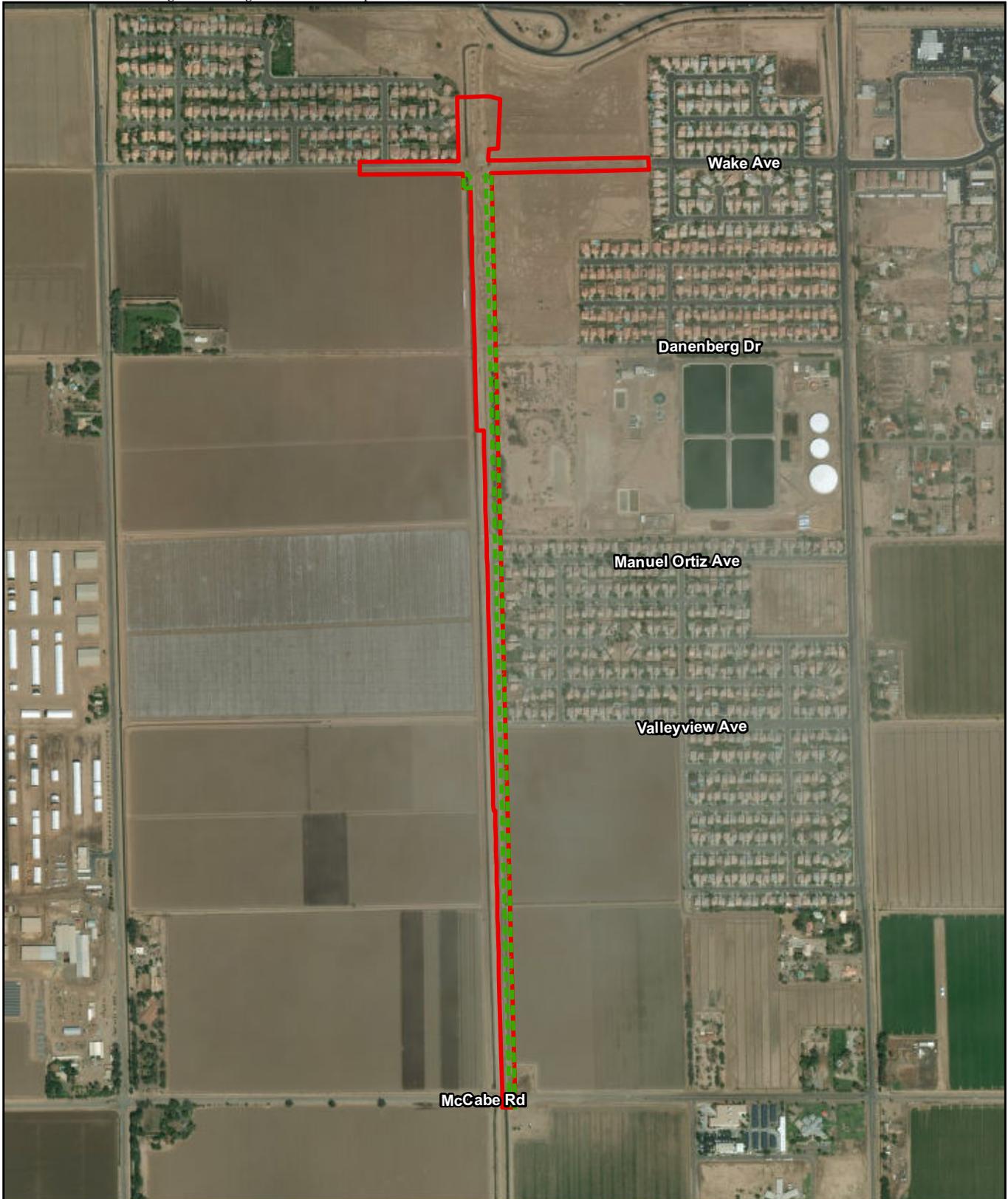
1.5 Study Area

The project study area was developed to include areas that may be directly affected by construction and operation of the project, as well as surrounding areas that may experience indirect impacts. Delineation of the project study area began by identifying all census tracts located within a 0.5-mile buffer of the project. Of the five census tracts identified through this process, two were excluded from the study area due to the limited amount of land located within the 0.5-mile buffer. Census Tract 113, located south of the project, was not included in the study area because only a small portion of this very large tract that is predominately rural in nature was located within the 0.5-mile buffer. Similarly, Census Tract 118.01 was not included in the study area because a very small portion of the southeastern corner of the tract was located within the 0.5-mile buffer. The three remaining census tracts were used to develop the boundaries for the project study area are shown in Figure 3. The project site is located entirely within Census Tract 118.03. Census Tract 118.02 and Census Tract 117 were also included due to their proximity to the project site to provide context for the direct project impact area.



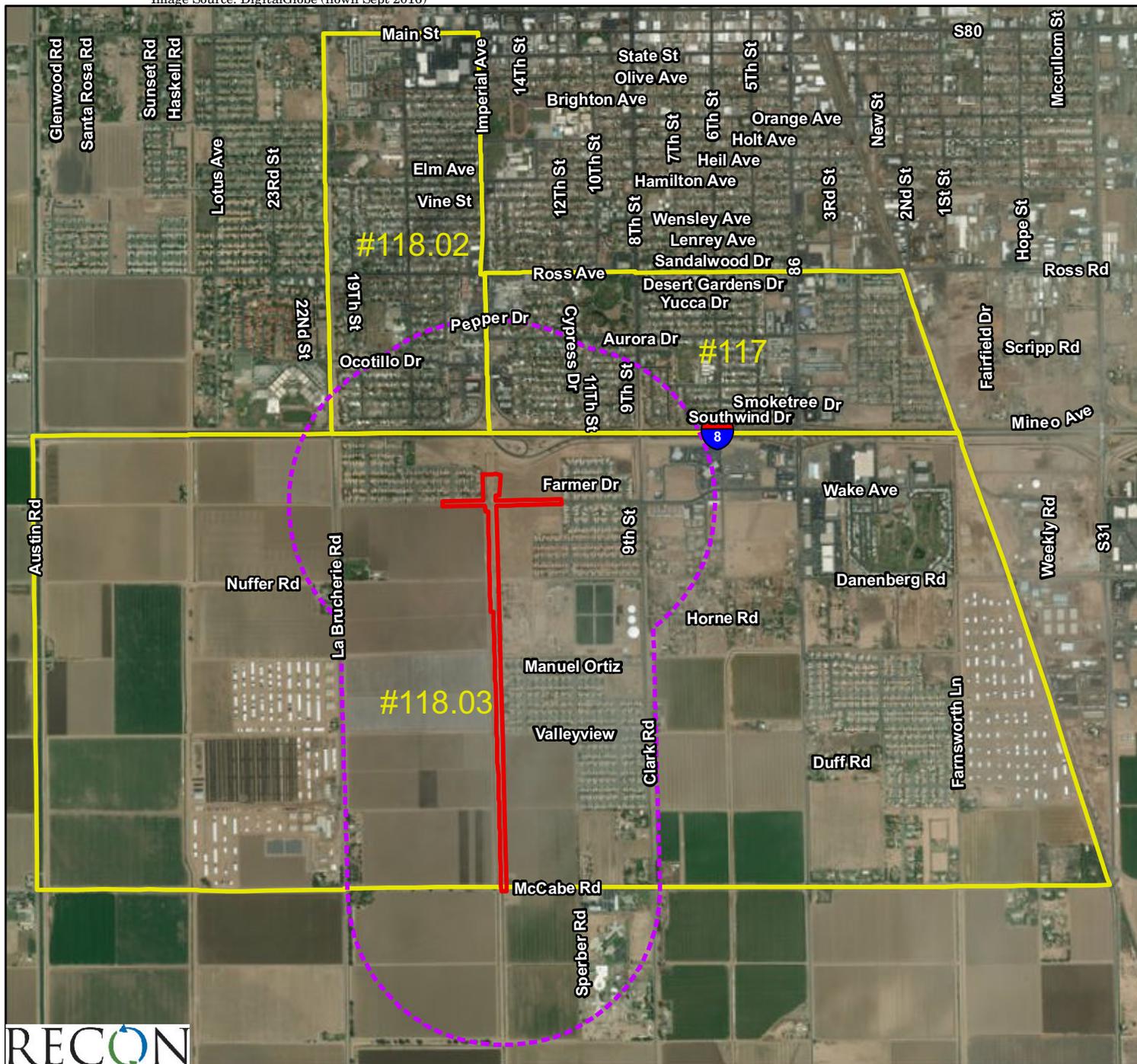
 Project Location

FIGURE 1
Regional Location



-  Project Boundary
-  Public Utility Easement

FIGURE 2
Project Location on Aerial Photograph



-  Project Boundary
-  0.5-mi Buffer
-  2010 Census Tracts



FIGURE 3
Community Impact
Assessment Study Area

Chapter 2 Land Use

2.1 Existing and Future Land Use

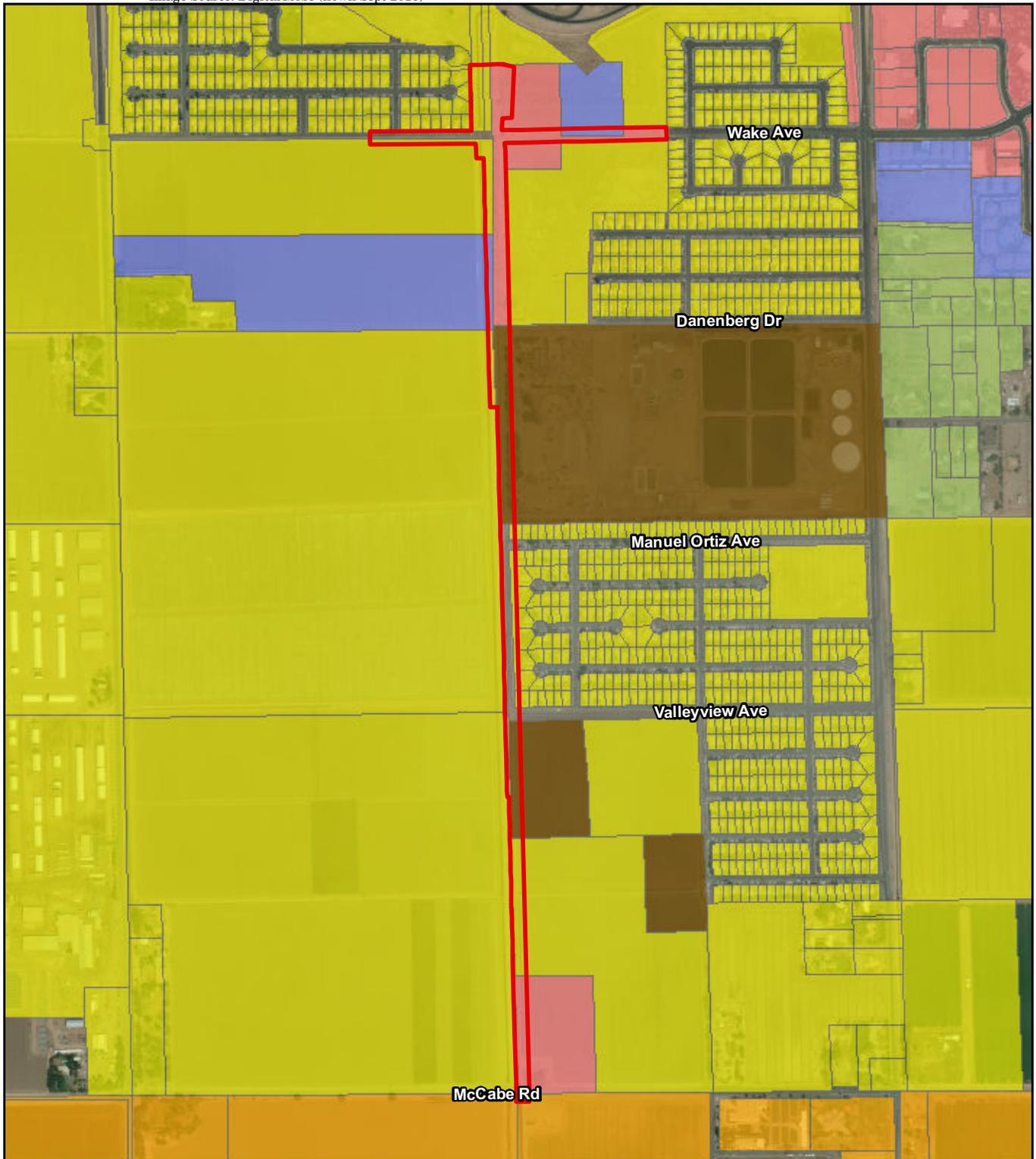
2.1.1 Affected Environment

2.1.1.1 Existing Land Uses

The project site and surrounding land uses primarily consist of a mix of urban development within the City and agricultural fields within unincorporated Imperial County. The project site is relatively flat, and consists primarily of a narrow north-south corridor of vacant land with sparse vegetation. A small portion of land within the southernmost segment of this corridor along the eastern project boundary is currently in agricultural production. The project site also includes a paved segment of Wake Avenue and vacant land with sparse vegetation that would be developed for extensions of Wake Avenue and Danenberg Drive.

