FINAL
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

2005 MONTEREY BAY AREA
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

2005 MONTEREY COUNTY
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN
Transportation Agency for Monterey County

2005 SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

State Clearinghouse #2004061013

Prepared by Lamphier-Gregory
1944 Embarcadero
Oakland, CA 94606

April 26, 2005

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PREFACE

A. PURPOSE OF THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended (CEQA) requires Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) to be prepared for all projects which may have a significant impact on the environment. An EIR is an information document, the purposes of which, according to CEQA Guidelines, are "...to identify the significant effects of a project on the environment, to identify alternatives to the project, and to indicate the manner in which such significant effects can be mitigated or avoided." The information contained in this EIR is intended to be objective and impartial, to enable the reader to arrive at an independent judgment regarding the probable character and significance of the impacts resulting from the adoption and implementation of the 2005 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2005 MTP), the 2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan (2005 MC-RTP) and the 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan (2005 SCC-RTP), herein referenced as the "three plans".

In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, this Final EIR formally consists of the responses to comments on the Draft EIR and revisions of those portions of the Draft EIR which have been modified in response to comments received during the public review period on the Draft EIR. The Final EIR includes copies of all comments on the Draft EIR received during the 45-day public review period following publication of the Draft EIR, and provides responses to those comments. In some cases, the responses have also resulted in revisions to the Draft EIR, and all such changes are reflected in this document. As required by CEQA, this document addresses those comments received during the public review period that relate directly to the adequacy and completeness of the Draft EIR. The Final EIR does not include or address those comments received that relate to the characteristics or features of the three plans where the Draft EIR's analysis of the environmental issues associated with the implementation of the three plans are not directly involved.

The EIR (which is comprised of the Draft EIR and the Final EIR) is intended to be certified as a complete and thorough program-level record of the types of environmental impacts that may be associated with the implementation of the three plans by the Lead Agencies (the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments for the 2005 Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the Transportation Agency for Monterey County for the 2005 Monterey County Regional

Transportation Plan, and the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission for the 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan). Certification of the EIR as adequate and complete must take place prior to any formal Lead Agency action on adopting the three plans, and certification of the EIR does not equate to adoption of the three plans.

The EIR has been prepared pursuant to CEQA as amended (commencing with Section 21000 of the California Public Resources Code), and the CEQA Guidelines.

B. ORGANIZATION OF THE FINAL EIR

The Final EIR consists of the following major sections:

- **Preface** – outlines the objectives of the EIR and important preliminary information.
- **Revisions of the Draft EIR** – contains revisions to the Draft EIR text.
- **Comments and Responses** – contains letters of comment on the Draft EIR and verbal comments recorded during the public hearings on the Draft EIR, along with responses to these comments. In response to some comments, the text of the Draft EIR has been modified, with changes indicated as described in the previous paragraph.

This Final EIR has been prepared for the Lead Agencies by Lamphier-Gregory, Urban Planning and Environmental Analysis. Each participant in the preparation of the EIR has extensive experience and knowledge in their respective fields. The information in the EIR has been compiled from a variety of sources, including published studies, applicable maps and independent field investigations.

C. PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS

The Draft EIR was circulated for a public review period of 45 days (February 15, 2005 through April 1, 2005). During that period, three public hearings were held to obtain public comment on the adequacy and completeness of the Draft EIR (on March 9, 2005 in Marina for AMBAG, on March 17, 2005 in Watsonville for SCCRTC, and March 23, 2005 in Salinas for TAMC). The Draft EIR was available for review at the offices of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (445 Reservation Road, Suite G, Marina, California), the offices of the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (55-B Plaza Circle, Salinas, CA) and the offices of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA), and at many local libraries within Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz Counties. In addition to the three agencies mailing hard copies of the Draft EIR to various partner agencies and applicable agency committees, the Draft EIR was also available for review on the SCCRTC and TAMC websites. The Draft EIR was additionally circulated for review through the State of California Office of Planning and Research's State Clearinghouse, as well as AMBAG's Regional Clearinghouse.

At the close of the public review period, all comments received were compiled, and responses to these comments were prepared and are presented in this Final EIR. The Final EIR also incorporates any necessary revisions to the Draft EIR made in response to comments received. The Boards of Directors of AMBAG, TAMC and SCCRTC will each review the EIR (comprised of the Draft EIR and Final EIR), and independently consider whether or not to certify the EIR as adequate and complete.

After reviewing the Draft EIR and the Final EIR, and following action to certify the EIR as adequate and complete, the Boards of Director of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, the Board of Directors of the Transportation Agency for Monterey County, and the Commissioners of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission will each be in a position to determine whether each of the three documents should be adopted as proposed, revised, or rejected. This determination will be based upon information presented on the three transportation plans, impacts and probable consequences, and the possible alternatives and mitigation measures available.

Where potentially significant and unavoidable environmental impacts have been identified in the EIR, each Lead Agency will be required to make a written statement of overriding considerations. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines, Section 15093 [a], a decision-making agency must balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered "acceptable".

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COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

This chapter contains written comments on the Draft EIR on the three plans. Letters received during the 45-day public review period are listed. Each letter is marked to identify distinct comments on the Draft EIR. Responses to these comments are provided following each letter. No comments were received at the public hearings on the Draft EIR, held on March 9, 2005 (AMBAG), March 17, 2005 (SCCRTC) and March 23, 2005 (TAMC).

Throughout the responses to comments, where a specific comment has been addressed previously, a reference to the response in which the comment is discussed may be provided in order to reduce repetition.

As noted in the **PREFACE**, in several instances responding to a comment received on the Draft EIR has resulted in a revision to the text of the Draft EIR. In other cases, the information provided in the responses is deemed adequate in itself, and modification of the Draft EIR text was not deemed appropriate.

In reviewing the comments received on the Draft EIR, it should be noted that while some of the material submitted provides opinion on the three plans or addresses features and characteristics of the three plans as currently proposed, such material may not address the environmental analysis presented in the Draft EIR. Responses presented in this document focus only on those comments which bear a direct relationship to the Draft EIR, as required under CEQA. While other comments that are not directly related to the Draft EIR may be acknowledged, it is beyond the scope of the Final EIR to provide responses to these comments or opinions. Additional letters that were received by lead agencies which did not include comments on the Draft EIR are not included in this document, but were considered by the respective lead agencies.

Several additional points to keep in mind in reviewing the comments received on the Draft EIR are presented in Section 15204 of the CEQA Guidelines (as revised on October 28, 1998) which states that a Lead Agency need not "conduct every test or perform all research, study, and experimentation recommended or demanded by commentors.", in Section 15003 (h) which states that "CEQA does not require technical perfection in an EIR, but rather adequacy, completeness, and a good-faith effort at full disclosure. A court does not pass on the correctness of an EIR's environmental conclusions, but only determines if the EIR is sufficient as an informational document.", and in Section 15003 (j), which states: "CEQA requires that decisions be informed and balanced. It must not be subverted into an instrument for the oppression and delay of social, economic, or recreational development or advancement."

The letters received on the Draft EIR are listed below. Each letter has been marked to identify each specific comment in the right-hand margin (i.e., **A-1**, **D-2**, etc.). Following each letter, the response to each identified comment in that letter is presented sequentially (for example, the first comment on the Draft EIR identified in **LETTER C** is identified as **C-1** in the right-hand margin of the letter, and the corresponding response immediately following **LETTER C** is coded as **RESPONSE C-1**). In order to avoid repetition, where individual comments focus on the same issues raised in a previous comment or comments, the response to those comments may make reference to a previous response or responses.

LIST OF LETTERS **Page**

MAR 0 1 2005

LETTER A

MONTEREY BAY
Unified Air Pollution Control District
serving Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties

AIR POLLUTION CONTROL OFFICER
Douglas Quetin

24580 Silver Cloud Court • Monterey, California 93940 • 831/647-9411 • FAX 831/647-8501

February 22, 2005

Kathy Urlie
AMBAG
P.O. Box 809
Marina, CA 93933-0809

SUBJECT: DEIR FOR 2005 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Dear Ms. Urlie:

Staff has reviewed the referenced document and has the following comments:

1. Page 3-22 and Table 3-2. The Basin is now a nonattainment transitional area for the State ozone standard. **A-1**

2. Page 3-27, para. 1. Recommend the following addition: "The 2004 AQMP uses the same 2004 population projects and travel data assumptions for the period through 2030 as do the three plans." **A-2**

Thank you for the opportunity to review the document. Please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jean Getchell
Supervising Planner

Letter A: Jean Getchell, Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, February 22, 2005.

COMMENT A-1: 1. Page 3-22 and Table 3-2. The Basin in now nonattainment transitional for the State ozone standard.

RESPONSE A-1: Comment noted. In response to this comment, the text of the first sentence in the second paragraph under **Current Air Quality** on Draft EIR page 3-22 has been modified to read as follows:

> "Under the California Clean Air Act, the NCCAB is a ~~moderate~~ nonattainment transitional area for the State ozone AAQS."

In response to this comment, the entry under "State" on the line for "Ozone (O^3) – 1 hour" in **Table 3-2: Attainment Status of the North Central Coast Air Basin** on Draft EIR page 3-23 has been modified to read as follows:

> "~~Moderate~~ Nonattainment Transitional"

COMMENT A-2: 2. Page 3-27, para. 1. Recommend the following addition: "The 2004 AQMP uses the same 2004 population projections and travel data assumptions for the period through 2030 as do the three plans."

RESPONSE A-2: Comment noted. In response to this comment, the text of fourth sentence in the first paragraph on Draft EIR page 3-27 has been modified to read as follows:

> "The 2004 AQMP uses the same 2004 population projections and travel data assumptions for the period through 2030 as do the three plans."

LETTER B

AMBAG
ASSOCIATION OF MONTEREY BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS

March 10, 2005

Ms. Kathy Urlie
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
PO Box 809
Marina, CA 93933

Re: MCH# 020526- Notice of Availability of Draft Environmental Impact Report for the 2005 Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan, 2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan, and 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan

Dear Ms. Urlie:

AMBAG's Regional Clearinghouse circulated a summary of notice of your environmental document to our member agencies and interested parties for review and comment.

The AMBAG Board of Directors considered the project on **March 9, 2005** and has no comments at this time. **B-1**

Thank you for complying with the Clearinghouse process.

Sincerely,

Nicolas Papadakis
Executive Director

SERVING OUR REGIONAL COMMUNITY SINCE 1968
445 RESERVATION ROAD, SUITE G ✦ P. O. BOX 809 ✦ MARINA, CA 93933-0809
(831) 883-3750 ✦ FAX (831) 883-3755 ✦ www.ambag.org

Letter B: Nicolas Papadakis, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, March 10, 2005.

COMMENT B-1: The AMBAG Board of Directors considered the project on ***March 9, 2005*** *and has no comments at this time.*

RESPONSE B-1: Comment noted. No response is necessary.

LETTER C

-----Original Message-----
From: Steve Lustgarden [mailto:steve@hpcn.org]
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2005 9:07 PM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: comments on plan

C-1

I believe that there are many positive components to this plan.
However, I strongly oppose any measures to widen any portion of Highway One.
I believe that any additional development of this Highway will only encourage further growth in our community, further reliance on automobiles, both of which will degrade the quality of life in our community.
Thank you for considering my viewpoint.

Steve Lustgarden

Thank you for your comments. They will be forwarded to the Commission for their review.

Please visit the SCCRTC website at www.sccrtc.org for information on the Commission and its activities.

Thank you again.

<><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><>
Gini Pineda, Secretary
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz CA 95060
831 460 3200
831 460 3215 (fax)
www.sccrtc.org

Letter C: Steve Lustgarden, March 17, 2005.

COMMENT C-1: I believe that there are many positive components to this plan. However, I strongly oppose any measures to widen any portion of Highway One. I believe that any additional development of this Highway will only encourage further growth in our community, further reliance on automobiles, both of which will degrade the quality of life in our community. Thank you for considering my viewpoint.

RESPONSE C-1: Comments and opinions noted. As indicated on Draft EIR page 5-6, a relatively high level of residential and non-residential development is anticipated within the region through the year 2030, and much of this growth is projected to occur regardless of the extent to which the three plans are implemented. Adoption of the three plans, in itself, would not be expected to alter the projected magnitude of regional residential and non-residential growth. Transportation system improvement projects identified in the three plans (including improvements to Highway 1) may indirectly increase growth pressure by increasing transportation system capacity. Quantification of any growth-inducing effects associated with specific projects (e.g., those related to Highway 1 improvements) would need to be considered as part of the project-specific environmental evaluation to be conducted by each individual implementing agency as designs for such projects are developed and brought forward for review.

Because the planned Highway 1 Widening project is identified as an HOV lane project, it is anticipated that the project will increase carpool and bus use. However, as indicated on Draft EIR page 3-107, if added capacity results in travelers switching from public transportation or other commute alternatives to using single occupancy vehicles, diversion from other modes would be expected to increase vehicle activity. It is assumed that, on balance, implementation of the three plans would increase transit ridership and the utilization of other commute alternatives, and would, accordingly, reduce the number of daily vehicle trips within the region. Quantification of any traffic-inducing effects associated with specific projects (e.g., those related to Highway 1 improvements) would need to be considered as part of the project-specific environmental evaluation to be conducted by each individual implementing agency as designs for such projects are developed and brought forward for review, in combination with development decisions by individual local jurisdictions.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
50 HIGUERA STREET
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401-5415
PHONE (805) 549-3101
FAX (805) 549-3077
TDD (805) 549-3259
http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/

Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!

March 30, 2005

LETTER D

SCH# 2004061013

Kathy Urlie, Principal Planner
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
445 Reservation Road, Suite G
Marina, CA 93933-0809

Dear Ms. ~~Urlie:~~ KATHY

COMMENTS TO COMBINED 2005 METROPOLITAN AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The California Department of Transportation (Department), District 5, Development Review, has reviewed the combined 2005 Monterey Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan, and Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report (hereafter called DEIR), and offers the following comments.

1. We appreciate that the authors have included numerous statements of what the DEIR tries to accomplish, what it 'is and is-not' and that the plan does not provide project designs, construction schedule or approval action. **D-1**

2. The Department does feel, however, that the DEIR inappropriately designates many of the project impacts listed as significant and unavoidable impacts to the environment without the benefit of an environmental analysis. In short, there is not enough detail in any of the projects listed to make an assessment of the impacts. Granted, most projects have consequences, but it is our position that the DEIR can list projects without predetermining ultimate impacts. **D-2**

3. Our previous review of this document in administrative format did not include a review of storm water runoff, flood hazards, and water quality issues. The bulleted comments below capture the comments from the Department's subject matter experts on these topics: **D-3**

   (Hydrology)
   - It should not be assumed that could be significant unavoidable runoff impacts for any of the projects listed.
   - Runoff impacts in addition to existing watershed can almost always be mitigated through energy dissipation and flow detention. **D-4**
   - Any new roadway alignment could and should be designed not to have runoff impacts. **D-5**
   - Section 5.4 included "permanent modification of existing drainage patterns" as a significant irreversible modification to the environment. Without the benefit of a full analysis, this should not be the case. Specific projects are designed to not permanently alter drainage patterns. **D-6**

(Water Quality)

- The DEIR seems to limit itself to only two best management practices (BMP). It is suggested to replace specific BMP references with more general "treatment BMP" language. (Page 3-63) **D-7**
- Generally, increases in peak flow volumes, velocities, impervious surface or drainage patters can be mitigated via the implementation of design pollution prevention BMPs. These could include flow conveyance systems, ditches, berms, dikes, swales, hard surface protection systems, vegetated systems and energy dissipation. (Impact 3.8.3-Resulting Level of Significance) **D-8**
- The DEIR should mention that Carmel Bay, Pacific Grove Marine Gardens Fish, and Hopkins Marine Life Refuge is an Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS). Storm water discharges in ASBS are prohibited by the ocean plan unless they are treated, or the State Water Resources Control Board grants an exemption. **D-9**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the DEIR. If you have any questions, or need further clarification on items discussed above, please don't hesitate to call me at (805) 549-3168.

Sincerely,

DAVID M. MURRAY, Chief
Regional Planning / Development Review

Letter D: David M. Murray, California Department of Transportation, March 30, 2005.

COMMENT D-1: We appreciate that the authors have included numerous statements of what the DEIR tries to accomplish, what it "is and is not" and that the plan does not provide project designs, construction schedule or approval action.

RESPONSE D-1: Comment noted. No response required.

COMMENT D-2: The Department does feel, however, that the DEIR inappropriately designates many of the project impacts listed as significant and unavoidable impacts to the environment without the benefit of an environmental analysis. In short, there is not enough detail in any of the projects listed to make an assessment of the impacts. Granted, most projects have consequences, but it is our position that the DEIR can list projects without predetermining ultimate impacts.

RESPONSE D-2: Comment acknowledged. As indicated in the Introduction section of the Draft EIR, in the absence of details related to the site-specific alignments, locations, designs and scheduling of several hundred transportation system improvements projects which are identified in the three plans, the Draft EIR can only provide a "program-level" environmental review of the three plans. The Draft EIR identifies the general types of environmental impacts that may be anticipated with actual implementation of these individual projects. In conducting the required site-specific environmental review for each individual project in the future, implementing agencies may find that many of the types of impacts identified as potentially significant, or potentially significant and unavoidable in the program-level Draft EIR are not, in fact, applicable to any specific individual transportation system improvement projects listed in the three plans. Given the current level of uncertainty regarding the details of the hundreds of projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans, and regarding future environmental conditions between now and 2030 when such projects may ultimately be implemented, the Draft EIR takes a conservative approach to the identification of potential impacts by identifying those impacts that may, in the case of some individual projects or types of projects, prove to ultimately be significant and unavoidable. However, this does not imply that any individual listed project either would or would not entail these impacts, since that can only be determined when the implementing agency for each individual project conducts site-specific environmental review once such projects have been designed and are formally brought forward for consideration.

COMMENT D-3: Our previous review of this document in administrative format did not include a review of storm water runoff, flood hazards, and water quality issues. The bulleted comments below capture the comments from the Department's subject matter experts on these topics:

(Hydrology)

- *It should not be assumed that could be significant unavoidable runoff impacts for any of the projects listed.*

RESPONSE D-3: See **RESPONSE D-2**, above, regarding the Draft EIR approach to identifying potentially significant, or potentially significant and unavoidable environmental impacts, which

applies to potential impacts related to stormwater runoff. In the absence of specific details regarding each of several hundred transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans, at a program-level the Draft EIR conservatively indicates that there might be some listed projects that may entail adverse effects associated with stormwater runoff, and that in some instances, these could prove significant and unavoidable. An assumption that the stormwater runoff impacts associated with each of several hundred of these projects could never ultimately prove significant and unavoidable, in the absence of site-specific environmental review (as suggested in this comment) would be inconsistent with the conservative, program-level approach to the identification of potential environmental effects employed by the three Lead Agencies involved in the preparation of the Draft EIR.

COMMENT D-4: Runoff impacts in addition to existing watershed can almost always be mitigated through energy dissipation and flow detention.

RESPONSE D-4: Comment regarding the ability to "almost always" effectively mitigate runoff effects through the use of energy dissipation and flow detention is noted. See **RESPONSE D-3**, above.

COMMENT D-5: Any new roadway alignment could and should be designed not to have runoff impacts.

RESPONSE D-5: Comment indicating that any new roadway alignment should be designed not to have runoff impacts is noted. See **RESPONSE D-3**, above.

COMMENT D-6: Section 5.4 included "permanent modification of existing drainage patterns" as a significant irreversible modification to the environment. Without the benefit of a full analysis, this should not be the case. Specific projects are designed to not permanently alter drainage patterns.

RESPONSE D-6: Comment regarding the ability of transportation system improvement projects to be designed to avoid permanent modification of existing drainage patterns is noted. See **RESPONSE D-3**, above.

COMMENT D-7: (Water Quality)

- *The DEIR seems to limit itself to only two best management practices (BMP). It is suggested to replace specific BMP references with more general "treatment BMP" language. (Page 3-63)*

RESPONSE D-7: See Draft EIR page 3-63, **MITIGATION MEASURE 3.8.1**. In the discussion under "D.", the Draft EIR indicates that "The SWPPP shall, where appropriate, include specific BMPs to control the discharge of materials from the site and into creeks and local storm drains. BMP methods may include (but would not be limited to) the use of temporary retention basins, straw bales, sand bagging, mulching, erosion control blankets, soil stabilizers and native erosion control grass seed." As the Draft EIR indicates, there may be additional BMPs not listed in the Draft EIR that may be employed to reduce potentially significant water pollution impacts at project construction sites. Each implementing agency will, as part of the necessary site-specific

environmental review for each project, determine whether or not that project would entail potentially significant water pollution effects, and if so, for the identification of specific mitigation measures that could feasibly reduce those impacts (which may include implementation of site-specific BMPs).

COMMENT D-8: Generally, increases in peak flow volumes, velocities, impervious surface or drainage patters can be mitigated via the implementation of design pollution prevention BMPs. These could include flow conveyance systems, ditches, berms, dikes, swales, hard surface protection systems, vegetated systems and energy dissipation (Impact 3.8.3 – Resulting Level of Significance)

RESPONSE D-8: Comment regarding the ability of design pollution prevention BMPs to generally mitigate increases in peak flow volumes, velocities, impervious surface or drainage patterns is noted. See **RESPONSE D-3** and **RESPONSE D-7**, above.

COMMENT D-9: The DEIR should mention that Carmel Bay, Pacific Grove Marine Gardens Fish, and Hopkins Marine Life Refuge is an Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS). Storm water discharges in ASBS are prohibited by the ocean plan unless they are treated, or the State Water Resources Control Board grants an exemption.

RESPONSE D-9: Comment noted. In response to this comment, the following text has been added below the last paragraph on Draft EIR page 3-34:

"Under the Water Quality Control Plan for Ocean Waters of California, the State Water Resources Control Board has identified five Areas of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) within the region:

Pacific Grove Marina Gardens Fish Refuge and Hopkins Marine Life Refuge
Carmel Bay ASBS
Point Lobos Ecological Reserve ASBS
Julia Pfeiffer Burns Underwater Park ASBS
Ocean Area Surrounding the Mouth of Salmon Creek ASBS

The purpose of designating these ASBS is to protect these areas from undesirable changes in natural water quality. The ASBS designation is based on the presence of certain species or biological communities that deserve special protection consisting of preservation and maintenance of natural water quality conditions to the extent practicable (Water Resources Control Board and California Regional Water Quality Control Board Administrative Procedures, September 24, 1970, Section XI and Miscellaneous Rev. 7-9/1/72). New point-source discharges into ASBSs are strictly prohibited. Along the coast between Monterey and San Francisco, prospective point-source dischargers are required by the SWRCB to show, through techniques such as mathematical modeling, that there will be no deleterious effects of the new discharge in the water quality of nearby ASBSs."

MONTEREY COUNTY

PLANNING AND BUILDING INSPECTION DEPARTMENT

☐ 230 CHURCH STREET, SALINAS, CALIFORNIA 93901 PLANNING: (831) 755-5025 BUILDING: (831) 755-5027 FAX: (831) 755-5487
MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 1208, SALINAS, CALIFORNIA 93902

☑ COASTAL OFFICE, 2620 1st Avenue, MARINA, CALIFORNIA 93933 PLANNING: (831) 883-7500 BUILDING: (831) 883-7501 FAX:(831) 384-3261

March 31, 2005

Mr. William Reichmuth, P.E., Executive Director
Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC)
55-B Plaza Circle, Salinas, CA 93901

Subject: Draft EIR for the 2005 AMBAG Metropolitan Transportation Plan, 2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan and 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan

Dear Mr. Reichmuth:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the subject Draft EIR. Our comments are as follows:

1. Impact 3.1.2: Substantial Damage to Scenic Resources. Potential impacts on scenic resources should be expanded to include ridgeline development and development on slopes over 30%. The County has concerns regarding the adequacy of Mitigation Measure 3.1.2 (Scenic Resource Avoidance by Design) to mitigate the impacts of projects that cause substantial damage to scenic resources. Specifically, the mitigation measure needs to be expanded to address impacts of ridgeline development and development on slopes greater than 30%. Policy 26.1.9 of the Monterey County General Plan states: E-

> *"In order to preserve the County's scenic and rural character, ridgeline development shall not be allowed unless a special permit is first obtained. Such permit shall only be granted upon findings being made that the development as condition by permit will not create a substantially adverse visual impact when viewed from a common public viewing area...."*

Policy 26.1.10 of the Monterey County General Plan states:

> *"The County shall prohibit development on slopes greater than 30%. It is the general policy of the County to require dedication of scenic easement on a slope of 30% or greater. Upon application, an exception to allow development on slopes of 30% or greater may be granted at a noticed public hearing by the approving authority for discretionary permits or by the Planning Commission for building or grading permits. The exception may*

LETTER E (continued)

be granted if one or both of the following findings are made, based upon substantial evidence: a) There is no alternative which would allow development to occur on slopes of less than 30%, or b) The proposed development better achieves the resource protection objectives and policies contained in the Monterey County General Plan, accompanying Area Plans and Land Use Plans, and all applicable master plans."

At a minimum, the mitigation measure should be modified to require compliance with local policies regarding scenic resources.

2. Impact 3.2.1: Conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance. The County has concerns regarding the adequacy of Mitigation Measure 3.2.1 (Design Modifications) to mitigate the impacts of projects that result in the conversion of prime farmland, unique farmland and farmland of Statewide importance. The mitigation measure states: **E-2**

"*In designing specific transportation system improvement projects, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, avoid the conversion of prime farmland, unique farmland and farmland of statewide importance to the maximum extent feasible, and shall consider alternative alignments that reduce or avoid the conversion of such farmlands. Where avoidance is not feasible, such projects shall, where appropriate be designed to minimize the conversion of such farmlands.... The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (LESA) from the California Department of Conservation shall, where appropriate, be utilized to identify the potentially significant project-related impacts resulting from changes in agricultural land use....*

Policy 30.0.1 of the Monterey County General Plan states:

"*The County shall prevent non-agricultural uses which could interfere with the potential of normal agricultural operations on viable farmlands designed as prime, of state importance, unique or of local importance.*"

While not all transportation projects will be able to prevent interfering with agricultural operations on viable farmland, this mitigation measure should be revised to provide more specific criteria for when such interference may be appropriate and specific measures that could reduce such impacts to a level of less than significant. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (LESA) is a point-based approach that is generally used for rating the relative values of agricultural land resources. It does not provide criteria for when it may be appropriate for land uses to interfere with agricultural operations on viable farmlands.

3. Impact 3.2.4: Fragmentation of Agricultural Lands and Changes in Land Uses Adjacent to Agricultural Lands. Mitigation Measure 3.2.4 (Project-Specific Agricultural Protection) is intended to mitigate fragmentation of agricultural lands and changes in land uses adjacent to agricultural lands by a) ensuring that rural roadway alignments follow property lines to the maximum extent feasible, and b) incorporate project-specific design features which would provide adequate protection for the farmland adjacent to the project site (fencing, warning notices, **E-3**

LETTER E (continued)

etc.). To be consistent with Policy 30.0.2 of the Monterey County General Plan, this mitigation measure should be expanded to require mitigation of road dust, erosion, water quality and weed abatement when transportation projects are adjacent to viable farmlands. Policy 30.0.2 states:

"*The County shall require that permanent, well-defined buffer areas be provided as part of new non-agricultural development proposals which are located adjacent agricultural land uses on viable farm lands designated as prime, of statewide importance, unique, or of local importance. These buffer areas shall be dedicated in perpetuity, shall be of sufficient size to protect agricultural from the impacts of incompatible development and to mitigate against the effects of agricultural operations on adjacent land uses, and shall be credited as open space.*"

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR.

Sincerely,

Scott Hennessey

Scott Hennessey, Director of Planning and Building Inspection Department

Letter E: Scott Hennessey, Monterey County Planning and Building Inspection Department, March 31, 2005.

COMMENT E-1: Impact 3.1.2: Substantial Damage to Scenic Resources. Potential impacts on scenic resources should be expanded to include ridgeline development and development on slopes over 30%. The County has concerns regarding the adequacy of Mitigation Measure 3.1.2 (Scenic Resource Avoidance by Design) to mitigate the impacts of projects that cause substantial damage to scenic resources. Specifically, the mitigation measure needs to be expanded to address impacts of ridgeline development and development on slopes greater than 30%. Policy 26.1.9 of the Monterey County General Plan states:

> *"In order to preserve the County's scenic and rural character, ridgeline development shall not be allowed unless a special permit is first obtained. Such permit shall only be granted upon findings being made that the development as condition by permit will not create a substantially adverse visual impact when viewed from a common public viewing area …."*

Policy 26.1.10 of the Monterey County General Plan states:

> *"The County shall prohibit development on slopes greater than 30%. It is the general policy of the County to require dedication of scenic easement on a slope of 30% or greater. Upon application, an exception to allow development on slopes of 30% or greater may be granted at a noticed public hearing by the approving authority for discretionary permits or by the Planning Commission for building or grading permits. The exception may be granted if one or both of the following findings are made, based upon substantial evidence: a) There is no alternative which would allow development to occur on slopes of less than 30%, or b) The proposed development better achieves the resources protection objectives and policies contained in the Monterey County General Plan, accompanying Area Plans and Land Use Plans, and all applicable master plans."*

RESPONSE E-1: Comment noted. Although a review of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans did not provide any examples of projects which might be expected to require development on ridgelines or slopes of 30 percent or greater within Monterey County, in response to this comment, the first sentence in paragraph "B" on Draft EIR page ES-8 and Draft EIR page 3-7 has been modified to read as follows:

> "B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, design transportation project alignments to avoid ridgelines or slopes of 30 percent or greater, and to avoid or minimize substantial physical alteration of the land, due to large amounts of cut and fill."

As indicated on Draft EIR page 3-8, although the effective application of the type of measures identified in **MITIGATION MEASURE 3.1.2: Scenic Resource Avoidance by Design** could reduce impacts to scenic resources to a level of less than significant for most projects, impacts associated with a few projects may remain **significant and unavoidable**. Project-specific impacts on scenic resources, and the identification of appropriate site-specific mitigation, can only be accomplished by the implementing agencies on a project-by-project basis as individual

transportation system improvement projects are designed and brought forward for environmental review.

COMMENT E-2: Impact 3.2.1: Conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland and Farmland if Statewide Importance. The County has concerns regarding the adequacy of Mitigation measure 3.2.1 (Design Modifications) to mitigate the impacts of projects that result in the conversion of prime farmland, unique farmland and farmland of Statewide importance. The mitigation measure states:

> *"In designing specific transportation system improvement projects, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, avoid the conversion of prime farmland, unique farmland and farmland of statewide importance to the maximum extent feasible, and shall consider alternative alignments that reduce or avoid the conversion of such farmlands. Where avoidance is not feasible, such projects shall, where appropriate be designed to minimize the conversion of such farmlands …. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (LESA) from the California Department of Conservation shall, where appropriate, be utilized to identify the potentially significant project-related impacts resulting from changes in agricultural land use….*

Policy 30.0.1 of the Monterey County General Plan states:

> *"The County shall prevent non-agricultural uses which could interfere with the potential of normal agricultural operations of viable farmlands designed as prime, of state importance, unique or of local importance."*

While not all transportation projects will be able to prevent interfering with agricultural operations on viable farmland, this mitigation measure should be revised to provide more specific criteria for when such interference may be appropriate and specific measures that could reduce such impacts to a level of less than significant. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (LESA) is a point-based approach that is generally used for rating the relative values of agricultural land resources. It does not provide criteria for when it may be appropriate for land uses to interfere with agricultural operations on viable farmlands.

RESPONSE E-2: Comment noted. As indicated in the Draft EIR, a program-level evaluation of the general types of environmental impacts that might be associated with implementation of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans is not a substitute for the detailed, site-specific evaluation of the environmental effects that may be associated with each individual project listed as they are individually designed and brought forward for environmental review by the implementing agencies. Although **MITIGATION MEASURE 3.2.1: Design Modifications** indicates that the LESA model may be used to identify potentially significant impacts associated with the conversion of agricultural land that may result from the implementation of some projects, where appropriate, if implementing agencies wish to use other, more appropriate criteria in evaluating the significance of these impacts on a project-by-project basis as part of their required CEQA review of such projects, they are free to do so. Although this comment suggests the need for the use of alternate criteria, no proposed alternatives have been identified in the comment.

As indicated on Draft EIR page 3-13, although the effective application of the type of measures identified in **MITIGATION MEASURE 3.2.1: Design Modifications** by implementing agencies could reduce the conversion of farmland to a level of less than significant for most projects, impacts associated with a few projects may remain **significant and unavoidable**. Project-specific impacts associated with the conversion of farmland or interference with agricultural operations, and the identification of appropriate site-specific mitigation, can only be accomplished by the implementing agencies on a project-by-project basis as individual transportation system improvement projects are designed and brought forward for environmental review.

COMMENT E-3: Impact 3.2.4: Fragmentation of Agricultural Lands and Changes in Land Uses Adjacent to Agricultural Lands. Mitigation Measure 3.2.4 (Project-Specific Agricultural Protection) is intended to mitigate fragmentation of agricultural lands and changes in land uses adjacent to agricultural lands by a) ensuring that rural roadway alignments follow property lines to the maximum extent feasible, and b) incorporate project-specific design features which would provide adequate protection for the farmland adjacent to the project site (fencing, warning notices, etc.). To be consistent with Policy 30.0.2 of the Monterey County General Plan, the mitigation measure should be expanded to require mitigation of road dust, erosion, water quality and weed abatement when transportation projects are adjacent to viable farmlands. Policy 30.0.2 states:

> *"The County shall require that permanent, well-defined buffer areas be provided as part of new non-agricultural development proposals which are located adjacent agricultural land uses on viable farm lands designated as prime, of statewide importance, unique, or of local importance. These buffer areas shall be dedicated in perpetuity, shall be of sufficient size to protect agricultural from the impacts of incompatible development and to mitigate against the effects of agricultural operations on adjacent land use, and shall be credited as open space.*

RESPONSE E-3: Comment noted. In response to this comment, paragraph "B" on Draft EIR page ES- 14 and Draft EIR page 3-15 has been modified to read as follows:

> "B. In those instances where projects are proposed in areas adjacent to lands currently in agricultural uses (particularly lands which have been designated as prime farmland, unique farmland or farmland of statewide importance), implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, incorporate project-specific design features which would provide adequate protection for the farmland adjacent to the project site (fencing, warning notices, buffers, etc.)."

In evaluating project-specific farmland fragmentation impacts and mitigation measures as part of the necessary CEQA environmental review process, implementing agencies that identify a site-specific need for buffers as a feasible mitigation measure may also define how such buffers would need to be designed and maintained to reduce prevent road dust and erosion, to maintain water quality, and to pursue weed abatement efforts within those buffer areas.

As indicated on Draft EIR page 3-15, although the effective application of the type of measures identified in **MITIGATION MEASURE 3.2.4: Project-Specific Agricultural Protection** by implementing agencies could reduce the effects of agricultural land fragmentation to a level of less than significant for most projects, impacts associated with a few projects may remain **significant and unavoidable**. Project-specific impacts associated with farmland fragmentation, and the identification of appropriate site-specific mitigation, can only be accomplished by the implementing agencies on a project-by-project basis as individual transportation system improvement projects are designed and brought forward for environmental review.

LETTER F

-----Original Message-----
From: RSANTEE5@aol.com [mailto:RSANTEE5@aol.com]

808 River Street
Santa Cruz CA 95060
(831)423-0763 (831)
centralhomesupply@s

Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2005 7:21 PM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: 2005 RTP/EIR Draft

Central Home Supply

March 31, 2005

To: Regional Transportation Commission

From: R. Santee, Central Home Supply

RE: Draft 2005 Regional Transportation Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report

Dear Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft 2005 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and draft Environmental Impact Report. Under "Project within Projected Funds" on page C-5, there exists a proposal for Hwy 1/9 intersection improvements and Park & Ride lot" identified as SC-25 at a cost of $7.6 million.

1. Background: SC-25 as proposed takes 1.36 acres of Central Home Supply operations forcing the closure or relocation of our business. We are a locally owned, family business serving this community for three generations.

2. History: In 2000, the city traffic engineer proposed a similar project on Central Home Supply property. The city council rejected that project because:

   A) Traffic: The Park & Ride *added* traffic congestion to an already impacted intersection during peak usage periods.

   B) Service: Central Home Supply serves the whole community while a Park & Ride would only benefit Hwy 17 commuters, UCSC students and possibly summer beach traffic.

   C) Fiscal: Central Home Supply is a top ten sales tax revenue producer for the City of Santa Cruz. The Santee family and our coworkers are wholly invested in the local economy. We live and work here. A Park & Ride would cost millions to build and

maintain and the City would suffer enormous revenue losses associated with Central Home Supply's demise.

3. Lack of Available Funds: it is our understanding that the "Projected Funds" are no longer available for this project. If not, the project does not belong in the category selected. We challenge the determination that the funds are at this time dedicated to this project.

4. Precedent: The City of Santa Cruz Redevelopment Agency published a draft environmental impact report for the Tannery Arts Center 27 Dec 2004 that included this Park and Ride lot as phase II of the development. Because of its impact on Central Home Supply, the redevelopment agency *removed all of phase II including the Park & Ride* from the Tannery Arts Center plan. The data supporting their decision still exists. We believe the Park & Ride lot was included in the RTP because the City appeared to be in the process of approving it, along with evaluating the environmental impacts associated with it. However, now that the Park & Ride lot has been removed from the Tannery Arts Center, there is no basis for including it in the RTP, because the City is no longer advancing the project.

5. Legal: Central Home Supply has perfected a continuous and uninterrupted lease for thirty years with Caltrans. The leased property and improvements are essential to Central Home Supply operations at this location. Note: Caltrans sold the analogous right of way property for the Gateway Shopping Center thus negating a future interchange at the Hwy 1/9 intersection. In addition, Central Home Supply legally added improvements to the leased property amounting to more than $5000 in value. As a result, Central Home Supply is entitled to a first right of refusal regarding the disposition of the property.

5. Alternatives: There are numerous unused and unimproved properties in the vicinity of the Hwy 1/9 intersection (i.e. behind the Sash Mill, next to the Portuguese Hall, vacant businesses in Harvey West Park) that could be used for a Park & Ride. However traffic congestion would be better reduced by parking before entering the Hwy 1/9 intersection that is already heavily impacted.

Summary: The traffic problems targeted by this Park & Ride are exacerbated by locating it at the Hwy 1 & 9 intersection. These impacts should be evaluated in the EIR for the RTP. In addition, an EIR would be necessary prior to making a discretionary decision to embark upon this project. Moreover, the fiscal impact on the community would be unconscionable. It is not legally feasible. Central Home Supply is willing, able, and entitled to purchase the property, if surplus. The project should be deleted from the Regional Transportation Plan. F-1

Sincerely,

Raymond W. Santee
Vice President

CC: Santa Cruz City Council California Transportation Commission John Laird
Bruce McPherson Keith Hinrichsen Paul Hastings

Letter F: Raymond W. Santee, Central Home Supply, March 31, 2005.

