July 31, 2007

Subject: Supplemental Notice of Preparation for the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the Mid County Parkway Project, SCH#2004111103

Dear Responsible Agencies, Elected Officials, and Interested Parties:

Attached for your review and comment is the Supplemental Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the Mid County Parkway (MCP) Project. The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) is the Lead Agency for the proposed project.

Since November 2004, when the original NOP was issued for the proposed MCP project, the RCTC has been conducting engineering and environmental studies in support of the Draft EIR/EIS for the project. In addition, RCTC has also engaged in ongoing consultation with various public agencies and other interested parties. As a result of these technical studies and public consultation efforts, several refinements have been made to the suite of alternatives presented in the November 2004 NOP.

The purpose of this Supplemental NOP is to describe the refinements made to the suite of alternatives, solicit input regarding the scope and content of the analysis in the Draft EIR/EIS, and describe the probable environmental impacts that the Draft EIR/EIS will evaluate. Pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections 15060 and 15063, an Initial Study is not required and is not included with this NOP. Because federal environmental approval under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is also required, a joint EIR/EIS will be prepared. The Federal Highway Administration is the lead federal agency for the EIS.

The RCTC would appreciate your comments, suggestions, or concerns regarding potential environmental impacts related to the proposed project. The Web site (www.midcountyparkway.org) offers additional information about the project. Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. Please submit your comments by August 31, 2007. In your response, please note the primary contact person for your agency or organization. Written comments regarding the Supplemental NOP may be sent via regular mail or fax to the following:

Ms. Cathy Bechtel
Riverside County Transportation Commission
4080 Lemon Street, 3rd Floor
P.O. Box 12008
Riverside, CA 92502-2208
Fax: (951) 787-7920
Phone: (951) 787-7141
Thank you in advance for your comments. If you have any questions about the proposed project or the environmental review process, please contact Cathy Bechtel at (951) 787-7141.

Sincerely,

Eric Haley
Executive Director

Attachment: Supplemental Notice of Preparation for Mid County Parkway Draft EIR/EIS
SUPPLEMENTAL NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE
MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT
SCH #2004111103

INTRODUCTION
Since November 2004, when the original NOP (Notice of Preparation) was issued for the proposed Mid County Parkway (MCP) project, the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) has been conducting engineering and environmental studies in support of the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the project. In addition, RCTC has also engaged in ongoing consultation with various public agencies and other interested parties. As a result of these technical studies and public consultation efforts, several refinements have been made to the suite of alternatives presented in the November 2004 NOP.

This document is the Supplemental NOP of an EIR/EIS for the proposed MCP project from Interstate 15 (I-15) on the west to State Route 79 (SR-79) on the east within western Riverside County, California. The Supplemental NOP is being issued because of refinements made to the suite of alternatives: the elimination of Alternatives 2 and 3 that included a parkway north of Lake Mathews, rerouting a segment of two alternatives away from the Perris Dam, renumbering Alternative 8 to Alternative 1B (No Action/No Project General Plan Circulation Element conditions), and adding Alternative 9 (Far South Alternative). By issuing this Supplemental NOP, RCTC would like to solicit input from public agencies and other interested parties regarding the revised suite of alternatives prior to the release of the Draft EIR/EIS for public review.

Under the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the RCTC is the Lead Agency for environmental review of the proposed project and must evaluate the potentially significant environmental effects. The RCTC has determined that an EIR must be prepared to assess the proposed project’s effects on the environment, to identify potentially significant impacts, to identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate potentially significant environmental impacts, and to discuss potentially feasible alternatives to the project that may accomplish basic project objectives while lessening or eliminating any potential significant project impacts.

Since the proposed project is to be partially funded with federal transportation funds, environmental compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is also required. An EIS will be prepared for NEPA compliance. To ensure coordination between the NEPA and CEQA processes and to avoid duplication of effort, a joint CEQA/NEPA document will be prepared. The joint document will be an EIR/EIS (an EIR for CEQA and an EIS for NEPA). The purpose of the Supplemental NOP is to describe the refinements made to the suite of alternatives since the original NOP was issued in November 2004, describe the probable environmental effects of the project that will be evaluated in
the EIR/EIS, and solicit input regarding the scope of the analysis of the revised suite of alternatives to be included in the EIR/EIS.