The project site is primarily surrounded by existing residential development, active farmland, and agricultural drains. Existing residential development is located northwest of the future intersection of Imperial Avenue and Wake Avenue. All other land west of the project site, south of the future intersection of Imperial Avenue and Wake Avenue to the southern terminus, consists of active farmland. The Date Drain, which consists of an earthen agricultural drain, runs parallel along the entire western edge of the proposed Imperial Avenue extension. Existing residential development is located east of the project site from the northern terminus to Danenberg Drive. A water treatment plant is located east of the project south of the future intersection with Danenberg Drive, followed by additional existing residential development along the eastern project boundary south to Valleyview Avenue. Land east of the project site from Valleyview Avenue to the southern terminus consists of active farmland. The Dahlia Lateral, which consists of a concrete lined agricultural drain, runs parallel along the eastern edge of the proposed Imperial Avenue extension from Danenberg Drive to McCabe Road. Land north of the project site consists of an elevated roadway berm supporting I-8, while land to the south consists of active farmland. Existing land use designations of the project site and surrounding properties are shown in Figure 4, and existing zoning designations of the project site and surrounding properties are shown in Figure 5. Parcels south of the future intersection of Imperial Avenue and Wake Avenue are within the City's sphere of influence, which consists of areas that are currently under the jurisdiction of Imperial County but are anticipated to be incorporated into the City at some time in the future. Consequently, these parcels have City General Plan land use designations for residential uses (Figure 4), but County of Imperial zoning designations for agricultural uses (Figure 5). It is anticipated that the zoning designations of these properties would be changed to City residential uses at the time of incorporation.

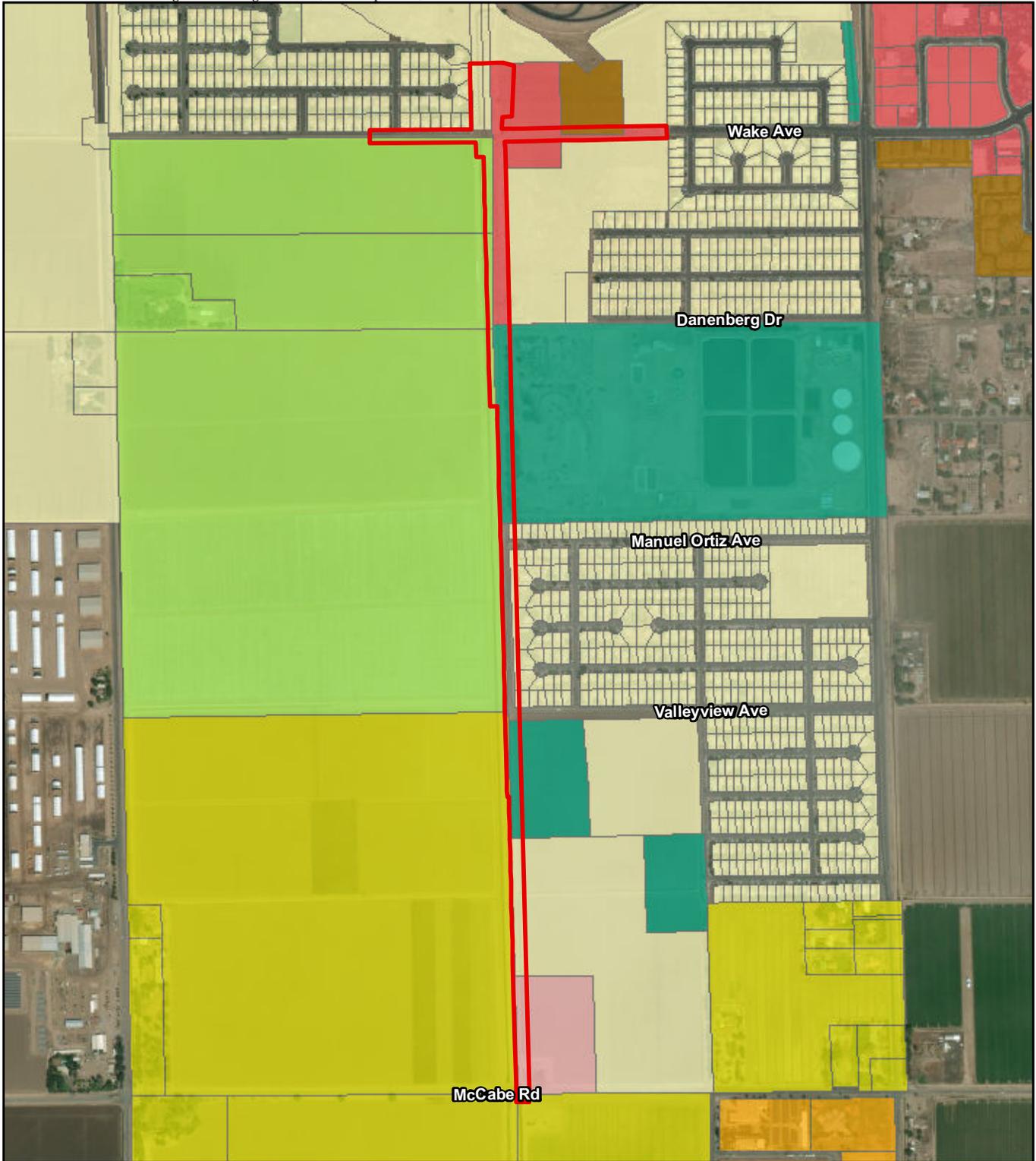
The project site would be created through partial ROW and Easement acquisitions of portions of properties located within the proposed boundaries. The locations of these partial ROW and Easement acquisitions are shown in Figure 6a and 6b; a description of these preliminary partial ROW and Easement acquisitions are presented in Table 1.



- | | |
|---|---|
|  Project Boundary |  High-Medium Density Residential |
| El Centro Land Use |  Public |
|  Low Density Residential |  Rural Residential |
|  General Commercial |  Agriculture (Imperial County) |

FIGURE 4

City of El Centro Existing
Land Use Designations



 Project Boundary

El Centro Zoning

 General Commercial

 Limited Use

 Multiple Family Residential

 Neighborhood Commercial

 Single Family Residential

 General Agriculture (Imp. Co.)

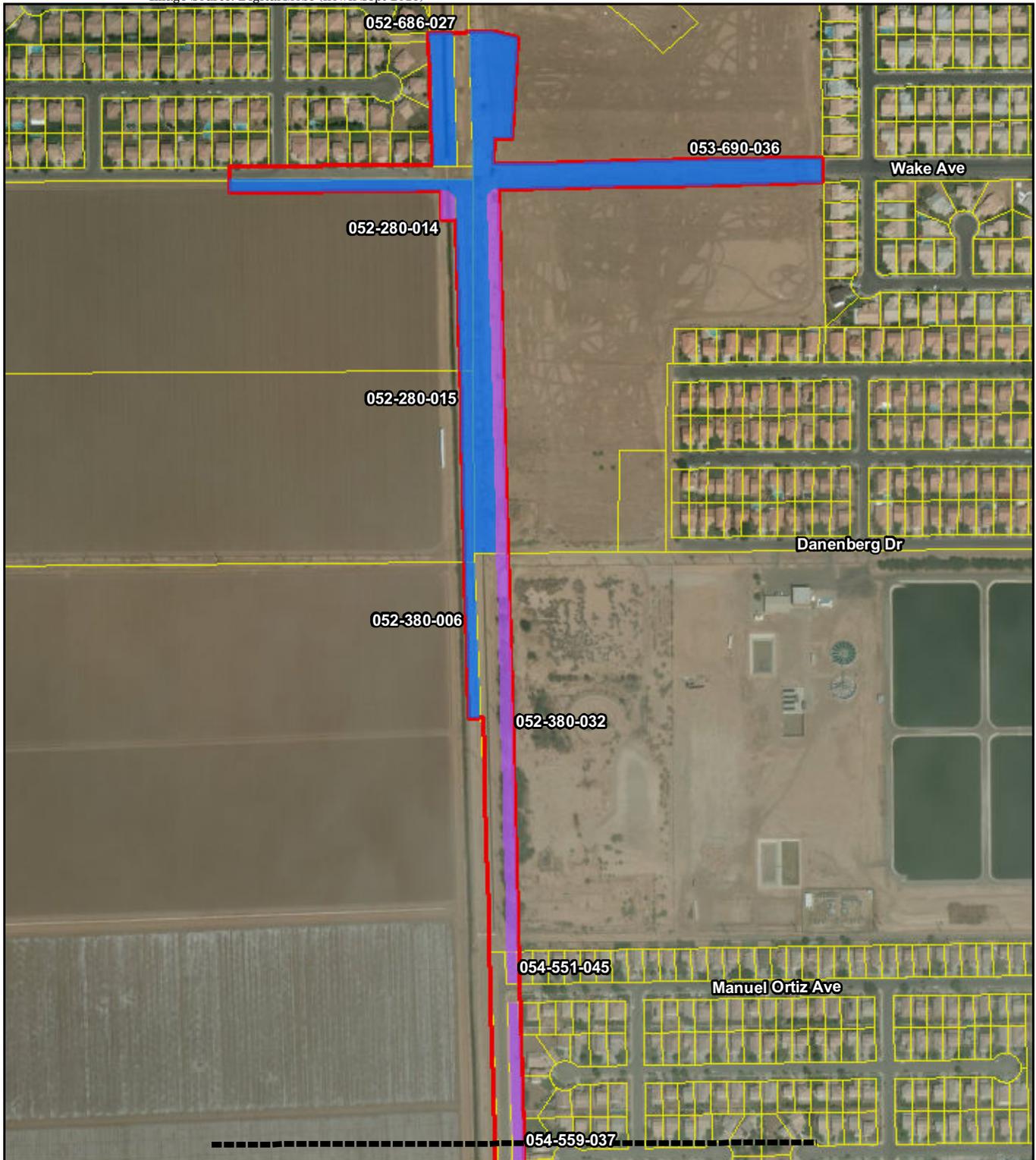
 General Agriculture/Urban (Imp. Co.)

 Government/Special (Imp. Co.)