COMMENT F-1: Summary: The traffic problems targeted by this Park & Ride are exacerbated by locating it at the Hwy 1 & 9 intersection. These impacts should be evaluated in the EIR for the RTP. In addition, an EIR would be necessary prior to making a discretionary decision to embark upon this project. Moreover, the fiscal impact on the community would be unconscionable. It is not legally feasible. Central Home Supply is willing, able, and entitled to purchase the property, if surplus. The project should be deleted from the Regional Transportation Plan.

RESPONSE F-1: Comments and opinions noted. As indicated on Draft EIR page 1-5, the EIR on the three plans has been prepared as a Program EIR that focuses on the identification of the probable types of environmental effects that may generally be associated with the implementation of several hundred individual transportation system improvement projects listed in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans between now and 2030. A detailed, site-specific environmental evaluation of each individual transportation system improvement project (e.g., a future Park & Ride lot identified as SC-25 on the financially constrained Action Element lists of the 2005 SCC-RTP and the 2005 MTP) will need to be conducted by each implementing agency once such projects have been designed and brought forward for review, and prior to any action being taken to approve such projects, as indicated in this comment.

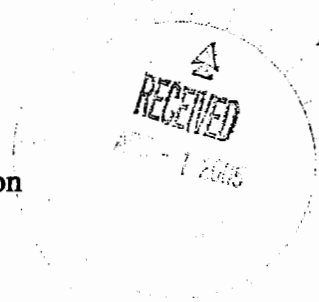
SIERRA CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

Santa Cruz County Group of the Ventana Chapter

P.O. Box 604, Santa Cruz, California 95061 phone: (831) 426-4453
FAX (831) 426-5323 web: www.ventana.org e-mail: scscrg@cruzio.com

April 1, 2005

LETTER G



Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: Draft Regional Transportation Plan and EIR

Dear Commission and Staff:

It is apparent in reviewing the 2005 RTP Draft and EIR Draft that the Commission is again placing the highest priority on the proposed widening of Highway 1, and expecting to fund the widening with a 1/2 cent sales tax. The Sierra Club strongly urges the RTC to reconsider its priorities and give, instead, highest priority to the many options, other than widening Highway 1, that are available for increasing mobility within the county without the need to increase taxes or to degrade the environment further.

Through the lopsided defeat of Measure J just a few months ago, the voters in this county resoundly repudiated the Highway widening and the tax increase. Certainly many sales tax measures in other counties have failed before eventually passing. However, any sales tax measure in this county to widen Highway 1 is likely to fail again because of a lack of consensus on the part of the county voters that widening the freeway will reduce congestion. In addition, the RTC has not included the public in a significant way in the discussion of transportation concerns. Without that open, inclusionary process, the public is likely to respond with another resounding rejection of future tax measures.

Given all the issues relating to impacts from automobiles, including global warming, uncertainty in future oil supplies, and local concerns about habitat loss, pollution runoff, increased noise, any decision to increase our dependence on petroleum and the single occupant automobile should be considered carefully. Those concerns, coupled with studies showing that a widened freeway will not reduce congestion over the longer term in any significant way, should persuade the Commission to reconsider an ill-fated priority. The Sierra Club strongly urges the RTC to reconsider these factors and remove the widening of Highway 1 as its highest priority. **G-1**

Sincerely,

James Danaher
Chair, Transportation Committee

Aldo Giacchino
Chair, Executive Committee

Letter G: James Danaher and Aldo Giacchino, Sierra Club, April 1, 2005.

COMMENT G-1: Given all the issues relating to impacts from automobiles, including global warming, uncertain oil supplies, and local concerns about habitat loss, pollution runoff, increased noise, any decision to increase our dependence on petroleum and the single occupant automobile should be considered carefully. Those concerns, coupled with studies showing that a widened freeway will not reduce congestion over the longer term in any significant way, should persuade the Commission to reconsider an ill-fated priority. The Sierra Club strongly urges the RTC to reconsider these factors and remove the widening of Highway 1 as its highest priority.

RESPONSE G-1: Comments and opinions noted. As indicated on Draft EIR page 1-5, the EIR on the three plans has been prepared as a Program EIR that focuses on the identification of the probable types of environmental effects that may generally be associated with the implementation of several hundred individual transportation system improvement projects listed in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans between now and 2030. A detailed, site-specific environmental evaluation of each individual transportation system improvement project (e.g., future widening of Highway 1 in Santa Cruz County) will need to be conducted by each implementing agency once such projects have been designed and brought forward for review. Depending on the significance criteria established by each implementing agency, such a project-specific environmental review could evaluate the possible effects of individual projects on air quality, habitat loss, stormwater runoff, ambient noise levels, as well as any effects associated with traffic congestion levels. If the Draft EIR for a project-specific environmental review finds any project-related impacts to be significant and unavoidable, the lead agency has three ways of responding under CEQA. Specifically, agencies must ensure that adopted mitigation measures are fully enforceable and can avoid or reduce the magnitude of the impact, specify that changes have been or should be adopted if the project is within another agency's jurisdiction, or adopt a statement of overriding consideration including the economic, social, legal, technical considerations that make mitigation and alternatives infeasible.

Mike Weaver
52 Corral de Tierra Rd.
Salinas, CA 93908
Phone: (831) 484-2243

Ms. Kathy Urlie
AMBAG (Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments)
P.O. Box 809
Marina, CA 93933
Phone: (831) 883-3750
Fax: (831) 883-3755

Mr. Andy Cook
TAMC (Transportation Agency for Monterey County)
55-B Plaza Circle
Salinas, CA 93901
Phone: (831) 775-4411
Fax: (831) 775-0897

April 1, 2005

Dear Ms. Urlie and Mr. Cook,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft 2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan, Draft Metropolitan Plan and the Draft Environmental Impact Report. H-

I note in the initial Executive Summary of your Draft Metropolitan Plan language that it states the metropolitan area covered by this plan is a designated maintenance area for the one hour ozone standard under the Federal Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990. Can you please explain the connection between the forecasts for population growth in the region and the expected air quality standards? A map of the region with shadings of air quality in the various parts would also be most helpful. Perhaps clear plastic overlays on top of the map of the region, showing air quality in 1990, today, and expected air quality ten years from now under current projections?

Your introduction states that the tri-County area has been incorporated into this metropolitan planning region for the purpose of meeting the federal Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) requirement that the planning area coincide with the non-attainment air basin boundary. Please explain in greater detail this requirement and the non-attainment for the lay person reviewing this document.

Your Plan Purpose (Page II-1) states, "Arguably most importantly, the RTP's reflect an extensive public involvement and participation process."
Please explain how this can be in Monterey County? Despite both Federal and State encouragement and requirement for public participation, the Transportation

Agency for Monterey County eliminated the Citizen's Advisory Committee for the Agency. First it was dissolved because it was felt there wasn't enough geographic diversity, even though there were nine unfilled positions that could have been filled from anywhere in the County. Then, a newly formed Citizen's Advisory Committee was created, and then eliminated. Although the TAMC staff has an "outreach" Program where speeches are given at Rotary Club functions, and the like, and questions are solicited, it does not take the place of a regularly scheduled group of County citizens who can pour over the budget, ask good questions, and make advisory comments for the elected representatives of the TAMC Board. Millions of dollars of both Federal and State monies are at stake and politicians are spending it without much Citizen oversight.

Under Item B. Regional Transportation Planning Process, you correctly point out that the Transportation Agency for Monterey County is a designated Congestion Management Agency. It states that it may OPT OUT of the designation if their member Jurisdictions decide to pursue that course. Please explain in detail for both the layperson and the Federal and State Agencies who may be reviewing this:

1) What is a Congestion Management Agency?
2) Why was it adopted in Monterey County?
3) What are the requirements for roadways in the Congestion Management Program?
4) Can roadways or segments be eliminated from the CMP?
5) What are the dollar advantages of being a County in the Congestion Management Program?
6) What are the environmental advantages of being a County in the Congestion Management Program?
7) What are the requirements when a segment of highway falls below the designated Level of Service?
8) Please provide the location of the documents that reflect the adherence of this County of Monterey to the CMP. Are these documents available for public review?
9) Is the Transportation Agency for Monterey County considering opting out of a CMP because they may not be in conformance?

On page II-5, your draft Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan states, "RTPAs (Regional Transportation Planning Agencies) are also responsible for ensuring adequate citizen involvement within the regional transportation planning process." Please explain what "adequate" means in terms of real citizen involvement. Again, note the Monterey County Citizen's Advisory Committee was eliminated.

On page II-7, your draft Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan states, "AMBAG and other providers of transportation planning services regularly meet and consult with representatives from other local transportation planning and public works

agencies to ensure that the transportation needs of their jurisdictions are being adequately served. THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY AND CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEES STAFFED BY THE RTPAs." (Emphasis mine) Once again, the Citizen's Advisory Committee in Monterey County was eliminated.

Please explain in greater detail the loss of approximately $5 Million annually to the Monterey Bay region because they are no longer eligible under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program. What events led up to this loss of eligibility? What are the effects of the Monterey Bay region no longer being "beholden" to the performance of air quality conformity of its plans and programs?

Page II-11 of your draft Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan references both Memoranda of Understanding and Agreement amongst various agencies. Can the language of these Memoranda be published in the Final Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the public to read what it is that their public agencies and elected representatives have agreed to?

Your description of the various highways in the draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan fails to mention that State Route 68 is a designated California State Scenic Highway on page III-8. Also, might I suggest you change the wording of sentence number two from "...easterly to Laguna Seca Raceway and on into Salinas..." to the following: " easterly to the Monterey County Park, Laguna Seca Recreation Area, and again eastward past Monterey County's Toro Regional Park and on into Salinas."

Regarding Bus Transit, specifically the Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST), could you please list both the total number of buses, the number of new buses acquired in the past three years, and the cost of these new buses? Have the old bus's been sold?

Your draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan on page III-15 has Map 3 that lists Park and Ride Lots. Where is the Park and Ride Lot for the 1,031 houses of the Las Palmas Ranch housing development off River Road in Monterey County? This traffic impacts SR 68.

Could you please list the official operating hours of the various airports under "f." "Aviation System". This could be included as part of Table III-3, titled, MONTEREY BAY GENERAL AVIATION OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES- 2003.

Under Level of Service Standards Applicability, can you please explain any differences between Monterey County requirements and the State of California recommendations for the State's highways that pass through Monterey County?
Also, a description of the various methodologies that can be used in calculating Levels of Service would be most helpful. Is there a standard methodology that is used in the tri-County Metropolitan area? If not, why not?

Your Metropolitan Transportation Plan has a Map labeled Map 6 on page III-40.

Page 4

I am completely mystified by this map. It is labeled LEVELS OF SERVICE E & F ON STATE HIGHWAYS. State Highway 68 in Monterey County is drawn in as being Level of Service E. The date on the top of the page is May 8, 2002. Briefly, State Highway 68 was designed and estimated to be able to accommodate upto16,000 vehicles per day. It achieved this capacity in approximately 1983. Today, depending on the time of year, I have seen estimates from 24,000 to over 30,000 vehicles per day using this Highway 68 from Salinas to Monterey. This highway was officially designated as being Level of Service F in 1997 by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County. Since 1997, traffic has gotten worse. How then, can this Highway 68 segment be listed as being Level of Service "E" in the 2005 draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan? Where is the required deficiency study/plan?

Finally, regarding your Monterey County Constrained (Funded) Project List dated February 15, 2005 in your draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan, I have a few questions regarding State Highway 68.

1) Where did the estimated $10 Million funding come from for SR 68-Operational Improvements? (CT018)
2) Additional proposed left turn lanes at San Benancio and Corral de Tierra Roads are controversial to many of these Road's residents and will cause more safety problems. (CT018)
3) The Project Study Report has not been completed, thus not reviewed by the State of California, CalTrans, who owns this Highway 68. Thus, isn't it premature to list this on a funded project list? (CT018)
4) Specifically, what York Road Improvements are being considered? (reference MRY031). It lists signal installations (plural). However, there is a signal already there. It also lists "modifications". Is there a plan to significantly increase the traffic on York Road?
5) Significant changes are listed for General Jim Moore Blvd in this list on the draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan. However, comments on the plan for General Jim Moore Blvd. are due on April 16, 2005. One concern is that I do not believe the Army has completed its removal of possible unexploded ordnance.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. I sincerely appreciate the good work that the management and staff of both AMBAG and TAMC are providing Monterey County and the tri-County area. These are large documents to prepare.
For the most part, they are informative and helpful. I hope you can take my comments and suggestions as being constructive.

Sincerely,

Mike Weaver

c.c. FHA, CTC, CalTrans District 5, Highway 68 Coalition

Letter H: Mike Weaver, April 1, 2005.

COMMENT H-1: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft 2005 Monterey County regional Transportation Plan, Draft Metropolitan Plan and the Draft Environmental Impact Report.

RESPONSE H-1: Comment noted. As Mr. Weaver's letter did not address revisions/review of the Draft EIR, no further response is required.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit

Arnold
Schwarzenegger
Governor

Sean Walsh
Director

APR 07 2005

April 4, 2005

LETTER I

Kathy Urlie
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
445 Reservation Rd., Ste. G
P.O. Box 809
Marina, CA 93933-0809

Subject: 2005 Monterey Bay Area MTP, 2005 Monterey County RTP, and 2005 Santa Cruz County RTP
SCH#: 2004061013

Dear Kathy Urlie:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Draft EIR to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on April 1, 2005, and no state agencies submitted comments by that date. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. **I-1**

Please call the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. If you have a question about the above-named project, please refer to the ten-digit State Clearinghouse number when contacting this office.

Sincerely,

Terry Roberts

Terry Roberts
Director, State Clearinghouse

1400 TENTH STREET P.O. BOX 3044 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95812-3044
TEL (916) 445-0613 FAX (916) 323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov

Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base

SCH# 2004061013
Project Title 2005 Monterey Bay Area MTP, 2005 Monterey County RTP, and 2005 Santa Cruz County RTP
Lead Agency Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

Type EIR Draft EIR

Description 1) 2005 Monterey Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Plan: federally-required, 20 + year transportation plan covering 3-county Monterey Bay region.
2) 2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan: state-required, 20 + year transportation plan covering Monterey County.
3) 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan: state-required, 20 + year transportation plan covering Santa Cruz County.

Lead Agency Contact

Name Kathy Urlie
Agency Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
Phone (831) 883-3750 **Fax**
email
Address 445 Reservation Rd., Ste. G
P.O. Box 809
City Marina **State** CA **Zip** 93933-0809

Project Location

County Monterey, Santa Cruz
City
Region
Cross Streets N/A
Parcel No.
Township **Range** **Section** **Base**

Proximity to:

Highways
Airports
Railways
Waterways
Schools
Land Use N/A

Project Issues Aesthetic/Visual; Agricultural Land; Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Drainage/Absorption; Flood Plain/Flooding; Geologic/Seismic; Growth Inducing; Landuse; Minerals; Noise; Population/Housing Balance; Public Services; Recreation/Parks; Schools/Universities; Sewer Capacity; Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading; Solid Waste; Toxic/Hazardous; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Water Quality; Water Supply; Wetland/Riparian; Wildlife

Reviewing Agencies Resources Agency; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 3; Department of Parks and Recreation; Native American Heritage Commission; Public Utilities Commission; Department of Fish and Game, Region 3; Department of Water Resources; California Coastal Commission; California Highway Patrol; Caltrans, District 5; Air Resources Board, Transportation Projects; Caltrans, Division of Transportation Planning; Caltrans, Division of Aeronautics

Date Received 02/15/2005 **Start of Review** 02/15/2005 **End of Review** 04/01/2005

Note: Blanks in data fields result from insufficient information provided by lead agency.

Letter I: Terry Roberts, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, April 4, 2005.

COMMENT I-1: The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Draft EIR to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on April 1, 2005, and no state agencies submitted comments by that date. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

RESPONSE I-1: Comment noted. No response required.

APR 0 7 2005

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Governor's Office of Planning and Research

State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit

Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

Sean Walsh
Director

April 4, 2005

LETTER J

Kathy Urlie
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
445 Reservation Rd., Ste. G
P.O. Box 809
Marina, CA 93933-0809

Subject: 2005 Monterey Bay Area MTP, 2005 Monterey County RTP, and 2005 Santa Cruz County RTP
SCH#: 2004061013

Dear Kathy Urlie:

The enclosed comment (s) on your Draft EIR was (were) received by the State Clearinghouse after the end of the state review period, which closed on April 1, 2005. We are forwarding these comments to you because they provide information or raise issues that should be addressed in your final environmental document. **J-1**

The California Environmental Quality Act does not require Lead Agencies to respond to late comments. However, we encourage you to incorporate these additional comments into your final environmental document and to consider them prior to taking final action on the proposed project.

Please contact the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions concerning the environmental review process. If you have a question regarding the above-named project, please refer to the ten-digit State Clearinghouse number (2004061013) when contacting this office.

Sincerely,

Terry Roberts

Terry Roberts
Senior Planner, State Clearinghouse

Enclosures
cc: Resources Agency

1400 TENTH STREET P.O. BOX 3044 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95812-3044
TEL (916) 445-0613 FAX (916) 323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov

State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
http://www.dfg.ca.gov
POST OFFICE BOX 47
YOUNTVILLE, CALIFORNIA 94599
(707) 944-5500

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor

LETTER J (continued)

April 1, 2005

Clear 4-1-05 Late

RECEIVED
APR - 4 2005
STATE CLEARING HOUSE

RECEIVED
APR - 4 2005
STATE CLEARING HOUSE

Ms. Kathy Urlie
Association of Bay Area
Governments
445 Reservation Road, Suite G
Marina, CA 93933

Dear Ms. Urlie:

2005 Monterey Bay Area
Metropolitan Transportation Plan
SCH 2004061013

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) has reviewed the document for the subject project. We do not have specific comments regarding the proposed project and its effects on biological resources. Please be advised this project may result in changes to fish and wildlife resources as described in the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 753.5(d)(1)(A)-(G)[1]. Therefore, a de minimis determination is not appropriate, and an environmental filing fee as required under Fish and Game Code Section 711.4(d) should be paid to the county clerk on or before filing of the Notice of Determination for this project.

If you have any questions, please contact Dave Johnston Environmental Scientist, at (831) 475-9065; or Mr. Scott Wilson, Habitat Conservation Supervisor, at (707) 944-5584.

Sincerely,

for Scott Wilson
Robert W. Floerke
Regional Manager
Central Coast Region

cc: State Clearinghouse

[1] http://ccr.oal.ca.gov/. Find California Code of Regulations, Title 14 Natural Resources, Division 1, Section 753

Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870

Letter J: Terry Roberts, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, April 4, 2005.

COMMENT J-1: The enclosed comment(s) on your Draft EIR was (were) received by the State Clearinghouse after the end of the state review period, which closed on April 1, 2005. We are forwarding these comments to you because they provide information or raise issues that should be addressed in your final environmental document.

The California Environmental Quality Act does not require Lead Agencies to respond to late comments. However, we encourage you to incorporate these additional comments into your final environmental document and to consider them prior to taking final action on the proposed project.

Comment from Robert W. Floerke, Regional Manager, Central Coast Region, California Department of Fish and Game, April 1, 2005:

> *"The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) has reviewed the document for the subject project. We do not have specific comments regarding the proposed project and its effects on biological resources. Please be advised this project may result in changes to fish and wildlife resources as described in the California Code of regulations, Title 14, Section 753.5(d)(1)(A) – (G)[1]. Therefore, a de minimus determination is not appropriate, and an environmental filing fee as required under Fish and Game Code Section 711.4 (d) should be paid to the county clerk on or before filing of the Notice of Determination for this project."*

RESPONSE J-1: Comment noted. No response is required. In following up to this correspondence, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments has received the attached April 14, 2005 e-mail from David Johnston of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) indicating that the de minimums determination is indeed appropriate for this project's environmental filing, and that a filing fee required under Fish and Game Code Section 711.4(d) is not applicable.

John Courtney

From: Kathy Urlie [KUrlie@ambag.org]
Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2005 8:11 AM
To: jcourtney@lamphier-gregory.com
Subject: FW: Monterey Bay Region MTP-RTPs EIR De Minimis Finding

-----Original Message-----
From: David Johnston [mailto:djohnston@dfg.ca.gov]
Sent: Thursday, April 14, 2005 9:23 AM
To: Kathy Urlie
Subject: Re: Monterey Bay Region MTP-RTPs EIR De Minimis Finding

Kathy:

I've heard back from Region and we have decided to go with your interpretation on this one. Persistence pays!

This e-mail is notification that DFG considers the Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan a deminimis project and agrees that the fee will not be required.

Dave Johnston
Calif. Department of Fish and Game
(831)475-9065

>>> "Kathy Urlie" <KUrlie@ambag.org> 04/11/05 11:54 AM >>>
Hi, Dave - Per our conversation, here's the previous signed finding for the 2002 MTP SEIR. As discussed, the act of adopting the plan itself does not provide the discretionary project approval to put the projects into place; therefore, I believe the EIR warrants a De Minimis Impact
Finding. Please advise me after you talk internally. Thanks, Kathy

<<img001.pdf>>

Public Hearing – Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, March 9, 2005

There were no comments on the Draft EIR made during the public hearing held by AMBAG on March 9, 2005.

Public Hearing – Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, March 17, 2005

There were no comments on the Draft EIR made during the public hearing held by SCCRTC on March 17, 2005.

Public Hearing – Transportation Agency for Monterey County, March 23, 2005

There were no comments on the Draft EIR made during the public hearing held by TAMC on March 23, 2005.

PREFACE

A. PURPOSE OF THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended (CEQA) requires Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) to be prepared for all projects which may have a significant impact on the environment. An EIR is an information document, the purposes of which, according to CEQA Guidelines, are "...to identify the significant effects of a project on the environment, to identify alternatives to the project, and to indicate the manner in which such significant effects can be mitigated or avoided." The information contained in this EIR is intended to be objective and impartial, to enable the reader to arrive at an independent judgment regarding the probable character and significance of the impacts resulting from the adoption and implementation of the 2005 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2005 MTP), the 2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan (2005 MC-RTP) and the 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan (2005 SCC-RTP), herein referenced as the "three plans".

In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, this Final EIR formally consists of the responses to comments on the Draft EIR and revisions of those portions of the Draft EIR which have been modified in response to comments received during the public review period on the Draft EIR. The Final EIR includes copies of all comments on the Draft EIR received during the 45-day public review period following publication of the Draft EIR, and provides responses to those comments. In some cases, the responses have also resulted in revisions to the Draft EIR, and all such changes are reflected in this document. As required by CEQA, this document addresses those comments received during the public review period that relate directly to the adequacy and completeness of the Draft EIR. The Final EIR does not include or address those comments received that relate to the characteristics or features of the three plans where the Draft EIR's analysis of the environmental issues associated with the implementation of the three plans are not directly involved.

The EIR (which is comprised of the Draft EIR and the Final EIR) is intended to be certified as a complete and thorough program-level record of the types of environmental impacts that may be associated with the implementation of the three plans by the Lead Agencies (the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments for the 2005 Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan, the Transportation Agency for Monterey County for the 2005 Monterey County Regional

Transportation Plan, and the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission for the 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan). Certification of the EIR as adequate and complete must take place prior to any formal Lead Agency action on adopting the three plans, and certification of the EIR does not equate to adoption of the three plans.

The EIR has been prepared pursuant to CEQA as amended (commencing with Section 21000 of the California Public Resources Code), and the CEQA Guidelines.

B. ORGANIZATION OF THE FINAL EIR

The Final EIR consists of the following major sections:

- **Preface** – outlines the objectives of the EIR and important preliminary information.
- **Revisions of the Draft EIR** – contains revisions to the Draft EIR text.
- **Comments and Responses** – contains letters of comment on the Draft EIR and verbal comments recorded during the public hearings on the Draft EIR, along with responses to these comments. In response to some comments, the text of the Draft EIR has been modified, with changes indicated as described in the previous paragraph.

This Final EIR has been prepared for the Lead Agencies by Lamphier-Gregory, Urban Planning and Environmental Analysis. Each participant in the preparation of the EIR has extensive experience and knowledge in their respective fields. The information in the EIR has been compiled from a variety of sources, including published studies, applicable maps and independent field investigations.

C. PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS

The Draft EIR was circulated for a public review period of 45 days (February 15, 2005 through April 1, 2005). During that period, three public hearings were held to obtain public comment on the adequacy and completeness of the Draft EIR (on March 9, 2005 in Marina for AMBAG, on March 17, 2005 in Watsonville for SCCRTC, and March 23, 2005 in Salinas for TAMC). The Draft EIR was available for review at the offices of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (445 Reservation Road, Suite G, Marina, California), the offices of the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (55-B Plaza Circle, Salinas, CA) and the offices of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA), and at many local libraries within Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz Counties. In addition to the three agencies mailing hard copies of the Draft EIR to various partner agencies and applicable agency committees, the Draft EIR was also available for review on the SCCRTC and TAMC websites. The Draft EIR was additionally circulated for review through the State of California Office of Planning and Research's State Clearinghouse, as well as AMBAG's Regional Clearinghouse.

At the close of the public review period, all comments received were compiled, and responses to these comments were prepared and are presented in this Final EIR. The Final EIR also incorporates any necessary revisions to the Draft EIR made in response to comments received. The Boards of Directors of AMBAG, TAMC and SCCRTC will each review the EIR (comprised of the Draft EIR and Final EIR), and independently consider whether or not to certify the EIR as adequate and complete.

After reviewing the Draft EIR and the Final EIR, and following action to certify the EIR as adequate and complete, the Boards of Director of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, the Board of Directors of the Transportation Agency for Monterey County, and the Commissioners of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission will each be in a position to determine whether each of the three documents should be adopted as proposed, revised, or rejected. This determination will be based upon information presented on the three transportation plans, impacts and probable consequences, and the possible alternatives and mitigation measures available.

Where potentially significant and unavoidable environmental impacts have been identified in the EIR, each Lead Agency will be required to make a written statement of overriding considerations. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines, Section 15093 [a], a decision-making agency must balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered "acceptable".

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COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

This chapter contains written comments on the Draft EIR on the three plans. Letters received during the 45-day public review period are listed. Each letter is marked to identify distinct comments on the Draft EIR. Responses to these comments are provided following each letter. No comments were received at the public hearings on the Draft EIR, held on March 9, 2005 (AMBAG), March 17, 2005 (SCCRTC) and March 23, 2005 (TAMC).

Throughout the responses to comments, where a specific comment has been addressed previously, a reference to the response in which the comment is discussed may be provided in order to reduce repetition.

As noted in the **PREFACE**, in several instances responding to a comment received on the Draft EIR has resulted in a revision to the text of the Draft EIR. In other cases, the information provided in the responses is deemed adequate in itself, and modification of the Draft EIR text was not deemed appropriate.

In reviewing the comments received on the Draft EIR, it should be noted that while some of the material submitted provides opinion on the three plans or addresses features and characteristics of the three plans as currently proposed, such material may not address the environmental analysis presented in the Draft EIR. Responses presented in this document focus only on those comments which bear a direct relationship to the Draft EIR, as required under CEQA. While other comments that are not directly related to the Draft EIR may be acknowledged, it is beyond the scope of the Final EIR to provide responses to these comments or opinions. Additional letters that were received by lead agencies which did not include comments on the Draft EIR are not included in this document, but were considered by the respective lead agencies.

Several additional points to keep in mind in reviewing the comments received on the Draft EIR are presented in Section 15204 of the CEQA Guidelines (as revised on October 28, 1998) which states that a Lead Agency need not "conduct every test or perform all research, study, and experimentation recommended or demanded by commentors.", in Section 15003 (h) which states that "CEQA does not require technical perfection in an EIR, but rather adequacy, completeness, and a good-faith effort at full disclosure. A court does not pass on the correctness of an EIR's environmental conclusions, but only determines if the EIR is sufficient as an informational document.", and in Section 15003 (j), which states: "CEQA requires that decisions be informed and balanced. It must not be subverted into an instrument for the oppression and delay of social, economic, or recreational development or advancement."

The letters received on the Draft EIR are listed below. Each letter has been marked to identify each specific comment in the right-hand margin (i.e., **A-1**, **D-2**, etc.). Following each letter, the response to each identified comment in that letter is presented sequentially (for example, the first comment on the Draft EIR identified in **LETTER C** is identified as **C-1** in the right-hand margin of the letter, and the corresponding response immediately following **LETTER C** is coded as **RESPONSE C-1**). In order to avoid repetition, where individual comments focus on the same issues raised in a previous comment or comments, the response to those comments may make reference to a previous response or responses.

LIST OF LETTERS **Page**

MAR 0 1 2005

LETTER A

MONTEREY BAY
Unified Air Pollution Control District
serving Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties

AIR POLLUTION CONTROL OFFICER
Douglas Quetin

24580 Silver Cloud Court • Monterey, California 93940 • 831/647-9411 • FAX 831/647-8501

February 22, 2005

Kathy Urlie
AMBAG
P.O. Box 809
Marina, CA 93933-0809

SUBJECT: DEIR FOR 2005 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Dear Ms. Urlie:

Staff has reviewed the referenced document and has the following comments:

1. Page 3-22 and Table 3-2. The Basin is now a nonattainment transitional area for the State ozone standard. **A-1**

2. Page 3-27, para. 1. Recommend the following addition: "The 2004 AQMP uses the same 2004 population projects and travel data assumptions for the period through 2030 as do the three plans." **A-2**

Thank you for the opportunity to review the document. Please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jean Getchell
Supervising Planner

Letter A: Jean Getchell, Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, February 22, 2005.

COMMENT A-1: 1. Page 3-22 and Table 3-2. The Basin in now nonattainment transitional for the State ozone standard.

RESPONSE A-1: Comment noted. In response to this comment, the text of the first sentence in the second paragraph under **Current Air Quality** on Draft EIR page 3-22 has been modified to read as follows:

> "Under the California Clean Air Act, the NCCAB is a ~~moderate~~ nonattainment transitional area for the State ozone AAQS."

In response to this comment, the entry under "State" on the line for "Ozone (O^3) – 1 hour" in **Table 3-2: Attainment Status of the North Central Coast Air Basin** on Draft EIR page 3-23 has been modified to read as follows:

> "~~Moderate~~ Nonattainment Transitional"

COMMENT A-2: 2. Page 3-27, para. 1. Recommend the following addition: "The 2004 AQMP uses the same 2004 population projections and travel data assumptions for the period through 2030 as do the three plans."

RESPONSE A-2: Comment noted. In response to this comment, the text of fourth sentence in the first paragraph on Draft EIR page 3-27 has been modified to read as follows:

> "The 2004 AQMP uses the same 2004 population projections and travel data assumptions for the period through 2030 as do the three plans."

LETTER B

AMBAG
ASSOCIATION OF MONTEREY BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS

March 10, 2005

Ms. Kathy Urlie
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
PO Box 809
Marina, CA 93933

Re: MCH# 020526- Notice of Availability of Draft Environmental Impact Report for the 2005 Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan, 2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan, and 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan

Dear Ms. Urlie:

AMBAG's Regional Clearinghouse circulated a summary of notice of your environmental document to our member agencies and interested parties for review and comment.

The AMBAG Board of Directors considered the project on **March 9, 2005** and has no comments at this time. **B-1**

Thank you for complying with the Clearinghouse process.

Sincerely,

Nicolas Papadakis
Executive Director

SERVING OUR REGIONAL COMMUNITY SINCE 1968
445 RESERVATION ROAD, SUITE G ✦ P. O. BOX 809 ✦ MARINA, CA 93933-0809
(831) 883-3750 ✦ FAX (831) 883-3755 ✦ www.ambag.org

Letter B: Nicolas Papadakis, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, March 10, 2005.

COMMENT B-1: The AMBAG Board of Directors considered the project on ***March 9, 2005*** *and has no comments at this time.*

RESPONSE B-1: Comment noted. No response is necessary.

LETTER C

-----Original Message-----
From: Steve Lustgarden [mailto:steve@hpcn.org]
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2005 9:07 PM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: comments on plan

C-1

I believe that there are many positive components to this plan.
However, I strongly oppose any measures to widen any portion of Highway One.
I believe that any additional development of this Highway will only encourage further growth in our community, further reliance on automobiles, both of which will degrade the quality of life in our community.
Thank you for considering my viewpoint.

Steve Lustgarden

Thank you for your comments. They will be forwarded to the Commission for their review.

Please visit the SCCRTC website at www.sccrtc.org for information on the Commission and its activities.

Thank you again.

<><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><><>
Gini Pineda, Secretary
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz CA 95060
831 460 3200
831 460 3215 (fax)
www.sccrtc.org

Letter C: Steve Lustgarden, March 17, 2005.

COMMENT C-1: I believe that there are many positive components to this plan. However, I strongly oppose any measures to widen any portion of Highway One. I believe that any additional development of this Highway will only encourage further growth in our community, further reliance on automobiles, both of which will degrade the quality of life in our community. Thank you for considering my viewpoint.

RESPONSE C-1: Comments and opinions noted. As indicated on Draft EIR page 5-6, a relatively high level of residential and non-residential development is anticipated within the region through the year 2030, and much of this growth is projected to occur regardless of the extent to which the three plans are implemented. Adoption of the three plans, in itself, would not be expected to alter the projected magnitude of regional residential and non-residential growth. Transportation system improvement projects identified in the three plans (including improvements to Highway 1) may indirectly increase growth pressure by increasing transportation system capacity. Quantification of any growth-inducing effects associated with specific projects (e.g., those related to Highway 1 improvements) would need to be considered as part of the project-specific environmental evaluation to be conducted by each individual implementing agency as designs for such projects are developed and brought forward for review.

Because the planned Highway 1 Widening project is identified as an HOV lane project, it is anticipated that the project will increase carpool and bus use. However, as indicated on Draft EIR page 3-107, if added capacity results in travelers switching from public transportation or other commute alternatives to using single occupancy vehicles, diversion from other modes would be expected to increase vehicle activity. It is assumed that, on balance, implementation of the three plans would increase transit ridership and the utilization of other commute alternatives, and would, accordingly, reduce the number of daily vehicle trips within the region. Quantification of any traffic-inducing effects associated with specific projects (e.g., those related to Highway 1 improvements) would need to be considered as part of the project-specific environmental evaluation to be conducted by each individual implementing agency as designs for such projects are developed and brought forward for review, in combination with development decisions by individual local jurisdictions.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
50 HIGUERA STREET
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401-5415
PHONE (805) 549-3101
FAX (805) 549-3077
TDD (805) 549-3259
http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/

Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!

March 30, 2005

LETTER D

SCH# 2004061013

Kathy Urlie, Principal Planner
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
445 Reservation Road, Suite G
Marina, CA 93933-0809

Dear Ms. ~~Urlie:~~ KATHY

COMMENTS TO COMBINED 2005 METROPOLITAN AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The California Department of Transportation (Department), District 5, Development Review, has reviewed the combined 2005 Monterey Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan, and Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report (hereafter called DEIR), and offers the following comments.

1. We appreciate that the authors have included numerous statements of what the DEIR tries to accomplish, what it 'is and is-not' and that the plan does not provide project designs, construction schedule or approval action. **D-1**

2. The Department does feel, however, that the DEIR inappropriately designates many of the project impacts listed as significant and unavoidable impacts to the environment without the benefit of an environmental analysis. In short, there is not enough detail in any of the projects listed to make an assessment of the impacts. Granted, most projects have consequences, but it is our position that the DEIR can list projects without predetermining ultimate impacts. **D-2**

3. Our previous review of this document in administrative format did not include a review of storm water runoff, flood hazards, and water quality issues. The bulleted comments below capture the comments from the Department's subject matter experts on these topics: **D-3**

   (Hydrology)
   - It should not be assumed that could be significant unavoidable runoff impacts for any of the projects listed.
   - Runoff impacts in addition to existing watershed can almost always be mitigated through energy dissipation and flow detention. **D-4**
   - Any new roadway alignment could and should be designed not to have runoff impacts. **D-5**
   - Section 5.4 included "permanent modification of existing drainage patterns" as a significant irreversible modification to the environment. Without the benefit of a full analysis, this should not be the case. Specific projects are designed to not permanently alter drainage patterns. **D-6**

(Water Quality)

- The DEIR seems to limit itself to only two best management practices (BMP). It is suggested to replace specific BMP references with more general "treatment BMP" language. (Page 3-63) **D-7**
- Generally, increases in peak flow volumes, velocities, impervious surface or drainage patters can be mitigated via the implementation of design pollution prevention BMPs. These could include flow conveyance systems, ditches, berms, dikes, swales, hard surface protection systems, vegetated systems and energy dissipation. (Impact 3.8.3-Resulting Level of Significance) **D-8**
- The DEIR should mention that Carmel Bay, Pacific Grove Marine Gardens Fish, and Hopkins Marine Life Refuge is an Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS). Storm water discharges in ASBS are prohibited by the ocean plan unless they are treated, or the State Water Resources Control Board grants an exemption. **D-9**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the DEIR. If you have any questions, or need further clarification on items discussed above, please don't hesitate to call me at (805) 549-3168.

Sincerely,

DAVID M. MURRAY, Chief
Regional Planning / Development Review

Letter D: David M. Murray, California Department of Transportation, March 30, 2005.

COMMENT D-1: We appreciate that the authors have included numerous statements of what the DEIR tries to accomplish, what it "is and is not" and that the plan does not provide project designs, construction schedule or approval action.

RESPONSE D-1: Comment noted. No response required.

COMMENT D-2: The Department does feel, however, that the DEIR inappropriately designates many of the project impacts listed as significant and unavoidable impacts to the environment without the benefit of an environmental analysis. In short, there is not enough detail in any of the projects listed to make an assessment of the impacts. Granted, most projects have consequences, but it is our position that the DEIR can list projects without predetermining ultimate impacts.

RESPONSE D-2: Comment acknowledged. As indicated in the Introduction section of the Draft EIR, in the absence of details related to the site-specific alignments, locations, designs and scheduling of several hundred transportation system improvements projects which are identified in the three plans, the Draft EIR can only provide a "program-level" environmental review of the three plans. The Draft EIR identifies the general types of environmental impacts that may be anticipated with actual implementation of these individual projects. In conducting the required site-specific environmental review for each individual project in the future, implementing agencies may find that many of the types of impacts identified as potentially significant, or potentially significant and unavoidable in the program-level Draft EIR are not, in fact, applicable to any specific individual transportation system improvement projects listed in the three plans. Given the current level of uncertainty regarding the details of the hundreds of projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans, and regarding future environmental conditions between now and 2030 when such projects may ultimately be implemented, the Draft EIR takes a conservative approach to the identification of potential impacts by identifying those impacts that may, in the case of some individual projects or types of projects, prove to ultimately be significant and unavoidable. However, this does not imply that any individual listed project either would or would not entail these impacts, since that can only be determined when the implementing agency for each individual project conducts site-specific environmental review once such projects have been designed and are formally brought forward for consideration.