BACKGROUND

The MCP project was identified as a key east-west regional transportation corridor as a result of several years of comprehensive land use and transportation planning in Riverside County through the Riverside County Integrated Project (RCIP). The RCIP is an unprecedented, multi-year planning effort to simultaneously prepare environmental, transportation, housing, and development guidelines for Riverside County for the first half of the twenty-first century. The purpose of the RCIP is to address the planning, environmental, and transportation issues that would result from the anticipated doubling of population in Riverside County, from 1.5 million residents currently to approximately 3.0 million by 2020. The RCIP includes three components: (1) a new General Plan for Riverside County, adopted on October 7, 2003; (2) a Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) for western Riverside County (approved by the County in June 2003 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in June 2004); and (3) the Community and Environmental Transportation Acceptability Process (CETAP). In addition, the RCIP Partnership Action Plan (September 2000) commits participating federal, State, and county governments to incorporate the western Riverside County Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) into all three RCIP planning efforts. The purpose of the SAMP is to provide for comprehensive aquatic resource protection and reasonable economic growth.

CETAP study efforts were jointly undertaken by the RCTC and the County of Riverside. CETAP includes the study of two intercounty corridors (Riverside County to Orange County and Riverside County to San Bernardino County) and two intra-county transportation corridors. The “internal” (intra-county) corridors included a north-south and an east-west study area. Tier 1 analyses and environmental documents were initiated for the two corridors in the fall of 2000. The purpose of the Tier 1 efforts was to select a preferred alternative and preserve needed right-of-way. A Draft Tier 1 EIR/EIS was prepared for the east-west (Hemet to Corona/Lake Elsinore [HCLE]) Corridor and circulated for public review in July 2002. The Draft EIR/EIS considered a suite of 14 “Build” alternatives that extended from San Jacinto/Hemet on the east to Corona/Lake Elsinore on the west. Several alternatives were variations of routes along Ramona Expressway and Calexico/El Sobrante Road, at the northwestern portion of the HCLE study area. Transportation analyses were conducted for these and other alternatives to the south, along portions of State Route 74 (SR-74), Domenigoni Parkway, Ethanac Road, and Newport Road.

The analyses indicated the alternative with the greatest transportation benefit was located along Ramona Expressway, Calexico Road, and El Sobrante Road, with a connection to I-15. This alternative demonstrated it best met traffic needs by providing the greatest benefits in terms of reductions in travel time, and congestion relief. In addition, public comments identified concerns regarding adverse impacts to existing communities for the portion of the alternatives located north of Lake Mathews. As a result of the information contained in the Draft Tier 1 EIR/EIS regarding transportation benefits and the community input received on the HCLE alternatives, the RCTC Board accepted a staff recommendation in June 2003 to proceed with the accelerated preparation of a project-level environmental document for an east-west alternative that included the Ramona Expressway/Calexico Road alignment located south of Lake Mathews. This action by the RCTC terminated the Tier 1 study efforts and began a focused, project-level study effort for the MCP project.
In 2005, RRTC and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) conducted a Value Analysis (VA) Study to determine whether there were additional alignment refinements that could more effectively and efficiently meet the project purpose and need. As a result of the VA Study, new information became available with regard to the practicability of some of the alternative alignments, as well as opportunities to further avoid or minimize adverse environmental impacts to existing habitat reserves, Section 404 and Section 4(f) resources, and existing communities. In addition, during this same period, the MCP engineering and environmental project team conducted engineering studies, environmental studies, field work, public scoping meetings, and traffic modeling for the MCP project. Based on these studies and analyses, RRTC considered and approved a refined set of seven alternatives to be evaluated in the Draft EIR/EIS, five "Build" alternatives, and two "No Action/No Project" alternatives. The refined set of alternatives eliminated Alternatives 2 and 3 that included a parkway north of Lake Mathews due to engineering feasibility issues, rerouted a segment of two alternatives away from the Perris Dam, renumbered Alternative 8 to Alternative 1B (No Action/No Project General Plan Circulation Element conditions), and added Alternative 9 (Far South Alternative), which avoids the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Reserve. No preferred alternative has been identified by the lead agencies.

The Circulation Element of the Riverside County General Plan currently identifies Ramona Expressway and Cajalco Road as future expressways of four to eight lanes, and realigns the portion of Cajalco Road south of Lake Mathews. The proposed MCP project executes the intent of the prior RRTC and County actions with regard to the HCLE Corridor and is consistent with the intent of the County’s Circulation Element, which recognizes that the decisions regarding the CETAP corridors will result in appropriate amendments to the General Plan.

