

# Chapter 1. Introduction

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The proposed project will widen and improve approximately 2.6 miles of State Route 32 (SR 32) (encompassing approximately 45 acres), beginning at the southbound State Route 99 (SR 99) ramps at the west end of the project corridor and extending east past Yosemite Drive (**Figures 1 and 2**). State Route 32 will be widened from two to three lanes in each direction from the east side of the SR 99 interchange to just east of Fir Street. The roadway will then be widened from two to four lanes (two in each direction) from Fir Street to 1,400 ft east of Yosemite Drive, where the roadway width will transition down from four lanes to the existing two lanes.

There are five intersections along the project corridor: Fir Street, Forest Avenue, El Monte Avenue, Bruce Road, and Yosemite Drive. In addition, there are four intersections associated with the SR 99 Interchange.

## 1.1 Project History

### 1.1.1 *Project Purpose*

The purpose of the proposed project is to accommodate additional capacity needed as a result of approved and planned development on and near the SR 32 corridor between SR 99 and 1,400 feet past Yosemite Drive. The widening of SR 32 is consistent with the City's General Plan and will be in accordance with Caltrans' Traffic Concept Report with its next update.

### 1.1.2 *Project Need*

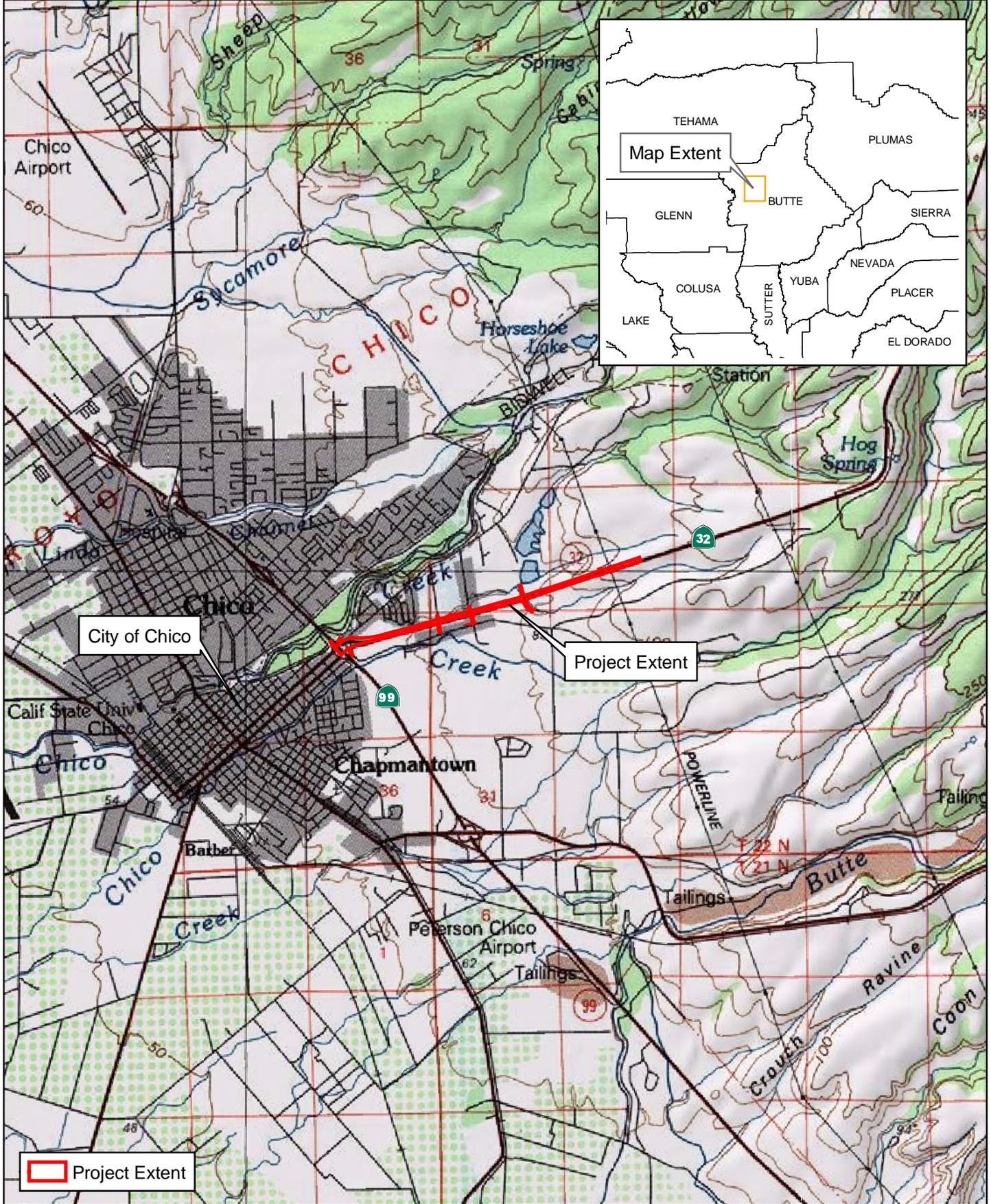
The project is needed because local growth in the area is anticipated to increase congestion due to inadequate capacity on SR 32. There are existing operational and safety concerns at the SR 99/SR 32 Interchange, which can be expected to be impacted if the intersections of the two state highway facilities are not looked at concurrently. This improvement will also help maintain and improve connectivity between the neighborhoods on either side of SR 32. Without the proposed project, the congestion and safety concerns will increase and substantially degrade the operations of SR 32 and SR 99.