FIGURE 5

County of Imperial
Existing Zoning Designations

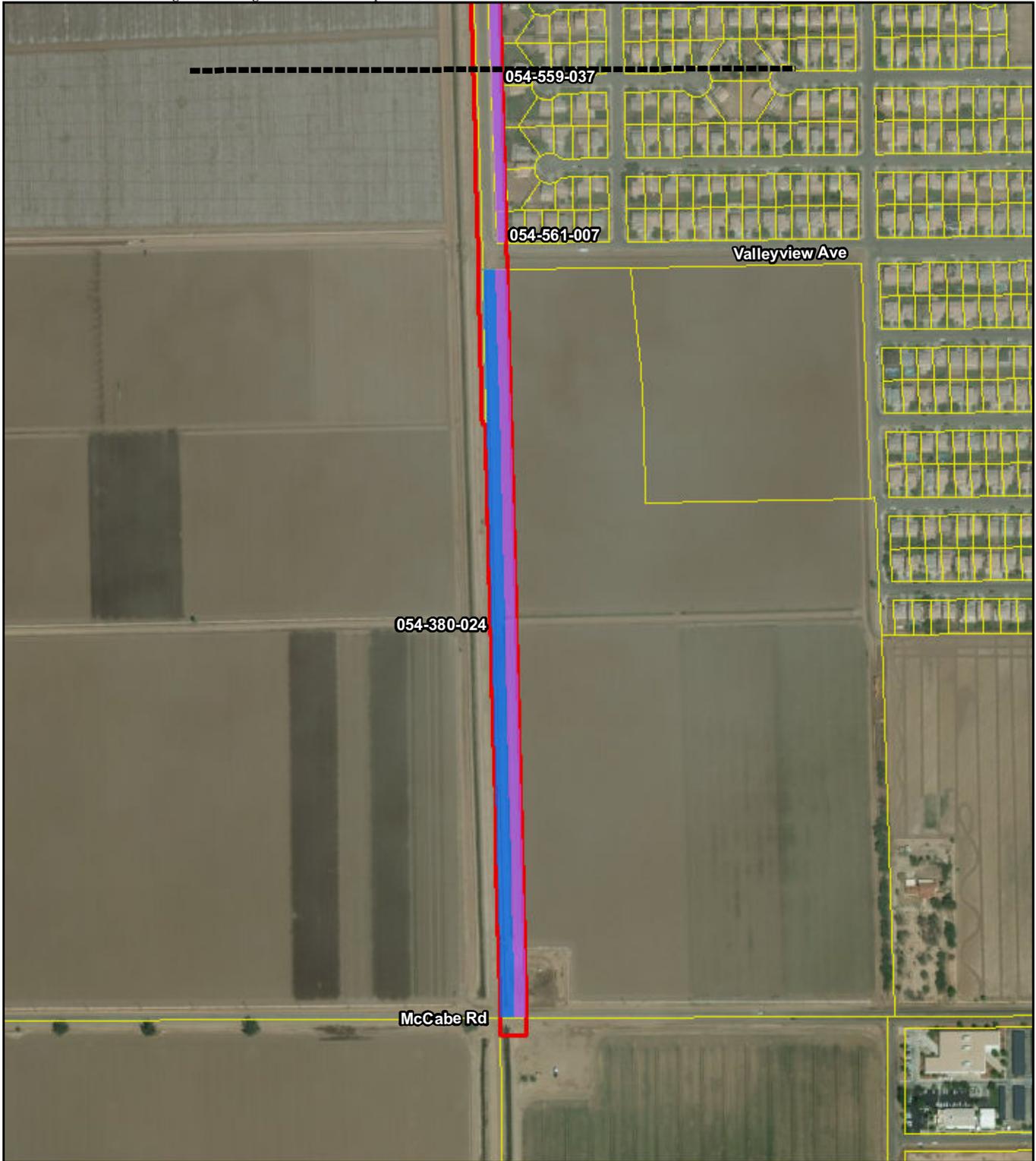


- Project Boundary
- ROW Acquisition
- Easement Acquisition
- Parcel Boundaries
- Matchline



FIGURE 6a

ROW and Easement Acquisitions - North



-  Project Boundary
-  ROW Aquisition
-  Easement Aquisition
-  Parcel Boundaries
-  Matchline

FIGURE 6b

ROW and Easement Acquisitions - South

Table 1. Preliminary Right-of-Way and Easement Acquisitions							
Assessor's Parcel Numbers	Location	Owner and Contact Information	Street Name	Approximate			
				Width (feet)	Length (feet)	Area	
						(feet)	(acres)
Right-of-Way Acquisitions							
052-380-006	Tract 59	Grizzle Land & Development LLC John O. Grizzle 1395 Bonds Corner Road, Holtville, CA 92250 Phone: (760) 356-4381	Imperial Avenue	60.00	539.50	32,370.00	0.74
				10.00	2,697.90	26,979.00	0.62
052-280-014 052-280-015	Tract 60	Susanna D. Waterman & Mincks J.L. Waterman Thomas & Jeanette Mincks Tio Diego Place, La Mesa, CA 91942 Phone: (619) 461-7034	Imperial Avenue	60.00	1,321.60	79,296.00	1.82
052-686-027	Tract 60 Farmers Estate Parcel E	Imperial Irrigation District Real Estate 333 E. Barioni Boulevard, Imperial CA 92251 Phone: (760) 339-9239	Imperial Avenue	80.00	508.00	40,640.00	0.93
053-690-036	Tract 85 & 86	Maruti Construction & Management LLC 445 Hotel Circle South, San Diego, CA 92108	Imperial Avenue	50.00	1,831.26	91,563.00	2.10
053-690-036	Tract 85 & 86	Maruti Construction & Management LLC 445 Hotel Circle South, San Diego, CA 92108	Wake Avenue	88.00	1,207.34	106,245.92	2.44
054-380-023 054-380-024	Tract 81	Tierra Linda Vista LLC John O. Grizzle 1395 Bonds Corner Road, Holtville, CA 92250 Phone: (760) 356-4381	Imperial Avenue	50.00	2,643.72	132,186.00	3.03

Table 1. Preliminary Right-of-Way and Easement Acquisitions							
Assessor's Parcel Numbers	Location	Owner and Contact Information	Street Name	Approximate			
				Width (feet)	Length (feet)	Area	
						(feet)	(acres)
Easement Acquisitions							
052-280-014	Tract 60	Susanna D. Waterman & Mincks J.L. Waterman Thomas & Jeanette Mincks Tio Diego Place, La Mesa, CA 91942 Phone: (619) 461-7034	Imperial Avenue	50.00	100.00	5,000.00	0.11
052-380-032	City of El Centro Water Treatment Plant – Tract 84	City of El Centro Contact: Grace Connor Phone: (760) 337-4540	Imperial Avenue	40.00	1,320.50	52,820.00	1.21
053-690-036	Tracts 85 & 86	Maruti Construction & Management LLC 445 Hotel Circle South, San Diego, CA 92108	Imperial Avenue	40.00	2,073.24	82,929.60	1.90
054-380-023 054-380-024	Tract 81	Tierra Linda Vista LLC John O. Grizzle 1395 Bonds Corner Road, Holtville, CA 92250 Phone: (760) 356-4381	Imperial Avenue	40.00	2,643.72	105,748.80	2.43
054-551-045	Buena Vista Park Subdivision – Southern Half of Tract 84	City of El Centro Contact: Grace Connor Phone: (760) 337-4540	Imperial Avenue	40.00	1,320.50	52,820.00	1.21
054-559-037	Buena Vista Park Subdivision – Southern Half of Tract 84	City of El Centro Contact: Grace Connor Phone: (760) 337-4540	Imperial Avenue	40.03	928.25	37,157.85	0.85
054-561-007	Buena Vista Park Subdivision – Southern Half of Tract 84	City of El Centro Contact: Grace Connor Phone: (760) 337-4540	Imperial Avenue	40.00	113.38	4,535.20	0.10

2.1.1.2 Future Land Uses

Future growth is anticipated in the area surrounding the project site and larger study area. This is based on an expectation that zoning designations of surrounding agricultural properties would be changed to residential uses at the time of incorporation of these unincorporated properties by the City. Planned future developments in the area are presented below in Table 2.

Table 2. Future Private Development			
Name	Jurisdiction	Proposed Uses	Status
Lotus Ranch	City of El Centro	574 single-family units on approximately 213 acres. Located south of I-8, west of La Brucherie Avenue.	Construction began in December 2017, and will be complete in 2022.
Linda Vista	City of El Centro	232 single-family units on approximately 80 acres. Located northwest of the future intersection of Imperial Avenue and McCabe Road.	Construction to begin in 2020 and be complete in 2023.
Desert Village #6	City of El Centro	Proposes the division of a 55+ acre parcel of land in order to create one hundred and ten (110) single-family residential lots, one (1) multi-family residential lot and four (4) general commercial lots, south of I-8, west of Imperial Avenue.	Construction to begin in 2020 and be complete in 2022.
Citrus Grove	City of El Centro	Residential development of 120 single-family lots and a 2.23-acre park on approximately 50 acres of land east of SR 86 and north of McCabe Road.	Construction to begin in 2020 and be complete in 2022.

2.1.2 Environmental Consequences

The partial ROW and Easement acquisitions needed for the project would not alter the surrounding land use pattern or affect existing or future uses. The partial ROW and Easement acquisitions from existing farmland surrounding the project site would be limited to small strips of land at the parcel boundaries that would not preclude future agricultural production on the properties (see Section 2.3). Similarly, ROW and Easement acquisitions from surrounding residential and vacant land uses would be limited to small strips of land at the parcel boundaries that would not affect existing or future uses. The project would improve circulation and access within the surrounding community by resolving existing traffic network deficiencies (see Section 4.1). No impact to existing or future land uses would occur.

2.1.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures would be required.

2.2 Consistency with State, Regional, and Local Plans

2.2.1 Affected Environment

The project would be subject to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), 2017 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP), as well as the goals and policies of the City General Plan (2004) and County of Imperial (County) General Plan (2015). The project's consistency with SCAG and the City and County general plans is described in Section 2.2.2.

2.2.2 Environmental Consequences

2.2.2.1 2016 Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) and 2017 Federal Transportation Improvement Programs (FTIP)

The project is included in the 2016 RTP/SCS (RTP ID 1161L001) and in the 2017 FTIP Amendment 17-03 (FTIP ID IMP160901, Program CAX66). The project was originally described in the 2016 RTP/SCS as a “new roadway from I-8 to McCabe Road. Phase 1 includes 6 new lanes on Imperial Avenue from I-8 to Wake Avenue; and 2 new lanes on Wake Avenue from Imperial Avenue to Cypress Drive.” The 2016 RTP/SCS Amendment 1 removed the discussion of Phase 1 from the project description and only described the project as a “new roadway from I-8 to McCabe Road.”

The project has subsequently been down-scoped to four new lanes on Imperial Avenue from I-8 to Wake Avenue. Although the project is inconsistent with the description in the 2016 RTP/SCS, the project is conforming because it would build fewer lanes than originally anticipated, would not exceed the emissions budget for the project, and is consistent with the 2017 FTIP (see below). Additionally, it is anticipated that 2016 RTP/SCS Amendment 3 will receive Federal approval in December 2018, which will include a revised description of Phase 1 of the project as four new lanes on Imperial Avenue from I-8 to Wake Avenue, consistent with the 2017 FTIP.

The project has the following description in the 2017 FTIP: Imperial Avenue Extension South – New roadway from I-8 to McCabe Road. Phase 1 includes four new lanes on Imperial Avenue from I-8 to Wake Avenue; and two new lanes on Wake Avenue from Imperial Avenue to Cypress Drive. On April 6, 2017, SCAG adopted the 2016 RTP/SCS Amendment 1 and the 2017 FTIP Amendment 17-03 via Resolution No. 17-588-2, and the conformity analysis indicated that all air quality conformity requirements have been met. The FHWA also made a finding of conformity on the 2016 RTP/SCS Amendment 1 and the 2017 FTIP Amendment 17-03 on May 12, 2017 (FHWA 2017).

The design concept and scope of the project are consistent within the scope of the project description that will be included in the 2016 RTP/SCS Amendment 3 anticipated to receive

Federal approval in December 2018, as well as the project description in the 2017 FTIP, and the assumptions in the SCAG regional emissions analysis. Therefore, the project is assumed to conform to the SIP and no adverse regional or local air quality impact would occur as a result of the project. Furthermore, implementation of the project would ensure that the City would be consistent with the 2016 SCAG RTP/SCS and 2017 FTIP.

2.2.2.2 El Centro General Plan

Table 3 presents an evaluation of the project’s consistency with applicable goals in the El Centro General Plan.