COMMENT D-3: Our previous review of this document in administrative format did not include a review of storm water runoff, flood hazards, and water quality issues. The bulleted comments below capture the comments from the Department's subject matter experts on these topics:

(Hydrology)

- *It should not be assumed that could be significant unavoidable runoff impacts for any of the projects listed.*

RESPONSE D-3: See **RESPONSE D-2**, above, regarding the Draft EIR approach to identifying potentially significant, or potentially significant and unavoidable environmental impacts, which

applies to potential impacts related to stormwater runoff. In the absence of specific details regarding each of several hundred transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans, at a program-level the Draft EIR conservatively indicates that there might be some listed projects that may entail adverse effects associated with stormwater runoff, and that in some instances, these could prove significant and unavoidable. An assumption that the stormwater runoff impacts associated with each of several hundred of these projects could never ultimately prove significant and unavoidable, in the absence of site-specific environmental review (as suggested in this comment) would be inconsistent with the conservative, program-level approach to the identification of potential environmental effects employed by the three Lead Agencies involved in the preparation of the Draft EIR.

COMMENT D-4: Runoff impacts in addition to existing watershed can almost always be mitigated through energy dissipation and flow detention.

RESPONSE D-4: Comment regarding the ability to "almost always" effectively mitigate runoff effects through the use of energy dissipation and flow detention is noted. See **RESPONSE D-3**, above.

COMMENT D-5: Any new roadway alignment could and should be designed not to have runoff impacts.

RESPONSE D-5: Comment indicating that any new roadway alignment should be designed not to have runoff impacts is noted. See **RESPONSE D-3**, above.

COMMENT D-6: Section 5.4 included "permanent modification of existing drainage patterns" as a significant irreversible modification to the environment. Without the benefit of a full analysis, this should not be the case. Specific projects are designed to not permanently alter drainage patterns.

RESPONSE D-6: Comment regarding the ability of transportation system improvement projects to be designed to avoid permanent modification of existing drainage patterns is noted. See **RESPONSE D-3**, above.

COMMENT D-7: (Water Quality)

- *The DEIR seems to limit itself to only two best management practices (BMP). It is suggested to replace specific BMP references with more general "treatment BMP" language. (Page 3-63)*

RESPONSE D-7: See Draft EIR page 3-63, **MITIGATION MEASURE 3.8.1**. In the discussion under "D.", the Draft EIR indicates that "The SWPPP shall, where appropriate, include specific BMPs to control the discharge of materials from the site and into creeks and local storm drains. BMP methods may include (but would not be limited to) the use of temporary retention basins, straw bales, sand bagging, mulching, erosion control blankets, soil stabilizers and native erosion control grass seed." As the Draft EIR indicates, there may be additional BMPs not listed in the Draft EIR that may be employed to reduce potentially significant water pollution impacts at project construction sites. Each implementing agency will, as part of the necessary site-specific

environmental review for each project, determine whether or not that project would entail potentially significant water pollution effects, and if so, for the identification of specific mitigation measures that could feasibly reduce those impacts (which may include implementation of site-specific BMPs).

COMMENT D-8: Generally, increases in peak flow volumes, velocities, impervious surface or drainage patters can be mitigated via the implementation of design pollution prevention BMPs. These could include flow conveyance systems, ditches, berms, dikes, swales, hard surface protection systems, vegetated systems and energy dissipation (Impact 3.8.3 – Resulting Level of Significance)

RESPONSE D-8: Comment regarding the ability of design pollution prevention BMPs to generally mitigate increases in peak flow volumes, velocities, impervious surface or drainage patterns is noted. See **RESPONSE D-3** and **RESPONSE D-7**, above.

COMMENT D-9: The DEIR should mention that Carmel Bay, Pacific Grove Marine Gardens Fish, and Hopkins Marine Life Refuge is an Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS). Storm water discharges in ASBS are prohibited by the ocean plan unless they are treated, or the State Water Resources Control Board grants an exemption.

RESPONSE D-9: Comment noted. In response to this comment, the following text has been added below the last paragraph on Draft EIR page 3-34:

"Under the Water Quality Control Plan for Ocean Waters of California, the State Water Resources Control Board has identified five Areas of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) within the region:

Pacific Grove Marina Gardens Fish Refuge and Hopkins Marine Life Refuge
Carmel Bay ASBS
Point Lobos Ecological Reserve ASBS
Julia Pfeiffer Burns Underwater Park ASBS
Ocean Area Surrounding the Mouth of Salmon Creek ASBS

The purpose of designating these ASBS is to protect these areas from undesirable changes in natural water quality. The ASBS designation is based on the presence of certain species or biological communities that deserve special protection consisting of preservation and maintenance of natural water quality conditions to the extent practicable (Water Resources Control Board and California Regional Water Quality Control Board Administrative Procedures, September 24, 1970, Section XI and Miscellaneous Rev. 7-9/1/72). New point-source discharges into ASBSs are strictly prohibited. Along the coast between Monterey and San Francisco, prospective point-source dischargers are required by the SWRCB to show, through techniques such as mathematical modeling, that there will be no deleterious effects of the new discharge in the water quality of nearby ASBSs."

MONTEREY COUNTY

PLANNING AND BUILDING INSPECTION DEPARTMENT

☐ 230 CHURCH STREET, SALINAS, CALIFORNIA 93901 PLANNING: (831) 755-5025 BUILDING: (831) 755-5027 FAX: (831) 755-5487
MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 1208, SALINAS, CALIFORNIA 93902

☑ COASTAL OFFICE, 2620 1st Avenue, MARINA, CALIFORNIA 93933 PLANNING: (831) 883-7500 BUILDING: (831) 883-7501 FAX:(831) 384-3261

March 31, 2005

Mr. William Reichmuth, P.E., Executive Director
Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC)
55-B Plaza Circle, Salinas, CA 93901

Subject: Draft EIR for the 2005 AMBAG Metropolitan Transportation Plan, 2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan and 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan

Dear Mr. Reichmuth:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the subject Draft EIR. Our comments are as follows:

1. Impact 3.1.2: Substantial Damage to Scenic Resources. Potential impacts on scenic resources should be expanded to include ridgeline development and development on slopes over 30%. The County has concerns regarding the adequacy of Mitigation Measure 3.1.2 (Scenic Resource Avoidance by Design) to mitigate the impacts of projects that cause substantial damage to scenic resources. Specifically, the mitigation measure needs to be expanded to address impacts of ridgeline development and development on slopes greater than 30%. Policy 26.1.9 of the Monterey County General Plan states: E-

> *"In order to preserve the County's scenic and rural character, ridgeline development shall not be allowed unless a special permit is first obtained. Such permit shall only be granted upon findings being made that the development as condition by permit will not create a substantially adverse visual impact when viewed from a common public viewing area...."*

Policy 26.1.10 of the Monterey County General Plan states:

> *"The County shall prohibit development on slopes greater than 30%. It is the general policy of the County to require dedication of scenic easement on a slope of 30% or greater. Upon application, an exception to allow development on slopes of 30% or greater may be granted at a noticed public hearing by the approving authority for discretionary permits or by the Planning Commission for building or grading permits. The exception may*

LETTER E (continued)

be granted if one or both of the following findings are made, based upon substantial evidence: a) There is no alternative which would allow development to occur on slopes of less than 30%, or b) The proposed development better achieves the resource protection objectives and policies contained in the Monterey County General Plan, accompanying Area Plans and Land Use Plans, and all applicable master plans."

At a minimum, the mitigation measure should be modified to require compliance with local policies regarding scenic resources.

2. Impact 3.2.1: Conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance. The County has concerns regarding the adequacy of Mitigation Measure 3.2.1 (Design Modifications) to mitigate the impacts of projects that result in the conversion of prime farmland, unique farmland and farmland of Statewide importance. The mitigation measure states: **E-2**

"*In designing specific transportation system improvement projects, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, avoid the conversion of prime farmland, unique farmland and farmland of statewide importance to the maximum extent feasible, and shall consider alternative alignments that reduce or avoid the conversion of such farmlands. Where avoidance is not feasible, such projects shall, where appropriate be designed to minimize the conversion of such farmlands.... The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (LESA) from the California Department of Conservation shall, where appropriate, be utilized to identify the potentially significant project-related impacts resulting from changes in agricultural land use....*

Policy 30.0.1 of the Monterey County General Plan states:

"*The County shall prevent non-agricultural uses which could interfere with the potential of normal agricultural operations on viable farmlands designed as prime, of state importance, unique or of local importance.*"

While not all transportation projects will be able to prevent interfering with agricultural operations on viable farmland, this mitigation measure should be revised to provide more specific criteria for when such interference may be appropriate and specific measures that could reduce such impacts to a level of less than significant. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (LESA) is a point-based approach that is generally used for rating the relative values of agricultural land resources. It does not provide criteria for when it may be appropriate for land uses to interfere with agricultural operations on viable farmlands.

3. Impact 3.2.4: Fragmentation of Agricultural Lands and Changes in Land Uses Adjacent to Agricultural Lands. Mitigation Measure 3.2.4 (Project-Specific Agricultural Protection) is intended to mitigate fragmentation of agricultural lands and changes in land uses adjacent to agricultural lands by a) ensuring that rural roadway alignments follow property lines to the maximum extent feasible, and b) incorporate project-specific design features which would provide adequate protection for the farmland adjacent to the project site (fencing, warning notices, **E-3**

LETTER E (continued)

etc.). To be consistent with Policy 30.0.2 of the Monterey County General Plan, this mitigation measure should be expanded to require mitigation of road dust, erosion, water quality and weed abatement when transportation projects are adjacent to viable farmlands. Policy 30.0.2 states:

"*The County shall require that permanent, well-defined buffer areas be provided as part of new non-agricultural development proposals which are located adjacent agricultural land uses on viable farm lands designated as prime, of statewide importance, unique, or of local importance. These buffer areas shall be dedicated in perpetuity, shall be of sufficient size to protect agricultural from the impacts of incompatible development and to mitigate against the effects of agricultural operations on adjacent land uses, and shall be credited as open space.*"

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR.

Sincerely,

Scott Hennessey

Scott Hennessey, Director of Planning and Building Inspection Department

Letter E: Scott Hennessey, Monterey County Planning and Building Inspection Department, March 31, 2005.

COMMENT E-1: Impact 3.1.2: Substantial Damage to Scenic Resources. Potential impacts on scenic resources should be expanded to include ridgeline development and development on slopes over 30%. The County has concerns regarding the adequacy of Mitigation Measure 3.1.2 (Scenic Resource Avoidance by Design) to mitigate the impacts of projects that cause substantial damage to scenic resources. Specifically, the mitigation measure needs to be expanded to address impacts of ridgeline development and development on slopes greater than 30%. Policy 26.1.9 of the Monterey County General Plan states:

> *"In order to preserve the County's scenic and rural character, ridgeline development shall not be allowed unless a special permit is first obtained. Such permit shall only be granted upon findings being made that the development as condition by permit will not create a substantially adverse visual impact when viewed from a common public viewing area …."*

Policy 26.1.10 of the Monterey County General Plan states:

> *"The County shall prohibit development on slopes greater than 30%. It is the general policy of the County to require dedication of scenic easement on a slope of 30% or greater. Upon application, an exception to allow development on slopes of 30% or greater may be granted at a noticed public hearing by the approving authority for discretionary permits or by the Planning Commission for building or grading permits. The exception may be granted if one or both of the following findings are made, based upon substantial evidence: a) There is no alternative which would allow development to occur on slopes of less than 30%, or b) The proposed development better achieves the resources protection objectives and policies contained in the Monterey County General Plan, accompanying Area Plans and Land Use Plans, and all applicable master plans."*

RESPONSE E-1: Comment noted. Although a review of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans did not provide any examples of projects which might be expected to require development on ridgelines or slopes of 30 percent or greater within Monterey County, in response to this comment, the first sentence in paragraph "B" on Draft EIR page ES-8 and Draft EIR page 3-7 has been modified to read as follows:

> "B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, design transportation project alignments to avoid ridgelines or slopes of 30 percent or greater, and to avoid or minimize substantial physical alteration of the land, due to large amounts of cut and fill."

As indicated on Draft EIR page 3-8, although the effective application of the type of measures identified in **MITIGATION MEASURE 3.1.2: Scenic Resource Avoidance by Design** could reduce impacts to scenic resources to a level of less than significant for most projects, impacts associated with a few projects may remain **significant and unavoidable**. Project-specific impacts on scenic resources, and the identification of appropriate site-specific mitigation, can only be accomplished by the implementing agencies on a project-by-project basis as individual

transportation system improvement projects are designed and brought forward for environmental review.

COMMENT E-2: Impact 3.2.1: Conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland and Farmland if Statewide Importance. The County has concerns regarding the adequacy of Mitigation measure 3.2.1 (Design Modifications) to mitigate the impacts of projects that result in the conversion of prime farmland, unique farmland and farmland of Statewide importance. The mitigation measure states:

> *"In designing specific transportation system improvement projects, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, avoid the conversion of prime farmland, unique farmland and farmland of statewide importance to the maximum extent feasible, and shall consider alternative alignments that reduce or avoid the conversion of such farmlands. Where avoidance is not feasible, such projects shall, where appropriate be designed to minimize the conversion of such farmlands …. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (LESA) from the California Department of Conservation shall, where appropriate, be utilized to identify the potentially significant project-related impacts resulting from changes in agricultural land use….*

Policy 30.0.1 of the Monterey County General Plan states:

> *"The County shall prevent non-agricultural uses which could interfere with the potential of normal agricultural operations of viable farmlands designed as prime, of state importance, unique or of local importance."*

While not all transportation projects will be able to prevent interfering with agricultural operations on viable farmland, this mitigation measure should be revised to provide more specific criteria for when such interference may be appropriate and specific measures that could reduce such impacts to a level of less than significant. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (LESA) is a point-based approach that is generally used for rating the relative values of agricultural land resources. It does not provide criteria for when it may be appropriate for land uses to interfere with agricultural operations on viable farmlands.

RESPONSE E-2: Comment noted. As indicated in the Draft EIR, a program-level evaluation of the general types of environmental impacts that might be associated with implementation of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans is not a substitute for the detailed, site-specific evaluation of the environmental effects that may be associated with each individual project listed as they are individually designed and brought forward for environmental review by the implementing agencies. Although **MITIGATION MEASURE 3.2.1: Design Modifications** indicates that the LESA model may be used to identify potentially significant impacts associated with the conversion of agricultural land that may result from the implementation of some projects, where appropriate, if implementing agencies wish to use other, more appropriate criteria in evaluating the significance of these impacts on a project-by-project basis as part of their required CEQA review of such projects, they are free to do so. Although this comment suggests the need for the use of alternate criteria, no proposed alternatives have been identified in the comment.

As indicated on Draft EIR page 3-13, although the effective application of the type of measures identified in **MITIGATION MEASURE 3.2.1: Design Modifications** by implementing agencies could reduce the conversion of farmland to a level of less than significant for most projects, impacts associated with a few projects may remain **significant and unavoidable**. Project-specific impacts associated with the conversion of farmland or interference with agricultural operations, and the identification of appropriate site-specific mitigation, can only be accomplished by the implementing agencies on a project-by-project basis as individual transportation system improvement projects are designed and brought forward for environmental review.

COMMENT E-3: Impact 3.2.4: Fragmentation of Agricultural Lands and Changes in Land Uses Adjacent to Agricultural Lands. Mitigation Measure 3.2.4 (Project-Specific Agricultural Protection) is intended to mitigate fragmentation of agricultural lands and changes in land uses adjacent to agricultural lands by a) ensuring that rural roadway alignments follow property lines to the maximum extent feasible, and b) incorporate project-specific design features which would provide adequate protection for the farmland adjacent to the project site (fencing, warning notices, etc.). To be consistent with Policy 30.0.2 of the Monterey County General Plan, the mitigation measure should be expanded to require mitigation of road dust, erosion, water quality and weed abatement when transportation projects are adjacent to viable farmlands. Policy 30.0.2 states:

> *"The County shall require that permanent, well-defined buffer areas be provided as part of new non-agricultural development proposals which are located adjacent agricultural land uses on viable farm lands designated as prime, of statewide importance, unique, or of local importance. These buffer areas shall be dedicated in perpetuity, shall be of sufficient size to protect agricultural from the impacts of incompatible development and to mitigate against the effects of agricultural operations on adjacent land use, and shall be credited as open space.*

RESPONSE E-3: Comment noted. In response to this comment, paragraph "B" on Draft EIR page ES- 14 and Draft EIR page 3-15 has been modified to read as follows:

> "B. In those instances where projects are proposed in areas adjacent to lands currently in agricultural uses (particularly lands which have been designated as prime farmland, unique farmland or farmland of statewide importance), implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, incorporate project-specific design features which would provide adequate protection for the farmland adjacent to the project site (fencing, warning notices, buffers, etc.)."

In evaluating project-specific farmland fragmentation impacts and mitigation measures as part of the necessary CEQA environmental review process, implementing agencies that identify a site-specific need for buffers as a feasible mitigation measure may also define how such buffers would need to be designed and maintained to reduce prevent road dust and erosion, to maintain water quality, and to pursue weed abatement efforts within those buffer areas.

As indicated on Draft EIR page 3-15, although the effective application of the type of measures identified in **MITIGATION MEASURE 3.2.4: Project-Specific Agricultural Protection** by implementing agencies could reduce the effects of agricultural land fragmentation to a level of less than significant for most projects, impacts associated with a few projects may remain **significant and unavoidable**. Project-specific impacts associated with farmland fragmentation, and the identification of appropriate site-specific mitigation, can only be accomplished by the implementing agencies on a project-by-project basis as individual transportation system improvement projects are designed and brought forward for environmental review.

LETTER F

-----Original Message-----
From: RSANTEE5@aol.com [mailto:RSANTEE5@aol.com]

808 River Street
Santa Cruz CA 95060
(831)423-0763 (831)
centralhomesupply@s

Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2005 7:21 PM
To: info@sccrtc.org
Subject: 2005 RTP/EIR Draft

Central Home Supply

March 31, 2005

To: Regional Transportation Commission

From: R. Santee, Central Home Supply

RE: Draft 2005 Regional Transportation Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report

Dear Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft 2005 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and draft Environmental Impact Report. Under "Project within Projected Funds" on page C-5, there exists a proposal for Hwy 1/9 intersection improvements and Park & Ride lot" identified as SC-25 at a cost of $7.6 million.

1. Background: SC-25 as proposed takes 1.36 acres of Central Home Supply operations forcing the closure or relocation of our business. We are a locally owned, family business serving this community for three generations.

2. History: In 2000, the city traffic engineer proposed a similar project on Central Home Supply property. The city council rejected that project because:

   A) Traffic: The Park & Ride *added* traffic congestion to an already impacted intersection during peak usage periods.

   B) Service: Central Home Supply serves the whole community while a Park & Ride would only benefit Hwy 17 commuters, UCSC students and possibly summer beach traffic.

   C) Fiscal: Central Home Supply is a top ten sales tax revenue producer for the City of Santa Cruz. The Santee family and our coworkers are wholly invested in the local economy. We live and work here. A Park & Ride would cost millions to build and

maintain and the City would suffer enormous revenue losses associated with Central Home Supply's demise.

3. Lack of Available Funds: it is our understanding that the "Projected Funds" are no longer available for this project. If not, the project does not belong in the category selected. We challenge the determination that the funds are at this time dedicated to this project.

4. Precedent: The City of Santa Cruz Redevelopment Agency published a draft environmental impact report for the Tannery Arts Center 27 Dec 2004 that included this Park and Ride lot as phase II of the development. Because of its impact on Central Home Supply, the redevelopment agency *removed all of phase II including the Park & Ride* from the Tannery Arts Center plan. The data supporting their decision still exists. We believe the Park & Ride lot was included in the RTP because the City appeared to be in the process of approving it, along with evaluating the environmental impacts associated with it. However, now that the Park & Ride lot has been removed from the Tannery Arts Center, there is no basis for including it in the RTP, because the City is no longer advancing the project.

5. Legal: Central Home Supply has perfected a continuous and uninterrupted lease for thirty years with Caltrans. The leased property and improvements are essential to Central Home Supply operations at this location. Note: Caltrans sold the analogous right of way property for the Gateway Shopping Center thus negating a future interchange at the Hwy 1/9 intersection. In addition, Central Home Supply legally added improvements to the leased property amounting to more than $5000 in value. As a result, Central Home Supply is entitled to a first right of refusal regarding the disposition of the property.

5. Alternatives: There are numerous unused and unimproved properties in the vicinity of the Hwy 1/9 intersection (i.e. behind the Sash Mill, next to the Portuguese Hall, vacant businesses in Harvey West Park) that could be used for a Park & Ride. However traffic congestion would be better reduced by parking before entering the Hwy 1/9 intersection that is already heavily impacted.

Summary: The traffic problems targeted by this Park & Ride are exacerbated by locating it at the Hwy 1 & 9 intersection. These impacts should be evaluated in the EIR for the RTP. In addition, an EIR would be necessary prior to making a discretionary decision to embark upon this project. Moreover, the fiscal impact on the community would be unconscionable. It is not legally feasible. Central Home Supply is willing, able, and entitled to purchase the property, if surplus. The project should be deleted from the Regional Transportation Plan. F-1

Sincerely,

Raymond W. Santee
Vice President

CC: Santa Cruz City Council California Transportation Commission John Laird
Bruce McPherson Keith Hinrichsen Paul Hastings

Letter F: Raymond W. Santee, Central Home Supply, March 31, 2005.

COMMENT F-1: Summary: The traffic problems targeted by this Park & Ride are exacerbated by locating it at the Hwy 1 & 9 intersection. These impacts should be evaluated in the EIR for the RTP. In addition, an EIR would be necessary prior to making a discretionary decision to embark upon this project. Moreover, the fiscal impact on the community would be unconscionable. It is not legally feasible. Central Home Supply is willing, able, and entitled to purchase the property, if surplus. The project should be deleted from the Regional Transportation Plan.

RESPONSE F-1: Comments and opinions noted. As indicated on Draft EIR page 1-5, the EIR on the three plans has been prepared as a Program EIR that focuses on the identification of the probable types of environmental effects that may generally be associated with the implementation of several hundred individual transportation system improvement projects listed in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans between now and 2030. A detailed, site-specific environmental evaluation of each individual transportation system improvement project (e.g., a future Park & Ride lot identified as SC-25 on the financially constrained Action Element lists of the 2005 SCC-RTP and the 2005 MTP) will need to be conducted by each implementing agency once such projects have been designed and brought forward for review, and prior to any action being taken to approve such projects, as indicated in this comment.

SIERRA CLUB
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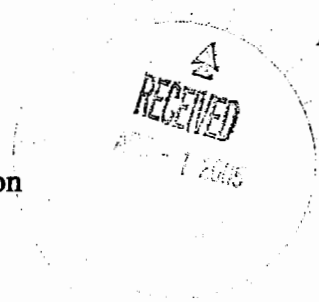
Santa Cruz County Group of the Ventana Chapter

P.O. Box 604, Santa Cruz, California 95061 phone: (831) 426-4453
FAX (831) 426-5323 web: www.ventana.org e-mail: scscrg@cruzio.com

April 1, 2005

LETTER G



Santa Cruz County
Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: Draft Regional Transportation Plan and EIR

Dear Commission and Staff:

It is apparent in reviewing the 2005 RTP Draft and EIR Draft that the Commission is again placing the highest priority on the proposed widening of Highway 1, and expecting to fund the widening with a 1/2 cent sales tax. The Sierra Club strongly urges the RTC to reconsider its priorities and give, instead, highest priority to the many options, other than widening Highway 1, that are available for increasing mobility within the county without the need to increase taxes or to degrade the environment further.

Through the lopsided defeat of Measure J just a few months ago, the voters in this county resoundly repudiated the Highway widening and the tax increase. Certainly many sales tax measures in other counties have failed before eventually passing. However, any sales tax measure in this county to widen Highway 1 is likely to fail again because of a lack of consensus on the part of the county voters that widening the freeway will reduce congestion. In addition, the RTC has not included the public in a significant way in the discussion of transportation concerns. Without that open, inclusionary process, the public is likely to respond with another resounding rejection of future tax measures.

Given all the issues relating to impacts from automobiles, including global warming, uncertainty in future oil supplies, and local concerns about habitat loss, pollution runoff, increased noise, any decision to increase our dependence on petroleum and the single occupant automobile should be considered carefully. Those concerns, coupled with studies showing that a widened freeway will not reduce congestion over the longer term in any significant way, should persuade the Commission to reconsider an ill-fated priority. The Sierra Club strongly urges the RTC to reconsider these factors and remove the widening of Highway 1 as its highest priority. **G-1**

Sincerely,

James Danaher
Chair, Transportation Committee

Aldo Giacchino
Chair, Executive Committee

Letter G: James Danaher and Aldo Giacchino, Sierra Club, April 1, 2005.

COMMENT G-1: Given all the issues relating to impacts from automobiles, including global warming, uncertain oil supplies, and local concerns about habitat loss, pollution runoff, increased noise, any decision to increase our dependence on petroleum and the single occupant automobile should be considered carefully. Those concerns, coupled with studies showing that a widened freeway will not reduce congestion over the longer term in any significant way, should persuade the Commission to reconsider an ill-fated priority. The Sierra Club strongly urges the RTC to reconsider these factors and remove the widening of Highway 1 as its highest priority.

RESPONSE G-1: Comments and opinions noted. As indicated on Draft EIR page 1-5, the EIR on the three plans has been prepared as a Program EIR that focuses on the identification of the probable types of environmental effects that may generally be associated with the implementation of several hundred individual transportation system improvement projects listed in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans between now and 2030. A detailed, site-specific environmental evaluation of each individual transportation system improvement project (e.g., future widening of Highway 1 in Santa Cruz County) will need to be conducted by each implementing agency once such projects have been designed and brought forward for review. Depending on the significance criteria established by each implementing agency, such a project-specific environmental review could evaluate the possible effects of individual projects on air quality, habitat loss, stormwater runoff, ambient noise levels, as well as any effects associated with traffic congestion levels. If the Draft EIR for a project-specific environmental review finds any project-related impacts to be significant and unavoidable, the lead agency has three ways of responding under CEQA. Specifically, agencies must ensure that adopted mitigation measures are fully enforceable and can avoid or reduce the magnitude of the impact, specify that changes have been or should be adopted if the project is within another agency's jurisdiction, or adopt a statement of overriding consideration including the economic, social, legal, technical considerations that make mitigation and alternatives infeasible.

Mike Weaver
52 Corral de Tierra Rd.
Salinas, CA 93908
Phone: (831) 484-2243

Ms. Kathy Urlie
AMBAG (Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments)
P.O. Box 809
Marina, CA 93933
Phone: (831) 883-3750
Fax: (831) 883-3755

Mr. Andy Cook
TAMC (Transportation Agency for Monterey County)
55-B Plaza Circle
Salinas, CA 93901
Phone: (831) 775-4411
Fax: (831) 775-0897

April 1, 2005

Dear Ms. Urlie and Mr. Cook,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft 2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan, Draft Metropolitan Plan and the Draft Environmental Impact Report. H-

I note in the initial Executive Summary of your Draft Metropolitan Plan language that it states the metropolitan area covered by this plan is a designated maintenance area for the one hour ozone standard under the Federal Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990. Can you please explain the connection between the forecasts for population growth in the region and the expected air quality standards? A map of the region with shadings of air quality in the various parts would also be most helpful. Perhaps clear plastic overlays on top of the map of the region, showing air quality in 1990, today, and expected air quality ten years from now under current projections?

Your introduction states that the tri-County area has been incorporated into this metropolitan planning region for the purpose of meeting the federal Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) requirement that the planning area coincide with the non-attainment air basin boundary. Please explain in greater detail this requirement and the non-attainment for the lay person reviewing this document.

Your Plan Purpose (Page II-1) states, "Arguably most importantly, the RTP's reflect an extensive public involvement and participation process."
Please explain how this can be in Monterey County? Despite both Federal and State encouragement and requirement for public participation, the Transportation

Agency for Monterey County eliminated the Citizen's Advisory Committee for the Agency. First it was dissolved because it was felt there wasn't enough geographic diversity, even though there were nine unfilled positions that could have been filled from anywhere in the County. Then, a newly formed Citizen's Advisory Committee was created, and then eliminated. Although the TAMC staff has an "outreach" Program where speeches are given at Rotary Club functions, and the like, and questions are solicited, it does not take the place of a regularly scheduled group of County citizens who can pour over the budget, ask good questions, and make advisory comments for the elected representatives of the TAMC Board. Millions of dollars of both Federal and State monies are at stake and politicians are spending it without much Citizen oversight.

Under Item B. Regional Transportation Planning Process, you correctly point out that the Transportation Agency for Monterey County is a designated Congestion Management Agency. It states that it may OPT OUT of the designation if their member Jurisdictions decide to pursue that course. Please explain in detail for both the layperson and the Federal and State Agencies who may be reviewing this:

1) What is a Congestion Management Agency?
2) Why was it adopted in Monterey County?
3) What are the requirements for roadways in the Congestion Management Program?
4) Can roadways or segments be eliminated from the CMP?
5) What are the dollar advantages of being a County in the Congestion Management Program?
6) What are the environmental advantages of being a County in the Congestion Management Program?
7) What are the requirements when a segment of highway falls below the designated Level of Service?
8) Please provide the location of the documents that reflect the adherence of this County of Monterey to the CMP. Are these documents available for public review?
9) Is the Transportation Agency for Monterey County considering opting out of a CMP because they may not be in conformance?

On page II-5, your draft Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan states, "RTPAs (Regional Transportation Planning Agencies) are also responsible for ensuring adequate citizen involvement within the regional transportation planning process." Please explain what "adequate" means in terms of real citizen involvement. Again, note the Monterey County Citizen's Advisory Committee was eliminated.

On page II-7, your draft Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan states, "AMBAG and other providers of transportation planning services regularly meet and consult with representatives from other local transportation planning and public works

agencies to ensure that the transportation needs of their jurisdictions are being adequately served. THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY AND CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEES STAFFED BY THE RTPAs." (Emphasis mine) Once again, the Citizen's Advisory Committee in Monterey County was eliminated.

Please explain in greater detail the loss of approximately $5 Million annually to the Monterey Bay region because they are no longer eligible under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program. What events led up to this loss of eligibility? What are the effects of the Monterey Bay region no longer being "beholden" to the performance of air quality conformity of its plans and programs?

Page II-11 of your draft Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan references both Memoranda of Understanding and Agreement amongst various agencies. Can the language of these Memoranda be published in the Final Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the public to read what it is that their public agencies and elected representatives have agreed to?

Your description of the various highways in the draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan fails to mention that State Route 68 is a designated California State Scenic Highway on page III-8. Also, might I suggest you change the wording of sentence number two from "...easterly to Laguna Seca Raceway and on into Salinas..." to the following: " easterly to the Monterey County Park, Laguna Seca Recreation Area, and again eastward past Monterey County's Toro Regional Park and on into Salinas."

Regarding Bus Transit, specifically the Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST), could you please list both the total number of buses, the number of new buses acquired in the past three years, and the cost of these new buses? Have the old bus's been sold?

Your draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan on page III-15 has Map 3 that lists Park and Ride Lots. Where is the Park and Ride Lot for the 1,031 houses of the Las Palmas Ranch housing development off River Road in Monterey County? This traffic impacts SR 68.

Could you please list the official operating hours of the various airports under "f." "Aviation System". This could be included as part of Table III-3, titled, MONTEREY BAY GENERAL AVIATION OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES- 2003.

Under Level of Service Standards Applicability, can you please explain any differences between Monterey County requirements and the State of California recommendations for the State's highways that pass through Monterey County?
Also, a description of the various methodologies that can be used in calculating Levels of Service would be most helpful. Is there a standard methodology that is used in the tri-County Metropolitan area? If not, why not?

Your Metropolitan Transportation Plan has a Map labeled Map 6 on page III-40.

Page 4

I am completely mystified by this map. It is labeled LEVELS OF SERVICE E & F ON STATE HIGHWAYS. State Highway 68 in Monterey County is drawn in as being Level of Service E. The date on the top of the page is May 8, 2002. Briefly, State Highway 68 was designed and estimated to be able to accommodate upto16,000 vehicles per day. It achieved this capacity in approximately 1983. Today, depending on the time of year, I have seen estimates from 24,000 to over 30,000 vehicles per day using this Highway 68 from Salinas to Monterey. This highway was officially designated as being Level of Service F in 1997 by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County. Since 1997, traffic has gotten worse. How then, can this Highway 68 segment be listed as being Level of Service "E" in the 2005 draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan? Where is the required deficiency study/plan?

Finally, regarding your Monterey County Constrained (Funded) Project List dated February 15, 2005 in your draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan, I have a few questions regarding State Highway 68.

1) Where did the estimated $10 Million funding come from for SR 68-Operational Improvements? (CT018)
2) Additional proposed left turn lanes at San Benancio and Corral de Tierra Roads are controversial to many of these Road's residents and will cause more safety problems. (CT018)
3) The Project Study Report has not been completed, thus not reviewed by the State of California, CalTrans, who owns this Highway 68. Thus, isn't it premature to list this on a funded project list? (CT018)
4) Specifically, what York Road Improvements are being considered? (reference MRY031). It lists signal installations (plural). However, there is a signal already there. It also lists "modifications". Is there a plan to significantly increase the traffic on York Road?
5) Significant changes are listed for General Jim Moore Blvd in this list on the draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan. However, comments on the plan for General Jim Moore Blvd. are due on April 16, 2005. One concern is that I do not believe the Army has completed its removal of possible unexploded ordnance.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. I sincerely appreciate the good work that the management and staff of both AMBAG and TAMC are providing Monterey County and the tri-County area. These are large documents to prepare.
For the most part, they are informative and helpful. I hope you can take my comments and suggestions as being constructive.

Sincerely,

Mike Weaver

c.c. FHA, CTC, CalTrans District 5, Highway 68 Coalition

Letter H: Mike Weaver, April 1, 2005.

COMMENT H-1: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft 2005 Monterey County regional Transportation Plan, Draft Metropolitan Plan and the Draft Environmental Impact Report.

RESPONSE H-1: Comment noted. As Mr. Weaver's letter did not address revisions/review of the Draft EIR, no further response is required.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit

Arnold
Schwarzenegger
Governor

Sean Walsh
Director

APR 07 2005

April 4, 2005

LETTER I

Kathy Urlie
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
445 Reservation Rd., Ste. G
P.O. Box 809
Marina, CA 93933-0809

Subject: 2005 Monterey Bay Area MTP, 2005 Monterey County RTP, and 2005 Santa Cruz County RTP
SCH#: 2004061013

Dear Kathy Urlie:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Draft EIR to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on April 1, 2005, and no state agencies submitted comments by that date. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. **I-1**

Please call the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. If you have a question about the above-named project, please refer to the ten-digit State Clearinghouse number when contacting this office.

Sincerely,

Terry Roberts

Terry Roberts
Director, State Clearinghouse

1400 TENTH STREET P.O. BOX 3044 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95812-3044
TEL (916) 445-0613 FAX (916) 323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov

Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base

SCH# 2004061013
Project Title 2005 Monterey Bay Area MTP, 2005 Monterey County RTP, and 2005 Santa Cruz County RTP
Lead Agency Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

Type EIR Draft EIR

Description 1) 2005 Monterey Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Plan: federally-required, 20 + year transportation plan covering 3-county Monterey Bay region.
2) 2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan: state-required, 20 + year transportation plan covering Monterey County.
3) 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan: state-required, 20 + year transportation plan covering Santa Cruz County.

Lead Agency Contact

Name Kathy Urlie
Agency Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
Phone (831) 883-3750 **Fax**
email
Address 445 Reservation Rd., Ste. G
P.O. Box 809
City Marina **State** CA **Zip** 93933-0809

Project Location

County Monterey, Santa Cruz
City
Region
Cross Streets N/A
Parcel No.
Township **Range** **Section** **Base**

Proximity to:

Highways
Airports
Railways
Waterways
Schools
Land Use N/A

Project Issues Aesthetic/Visual; Agricultural Land; Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Drainage/Absorption; Flood Plain/Flooding; Geologic/Seismic; Growth Inducing; Landuse; Minerals; Noise; Population/Housing Balance; Public Services; Recreation/Parks; Schools/Universities; Sewer Capacity; Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading; Solid Waste; Toxic/Hazardous; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Water Quality; Water Supply; Wetland/Riparian; Wildlife

Reviewing Agencies Resources Agency; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 3; Department of Parks and Recreation; Native American Heritage Commission; Public Utilities Commission; Department of Fish and Game, Region 3; Department of Water Resources; California Coastal Commission; California Highway Patrol; Caltrans, District 5; Air Resources Board, Transportation Projects; Caltrans, Division of Transportation Planning; Caltrans, Division of Aeronautics

Date Received 02/15/2005 **Start of Review** 02/15/2005 **End of Review** 04/01/2005

Note: Blanks in data fields result from insufficient information provided by lead agency.

Letter I: Terry Roberts, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, April 4, 2005.

COMMENT I-1: The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Draft EIR to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on April 1, 2005, and no state agencies submitted comments by that date. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

RESPONSE I-1: Comment noted. No response required.

APR 0 7 2005

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Governor's Office of Planning and Research

State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit

Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

Sean Walsh
Director

April 4, 2005

LETTER J

Kathy Urlie
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
445 Reservation Rd., Ste. G
P.O. Box 809
Marina, CA 93933-0809

Subject: 2005 Monterey Bay Area MTP, 2005 Monterey County RTP, and 2005 Santa Cruz County RTP
SCH#: 2004061013

Dear Kathy Urlie:

The enclosed comment (s) on your Draft EIR was (were) received by the State Clearinghouse after the end of the state review period, which closed on April 1, 2005. We are forwarding these comments to you because they provide information or raise issues that should be addressed in your final environmental document. **J-1**

The California Environmental Quality Act does not require Lead Agencies to respond to late comments. However, we encourage you to incorporate these additional comments into your final environmental document and to consider them prior to taking final action on the proposed project.

Please contact the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions concerning the environmental review process. If you have a question regarding the above-named project, please refer to the ten-digit State Clearinghouse number (2004061013) when contacting this office.

Sincerely,

Terry Roberts

Terry Roberts
Senior Planner, State Clearinghouse

Enclosures
cc: Resources Agency

1400 TENTH STREET P.O. BOX 3044 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95812-3044
TEL (916) 445-0613 FAX (916) 323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov

State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
http://www.dfg.ca.gov
POST OFFICE BOX 47
YOUNTVILLE, CALIFORNIA 94599
(707) 944-5500

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor

LETTER J (continued)

April 1, 2005

Clear 4-1-05 Late

RECEIVED
APR - 4 2005
STATE CLEARING HOUSE

RECEIVED
APR - 4 2005
STATE CLEARING HOUSE

Ms. Kathy Urlie
Association of Bay Area
Governments
445 Reservation Road, Suite G
Marina, CA 93933

Dear Ms. Urlie:

2005 Monterey Bay Area
Metropolitan Transportation Plan
SCH 2004061013

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) has reviewed the document for the subject project. We do not have specific comments regarding the proposed project and its effects on biological resources. Please be advised this project may result in changes to fish and wildlife resources as described in the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 753.5(d)(1)(A)-(G)[1]. Therefore, a de minimis determination is not appropriate, and an environmental filing fee as required under Fish and Game Code Section 711.4(d) should be paid to the county clerk on or before filing of the Notice of Determination for this project.