### 1.1.3 *Project Characteristics*

The proposed project will widen and improve approximately 2.6 miles of SR 32, beginning at the southbound SR 99 ramps at the west end of the project corridor and extending east past Yosemite Drive. State Route 32 will be widened from two to three lanes in each direction from the east side of the SR 99 interchange to just east of Fir Street. The roadway will then be widened from two to four lanes (two in each direction) from Fir Street to 1,400 ft east of Yosemite Drive, where the roadway width will transition down from four lanes to the existing two lanes.

Highway 32 Widening

Location



Project Extent

Within sections 19, 20, 25, & 30 of  
T22N R1E, & T22N R2E, Butte County, CA.  
Chico USGS 7.5' Quad.  
Map Date: Aug. 10, 2006/Revised: July 7, 2006.

0 0.5 1 Miles



Figure 1.



--- Environmental Study Limit  
▭ Project Extent

↑ Project Extent derived from MTCO CAD,  
Butte County parcel right of way & proposed avoidance.  
Map Date: Aug. 10, 2006/Revised:

0 800 1,600 Feet



Figure 2.

State Route 32 is currently maintained by Caltrans. Following the completion of the project, Caltrans will continue to maintain the roadway, bridge, box culvert, and other drainage facilities. Any proposed soundwalls will either be maintained by the City of Chico or by Caltrans under a Maintenance Agreement with the City.

The project will consist of modifications to the ramp terminal intersections and the couplet at the SR 99/SR 32 interchange. The intersections of SR 32 with Forest Avenue, El Monte Avenue, Bruce Road, and Yosemite Drive will be improved to include turn pockets. The City and Caltrans are evaluating signalized intersection improvements (Alternative 1) or a roundabout at Bruce Road (Alternative 2). Both Alternatives have been evaluated and are included in the impacts section. The intersections of SR 32 with Fir Street and Yosemite Drive will be widened and new traffic signals will be installed. The signals at Forest Avenue and El Monte Avenue will be modified. The project includes construction of the south leg of the Yosemite Drive intersection.

For the widening portion between the SR 99 interchange and Fir Street, the roadway will consist of three lanes in each direction with outside shoulders and inside shoulders. For the segment east of Fir Street, the roadway will consist of two lanes in each direction with outside shoulders and inside shoulders. A grassy center median will be included from east of Fir Street to Bruce Road. East of Bruce Road, the median will transition to a paved section until the conform with the existing two lane roadway.