Table 3. Summary of Project Consistency with Environmental Goals of the City of El Centro General Plan	
General Plan Goals	Consistency Evaluation
Circulation Element Goal 1: Provide a system of roadways that meet the needs of the community.	The project would be consistent with the El Centro Circulation Element, which identifies Imperial Avenue as a four-lane arterial from I-8 to McCabe Road. Implementation of the project would meet the transportation needs of the community by improving vehicular to areas south of I-8.
Circulation Element Goal 3: Provide for adequate bicycle and pedestrian access throughout the community.	The project would improve pedestrian access by constructing a 5.5-foot sidewalk along the entire length of northbound Imperial Avenue. The project segment of Imperial Avenue is not identified for future bicycle lanes in the El Centro Circulation Element Transit and Bicycle Routes Map (Figure C-4). However, bicyclists would still be able to use the roadway.
Conservation/Open Space Element Goal 1:	The project would have the potential to conflict with Conservation/Open Space Goal 1, to conserve and maintain farmland and prime soil areas surrounding El Centro so that agriculture remains a viable and dominant part of the community’s character and local economy. The project site and surrounding properties are not classified as Prime Farmland (impacts on farmland are discussed in greater detail in Section 2.3, Farmlands). The project would result in the conversion of 5.76 acres of soils classified as Farmland of Statewide Importance and 9.98 acres of soils classified as Farmland of Local Importance. However, only 3.03 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance within the project site is currently in agricultural production, which represents .000032 percent of the 94,033 acres of farmland within Imperial County. The remaining land classified as Important Farmland by the Farmland by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) is currently used as an unofficial dirt road or is vacant land. Similarly, the partial ROW acquisitions from existing farmlands surrounding the project site would be limited to small strips of land at the parcel boundaries that would not preclude future agricultural production on the properties. Therefore, conflicts with Conservation/Open Space Goal 1 would be minimal.

2.2.2.3 County of Imperial General Plan

Table 4 presents an evaluation of the project’s consistency with applicable goals of the Imperial County General Plan.

Table 4. Summary of Project Consistency with Goals of the Imperial County General Plan	
General Plan Goals	Consistency Evaluation
Agricultural Element Goal 1: All Important Farmland, including the categories of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Local Importance, as defined by Federal and State agencies, should be reserved for agricultural uses.	Partial acquisitions within Imperial County would be limited to a an easement to underground a 100-foot segment of the Date Drain that would continue to convey water and ROW acquisitions from areas consisting of an unofficial dirt road or vacant land. Although land within these ROW and Easement acquisitions is classified as Important Farmland by the FMMP, these areas are not in agricultural production. The partial ROW acquisitions from these County parcels would be limited to small strips of land at the parcel boundaries that would not preclude future agricultural production on the remainder of the properties. Furthermore, the project site and surrounding properties are not classified as Prime Farmland (impacts on farmland are discussed in greater detail in Section 2.3 Farmlands). Consequently, the project would not reduce the amount of active farmland within Imperial County, and conflicts with Agricultural Element Goal 1 would be minimal.
Land Use Goal 3: Achieve balanced economic and residential growth while preserving the unique natural, scenic, and agricultural resources of Imperial County.	The project would support future economic and residential growth within Imperial County by improving access to unincorporated County land south of I-8. Partial ROW acquisitions from County parcels would be limited to small strips of land at the parcel boundaries that would not preclude future agricultural production on the remainder of the properties, nor would the ROW acquisitions impact unique natural or scenic resources. Therefore, conflicts with Land Use Goal 3 would be minimal. To resolve this inconsistency, the City will work with the County to update the zoning designations.
Circulation Element Goal 1: The County will provide and require an integrated transportation system for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods within and through the County of Imperial with minimum disruption to the environment.	Upon acquiring partial ROW acquisitions from land within Imperial County, the project would be located entirely within the jurisdiction of the City of El Centro and would not be subject to the Imperial County General Plan. The project would expand the safe and efficient movement of people and goods within Imperial County by improving access to unincorporated County land south of I-8.

2.2.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures would be required.

2.3 Farmlands

2.3.1 Affected Environment

The California Department of Conservation (CDC) Division of Land Resource Protection administers the FMMP, which monitors and documents land use changes that affect California’s farmland. The FMMP classifies land as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, Grazing Land, Urban and Built-Up Land, and Other Land. Descriptions of these classifications are provided in Table 5. The first four categories are collectively known as Important Farmland.

Table 5. FMMP Designations	
Classification	Definition
Prime Farmland	Land with the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics able to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops.
Farmland of Statewide Importance	Land with a good combination of physical and chemical characteristics for agricultural use, having only minor shortcomings, such as less ability to store soil moisture, compared to Prime Farmland.
Unique Farmland	Land used for production of the state’s major crops on soils not qualifying for prime or statewide importance. This land is usually irrigated but may include non-irrigated fruits and vegetables as found in some climatic zones in California.
Farmland of Local Importance	Land that meets all the characteristics of Prime and Statewide, with the exception of irrigation. Farmlands not covered by the above categories, but which are of significant economic importance to the County. They have a history of good production for locally adapted crops. The soils are grouped in types that are suitable for truck crops and soils suited for orchard crops.
Grazing Land	Land on which the existing vegetation is suitable for grazing of livestock. The minimum mapping unit for this category is 40 acres.
Urban and Built-Up Land	Residential land with a density of at least six units per 10-acre parcel, as well as land used for industrial and commercial purposes, golf courses, landfills, airports, water treatment, and water control structures.
Other Land	Land does not meet the criteria of any other category. Common examples include low-density rural developments, wetlands, dense brush and timberlands gravel pits, and small water bodies.

NEPA and the FPPA (U.S. Code 4201-4209, and its regulations, 7 Code of Federal Regulations Ch. VI Part 658), require the lead (federal) agency to coordinate with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to examine the effects of farmland conversion before approving any federal action. A Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form AD 1006 (Form AD 1006) was completed for the project on July 17, 2017 to assess the project’s agricultural impacts. Completion of Form AD 1006 assisted in the determination of the extent to which the project area is conducive to further agricultural use, and the level of direct impact sustained by the project. The completed Form AD 1006 was approved on July 31, 2017 and is included as Appendix B. It should be noted that the approved Form AD 1006 utilized a larger project footprint based on a 4-lane Divided Arterial (with left turn lane) roadway from I-8 to McCabe Road. The reduced project footprint analyzed in this CIA would have a smaller impact on agricultural resources than was identified in the approved form.

Agricultural production is an important industry within the City and County. As shown in Figure 7, the majority of land within a one-mile radius of the project site (52 percent) is classified as Important Farmland by the FMMP (CDC 2017). As shown in Figure 5 above, properties within Imperial County within the western portion of the project site are zoned for agricultural uses.

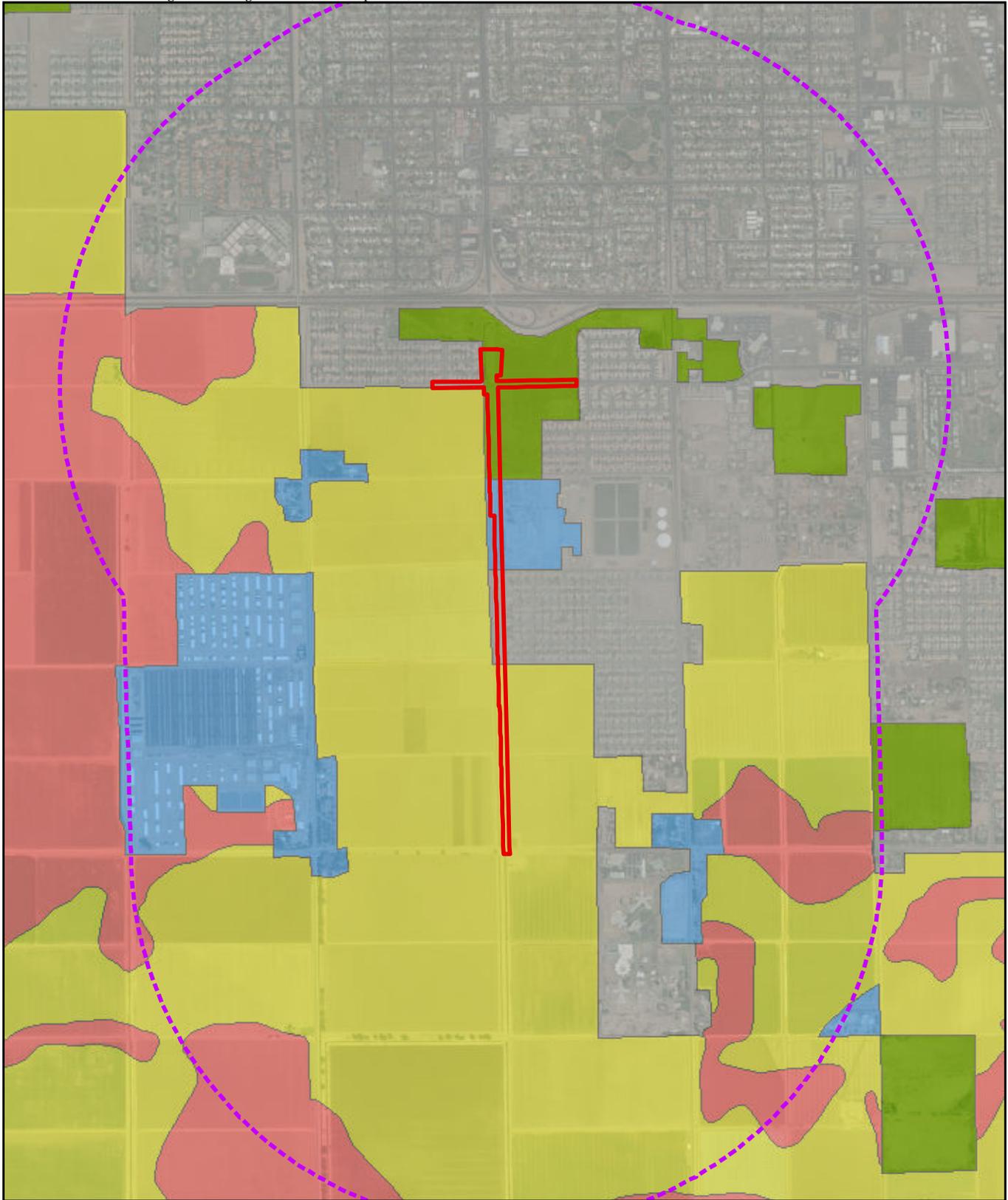
2.3.2 Environmental Consequences

As shown in Figure 8 and Table 6, the project would convert 5.76 acres of soils classified as Farmland of Statewide Importance and 9.98 acres of soils classified as Farmland of Local Importance to non-farmland uses. This would result in a total conversion of 15.74 acres (66 percent) of the project site from FMMP Important Farmland to non-farmland uses. However, Figure 9 shows that only 3.03 acres of this Important Farmland (Farmland of Statewide Importance) within the project site is currently in agricultural production. The remaining land classified as Important Farmland by the FMMP is currently used as an unofficial dirt road or is vacant land. Furthermore, no Prime Farmland was identified within the project site.

The partial ROW acquisitions from existing farmlands surrounding the project site would be limited to small strips of land at the parcel boundaries that would not preclude future agricultural production on the properties. As shown by the presence of active farmland adjacent to major roadways throughout Imperial County, the proposed roadway extension would not adversely affect existing agricultural use. Active farmland is located immediately adjacent to long stretches of I-8 and McCabe Road, which shows that active farmland located east and west of the proposed extension of Imperial Avenue could continue with cultivation adjacent to a major roadway.