If you have any questions, please contact Dave Johnston Environmental Scientist, at (831) 475-9065; or Mr. Scott Wilson, Habitat Conservation Supervisor, at (707) 944-5584.

Sincerely,

for Scott Wilson
Robert W. Floerke
Regional Manager
Central Coast Region

cc: State Clearinghouse

[1] http://ccr.oal.ca.gov/. Find California Code of Regulations, Title 14 Natural Resources, Division 1, Section 753

Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870

Letter J: Terry Roberts, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, April 4, 2005.

COMMENT J-1: The enclosed comment(s) on your Draft EIR was (were) received by the State Clearinghouse after the end of the state review period, which closed on April 1, 2005. We are forwarding these comments to you because they provide information or raise issues that should be addressed in your final environmental document.

The California Environmental Quality Act does not require Lead Agencies to respond to late comments. However, we encourage you to incorporate these additional comments into your final environmental document and to consider them prior to taking final action on the proposed project.

Comment from Robert W. Floerke, Regional Manager, Central Coast Region, California Department of Fish and Game, April 1, 2005:

> *"The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) has reviewed the document for the subject project. We do not have specific comments regarding the proposed project and its effects on biological resources. Please be advised this project may result in changes to fish and wildlife resources as described in the California Code of regulations, Title 14, Section 753.5(d)(1)(A) – (G)[1]. Therefore, a de minimus determination is not appropriate, and an environmental filing fee as required under Fish and Game Code Section 711.4 (d) should be paid to the county clerk on or before filing of the Notice of Determination for this project."*

RESPONSE J-1: Comment noted. No response is required. In following up to this correspondence, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments has received the attached April 14, 2005 e-mail from David Johnston of the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) indicating that the de minimums determination is indeed appropriate for this project's environmental filing, and that a filing fee required under Fish and Game Code Section 711.4(d) is not applicable.

John Courtney

From: Kathy Urlie [KUrlie@ambag.org]
Sent: Thursday, April 21, 2005 8:11 AM
To: jcourtney@lamphier-gregory.com
Subject: FW: Monterey Bay Region MTP-RTPs EIR De Minimis Finding

-----Original Message-----
From: David Johnston [mailto:djohnston@dfg.ca.gov]
Sent: Thursday, April 14, 2005 9:23 AM
To: Kathy Urlie
Subject: Re: Monterey Bay Region MTP-RTPs EIR De Minimis Finding

Kathy:

I've heard back from Region and we have decided to go with your interpretation on this one. Persistence pays!

This e-mail is notification that DFG considers the Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan a deminimis project and agrees that the fee will not be required.

Dave Johnston
Calif. Department of Fish and Game
(831)475-9065

>>> "Kathy Urlie" <KUrlie@ambag.org> 04/11/05 11:54 AM >>>
Hi, Dave - Per our conversation, here's the previous signed finding for the 2002 MTP SEIR. As discussed, the act of adopting the plan itself does not provide the discretionary project approval to put the projects into place; therefore, I believe the EIR warrants a De Minimis Impact
Finding. Please advise me after you talk internally. Thanks, Kathy

<<img001.pdf>>

Public Hearing – Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, March 9, 2005

There were no comments on the Draft EIR made during the public hearing held by AMBAG on March 9, 2005.

Public Hearing – Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, March 17, 2005

There were no comments on the Draft EIR made during the public hearing held by SCCRTC on March 17, 2005.

Public Hearing – Transportation Agency for Monterey County, March 23, 2005

There were no comments on the Draft EIR made during the public hearing held by TAMC on March 23, 2005.

REVISIONS TO THE DRAFT EIR

On Draft EIR page ES-8, the first sentence in paragraph "B" has been modified to read as follows:

> "B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, design transportation project alignments to avoid ridgelines or slopes of 30 percent or greater, and to avoid or minimize substantial physical alteration of the land, due to large amounts of cut and fill."

On Draft EIR page ES-14, paragraph "B" has been modified to read as follows:

> "B. In those instances where projects are proposed in areas adjacent to lands currently in agricultural uses (particularly lands which have been designated as prime farmland, unique farmland or farmland of statewide importance), implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, incorporate project-specific design features which would provide adequate protection for the farmland adjacent to the project site (fencing, warning notices, buffers, etc.)."

On Draft EIR page 3-7, the first sentence in paragraph "B" has been modified to read as follows:

> "B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, design transportation project alignments to avoid ridgelines or slopes of 30 percent or greater, and to avoid or minimize substantial physical alteration of the land, due to large amounts of cut and fill."

On Draft EIR page 3-15, paragraph "B" has been modified to read as follows:

> "B. In those instances where projects are proposed in areas adjacent to lands currently in agricultural uses (particularly lands which have been designated as prime farmland, unique farmland or farmland of statewide importance), implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, incorporate project-specific design features which would provide adequate protection for the farmland adjacent to the project site (fencing, warning notices, buffers, etc.)."

On Draft EIR page 3-22, the text of the first sentence in the second paragraph under **Current Air Quality** has been modified to read as follows:

> "Under the California Clean Air Act, the NCCAB is a ~~moderate~~ nonattainment transitional area for the State ozone AAQS."

On Draft EIR page 3-23, the entry under "State" on the line for "Ozone (O^3) – 1 hour" in **Table 3-2: Attainment Status of the North Central Coast Air Basin** has been modified to read as follows:

"~~Moderate~~ Nonattainment Transitional"

On Draft EIR page 3-27, the text of fourth sentence in the first paragraph has been modified to read as follows:

"The 2004 AQMP uses the same 2004 population projections and travel data assumptions for the period through 2030 as do the three plans."

The following text has been added below the last paragraph on Draft EIR page 3-34:

"Under the Water Quality Control Plan for Ocean Waters of California, the State Water Resources Control Board has identified five Areas of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) within the region:

Pacific Grove Marina Gardens Fish Refuge and Hopkins Marine Life Refuge
Carmel Bay ASBS
Point Lobos Ecological Reserve ASBS
Julia Pfeiffer Burns Underwater Park ASBS
Ocean Area Surrounding the Mouth of Salmon Creek ASBS

The purpose of designating these ASBS is to protect these areas from undesirable changes in natural water quality. The ASBS designation is based on the presence of certain species or biological communities that deserve special protection consisting of preservation and maintenance of natural water quality conditions to the extent practicable (Water Resources Control Board and California Regional Water Quality Control Board Administrative Procedures, September 24, 1970, Section XI and Miscellaneous Rev. 7-9/1/72). New point-source discharges into ASBSs are strictly prohibited. Along the coast between Monterey and San Francisco, prospective point-source dischargers are required by the SWRCB to show, through techniques such as mathematical modeling, that there will be no deleterious effects of the new discharge in the water quality of nearby ASBSs."

FEIR APPENDIX

PROJECTS REVISED SINCE DRAFT MTP WAS RELEASED

Projects Revised Since Draft MTP was Released

All Figures in '000s (thousands of dollars)

RTP Id	Agency	Project Title	Constrained Funding	Unconstrained Funding	Total Project Cost	Conformity Non-Exempt	Mode	TCM	$ Change from Draft MTP
Revised Projects									
CAL-3	Caltrans	Highway 25 to Santa Clara County	$164,300	$0	$164,300	Yes	VF		$41,800
SBCOG-13	San Benito COG	Ridesharing Program, Annual Allocation	$150	$0	$150		TDM	Yes	$100
Added Projects									
SBC-5	San Benito County	HBRR/Seismic Group Listing	$6,386	$0	$6,386	Yes	VF		$6,386
SBC-6	San Benito County	Fairview/Fallon Intersection Improvements	$300	$0	$300		TF		$300
SBC-7	San Benito County	Cienega Rd. Realignment	$629	$0	$629		TF		$629
SBC-8	San Benito County	John Smith/Fairview Intersection Improvements	$770	$0	$770		TF		$770
SBC-9	San Benito County	Orchard & Fairview/Prescott & SJ Hwy Imprv.	$160	$0	$160		TF		$160
SBt1-01	Hollister Airport	Runway 24 Holding Apron	$70	$0	$70		A		$70
SBt1-06	Hollister Airport	Perimeter Fencing	$447	$0	$447		A		$447
SBt1-08	Hollister Airport	Lighting Beacon Rehabilitation	$13	$0	$13		A		$13
Deleted Project									
CO-P48	County of Santa Cruz	San Lorenzo Valley Bicycle Trail	$0	$0	$0		BP	Yes	-$8,000

DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

2005 MONTEREY BAY AREA
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

2005 MONTEREY COUNTY
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN
Transportation Agency for Monterey County

2005 SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

State Clearinghouse #2004061013

Prepared by Lamphier-Gregory
1944 Embarcadero
Oakland, CA 94606

February 15, 2005

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report, together with its appendices, constitutes the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the proposed 2005 Monterey Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2005 MTP), the 2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan (2005 MC-RTP), and the 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan (2005 SCC-RTP). The purpose of these plans is to coordinate and facilitate the programming and budgeting of all transportation facilities and services within the appropriate jurisdictions within the Monterey Bay region through 2030 in accordance with Federal regulations. The three plans each represent minor revisions of the previous MTP/RTPs developed by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) and the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC), respectively.

The 2005 MTP meets federal requirements for transportation and air quality planning (23 CFR, Part 450, Subpart C and 40 CFR, Part 51), through a plan which meets the specific needs and deficiencies of the regional transportation system. Transportation projects and programs as proposed, evaluated and selected at the county-wide level, serve as the basis for the 2005 MTP. In receipt of each county's project list, AMBAG has been assured by the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies of each county that their RTP was developed taking into account transportation need, an evaluation of alternatives to meet that need, and the resultant plan and/or program selection to satisfy transportation need. Arguably most importantly, the RTPs reflect an extensive public involvement and participation process. The sum total is to reflect a transportation system for the region, based on public input, which embraces various modes of transportation in order to efficiently maximize the movement of people and goods within and through the region and to reduce energy consumption and air pollution through the year 2030.

The three plans do not provide project designs or a construction schedule, and adoption of these three comprehensive planning documents does not represent an approval action for any of the individual transportation programs and projects listed in their financially constrained Action Elements. Details relating to the site-specific alignment, location, design and scheduling of the transportation improvement projects which are identified in the three plans are not fixed in, or defined by, these documents. The adoption of the three plans represents an essential first step in qualifying for the receipt of the funding necessary to permit the implementation of the financially constrained Action Element of these three documents. However, the act of adopting the three documents, in itself, would not be sufficient to enable any of these programs or projects to proceed without additional actions on the part of the appropriate agencies responsible for the actual implementation of each individual program and project.

The Lead Agency in the development of the 2005 MTP and in the preparation of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). AMBAG is responsible for ensuring that the regional transportation planning process is continuing, cooperative and comprehensive. The 2005 MTP has been prepared to meet requirements set forth in the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, the metropolitan transportation planning regulations, and other applicable state and federal regulations. Although only one entity can represent the Lead Agency under CEQA for the preparation of an EIR, in the case of this document the EIR will serve as the CEQA environmental review document for three separate (but related) planning documents: the 2005 MTP, the 2005 MC-RTP and the 2005 SCC-RTP. For this reason, AMBAG, as Lead Agency for the preparation of the EIR, has developed the EIR in close cooperation with TAMC and SCCRTC, with the understanding that TAMC will ultimately act as Lead Agency when this EIR is considered in conjunction with the 2005 MC-RTP, and that SCCRTC will act as Lead Agency when this EIR is considered in conjunction with the 2005 SCC-RTP. Before considering adoption of the 2005 MTP, the AMBAG Board of Directors will consider whether this EIR provides an adequate and complete analysis of the environmental effects associated with the implementation of the 2005 MTP. The EIR must be certified as adequate and complete by the Board prior to any action to adopt the 2005 MTP.

The Lead Agency for the preparation of the 2005 MC-RTP is the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC). Before considering adoption of the 2005 MC-RTP, the TAMC Board of Directors will consider whether this EIR provides an adequate and complete analysis of the environmental effects associated with the implementation of the 2005 MC-RTP. The EIR must be certified as adequate and complete by the Board prior to any action to adopt the 2005 MC-RTP.

The Lead Agency responsible for the preparation of the 2005 SCC-RTP is the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC). Before considering adoption of the 2005 SCC-RTP, the SCCRTC board will consider whether this EIR provides an adequate and complete analysis of the environmental effects associated with the implementation of the 2005 SCC-RTP. The EIR must be certified as adequate and complete by the Commission prior to any action to adopt the 2005 SCC-RTP.

Within the context of the discussion above, this EIR has been prepared as a Program EIR (rather than a "project" EIR). The transportation system improvements proposed in the three plans can be regarded as a series of geographically-related projects, but for the majority of these projects, it would be premature to make final decisions on their implementation.

The Program EIR is intended to focus on those probable regional environmental effects associated with the implementation of the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans that can be identified now, while deferring analysis of those site-specific impacts which cannot be predicted prior to the preparation of detailed design and/or construction plans for the individual transportation system improvement projects that are identified in the financially-constrained project lists incorporated within each of these three documents. Upon submittal of formal plans for the individual transportation system improvement projects, the Lead Agency for each proposed project

would need to determine the level of additional environmental required to define in detail how the impacts of that project might differ from those identified as resulting from the implementation of the three plans, as described in the Program EIR.

Because the act of adopting the three plans would not, in itself, result in the implementation of any transportation system improvement programs or projects identified in these documents, no environmental impacts would be directly associated with this action. By the same token, the adoption of the three plans would not, in itself, resolve any of the existing traffic deficiencies within the region or result in any transportation system improvements, since this action would be insufficient to enable any of the proposed transportation system improvement programs and projects to proceed. However, adoption of the three plans is necessary to achieve compliance with state and federal laws, and can be regarded as a critical first step in obtaining the funding which will be required to carry out many of the programs and projects identified in the respective financially constrained Action Elements.

The three plans express the priorities of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, SCCRTC, TAMC and their partner planning/programming agencies, for transportation system improvements and programs within the Monterey Bay region. This Program EIR describes, in general terms, the probable environmental effects which may be associated with those expressed priorities on a regional, system-wide basis, rather than on a project-by-project basis.

The Draft EIR incorporates and adds to the information provided in the previous EIRs prepared on earlier MTPs and RTPs, but reflects changes which have been made in the development of the three plans. These changes include slight revisions to policy statements; the deletion of some projects which appeared on previous financially constrained Action Element lists (but which have since been completed or have been dropped from consideration); the addition of new projects to the financially constrained Action Element lists and the Financially Unconstrained Project Lists; revisions of the Financial Element to reflect changes in anticipated revenues; and a new air quality Conformity Analysis on the 2005 MTP.

This Draft EIR identifies measures which appear to be available for, and effective in, mitigating the significant environmental effects associated with the implementation of the programs and projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans. These mitigation measures, as identified, are recommendations to the appropriate agency responsible for the actual implementation of the projects. The identified mitigation measures may be subject to change based on comments received on the Draft EIR during the review period, and on the determination made by the respective governing boards in reviewing the EIR. These decision-making bodies will select the actual mitigation measures to be employed if the 2005 transportation plans are to be adopted, and those measures would then be incorporated in a mitigation monitoring program, as applicable.

The Draft EIR evaluates three alternatives to the adoption of the three plans and the implementation of the financially constrained Action Element programs and projects identified in those documents. In this document, the “No Build” alternative represents a scenario in which no

new construction on transportation system improvement projects would take place in the absence of the three plans, although maintenance of the existing transportation infrastructure would continue. The "Financially Unconstrained" alternative represents a more extensive range of transportation system improvements than anticipated under the three plans, since it would encompass all of the transportation system improvement programs and projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans, as well as all of the transportation system improvement programs and projects identified in the Financially Unconstrained Project Lists of the three plans. A third alternative represents the "Financially Constrained" projects that would be listed in the event that new local revenue sources, like funds generated by new local sales tax measures in Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties, do not realize future funding.

For the purposes of environmental analysis, the "No Build" alternative would be regarded as the "environmentally superior" alternative. Since it would require no new construction, this alternative would not entail any of the potentially significant construction-related impacts which might be associated with some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans, or associated with the "Financially Unconstrained" alternative or the "Financially Constrained – No New Revenues" alternative (i.e., conversion of land in agricultural use, noise, dust, alteration in visual characteristics, disturbance of cultural resources, changes in drainage patterns, etc.). **However, the "No Build" alternative would not pursue the goals and strategies of the three plans, and would provide the least efficient and most congested transportation system of all alternatives examined (including the three plans).**

Under CEQA, when the "No Project" alternative has been identified as the "environmentally superior" alternative, it is necessary to identify another alternative which would represent the "environmentally superior" alternative in the absence of the "No Project" alternative. Since the "No Build" alternative represents the "No Project" alternative in this evaluation, another alternative must be identified as the "environmentally superior" alternative in the absence of the "No Build" alternative. The three plans (with implementation of all transportation system improvement programs and projects identified in the financially constrained Action Element only), the "Financially Unconstrained" alternative and the "Financially Constrained – No New Revenues" alternative would all entail the same types of potential environmental impacts. However, the potential environmental impacts which may be associated with these alternatives are not identical.

The "Financially Unconstrained" alternative, with its expanded list of transportation system improvement projects, could be expected to entail more potentially significant construction-related impacts in a greater number of locations than the implementation of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans, although the basic character of these impacts (when viewed in terms of each individual project) would be expected to remain about the same. Since all of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans are included within the "Financially Unconstrained" alternative, and because the additional projects listed in the "Financially Unconstrained" alternative (see **Appendix C**) could be expected to entail similar types of impacts, but at an increased number of project sites, this would not be regarded as the "environmentally superior" alternative.

The "Financially Constrained – No New Revenues" alternative would result in the implementation of all of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans, but due to reduced availability of funding, it would be expected to take longer to complete these projects than currently anticipated. Although the type and magnitude of impacts associated with this alternative would be identical to those associated with the Project, delays in Action Element implementation might be expected to result in some reduction in the potential cumulative environmental impacts associated with project-specific construction activity when listed projects would otherwise be expected to be completed simultaneously within the same general areas (e.g., construction-related water quality impacts, construction-related air quality impacts, construction-related noise impacts, etc.). However, the delay in project completion resulting from funding constraints in the absence of new revenues could also be expected to result in some delays in obtaining the anticipated traffic congestion relief and related air quality benefits that may be associated with such projects. For this reason, the "Financially Constrained – No New Revenues" alternative would not be regarded as being "environmentally superior" to the full implementation of the financially constrained Action Element programs and projects identified in the three plans.

In the absence of the "No Build" alternative, the implementation of the three plans, including all projects identified in the financially constrained Action Element lists in these transportation plans, would be considered the "environmentally superior" alternative.

If the environmental impacts which may be associated with the implementation of the transportation system improvement programs and projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans are determined to outweigh the improvements in the regional transportation system which are anticipated, then the "No Build" alternative must be considered as the "environmentally superior" alternative. However, in balancing the environmental "costs" and transportation system improvement "benefits", in the absence of the programs and projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans, traffic conditions would be expected to remain unacceptable and deficient along some local roadways. The environmental "costs" associated with the "No Build" alternative are the lowest of all the alternatives examined, but the "No Build" alternative also provides the lowest level of transportation system "benefits" of all the alternatives examined, and would still be associated with potentially significant adverse environmental impacts (most notably, a deterioration in air quality linked to increased traffic congestion).

A "program-level" summary of the potentially significant adverse environmental impacts which might be associated with some of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans follows, along with the corresponding mitigation measures. In reviewing this section, however, it is important to remember that these potential impacts are not directly related to the adoption of the three plans. In and of itself, the adoption of these plans would not be sufficient to enable any of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans to proceed, and would not result in any adverse environmental impacts. Under CEQA, each of the appropriate agencies responsible for the actual implementation of projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the

three plans will be required to provide some level of project-specific environmental review for each of the projects listed once such projects have been designed and formally proposed for approval.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE 2005 TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.1.1: Substantial Adverse Effects on Scenic Vistas Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may result in a substantial change in existing scenic vistas along roadways that are included in the California Scenic Highway System, that are eligible for inclusion in the California Scenic Highway System, or that have been identified as Scenic Roadways/Scenic Highways/Scenic Roads by one of the three counties in the Monterey Bay region. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) operational, safety and capacity improvements to portions of SR 1 with views of the Pacific Ocean, and projects that would involve improvements on roadways that have been identified as eligible for inclusion in the California Scenic Highway System or that are locally-designated scenic routes. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with the implementation of these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.1.1: Visual/Scenic Resources Analysis** The implementing agency for any proposed project that may result in substantial adverse effects on scenic vistas shall, where appropriate, conduct a detailed visual assessment during the environmental review process and mitigate for significant visual impacts, where feasible. Visual assessments for improvement projects related to roadways that have been designated as part of the California Scenic Highway System shall, where appropriate, be prepared in consultation with Caltrans. Proposed median barriers should be carefully studied to determine if they are really needed, what alternatives may be available, and what mitigation measures (i.e., landscaping) may be appropriate. Through this process of assessment, it may be possible to identify mitigation measures or alternatives which could reduce project-specific impacts on scenic vistas to a level of less than significant for most projects. However, even with the implementation of the mitigation measures, impacts associated with some projects may remain **significant and unavoidable**.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.1.2: Substantial Damage to Scenic Resources Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may result in substantial damage to scenic resources, particularly in the vicinity of roadways that are included in the California Scenic Highway System, that are eligible for inclusion in the California Scenic Highway System, or that have been identified as Scenic Roadways/Scenic Highways/Scenic Roads by one of the three counties in the Monterey Bay region. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) road widenings, installation of median barriers, and construction of interchanges or new roadways. In addition, construction of individual improvement projects may affect public views of scenic resources that could result in the short-term blockage of views by construction equipment and staging areas, disruption of views by temporary signage, and exposure of slopes and removal of vegetation. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with the implementation of these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.1.2: Scenic Resource Avoidance by Design** A. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that any project that may affect scenic resources (particularly along a Scenic Roadway, Scenic Highway or Scenic Road) be designed to have the minimum possible impact on existing vegetation, landscape architecture and natural scenic views, and to avoid or minimize the removal of significant stands of trees and damage to rock outcroppings to the maximum extent possible. B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, design transportation project alignments to avoid or minimize substantial physical alteration of the land, due to large amounts of cut and fill. Where a particular improvement project would affect adjacent landforms, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that recontouring provides a smooth and gradual transition between modified landforms and existing grade. Where hillsides cannot be totally avoided, consideration shall, where appropriate, be given to dividing the roadway to better fit the topography, or to lengthening the alignment to follow existing contours. Where significant cuts and fills cannot be avoided, plans should be developed and implemented to mitigate identified impacts to the surrounding scenic resources (e.g., extensive landscaping with mature plants, rounding natural portions of cut and fill areas, regrading to the approximate previous visual grade, and design and placement of landscaping and signs to preserve and create scenic views for the motorist). Visual disruption shall, where appropriate, be minimized by re-grading to the approximate natural grades, rounding natural portions of cut and fills, and using retaining walls where appropriate and compatible with existing surrounding land uses. C. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, prepare grading plans which minimize the removal of scenic resources such as trees, rock outcroppings and historic buildings. D. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, design roadway alignments to avoid or minimize removal of significant mature trees. Where the retention of significant mature trees is not feasible, tree replanting shall, where appropriate, be undertaken using compatible native species in rural areas and appropriate street trees in urban areas at the completion of the construction process.

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	E. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that native, drought-tolerant plants and other landscape materials enhance landform variation, provide erosion control and blend with the surrounding natural setting. To ensure compliance with approved landscape plans, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, provide a monetary performance security equal to the value of the landscaping/irrigation installation. F. Where the use of soundwalls or other architectural features that could block views of scenic resources may be necessary to mitigate potential noise effects associated with specific projects, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that such features incorporate offsets, accents and landscaping to prevent monotony, and that they be designed in accordance with the architectural review requirements of the local jurisdiction. The effective application of this type of mitigation by the implementing agencies could reduce impacts to scenic resources to a level of less than significant for most projects. However, even with the implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts associated with a few projects may remain **significant and unavoidable**.

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IMPACT 3.1.3: Substantial Degradation of Visual Character Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may result in substantial degradation of the existing visual character or quality of project sites and/or surroundings, particularly in areas which are currently rural in character. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the development of rail stations (although in some instances, new rail stations may enhance the existing visual character of an area) construction of a new roadways, construction of new bridges or bridge improvements, road widenings, and the construction of lighting facilities, bus shelters and signs. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with the implementation of these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.1.3: Visual/Scenic Resources Analysis** A. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, prepare a visual assessment for any proposed project which may result in substantial degradation of the visual character of the project site and/or surroundings. Through this process of analysis and evaluation, it may be possible to identify mitigation measures or alternatives which would reduce project-specific visual impacts. B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that transportation system improvement projects are designed to minimize visual impacts through project siting and design, including minimizing vegetation removal. C. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, avoid the removal of existing mature trees associated with transportation system improvement projects to the extent possible. Any trees lost shall, where appropriate, be replaced at a minimum 2:1 basis with native trees (or consistent with tree replacement ratios of the local jurisdictions in which impacts could occur) and incorporated into the landscaping design for the project. D. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, minimize roadway, transit station, park-and-ride lot and wharf facility lighting to the extent possible, and shall, where appropriate, not allow lighting fixtures to exceed the maximum height limits set by the local jurisdiction in which such projects would occur. E. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that bus shelters and other ancillary transportation facilities are designed and constructed in accordance with the architectural review requirements of the local jurisdiction. The effective application of this type of mitigation by the implementing agencies could reduce impacts to scenic resources to a level of less than significant for most projects. However, even with the implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts associated with a few projects may remain **significant and unavoidable**.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.1.4: Increased Light and Glare Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may result in the creation of a new source of substantial light or glare which could adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the immediate vicinity of the project sites. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) construction of new roadways or roadway extensions, the development of rail or transit stations, and the construction of lighting facilities and signs. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with the implementation of these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.1.4: Minimize Intrusion of Lighting** Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that all lighting associated with transportation system improvement projects is designed to minimize intrusion onto adjacent properties and meets the architectural review and lighting requirements of the local jurisdiction in which the improvements would occur. Lighting that accompanies any proposed project should be minimized to the extent possible, consistent with safety requirements. Plans for individual projects should incorporate design features, such as hooded light shields (to direct lighting to the ground or toward the facility and away from adjacent residential and other uses), the use of dense landscaping to block light and glare from spilling over into adjacent uses, the use of unobtrusive signage that does not reflect light or glare onto nearby occupied properties, and the use of white reflective paint in lieu of reflective materials to the extent possible. The effective application of these light/glare reduction design techniques by implementing agencies could reduce project-specific impacts to a level of less than significant.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.2.1: Conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance Construction of several of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could be expected to result in the conversion of prime farmlands, unique farmlands or farmlands of statewide importance to non-agricultural uses. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) road widenings, construction of new roadways and interchanges, and construction of trails. In addition, the extension of existing roadways and the construction of new roadways, have the potential to induce, or accommodate, growth in the surrounding areas by providing new access, which could result in the conversion of additional farmland. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with implementation of these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.2.1: Design Modifications** In designing specific transportation system improvement projects, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, avoid the conversion of prime farmland, unique farmland and farmland of statewide importance to the maximum extent feasible, and shall consider alternative alignments that reduce or avoid the conversion of such farmlands. Where avoidance is not feasible, such projects shall, where appropriate, be designed to minimize the conversion of such farmlands. Implementing agencies will be required to evaluate the possible conversion of farmland during site-specific environmental review for each project. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (LESA) from the California Department of Conservation shall, where appropriate, be utilized to identify the potentially significant project-related impacts resulting from changes in agricultural land use. Implementing agencies should consider the use of agricultural land conservation easements where project-related conversion of farmland is determined to be unavoidable. Although most projects could be designed by the implementing agencies to reduce the conversion of prime farmland, unique farmland or farmland of statewide importance to non-agricultural uses, implementation of a few of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in an undetermined extent of such conversion which could not be effectively mitigated. In such cases, this impact could remain **significant and unavoidable.**

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IMPACT 3.2.2: Potential Conflict with Existing Zoning for Agricultural Use In some jurisdictions, construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may conflict with existing zoning which is intended to protect land for agricultural use. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) roadway widenings and the construction of new roadways and interchanges. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with implementation of these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.2.2: Project-Related Variances** In those instances where approval of a project could conflict with existing zoning intended to protect agricultural uses, the implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, first ensure that any appropriate variance is obtained. Approval of a variance to enable the construction of a transportation system improvement project to go forward despite a conflict with existing zoning regulations would indicate that the local jurisdiction has accepted the need for that improvement as being consistent with the general planning policies of that jurisdiction, in effect reducing this impact to a level of less than significant.
IMPACT 3.2.3: Potential Conflicts with Williamson Act Contracts In some jurisdictions, construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may be built on lands which are currently under Williamson Act contracts. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) roadway widenings, the construction of new roadways and interchanges, and the construction of bike paths or pedestrian trails. As long as these contracts remain in force, this could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with implementation of these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.2.3: Avoidance/Cancellation of Contracts** In designing specific transportation system improvement projects, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, avoid the cancellation of Williamson Act contracts to the maximum extent feasible. Where avoidance is not feasible, such projects shall, where appropriate, be designed to minimize the number of Williamson Act contracts that would need to be canceled. Implementing agencies will be required to evaluate the possible cancellation of Williamson Act contracts during site-specific environmental review for each project. Where the cancellation of current Williamson Act contracts can be avoided, potential impacts would be reduced to a level of less than significant. In those instances where project modifications to avoid cancellation of Williamson Act contracts cannot be made, it may be necessary for the jurisdiction which is a party to such contracts to take action to cancel them prior to project approval. In a few such cases the impact could remain **significant and unavoidable**.

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IMPACT 3.2.4: Fragmentation of Agricultural Lands and Changes in Land Uses Adjacent to Agricultural Lands Construction of several of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could be expected to result in major changes in existing land uses adjacent to land currently in agricultural uses or in the fragmentation of existing agricultural operations, which could also result in land use conflicts that might ultimately cause the agricultural operators to abandon their agricultural operations. For example, the improved access which would be provided through the construction of a new roadway in an area adjacent to land which is in active agricultural use could also result in increased trespass or vandalism on these farmlands, which might discourage the continued use of that land for agricultural purposes. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts might be (but would not necessarily be limited to) roadway widenings, construction of new roadways and interchanges, and the construction of new bike paths or pedestrian trails. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with implementation of this type of project.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.2.4: Project-Specific Agricultural Protection** A. In designing specific transportation system improvement projects, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that rural roadway alignments follow property lines to the maximum extent feasible, to minimize impacts to the agricultural production value of any specific property. Farmers shall, where appropriate, be compensated for the loss of agricultural production at the margins of lost property, based on the amount of land deeded as road right-of-way, as a function of the total amount of production on the property. B. In those instances where projects are proposed in areas adjacent to lands currently in agricultural uses (particularly lands which have been designated as prime farmland, unique farmland or farmland of statewide importance), implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, incorporate project-specific design features which would provide adequate protection for the farmland adjacent to the project site (fencing, warning notices, etc.). The effective application of this type of mitigation by the implementing agencies could reduce some specific project-related impacts to changes in land use adjacent to land in agricultural uses to a level of less than significant for most projects. However, even with the implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts associated with project-related fragmentation of parcels currently in agricultural uses may remain **significant and unavoidable** for a few projects.

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IMPACT 3.3.1: Construction-Related Emissions Construction associated with some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in emissions from equipment, additional emissions from delayed vehicles and fugitive dust. Construction projects using typical construction equipment (e.g., dump trucks, scrapers, bulldozers, compactors and front-end loaders) which temporarily emit precursors of ozone (i.e., VOC and NO_x) are accommodated in the emission inventories of State- and federally-required air plans, and would not have a significant impact on the attainment and maintenance of ozone AAQS. Using the potential thresholds identified in the MBUAPCD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines (September 2000, page 5-3, Table 5-2), construction sites involving minimal earthmoving over an area of 8.1 acres or more per day, or involving grading and excavation over an area of 2.2 acres or more per day would be expected to entail potentially significant effects associated with the generation of PM_{10}. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) those involving the construction of the new roadways, new transit/rail facilities, new parking areas, new bike paths or pedestrian trails, and the widening of existing roadways. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with those projects which involve construction activity.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.3.1: Construction Emission Control Measures/Scheduling** A. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, apply MBUAPCD-recommended measures for reducing construction emissions for specific transportation system improvement projects involving minimal earthmoving over an area of 8.1 acres or more per day, or involving grading and excavation over an area of 2.2 acres or more per day. Specific measures shall, where appropriate, be approved by the MBUAPCD as part of the permitting process, and shall include (but not be limited to) the following, as appropriate: • Water all construction areas at least twice daily. Frequency should be based on the type of operation, soil, and wind exposure; • Prohibit all grading activities during periods of high winds (over 15 MPH); • Apply chemical soil stabilizers on inactive construction areas (disturbed lands within construction projects that are unused for at least four consecutive days); • Apply non-toxic binders (e.g., latex acrylic copolymer) to exposed areas after cut and fill operations and hydroseed areas; • Haul trucks shall maintain at least two feet of freeboard; • Cover all trucks hauling dirt, sand and/or loose materials; • Plant tree windbreaks on the windward perimeter of construction projects if adjacent to open land; • Plant vegetative cover in disturbed areas as soon as possible; • Cover inactive storage piles; • Install wheel washers at the entrance to construction sites for all exiting trucks; • Pave all roads on construction sites;

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
	• Sweep street if visible soil material is carried out from the construction site; • Post a visible sign which specifies the telephone number and person to contact regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond to complaints and take corrective action within 48 hours. The phone number of the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District shall be visible to ensure compliance with Rule 402 (Nuisance); and/or • Limit the area under construction at any one time. B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that ground disturbance is phased to the extent possible to minimize the creation of fugitive dust. C. If the use of non-typical construction equipment (e.g., grinders and portable equipment) is contemplated, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, consult with the MBUAPCD, and shall ensure that the Best Available Control Technology (BACT) is implemented to reduce short-term NOx emissions during construction activity. BACT measures shall, where appropriate, include two-degree timing retard, high pressure fuel injectors and reformulated diesel fuel, if available. These measures shall, where appropriate, be noted on all construction plans, and the local jurisdiction shall, where appropriate, perform periodic site inspections. The use of the dust control measures identified above would generally be expected to reduce the construction-related air quality impacts associated with the implementation of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans to a level of less than significant.

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IMPACT 3.3.2: Carbon Monoxide Emissions Individual projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may have an adverse effect on local carbon monoxide levels, particularly where the construction of airport, rail station and park-and-ride lots may result in increased traffic congestion in the vicinity. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.3.2: Prevention of Carbon Monoxide Hot Spots** Where implementing agencies propose transportation system improvement projects that may cause an exceedance of MBUAPCD thresholds for CO modeling, the local jurisdiction shall, where appropriate, improve the circulation system in which the project is proposed such that all roadways and intersections affected by the project maintain an acceptable level of service, or shall, where appropriate, conduct CO modeling to demonstrate that the concentration of CO will remain below the relevant CO AAQS. This may involve a reduction in the size of the project, relocation of the project or a reconfiguration of project elements. This mitigation measure could reduce this potential impact which may be associated with the implementation of specific transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans to a level of less than significant.

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IMPACT 3.3.3: Toxic Air Contaminant Emissions Implementation of some transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in increased exposure of sensitive receptors to toxic air contaminants (TACs) associated with the operation of these improvements, including (but not limited to) the particulate fraction of diesel exhaust. Diesel exhaust from construction activity may have chronic and/or acute risks, depending on the duration of construction activity, proximity to sensitive receptors, and the amount and type of construction equipment to be used. The health risks associated with exposure to diesel exhaust is greatest for children, the elderly and the chronically or acutely ill, and an increase in the exposure of sensitive receptors to TACs could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** that might be associated with projects that involve construction involving diesel-powered equipment, an increase in the use of diesel-fueled vehicles within a limited area, or along roadways that could experience an increase in diesel-fueled vehicle traffic as a result of the implementation of transportation system improvement projects. Such projects could include those involving earth-moving or the use of diesel-powered construction equipment, transit stations served by diesel-fueled vehicles, transit maintenance and parking facilities, and those projects resulting in increased diesel train service, either along existing rail lines or on proposed future rail lines, as well as projects that would increase roadway capacities.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.3.3: Reduction in Diesel Emissions** Individual transportation system improvement projects that involve construction activity requiring the use of diesel-powered equipment, truck idling train idling or increased diesel-fueled traffic shall, where appropriate, be subject to a screening level risk assessment by the implementing agency, then to a full risk assessment where warranted following the screening risk assessment. If these project-specific assessment procedures (outlined in the MBUAPCD CEQA Guidelines, Appendix C) indicate that a project would exceed the MBUAPCD's cancer risk threshold of 10 per million, or the chronic hazard index is above one, then the following mitigation measures should be applied to such projects, where appropriate: <u>Construction-Related Diesel Exhaust</u> • Prior to initiating construction activity, the implementing agency should consult with the MBUAPCD to identify the types of grading, demolition and construction equipment that will be used for the project. Once the characteristics for specific equipment to be used have been identified, the MBUAPCD should provide recommendations for measures that can be implemented to reduce diesel emissions associated with such equipment (e.g., the substitution of diesel-powered equipment with non-diesel-powered equipment, the installation of exhaust controls, staggering construction activity at the project site, etc.). <u>Truck Idling Facilities</u> • Provide a minimum buffer zone of 300 meters between truck traffic and sensitive receptors; • Re-route truck traffic by adding direct off-ramps for the truck traffic or by restricting truck traffic on certain sensitive routes; • Improve traffic flow by signal synchronization;

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
	• Enforce truck parking restrictions; • Develop park and ride programs; • Restrict truck idling; • Restrict operation at the truck idling facility to "clean trucks"; • Electrify service equipment at the facility; • Provide electrical hook-ups for trucks that need to cool their load. • Use "clean" street sweepers; • Provide onsite services to minimize truck traffic in or near residential areas, including, but not limited to, the following services: meal or cafeteria service, automated teller machines, etc.; and • Require or provide incentives to use low-sulfur diesel fuel with particulate traps. <u>Train Idling</u> • Change railroad operating practices to reduce idle time; • Employ idle reduction technologies (such as auxiliary power units); and • Employ new engine technologies (such as modification of fuel injectors). Generally, transit operators within the Monterey Bay region should consider the use of alternative fuels, where appropriate and available, as a means of reducing diesel emissions associated with transit vehicles.