The MCP project is consistent with Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) adopted 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which emphasizes the identification of long-range corridors. The internal east-west corridor is identified on the RTP map of User Fee-Backed Capacity Improvements.

**PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The goal of the proposed project is to provide a transportation facility that will effectively and efficiently accommodate regional east-west movement of people and goods between and through San Jacinto, Perris, and Corona within western Riverside County. More specifically, the project objectives are to provide a transportation facility that will:

- Provide increased capacity to support the forecast travel demand for the 2035 design year;
- Provide a limited access parkway;
- Provide roadway geometries to meet State highway design standards;
- Accommodate Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) National Network for oversized trucks;
- Provide a parkway that is compatible with a future multimodal transportation system.
SUMMARY PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is located in western Riverside County. Figure 1.1 depicts the proposed study area for the MCP project, the surrounding vicinity, and the regional location of the project. The study area is approximately 32 miles long and ranges from 1 to 4 miles in width. The alternatives to be addressed in the EIR/EIS are described below.

The MCP project refined suite of alternatives includes two No Project/No Action alternatives (Alternatives 1A and 1B) and five "Build" alternatives (Alternatives 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9). Many of the alternatives share common segments. Maps of the alternatives are provided in Attachment A.

Alternative 1A: No Project/No Action—Existing Ground Conditions

Alternative 1A represents 2035 traffic on the planned street network except for future improvements to Cajalco Road and Ramona Expressway, which would remain as they exist today. Construction of the MCP project would not be implemented with the No Project/No Action Alternative 1A. The future east-west traffic described in the study area would be served by the existing Cajalco Road and El Sobrante Road between I-15 and Interstate 215 (I-215) and by the existing Ramona Expressway between I-215 and SR-79. This alternative assumes 2035 land use conditions and implementation of planned improvements to the regional and local circulation system as accounted for in the adopted Riverside County General Plan (2003), RRTC’s Measure A program, and other adopted plans and policies.

Alternative 1B: No Project/No Action—General Plan Circulation Element Conditions

Alternative 1B represents 2035 traffic levels on the planned street network, according to the Circulation Element of the Riverside County General Plan. Construction of the MCP project would not be implemented with No Project/No Action Alternative 1B. This alternative is the same as Alternative 1A but includes the implementation of Cajalco Road and Ramona Expressway consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element.

Alternative 4: South of Lake Mathews/North Perris

Alternative 4 is a six- to eight-lane limited access parkway alternative. Alternative 4 is located south of Lake Mathews and follows a northerly alignment through Perris. This alternative would be located south of the existing Cajalco Road west of Lake Mathews Drive and located north of Ramona Expressway from I-215 to the Perris Drain, from where it follows the Perris Drain on an elevated structure southerly to Placentia Avenue. From that point, Alternative 4 continues east through the McCanna Hills, where it follows the Ramona Expressway. Alternative 4 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I-15, I-215, and SR-79.
Legend

- Mid County Parkway Study Area


Project Vicinity and Study Area

KP 0.0/51.0 (PM 0.0/31.7) EA 08-0F3200

I:\JCV531\GIS_Final\NOP\Fig1.1_StudyArea_061407.mxd (8/1/2007)
Alternative 5: South of Lake Mathews/South Perris

Alternative 5 is a six- to eight-lane limited access parkway alternative. Alternative 5 is located south of Lake Mathews and follows a southerly alignment through Perris. This alternative is located south of the existing Cajalco Road west of Lake Mathews Drive and is located south of Ramona Expressway from I-215 (following Rider Street and Placentia Avenue) to just west of Antelope Road. Alternative 5 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I-15, I-215, and SR-79.

Alternative 6: General Plan/North and South of Lake Mathews and North Perris

Alternative 6 involves the implementation of arterial improvements included in the Riverside County General Plan, including a six-lane arterial north of Lake Mathews and a four-lane limited access expressway south of Lake Mathews, west of El Sobrante Road, and a new six- to eight-lane limited access parkway east of El Sobrante Road. This alternative is the same as Alternative 4 described above, east of El Sobrante Road. The proposed arterial street improvements north and south of Lake Mathews are consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element and generally follow the alignments shown in the General Plan.