FMMP Category	Acreage
Farmland of Statewide Importance	5.76 acres
Farmland of Local Importance	9.98 acres
Other Land	3.59 acres
Developed Lands	4.66 acres
Total	23.99 acres

As shown in Figure 4, all properties east and west of the project site, including those that would be affected by ROW and Easement acquisitions, are designated for non-agricultural uses in the City of El Centro General Plan Land Use Map. Consequently, future growth in the surrounding area that would occur independent of the project could convert active farmland to other uses. Implementation of the project would provide improved circulation access that could support development of parcels surrounding the project anticipated in the General Plan. This improved circulation would also help existing agricultural businesses in the City of El Centro and Imperial County to transport equipment and people in a more efficient manner. The project has been designed to resolve existing traffic network deficiencies, and therefore would not create new opportunities for growth beyond what is already anticipated by the City’s General Plan with regard to the City’s sphere of influence, which consists of areas that are currently under the jurisdiction of Imperial County but are anticipated to be incorporated into the City at some time in the future.



 Project Boundary **FMMP Imperial Co (2014)**

 1-mi Buffer

 Prime Farmland

 Farmland of Statewide Importance

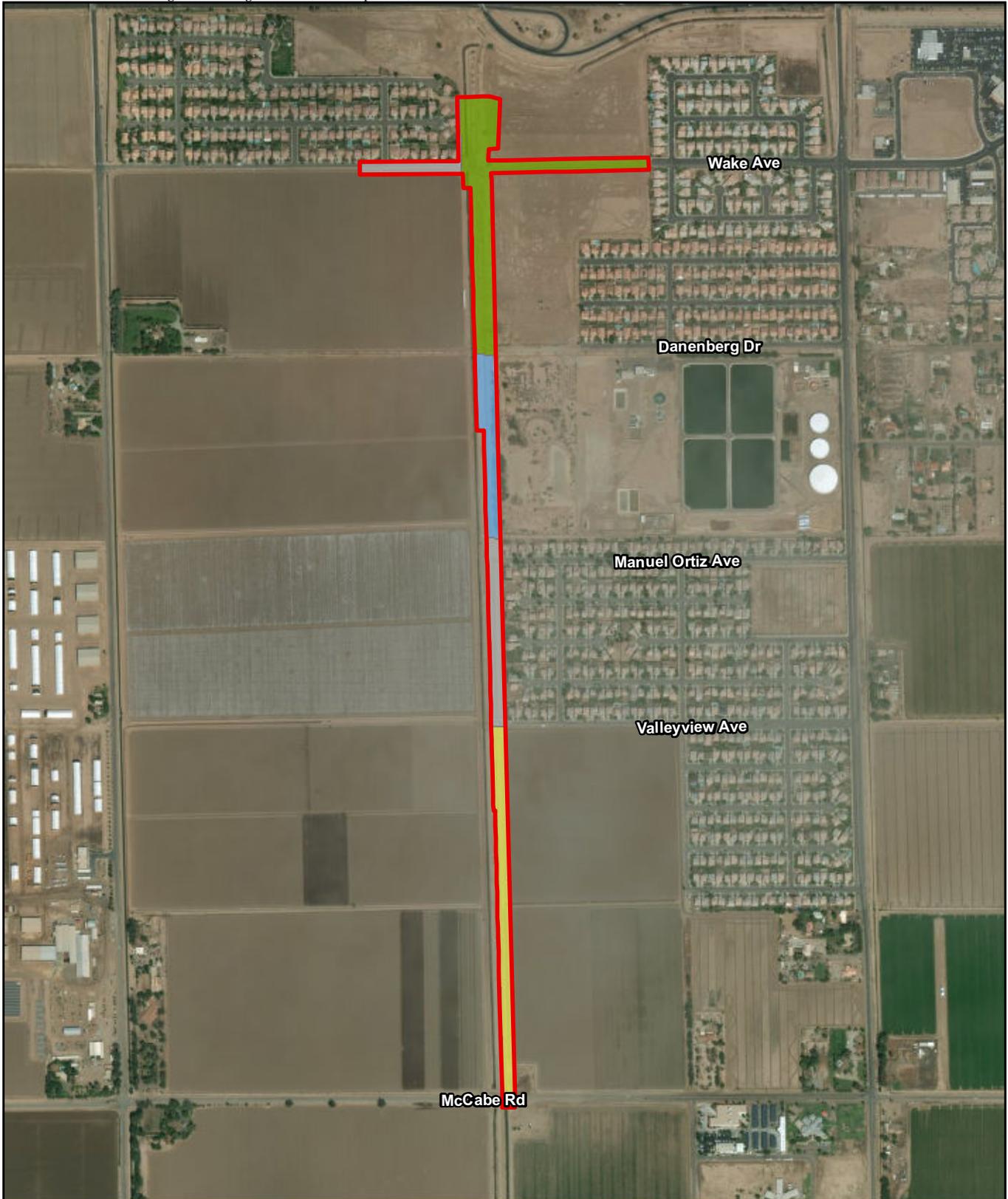
 Farmland of Local Importance

 Other Land

 Urban and Built Up Land



FIGURE 7
Existing Farmland



 Project Boundary

Impacted FMMP Imperial Co (2014)

 Farmland of Statewide Importance (5.76 ac) - 24%

 Farmland of Local Importance (9.98 ac) - 42%

 Other Land (3.59 ac) - 15%

 Urban and Built Up Land (4.66 ac) - 19%

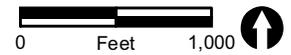
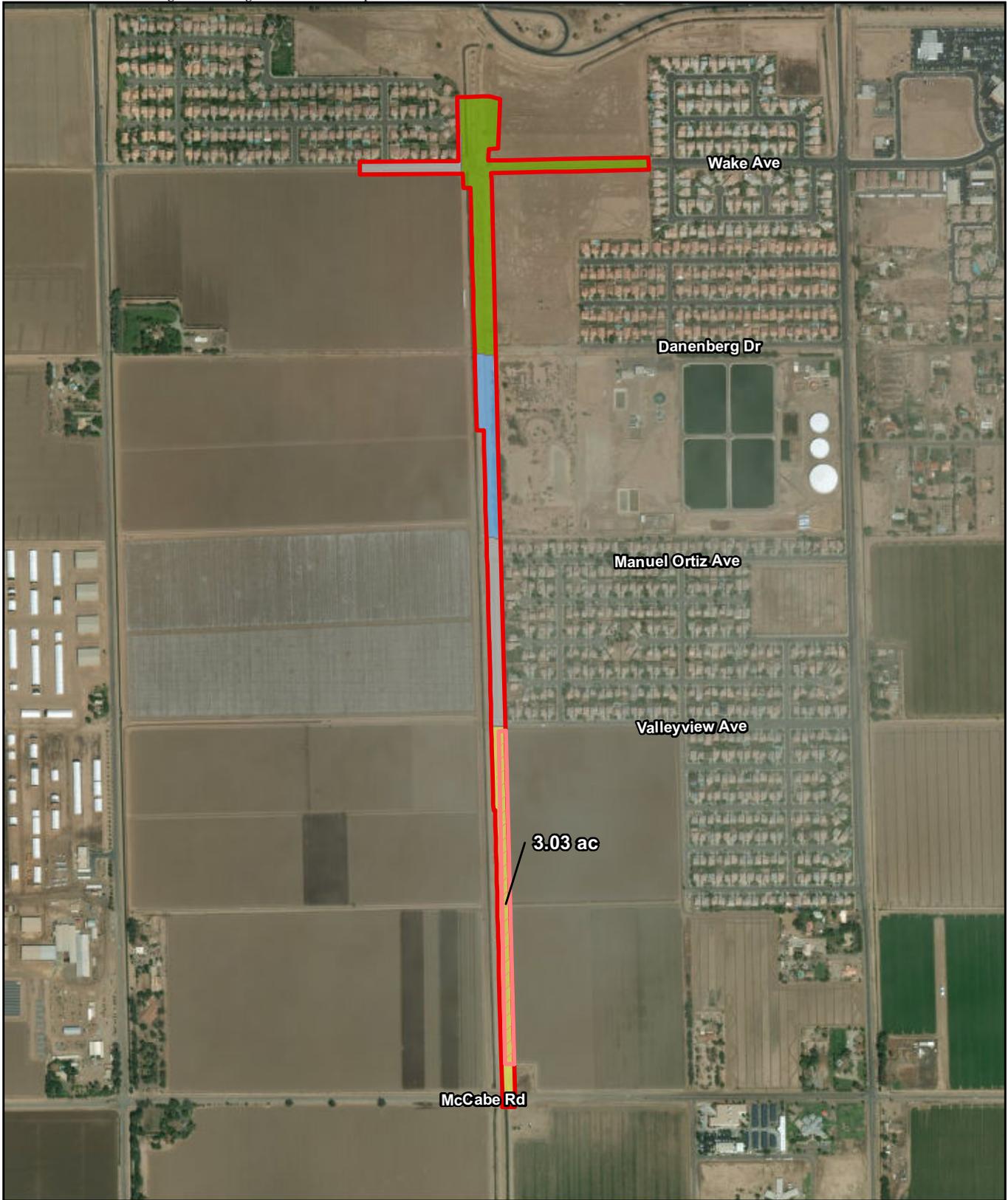


FIGURE 8
Farmland Impacts



 Project Boundary

 Impacted Active Farmland

Impacted FMMP Imperial Co (2014)

 Farmland of Statewide Importance (5.76 ac) - 24%

 Farmland of Local Importance (9.98 ac) - 42%

 Other Land (3.59 ac) - 15%

 Urban and Built Up Land (4.66 ac) - 19%



The completed Form AD 1006 determined that conversion of 15.74 acres of Important Farmland to non-agricultural uses would not be substantial compared to the overall total of 94,033 acres of Important Farmland within Imperial County. Additionally, Important Farmland within the project site is located adjacent to existing urban development, lacks well-maintained on-farm investments, and impacts to these soils would not result in the conversion of adjacent farms to non-agricultural uses. Therefore, impacts associated with the conversion of 15.74 acres of Important Farmland, only 3.03 acres of which are in agricultural production, would not be adverse.

2.3.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures would be required.

Chapter 3 Community Character

3.1 Population and Housing

3.1.1 Affected Environment

3.1.1.1 Neighborhoods/Communities/Community Character

The project site and surrounding mix of urban development and agricultural land uses does not have a defined sense of character or cohesion. Urban development surrounding the project site consists of single-family residences with backyards, fences, and walls facing the future roadway corridor (Photograph 1). The existing vacant and disturbed character of the majority of the project site is unremarkable and does not possess strong scenic quality or otherwise contribute to community character. Similarly, the small portion of the project site in agricultural production (Photograph 2) and the paved segment of Wake Avenue do not possess strong scenic quality or otherwise contribute to community character. Additionally, areas surrounding the project site have an unimproved landscape (i.e. unpaved roads, utilities, and canals), and have limited vehicular access due to the existing traffic network deficiencies created by the Imperial Avenue terminus north of I-8.

3.1.1.2 Regional Population Characteristics

Tables 7 through 9 present the demographic characteristics of the three census tracts located within the CIA study area, the City, and County. The project site is located entirely within Census Tract 118.03. A description of the demographic characteristics of Census Tract 118.03 in comparison to the other two census tracts within the study area, the City, and the County is provided below.

3.1.1.3 Race and Ethnicity

Table 7 shows that racial and ethnic minorities constitute 81.8 percent of the population of Census Tract 118.03, which is slightly higher than the minority population of Census Tract 118.02 (79.3 percent), but lower than the minority populations of Census Tract 117 (84.9 percent), El Centro (86.5 percent), and Imperial County (86.3 percent). The minority populations of all three census tracts within the CIA study area are lower than those within the City and Imperial County.