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
	Depending on the project-specific diesel emission characteristics, this mitigation measure could be expected to reduce diesel particulate material emissions which may be associated with the implementation of specific transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans to some extent, most often to a level of less than significant. However, for a few projects where identified measures intended to reduce diesel particulate material emissions cannot be effectively implemented to reduce these emissions to a level below the MBUAPCD's cancer risk threshold or to obtain a chronic hazard index of one or less, this impact could remain **significant and unavoidable**.
IMPACT 3.3.4: Increased Exposure to Diesel Exhaust Fumes Implementation of some of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans involving an increase in diesel exhaust levels at construction sites, within limited areas (e.g., transit stations, transit maintenance and parking facilities, along rail lines which would support increased train service, etc.) or along roadways that could experience an increase in diesel-fueled vehicle traffic as a result of the implementation of transportation system improvement projects could result in potential exposure of sensitive receptors to objectionable odors. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact**.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.3.3: Reduction in Diesel Emissions** The **MITIGATION MEASURE** for **IMPACT 3.3.4** is the same as **MITIGATION MEASURE 3.3.3: Reduction in Diesel Emissions**, above. Depending on the project-specific diesel emission characteristics, the effective implementation of **MITIGATION MEASURE 3.3.3** could be expected to reduce odors associated with project-specific diesel emissions to some extent, most often to a level of less than significant. However, for a few projects where identified measures intended to reduce diesel particulate material emissions cannot be effectively implemented to reduce these emissions to a level below the MBUAPCD's cancer risk threshold or to obtain a chronic hazard index of one or less, this impact could remain **significant and unavoidable**.

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IMPACT 3.4.1: Modification of Habitat Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could be expected to result in the modification of areas which currently provide habitat for candidate, sensitive, or special status species, and could interfere with the movement of resident or migratory fish or wildlife species. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) construction of the new roadways, bridge widenings, roadway widenings, rail improvements on rail lines not currently utilized by trains and the development of transportation-related facilities in coastal zones. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.4.1: Avoidance and Design Modification** For each project identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans where habitat modification may be anticipated, the following measures may be used by the implementing agency to reduce modification of areas which currently provide habitat for candidate, sensitive, or special status species, and interference with the movement of resident or migratory fish or wildlife species:: A. Prior to the finalization of project design, the area in which the project is proposed should be thoroughly surveyed to determine the presence or absence of habitat for candidate, sensitive, or special status species, and to determine the extent to which project construction may interfere with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species. If special status species are known to occur or have the potential to occur, appropriate resource agency contacts shall, where appropriate, be made and mitigation developed in consultation with a qualified biologist and the resource agencies. B. If initial biological assessments for a proposed project identified in one of the three plans determine the presence or potential presence of a state or federally listed species on the site, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, consult with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), respectively, for guidance on whether or not the project can avoid impacts to the species. The project shall, where appropriate, avoid impacts through re-design or realignment, wherever possible. C. During site-specific environmental review, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, evaluate the effects of project-related noise, light and activity on any environmentally sensitive habitat areas, both during and after construction, and shall, where appropriate, identify appropriate mitigation measures, where feasible. D. In those instances where it is not possible to avoid sensitive habitat areas through design measures, the USFWS and the CDFG may need to be contacted in order to achieve compliance with the appropriate endangered species protection regulations through the implementation of site-specific mitigation measures prior to project approval.

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
	Avoiding completely those areas identified as habitat for candidate, sensitive, or special status species of plants and animals, or those areas which are important in providing free movement for resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, would reduce this potential impact to a level of less than significant for most projects. However, depending on the location, character and purpose of a proposed project, it may not be possible to design it in such a way so as to completely avoid these areas. In these instances, this potential impact would need to be mitigated to the satisfaction of the appropriate regulatory agencies prior to the issuance of the permits necessary to allow project construction to proceed, although impacts associated with a few projects could be expected to remain **significant and unavoidable**.

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.4.2: Modification of Riparian Areas/Wetlands Construction of some projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could be expected to result in the modification of riparian areas or wetlands. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the construction of new bridges, the replacement of existing bridges, and projects that result in an increase in impermeable surface areas that may require additional infrastructure for stormwater runoff collection and treatment. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.4.2: Avoidance/Permitting/Precautions During Construction** The following measures may be used by the implementing agencies to reduce modification of riparian areas or wetlands: A. The proposed projects should be designed to avoid construction in riparian areas or wetlands to the extent practicable. B. In those instances where it is not possible to avoid riparian areas or wetlands through design measures, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game shall, where appropriate, be contacted in order to achieve compliance with the appropriate regulations and to obtain all required permits prior to project approval. The granting of the required permits may be conditional on the implementation of site-specific measures designed to mitigate any modification of riparian areas or wetlands which may result from construction of the projects. C. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that all removed and excess material is disposed of off-site and away from the flood plain, outside areas subject to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction. D. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that construction activities in drainages occur during the dry season when channels are at low flow. E. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that no fueling or maintenance of equipment takes place in any channel. Mechanical equipment shall, where appropriate, be serviced in designated staging areas located outside of any creek bed and associated wetland habitat. Water from equipment washing or concrete wash down shall, where appropriate, be prevented from entering any channel.

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
	F. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that any equipment adjacent to any channel is checked and maintained daily, to prevent leaks of materials that if (eventually) introduced to water could be deleterious to aquatic life. Petroleum products and other substances that could be hazardous to aquatic life shall be prevented from contaminating the soil and/or entering the adjacent waters. CDFG shall, where appropriate, be notified immediately of any spills, and shall, where appropriate, be consulted regarding clean-up procedures. G. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that construction activities minimize increases in turbidity to the maximum extent possible. H. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that, following construction, disturbed banks are re-vegetated using locally-occurring, drought-resistant native species and erosion control grass seed, in consultation with a qualified biologist. Avoiding completely riparian areas or wetlands through design measures would reduce this potential impact to a level of less than significant for most projects. However, depending on the character and purpose of a proposed project, it may not be possible to design it in such a way as to completely avoid these areas. In these instances, this potential impact would need to be mitigated to the satisfaction of the appropriate regulatory agencies prior to the issuance of the permits necessary to allow project construction to proceed, although impacts associated with a few projects could be expected to remain **significant and unavoidable**.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.4.3: Interference with Wildlife Movement Development of projects identified in the three plans involving roadways located in previously undeveloped areas, such as new road construction and roadway extensions, has the potential to substantially interfere with wildlife movement if established wildlife movement corridors are located within or in the vicinity of the proposed roadway improvements. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact**.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.4.3: Avoidance and Design Modification** During site-specific environmental review for projects located in wildlife movement corridors, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, conduct biological field investigations to document existing conditions and assess site-specific impacts upon wildlife that may be affected by the project. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, develop new roadway alignments and extensions to avoid or minimize disturbance of wildlife movement corridors to the maximum extent feasible. If impacts cannot be avoided, project-specific mitigation measures shall, where appropriate, be developed in consultation with responsible agencies (USFWS and/or CDFG, as appropriate). Avoiding completely wildlife movement corridors through design measures would reduce this potential impact to a level of less than significant for most projects. However, depending on the character and purpose of a proposed project, it may not be possible to design it in such a way as to completely avoid these areas. In these instances, this potential impact would need to be mitigated to the satisfaction of the appropriate regulatory agencies prior to the issuance of the permits necessary to allow project construction to proceed, although impacts associated with a few projects could be expected to remain **significant and unavoidable**.

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.4.4: Conflicts with Protective Ordinances and Policies Depending on the specific features of local ordinances and policies which are designed to protect biological resources within each jurisdiction, it is possible that implementation of some projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could conflict with such ordinances and policies. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) construction of new roadways and rail improvements on rail lines that are not currently used by trains. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.4.4: Modify Design to Achieve Compliance / Tree Replacement / Tree Protection Plans** A. Where it is clear that the implementation of a specific project would result in a conflict with local ordinances or policies intended to protect biological resources, the appropriate agency responsible for the actual implementation of the proposed project should modify the design of the project to achieve compliance with the applicable ordinances or policies, where feasible. B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that trees that are removed for construction of specific projects are replaced with native tree species at a minimum 2:1 ratio, under the direction of a certified arborist. Special status trees or trees located in sensitive habitats may require higher replacement ratios to mitigate the specific function and value impacted. Tree replacement ratios shall, where appropriate, be consistent with the local jurisdictions in which impacts occur. As part of the overall revegetation and monitoring plan, these replacement tree plantings shall, where appropriate, be monitored over time based on the recommendations of a qualified revegetation specialist. C. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that a tree protection plan is required for construction around trees. The plan may include (but need not be limited to) setbacks for trees, use of protective fencing, restrictions regarding grading and paving near trees, directions regarding pruning and restrictions regarding digging / trenching within root zones of trees. Depending on the character and purpose of a proposed project, it may not be possible to modify it in such a way as to completely avoid disturbing protected trees or other biological resources that may be protected within a specific local jurisdiction. In these instances, this potential impact would need to be mitigated to the satisfaction of the appropriate local jurisdiction prior to the issuance of the permits necessary to allow project construction to proceed, although impacts associated with a few projects could be expected to remain **significant and unavoidable**.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.4.5: Conflicts with Habitat Conservation Plans It is possible that implementation of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could conflict with the provisions of approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plans. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the construction of new roadways or bike paths. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.4.5: Modify Design to Achieve Compliance** For projects located within the boundaries of an HCP, the appropriate jurisdiction shall, where appropriate, ensure that the project is reviewed for consistency with the HCP, and that specific mitigation measures and/or alternative alignments are identified to avoid conflicts with the HCP and its protected species and habitats. Implementation of this mitigation measure could reduce the impact to a level of less than significant.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.5.1: Disturbance of Cultural Resources Construction of some projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in the disturbance of, or in damage to, prehistoric or historic cultural resources. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) bridge improvements and construction new roadways or rail improvements on rail lines that are not currently used by trains. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.5.1: Cultural Resource Surveys/Modifications** A. The implementing agency for a project involving substantial earth disturbance, the removal or disturbance of existing buildings, or the construction of permanent above-ground structures or roadways shall, where appropriate, ensure that the following elements are included in the project's environmental review: B. A map defining the Area of Potential Effects (APE) shall, where appropriate, be prepared for transportation system improvements that involve substantial earth disturbance, the removal or disturbance of existing buildings, or construction of permanent above-ground structures. This map will indicate the areas of primary and secondary disturbance associated with construction and operation of the facility and will help in determining whether known cultural resources are located within the impact zone. C. A preliminary study of each project area, as defined in the APE, shall, where appropriate, be completed to determine whether or not the project area has been studied under an earlier investigation, and to determine the impacts of the previous project. D. If the results of the preliminary studies indicate additional studies are necessary, development of field studies and/or other documentary research shall, where appropriate, be completed (Phase I studies). Negative results would result in no additional studies for the project area. E. Based on positive results of the Phase I studies, an evaluation of identified resources shall, where appropriate, be completed to determine the potential eligibility/significance of the resources (Phase II studies).

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
	F. Phase III mitigation studies shall, where appropriate, be coordinated with the Office of Historic Preservation, as the research design will require review and approval from OHP. In the case of prehistoric or Native American related resources, the Native American Heritage Commission and/or local representatives of the Native American population shall, where appropriate, be contacted and permitted to respond to the testing/mitigation programs. G. If development of a specific project requires the presence of an archaeological monitor, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that a certified archaeologist/paleontologist monitors the grading and/or other ground altering activities. The schedule and extent of monitoring will depend on the grading schedule and/or extent of the ground alterations. This requirement can be accomplished through placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review. H. The implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that materials recovered over the course of any given improvement are adequately cleaned, labeled and curated at a recognized repository. This requirement can be accomplished through placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review. J. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that mitigation for potential impacts to significant cultural resources includes on or more of the following:

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
	• Realignment of the project right-of-way (avoidance - the most preferable method); • Capping of the site and leaving it undisturbed; • Addressing structural remains with respect to NRHP guidelines (Phase III studies); • Relocating structures per NRHP guidelines; • Creation of interpretive facilities; and/or • Development of measures to prevent vandalism. K. A qualified archaeologist shall, where appropriate, monitor all earth moving activities within native soil. In the event that archaeological and historic artifacts are encountered during project construction, all work in the vicinity of the find will be halted until such time as the find is evaluated by a qualified archaeologist and appropriate mitigation (if necessary) is implemented. L. As required under CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, to prepare for the possibility of an accidental discovery of significant buried cultural resources during transportation system improvement project construction, the following measures shall, where appropriate, be taken: • Due to the possibility that significant buried cultural resources might be found during construction, the following language shall, where appropriate, be included in any permits issued for the project site, including (but not limited to) building permits for future development, subject to the review and approval of the implementing agency: "If archaeological resources or human remains are discovered during construction, work shall be halted at a minimum of 200 feet from the find and the area shall be staked off. The project developer shall notify a qualified professional archaeologist. If the find is determined to be significant, appropriate mitigation measures shall be formulated and implemented."

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
	• Due to the possibility that an accidental discovery or recognition of human remains in a location other than a dedicated cemetery may occur, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that this language is included in all permits in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e): "If human remains are found during construction, there shall be not further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until the County Coroner is contacted to determine that no investigation of the cause of death is required. If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. The Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the person or persons it believes to be the most likely descendent of the deceased Native American. The most likely descendent may then make recommendations to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating and disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The landowner or his authorized representative shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods with appropriate dignity on the property in a location not subject to further disturbance if a) the Native American Heritage Commission is unable to identify a most likely descendent or the most likely descendent failed to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the commission; b) the descendent identified fails to make a recommendation; or c) the landowner or his authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the descendent, and the mediation by the Native American Heritage Commission fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner." These measures could reduce the potential impact to a level of less than significant.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.6.1: Increased Exposure to Seismic Hazards In those instances where projects are proposed in proximity to known earthquake faults (as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault), construction of some of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in the increased exposure of people or structures to the risk of loss, injury or death involving fault rupture or other seismic hazards. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) road widenings, bridge improvements and the construction of new roadways or other transportation infrastructure. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.6.1: Building Code Compliance/Avoidance of Known Earthquake Faults** Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that all structures, including (but not limited to) roadway improvements, bridges and pedestrian/bike facilities, are designed and constructed to the latest geotechnical standards (including the UBC Zone 4 guidelines) to limit potential hazards to the public after project completion. In most cases, this will necessitate site-specific geologic and soils engineering investigations to exceed the code for high groundshaking zones. Where transportation system improvement projects involve bridges or passenger stations, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that such structures are placed in areas outside of fault rupture zones. If avoidance is not possible, detailed geologic and seismic studies must be completed to locate active or potentially active fault traces. Structures shall, where appropriate, then be placed outside of an appropriate setback distance. Implementation of these mitigation measures could reduce the impact to a level of less than significant.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.6.2: Increased Exposure to Landslides Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Element of the three plans could result in the increased exposure of people or structures to the risk of loss, injury or death involving landslides. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the construction of new roadways and improvements to existing roadways that pass through hilly terrain. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.6.2: Project-Specific Geotechnical Investigations** A. The implementing agency shall, where appropriate, require that design-level geotechnical analyses are prepared for all transportation system improvement projects, and that all recommendations contained in the geotechnical reports are incorporated into project design. B. If a particular transportation system improvement project involves cut slopes over 20 feet in height, or is located in an area of bedded or jointed bedrock, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that specific slope stabilization studies are conducted. Possible stabilization methods include buttresses, retaining walls and soldier piles. The implementation of site-specific slope stabilization measures and incorporation of other geotechnical recommendations could be expected to reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant.

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.6.3: Increased Erosion and Loss of Topsoil During Construction Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Element of the three plans could result in increased soil erosion and loss of topsoil during construction. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the construction of new roadways and the widening of existing roadways. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.6.3: Grading and Erosion Control Plans** If a particular transportation system improvement project involving deep foundations or underground areas is located in an area of moderate or high erosion potential, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, prepare a grading and erosion control plan that minimizes erosion and sedimentation prior to the issuance of grading permits. The grading and erosion control plan must include the following: A. Methods such as retention basins, drainage diversion structures, spot grading, silt fencing/coordinated sediment trapping, straw bales and sand bags shall, where appropriate, be used to minimize erosion on slopes and siltation into waterways during grading and construction activities. B. Graded areas shall, where appropriate, be revegetated within four weeks of grading activities with deep-rooted, native, drought-tolerant species to minimize slope failure and erosion potential. Geotextile binding fabrics shall, where appropriate, be used, if necessary, to hold slope soils until vegetation is established. C. Exposed areas shall, where appropriate, be stabilized to prevent wind and water erosion using methods approved by the MBUAPCD. These methods may include the importation of topsoil to be spread on the ground surface in areas having soils that can be transported by the wind, and/or the mixing of highly erosive sand with finer-grained materials (silt or clay) in sufficient quantities to prevent its ability to be transported by wind. As a minimum, six inches of topsoil or silt/clay mixture is to be used to stabilize wind-erodable soils. D. Landscaped areas adjacent to structures shall, where appropriate, be graded so that drainage is away from structures. E. Grading on slope steeper than 5:1 shall, where appropriate, be designed to minimize surface water runoff. F. Fills placed on slopes steeper than 5:1 shall, where appropriate, be properly benched prior to placement of fill.

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
	G. Brow ditches and/or berms shall, where appropriate, be constructed and maintained above all cut and fill slopes, respectively. H. Cut and fill benches shall, where appropriate, be constructed at regular intervals. I. Retaining walls shall, where appropriate, be installed to stabilize slopes where there is a 10-foot or greater difference in elevation between the base of the proposed structure and adjacent lots. J. Excavation and grading shall, where appropriate, be limited to the dry season of the year (typically April 15 to November 1, allowing for variations in weather) unless an approved erosion control plan is in place and all measures identified therein are in effect. Additional measures which may be applied to reduce erosion during the construction of transportation system improvement projects include (but are not limited to) the following: K. Limiting disturbance of soils and vegetation removal to the minimum area necessary for access and construction. L. Confining all vehicular traffic associated with construction to the right-of-way or to designated access roads. M. Limiting access routes and stabilizing access points. N. Adhering to construction schedules designed to avoid periods of heavy precipitation or high winds. O. Ensuring that all exposed soil is provided with temporary drainage and soil protection when construction activity is shut down during the winter periods. P. Stabilizing denuded areas as soon as possible with seeding, mulching or other effective methods.

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
	Q. Protecting adjacent properties with vegetative buffer strips, sediment barriers or other effective methods. R. Delineating clearing limits, easements, setbacks, sensitive areas, vegetation and drainage courses by marking them in the field. S. Stabilizing and preventing erosion from temporary conveyance channels and outlets. T. Using sediment controls and filtration to remove sediment from water generated by dewatering or collected on-site during construction. U. Informing construction personnel prior to construction and periodically during construction activities of environmental concerns, pertinent laws and regulations, and elements of the grading and erosion control plans. The effective implementation of grading and erosion control plans could reduce this impact to a level of less than significant.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.6.4: Construction on Unstable Soils Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Element of the three plans on soils that are unstable (or that could become unstable as a result of such construction) could result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse, possibly resulting in substantial risks to life and property. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the construction of new roadways and rail improvements along rail lines not currently used by trains. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.6.4: Project-Specific Soils Analysis** A. If a particular transportation system improvement project is located in an area of moderate to high liquefaction potential, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that such improvements are designed based upon appropriate soil studies. Possible design measures include deep foundations, removal of liquefiable materials and dewatering. B. If a particular transportation system improvement project is located in an area of highly expansive, collapsible or compressible soils, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that a site-specific investigation and appropriate design factors are implemented. C. If a particular transportation system improvement project involving deep foundations or underground areas is located in an area of high groundwater potential, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that appropriate construction techniques (i.e., dewatering, special water proofing and deeper foundations) are included in the design of the facility). Site-specific soil studies should be able to recommend appropriate mitigation measures which may reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.7.1: Potential to Create a Significant Hazard to the Public or Environment The development of some transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may have the potential to be affected by DTSC Calsites, aerial deposited lead, naturally occurring asbestos and other hazardous materials. In the absence of appropriate precautions and/or cleanup efforts, such projects may create the potential for exposing construction workers, the public or the environment to hazardous materials, a **potentially significant environmental impact**.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.7.1: Site-Specific Analysis for Hazardous Materials/ Remediation/Cleanup** Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, investigate the potential for transportation system improvement projects to be located at, or in the vicinity of, identified DTSC hazardous material sites, or to be located in areas that contain aerial deposited lead, naturally occurring asbestos or other hazardous materials. Site-specific evaluation should include a historical assessment of past uses, and soil sampling should be conducted when determined appropriate by the implementing agency. In those instances where a specific project site is found to be contaminated by hazardous materials, the site shall, where appropriate, be cleaned up to the standards of the appropriate regulatory agency, and appropriate remediation measures to ensure worker safety during construction shall, where appropriate, be identified prior to the commencement of earthmoving activities, subject to the review and approval of DTSC. Implementation of this mitigation measure could reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant.
IMPACT 3.7.2: Potential Hazards Associated with Roadway Design and the Transport of Hazardous Materials Although the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans would generally be expected to improve roadway safety for the transport of hazardous materials, proper design of roadway improvements is necessary to minimize potential safety impacts associated with the transport of hazardous materials. The possible effects of unsafe roadway design on hazardous material transport could be considered a **potentially significant environmental impact**.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.7.2: Design Roadway Improvements along Designated Hazardous Materials Transfer Routes for Enhanced Safety** For roadway improvements along designated hazardous materials transfer routes, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that such projects are designed to allow for safe traveling, merging and passing of hazardous materials haul trucks. Design considerations should include: wider "slow" lanes, longer approach ramps and merger lanes, and more gradually-inclined interchanges. Implementation of the above mitigation measure could reduce this impact to a level of less than significant.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.8.1: Construction-Related and Operational Water Quality Effects During construction, some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may introduce pollutants to local bodies of water and groundwater through storm water runoff. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) construction of new roadways, rail improvements on rail lines that are not currently used by trains and bridge replacements. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.8.1: Water Pollution Prevention Measures** A. Prior to final design approval, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, evaluate potential increases in surface water runoff volume for each transportation system improvement project with the potential to have significant effects on drainage ways. If it is found that increased runoff volumes will significant affect drainage capacities or increase flood hazards, site-specific measures to control runoff (i.e., the use of detention or retention basins, french drains, vegetated swales and medians, or other techniques designed to delay peak flows) should be implemented. B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that fertilizer/pesticide application plans for any new right-of-way landscaping are prepared to minimize deep percolation of chemicals. C. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that transportation system improvement projects direct runoff into subsurface percolation basins and traps which would allow for the removal of sediment, urban pollutants, fertilizers, pesticides and other chemicals. D. For transportation system improvement projects that would disturb at least one acre, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) shall, where appropriate, be developed by the implementing agency prior to the initiation of grading. The measures identified in the SWPPP shall, where appropriate, be implemented for all construction activity on the project site. The SWPPP shall, where appropriate, include specific BMPs to control the discharge of materials from the site and into creeks and local storm drains. BMP methods may include (but would not be limited to) the use of temporary retention basins, straw bales, sand bagging, mulching, erosion control blankets, soil stabilizers and native erosion control grass seed. Implementation of the above measures could reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.8.2: Depletion of Groundwater Supplies and Interference with Groundwater Recharge Construction and maintenance of transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could incrementally increase demand for water within the region, and several of the projects could be expected to reduce groundwater recharge. Since many local water supply systems are reliant on groundwater resources, and since many local groundwater basins are being overdrafted, increased water demand combined with reduced groundwater recharge capability could be considered a **potentially significant environmental impact**.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.8.2: Reduce Water Demand/Increase Permeability** A. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that, where economically and technically feasible, reclaimed and/or desalinated water is used for dust suppression during construction activities. B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that low water use landscaping (i.e., drought-tolerant plants and drip irrigation) is installed. C. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that, where economically and technically feasible, landscaping associated with transportation system improvement projects is maintained using reclaimed and/or desalinated water. D. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that porous pavement materials are utilized, where feasible, to allow for groundwater percolation. Rural bicycle and other recreational trails shall be left unpaved, where appropriate. Implementation of the above measures could reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant.

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IMPACT 3.8.3: Increased Impervious Surface/Storm Water Runoff Construction of several of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could be expected to result in an increase in the area of impervious surface and/or modifications in local drainage/groundwater recharge patterns, which could result in increased flood risk on- or off-site. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the construction of new roadways, the widening of existing roadways and the development of transit system improvements with large parking areas. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.8.3: Evaluation/Design/Permitting** The following measures may be used by implementing agencies to limit the area of impervious surface and/or modifications in local drainage/groundwater recharge patterns resulting from project construction: A. Prior to the finalization of project design, the drainage and groundwater recharge characteristics of the area for which the project is proposed should be thoroughly evaluated. In those instances where the capacity of the existing or planned storm water drainage systems may be exceeded, it will be necessary to identify appropriate site-specific measures to control surface runoff, and to detain surface water runoff on-site, if possible. B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that adequate drainage infrastructure is in place to accommodate runoff from each transportation system improvement project prior to the issuance of grading permits. If adequate drainage infrastructure is not available, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, pay utility mitigation fees or otherwise provide improvements to the drainage facilities of the jurisdiction in which the project is located such that drainage facilities affected by the project in question maintain an acceptable level of service. C. Based on the results of the drainage/groundwater recharge evaluation, the proposed project should be designed to minimize the area of impervious surface and to maintain existing drainage/groundwater recharge patterns to the extent practicable. D. In those instances where a streambed would be altered as a result of project construction, it will be necessary to enter into a Streambed Alteration Agreement with the California Department of Fish and Game prior to the start of construction.

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
	Although it may be possible to limit the area of impervious surface associated with roadway improvement projects to some extent, it will generally not be possible to avoid increasing impervious surfaces as new roadways are built or as existing roadways are widened, and this potential impact could remain **significant and unavoidable** in those cases. It may not be possible to design some projects in such a way so as to completely avoid significant alteration of existing drainage/groundwater recharge patterns, and in such cases these potential impacts could remain **significant and unavoidable**. In those instances where a specific project would require a Streambed Alteration Agreement, compliance with the conditions of such an agreement could be expected to reduce streambed impacts to a level of less than significant.
IMPACT 3.8.4: Increased Exposure to Flood Hazards Some of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans that may be proposed in low-lying areas could be subject to high flood hazards. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact**.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.8.4: All Structures Above the 100-Year Flood Zone Elevation/Stabilization Along Creek Crossings/Avoid Encroachment of Designated Flood Areas** A. If a particular transportation system improvement project is located in an area with high flooding potential, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that the structure is elevated at least one foot above the 100-year flood zone elevation, is designed to minimize damage to the physical improvement and ensure public safety, and that feasible stabilization and erosion control measures are implemented along creek crossings. B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that projects located in areas with high flooding potential are designed to keep designated floodways free from encroachment as much as possible. Encroachment into the flood plain can be accommodated with proper design, planning and mitigation, as long as the resulting shift of flood waters does not increase adjacent flood ways or flood plains. Implementation of the above measures could reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.8.5: Increased Exposure to Tsunami Hazards Some transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may be located in areas subject to tsunami. This would represent a **potentially significant environmental impact**.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.8.5: Incorporate Features to Minimize Tsunami Damage** In areas subject to tsunami effects, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that all projects incorporate features designed to minimize damage from a tsunami. Structures should either be placed at elevations above those likely to be adversely affected during a tsunami event, or designed to allow swift water to flow around, through, or underneath without causing collapse. Other features to be considered in designing projects within areas subject to tsunami may include using structures as buffer zones, providing front-line defenses, and securing foundations of expendable structures so as not to add to debris. Implementation of the above measure could reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant.

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Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.9.1: Potential Land Use Conflicts Construction and operation of some transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in potential land use conflicts with existing sensitive uses such as residences, schools, parks, etc. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact**.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.9.1: Enhancing Land Use Compatibility** A. In order to minimize safety hazards, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, require adequate traffic controls such as signs, striping, crosswalks and warning lights to slow traffic on streets in residential, school or park areas where new roadways are proposed, or where projected traffic volumes will substantially increase, to reduce safety and noise impacts. B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that roadways and other transportation system improvements are designed to minimize potential impacts to pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly those living in adjacent residential areas, or attending schools. C. Street lighting, where necessary, shall, where appropriate, be minimized to the extent possible in areas adjacent to sensitive land uses. Street lights shall be shielded, and oriented away from residential development. No street light shall exceed the maximum height limit established by Caltrans or local ordinance, as applicable. D. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, require that all transportation system improvement projects provide appropriate setbacks, barriers, fences or other appropriate means of buffering proposed improvements with the potential to generate land use conflicts from adjacent sensitive land uses. Implementation of these measures could reduce the potential impact to a level of less than significant.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE 2005 TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.9.2: Conflicts with Land Use Plans/Policies/Regulations It is possible that implementation of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could conflict with the applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations of an agency with jurisdiction over the project which have been adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. Examples of projects which might involve such an impact may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the construction of new roadways and rail improvements on rail lines that are not currently used by trains. This could represent a **potentially significant adverse environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.9.2: Design Modifications to Achieve Consistency** Where it is clear that the implementation of a specific project would result in a conflict with the applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations of an agency with jurisdiction over the project which have been adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact, the implementing agency should modify the design of the project to achieve consistency with the applicable plans, policies or regulations. In those instances where it would be possible to modify the design of a transportation system improvement project to meet the intent of plans, policies or regulations of the jurisdictions where such projects are proposed, this mitigation measure could reduce the impact to a level of less than significant for most projects. However, for a few projects, it may not be possible to make such design and still achieve the project objectives. In these cases, the potential conflict with established plans, policies and regulations could remain **significant and unavoidable**.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE 2005 TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.11.1: Increased Noise Related to Increased Traffic Volumes Major roadway widenings which increase capacity, or transportation system improvements which create new roadways in previously unaffected areas, may permanently affect ambient noise levels by substantially increasing traffic volumes, possibly exceeding established standards for noise exposure. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.11.1: Acoustical Analysis/Site-Specific Mitigation** A. Acoustical analyses shall, where appropriate, be conducted by the implementing agency as part of new roadway construction and/or widening projects for existing roads. The noise study shall, where appropriate, identify existing noise sensitive receptors, determine existing ambient noise levels, project future noise levels, make appropriate findings with respect to appropriate criteria, and recommend mitigation/abatement measures. Specific noise mitigation or abatement measures to be considered include alternative alignments, sound barrier walls and earthen berms where space is available. Determination of appropriate noise attenuation or abatement measures shall, where appropriate, be assessed on a case-by-case basis pursuant to the regulations of the applicable agency. B. Various sound attenuation techniques shall, where appropriate, be considered where transportation system improvement projects are found to expose sensitive receptors to noise exceeding normally acceptable levels. The preferred methods for mitigating noise impacts will be the use of appropriate setbacks and sound attenuating building design, including retrofit of existing structures with sound attenuating building materials, where feasible. In instances where the use of these techniques is not feasible, the use of sound barriers (earthen berms, sound walls, or some combination of the two) will be considered. Determination of appropriate noise attenuation measures will be assessed on a case-by-case basis during a project's individual environmental review pursuant to the regulations of the applicable agency. Although noise mitigation or abatement measures may be expected to reduce potential traffic noise impacts to a level of less than significant in most instances, this impact may not be mitigable in a few cases, resulting in an environmental impact that could remain **significant and unavoidable**.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE 2005 TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.11.2: Increased Noise Levels along Rail Corridors Expansion of existing rail service and related facilities associated with the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may increase ambient noise levels along rail service corridors, possibly exceeding established standards for noise exposure. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with this type of project.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.11.2: Acoustical Analysis/Site-Specific Mitigation** A. Where appropriate and feasible, a Community Quiet Zone should be pursued with appropriate crossing devices to decrease the use of train crossing horns. Designation of the Quiet Zone is made by the Federal Railroad Administration, in coordination with the Public Utilities Commission. B. Acoustical analyses shall, where appropriate, be conducted by the implementing agency as part of future rail service and facilities expansion projects. If future noise levels exceed the applicable federal, state or local noise impact criteria, appropriate noise barriers such as berms, noise walls, and/or landscaping shall, where appropriate, be installed as necessary to reduce exterior noise levels to acceptable levels, and to meet state standards for residential interior noise levels. C. If proposed rail projects are located adjacent to sensitive uses, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that a vibration survey and assessment is conducted to determine alternative alignments which allow greater distance from the rail or other vibration isolation techniques, as necessary, to assess the effects and mitigate any potential adverse effects. Use of noise mitigation or abatement measures may be expected to reduce potential rail-related noise and vibration impacts to a level of less than significant in most instances. However, these impacts may not be mitigable in a few cases, resulting in environmental impacts that could remain **significant and unavoidable**.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE 2005 TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.11.3: Construction-Related Noise **C**onstruction activity associated with some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could temporarily result in noise levels which might exceed established standards for noise exposure. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the construction of new roadways, the widening of existing roadways, rail improvements on rail lines that are not currently used by trains, bridge improvements and the construction of other transportation system improvement infrastructure. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with those projects which involve construction activity.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.11.3: Noise Abatement** In order to reduce potential construction-related noise impacts, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that, where residences or other noise sensitive uses are located adjacent to construction sites, appropriate measures shall be implemented to ensure consistency with local noise ordinance requirements relating to construction activity. Specific techniques may include (but are not limited to) restrictions on construction timing, the use of sound blankets on construction equipment, and the use of temporary noise walls and noise barriers to block and deflect noise. All construction equipment in active use at project sites should be appropriately muffled and properly maintained. Limiting truck access routes and establishing maximum allowable noise limits for construction equipment should also be considered as measures which would reduce construction-related noise at specific sites. These noise abatement measures could generally be expected to reduce construction-related noise impacts to a level of less than significant.
IMPACT 3.11.4: Exposure to Excessive Groundborne Noise/Vibration Construction associated with some of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans might involve activities (such as pile-driving) which could result in the temporary exposure of persons living or working near the construction area to excessive groundborne noise and/or vibration during construction activity. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) bridge replacements and the construction of new transportation system improvement infrastructure, including on/off ramps ands interchanges. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.11.4: Restrictions on Construction Activities** In order to reduce the potential noise and/or vibration impacts associated with certain construction activities such as pile-driving, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that, to the maximum extent feasible, all such activity which would take place in the vicinity of sensitive receptors be limited to the hours of 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM, Monday through Friday. If a particular project located adjacent to sensitive receptors requires pile driving, the local jurisdiction may require the use of pile driving techniques that would reduce physical impacts and associated noise generation from such activity. These restrictions could generally be expected to reduce noise and/or vibration impacts associated with such construction activity to a level of less than significant.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE 2005 TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.12.1: Indirect Growth Inducement Implementation of some of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could indirectly induce growth within the region by increasing transportation system capacity. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact**.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.12.1: Prioritization of Transportation System Improvement Projects** To minimize possible growth inducement, transportation system improvement project should be given priority on the basis of 1) improving safety; 2) addressing existing capacity deficiencies; or 3) addressing potential impacts of planned land development that is the subject of an active development application. Priority should not be given to transportation system improvement projects that would allow land development that has not yet been planned for, or is not anticipated to occur in the future. This approach could reduce the growth-inducing potential of the three plans. However, to the extent that the increases in transportation system capacity associated with projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may indirectly contribute to population growth within the region, this impact could remain **significant and unavoidable**.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE 2005 TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.12.2: Permanent Displacement of People and/or Existing Housing Units/Businesses Implementation of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans might result in the permanent displacement of people and/or existing housing units, as well as business enterprises. As the physical characteristics of each project become more clearly defined, it is possible that some of these projects may be found to displace people or existing housing units or businesses. In those cases where such displacement would be regarded as substantial, this could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact**.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.12.2: Avoidance/Relocation** A. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, assure that project-specific environmental reviews for transportation system improvement projects with the potential to permanently displace existing residences and businesses consider alternative alignments that avoid or minimize impacts to nearby residences and businesses. B. Where project-specific reviews identify unavoidable displacement impacts, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that appropriate relocation programs are used to assist eligible persons to relocate, in accordance with local, state and federal requirements. Owners shall be compensated for acquired property based on fair market values. In addition, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, review and, if necessary, modify construction schedules to ensure that adequate time is provided to allow affected businesses to find and relocate to other sites. Implementation of these measures could reduce potential impacts associated with the displacement of existing homes, residents and businesses to a level of less than significant.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE 2005 TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.13.1: Temporary Interference with School Access Proposed roadway construction and other transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could temporarily impede access to public school facilities, and could create pedestrian traffic hazards. As the physical characteristics of each project become more clearly defined, it is possible that some of these projects may be found to interfere with access to schools. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.13.1: Notification/Designated Detours** A. If construction is to take place in the vicinity of a school, or on roadways that could affect access to a school facility, then the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, notify the school district superintendent or other appropriate representative of the affected school district prior to any road construction and road closures. School officials shall also be consulted, where appropriate, to determine if any critical access routes would be affected, or if construction would create specific safety problems. B. For roadway construction projects that involving temporary lane or road closures, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, post advance warning signs no more than 100 feet from the project site indicating when disruption would occur for a period of at least one week prior to project construction through the completion of construction, and provide clearly marked detours. Adequate access to all schools shall be maintained, where appropriate, during school hours throughout the construction period. During implementation of transportation system improvements that necessitate partial or total road closure, at least one lane shall, where appropriate, remain open to vehicles at all times, and/or alternative routes/detours around improvement areas with appropriate signage shall be provided. The implementation of these measures could reduce the impact to a level of less than significant.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE 2005 TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.13.2: Temporary Interference with Park/Recreation Access Although implementation of some transportation system improvements would ultimately result in enhanced access to parks and recreational facilities within the Monterey Bay region, implementation of several of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could temporarily affect access to park and recreational facilities if road construction or other activities were to occur in the vicinity of these facilities. Road or bridge construction could also generate noise that could disrupt the quiet atmosphere of parklands, which could detract from the recreational experience of visitors. As the physical characteristics of each project become more clearly defined, it is possible that some of these projects may be found to interfere with access to parks or recreational facilities. These could represent **potentially significant adverse environmental impacts** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.13.2: Consultation/Site-Specific Mitigation** A. Although potential impacts to recreational facilities which may be associated with the implementation of projects identified in the three plans are not generally expected to be significant, park authorities shall be consulted, where appropriate, if construction is to occur in the vicinity of park or recreational facilities. The implementing agency and park authorities shall, where appropriate, jointly participate in project planning to include measures to reduce project-related impacts to park users, when possible. B. For roadway construction projects that involving temporary lane or road closures, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, post advance warning signs no more than 100 feet from the project site indicating when disruption would occur for a period of at least one week prior to project construction through the completion of construction, and provide clearly marked detours. During implementation of transportation system improvements that necessitate partial or total road closure, at least one lane shall, where appropriate, remain open to vehicles at all times, and/or alternative routes/detours around improvement areas with appropriate signage shall be provided, where appropriate. These measures could reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant.
IMPACT 3.13.3: Increased Transportation System Maintenance The completion of transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans would increase maintenance demands. Due to uncertainties regarding the availability of adequate maintenance staffing and equipment to address increased maintenance needs, this is considered a **potentially significant environmental impact**.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.13.3: Adequate Maintenance Funding** The implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that adequate funds are budgeted to maintain proposed transportation facilities as well as existing transportation facilities. With implementation of the proposed measure, impacts could be reduced to a level of less than significant.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE 2005 TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.15.1: Deterioration in Traffic Operations Although they would likely reduce regional traffic congestion, implementation of some projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in localized traffic congestion. Several airport, rail station, and park and ride lot projects are included in the three plans. These projects are intended to relieve regional traffic congestion through multi-modal transportation facilities. However, these facilities would act as focal points for automobiles, since their purpose is to concentrate automobile trips at transfer nodes. Because of this concentration, there could be localized traffic congestion near these facilities. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with this type of project.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.15.1: Project-Specific Traffic Studies/Mitigation** A. Implementing agencies that propose transportation system improvement projects that are demonstrated to significantly impact local roadways shall, where appropriate, design such projects so that impacts are reduced or eliminated. Project-specific mitigation should provide a range of mitigation options, including (but not limited to) the following: • Reduction in project size; • Relocation of project route or alignment; • Modification of project to provide additional lane capacity; • Modification of project to provide additional turning lanes; • Provision of additional transit services in lieu of, or in addition to, roadway capacity increases; • Designation of Peak Hour HOV lanes in lieu of mixed-flow lanes; • Additional carpool and vanpool incentives; • Expanded intermodal transportation facilities, including secure bicycle parking, bicycle carriers on buses, and Park & Ride lots; and • Use of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures to reduce traffic demand instead of increasing roadway capacity. B. If physical changes to such projects are not feasible due to physical, economic, technological or other constraints, the implementing agencies may be required to pay in lieu traffic mitigation fees such that roadways and/or intersections affected by these projects maintain acceptable levels of service.