Alternative 7: General Plan/North and South of Lake Mathews and South Perris

Alternative 7 involves the implementation of arterial improvements included in the Riverside County General Plan, including a six-lane arterial north of Lake Mathews, a four-lane limited-access expressway south of Lake Mathews, west of El Sobrante Road, and a new six- to eight-lane limited access parkway east of El Sobrante Road. This alternative is the same as Alternative 5 described above, east of El Sobrante Road. The proposed arterial street improvements north and south of Lake Mathews are consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element and generally follow the alignments shown in the General Plan.

Alternative 9: Far South/Placentia Avenue

Alternative 9 is a four- to six-lane controlled access parkway from the I-15 interchange to Old Elsinore Road, south of both Lake Mathews and Mead Valley. The alternative is aligned south of Metropolitan HCP Reserve lands and traverses the Gaviilan Hills area. From Old Elsinore Road to the I-215 interchange, Alternative 9 is a six- to eight-lane controlled access parkway. East of I-215, Alternative 9 follows Placentia Avenue; east of Evans Road, it follows a common alignment with Alternatives 4–7 through McCanna Hills and along the Ramona Expressway. Alternative 9 is a six- to eight-lane controlled-access parkway between I-215 and SR-79. Alternative 9 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I-15, I-215, and SR-79.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

This section discusses the environmental review process necessary for the completion of the MCP EIR/EIS. Since RCTC has committed to prepare an EIR/EIS in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15060 and 15063, an Initial Study has not been completed for this NOP. This NOP contains a description of the environmental issues and analysis proposed to be provided in the EIR/EIS.
The EIR/EIS will assess potential project-related, indirect, and cumulative impacts anticipated to result from implementation of the project, and will include all potentially feasible mitigation measures that could reduce these impacts. The EIR/EIS is intended to provide the necessary CEQA and NEPA clearance for implementation of the project.

The CEQA Guidelines require preparation of objective analysis and documentation to inform decision makers, the general public, and responsible agencies of the direct and indirect environmental effects of a proposed action, to provide mitigation measures that reduce or eliminate potential adverse impacts, and to identify and evaluate alternatives to the proposed project. RCTC will be the Lead Agency for CEQA; potential Responsible and Trustee Agencies are listed in Table A. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is the lead agency for preparation of the EIS pursuant to NEPA. After its publication, the Draft EIR/EIS will be available for public review and comment, and a public hearing will take place. After all comments have been responded to, RCTC may certify the Final EIR and select a preferred alternative. Following this action by the RCTC Board of Directors, RCTC and Caltrans will request FHWA’s approval of the Final EIS and issuance of a Record of Decision. Once the NEPA and CEQA processes are complete, design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction of the MCP project can proceed.

PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The following explanation of probable environmental effects of the MCP project is provided to help guide the analysis in the forthcoming EIR/EIS document and to provide information to the public and agencies reviewing this NOP. As noted previously, environmental technical studies were initiated in 2004 concurrent with the issuance of the original NOP.

Air Quality

Regional and local air quality may be affected by the project. Regional emissions will be evaluated to determine if implementation of the proposed project would result in any exceedance of State and federal ambient air quality standards. The air quality analysis will discuss both short-term impacts resulting from construction, as well as long-term impacts resulting from project operation. The analysis will also address whether the proposed improvements would exceed any thresholds of significance established by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). A carbon monoxide (CO) hot spot analysis, PM10 and PM2.5 analysis, and Mobile Source Air Toxins (MSAT) analysis will also be conducted, and the results will be included in the EIR/EIS. Mitigation measures for air quality impacts during construction will be identified.