PHOTOGRAPH 1
View Facing Southwest of Project Site
from Future Eastern Terminus of
Wake Avenue Extension



PHOTOGRAPH 2
View Facing North of Project Site
from Future Intersection of
Imperial Avenue and McCabe Road

Table 7. Race and Ethnicity										
	Census Tract 118.03	% of Pop.	Census Tract 118.02	% of Pop.	Census Tract 117	% of Pop.	City of El Centro	% of Pop.	Imperial County	% of Pop.
Total Population	5,937	100.0%	4,870	100.0%	4,797	100.0%	42,598	100.0%	174,528	100.0%
Non-Hispanic White	1,083	18.2%	1,006	20.7%	724	15.1%	5,758	13.5%	23,927	13.7%
Black	50	0.8%	115	2.4%	88	1.8%	864	2.0%	5,114	2.9%
Native American	4	0.1%	23	0.5%	6	0.1%	95	0.2%	1,642	0.9%
Asian	318	5.4%	128	2.6%	48	1.0%	785	1.8%	2,201	1.3%
Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	6	0.1%	0	0.0%	5	0.1%	19	0.0%	87	0.0%
Other/Two or More Races	76	1.3%	40	0.8%	25	0.5%	326	0.8%	1,286	0.7%
Hispanic	4,400	74.1%	3,558	73.1%	3,901	81.3%	34,751	81.6%	140,271	80.4%
Total Minority Population	4,854	81.8%	3,864	79.3%	4,073	84.9%	36,840	86.5%	150,601	86.3%

% = percent; Pop. = population
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010

3.1.1.4 Income

Table 8 shows that Census Tract 118.03 has a substantially higher median household income (\$95,024) compared to Census Tract 118.02 (\$43,913), Census Tract 117 (\$47,000), the City (\$40,517), and the County (\$41,079). Similarly, Table 8 also shows that Census Tract 118.03 has a substantially lower percentage of the population living below the poverty level (3.8 percent) compared to Census Tract 118.02 (22.1 percent), Census Tract 117 (20.0 percent), the City (25.2 percent), and Imperial County (24.0 percent). Table 8 also shows that Census Tract 118.03 has a lower unemployment rate (8.0 percent) compared to Census Tract 118.02 (12.3 percent), Census Tract 117 (12.5 percent), the City (15.9 percent), and Imperial County (17.4 percent). Income and employment characteristics of all three census tracts within the CIA study area are higher than those within the City and Imperial County.

Table 8. Income					
	Census Tract 118.03	Census Tract 118.02	Census Tract 117	City of El Centro	Imperial County
Median Household Income	\$95,024	\$43,913	\$47,000	\$40,517	\$41,079
Percent Below Poverty Level	3.8%	22.1%	20.0%	25.2%	24.0%
Unemployment Rate	8.0%	12.3%	12.5%	15.9%	17.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010

3.1.1.5 Housing

Housing within 0.5-mile of the project site consists primarily of single-family residences. All housing immediately surrounding the project site consists of single-family residences, while multi-family residences are located southeast of the intersection of 9th Street and Wake Avenue. Housing north of I-8 within 0.5 mile of the project site consists of single-family residences along and lodging along the existing segment of Imperial Avenue.

Table 9 shows that Census Tract 118.03 has the lowest percentage of occupied housing units (80.6 percent) compared to Census Tract 118.02 (93.4 percent), Census Tract 117 (92.3 percent), the City (90.5 percent), and the County (87.6 percent). Census Tracts 118.02 and 117 have higher percentages of occupied housing units compared to the City and the County. Table 9 also shows that Census Tract 118.03 has a substantially higher percentage of owner occupied units (75.1 percent) compared to Census Tract 118.02 (46.2 percent), Census Tract 117 (64.3 percent), the City (49.5 percent), and Imperial County (56.1 percent). Census Tract 118.02 has a lower percentage of owner occupied units compared to the City and Imperial County, while Census Tract 117 has a higher percentage of owner occupied units compared to the City and Imperial County.

Table 9. Housing										
	Census Tract 118.03	% of total housing units	Census Tract 118.02	% of total housing units	Census Tract 117	% of total housing units	City of El Centro	% of total housing units	Imperial County	% of total housing units
Total Housing Units	2,170	100.0%	1,788	100.0%	1,537	100.0%	14,476	100.0%	56,067	100.0%
Occupied Housing Units	1,749	80.6%	1,670	93.4%	1,418	92.3%	13,108	90.5%	49,126	87.6%
Vacant Housing Units	421	19.4%	118	6.6%	119	7.7%	1,368	9.5%	6,941	12.4%
Owner Occupied	1,314	75.1%	772	46.2%	912	64.3%	6,488	49.5%	27,564	56.1%
Renter Occupied	435	24.9%	898	53.8%	506	35.7%	6,620	50.5%	21,661	44.1%
Average Household Size	3.39		2.78		3.36		3.19		3.34	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010

3.1.2 Environmental Consequences

3.1.2.1 Neighborhoods/Communities/ Community Character

Impacts to community cohesion, under federal guidelines, are expected to occur when any of the following result:

- A disruption or division of the physical arrangement of an established community;
- A conflict with established recreational, educational, religious, or scientific uses of the area.

The proposed roadway extension would not change the land use pattern surrounding the project site. The partial ROW acquisitions needed for the project would not result in any property displacements. Similarly, the partial ROW acquisitions from existing farmlands surrounding the project site would be limited to small strips of land at the parcel boundaries that would not preclude future agricultural production on the properties. Additionally, the proposed roadway extension would follow the alignment of the existing unofficial dirt road.

The visual character of the project would be compatible with the existing visual character of the proposed roadway extension corridor. Although the project would slightly increase the urban character of the project site and surrounding area, viewer response from surrounding properties would be low due to the presence of existing residential development and other roadways in the immediate area. The proposed roadway extension would follow the alignment of the existing unofficial dirt road and would not change the surrounding land use pattern. The project would not introduce new structures with heights that would block views or otherwise substantially change the scenic character of the area. Viewer response to covering the Date Drain running parallel along the project's western boundary would be low because the earthen channel does not possess strong scenic quality.

The project would improve community character by introducing 5.5-foot wide sidewalks on both sides of Imperial Avenue. The resulting increase in pedestrian traffic could create new opportunities for social interaction and relationships and lead to a more cohesive neighborhood. The project could also lead to an increase in economic activity that would benefit the surrounding area and the City.

Implementation of the project would provide improved circulation access that would support development of parcels surrounding the project anticipated in the General Plan. The resulting development anticipated in the General Plan would generate new businesses and increase tax revenues that would improve the overall economic health within Census Tract 118.03, the remainder of the CIA study area, and the City.

3.1.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures would be required.

3.2 Economic Conditions

3.2.1 Affected Environment

According to the Caltrans 2017 Imperial County Economic Forecast (Caltrans 2017), Imperial County has a population of 187,200 people and a total of 63,700 wage and salary jobs. The income per capita is \$32,722 and the average salary per worker is \$48,014, both of which represent the lowest levels among all Southern California counties.

Imperial County's economy is heavily agricultural. With approximately 11,700 farm workers, the county generates \$2 billion of agricultural output each year. Its most prevalent commodities are cattle, alfalfa, broccoli, and lettuce.

The public sector also plays a large role in the region's economy, and with 18,300 workers, it is the county's largest employment sector. A substantial number of the government jobs in Imperial County are related to the two state correctional facilities, which employ a combined total of 2,000 staff and house 7,400 inmates.

Across Southern California, employment increased by 2.6 percent in 2016. Imperial County lost 930 wage and salary jobs, representing a decline of 1.4 percent. Farm employment decreased by 10.3 percent, while non-farm employment increased by 0.8 percent. The unemployment rate improved slightly, falling from 24.0 percent in 2015 to 23.5 percent in 2016. Despite this improvement, Imperial County still has one of the highest unemployment rates in the state.

In 2016, the largest employment gains were observed in government (+390 jobs), education and healthcare (+350 jobs), and transportation and warehousing (+250 jobs). The largest losses were observed in agriculture (-1,300 jobs), construction (-750 jobs), and wholesale and retail trade (-130 jobs).

Between 2011 and 2016, the Imperial County population grew at an average rate of 1.0 percent per year. This growth was entirely due to the natural increase (new births), as net migration was negative.

3.2.2 Environmental Consequences

The project could lead to an increase in economic activity that would benefit residents within Census Tract 118.03, the remainder of the CIA study area, and the City. The City down-scoped the project from the original scope of work analyzed in the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form AD-1006. The modified scope reduces impacts to agricultural fields located on the west side of the project site. The reduction in the project scope does not affect the original farmland analysis findings, which concluded that there would be no adverse impacts to farmland (see Appendix B).

3.2.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures would be required.

3.3 Relocations and Real Property Acquisition

3.3.1 Affected Environment

As described in Section 2.1.1, the project site is primarily surrounded by existing residential development, active farmland, vacant lots, and agricultural drains. Existing land use designations of surrounding properties are shown in Figure 4, while existing zoning designations of surrounding properties are shown in Figure 5. The project site would be created through partial ROW and Easement acquisitions of portions of properties located within the proposed boundaries. The locations of these partial ROW and Easement acquisitions are shown in Figures 6a and 6b, and a description of these partial ROW and Easement acquisitions are presented above in Table 1.

3.3.2 Environmental Consequences

The partial ROW acquisitions needed for the project roadway would not result in any property displacements. The majority of the partial ROW acquisitions would be located in areas that consist of an unofficial dirt road or vacant land and would not affect existing or future uses on the remainders of the properties. The remaining partial ROW acquisitions from existing farmland surrounding the project site would be limited to small strips of land at the parcel boundaries that would not preclude future agricultural production on the properties (see Section 2.3). The project would require several easement acquisitions to develop a 40-foot wide Public Utility Easement (PUE) that would be located parallel to the eastern project boundary. The project would relocate and underground existing overhead electric lines, an existing 18-inch diameter steel domestic potable water pipeline, and existing raw water lines for the water treatment plant within the PUE. The project would also underground a new stormwater pipeline for the project within the PUE. The project would also require an easement to underground a 100-foot segment of the Date Drain that would continue to convey water. ROW acquisition procedures will be followed. No impact would occur.

3.3.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures would be required.

3.4 Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898—Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations—requires federal agencies to identify and address, as appropriate, the disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations, and to avoid or minimize such effects to the extent feasible. Minority populations are defined as all people other than Non-Hispanic Whites, while low-income populations are defined as those living below the poverty line by the U.S. Census Bureau.

As shown in Table 7, above, the minority population for Census Tract 118.03 is similar to the minority populations of other census tracts within the CIA study area and lower than the minority populations of the City and the County. Consequently, the project does not have the

potential to disproportionately affect minority populations. As shown in Table 8, the employment characteristics of Census Tract 118.03 are substantially higher than those within the other census tracts within the CIA study area and the City and the County. Similarly, Table 9 shows that percentage of owner occupied housing units is substantially higher than those within the other census tracts within the CIA study area and the City and the County. Consequently, the project does not have the potential to disproportionately affect low-income populations.

Additionally, the project would be beneficial to residents within Census Tract 118.03 because it would resolve existing traffic network deficiencies and provide improved access to residences and other properties south of I-8. The project could also lead to an increase in economic activity that would benefit residents within Census Tract 118.03, the remainder of the CIA study area, and the City (see Section 3.1.2.2).

Chapter 4 Traffic and Transportation/ Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

4.1 Affected Environment

4.1.1 Access, Circulation, and Parking

The project site is located immediately south of I-8, which is a major east-west freeway that passes through the City and region. Imperial Avenue is a major north-south route through the City with a southern terminus at the intersection with I-8. The project has been designed to resolve existing traffic network deficiencies within the City. Motorists heading south and east from Imperial Avenue must travel along I-8 and exit one mile away at 4th Street (SR 86), which exacerbates the existing congested traffic condition at the 4th Street (SR 86)/I-8 interchange. Motorists heading west from Imperial Avenue must travel along I-8 and exit three miles away at Forrester Road. Parking within the project site is limited to the existing segment of Wake Avenue.

4.1.2 Public Transportation

Imperial Valley Transit provides bus service within the City and to neighboring jurisdictions. The project site is not located adjacent to an existing Imperial Valley Transit bus stop.

4.2 Environmental Consequences

4.2.1 Access, Circulation, and Parking

Implementation of the project would resolve the existing traffic network deficiencies within the City and provide improved access to residences and other properties south of I-8. Travelers would no longer need to travel the additional distance required under the existing condition and would have improved direct access south of I-8. This improved access to areas south of I-8 would allow travelers to reach destinations by shorter and more direct routes. The improved access would also provide for greater connectivity and improve emergency access to areas located south of I-8.