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
	C. Implementing agencies that propose transportation system improvement projects that are demonstrated to significantly impact local roadways shall, where appropriate, incorporate facilities that encourage the use of alternative forms of transportation (e.g., provision of bike storage facilities, pedestrian facilities, etc.) into the design of the projects, as feasible. In addition, such facilities shall, where appropriate, provide additional carpool or vanpool incentives, as feasible. Depending on the outcome of project-specific traffic analysis, implementation of these and/or other traffic mitigations could be expected to reduce this impact to a level of less than significant in most cases. However, in a few instances, such mitigation may not be feasible, and impacts could be expected to remain **significant and unavoidable**.
IMPACT 3.15.2: Temporary Increase in Traffic Congestion during Construction Construction associated with the implementation of some transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could be expected to result in temporary lane closures, equipment maneuvering and rerouting, which could result in temporary traffic congestion and other access restrictions that could disrupt existing homes, businesses and pedestrian, bicycle and transit routes. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact**.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.15.2: Development of Detour and Access Plans** Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that transportation system improvement projects that could affect traffic flow and access prepare detour and access plans, subject to review and approval by the permitting agency. In addition, signs and safety measures shall be installed during construction, where appropriate, to ensure continued safe access for affected cyclists, pedestrians, businesses and homes. The implementation of this mitigation measure could reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant in most instances, although in a few cases these impacts could remain **significant and unavoidable**.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE 2005 TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.15.3: Hazardous Design Features In the absence of project-specific designs, it is possible that some of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans might incorporate design features which could result in a substantial increase in hazards (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections). As the physical characteristics of each project become more clearly defined, it is possible that some of these projects may be found to create such hazards. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.15.3: Project-Specific Safety Review/Mitigation** As part of the environmental review for each proposed project identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans, a comprehensive safety analysis should be conducted by the implementing agency to ensure that implementation of the project as proposed would not result in any significant increase in hazards. If potential project-related hazards are identified, appropriate mitigation should be implemented to reduce or eliminate the potentially hazardous situation as part of the project design process. This may involve realignment, redesign or reconfiguration of roadway improvements. This measure could generally be expected to reduce potential hazards associated with the design of specific transportation system improvement projects to a level of less than significant.
IMPACT 3.15.4: Temporary Interference with Emergency Access Proposed roadway construction and other transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could temporarily interrupt traffic, and could impede emergency access in some instances. Emergency response vehicles could be delayed as a result of proposed construction activities. A review of the projects currently listed in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans failed to identify any project which would definitely interfere with emergency access. However, as the physical characteristics of each project become more clearly defined, it is possible that some of these projects may be found to interfere with emergency access. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.15.4: Notification/Designated Detours** In no case shall a major critical facility (state or federal highway) be disrupted without first coordinating with the appropriate County Office of Emergency Preparedness. Prior to construction, the appropriate agency responsible for the actual implementation of each individual project listed in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans should notify all public safety agencies and affected property owners of any pending road construction activities and road closures. Detours should be designated and adequate access and circulation provided at construction sites to permit emergency vehicles to safely and effectively navigate in these areas, even during construction activity. The implementation of these measures could reduce the impact to a level of less than significant.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE 2005 TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Potentially Significant Impact	Mitigation Measure
IMPACT 3.15.5: Insufficient Parking Capacity In the absence of project-specific designs, it is possible that some of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans might not provide sufficient parking capacity to meet anticipated demand. The types of project which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the construction of new transit facilities. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.15.5: Project-Specific Parking Review/Mitigation** As part of the environmental review for each project identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans which will generate a demand for parking, a parking analysis should be conducted by the appropriate agency responsible for the actual implementation of such projects to ensure that implementation of the project as proposed would not result in any significant lack of parking space. If potential project-related parking insufficiencies are identified, then appropriate mitigation (e.g., preferential parking for carpools, for-fee parking space, implementation of trip reduction programs, incorporation of transit-oriented features, incorporation of bicycle-friendly and pedestrian-friendly features, etc.) should be implemented to provide adequate project-related parking space as part of the project design process. This measure could generally be expected to reduce potential shortfalls in parking space associated with the design of specific transportation system improvement projects to a level of less than significant.
IMPACT 3.16.1: Temporary Disruption of Utility Services/Installation Proposed roadway construction and other transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in short-term, temporary disruption of utility services and/or could conflict with planned utility installation. Construction activities could disrupt services through both accidental and scheduled interruption of services. In addition, utility installation could disrupt newly constructed or resurfaced roadways if not properly coordinated between the agency responsible for the implementation of the proposed transportation system improvement and the local public works department or utility provider. As the physical characteristics of each project become more clearly defined, it is possible that some of these projects may be found to have the potential to disrupt utility services. These disruptions could represent **potentially significant environmental impacts** associated with these types of projects.	**MITIGATION MEASURE 3.16.1: Consultation/Notice/USA** Prior to construction, the appropriate agency responsible for the actual implementation of individual projects should consult with affected utility companies to ensure adequate protection of all existing utilities. Advance notice should be given to affected residents and businesses of any scheduled utility disruption. Underground Service Alert (USA) should be contacted at least one week prior to the initiation of any construction activities, to allow utility companies and affected agencies adequate response time. Implementation of these measures could reduce these impacts to a level of less than significant.

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

1.1.1 CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended (CEQA) requires Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) to be prepared for all projects which may have a significant impact on the environment. An EIR is an information document, the purposes of which, according to CEQA Guidelines, are "...to identify the significant effects of a project on the environment, to identify alternatives to the project, and to indicate the manner in which such significant effects can be mitigated or avoided." The information contained in this EIR is intended to be objective and impartial, to enable the reader to arrive at an independent judgment regarding the probable character and significance of the impacts resulting from the adoption and implementation of the 2005 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2005 MTP), the 2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan (2005 MC-RTP) and the 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan (2005 SCC-RTP), herein referenced as the “three plans”.

Under CEQA, a Program EIR may be prepared in those instances where a series of actions are under consideration "in connection with (the) issuance of rules, regulations, plans or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program." CEQA Guidelines provide for preparation of a "program" EIR for "a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related either (1) geographically; [or] (2) as logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions..." (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15168 (a) (1, 2)). The advantages of a “program" EIR cited by the CEQA Guidelines include its ability to: "(1) provide an occasion for a more exhaustive consideration of effects and alternatives than would be practical in an EIR on an individual action; (2) ensure consideration of cumulative impacts that might be slighted in a case-by-case analysis; (3) avoid duplicative reconsideration of basic policy considerations; (4) allow the Lead Agency to consider broad policy alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures at an early time when the agency has greater flexibility to deal with basic problems or cumulative impacts; and (5) allow reduction in paperwork." (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15168 (b) (1-5)).

CEQA also provides for the tiering of EIRs, to eliminate repetitive discussions of issues and "to focus the EIR on the actual issues ripe for decision at each level of environmental review" (CEQA

Guidelines Section 15152 (a)). An initial EIR for a particular plan or program can evaluate environmental impacts in a general sense, and can be followed by additional, project-specific environmental impact reports which refer to previous discussions presented in the initial EIR (which may be incorporated by reference). By using the Program EIR as the first tier under this approach, it may be possible to avoid duplication and eliminate repetition in the preparation of the project-specific EIRs, which should be focused on the site-specific issues related to each individual project (CEQA Guidelines, Article 10, Section 15152).

As transportation system improvement projects are proposed, additional site-specific environmental review will be required by those agencies responsible for actually implementing such projects. During site-specific environmental review, lead agencies responsible for the implementation of specific projects will make every effort to identify ways that environmental damage can be avoided or significantly reduced, consistent with the basic purposes of CEQA (CEQA Guidelines, Article 1, Section 15002). This would include efforts to identify appropriate site-specific mitigation designed to avoid or reduce potential environmental impacts, including possible environmental impacts that may ultimately be significant and unavoidable. These later EIRs (possibly including other Program EIRs) may not be required to repeat the broad analysis of environmental issues examined in the original Program EIR. Later EIRs which are tiered under this Program EIR must indicate such an intention, and must identify the location where this Program EIR may be reviewed by the public.

What the Three 2005 Transportation Plans Are

The three plans each represent minor revisions of the previous MTP and RTPs developed by the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) and the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC), respectively. The 2005 RTPs for Monterey County and Santa Cruz County are intended to establish a framework for providing a transportation system for the Monterey County and Santa Cruz County, respectively, which efficiently utilizes a variety of modes for the movement of people and freight, and which reduces energy consumption and air pollution. The MTP combines the RTPs for Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito Counties.

AMBAG, as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), must prepare a triennially updated long-range (at least twenty-year) transportation plan for the Monterey Bay metropolitan region (Code of Federal Regulations, Part 450, Subpart C, Section 450.322). When adopted, the 2005 MTP will serve as the principal federal planning document guiding investment in improvements to roadways, transit, multi-modal and intermodal facilities and services that, together, constitute the Monterey Bay region's transportation system. The 2005 MTP will serve as a coordination document, which will enable the proposed transportation system improvement programs and projects to be viewed by local decision-makers within a regional context.

The 2005 MTP meets federal requirements for transportation and air quality planning (23 CFR, Part 450, Subpart C and 40 CFR, Part 51), through a plan which meets the specific needs and deficiencies of the regional transportation system. RTPs are state-mandated documents, required to access state

funds. Transportation projects and programs as proposed, evaluated and selected at the county-wide level through the RTPs, serve as the basis for the 2005 MTP. In receipt of each county's project list, AMBAG has been assured by the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies of each county that their RTP was developed taking into account transportation needs, an evaluation of alternatives to meet those needs, and the resultant plan and/or program selection to satisfy transportation need. Arguably most importantly, the RTPs reflect an extensive public involvement and participation process. The sum total is to reflect a transportation system for the region, based on public input, which embraces various modes of transportation in order to efficiently maximize the movement of people and goods within and through the region and to reduce energy consumption and air pollution through the year 2030.

The three plans each include a Policy Element, a proposed financially constrained Action Element, a Financial Element, and a Financially Unconstrained Project List. The financially constrained Action Element in each of the three plans identifies the specific transportation system improvement projects which have been proposed within the Counties of Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz, respectively, through the year 2030, and for which funding sources have been identified or are reasonably expected to be available. This financially constrained Action Element is regarded as the program of projects which can be implemented under financially constrained conditions. The Financial Elements in each of the three plans document the funding sources reasonably expected to be available to finance those projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements. These sections of the three plans also address the use of transportation impact fees at a regional and local level as a possible means of generating the additional revenue for transportation system improvements where fair-share, per-unit fees for new development can be directly linked to mitigating the impacts associated with the additional vehicle trips coming from such development.

The three plans identify existing and future transportation-related needs, consider all modes of travel, analyze alternative solutions, and identify what can be completed with anticipated available funding for projects and programs. As mandated by federal law, the MTP specifically includes a discussion of the conformity of the 2005 MTP to the approved federal air quality plan and updated travel demand forecasts.

As part of the transportation planning process, planners must: determine the benefits to, and potential negative impacts on, minority populations and low-income populations from proposed investment or actions; quantify the expected effects (total, positive, and negative); and determine the appropriate course of action, whether avoidance, minimization, or mitigation. Through public noticing, the staff and boards of AMBAG, TAMC and SCCRTC have attempted to make contact with all residents of the three counties in their outreach and planning efforts. Transportation system improvement projects identified in the three plans are located in most of the settled areas of Monterey County, San Benito County and Santa Cruz County, most frequently in areas where transportation infrastructure already exists. Adoption of each of these three plans, in itself, would not result in disproportionately high adverse health or environmental effects on minority or low-income populations, as this action would not result in any direct physical changes in the environment. However, some individual transportation system improvement projects identified in

the transportation plans could have adverse effects on these populations, depending on the demographic characteristics of the area surrounding the proposed improvements at the time they are formally brought forward for environmental review. Potentially disproportionate adverse effects on minority or low-income populations would need to be evaluated on the project-by-project basis as appropriate during the environmental review process for each of the individual transportation system improvement projects identified in the three transportation plans.

What the Three 2005 Transportation Plans Are Not

The three plans do not provide project designs or a construction schedule, and adoption of these three comprehensive planning documents does not represent an approval action for any of the individual transportation programs and projects listed in their financially constrained Action Elements. Details relating to the site-specific alignment, location, design and scheduling of the transportation improvement projects which are identified in the three plans are not fixed in, or defined by, these documents. The adoption of the three plans represents an essential first step in qualifying for the receipt of the funding necessary to permit the implementation of the financially constrained Action Element of these three documents. However, the act of adopting the three documents, in itself, would not be sufficient to enable any of these programs or projects to proceed without additional actions on the part of the appropriate agencies responsible for the actual implementation of each individual program and project.

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments is the Lead Agency for the EIR

The Lead Agency in the development of the 2005 MTP and in the preparation of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). AMBAG is responsible for ensuring that the regional transportation planning process is continuing, cooperative and comprehensive. The 2005 MTP has been prepared to meet requirements set forth in the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, the metropolitan transportation planning regulations, and other applicable state and federal regulations. Although only one entity can represent the Lead Agency under CEQA for the preparation of an EIR, in the case of this document the EIR will serve as the CEQA environmental review document for three separate (but related) planning documents: the three plans. For this reason, AMBAG, as Lead Agency for the preparation of the EIR, has developed the EIR in close cooperation with TAMC and SCCRTC, with the understanding that TAMC will ultimately act as Lead Agency when this EIR is considered in conjunction with the 2005 MC-RTP, and that SCCRTC will act as Lead Agency when this EIR is considered in conjunction with the 2005 SCC-RTP. Before considering adoption of the 2005 MTP, the AMBAG Board of Directors will consider whether this EIR provides an adequate and complete analysis of the environmental effects associated with the implementation of the 2005 MTP. The EIR must be certified as adequate and complete by the Board prior to any action to adopt the 2005 MTP.
The Lead Agency for the preparation of the 2005 MC-RTP is the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC). Before considering adoption of the 2005 MC-RTP, the TAMC Board of Directors will consider whether this EIR provides an adequate and complete analysis of the environmental effects associated with the implementation of the 2005 MC-RTP. The EIR must be

certified as adequate and complete by the Board prior to any action to adopt the 2005 MC-RTP. **The Lead Agency responsible for the preparation of the 2005 SCC-RTP is the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC).** Before considering adoption of the 2005 SCC-RTP, the SCCRTC Commissioners will consider whether this EIR provides an adequate and complete analysis of the environmental effects associated with the implementation of the 2005 SCC-RTP. The EIR must be certified as adequate and complete by the Board prior to any action to adopt the 2005 SCC-RTP.

1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT REVIEW PROCESS

Within the context of the discussion above, this EIR has been prepared as a Program EIR (rather than a "project" EIR). The transportation system improvements proposed in the three plans can be regarded as a series of geographically-related projects, but for the majority of these projects, it would be premature to make final decisions on their implementation.

The Program EIR is intended to focus on those probable regional environmental effects associated with the implementation of the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans that can be identified now, while deferring analysis of those site-specific impacts which cannot be predicted prior to the preparation of detailed design and/or construction plans for the individual transportation system improvement projects that are identified in the financially-constrained project lists incorporated within each of these three documents. Upon submittal of formal plans for the individual transportation system improvement projects, the Lead Agency for each proposed project would need to determine the extent of additional environmental review that would be required to define in detail how the site-specific impacts of that project might differ from those identified as resulting from the implementation of the three plans, as described in the Program EIR.

Because the act of adopting the three plans would not, in itself, result in the implementation of any transportation system improvement programs or projects identified in these documents, no environmental impacts would be directly associated with this action. By the same token, the adoption of the three plans would not, in itself, resolve any of the existing traffic deficiencies within the region or result in any transportation system improvements, since this action would be insufficient to enable any of the proposed transportation system improvement programs and projects to proceed. However, adoption of the three plans is necessary to achieve compliance with state and federal laws, and can be regarded as a critical first step in obtaining the funding which will be required to carry out many of the programs and projects identified in the respective financially constrained Action Elements.

The three plans express the priorities of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments and its partner planning/programming agencies, for transportation system improvements and programs within the Monterey Bay region. This Program EIR describes, in general terms, the probable environmental effects which may be associated with those expressed priorities on a regional, system-wide basis, rather than on a project-by-project basis.

The EIR will enable decision-makers and interested citizens to evaluate the broad environmental issues associated with the overall character and concept of the three plans. Although very few of the transportation system improvements identified in these three documents have either been proposed in detailed design form or been formally presented for specific approval at this time, a Program EIR can serve as the first tier in a sequence of environmental evaluations by providing a framework for the subsequent and more detailed site-specific environmental analyses which will be required as individual transportation system improvement projects are presented for review and approval in the future.

In accordance with California law, the EIR on the three plans must be certified before any of these three documents can be formally adopted by the each agency's governing board. During the review period for the Draft EIR, interested individuals, organizations and agencies may offer their comments on its evaluation of program-level impacts and alternatives. The comments received during this public review period will be compiled and presented together with responses to these comments. The Draft EIR and the Final EIR (Responses to Comments document) together will constitute the Program EIR on the three plans. The Board of Directors of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, the Transportation Agency for Monterey County and the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission will review the EIR documents, and will determine whether or not the EIR provides a full and adequate appraisal of the three plans, the alternatives and their effects at the program (rather than "project") level.

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) was issued on May 28, 2004, to solicit comments from public agencies and the public regarding the scope of the environmental evaluation for the three plans. Public scoping sessions were held in Santa Cruz on June 22, 2004, and in Salinas on June 24, 2004. The NOP, all written responses to the NOP, and summaries of comments received at both EIR scoping sessions are presented in **Appendix A**. These comments were taken into consideration during the preparation of the Draft EIR. The comments raised several areas of controversy, including:

- *Concern regarding the selection of alternatives to be evaluated in the Draft EIR.* In comments received at the Scoping Session in Santa Cruz and in the California Coastal Commission response to the NOP, it was suggested that the EIR evaluate additional alternatives beyond the CEQA-mandated "No Project" alternative, the "Financially Unconstrained" alternative and the "Financially Constrained - No New Revenues" alternative, including an alternative that would be expected to reduce environmental impacts associated with implementation of the transportation system improvement projects included in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans. The three agencies' staff discussed this concern at length, and determined that development of a hypothetical "environmentally sensitive" alternative for evaluation in the Draft EIR that would eliminate some of the projects listed in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans based on assumptions regarding possible future environmental effects associated with such projects would be too subjective in the absence of project-specific environmental analysis. Rather than speculate on the environmental effects that might be associated with such an alternative developed in this

manner, Lead Agency staff decided to focus the evaluation of alternatives in the Draft EIR on the CEQA-mandated "No Project" alternative, the "Financially Unconstrained" alternative and the "Financially Constrained - No New Revenues" alternative.

- *Concern regarding the consistency of future transportation system improvement projects that may be proposed within the coastal zone (particularly the widening of Highway 1 in the Moss Landing area) with the policies of the Coastal Act.* As discussed in Section 2.7, in some instances, the Coastal Act specifically limits future improvements to roadways within the coastal zone, which could limit future improvements along SR 1 in rural areas (e.g., the widening of Highway 1 between Salinas Road and Castroville, which is not a project currently identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans). Since the three plans each provide a program identifying future transportation system improvement projects (rather than specific plans for the construction of any such projects), these documents would not be inconsistent with the provisions of the Coastal Act. However, as individual transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans are formally submitted to the appropriate lead agencies for environmental review, each lead agency will be required to determine whether such projects are consistent with policies of the Coastal Act, and the Coastal Commission will be responsible for reviewing such projects within its jurisdiction prior to issuing any required coastal development permit.

- *Concern regarding the evaluation of alternatives to highway widening.* The Draft EIR provides a program-level evaluation of the types of environmental effects that might be associated with implementation of all transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans, including listed roadway widening projects. It is beyond the scope of the Draft EIR to evaluate alternatives to each of the hundreds of transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans. However, as individual roadway widening projects listed in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans are brought forward to the responsible Lead Agency for project-specific environmental review, if potentially significant environmental impacts are anticipated with such projects, an evaluation of feasible alternatives to such projects will be necessary as part of the environmental review in each instance.

- *Concern regarding possible adverse effects on biological resources resulting from transportation system improvements identified in the MTP/RTPs.* A program-level evaluation of the types of adverse effects on biological resources that may be anticipated with implementation of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans is presented in Section 3.4.2 of the Draft EIR. As individual transportation system improvement project identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans are brought forward to the responsible Lead Agencies for environmental review, evaluation of project-specific effects on biological resources will be required in each instance.

- *Concern regarding adverse air quality impacts associated with highway widening.* A program-level evaluation of the types of adverse effects on air quality that may be anticipated with

implementation of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans is presented in Section 3.3.2 of the Draft EIR. As individual transportation system improvement project identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans are brought forward to the responsible Lead Agencies for environmental review, evaluation of project-specific effects on air quality will be required in each instance.

- *Concern regarding adverse noise/vibration effects and sound walls associated with highway widening.* A program-level evaluation of the types of adverse effects on the existing noise environment that may be anticipated with implementation of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans is presented in Section 3.11.2 of the Draft EIR. As individual transportation system improvement project identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans are brought forward to the responsible Lead Agencies for environmental review, evaluation of project-specific noise/vibration effects will be required. If such effects are found to be potentially significant, project-specific mitigation measures would need to be identified, where feasible. These measures might or might not include the installation of sound walls, depending on their feasibility as mitigation in each instance.

- *Concern regarding adverse water quality impacts associated with highway widening.* A program-level evaluation of the types of adverse effects on water quality that may be anticipated with implementation of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans is presented in Section 3.8.2 of the Draft EIR. As individual transportation system improvement project identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans (including roadway widening projects) are brought forward to the responsible Lead Agencies for environmental review, evaluation of project-specific effects on water quality will be required in each instance.

- *Concern regarding increased congestion resulting from transportation system improvements.* A program-level evaluation of the types of traffic-related that may be anticipated with implementation of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans is presented in Section 3.15.2 of the Draft EIR (Traffic Congestion During Construction). As individual transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans are brought forward to the responsible Lead Agencies for environmental review, evaluation of project-specific traffic congestion impacts will be required in each instance.

- *Concern regarding environmental justice issues.* The Draft EIR addresses environmental justice issues in Section 5.6.

- *Concern regarding financial aspects associated with implementation of the MTP/RTPs.* Under CEQA, the Draft EIR is tasked with the program-level evaluation of the environmental effects that may be associated with implementation of the three plans. It is beyond the scope of the EIR to provide an evaluation of the fiscal or financial aspects of transportation plan implementation. Funding sources for those transportation system improvement projects

identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans are discussed at length in the each of the respective transportation plans.

- *Concern regarding effects on property values and other economic effects associated with implementation of the MTP/RTPs.* Under CEQA, the Draft EIR is tasked with the program-level evaluation of the environmental effects that may be associated with implementation of the three plans. It is beyond the scope of the EIR to provide an evaluation of the extent to which implementation of these transportation plans might affect property values or generate other economic effects (either positive or negative).

- *Concern regarding the inclusion of new intermodal freight facilities within the MTP/RTPs.* The Draft EIR provides a program-level evaluation of the type of environmental effects that may be associated with implementation of the three plans. None of these transportation plans include any transportation system improvement projects that would provide for the development of any intermodal freight facilities, and as a result, the environmental effects that might be associated with the establishment of such facilities is not addressed in the Draft EIR.

- *Concern regarding the use of public funding to support local transit systems.* Under CEQA, the Draft EIR is tasked with the program-level evaluation of the environmental effects that may be associated with implementation of the three plans. It is beyond the scope of the EIR to provide an evaluation of funding sources for the listed transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans, including the sources of funding for local transit operations.

- *Concern regarding adverse effects on aviation facilities that might be associated with implementing the MTP/RTPs.* In the program-level Draft EIR evaluation of the environmental effects that may be associated with the implementation of the three plans, no potentially significant adverse effects on existing aviation facilities have been identified. However, as individual transportation system improvement projects are brought forward to the responsible Lead Agencies for environmental review, those projects proposed in the vicinity of aviation facilities will need to be evaluated for potentially significant project-specific impacts that may adversely affect the continued safe operation of those facilities.

In reviewing the Draft EIR, readers should focus on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts that adoption of the three plans may have on the environment, and on ways in which the significant impacts associated with the implementation of these three transportation plans might be avoided or mitigated. As indicated in CEQA Guidelines, Section 15151:

> *"An Environmental Impact report should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision-makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of a proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main*

points of disagreement among experts. The courts have looked not for perfection; but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure."

Public Review

The Draft EIR will be circulated for a public review period of at least 45 days. During that period, public hearings will be held to obtain public comment on the adequacy and completeness of the Draft EIR. Comments are most helpful when they suggest additional specific alternatives or mitigation measures that would provide better ways to avoid or mitigate significant environmental impacts. Reviewers should explain the basis for their comments and, whenever possible, should submit data or references in support of their comments.

The Draft EIR will be available for review at the offices of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (445 Reservation Road, Suite G, Marina, California), the offices of the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (55-B Plaza Circle, Salinas, CA) and the offices of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA), and at many local libraries within Monterey County, San Benito County and Santa Cruz County. Copies of the Draft EIR may be obtained through AMBAG at the address below.

Comments on the Draft EIR may be submitted in writing until 5:00 P.M. PST on the last day of the public review period (April 1, 2005) to:

Kathy Urlie, Principal Planner
Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
445 Reservation Road, Suite G
P.O. Box 809
Marina, CA 93933-0809

Telephone: (831) 883-3750 FAX: (831) 883-3755 e-mail: KUrlie@ambag.org

Comments on the contents of the MTP or the RTP documents (but not directly related to the content of the Draft EIR) should be submitted directly to the appropriate agency.

At the close of the public review period, all comments received will be compiled, and responses to these comments will be prepared and presented in a Final EIR. The Final EIR may also incorporate any necessary revisions to the Draft EIR made in response to comments received. The Boards of Directors of AMBAG, TAMC and SCCRTC will each review the EIR (comprised of the Draft EIR and Final EIR), and independently consider whether or not to certify the EIR as adequate and complete.

After reviewing the Draft EIR and the Final EIR, and following action to certify the EIR as adequate and complete, the Boards of Directors of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, Transportation Agency for Monterey County and Santa Cruz County Regional

Transportation Commission will each be in a position to determine whether each of the three documents should be adopted as proposed, revised, or rejected. This determination will be based upon information presented on the three transportation plans, impacts and probable consequences, and the possible alternatives and mitigation measures available.

Where potentially significant and unavoidable environmental impacts have been identified in the EIR, each Lead Agency will be required to make a written statement of overriding considerations. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines, Section 15093 [a], a decision-making agency must balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered "acceptable".

1.3 ORGANIZATION AND ANALYSIS APPROACH

The Draft EIR incorporates and adds to the information provided in the previous EIRs prepared on earlier MTPs and RTPs, but reflects changes which have been made in the development of the three plans. These changes include slight revisions to policy statements; the deletion of some projects which appeared on previous financially constrained Action Element lists (but which have since been completed or have been dropped from consideration); the addition of new projects to the financially constrained Action Element lists and the Financially Unconstrained Project Lists; revisions of the Financial Element to reflect changes in the three financially constrained Action Elements; and a new air quality Conformity Analysis on the 2005 MTP.

Brief descriptions of the three plans are presented in **Chapter 2**. **Chapter 3** presents a "program-level" environmental analysis of the three plans. In each section, the existing conditions are briefly discussed ("Setting"), followed by a "program-level" evaluation of potentially significant impacts which may be associated with the implementation of the programs or projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of each of the three proposed transportation plans. Where potentially significant impacts are identified, appropriate mitigation measures (where feasible) are presented.

Chapter 4 presents an evaluation of the environmental effects which may be associated with the three project alternatives which were evaluated, the "No Build" Alternative, the "Financially Constrained - No New Revenues" alternative, and the "Financially Unconstrained" Alternative.

Chapter 5 presents an overview of the potentially significant environmental impacts which may be associated with implementation of the programs and projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans, including a discussion of those impacts which would be unavoidable/irreversible, growth-inducing impacts, cumulative impacts, environmental impacts identified as "less than significant" and environmental impact which would be expected to remain

significant despite mitigation. Environmental justice issues are also addressed in this chapter of the Draft EIR.

Chapter 6 lists the persons who prepared the Draft EIR, identifies those persons and organizations contacted during the preparation of the document, and lists the reference materials used.

Appendix A includes the Notice of Preparation and the responses received. **Appendix B** presents the list of transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans. **Appendix C** presents the list of transportation system improvement projects identified in the Financially Unconstrained Project Lists of the three plans.

1.4 MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM

Under California law, public agencies are required to adopt a report or monitoring program for the changes to a project which it has adopted or made a condition of project approval in order to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment. A monitoring and reporting program must be established for the each of the three plans to ensure that mitigation measures are incorporated in their implementation to reduce or avoid anticipated significant environmental impacts. To the extent that AMBAG, TAMC or the SCCRTC is identified as an appropriate agency with respect to identified mitigation measures, the mitigation monitoring program, as applicable, is to be adopted at the same time that the Lead Agency (in this case, the Board of Directors of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, the Transportation Agency for Monterey County or the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission) formally adopts their respective 2005 transportation plans.

A mitigation monitoring program would include a description of the respective transportation plan, a list of the mitigation measures identified in the EIR, a program schedule for implementation of the 2005 transportation plan, delegation of responsibilities and authority in the monitoring process, and procedures for monitoring the implementation of mitigation measures, enforcement, and handling of disputes, appeals and modifications.

This Draft EIR identifies measures which appear to be available for, and effective in, mitigating the significant environmental effects associated with the implementation of the programs and projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans. These mitigation measures, as identified, are recommendations to the appropriate agency responsible for the actual implementation of the projects. The identified mitigation measures may be subject to change based on comments received on the Draft EIR during the review period, and on the determination made by the respective Board of Directors in reviewing the EIR. These decision-making bodies will select the actual mitigation measures to be employed if the 2005 transportation plans are to be adopted, and those measures would then be incorporated in a mitigation monitoring program, as applicable, to the Responsible Agencies.

2

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 PROJECT APPLICANTS

For the 2005 Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan:

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
445 Reservation Road, Suite G
P.O. Box 809
Marina, CA 93933-0809

For the 2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan:

Transportation Agency for Monterey County
55-B Plaza Circle
Salinas, CA 93901-2902

For the 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan:

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

2.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

2005 Monterey Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The purpose of the 2005 MTP is to coordinate and facilitate the programming and budgeting of all transportation facilities and services within the three-county Monterey Bay region through 2030 in accordance with Federal regulations.

In preparing the 2005 MTP Policy Element, AMBAG's objectives were to ensure that the transportation system planned for the Monterey Bay region accomplishes the following:

- Serves regional goals, objectives, policies and plans.

- Responds to community and regional transportation needs.

- Promotes energy efficiency, environmentally sound modes of travel and facilities and services.

- Promotes equity and efficiency in the distribution of transportation projects and services.

Regional Transportation Plans

The California Transportation Commission's Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines (1999) identify the purpose of an RTP as follows:

- Provide an assessment of current modes of transportation and the potential of new travel options within the region;

- Predict the future needs for travel and goods movement;

- Identify and document specific actions necessary to address the region's mobility and accessibility needs;

- Identify guidance and document public policy decisions by local, regional, state and federal officials regarding transportation expenditures and financing;

- Identify needed transportation improvements in sufficient detail to serve as a foundation for:

    - development of the FTIP, RTIP, and ITIP;

    - facilitation of the NEPA/404 integration process;

    - identification of project purpose and need;

    - development of an estimate of emission impacts for demonstrating conformity with air quality standards identified in the State Implementation Plan (SIP)

- Promote consistency between the California Transportation Plan, the regional transportation plan, and other transportation plans developed by cities, counties, districts, private organizations, tribal governments, and state and federal agencies in responding to statewide and interregional transportation issues and needs;

- Provide a forum for 1) participation and cooperation, and 2) facilitating partnerships that reconcile transportation issues which transcend regional boundaries and

- Involve the public, federal, state and local agencies, as well as local elected officials, early in the transportation planning process so as to include them in discussions and decisions on the social, economic, air quality and environmental issues related to transportation.

RTPs must include long-term horizons (at least 20 years) that reflect regional needs, must identify regional transportation issues/problems, and must develop and evaluate solutions that incorporate all modes of travel. RTPs must also recommend a comprehensive approach that provides direction for programming decisions to meet the identified regional transportation needs. RTPs must also be fully consistent with the requirements of TEA-21 and other federal regulations, including conformity with the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments and consistency with the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP). Relationships between the RTPs and other plans and programs are addressed within the 2005 MC-RTP and the 2005 SCC-RTP.

The objective of both the 2005 MC-RTP and the 2005 SCC-RTP is to comply with the current California Transportation Commission Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines, pursuant to Government Code Section 14522, to prepare a regional transportation plan, a long-range transportation planning document which will provide policy guidelines regarding the planning and programming of transportation projects within each respective County through 2030.

2.3 LOCATION AND ENVIRONS OF THE PROJECT AREA

The Monterey Bay region is formally composed of Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz Counties, which are located around Monterey Bay towards the center of California's coastline, south of the San Francisco Bay area and north of San Luis Obispo County (see **Figure 2.1**). Other adjoining Counties include San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties on the north, Merced and Fresno Counties on the east, and to the southeast, with a short border along Monterey County, Kings County. The combined area encompasses approximately 3.3 million acres, incorporating the Pajaro and Salinas River Valleys, adjacent coastal lowland and surrounding mountains. A vast amount of the region is highly mountainous, and includes the Santa Cruz, Gabilan and Santa Lucia mountain ranges, and the Diablo range along the eastern border of the region, over which there is only one major roadway. However, the highest elevation, over a mile high at 5,860 feet above sea level, is Junipero Serra Peak, located less than five miles from the Pacific Ocean. The region is widely recognized for its scenic beauty, and the Pajaro and Salinas valleys represent some of the most productive agricultural soils in the United States.

Monterey County (the area covered by the MC-RTP) covers approximately 2,127,360 acres, of which approximately 1,210,000 acres are in agricultural use (irrigated cropland, dry farming, grazing, animal husbandry and related agricultural services).

Figure 2.1: Monterey Bay Metropolitan Region

Santa Cruz County (the area covered by the SCCRTP) covers approximately 282,240 acres, with approximately 71,115 acres in farms in 1997.

The majority of the region's estimated 758,555 people live within the coastal plain that extends from the Santa Cruz/Capitola area in the north to the Monterey Peninsula in the south, with one major inland city, Salinas, which is the largest single city in the region, with approximately 19 percent of the total population. Salinas and the coastal plain areas are densely developed, while the Gabilan, Santa Lucia and Santa Cruz mountain ranges are sparsely populated and largely undeveloped. Other inland settlements include Hollister, San Juan Bautista and the cities of the Salinas Valley.

Besides Salinas, major urban concentrations in Monterey County are contained in and around Monterey, such as the cities of Carmel, Pacific Grove, Marina, Sand City, Seaside and Del Rey Oaks. Also within Monterey County, extending at intervals along the Salinas River Valley south of Salinas, are the cities of Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield and King City. Monterey County also contains several unincorporated communities, including Carmel Valley Village, Del Monte Forest, Pine Canyon, Castroville, Elkhorn, Las Lomas, Pajaro and Prunedale.

In San Benito County, the cities of Hollister and San Juan Bautista constitute the only two major urban concentrations.

Urban concentrations exist in and around four Santa Cruz County cities (Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley and Watsonville) and the adjacent unincorporated communities (such as Aptos, Freedom, Live Oak and Soquel).

The economy of the region is primarily based on agriculture, although research and development sectors are growing. Tourism plays a major role in the economy of each of the three Counties, particularly Santa Cruz and Monterey during summer months, and contributes substantially to the proportion of vehicles on the region's roadway network. The computer technology economy of the Santa Clara Valley and in Santa Cruz County has also been an important factor in the economy of the area, particularly related to persons residing in Santa Cruz/Scotts Valley, Hollister and other northerly cities of the region, who commute to the Santa Clara Valley.

2.4 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Each of the three plans is a multimodal, financially constrained regional transportation plan which expresses the current state of system planning for their respective regions. The purpose of the plans is to coordinate and facilitate the programming and budgeting for all transportation facilities and services through 2030 in accordance with Federal or State regulations

The purpose of the Policy Element of 2005 MTP is to ensure that the transportation system planned for the region accomplishes the following:

1. Serves regional goals, objectives, policies and plans.
2. Responds to community and regional transportation needs.
3. Promotes energy efficient, environmentally sound modes of travel and facilities and services.
4. Promotes equity and efficiency in the distribution of transportation projects and services,

Each of the three plans includes a financially constrained Action Element which identifies the programs and projects proposed by regional transportation planning agencies and public transit operators in the three-County region for which funding will likely be available (**Appendix B**) All of these programs and projects are considered **financially constrained** by reasonably anticipated funding. This is in contrast to additional **financially unconstrained** programs and projects (**Appendix C**), which would serve the goals, strategies and objectives of the three plans, but for which no funding sources have been identified. These programs and projects are identified in the financially unconstrained Project Lists of the three plans.

The financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans include a full range of programs and projects intended to improve roadway capacity/vehicular flow, enhance transit operations, improve safety, support transportation planning and travel demand management, promote high occupancy vehicle use, protect visual resources associated with scenic routes and improve multimodal and intermodal facilities.

None of the three plans provide project designs or a construction schedule, and adoption of the three plans would not represent an approval action for any of the individual transportation programs and projects listed in their respective financially constrained Action Elements. Detailed site-specific alignment, location, design and scheduling of the improvement projects which are identified in the three plans are not fixed by the three plans, and these individual projects may be modified substantially from their initial description in the three plans at the time they are considered for implementation (which could be over a period of up to 25 years).