Biological Resources

Sensitive biological resources, such as plant life, wildlife, and wildlife habitat may be impacted by the MCP project. Potential impacts include direct loss of habitat from grading or other construction activities, direct loss of animals and plants by project construction, loss or disruption of wildlife movement corridors, and habitat fragmentation.
### Table A: Potential Responsible and Trustee Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Permit/Approval</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)</td>
<td>Section 7 consultation for Threatened and Endangered Species Concur on RCTC’s MSHCP Consistency Determination Concurrency on Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation (DBESP) Approval of amendment to El Sobrante Landfill Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (USA Waste is permitted) Consult with Corps on Section 404 permit</td>
<td>To be conducted following identification of a Preferred Alternative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)</td>
<td>Section 404 Permit for filling or dredging waters of the United States</td>
<td>To be submitted following identification of a Preferred Alternative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)</td>
<td>Section 1602 Agreement for Streambed Alteration Concur on RCTC’s MSHCP Consistency Determination Approval of amendment to El Sobrante Landfill Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (USA Waste is permitted)</td>
<td>Application to be submitted prior to construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)</td>
<td>Encroachment Permit for Construction within State highway right-of-way</td>
<td>Application to be submitted prior to construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Water Resources Control Board</td>
<td>Water Discharge Permit, approval of Notice of Intent to comply with General Construction Activity NPDES Permit</td>
<td>Application to be submitted prior to construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA)</td>
<td>Concur on RCTC’s MSHCP Consistency Determination</td>
<td>To be conducted following identification of a Preferred Alternative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County of Riverside, Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency (RCHCA)</td>
<td>Stephens’ kangaroo rat (SKR) Reserve HCP Consistency finding</td>
<td>To be conducted following identification of a Preferred Alternative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Water Quality Control Board 8, Santa Ana Region</td>
<td>Section 401 Water Quality certification</td>
<td>Section 401 application to be submitted following identification of a Preferred Alternative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County of Riverside, City of Corona, City of Perris, and City of San Jacinto</td>
<td>Freeway Agreement with Caltrans should the MCP be adopted as a State highway by the California Transportation Commission Approval of encroachment permits and street construction permits, street closures and rerouting, and associated improvements in the public rights-of-way</td>
<td>Actions/permits would be issued prior to start of construction</td>
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<td>Agency</td>
<td>Permit/Approval</td>
<td>Status</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Riverside County Flood Control District (RCFCD)</td>
<td>Erosion control permits for improvements affecting RCFCD facilities</td>
<td>Application(s) to be submitted prior to construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Water District of Southern California</td>
<td>Lake Mathews Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Amendment for Alternatives (4-7)</td>
<td>To be determined after the identification of a Preferred Alternative</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Information on biological resources from the approved MSHCP for western Riverside County will be included in the MCP project EIR/EIS as appropriate. Information from the Lake Mathews MSHCP, the Stephens' kangaroo rat HCP, and the El Sobrante Landfill HCP will also be included. The potential effects of the project on biological resources will be analyzed and documented in a Natural Environment Study (NES) that will be prepared in a manner consistent with Caltrans guidelines. The analysis will be based on a literature review and field surveys of sensitive plant species, small mammals, birds (including riparian birds and burrowing owls), jurisdictional waters, fairy shrimp, wildlife movement, and habitat connectivity. Focused species surveys will be conducted as required by the western Riverside County MSHCP. Consistency with the western Riverside County MSHCP and other applicable HCPs will be addressed in the EIR/EIS.

**Cultural Resources**

The proposed alternatives have the potential to affect both prehistoric and historic cultural resources. Potential impacts include direct loss of resources from grading or other construction activities, as well as indirect effects resulting from construction of the new transportation facilities that may affect the historical context of a particular resource. A records search has been conducted through the Archaeological Information Center at University of California Riverside to determine the location of known archaeological sites and any prehistoric resources that are listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Because the project requires clearance under NEPA, the EIR/EIS will include documentation of the project’s compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Cultural resource studies will include records searches for each alternative, field surveys of previously unsurveyed areas, testing of sites as needed to determine significance, and evaluation of historic properties.

**Floodplain Evaluation**

The proposed project may affect floodplains, particularly for the San Jacinto River and Temescal Wash. The existing floodplain setting will be documented in the EIR/EIS along with an evaluation of potential floodplain impacts and encroachments. The determination of any affected floodplains will be based on the latest available Flood Insurance Rate Maps for incorporated and unincorporated areas of Riverside County. Potential impacts could include loss of beneficial floodplain values resulting from grading or other construction activities, as well as increased exposure of humans to floodplain risk.
Hazardous Waste

A hazardous waste Initial Site Assessment (ISA) will be prepared for the MCP project. A records search of agency databases will be conducted to determine whether the proposed project would impact known hazardous waste sites. Field surveys will be conducted as necessary to determine the potential presence of unknown hazardous wastes within the corridor that could be impacted by construction of the proposed corridor improvements. Potential hazardous waste impacts could occur from either soil or groundwater contamination that exists within properties to be acquired for the improvements, or where contamination on an adjacent property would pose a health risk to construction workers.