The Transportation Analysis (TA) prepared for the project determined that the proposed roadway improvements would either improve or maintain levels of service below what would occur without the project (LLG 2018). Therefore, the project would either reduce times for commutes and general travel on the improved circulation network. The project would also improve pedestrian access by introducing 5.5-foot wide sidewalks on both sides of Imperial Avenue. The project would not result in the loss of parking on the existing portion of Wake Avenue within the project site.

4.2.2 Public Transportation

The project site is not served by public transportation and would not result in any impacts. Upon project completion, it is anticipated that Imperial Valley Transit would serve the project

site as demand for public transportation arises. The project would accommodate future public transportation by adding roads.

4.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

4.3.1 Access, Circulation, and Parking

No avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures would be required.

4.3.2 Public Transportation

No avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures would be required.

Appendix A Farmland Conversion Impact
Rating Form

FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING

PART I (To be completed by Federal Agency)		Date Of Land Evaluation Request 7/15/2016			
Name of Project Imperial Avenue Extension		Federal Agency Involved Federal Highway Administration			
Proposed Land Use Transportation/ Roadway		County and State Imperial, CA			
PART II (To be completed by NRCS)		Date Request Received By NRCS 07/17/2017		Person Completing Form: Cydean Gillespie	
Does the site contain Prime, Unique, Statewide or Local Important Farmland? <i>(If no, the FPPA does not apply - do not complete additional parts of this form)</i>		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Acres Irrigated 455,033	Average Farm Size 1225
Major Crop(s) Alfalfa	Farmable Land In Govt. Jurisdiction Acres: 487898 % 16.8	Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: 94033 % 32.4			
Name of Land Evaluation System Used CA Revised Storie Index	Name of State or Local Site Assessment System None	Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS 7/31/2017			
PART III (To be completed by Federal Agency)		Alternative Site Rating			
		Site A	Site B	Site C	Site D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly		25.43			
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly		0			
C. Total Acres In Site		37.82			
PART IV (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information					
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland		0			
B. Total Acres Statewide Important or Local Important Farmland		24.53			
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted		0.0083			
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value		57.2			
PART V (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Criterion Relative Value of Farmland To Be Converted (Scale of 0 to 100 Points)		55			
PART VI (To be completed by Federal Agency) Site Assessment Criteria <i>(Criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5 b. For Corridor project use form NRCS-CPA-106)</i>		Maximum Points	Site A	Site B	Site C
1. Area In Non-urban Use		(15)	7		
2. Perimeter In Non-urban Use		(10)	8		
3. Percent Of Site Being Farmed		(20)	0		
4. Protection Provided By State and Local Government		(20)	20		
5. Distance From Urban Built-up Area		(15)	0		
6. Distance To Urban Support Services		(15)	0		
7. Size Of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average		(10)	0		
8. Creation Of Non-farmable Farmland		(10)	0		
9. Availability Of Farm Support Services		(5)	5		
10. On-Farm Investments		(20)	10		
11. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services		(10)	0		
12. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use		(10)	5		
TOTAL SITE ASSESSMENT POINTS		160	55		
PART VII (To be completed by Federal Agency)					
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)		100	0		
Total Site Assessment (From Part VI above or local site assessment)		160	55		
TOTAL POINTS (Total of above 2 lines)		260	55		
Site Selected: A		Date Of Selection 7/31/2017		Was A Local Site Assessment Used? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Reason For Selection: The City of El Centro proposes to extend Imperial Avenue from Interstate 8 (I-8) south to McCabe Road within the City of El Centro. The single alignment under consideration was selected for this road extension project.					
Name of Federal agency representative completing this form: Michelle Blake					Date: 7/31/2017

STEPS IN THE PROCESSING THE FARMLAND AND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FORM

- Step 1 - Federal agencies (or Federally funded projects) involved in proposed projects that may convert farmland, as defined in the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) to nonagricultural uses, will initially complete Parts I and III of the form. For Corridor type projects, the Federal agency shall use form NRCS-CPA-106 in place of form AD-1006. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) process may also be accessed by visiting the FPPA website, <http://fppa.nrcs.usda.gov/lesa/>.
- Step 2 - Originator (Federal Agency) will send one original copy of the form together with appropriate scaled maps indicating location(s) of project site(s), to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) local Field Office or USDA Service Center and retain a copy for their files. (NRCS has offices in most counties in the U.S. The USDA Office Information Locator may be found at http://offices.usda.gov/scripts/ndISAPI.dll/oip_public/USA_map, or the offices can usually be found in the Phone Book under U.S. Government, Department of Agriculture. A list of field offices is available from the NRCS State Conservationist and State Office in each State.)
- Step 3 - NRCS will, within 10 working days after receipt of the completed form, make a determination as to whether the site(s) of the proposed project contains prime, unique, statewide or local important farmland. (When a site visit or land evaluation system design is needed, NRCS will respond within 30 working days.
- Step 4 - For sites where farmland covered by the FPPA will be converted by the proposed project, NRCS will complete Parts II, IV and V of the form.
- Step 5 - NRCS will return the original copy of the form to the Federal agency involved in the project, and retain a file copy for NRCS records.
- Step 6 - The Federal agency involved in the proposed project will complete Parts VI and VII of the form and return the form with the final selected site to the servicing NRCS office.
- Step 7 - The Federal agency providing financial or technical assistance to the proposed project will make a determination as to whether the proposed conversion is consistent with the FPPA.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING FORM

(For Federal Agency)

Part I: When completing the "County and State" questions, list all the local governments that are responsible for local land use controls where site(s) are to be evaluated.

Part III: When completing item B (Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly), include the following:

1. Acres not being directly converted but that would no longer be capable of being farmed after the conversion, because the conversion would restrict access to them or other major change in the ability to use the land for agriculture.
2. Acres planned to receive services from an infrastructure project as indicated in the project justification (e.g. highways, utilities planned build out capacity) that will cause a direct conversion.

Part VI: Do not complete Part VI using the standard format if a State or Local site assessment is used. With local and NRCS assistance, use the local Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA).

1. Assign the maximum points for each site assessment criterion as shown in § 658.5(b) of CFR. In cases of corridor-type project such as transportation, power line and flood control, criteria #5 and #6 will not apply and will, be weighted zero, however, criterion #8 will be weighed a maximum of 25 points and criterion #11 a maximum of 25 points.
2. Federal agencies may assign relative weights among the 12 site assessment criteria other than those shown on the FPPA rule after submitting individual agency FPPA policy for review and comment to NRCS. In all cases where other weights are assigned, relative adjustments must be made to maintain the maximum total points at 160. For project sites where the total points equal or exceed 160, consider alternative actions, as appropriate, that could reduce adverse impacts (e.g. Alternative Sites, Modifications or Mitigation).

Part VII: In computing the "Total Site Assessment Points" where a State or local site assessment is used and the total maximum number of points is other than 160, convert the site assessment points to a base of 160.

Example: if the Site Assessment maximum is 200 points, and the alternative Site "A" is rated 180 points:

$$\frac{\text{Total points assigned Site A}}{\text{Maximum points possible}} = \frac{180}{200} \times 160 = 144 \text{ points for Site A}$$

For assistance in completing this form or FPPA process, contact the local NRCS Field Office or USDA Service Center.

NRCS employees, consult the FPPA Manual and/or policy for additional instructions to complete the AD-1006 form.

The Imperial Avenue Extension Project would extend Imperial Avenue from I-8 to McCabe Road. The proposed one-mile roadway extension would have a 110-foot Right-of-Way to accommodate a 4-lane roadway with a 14-foot median, a 5.5-foot sidewalk, and 6.5-foot native backing on both sides. It is anticipated the project will be phased, and preliminary phasing consists of the following:

- Phase I: 1-8 to Wake Avenue
- Phase II: Wake Avenue to Dannenberg Avenue
- Phase III: Dannenberg Avenue to Valleyview Avenue
- Phase IV: Valleyview Avenue to McCabe Road

The project would also construct a two-lane roadway segment to connect the separated pieces of Wake Avenue located west and east of the project site. Similarly, the project would construct a two-lane roadway segment to connect to the portion of Dannenberg road located east of the project. The sidewalk and native backing on the southbound side of the proposed roadway corridor would cover the existing Date Drain that runs parallel along the entire western edge of the project site. The covered Date Drain would continue to convey water beneath the project improvements.

The 37.82-acre project site is located south of I-8 and north of McCabe Road in the southern portion of the City of El Centro, Imperial County, California. The alignment of the proposed roadway extension follows the same linear pathway as the existing portion of Imperial Avenue north of I-8. The project site is relatively flat, and consists primarily of a narrow north-south corridor of vacant land with sparse vegetation. A small portion of land within the southernmost segment of this corridor along the eastern project boundary is currently in agricultural production. The project site also includes a paved segment of Wake Avenue and vacant land with sparse vegetation that would be developed for extensions of Wake Avenue and Dannenberg Road.

The project site is primarily surrounded by existing residential development, active farmland, and agricultural drains. Existing residential development is located northwest of the future intersection of Imperial Avenue and Wake Avenue. All other land west of the project site south of the future intersection of Imperial Avenue and Wake Avenue to the southern terminus consists of active farmland. The Date Drain, which consists of an earthen agricultural drain, runs parallel along the entire western edge of the proposed Imperial Avenue extension. Existing residential development is located east of the project site from the northern terminus to Dannenberg Road. An unused park and a water treatment plant are located east of the project south of the future intersection with Dannenberg Road, followed by additional existing residential development along the eastern project boundary south to Valleyview Avenue. Land east of the project site from Valleyview Avenue to the southern terminus consists of active farmland. The Dahlia Lateral, which consists of a concrete lined agricultural drain, runs parallel along the eastern edge of the proposed Imperial Avenue extension from Dannenberg Road to McCabe Road. Land north of the project site consists of an elevated roadway berm supporting I-8, while land to the south consists of active farmland.

1. How much land is in nonurban use within a radius of 1.0 mile from where the project is intended?
 - More than 90 percent? 15 points
 - 90 to 20 percent? 14 to 1 point(s)
 - Less than 20 percent? 0 points

Figure 2 shows that 52 percent of land within a radius of 1.0 mile is in nonurban use.

2. How much of the perimeter of the site borders on land in nonurban use?
 - More than 90 percent? 10 points
 - 90 to 20 percent? 9 to 1 point(s)
 - Less than 20 percent? 0 points

Figure 3 shows that 76 percent of the perimeter of the site borders are in nonurban use.

3. How much of the site has been farmed (managed for a scheduled harvest or timber activity) more than 5 of the last 10 years?
 - More than 90 percent? 20 points
 - 90 to 20 percent? 19 to 1 points(s)
 - Less than 20 percent? 0 points

Figure 4 shows that the project would impact 3.03 acres of active farmland. The remaining land categorized as farmland by the FMMP within the project site has not been in active cultivation for the last ten years and has either been used as an unofficial dirt road or has been vacant land.

4. Is the site subject to State or unit of local government policies or programs to protect farmland or covered by private programs to protect farmland?
 - Site is protected? 20 points
 - Site is not protected? 0 points

The project site is located within the jurisdictions of the City of El Centro and Imperial County. Both jurisdictions have general plan policies protecting farmland.

5. How close is the site to an urban built-up area?
 - The site is 2 miles or more from an urban built-up area? 15 points
 - The site is more than 1 mile but less than 2 miles from an urban built-up area? 10 points
 - The site is less than 1 mile from, but is not adjacent to an urban built-up area? 5 points
 - The site is adjacent to an urban built-up area? 0 points

The project site is located adjacent to residential development northwest of the future intersection of Imperial Avenue and Wake Avenue and along the eastern project boundary from Manuel Ortiz Avenue to Valleyview Avenue.