The three plans include the following types of transportation system improvement projects:

> Auto-Serving Road Projects: Continued operation and maintenance of the region's highway and arterial circulation system is a primary policy of the three plans. Caltrans and each local jurisdiction have proposed projects for the region's roadway system that address current and future needs based on existing traffic conditions and projected traffic increases. These projects include road widenings and extensions, interchange/intersection improvements, roadway rehabilitation and freeway overcrossings.
>
> Multi-modal Projects: The three plans include multi-modal projects throughout the county, including bikeways, pedestrian improvements and HOV lanes in conjunction with road widening projects.

Non-Motorized Transportation (Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects): The three plans include projects that would complete Class I bike trails and Class II bike lanes along highways and arterial streets, as well as sidewalk improvements associated with some roadway projects.

TDM, ITS and Alternative Fuel Projects: The three plans include Transportation Demand Management (TDM, which aims to reduce demands on the roadway system), Intelligent Transportation System (ITS, which aims to use technology for more efficient use of the existing road network), and alternative fuels projects. These include the expansion of existing rideshare programs, the installation of bike lockers and bicycle parking, discounted transit passes, changeable message signs, coordination of freeway service patrols, ramp metering, closed-circuit television cameras, vehicle detection loops, emergency message signs, Highway Advisory Radio and the provision of compressed natural gas (CNG) stations.

Rail Projects: The three plans incorporate rail system improvement projects, including the construction of new rail stations.

Aviation Projects: The three plans include projects intended to provide for new access, lights, runway extensions and maintenance at local airports.

2005 Monterey Bay Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The 2005 MTP Policy Element is intended to address five ongoing transportation issues affecting the Monterey Bay region. For each issue, a goal to address that issue is adopted, and then one or more strategies are adopted to accomplish that goal. The five goals are:

Goal 1: Recognizing the interdependence of transportation and land use, promote consistency between such transportation projects and adopted local, regional and state land use plans, programs and projects.

Goal 2: Plan and promote safety, healthy, efficient, coordinated, convenient, energy-conserving transportation to meet existing and reasonably foreseeable travel demand in the region, via efficient transportation modes.

Goal 3: Promote transit, vanpooling, ridesharing, bicycling, pedestrian and other alternative transportation modes to reduce single-occupant vehicle travel.

Goal 4: Seek consistency between planned growth in population and jobs and the planned capacity growth of the regional and interregional transportation system.

Goal 5: Avoid, minimize or mitigate the environmental impacts caused by operation or improvement of the transportation system.

2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan

The 2005 MC-RTP Update presents the following goals:

- Mobility and Accessibility: Develop and maintain a multi-modal transportation system that preserves and/or enhances mobility and access of the regional transportation network.

  Goal: Road and Highway Transportation – Provide a network of road and highway facilities that provides for the safe, efficient movement of people and goods within Monterey County.

  Goal: Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation – Expand, improve and maintain facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists that accommodate safe, convenient, and accessible bicycle and pedestrian transportation across Monterey County.

  Goal: Public Transit Services – Provide public transportation that increases mobility and improves quality of life in Monterey County.

  Goal: Rail Transportation – Provide viable rail facilities for commuters and travelers that accommodates convenient, reliable and accessible rail transportation to and from Monterey County, enhancing mobility and access of the transportation network.

  Goal: Transportation Demand Management – Maximize use of existing infrastructure and resources by administering, implementing, or encouraging the employment of measures that reduce peak-hour demand on regional transportation infrastructure.

  Goal: Accessibility – Provide an integrated and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant transportation system that is responsive to the special needs of all seniors and Persons with disabilities.

- Environment and Community – Provide transportation facilities and services that enhance the livability of communities within the region, and minimize impacts to the natural and built environment.

  Goal: Environmental Preservation – Develop a multi-modal regional transportation system that complements and enhances the natural and social environment of the Monterey Bay region.

  Goal: Safety – Implement and encourage projects that enhance safety.

  Goal: Coordinated Land Use and Transportation Planning – Achieve transit, bicycle, and pedestrian-supportive land use development through promotion and coordination with county land use jurisdictions.

Goal: Public Outreach – Solicit broad public input in developing regional and local transportation plans, projects and funding.

- Financial Feasibility – Ensure the financial feasibility of the Regional Transportation Plan, by assuring that revenues are available to achieve planned transportation improvements needed to serve Monterey County's transportation needs.

  Goal: Regional Transportation Financing – Secure sufficient funding to meet the countywide regional transportation needs over the next twenty years.

The 2005 MC-RTP includes the following types of projects:

- Safety and operational improvements to high-priority corridors along Highway 1, Highway 68, Highway 101, Highway 156 and Highway 183;

- Operational and safety improvements to major arterial roads, including bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities, to better accommodate all modes of travel;

- Extending new rail services to the Monterey Bay region;

- Expanded bus and rail services with additional express and commuting routes linking to major employment centers; and

- Rehabilitation and enhancement of major local transportation corridors and increasing multi-modal access.

2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan

The 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan establishes the following goals:

Goal 1: Preserve and maintain the existing transportation system, emphasizing safety and efficiency.

Goal 2: Increase mobility by providing an improved and integrated multi-modal transportation system.

Goal 3: Coordinate land use and transportation decisions to ensure that the region's social, cultural, and economic vitality is sustained for current and future generations.

Goal 4: Ensure that the transportation system complements and enhances the natural environment of the Monterey Bay region.

Goal 5: Make the most efficient use of limited transportation financial resources.

Goal 6: Solicit broad public input on all aspects of regional and local transportation plans, projects and funding.

Financially Constrained Action Element Projects

The transportation system improvement projects identified in the Financially Constrained Action Elements of the three plans are listed in **Appendix B**. Funding for these listed projects is anticipated in the next 25 years, and each of them would be expected to be completed prior to 2030. As the focus of the program-level evaluation of types of environmental impacts that may be associated with the implementation of the three plans is on the possible physical changes in the environmental that could result during construction and operation of these listed projects, it is useful to identify those listed projects that involve major construction activity.

In terms of estimated costs, there are a limited number of very large construction projects listed in the Financially Constrained Action Elements of the three plans with estimated costs in excess of $50,000,000. These include:

- Highway 101 Prunedale Freeway (2005 MTP/2005 MC-RTP, #CT-029)
- Highway 1 Widening/HOV Lanes (2005 MTP/2005 SCC-RTP, #RTC-24)
- Highway 156 West Corridor and Interchange (2005 MTP/2005 MC-RTP, #CT-036)
- Highway 101 Salinas Corridor Improvements (2005 MTP/2005 MC-RTP, #CT-030)
- Highway 17 Improvements (2005 MTP/2005 SCC-RTP, #CT-P10)
- Highway 101 – Airport Boulevard (2005 MTP/2005 MC-RTP, #CT-024)
- Highway 101 – San Juan Road (2005 MTP/2005 MC-RTP, #CT-032)

Additional large transportation system improvement projects listed in the Financially Constrained Action Elements of the three plans can be categorized as follows:

- New Roads
- Roadway/Interchange Improvements (Capacity Increase)
- Operational/Safety Improvements
- Roadway Realignment
- Roadway Rehabilitation
- Bridges
- Transit Projects
- Rail Projects
- Bike/Pedestrian Facilities
- Parking Facilities
- Aviation Facilities
- Non- Transportation Programs

2.5 PROJECTED DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Growth and development within the region is projected to continue through the year 2030, generally consistent with recent historic trends, due to both natural population growth and new residential and non-residential development. The overall regional population, as projected by AMBAG in its 2004 AMBAG Population, Housing Unit & Employment Forecast, is expected to experience relatively slow growth between 2000 and 2010 (about 1.3 percent per year), then slower growth between 2010 and 2020 (about 1.1 percent per year), and still slower growth between 2020 and 2030 (about 1 percent per year). In sheer numbers, the regional population is anticipated to increase by nearly 94,000 persons between 2000 and 2010, by nearly 91,000 persons between 2010 and 2020, and by about 96,000 persons between 2020 and 2030. Anticipated regional growth rates are slower than those experienced during the 1950s and 1960s (about 6 percent and 4 percent per year, respectively), as well as the growth rates of the 1980s and 1990s (under 3 percent). However, some individual communities are projected to have relatively rapid growth, based on their currently adopted general plans (see discussion in **Section 3.12: Population, Housing and Employment** for additional information on projected population growth within the Monterey Bay region).

The total number of persons within the three Counties is expected to increase by approximately 32 percent between 2000 and 2030, with anticipated increases of approximately 50 percent in Monterey County, 57 percent in San Benito County, and 19 percent in Santa Cruz County during this period. Growth is expected to be distributed unevenly among the existing incorporated cities, unincorporated communities, and in rural areas of the region.

Some cities and communities will experience limited population growth due to coastal locations and environmental constraints (Marina could be an exception, with a projected net gain of approximately 16,000 persons between 2000 and 2030). After peaking around 2005, population is projected to decline below current levels in Carmel, Del Rey Oaks, Monterey and Pacific Grove.

The inland cities of Salinas, Watsonville and Hollister are expected to experience the largest numerical increases in local population during the thirty-year projection period. Population growth in Salinas alone is projected to account for nearly 30 percent of all population growth within the region between 2000 and 2030. On a percentage basis, the cities of Gonzales, Greenfield, Soledad and King City are projected to experience the greatest level of population growth between 2000 and 2030, each more than doubling their 2000 populations during that period. The projected population growth rates in these four cities during the thirty-year period are far above the regional average, and this would account for more than 34 percent of total population growth projected within the region during this period.

Although the type of non-residential development that may take place within the region between 2000 and 2030 is difficult to project, AMBAG has estimated that the total number of jobs within the region will increase by approximately 49 percent over the thirty-year projection period. Employment growth in Salinas is projected to represent 17 percent of the total additional jobs created within the region during this period, with employment growth in the City of Santa Cruz accounting for an

additional 10 percent of total regional jobs created. Job creation in unincorporated areas of Monterey County and Santa Cruz County would also account for a significant portion of total regional employment growth during this period (16 percent and 11 percent, respectively).

Within the Monterey Bay region, there are currently an estimated 416,535 employed residents living in an estimated 259,682 housing units, for a jobs/housing ratio of approximately 1.60 jobs per housing unit. Using AMBAG projections for 2030, this regional jobs/housing ratio is expected to increase to 1.78 jobs per housing unit during the next 25 years. The current regional ratio of persons per household is approximately 2.92, but based on AMBAG projections for 2030, this ratio is expected to increase to 3.01 persons per household during the next 25 years. The current regional percentage of employed residents within the total population is approximately 54 percent, but based on AMBAG projections for 2030, this percentage is expected to increase to approximately 59 percent during the next 25 years (see discussion in **Section 3.12: Population, Housing and Employment**).

As indicated above, significant residential and non-residential development is anticipated within the region through the year 2030. Much of the anticipated growth is likely to occur regardless of the extent to which the three plans are implemented. Implementation of the programs and projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three transportation plans is intended to provide a regional transportation system which can accommodate the projected level of development more effectively than would be possible through the maintenance of the existing transportation system. While individual transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three transportation plans might, if completed, exert some influence on the location of projected residential and non-residential development within the region, adoption of these plans, in itself, would not be expected to alter the projected magnitude of regional residential and non-residential growth.

The projections assume development consistent with local and County land use plans, at generally historic rates and based on other factors.

The supply of water has been perceived as one of the major potential constraints to regional growth, particularly in the Monterey Peninsula area, the Salinas Valley area, and Northern Monterey County, and it may also constrain growth in Santa Cruz County. Within the Salinas Valley, overdraft of groundwater has resulted in saltwater intrusion into the lower valley, especially in the North County area. A Basin Management Plan is being implemented which is aimed at achieving a water balance in the area, and the North County area is the subject of special remedial and investigative activities. The potential also exists for groundwater supplies to be constrained by groundwater pollution, resulting from saltwater intrusion and nitrate contamination from both urban and agricultural activities. If not mitigated, this could constrain some growth in the coastal areas of Pajaro, the Salinas Valley, northern Monterey County, southern Santa Cruz County and possibly other areas of the region.

Wastewater treatment capacity has also been a concern within some of the Salinas Valley cities, and in the large service area of the Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency (MRWPCA)

which encompasses most of the Monterey Peninsula, Salinas and Castroville. However, the MRWPCA has expansion and funding plans in place to accommodate growth as it becomes necessary. Growth in the Hollister and San Juan Bautista areas of San Benito County will also depend on new wastewater treatment infrastructure, and in Santa Cruz County, growth in Scotts Valley will depend on approval of system capacity increases by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. Septic-system carrying capacity is being reached in Prunedale, Carmel Valley and the Bolsa Knolls area north of Salinas, as well as in a number of areas in San Benito County, and within the San Lorenzo River watershed in Santa Cruz County.

Highway capacity, specifically related to poor levels of service (LOS) on selected highway segments, is a potential concern as a growth constraint in all three Counties. The segments that are congested or that are projected to be congested based on the 2005 MTP include, in Monterey County: Highway 101, from North Salinas to the San Benito County line; Highway 1 from the Santa Cruz County line to Highway 156 (Castroville); Highway 1 from Carmel to the Santa Cruz County line; Highway 68 from Highway 1 to the Toro Park area; Highway 156 from Highway 1 to Highway 101; and Highway 183 from Castroville to Salinas. In San Benito County, problematic highway segments include: Highway 25 from Union Road to Highway 156 and Highway 156 from San Juan Bautista to Union Road. Santa Cruz County's most congested highways include Highway 1 between the Rio Del Mar exit and Highway 9, and Highway 17 from Highway 1 to the Santa Clara County line, as well as several local arterial roadways and intersections.

A number of cities and unincorporated communities could be constrained by insufficient school facilities, including, in Monterey County: Salinas, Chualar, King City, the North County area, Gonzales, Toro Park, and the San Juan Road area. In Santa Cruz County, capacity constraints at school districts in the following communities could affect growth: Pajaro Valley, Live Oak, Scotts Valley, San Lorenzo Valley and Soquel areas. Planners for school districts in San Benito County have indicated that they expect to be able to absorb the projected rate of growth. Although these potential school district constraints appear to be widespread, there was not sufficient information provided by the County offices of education to fully judge the ability of districts to absorb projected growth.

As population grows within the region and urbanization spreads, it can be expected that there will be more pollution from urban runoff as stormwater washes across streets, parking lots, rooftops and other impervious surfaces, picking up numerous pollutants and transporting them to receiving waters. A number of measures can be taken to minimize the amount of polluted runoff generated by urban development ("best management practices"), including prevention, source controls and treatment controls under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting program.

2.6 PROJECT APPROVALS

In the actual implementation of projects identified within the 2005 MTP, the following oversight agencies will undoubtedly review the assumptions inherent in the 2005 MTP:

- Federal Highway Administration
- Federal Transit Administration
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- California Transportation Commission (CTC)
- Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD)
- California Coastal Commission

In the actual implementation of projects identified within the 2005 MC-RTP, the following oversight agencies will undoubtedly review the assumptions inherent in the 2005 MC-RTP:

- Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- California Transportation Commission (CTC)
- California Coastal Commission
- Cities of: Carmel, Del Rey Oaks, Gonzales, Greenfield, King City, Marina, Monterey, Pacific Grove, Salinas, Sand City, Seaside and Soledad;
- County of Monterey
- Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD)
- Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST)

In the actual implementation of projects identified within the 2005 SCC-RTP, the following oversight agencies will undoubtedly review the assumptions inherent in the 2005 SCC-RTP:

- Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- California Transportation Commission (CTC)
- California Coastal Commission
- Cities of: Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley, Watsonville
- County of Santa Cruz
- Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD)
- Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (SCMTD)

As future transportation system improvement projects identified in the three plans are planned and designed, site-specific environmental review will be conducted by the agencies responsible for implementing such projects.

Caltrans is a Responsible Agency for all projects planned within its rights-of-way. Any public agencies or private developers contemplating work within a Caltrans right-of-way are required to obtain an approved encroachment permit from Caltrans prior to beginning that work.

2.7 RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PLANS AND PROGRAMS

The following brief discussion of the relationship between the three plans with other plans and programs currently in force within the region indicates that all three of the Transportation Plans evaluated in this document are generally consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of these other plans. However, as individual transportation system improvement projects listed in the three associated financially constrained Action Elements are ultimately defined and actually brought forward for project-specific environmental review in the future, each project will also need to be evaluated for consistency with the applicable plans and programs that may be in force at that time.

California Coastal Act

In 1976, the California Coastal Act (California Public Resources Code Sections 30000 et seq) was enacted by the State Legislature to provide long-term protection of the California coastline. Coastal Act policies constitute the standards used by the California Coastal Commission in its coastal development permit decisions. These policies require:

- Protection and expansion of public access to the shoreline and recreational opportunities and resources;
- Protection, enhancement and restoration of environmentally sensitive habitats;
- Protection of productive agricultural lands, commercial fisheries and archaeological resources;
- Protection of the scenic beauty of coastal landscapes and seascapes;
- Establishment of urban-rural boundaries and directing new housing and other development into areas with adequate services to avoid wasteful urban sprawl and leapfrog development;
- Provision for the expansion of existing ports and electricity-generating powerplants, as well as for the siting of coastal-dependent industrial uses; and
- Protection against loss of life and property from coastal hazards.

Where the Coastal Commission has original coastal development permit jurisdiction, the policies of the Coastal Act will provide the standard for the Commission's review of specific transportation

system improvement projects proposed in these areas. In some instances, the Coastal Act specifically limits future improvements to roadways within the coastal zone. For example, in Section 30254, the Coastal Act states that "it is the intent of the Legislature that State Highway Route 1 in rural areas of the coastal zone remain a scenic two-lane road." This provision could limit future improvements along Highway 1 in rural areas (e.g., the widening of Highway 1 between Salinas Road and Castroville, which is not a project currently identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of any of the three plans). Other provisions of the Coastal Act that could affect permitting for future transportation system improvement projects within the Coastal Commission's jurisdiction include Section 30230 (which requires the maintenance, enhancement and restoration of marine resources), Section 30231 (which requires the maintenance and restoration of the biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries and lakes), Section 30240 (which requires the protection of environmentally sensitive habitat areas), Section 30241 (which requires the maintenance of the maximum amount of prime agricultural land in agricultural production), and Section 30251 (which requires the protection of the scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas). Since the three plans each provide a program identifying future transportation system improvement projects (rather than specific plans for the construction of any such projects), these documents would not be inconsistent with the provisions of the Coastal Act. However, as individual transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans are formally submitted to the appropriate lead agencies for environmental review, each lead agency will be required to determine whether such projects are consistent with policies of the Coastal Act as part of the site-specific project environmental review, and the Coastal Commission will be responsible for reviewing such projects within its jurisdiction prior to issuing any required coastal development permit.

Regional Plans

Monterey Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Monterey and Santa Cruz counties, and for San Benito County for purposes of compliance with the 1990 Federal Clean Air Act Amendments and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. In its role as MPO, AMBAG reviews transportation planning in the three counties for compliance with federal planning guidelines. AMBAG also prepares regional transportation Overall Work Program, regional population and employment forecasts, the Federal Transportation Improvement Program, air quality conformity analyses of transportation plans and programs, and serves as the Rideshare Agency for Monterey County. Following adoption, the 2005 MTP will establish the general goals, policies and strategies governing the conduct of a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation program in effect for Monterey County, San Benito County and Santa Cruz County. The basic purpose of the 2005 MTP is to coordinate and facilitate the programming and budgeting of all transportation facilities and services within the three-county Monterey Bay region in accordance with federal regulations. When adopted, the 2005 MC-RTP, the 2005 San Benito County RTP and the 2005 SCC-RTP are all expected to be fully consistent with the goals, policies and objectives of the 2005 MTP.

2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan

The 2005 MC-RTP Update presents the following goals:

- Mobility and Accessibility: Develop and maintain a multi-modal transportation system that preserves and/or enhances mobility and access of the regional transportation network.

  Goal: Road and Highway Transportation – Provide a network of road and highway facilities that provides for the safe, efficient movement of people and goods within Monterey County.

  Goal: Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation – Expand, improve and maintain facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists that accommodate safe, convenient, and accessible bicycle and pedestrian transportation across Monterey County.

  Goal: Public Transit Services – Provide public transportation that increases mobility and improves quality of life in Monterey County.

  Goal: Rail Transportation – Provide viable rail facilities for commuters and travelers that accommodates convenient, reliable and accessible rail transportation to and from Monterey County, enhancing mobility and access of the transportation network.

  Goal: Transportation Demand Management – Maximize use of existing infrastructure and resources by administering, implementing, or encouraging the employment of measures that reduce peak-hour demand on regional transportation infrastructure.

  Goal: Accessibility – Provide an integrated and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant transportation system that is responsive to the special needs of all seniors and Persons with disabilities.

- Environment and Community – Provide transportation facilities and services that enhance the livability of communities within the region, and minimize impacts to the natural and built environment.

  Goal: Environmental Preservation – Develop a multi-modal regional transportation system that complements and enhances the natural and social environment of the Monterey Bay region.

  Goal: Safety – Implement and encourage projects that enhance safety.

  Goal: Coordinated Land Use and Transportation Planning – Achieve transit, bicycle, and pedestrian-supportive land use development through promotion and coordination with county land use jurisdictions.

Goal: Public Outreach – Solicit broad public input in developing regional and local transportation plans, projects and funding.

- Financial Feasibility – Ensure the financial feasibility of the Regional Transportation Plan, by assuring that revenues are available to achieve planned transportation improvements needed to serve Monterey County's transportation needs.

  Goal: Regional Transportation Financing – Secure sufficient funding to meet the countywide regional transportation needs over the next twenty years.

The transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Element of the 2005 MTP would generally support the goals and objectives identified in the 2005 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan.

2005 San Benito County Regional Transportation Plan

The 2005 San Benito County Regional Transportation Plan identifies the following goals:

Goal 1: To support the economic vitality of the region, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.

Goal 2: To increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.

Goal 3: To increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and freight.

Goal 4: To protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life.

Goal 5: To enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.

Goal 6: To promote efficient system management and operation.

Goal 7: Maintenance of the existing transportation system shall be a priority.

Goal 8: To construct and maintain a street and highway system that is safe, accommodates well-managed demand from existing and future development, and is well maintained.

Goal 9: To design, construct and maintain the integrity of streets and highways to serve their designated purpose and be compatible with the land use to which they are adjacent.

Goal 10: New transportation facilities shall be planned to promote compact urban development, prevent urban sprawl, and prevent conversion of prime farmland.

Goal 11: To promote the development of "livable" streets in urbanized area that accommodates multiple modes of transportation.

Goal 12: To provide an alternative mode of transportation to commuters traveling from San Benito County to Santa Clara County.

Goal 13: To provide a transportation system that is responsive to the needs of the elderly, disabled, and transit dependent.

Goal 14: To promote transit-oriented development and encourage the use of public transportation to reduce energy consumption and congestion.

Goal 15: To encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel within urbanized areas.

Goal 16: To facilitate pedestrian and bicycle travel within new development and between new development and existing urban areas,

Goal 17: To create a new pedestrian and bicyclist's facility connecting urban areas with major recreational areas.

Goal 18: To promote pedestrian and bicycle safety.

Goal 19: To promote a safe and efficient air transportation system that serves general aviation and air commerce needs.

Goal 20: To facilitate the safe and efficient movement of commodities in ways that are compatible with existing and planned land uses.

The Council of San Benito County Governments has also adopted the following short-term (S, by 2010) and long-term (L, by 2020) objectives as part of the 2005 Regional Transportation Plan:

S.1: To increase the capacity of the street and highway system to accommodate projected short-term growth.

S.2: To serve 350 commuter round-trips per weekday of service with commuter rail and express bus service connecting Hollister to Gilroy.

S.3: To reduce the rate of fatal vehicular accidents throughout San Benito County.

S.4: To develop a recreational trail for pedestrians and bicyclists along the San Benito River from San Juan Bautista to Hollister.

S.5: To develop a transportation emergency preparedness and response plan that identifies emergency transportation systems, including emergency corridors and reliever routes.

S.6: To convert the old Highway 25 corridor in Hollister from use as a state highway to use as a business-oriented main street that includes increased parking, pedestrian, and bicyclist opportunities.

S.7: To develop a plan for commodities transportation that designates appropriate routes for large trucks throughout San Benito County and protects rural roads and residential and downtown business districts from degradation caused by large trucks.

S.8: To increase rideshare and intra-county transit operations by 10 percent over current (2000) levels.

S.9: To develop and initiate implementation of a comprehensive bike and pedestrian plan.

S.10: To improve Hollister Municipal Airport operations by lengthening the main runway, installing and Instrument Landing System, and constructing additional hangars for general aviation use.

L.1: To increase the capacity of the street and highway system to accommodate projected long-term growth.

L.2: To serve 1,000 commuter round trips per weekday of service with commuter rail and express bus service connecting Hollister to Gilroy; also, to begin plans to electrify the commuter rail corridor between Hollister and Gilroy.

L.3: To reduce the rate of fatal vehicular accidents throughout San Benito County.

L.4: To extend the recreational trail for pedestrians and bicyclists along the San Benito River from Hollister to the Pinnacles National Monument.

L.5: To increase rideshare and intra-county transit operations by 10 percent over (2010) levels.

The transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Element of the 2005 MTP would generally support the goals and objectives identified in the 2005 San Benito County Regional Transportation Plan.

2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan

The 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan establishes the following goals:

> Goal 1: Preserve and maintain the existing transportation system, emphasizing safety and efficiency.
>
> Goal 2: Increase mobility by providing an improved and integrated multi-modal transportation system.
>
> Goal 3: Coordinate land use and transportation decisions to ensure that the region's social, cultural, and economic vitality is sustained for current and future generations.
>
> Goal 4: Ensure that the transportation system complements and enhances the natural environment of the Monterey Bay region.
>
> Goal 5: Make the most efficient use of limited transportation financial resources.
>
> Goal 6: Solicit broad public input on all aspects of regional and local transportation plans, projects and funding.

The transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Element of the 2005 MTP would generally support the goals and objectives identified in the 2005 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan.

Local General Plans

Monterey County General Plan

The current Monterey County General Plan was last fully updated in 1982. Although a major effort to update the 1982 General Plan has been in progress for several years, this process was recently halted, and there is uncertainty regarding the timing of future efforts to develop a General Plan Update. The 2005 MTP and 2005 MC-RTP both identify transportation system improvements projects within unincorporated portions of Monterey County, and these projects are would help implement the transportation-related goals, policies and objectives identified in the Monterey County General Plan.

City of Carmel-by-the-Sea General Plan

The City of Carmel-by-the-Sea General Plan was last revised in 1983. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 MC-RTP include several following transportation system improvement projects within the jurisdiction of Carmel-by-the-Sea, including the rehabilitation of 5th Avenue, the rehabilitation of San Carlos Street (with streetscaping), the

rehabilitation of Mission Street, the installation of bike kiosks and the construction of a Class I or Class II bike facility along North San Antonio Road. Each of these projects would be generally consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Carmel-by-the-Sea General Plan.

City of Del Rey Oaks General Plan

The City of Del Rey Oaks General Plan was updated in 1997. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 MC-RTP include two resurfacing projects within the jurisdiction of Del Rey Oaks: Work Avenue and Carleton Drive. Neither of these projects would be inconsistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of Del Rey Oaks General Plan.

Fort Ord Reuse Plan

The Fort Ord Reuse Plan was adopted in 1997. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 MC-RTP include a number of transportation system improvement projects within the boundaries of the former Fort Ord, including roadway improvements/realignments, the construction of bike lanes, installation of traffic signals and development of transit centers. These projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the Fort Ord Reuse Plan.

City of Gonzales General Plan

The City of Gonzales General Plan was updated in 1996. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 MC-RTP include several transportation system improvement projects within the jurisdiction of the City of Gonzales, including the installation of traffic signals, the installation of bike racks and lockers, the modification of the Highway 101 interchange at Gloria Road, the widening of 5th Street over Highway 101, the construction of a park-and-ride lot and the construction of Class II bike lanes along River Road. These projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of Gonzales General Plan.

City of Greenfield General Plan

The City of Greenfield General Plan was adopted in 1981. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 MC-RTP include several transportation system improvement projects within the jurisdiction of the City of Greenfield, including the construction of Class II bike lanes, construction of bike/pedestrian bridges over Highway 101 at Apple Avenue and Thorne Avenue, roadway improvements on El Camino Real, installation of traffic signals and the widening of the Walnut Avenue bridge over Highway 101. These projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of Greenfield General Plan.

City of King City General Plan

The City of King City General Plan was updated in 1998. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 MC-RTP include several transportation system improvement projects within the jurisdiction of the City of King City, including the reconstruction of Bitterwater Road and South Second Street, the construction of a railroad grade separation, the rehabilitation of First Street and Bridge, and identification of bike lanes. These projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of King City General Plan.

City of Marina General Plan

The City of Marina General Plan was updated in 2000. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 MC-RTP include a large number of transportation system improvement projects within the jurisdiction of the City of Marina, which can generally be characterized as operational/capacity improvements (new roadways/signalization), bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and road and street maintenance/ rehabilitation. These projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of Marina General Plan.

City of Monterey General Plan

The City of Monterey adopted a new General Plan on January 4, 2005. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 MC-RTP include a number of transportation system improvement projects within the jurisdiction of the City of Monterey, including street reconstruction and improvement projects, intersection improvements and recreational trail improvements. These projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of Monterey General Plan.

City of Pacific Grove General Plan

The City of Pacific Grove General Plan was updated in 1994. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 MC-RTP include several transportation system improvement projects within the jurisdiction of the City of Pacific Grove, including mobility improvements/sidewalk construction, recreational trail repairs, street resurfacing and the installation of traffic signals. These projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of Pacific Grove General Plan.

City of Salinas General Plan

The City of Salinas General Plan was updated in 2002. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 MC-RTP include numerous transportation system improvement projects within the jurisdiction of the City of Salinas, including the construction of new roadways, the extension/widening/improvement of existing roadways, the construction of a new downtown parking garage, installation of bike lanes, installation of traffic signals and installation of ADA access

ramps. These projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of Salinas General Plan.

City of Sand City General Plan

The City of Sand City General Plan was revised in 2002. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 MC-RTP include several transportation system improvement projects within the jurisdiction of the City of Sand City, including the installation of bike racks and bike path lighting, the realignment of Contra Costa and widening of Tioga, the overlay of California Street and the installation of a traffic signal at California – Playa. These projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of Sand City General Plan 2002-2017.

City of Seaside General Plan

The City of Seaside General Plan was updated in 2004. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 MC-RTP include several transportation system improvement projects within the jurisdiction of the City of Seaside, including the installation of traffic signals, roadway and intersection improvements/realignments, and the installation of a Class I bike path. These projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of Seaside General Plan.

City of Soledad General Plan

The City of Soledad General Plan was updated in 1993, and a Final Draft of the 2004 revision has been prepared. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 MC-RTP include several transportation system improvement projects within the jurisdiction of the City of Soledad, including Front Street realignment/improvements, construction of realigned interchange ramps at Gablin Drive – Front Street and Highway 101, installation of traffic signals, and installation of bicycle racks and lockers. These projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of Soledad General Plan.

San Benito County General Plan

The San Benito County General Plan consists of several elements that were adopted between 1980 and 1995. The financially constrained Action Element of the 2005 MTP includes several transportation system improvement projects within the jurisdiction of the County of San Benito, including the widening of Fairview Road, transit vehicle replacement and bikeway repair and maintenance. These projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the County of San Benito General Plan.

City of Hollister General Plan

The City of Hollister General Plan was updated in 1995. The financially constrained Action Element of the 2005 MTP includes several transportation system improvement projects within the jurisdiction of the City of Hollister, including the construction of Buena Vista Road, Memorial Drive, Union Road and the Westside Boulevard Extension, the widening of SR 25 between Sunnyslope and Sunset, and the installation of traffic signals. These projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of Hollister General Plan.

City of San Juan Bautista General Plan

The City of San Juan Bautista adopted a new General Plan in 1998. Although improvements to Highway 156 in the vicinity of San Juan Bautista are included within the projects listed in the financially constrained Action Element of the 2005 MTP, no transportation system improvement projects within the jurisdiction of San Juan Bautista are identified in the financially constrained Action Element of the 2005 MTP. The policies of the 2005 MTP are generally consistent with the goals and policies of the San Juan Bautista General Plan.

County of Santa Cruz General Plan

The Santa Cruz County 1994 General Plan/Local Coastal Program was adopted in 1994. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 SCC-RTP include numerous projects that would further the goals identified in the Santa Cruz County 1994 General Plan/Local Coastal Program, and both the 2005 MTP and the 2005 SCC-RTP are generally consistent with the goals, policies and objectives of the Santa Cruz County 1994 General Plan/Local Coastal Program.

City of Capitola General Plan

The City of Capitola General Plan was adopted in 1989. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 SCC-RTP include several transportation system improvement projects that would address these problem areas, and both the 2005 MTP and the 2005 SCC-RTP are generally consistent with the goals, policies and objectives of the City of Capitola General Plan.

City of Santa Cruz General Plan

The City of Santa Cruz General Plan 1990-2005 was adopted in 1992. The City of Santa Cruz Bicycle Transportation Plan was adopted in 2000, and identifies gaps in the existing bike lane system on several streets, including Soquel Avenue, King Street and other high activity corridors. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 SCC-RTP include numerous projects that would accomplish many of the transportation system improvements previously identified in the City of Santa Cruz General Plan, and both the 2005 MTP and the 2005 SCC-RTP are generally consistent with the goals, policies and objectives of the City of Santa Cruz General Plan.

City of Scotts Valley General Plan

The City of Scotts Valley General Plan was adopted in 1994. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 SCC-RTP include numerous projects that would accomplish many of the transportation system improvements previously identified in the City of Scotts Valley General Plan, and both the 2005 MTP and the 2005 SCC-RTP are generally consistent with the goals, policies and objectives of the City of Scotts Valley General Plan.

City of Watsonville General Plan

The City of Watsonville 2005 General Plan was adopted in 1994, and the City is currently underway developing an update. The financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP and 2005 SCC-RTP include numerous projects that would accomplish many of the transportation system improvements previously identified in the City of Watsonville General Plan, and both the 2005 MTP and the 2005 SCC-RTP are generally consistent with the goals, policies and objectives of the City of Watsonville 2005 General Plan.

Local Coastal Programs

The California Coastal Commission oversees the incorporation of coastal issues and policies into all local general plans in the Coastal Zone (within the Monterey Bay region, this includes the jurisdictions of Monterey County, Santa Cruz County and all communities within those counties with land located within the Coastal Zone) in the form of a Local Coastal Program (LCP). An LCP is comprised of a Land Use Plan and a set of ordinances that implement the policies of the California Coastal Act. Once the Coastal Commission has certified the LCP, a local agency's general plan is considered to be consistent with the purposes and intent of the Coastal Act, including all transportation-related capital improvements proposals identified in the local general plan. Since the three plans each provide a program identifying future transportation system improvement projects (rather than specific plans for the construction of any such projects), these documents would not be inconsistent with the provisions of the Coastal Act. However, as individual transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans and within areas covered by an LCP are formally submitted to the appropriate lead agencies for environmental review, each lead agency will be required to determine whether such projects are consistent with the policies any applicable LCP.

Short-Range Transit Plans (SRTPs)

The SRTP is a five-year plan that evaluates existing transit service and performance in terms of adopted goals, objectives and policies. These documents also identify planned operational and capital improvements, as well as planning activities. In the Monterey Bay Area, SRTPs are developed by Monterey-Salinas Transit, the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District, San Benito County Transit, and the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments. The financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans include numerous projects that would fund on-going transit

operations, provide maintenance funds, enable the purchase of new transit vehicles and the expansion of transit service within the region, and provide for the construction of new transit stations. These projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the SRTPs within the region.

Airport Master Plans

Master Plans for public airports within the region (Monterey County - Mesa Del Rey Airport, Marina Municipal Airport, Monterey Peninsula Airport and Salinas Municipal Airport; San Benito County – Hollister Municipal Airport, Santa Cruz County – Watsonville Municipal Airport) generally identify existing aviation facilities, aviation demand forecasts, and the facilities needed to meet the projected demand for aviation services and facilities. The financially constrained Action Element of the three plans include numerous projects that would fund a wide range of improvements at airports within the region, and these projects would generally be consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the various Airport Master Plans.

Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIPs)

Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIPs) represent a four- to five-year program of transportation system improvement projects developed by each of the three counties in the Monterey Bay region that include 1) federally funded transportation projects; and 2) projects nominated for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Projects identified in each RTIP must be consistent with the appropriate RTP in order to be programmed into the STIP. Because of this requirement, each of the three RTIPs will ultimately be consistent with the three plans.

Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP)

The Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) is a three-year program of federally funded transportation system improvement projects for the Monterey Bay region and is prepared by AMBAG. Projects identified in the FTIP must be consistent with the MTP in order to be programmed into the Federal STIP. Because of this requirement, the FTIP will be consistent with the 2005 Monterey Bay MTP.

Congestion Management Programs (CMPs)

In Monterey County, California Government Code statutes link the required Congestion Management Program (CMP) with the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Monterey County must evaluate the consistency between the CMP and the RTP, and upon finding the CMP to be consistent with the RTP, the County shall incorporate certain projects from the CMP Capital Improvement Program (CIP) into the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). In addition, an adopted CMPs found in compliance with the MC-RTP will be incorporated into the associated RTP financially constrained Action Element. The Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC)

is tasked with evaluating its approved CMPs periodically as part of the RTP review process, and is responsible for incorporating relevant sections of their CMPs into its associated RTP Update. For this reason, the 2005 MC-RTP is consistent with the CMP for Monterey County.

3

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

3.1 AESTHETICS

3.1.1 SETTING

Monterey County

Monterey County is characterized by a scenic ocean coastline along its western and northern borders, with rugged coastal mountains inland along its eastern boundary. The most significant visual resources are located along the coastline. Monterey County includes some of the most magnificent ocean shoreline in the world along the Big Sur coast, which is bounded on the east by the very steep Santa Lucia Mountain range.

The greatest visual expanse within inland Monterey County is the 130-mile long Salinas Valley, which stretches the length of the County. The Salinas Valley is a world-renowned agricultural area, and has a reputation as the nation's "Salad Bowl", due to lettuce and other vegetables that are grown there.

The 1982 Monterey County General Plan includes policies related to scenic highways, but does not address other specific visual resources (except for ocean resources and native vegetation). The General Plan states that land use controls shall be applied to protect the scenic corridors (Policy 40.2.2), and additional sensitive treatments will be used within the scenic corridors, such as agricultural and landscape controls (Policy 40.2.1).