Noise

Existing noise levels in the vicinity of the MCP project will be documented in the EIR/EIS. A noise study will be conducted to evaluate projected noise levels resulting from construction and operation of the proposed project. The study will focus on identifying potential noise impacts to sensitive receptors, such as residential uses, exterior areas of commercial uses, hospitals, libraries, and parks. Potential noise impacts include increased noise exposure resulting from increased vehicular traffic adjacent to sensitive receptors. Construction impacts could result from noise generated by construction equipment such as graders and pile drivers.

Parks/Recreation and Section 4(f) Resources

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (now at 49 USC 303) specifies that publicly-owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or any significant historic site may not be used for projects that use federal funds unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land. The MCP project will incorporate all possible planning to minimize harm to 4(f) lands. The EIR/EIS will include an evaluation of potential impacts to 4(f) resources that could result from implementation of the MCP project.

Community Impacts (including Environmental Justice and Farmlands)

A Community Impact Assessment will be prepared for the MCP project that will address the potential community and socioeconomic impacts of the proposed MCP project. The analysis will be conducted to determine potential socioeconomic impacts of the project, with an emphasis on compliance with Executive Order 12898 regarding Environmental Justice. The Community Impact Assessment will provide a description of existing land use, housing, employment, and population conditions in the vicinity of the project alternatives. The impact analysis will address the potential impacts on the residential population and local business community within the project impact area for each alternative, including land use compatibility impacts associated with the project. A draft Relocation Impact Report will be prepared to document displacements of homes and businesses. The land use analysis will assess the impacts of each alternative on Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Discussions on growth, Environmental Justice, right-of-way displacements, relocation assistance, business impacts, neighborhood cohesion, and fiscal impacts (i.e., estimated loss of property tax and sales tax revenues) will be included in the EIR/EIS. The analysis shall also address consistency with relevant local, regional, and state regulations and plans.
Visual

Implementation of the MCP project may change the visual character and quality of the project area. A visual analysis will be included in the EIR/EIS to address how the project will affect the existing visual setting. The existing visual characteristics of the area surrounding each project alternative will be documented and significant visual resources will be identified in the analysis. Key issues to be considered in this analysis are the profile of the project (elevated, at-grade, or depressed), removal of vegetation (trees, etc.), the alteration of significant land forms, improvements to existing transportation facilities, and the construction of new facilities where none presently exist. Photographs from viewpoints near the project alternatives will be used to prepare view simulations to evaluate the potential visual impacts. Impacts shall be assessed in terms of views from the project and views of the project by sensitive viewers.

Water Resources

The MCP project will be evaluated with respect to its potential effect on waters of the U.S. and State. The evaluation will initially focus on opportunities to avoid impacts to these waters, where feasible, by shifting alignments or applying project design features (e.g., using bridges to span channels rather than using culverts). The EIR/EIS will describe impacts to those water resources that cannot be avoided, and will include mitigation measures to reduce impacts on those resources. Potential impacts to water resources include direct impacts such as dredging or filling of streams, rivers, and lakes, as well as indirect effects to water resources resulting from increased runoff from impervious surfaces such as roads and bridges. Effects on a more regional watershed level will be assessed using available data from the Special Area Management Plans for western Riverside County currently being developed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the Riverside County Flood Control District (RCFCD).

Geology and Soils

The EIR/EIS will discuss potential geological impacts of the proposed project, with an emphasis on whether implementation of the alternatives will result in any increased potential risk to persons or property, such as from landslides or seismic hazards. The EIR/EIS will also discuss the increased potential for soil erosion.

Public Services and Utilities

The EIR/EIS will discuss the potential for adverse impacts to public services (fire, police, schools, and other public facilities) and public utilities (gas, water, electricity, solid waste, and wastewater). Potential impacts to public services include delays to emergency vehicles during construction, effects on schools (both direct impacts if land acquisition is required, as well as indirect impacts such as noise and safety), and access to public facilities. Potential impacts to public utilities include direct impacts where the transportation improvements may require relocation of existing utilities.
Transportation/Traffic

While the proposed project is expected to have a beneficial effect on regional traffic circulation, the EIR/EIS will analyze the effect of the alternatives on both regional and local traffic conditions. Adverse impacts may occur on other facilities where traffic volumes are increased as a result of any changes in local circulation resulting from the project.
APPENDIX A

MAPS