### ***Bridge and Culvert Design***

The existing structure at Dead Horse Slough (Bridge No. 12-0135) will be widened to the north to accommodate the additional traffic lanes and widened shoulders. The existing structure is a four span reinforced concrete slab that is 123.5 feet long and 32.5 feet wide. The structure will be widened by 49 feet; the new structure width will be 81.5 feet wide. The existing railings on the structure will be upgraded to current standards. The structure widening will be constructed in one phase, with the new bridge constructed to the north and joined to the existing structure with a closure pour. Both the existing and proposed abutments will be protected from scour with rock slope protection. A Location Hydraulic Study has been completed, and the existing bridge exceeds Caltrans freeboard requirements. If there is water present within the channel, dewatering will be required when the concrete is poured for the piles. However, the bridge will be constructed in the summer months when the channel will be dry.

The existing 6 ft x 8 ft box culvert on South Fork Dead Horse Slough just east of Bruce Road will either be lengthened or replaced to accommodate the roadway widening. An adjacent culvert may also be added.

East of the SR 99 interchange, the roadway will be drained with a series of roadside ditches and cross culverts running underneath the side street intersections. The roadside drainage east of the interchange will drain to Dead Horse Slough or South

Fork Dead Horse Slough.

### ***Soundwalls***

Soundwalls may be constructed within the Environmental Study Limit (ESL) for portions of the project. If constructed, the soundwalls will be located just inside the Caltrans right-of-way line on the north and south sides of the roadway where there are noise-sensitive receptors.

### ***Roundabout at Bruce Road***

In-lieu of intersection widening and a signal modification at SR32 and Bruce Road (Alternative 1), a two-lane roundabout with right turn bypass lanes is proposed (Alternative 2). The roundabout will operate as a standard dual lane roundabout. Right turn bypass lanes are proposed for the movements from eastbound SR32 to southbound Bruce Road, from southbound Bruce Road to westbound SR32, and from westbound SR32 to northbound Bruce Road.

### ***Trees***

Several trees will need to be removed to construct the project. In addition, there are a number of trees located on the south side of the roadway from Fir Street to Forest Avenue that the City would like to remain.

### ***Right-of-Way***

The existing right-of-way through the project corridor is approximately 142 feet wide. The majority of the proposed improvements will be within this existing right-of-way. Right-of-way acquisition may be necessary at the SR 32/Bruce Road intersection to accommodate the widening and box culvert modifications and intersection improvements.

### ***Project Schedule***

Construction is set to begin in July of 2008 and will end in July of 2009. The project will require two seasons to be completed.

#### ***1.1.4 Construction Information and Traffic Handling***

##### ***Extent of Ground Disturbing Construction Activity***

The maximum depth of construction activity varies from approximately 3 to 4 feet or less for the road construction activity, to approximately 8 to 10 feet for any utility relocation, landscaping and traffic signal and lighting work. The ground disturbance associated with the proposed new bridge at Dead Horse Slough will require the construction of footings and possibly pile foundations; the depth of construction activity for this work is estimated at 20 to 30 feet deep.

##### ***Equipment Storage / Vehicle Storage / Staging Areas***

Two potential optional construction staging areas have been identified along the project corridor at the existing park-and-ride lots at the west end of the project corridor at Fir Street. All equipment and material staging for the project will occur

within these areas, within existing public right-of-way, or on private property subject to landowner approval.

Due to the environmental sensitivities of the project corridor (i.e., wetlands and special-status species), any additional staging areas proposed by the contractor on land that is currently undeveloped may require separate environmental review.

*Construction Timing and Traffic Handling*

The contractor will be required to prepare a traffic management plan and submit it to Caltrans and the City for review and approval prior to commencement of construction. No road closures or nighttime work is anticipated.

Road construction activities will include standard widening and road rehabilitation practices. Temporary access controls during road construction may require the use of a one-way reversible lane controlled by flaggers. Only temporary minor delays are anticipated. Construction contractors will schedule construction operations so that conflicts with traffic on SR 32 are minimized.

Bridge construction and culvert activities in Dead Horse Slough will occur during the summer months. Road and bridge construction is anticipated to begin in 2008.