

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 2008 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

In October 2008, the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) circulated a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which examined the potential environmental impacts of alternatives being considered for the proposed Mid County Parkway (MCP) project in western Riverside County, California. FHWA is the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the project, and RCTC is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the project, in cooperation with Caltrans.

The MCP Build Alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIR/EIS proposed a new approximately 32-mile (mi) long highway facility extending between Interstate 15 (I-15) on the west and State Route 79 (SR-79) on the east in western Riverside County. The Draft EIR/EIS for the MCP project was circulated for public and agency review between October 10, 2008, and January 8, 2009.

Two key themes emerged in the public review comments on the Draft EIR/Draft EIS. First was concern about the cost and timing of available funds for the project. Many comments noted that, given the current economy and difficulty in securing funding for the entire project, the limited financial resources should be focused on areas of greatest need. Second, although comments raised concerns about many aspects of the project throughout its entire length, many comments suggested that making improvements to existing facilities rather than building the MCP facility would be a better expenditure of public funds in the project area between I-15 and Interstate 215 (I-215). In that area, improving existing facilities, such as Cajalco Road, instead of building the MCP facility would minimize impacts to the rural communities of Gavilan Hills and Lake Mathews Estates and existing habitat reserves.

1.2 2013 RECIRCULATED DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/SUPPLEMENTAL DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

In 2009, RCTC, FHWA, and Caltrans developed an approach to respond to the concerns in the review comments on the Draft EIR/Draft EIS and for completing the EIR/EIS process for the MCP project. That approach modified the MCP project limits from 32 mi (I-15 to SR-79) to 16 mi (I-215 to SR-79) to focus the transportation improvements and funding where the need is the greatest, between I-215 and SR-79, near and along existing facilities such as the Ramona Expressway.

Under CEQA, a lead agency is required to recirculate an EIR when significant new information is added to the document after public notice is given of the availability of a Draft EIR for public review (Section 15087 of the *CEQA Guidelines*) but before certification of the Final EIR. A Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS that revised the project purpose statement, modified the project alternatives, and refined the impacts analyses to focus on the 16 mi long Build Alternatives was prepared. RCTC, FHWA, and Caltrans circulated the Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS for public and agency review between January 25, 2013, and April 10, 2013.

1.3 2014 RECIRCULATION OF REVISED SECTIONS OF THE RECIRCULATED DRAFT EIR

RCTC, as the lead agency under CEQA, has prepared additional quantitative analysis of the potential construction-related air emissions of the MCP project Build Alternatives and analysis supporting a determination of significance of project-related greenhouse gas emissions under CEQA. That analysis is described in detail in a technical memorandum titled “Updated Mid County Parkway Project Air Quality, Health Risk, and Greenhouse Gas Analyses” (LSA Associates, Inc., January 17, 2014). A copy of that technical memorandum is provided as Attachment A to this Recirculated Draft EIR. RCTC has revised the following Sections in Chapter 4, California Environmental Quality Act, in the Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS based on those analyses:

- Section 4.4, Responses to Checklist Question III, Air Quality (page 4-9 in the Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS)

- Section 4.4, Responses to Checklist Question VII, Greenhouse Gas Emissions (page 4-31 in the Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS)
- Section 4.5, Climate Change (page 4-96 in the Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS)
- Summary of Impacts for Air Quality and Climate Change in Table 4.10, Summary of Effects by Alternative

Pursuant to Section 15088.5(c) in the *CEQA Guidelines*, this document contains only these revised sections of the Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS, providing the new information and analyses cited above. The changes made to these sections are marked with margin lines. The revised analyses in these sections will be included in the Final EIR/EIS for the project, including appropriate updates to the Executive Summary and Appendix E, Environmental Commitments Record.

1.4 PURPOSE AND TYPE OF THESE RECIRCULATED EIR SECTIONS AND INTENDED USES OF THE RECIRCULATED EIR SECTIONS

The purpose of these revised sections of the Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS is to inform decision-makers and the general public of any significant adverse environmental effects associated with the additional air quality and greenhouse gas emission analyses conducted for the MCP Build Alternatives and to identify appropriate and feasible mitigation measures. Consistent with Section 15088(c) of the *CEQA Guidelines*, only those sections of the Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS that were revised to reflect the additional air quality and greenhouse gas emissions analyses are being recirculated for public review.

These revised sections of Chapter 4 will be incorporated in the Final EIR/EIS for the MCP project.

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