6. How close is the site to water lines, sewer lines and/or other local facilities and services whose capacities and design would promote nonagricultural use?
 - None of the services exist nearer than 3 miles from the site? 15 points
 - Some of the services exist more than 1 but less than 3 miles from the site? 10 points
 - All of the services exist within 1/2 mile of the site? 0 points

Water lines, sewer lines, electrical lines, and other infrastructure are present within the residential development northwest of the future intersection of Imperial Avenue and Wake Avenue and along the eastern project boundary from Manuel Ortiz Avenue to Valleyview Avenue.

7. Is the farm unit(s) containing the site (before the project) as large as the average-size farming unit in the county? (Average farm sizes in each county are available from the NRCS field offices in each State. Data are from the latest available Census of Agriculture, Acreage of Farm Units in Operation with \$1,000 or more in sales.)
 - As large or larger? 10 points
 - Below average? Deduct 1 point for each 5 percent below the average, down to 0 points if 50 percent or more below average? 9 to 0 points

USDA 2012 Census determined that the average farm size in Imperial County is 1,125 acres. The existing farms adjacent to the project site are more than 50 percent smaller than the average farm in Imperial County.

8. If this site is chosen for the project, how much of the remaining land on the farm will become nonfarmable because of interference with land patterns?
 - Acreage equal to more than 25 percent of acres directly converted by the project? 10 points
 - Acreage equal to between 25 and 5 percent of the acres directly converted by the project? 9 to 1 point(s)
 - Acreage equal to less than 5 percent of the acres directly converted by the project? 0 points

Partial right of way acquisitions from existing farmland would be limited to small strips of land at the parcel boundary that would not preclude future agricultural production on the properties. None of the remaining land on the farm will become nonfarmable because of interference with land patterns.

9. Does the site have available adequate supply of farm support services and markets, i.e., farm suppliers, equipment dealers, processing and storage facilities and farmer's markets?
 - All required services are available? 5 points
 - Some required services are available? 4 to 1 point(s)
 - No required services are available? 0 points

Agriculture is an important and developed industry within Imperial County and provides the required farm support services for active farmland adjacent to the project site.

10. Does the site have substantial and well-maintained on-farm investments such as barns, other storage buildings, fruit trees and vines, field terraces, drainage, irrigation, waterways, or other soil and water conservation measures?

- High amount of on-farm investment? 20 points
- Moderate amount of on-farm investment? 19 to 1 point(s)
- No on-farm investment? 0 points

Active farmland surrounding the project site has farm investment such as drainage, irrigation, and canals, but does not have other investment such as barns or storage buildings.

11. Would the project at this site, by converting farmland to nonagricultural use, reduce the demand for farm support services so as to jeopardize the continued existence of these support services and thus, the viability of the farms remaining in the area?

- Substantial reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted? 10 points
 - Some reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted? 9 to 1 point(s)
 - No significant reduction in demand for support services if the site is converted? 0 points
- Agriculture is an important and developed industry within Imperial County, and the loss of 3.03 acres of active farmland would not reduce the demand for farm support services in the area.*

12. Is the kind and intensity of the proposed use of the site sufficiently incompatible with agriculture that it is likely to contribute to the eventual conversion of surrounding farmland to nonagricultural use?

- Proposed project is incompatible with existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland? 10 points
- Proposed project is tolerable to existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland? 9 to 1 point(s)
- Proposed project is fully compatible with existing agricultural use of surrounding farmland? 0 points

As shown by the presence of active farmland adjacent to major roadways throughout Imperial County, the proposed roadway extension is tolerable to existing agricultural use. Active farmland is located immediately adjacent to long stretches of Interstate 8 and McCabe Road, which shows that active farmland located east and west of the proposed extension of Imperial Avenue could continue with cultivation adjacent to a major roadway. Partial right of way acquisitions from adjacent parcels categorized as farmland by the FMMP would be limited to small strips of land at the parcel boundary that would not preclude future agricultural production on the properties.

Future growth is anticipated in the area surrounding the project site that could convert active farmland to other uses. Implementation of the project would provide improved circulation access that would support development of parcels surrounding the project anticipated in the General Plan. However, the project has been designed to redress existing traffic network deficiencies, and therefore, would not create new opportunities for growth beyond what is already anticipated in the General Plan.

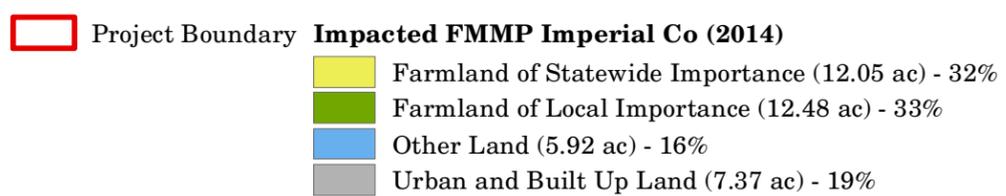
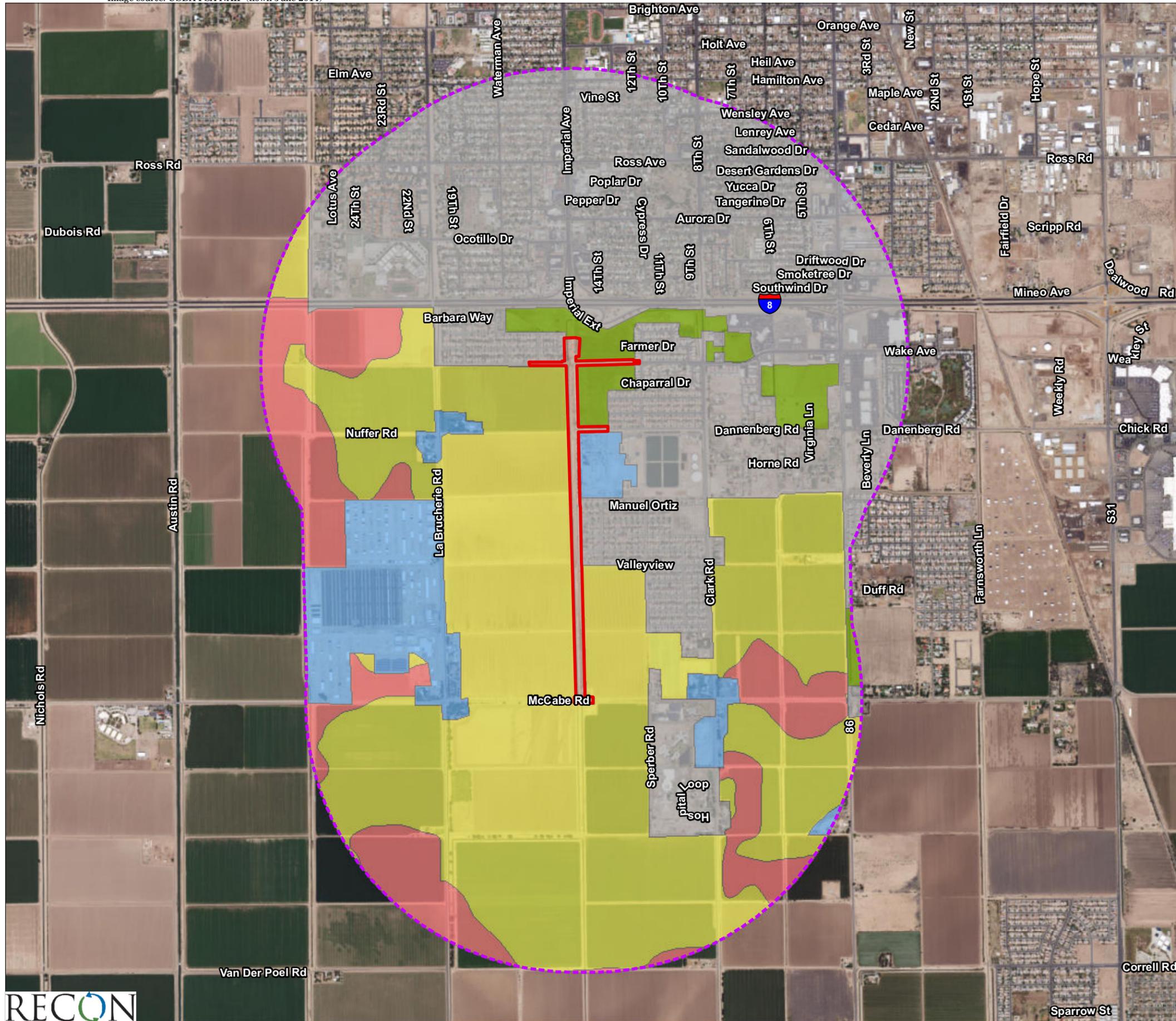


FIGURE 1
Farmland Impacts



- Project Boundary
- 1-mi Buffer
- FMMP Imperial Co (2014)**
- Prime Farmland (397 ac) - 10%
- Farmland of Statewide Importance (1,610 ac) - 39%
- Farmland of Local Importance (123 ac) - 3%
- Other Land (286 ac) - 7%
- Urban and Built Up Land (1,661 ac) - 41%



FIGURE 2

Existing Farmland



Project Perimeter

- Urban and Built Up Land - 15%
- Farmland of Local Importance - 24%
- Farmland of Statewide Importance - 52%
- Other Land - 9%



FIGURE 3
Perimeter Uses

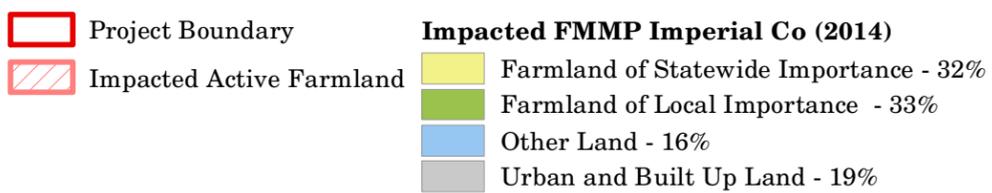


FIGURE 4
Impacted Active Farmland

Appendix B Scope Decrease for the Imperial Avenue Extension Project in the City of El Centro

Memorandum

*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.*

To: KEVIN HOVEY, Chief
District 11 Environmental Analysis Branch D

Date: March 21, 2018

File: STPL-5169(049)
City of El Centro
Imperial Ave Extension

From: MICHELLE BLAKE
Associate Environmental Planner
District 11 Environmental Analysis Branch D

Subject: **SCOPE DECREASE FOR THE IMPERIAL AVENUE EXTENSION PROJECT IN THE CITY OF EL CENTRO**

The City of El Centro has down-scoped the proposed Imperial Avenue Extension project from the original scope of work analyzed in the Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form AD-1006. The City now proposes to build four through traffic travel lanes with curb/cutter/sidewalk on both sides of Imperial Avenue between Wake Avenue and Interstate 8, and build a two-lane facility from Wake Avenue to McCabe Road. The two-lane facility south of Wake Avenue will be constructed on the east half of the ultimate ROW, and only the east half of ROW will be purchased at this time. This would result in curb/gutter/sidewalk only on the east side of the new two-lane road. The modified scope reduces impacts to agricultural fields located on the west side of the project site. The reduction in the project scope does not affect the original farmland analysis findings, which concluded that there would be no adverse impacts to farmland and mitigation was not required.

Appendix C References and Contacts

California Department of Conservation (CDC)

2017 Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program.

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

2017 Imperial County Economic Forecast. Accessed March 22, 2018 at http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/eab/socio_economic_files/2017/Imperial.pdf

El Centro, City of

2004 General Plan. February.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

2017 Letter from Vincent P. Mammano, Division Administrator, FHWA, to Hasan Ikhata, Executive Director, SCAG, and Bruce de Terra, California Department of Transportation. Subject: Conformity Determination for SCAG 2016 RTP/SCS Amendment No. 1 and 2017 FTIP Consistency Amendment No. 17-03 Approval. Dated May 12, 2017.

Linscott, Law & Greenspan (LLG)

2018 Transportation Analysis, Imperial Avenue Extension. LLG Ref. 3-16-2567. March.

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

2017 The 2016 – 2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. Proposed Final Amendment #1. April.

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2015 General Plan. October.

U.S. Census Bureau

2010 2010 Census.