The following roadways within Monterey County have been officially designated as parts of the California Scenic Highway System:

- State Highway 101 from the San Luis Obispo County line to State Highway 68
- State Highway 68 from State Highway 1 in Monterey to the Salinas River
- State Highway 156 from one mile east of Castroville to U.S. 101 near Prunedale
- Laureles Grade Road from State Highway 68 to Carmel Valley Road

The following roadways in Monterey County have been identified as eligible for inclusion in the California Scenic Highway System:

- State Highway 1 from State Highway 68 to the Santa Cruz County line
- U.S. 101 from State Highway 156 near Prunedale to the San Benito County line
- State Highway 25 from State Highway 198 to the San Benito County line

The County of Monterey has designated portions of U.S. 101, four State Highways and two County Roads as Scenic Roadways. These include:

- State Highway 1 from San Luis Obispo County to State Highway 68 (64 miles)
- State Highway 68 from Monterey city limits to Salinas River (10 miles)
- U.S. 101 from State Highway 156 near Prunedale to State Highway 156 near the Rocks (4 miles)
- State Highway 156 (4 miles)
- State Highway 198 from U.S. 101 near San Lucas to the Monterey County boundary (15 miles)
- Laureles Grade (5.5 miles)
- Interlake Road (11.5 miles)

The following roadways in Monterey County are proposed for designation as Scenic Roadways:

- Carmel Valley Road
- State Highway 1 from the State Highway 68 interchange to the Seaside city limits
- State Highway 1 from Marina to the Monterey County boundary at the Pajaro River
- State Highway 68 from the Carmel Hill interchange to New Monterey; and
- River Road

In addition, Holman Highway from the Carmel Hill Interchange to New Monterey has been proposed as a Scenic Highway by the City of Monterey.

San Benito County

In contrast to the other two counties in the Monterey Bay region, San Benito County has no coastline. It is characterized by the Diablo and Gabilan Mountain Ranges, and their associated inland agricultural valleys. Approximately seventy percent of the area within San Benito County can be characterized as public or private open space, with the majority of these areas in private ownership as Williamson Act lands that support active commercial agriculture.

The following roadways in San Benito County have been identified as eligible for inclusion in the California Scenic Highway System:

- U.S. 101 from the Monterey County line to the Santa Clara County line
- State Highway 25 from State Highway 198 to State Highway 156
- State Highway 146
- State Highway 156

The San Benito County General Plan Scenic Roads and Highways Element (1980) includes policies to provide for the protection of certain transportation corridors which are recognized as having unusual or outstanding scenic qualities (Policy 1), to carefully review all projects involving grading within Scenic Corridors (Policy 2), to enhance the visual character of Scenic Corridors, where appropriate (Policy 4), to minimize the visual impact of utility lines on Scenic Corridors (Policy 5), and to protect Scenic Corridors from the proliferation of unnecessary signs (Policy 6) The General Plan designates the following roadways as Scenic Highways, and describes the widths of the associated Scenic Corridors:

- U.S. 101 (entire length within San Benito County - the Scenic Corridor width includes all land 400 feet on either side of the centerline of the road)
- State Highway 129 from its intersection with U.S. 101 to the San Benito County boundary (the Scenic Corridor width includes all land within 340 feet on either side of the centerline of the road)
- State Highway 146 between State Highway 25 and the Monterey County line (the Scenic Corridor width includes all land 340 feet on either side of the centerline of the road)

Santa Cruz County

Santa Cruz County is characterized by scenic ocean coastlines along its western and southern borders, with rugged coastal mountains inland along its northern and eastern boundary, with visual resources generally similar to those of Monterey County described above.

State Highway 152 is the only Santa Cruz County roadway that has been officially designated as part of the California Scenic Highway System. However, the following Santa Cruz County roadways have been identified as eligible for inclusion in the California Scenic Highway System:

- State Highway 9
- State Highway 17

The 1994 General Plan and Local Coastal Program for the County of Santa Cruz contains several policies related to preserving and protecting the visual resources within the County. One policy calls for the protection of significant public viewsheds from all publicly used roads and vista points by minimizing disruption of the landform caused by grading or "inappropriate landscaping and structure design" (Policy 5.10.3). Policies regulate the design of structures within County-designated visual resources areas (Policy 5.10.2) and require supplemental landscaping as visual mitigation for development within the viewshed of designated Scenic Roads (Policy 5.10.13). Policy 5.10.10 designates the following roads and highways as Scenic Roads:

- State Highway 1 from San Mateo County to Monterey County
- State Highway 9 from State Highway 1 to Santa Clara County
- State Highway 17 from State Highway 1 to Santa Clara County
- State Highway 35 from State Highway 17 to San Mateo County
- State Highway 129 from State Highway 1 to San Benito County
- State Highway 152 from State Highway 1 to Santa Clara County
- State Highway 236 from State Highway 9 in Boulder Creek to State Highway 9 at Waterman Gap

The Santa Cruz County General Plan also identifies the following roadway segments as scenic County roads:

- Amesti Road from Varni Road to Browns Valley Road
- Beach Road from State Highway 1 to Palm Beach
- Bonita Drive and San Andreas Road from State Highway 1 to Beach Road
- Bonny Doon Road from State Highway 1 to Pine Flat Road
- Browns Valley Road from Eureka Canyon Road to Hazel Dell Road
- Buena Vista Drive from San Andreas Road to Larkin Valley Road
- Casserly Road from Mt. Madonna Road to State Highway 152

- Corralitos Road from Freedom Boulevard to Browns Valley Road
- Empire Grade from the Santa Cruz city limit to the end of Empire Grade
- East Cliff Drive from 33rd Avenue to 41st Avenue
- Eureka Canyon Road from Highland Way to Corralitos
- Graham Hill Road from Lockewood Lane to State Highway 9
- Hazel Dell Road from Browns Valley Road to Mt. Madonna Road
- Highland Way from Summit Road to Eureka Canyon Road
- Ice Cream Grade
- Martin Road from Pine Flat to Ice Cream Grade
- Mt. Hermon Road from Scotts Valley city limit to Graham Hill Road
- Mt. Madonna Road from Hazel Dell Road to Casserly Road
- Pine Flat Road from Bonny Doon Road to Empire Grade
- Sand Dollar Drive
- Smith Grade
- Summit Road from State Highway 17 to Highland Way
- Sunset Beach and Shell Road
- Swanton Road from State Highway 1 to Davenport Landing to State Highway 1 at Greyhound Rock

3.1.2 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Implementation of the three plans could have a significant environmental impact if it were to result in:

- A substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
- Substantial damage to scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;
- Substantial degradation of the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; or

- The creation of a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area.

The three plans are program-level planning documents containing a listing of financially constrained Action Element transportation programs and projects. In the case of most of the listed programs and projects, specific design details have not yet been established. Therefore, the following impact discussion relative to the listed projects is general, and does not evaluate any site-specific visual and other aesthetic impacts which may be associated with individual transportation system improvement projects. As detailed engineering plans are prepared for specific projects, an evaluation of site-specific visual and other aesthetic impacts will be required by the agency responsible for the implementation of each individual project as part of the environmental review and approval process.

Scenic Vistas

IMPACT 3.1.1: Substantial Adverse Effects on Scenic Vistas. Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may result in a substantial change in existing scenic vistas along roadways that are included in the California Scenic Highway System, that are eligible for inclusion in the California Scenic Highway System, or that have been identified as Scenic Roadways/Scenic Highways/Scenic Roads by one of the three counties in the Monterey Bay region. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) operational, safety and capacity improvements to portions of Highway 1 with views of the Pacific Ocean, and projects that would involve improvements on roadways that have been identified as eligible for inclusion in the California Scenic Highway System or that are locally-designated scenic routes. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with the implementation of these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.1.1: Visual/Scenic Resources Analysis

The implementing agency for any proposed project that may result in substantial adverse effects on scenic vistas shall, where appropriate, conduct a detailed visual assessment during the environmental review process and mitigate for significant visual impacts, where feasible. Visual assessments for improvement projects related to roadways that have been designated as part of the California Scenic Highway System shall, where appropriate, be prepared in consultation with Caltrans. Proposed median barriers and soundwalls should be carefully studied to determine if they are really needed, what alternatives may be available, and what mitigation measures (i.e., landscaping) may be appropriate.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Through this process of assessment, for most projects it may be possible to identify mitigation measures or alternatives which could reduce project-specific impacts on scenic vistas to a level of

less than significant for most projects. However, even with the implementation of the mitigation measures, impacts associated with a few projects may remain **significant and unavoidable**.

Scenic Resources

IMPACT 3.1.2: Substantial Damage to Scenic Resources. Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may result in substantial damage to scenic resources, particularly in the vicinity of roadways that are included in the California Scenic Highway System, that are eligible for inclusion in the California Scenic Highway System, or that have been identified as Scenic Roadways/Scenic Highways/Scenic Roads by one of the three counties in the Monterey Bay region. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) road widenings, installation of median barriers, and construction of interchanges or new roadways. In addition, construction of individual improvement projects may affect public views of scenic resources that could result in the short-term blockage of views by construction equipment and staging areas, disruption of views by temporary signage, and exposure of slopes and removal of vegetation. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with the implementation of these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.1.2: Scenic Resource Avoidance by Design

A. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that any project that may affect scenic resources (particularly along a Scenic Roadway, Scenic Highway or Scenic Road) be designed to have the minimum possible impact on existing vegetation, landscape architecture and natural scenic views, and to avoid or minimize the removal of significant stands of trees and damage to rock outcroppings to the maximum extent possible.

B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, design transportation project alignments to avoid or minimize substantial physical alteration of the land, due to large amounts of cut and fill. Where a particular improvement project would affect adjacent landforms, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that recontouring provides a smooth and gradual transition between modified landforms and existing grade. Where hillsides cannot be totally avoided, consideration shall, where appropriate, be given to dividing the roadway to better fit the topography, or to lengthening the alignment to follow existing contours, where appropriate. Where significant cuts and fills cannot be avoided, plans should be developed and implemented to mitigate identified impacts to the surrounding scenic resources (e.g., extensive landscaping with mature plants, rounding natural portions of cut and fill areas, regrading to the approximate previous visual grade, and design and placement of landscaping and signs to preserve and create scenic views for the motorist). Visual disruption shall, where appropriate, be minimized by re-grading to the approximate natural grades, rounding natural portions of cut and fills, and using retaining walls where appropriate and compatible with existing surrounding land uses.

C. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, prepare grading plans which minimize the removal of scenic resources such as trees, rock outcroppings and historic buildings.

D. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, design roadway alignments to avoid or minimize removal of significant mature trees. Where the retention of significant mature trees is not feasible, tree replanting shall, where appropriate, be undertaken using compatible native species in rural areas and appropriate street trees in urban areas at the completion of the construction process.

E. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that native, drought-tolerant plants and other landscape materials enhance landform variation, provide erosion control and blend with the surrounding natural setting. To ensure compliance with approved landscape plans, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, provide a monetary performance security equal to the value of the landscaping/irrigation installation.

F. Where the use of soundwalls or other architectural features that could block views of scenic resources may be necessary to mitigate potential noise effects associated with specific projects, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that such features incorporate offsets, accents and landscaping to prevent monotony, and that they be designed in accordance with the architectural review requirements of the local jurisdiction.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The effective application of this type of mitigation by the implementing agencies could reduce impacts to scenic resources to a level of less than significant for most projects. However, even with the implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts associated with a few projects may remain **significant and unavoidable**.

Visual Character

IMPACT 3.1.3: Substantial Degradation of Visual Character. Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may result in substantial degradation of the existing visual character or quality of project sites and/or surroundings, particularly in areas which are currently rural in character. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the development of rail stations (although in some instances, new rail stations may enhance the existing visual character of an area), construction of a new roadways, construction of new bridges or bridge improvements, road widenings, and the construction of lighting facilities, bus shelters and signs. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with the implementation of these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.1.3: Visual/Scenic Resources Analysis

A. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, prepare a visual assessment for any proposed project which may result in substantial degradation of the visual character of the project site and/or surroundings. Through this process of analysis and evaluation, it may be possible to identify mitigation measures or alternatives which would reduce project-specific visual impacts.

B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that transportation system improvement projects are designed to minimize visual impacts through project siting and design, including minimizing vegetation removal.

C. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, avoid the removal of existing mature trees associated with transportation system improvement projects to the extent possible. Any trees lost shall, where appropriate, be replaced at a minimum 2:1 basis with native trees (or consistent with tree replacement ratios of the local jurisdictions in which impacts could occur) and incorporated into the landscaping design for the project.

D. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, minimize roadway, transit station, park-and-ride lot and wharf facility lighting to the extent possible, and shall, where appropriate, not allow lighting fixtures to exceed the maximum height limits set by the local jurisdiction in which such projects would occur.

E. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that bus shelters and other ancillary transportation facilities are designed and constructed in accordance with the architectural review requirements of the local jurisdiction.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The effective application of this type of mitigation by the implementing agencies could reduce impacts to scenic resources to a level of less than significant for most projects. However, even with the implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts associated with a few projects may remain **significant and unavoidable**.

Light and Glare

IMPACT 3.1.4: Increased Light and Glare. Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may result in the creation of a new source of substantial light or glare which could adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the immediate vicinity of the project sites. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) construction of new roadways or roadway extensions, the development of rail or transit stations, and the construction of lighting facilities and signs. This

could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with the implementation of these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.1.4: Minimize Intrusion of Lighting

Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that all lighting associated with transportation system improvement projects is designed to minimize intrusion onto adjacent properties and meets the architectural review and lighting requirements of the local jurisdiction in which the improvements would occur. Lighting that accompanies any proposed project should be minimized to the extent possible, consistent with safety requirements. Plans for individual projects should incorporate design features, such as hooded light shields (to direct lighting to the ground or toward the facility and away from adjacent residential and other uses), the use of dense landscaping to block light and glare from spilling over into adjacent uses, the use of unobtrusive signage that does not reflect light or glare onto nearby occupied properties, and the use of white reflective paint in lieu of reflective materials to the extent possible.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The effective application of these light/glare reduction design techniques by implementing agencies could reduce project-specific impacts to a level of less than significant.

3.2 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

3.2.1 SETTING

Agricultural lands within Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz counties include some of the most productive in the United States. The economy of the region is primarily based on agriculture, and as indicated above, the 130-mile long Salinas Valley has a reputation as the nation's "Salad Bowl", due to the lettuce and other vegetables that are grown there. Large areas are also in crop production in the Pajaro Valley, on the coastal terraces of Santa Cruz County, and in northern San Benito County.

The California Department of Conservation has identified and mapped several categories of important farmland within the state, including the categories described below.

- Prime Farmland has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for the production of crops.
- Farmland of Statewide Importance is land other than Prime Farmland that has a good combination of physical and chemical characteristics for the production of crops.
- Unique Farmland does not meet the criteria for Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance, but has recently been used for the production of specific crops with a high economic value.

Each of the three counties within the Monterey Bay region has farmland areas that have been mapped under these definitions.

Under the California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (Williamson Act), local governments can enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of maintaining land in active agricultural use. Property taxes on those parcels under Williamson Act contracts are based on an assessment of the property as it supports farming and open space uses, rather than full market value (which may be considerably higher, particularly in areas that are exposed to development pressure where market prices for developable land can be far above prices based on the revenue such land could generate in agricultural uses). Williamson Act contracts are automatically renewed each year, unless the property owner files a notice of non-renewal. If so, property taxes on the affected parcel are adjusted upward in each of the remaining years of the contract, so that they will reflect the market value of the property at the end of the contract period. There are a limited number of circumstances, however, under which a Williamson Act contract may be cancelled without following non-renewal procedures, each involving a comprehensive review and approvals process.

There are lands under active Williamson Act contracts in each of the three counties within the Monterey Bay region.

3.2.2 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Implementation of the three plans could have a significant environmental impact if it were to result in:

- The conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency) to non-agricultural use;
- Any conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use;
- Any conflict with a Williamson Act contract; or
- Other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency) to non-agricultural use.

Although adoption of the three plans would not, in and of itself, change current land use designations established by jurisdictions within the region, construction of several of the proposed roadway improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Element could result in the conversion of some prime farmlands, unique farmlands or farmlands of statewide importance to non-agricultural uses. The actual acreage of farmland that may be converted as a result of the construction of the proposed transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans can only be determined following the design of each of these roadways and the formal definition of the proposed rights-of-way. Even if these roadways were designed to minimize the loss of productive farmlands, however, some farmlands would necessarily be converted to non-agricultural use as a result of the construction of the proposed roadways.

Farmland Conversion

IMPACT 3.2.1: Conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance. Construction of several of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could be expected to result in the conversion of prime farmlands, unique farmlands or farmlands of statewide importance to non-agricultural uses. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) road widenings, construction of new roadways and interchanges, and construction of some trails. In addition, the extension of existing roadways and the construction of new roadways, have the potential to induce, or accommodate, growth in the surrounding areas by providing new access, which could result in the conversion of additional farmland. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with implementation of these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.2.1: Design Modifications

In designing specific transportation system improvement projects, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, avoid the conversion of prime farmland, unique farmland and farmland of statewide importance to the maximum extent feasible, and shall, where appropriate, consider alternative alignments that reduce or avoid the conversion of such farmlands. Where avoidance is not feasible, such projects shall, where appropriate, be designed to minimize the conversion of such farmlands. Implementing agencies will be required to evaluate the possible conversion of farmland during site-specific environmental review for each project. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (LESA) from the California Department of Conservation shall, where appropriate, be utilized to identify the potentially significant project-related impacts resulting from changes in agricultural land use. Implementing agencies should consider the use of agricultural land conservation easements where project-related conversion of farmland is determined to be unavoidable.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Although most projects could be designed by the implementing agencies to reduce the conversion of prime farmland, unique farmland or farmland of statewide importance to non-agricultural uses to a level of less than significant, implementation of a few of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in an undetermined extent of such conversion which could not be effectively mitigated. In such cases, this impact could remain **significant and unavoidable.**

Agricultural Zoning

IMPACT 3.2.2: Potential Conflict with Existing Zoning for Agricultural Use. In some jurisdictions, construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may conflict with existing zoning which is intended to protect land for agricultural use. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) roadway widenings and the construction of new roadways and interchanges. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with implementation of these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.2.2: Project-Related Variances

In those instances where approval of a project could conflict with existing zoning intended to protect agricultural uses, the implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, first ensure that any appropriate variance is obtained.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Approval of a variance to enable the construction of a transportation system improvement project to go forward despite a conflict with existing zoning regulations would indicate that the local jurisdiction has accepted the need for that improvement as being consistent with the general planning policies of that jurisdiction, in effect reducing this impact to a level of less than significant.

Williamson Act Contracts

IMPACT 3.2.3: Potential Conflicts with Williamson Act Contracts. In some jurisdictions, construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may be built on lands which are currently under Williamson Act contracts. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) roadway widenings, the construction of new roadways and interchanges, and the construction of bike paths or pedestrian trails through agricultural areas. As long as these contracts remain in force, this could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with implementation of these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.2.3: Avoidance / Cancellation of Contracts

In designing specific transportation system improvement projects, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, avoid the cancellation of Williamson Act contracts to the maximum extent feasible. Where avoidance is not feasible, such projects shall, where appropriate, be designed to minimize the number of Williamson Act contracts that would need to be canceled. Implementing agencies will be required to evaluate the possible cancellation of Williamson Act contracts during site-specific environmental review for each project.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Where the cancellation of current Williamson Act contracts can be avoided, potential impacts would be reduced to a level of less than significant. In those instances where project modifications to avoid cancellation of Williamson Act contracts cannot be made, it may be necessary for the jurisdiction which is a party to such contracts to take action to cancel them prior to project approval. In a few such cases, the impact could remain **significant and unavoidable**.

Fragmentation of Agricultural Land / Changes in Agricultural Uses

IMPACT 3.2.4: Fragmentation of Agricultural Lands and Changes in Land Uses Adjacent to Agricultural Lands. Construction of several of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could be expected to result in major changes in existing land uses adjacent to land currently in agricultural uses or in the fragmentation of existing agricultural

operations, which could also result in land use conflicts that might ultimately cause the agricultural operators to abandon their agricultural operations. For example, the improved access which would be provided through the construction of a new roadway in an area adjacent to land which is in active agricultural use could also result in increased trespass or vandalism on these farmlands, which might discourage the continued use of that land for agricultural purposes. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts might be (but would not necessarily be limited to) roadway widenings, construction of new roadways and interchanges, and the construction of new bike paths or pedestrian trails through agricultural areas. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with implementation of this type of project.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.2.4: Project-Specific Agricultural Protection

A. In designing specific transportation system improvement projects, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that rural roadway alignments follow property lines to the maximum extent feasible, to minimize impacts to the agricultural production value of any specific property. Farmers shall, where appropriate, be compensated for the loss of agricultural production at the margins of lost property, based on the amount of land deeded as road right-of-way, as a function of the total amount of production on the property.

B. In those instances where projects are proposed in areas adjacent to lands currently in agricultural uses (particularly lands which have been designated as prime farmland, unique farmland or farmland of statewide importance), implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, incorporate project-specific design features which would provide adequate protection for the farmland adjacent to the project site (fencing, warning notices, etc.).

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The effective application of this type of mitigation by the implementing agencies could reduce changes in land use adjacent to land in agricultural uses to a level of less than significant for most projects. However, even with the implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts associated with project-related fragmentation of parcels currently in agricultural uses may remain **significant and unavoidable** for a few projects.

3.3 AIR QUALITY

This section is based on the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District's CEQA Air Quality Guidelines (June 2004) and the current Air Quality Management Plan. It includes a summary of regional air quality conditions, and an analysis of potential air quality impacts associated with the implementation of the three plans.

3.3.1 SETTING

Meteorology

Air quality is affected by the rate and location of pollutant emissions and by climatic conditions that influence the movement and dispersion of pollutants. Atmospheric conditions such as wind speed, wind direction and air temperature gradients, along with local and regional topography, provide the links between air pollutant emissions and air quality.

The three counties that are covered by the 2005 MTP (Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz) comprise the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB). The basin covers an area of 5,159 square miles along the central coast of California. The Santa Cruz Mountains dominate the northwest sector of the basin, while the Diablo Range marks the northeastern boundary, with the Santa Clara Valley between them. This valley transitions into the San Benito Valley, which runs northwest-southeast and is bounded on the west by the Gabilan Range. West of the Gabilan Range is the Salinas Valley, extending from Salinas in the northwest to King City in the southeast. The western edge of the Salinas Valley is formed by the Sierra de Salinas, which is also the eastern edge of the smaller Carmel Valley. The Santa Lucia Range along the Pacific coast defines the western edge of the Carmel Valley.

The basic controlling factor in the climate of the North Central Coast Air Basin is the semi-permanent high pressure cell in the eastern Pacific. During the summer, this cell is dominant, causing persistent west and northwest winds over the California coast. Air descending in the Pacific High forms a stable temperature inversion (a layer of hot air over a cool layer of coastal air). As onshore air currents pass over cool ocean waters, fog and relatively cool air moves into the coastal valleys, while warmer air aloft acts as a lid to inhibit vertical air movement.

The general orientation of mountain ridges (northwest-southeast) tends to restrict and channel summer onshore air currents. In the interior portions of the Salinas Valley and San Benito Valley, surface heating creates a weak low pressure which intensifies onshore air flow during the afternoon and evening.

In the fall, when surface winds become weak, the marine layer grows shallow, dissipating altogether on some days. The air flow is occasionally reversed in a weak offshore movement. The relatively stationary air mass is held in pace by the Pacific High pressure cell, which allows pollutants to build

up over a period of a few days. It is most often during this season that the north or east winds develop, which can transport pollutants from either the San Francisco Bay area or the Central Valley into the North Central Coast Air Basin.

In the winter, the Pacific High migrates further south, and has less influence on the North Central Coast Air Basin. Air frequently flows in a southeasterly direction out of the Salinas Valley and the San Benito Valley, especially during night and early morning hours. Although northwest winds remain dominant in winter, easterly flow is more frequent. The general absence of deep, persistent inversions and the occasional storm systems passing through the basin usually result in good air quality in winter and early spring.

Coastal mountains in Santa Cruz County exert strong influence on atmospheric circulation, and result in generally good air quality. Small inland valleys with low mountains on two sides (i.e., Scotts Valley) have poorer circulation than do areas on the coastal plain (i.e., Santa Cruz). Scotts Valley is downwind of major pollutant generating centers, and these pollutants have time to form oxidant while moving toward the area. This is why air pollutants tend to be more likely to build up in Scotts Valley than at Santa Cruz.

Monterey Bay represents a 25-mile wide inlet that allows marine air at low levels to penetrate interior areas. The Salinas Valley is a steep-sloped coastal valley opening out onto Monterey Bay and extending southeastward between mountain ranges with elevations ranging as high as two to three thousand feet. Near its mouth, the valley floor is approximately 25 miles wide, but its width narrows to about six miles at Soledad (40 miles inland) and to three miles at King City (approximately 60 miles from the coast). At Salinas (near the northern end of the valley), west and northwest winds occur about half the time during the entire year. While the summer coastal stratus rarely extends beyond Soledad, the extended sea breeze consisting of warmer and drier air frequently reaches far down the Salinas Valley. At the southern end of the Salinas Valley (extending beyond the North Central Coast Air Basin to Paso Robles), winds are generally weaker most of the year, except during storm periods.

At the northern end of the San Benito Valley, Hollister experiences westerly winds nearly one-third of the time. During the summer months, the prevailing air flow probably originates in the Monterey Bay area and enters the northern end of the San Benito Valley via the air gap through the Gabilan Range formed by the Pajaro River. In addition, a northwesterly air flow frequently moves pollutants from the Santa Clara Valley into the San Benito Valley.

Pollutants

Primary criteria pollutants are emitted directly from a source (i.e., an automobile, an exhaust stack of a factory, etc.) into the atmosphere. At the federal level, National Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS) have been established for carbon monoxide (CO - produced chiefly by internal combustion engines), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), ozone (O_3), inhalable particulate matter (PM_{10}), fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$), and lead (Pb). The State of California has adopted AAQS

which address the national criteria pollutants, and generally set more stringent limits. The California AAQS also establish standards for sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, vinyl chloride and visibility. **Table 3-1** summarizes federal and State AAQS.

The three criteria pollutants of concern within the NCCAB are ozone, PM10 and carbon monoxide. A description of each of these pollutants, their sources and their effects on human health and welfare, as presented in the MBUAPCD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines pages 3-2 and 3-3 (June 2004) is provided below, along with a brief discussion of Toxic Air Contaminants focused on diesel particulate matter.

Ozone (O_3)

Ozone in the lower atmosphere is one of the main components of smog. It is not directly emitted, but is formed in the atmosphere over several hours from combinations of various precursors in the presence of sunlight. Nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOC) are considered to be the primary compounds, or precursors, contributing to the formation of ozone. Ozone is viewed as both a secondary pollutant and as a regional pollutant.

Short-term exposure to ozone, a strongly oxidizing species, results in injury and damage to the lungs, decreases in pulmonary function, and impairment of immune mechanisms. These changes have been implicated in the development of chronic lung disease as a result of longer-term exposure. Symptoms of ozone irritation include shortness of breath, chest pain when inhaling deeply, wheezing and coughing. Children and persons with pre-existing respiratory disease (e.g., asthma, chronic bronchitis, emphysema) are at greater risk. In addition, effects on vegetation have been documented at concentrations below the standards.

In 2003, daily emissions of VOC and NO_x in the NCCAB were estimated at 78 tons and 88 tons, respectively, with on-road mobile sources making up 28 percent of total VOC emissions and 50 percent of total NO_x emissions.

Inhalable Particulates (PM_{10})

Inhalable particulates refer to particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM_{10}). Particulates are classified as primary or secondary, depending on their origin. Primary particulates are unchanged after being directly emitted (e.g., road dust), and are the most commonly analyzed and modeled for of PM_{10}. Because it is emitted directly and has limited dispersion characteristics, this type of PM_{10} is considered a localized pollutant. In addition, secondary PM_{10} can be formed in the atmosphere through chemical reactions involving gases. In 1997, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) adopted a fine particulate matter standard of 2.5 microns or less in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$). The California Air Resources Board (ARB) adopted an annual $PM_{2.5}$ standard in 2002.

Recent studies undertaken by EPA identify key health effects associated with particulate matter, including:

TABLE 3-1: AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standard[b]		National Standards[c]			
		ppm	µg/m³	Primary[d]		Secondary[e]	
				ppm	µg/m³	ppm	µg/m³
Ozone	1 hour	0.09	180	0.12	235	0.12	235
	8 hour			0.08		0.08	
Carbon Monoxide	8 hours	9.0	10,000	9.0	10,000	9.0	10,000
	1 hour	20.0	23,000	35.0	40,000	35.0	40,000
Nitrogen Dioxide	Annual			0.053	100	0.053	100
	1 hour	0.25	470				
Sulfur Dioxide[f]	Annual			0.03	80		
	24 hours	0.04	105	0.14	365		
	3 hours					0.5	1,300
	1 hour	0.25	655				
PM_{10}[g]	Annual		20		50		50
	24 hours		50		150		150
$PM_{2.5}$[g]	Annual		12		15		15
	24 hours				65		65
Lead[g]	Calendar quarter				1.5		1.5
	30-day avg		1.5				
Sulfate[g]	24 hours		25				
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 hour	0.03	42				
Vinyl Chloride	24 hours	0.010	26				
Visibility Reducing Particles	8 hours (10 a.m. – 6 p.m.)	In sufficient amounts to reduce prevailing visibility to <10 miles when relative humidity is <70% w/equivalent instrument method					

[a] Standards first promulgated in ppm concentrations except where noted. Equivalent µg/m³ concentrations based on reference temperature of 25° C and reference pressure of 760 mm of mercury.
[b] California standards for ozone, carbon monoxide (except Lake Tahoe), sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, PM_{10}, and visibility reducing particulate are values not to be exceeded.
[c] National standards, other than ozone and those based on annual averages, are not to be exceeded more than once a year.
[d] Designed to protect human health with an adequate margin of safety.
[e] Designed to protect public welfare (i.e., prevent damage to vegetation, property, visibility)
[f] Federal standards firs promulgated in µg/m³.
[g] Standards promulgated in µg/m³ only.

Source: Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, page 3-2, Table 3-1, June 2004.

- Premature mortality;
- Aggravation of respiratory and cardiovascular disease, as indicated by increased hospital admissions, emergency room visits, school absences, work loss days and restricted activity;
- Changes in lung function and increased respiratory symptoms;
- Changes in lung tissue and structure; and
- Altered respiratory defense mechanisms.

According to EPA, the recent epidemiological information indicates that several subpopulations are apparently more sensitive to effects of community air pollution containing particulate matter. Observed effects include decreases in pulmonary function reported in children and increased mortality reported in the elderly and individuals with cardiopulmonary disease.

In 2000, daily emissions of PM_{10} within the NCCAB were estimated at 106 tons per day. Of this, entrained road dust represented 35 percent of all PM_{10} emissions, windblown dust represented 20 percent, farming operations represented 15 percent, wasteburning represented 15 percent, construction represented 6 percent, and mobile sources, industrial processes and other sources represented 8 percent.

Carbon Monoxide (CO)

Carbon monoxide is formed by the incomplete combustion of carbon-containing material. Because it is directly emitted from combustion engines, carbon monoxide can have adverse localized impacts, primarily in areas of heavy traffic congestion. Because it is emitted directly and has limited dispersion characteristics, CO is considered a localized pollutant.

When carbon monoxide combines with hemoglobin in the blood, the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood is reduced, and the release of oxygen is inhibited or slowed. This condition places angina patients, persons with other cardiovascular diseases or chronic ling obstructive disease, persons with anemia, and fetuses at risk. At higher levels, CO also affects the central nervous system. Symptoms of exposure may include headaches, dizziness, sleepiness, nausea, vomiting, confusion and disorientation.

Carbon monoxide emissions within the NCCAB were estimated at 487 tons per day in 2002, with motor vehicles contributing approximately 43 percent of total CO emissions. Electric utilities, fires, and other mobile and miscellaneous sources contributed to the remainder.

Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs)

Toxic air contaminants (TACs) are pollutants which may be expected to result in an increase in mortality or serious illness, or which may pose a present or potential hazard to human health. Health effects include cancer, birth defects, neurological damage, damage to the body's natural defense systems, and diseases which led to death.

TACs can be separated into carcinogens and noncarcinogens based on the nature of the physiological degradation associated with exposure to the pollutant. For regulatory purposes, carcinogens are assumed to have no safe threshold below which health impacts will not occur. Noncarcinogenic TACs differ in that there is generally assumed a safe level of exposure below which no negative health impact is believed to occur. These levels are determined on a pollutant-by-pollutant basis.

In 1998, following a 10-year scientific assessment, the ARB identified particulate matter from diesel-fueled engines as a toxic air contaminant. ARB staff intends to issue statewide guidance for diesel toxic impact analyses for various source categories, Until such time, MBUAPCD provides technical guidance for estimating potential diesel particulate material emissions from truck idling and movement (such as, but not limited to, truck stops, warehouse/distribution centers or transit centers) and train idling.

Regulatory Framework

United States

In 1990, the federal Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) established a number of requirements, including new deadlines for attaining clean air standards and the development of State Implementation Plans (SIPs). The EPA administers the CAAA, and has established NAAQS for several air pollutants on the basis of human health and welfare criteria. To date, NAAQS have been established for CO, O_3, SO_2, NO_2, PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$ and Pb.

California

Under the California Clean Air Act (CCAA), the California ARB is responsible for research activities, the establishment of California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), guidelines for air quality management, and the regulation of both stationary and mobile emission sources. The CAAQS are generally more stringent than corresponding federal standards.

Monterey Bay Region

The Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD) shares responsibility with the ARB for ensuring that State and national AAQS are achieved and maintained within the NCCAB. State law assigns local air districts the primary responsibility for control of air pollution from stationary sources, while reserving to the ARB an oversight function. MBUAPCD is

responsible for developing regulations governing emissions of air pollution, permitting and inspecting stationary sources of air pollution, monitoring of ambient air quality, and air quality planning activities, including implementation of transportation control measures (MBUAPD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, page 2-2 [June 2004[).

As required under the CCAA, the MBUAPCD adopted the 1991 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) for the Monterey Bay region. The 1991 AQMP addressed attainment of CAAQS for ozone, and included measures to control emissions of VOC from stationary and mobile sources. Since the 1991 AQMP was adopted, control requirements have been reduced, and the 1991 AQMP was updated in 1994, 1997 and 2000 to reflect this change. The 2004 AQMP (adopted in September 2004) concluded that the NCCAB remains on the borderline between attainment and nonattainment for ozone, in part due to variable meteorological conditions occurring from year to year, transport of air pollution from the San Francisco Bay Area, and locally generated emissions. The photochemical model indicated that while the severity and extent of ozone exceedances are reduced in 2010 in comparison to 1990, some areas of the NCCAB may still not achieve the standard with current control measures.

Current Air Quality

Under the Federal Clean Air Act, the NCCAB is designated a maintenance area for the federal one-hour ozone AAQS (see **Table 3-2**). The NCCAB was redesignated from a moderate nonattainment area to a maintenance area in 1997 after meeting the federal one-hour standard in 1990.

Under the California Clean Air Act, the NCCAB is a moderate nonattainment area for the State ozone AAQS. The California Clean Air Act states that an ozone nonattainment area becomes nonattainment-transitional if the state AAQS is not exceeded more than three times at any monitoring station in the air basin. Further, the NCCAB is designated a nonattainment basin for the State PM_{10} AAQS (see **Table 3-2**).

The MBUAPCD operates a network of ten ambient air quality monitoring stations throughout the NCCAB (at Salinas, Hollister, Carmel Valley, Santa Cruz, Monterey, Moss Landing, King City, Scotts Valley, Davenport and Watsonville). In addition, the National Park Service operates a monitoring station at the Pinnacles National Monument. .

Based on monitoring data from the ambient air quality monitoring stations, ozone concentrations exceeded State AAQS on 4 days on 2000, 3 days in 2001, 11 days in 2002, and 3 days in 2003. The majority of these violations occurred at the Pinnacles monitoring station, where the State AAQS was exceeded on 13 days between 1999 and 2003. Ozone concentrations exceeded the federal 8-hour ozone standard on 1 day in 2000, 2 days in 2001, 4 days in 2002, and 1 day in 2003. All of these exceedances occurred at the Pinnacles monitoring station. **Table 3-3** summarizes the exceedances of the State 1-hour and federal 8-hour ozone AAQS. There were no recorded violations of the federal PM_{10} 24-hour AAQS at MBUAPCD monitoring stations from 1999 to 2002. There have been no recorded violations of the federal or State carbon monoxide AAQS at MBUAPCD monitoring

stations. However, based on air quality dispersion modeling, violations have been predicted at heavily congested intersections within the NCCAB.

TABLE 3-2: ATTAINMENT STATUS OF THE NORTH CENTRAL COAST AIR BASIN

Pollutant	Federal	State
Ozone (O^3) – 1 hour	Maintenance	Moderate Nonattainment
Ozone (O^3) – 8 hour	Attainment	Not Applicable
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Unclassified/Attainment	Monterey – Attainment San Benito – Unclassified Santa Cruz – Unclassified
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO^2)	Unclassified/Attainment	Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide (SO^2)	Unclassified	Attainment
Inhalable Particulates (PM_{10})	Attainment	Non-Attainment
Inhalable Particulates ($PM_{2.5}$)	Unclassified	Not Applicable

Source: Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, page 6-4, Table 6-1, June 2004.

TABLE 3-3: EXCEEDANCES OF STATE 1-HOUR OZONE AND FEDERAL 8-HOUR OZONE AAQS IN NCCAB (1999-2003)

Year	Monitoring Station	Federal (Station Days)	State (Station Days)
1999	Pinnacles	1	2
	Santa Cruz	0	1
2000	Pinnacles	0	2
	Scotts Valley	0	1
	Monterey	0	1
2001	Pinnacles	2	2
	Hollister	0	1
2002	Pinnacles	4	7
	Hollister	0	1
2003	Pinnacles	1	2
	Scotts Valley	0	1

Note: The data do not equal the number of separate days the State ozone AAQS was violated, as violations at two or more monitoring stations on the same day are considered to be one violation day.

Source: Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, page 6-7, Table 6-3, June 2004.

Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive receptors are population groups (children, the elderly, and sick persons) who may be located where there is a reasonable expectation of continuous human exposure according to the averaging period for the AAQS (e.g., 24-hour, 8-hour, 1-hour). These sensitive receptors are typically found in residences, hospitals and schools.

3.3.2 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines and the MBUAPCD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, implementation of the three plans could create a significant impact if any transportation system improvement project identified in the financially constrained Action Elements would:

- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan, or
- Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, or
- Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors), or
- Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, or
- Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

In addition, the MBUAPCD maintains quantitative thresholds of significance. Under MBUAPCD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, a project will have a significant air quality effect on the environment if it would:

- Emit 82 pounds per day of PM_{10} at the project site or result in a AAQS PM_{10} exceedance at existing receptors during construction;
- Emit 137 pounds per day of VOC or NO_x (from stationary sources and motor vehicle trips);
- Degrade the Level of Service (LOS) at an intersection/road segment from D or better to E or F, or increase the volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio at an intersection/road segment at LOS E or F by 0.05 or more; or increase the delay at an intersection at LOS E or F by 10 seconds or more, or decrease reserve capacity at an unsignalized intersection at LOS E or F by 50 seconds or more;
- Emit 550 pounds per day of CO (from stationary sources);

- Emit 150 pounds per day of SO_x (from stationary sources)
- Cause a violation of any other CAAQS or NAAQS;
- Be inconsistent with the AQMP; or
- Have any other significant adverse impacts (e.g., create objectionable odors, alter air movement, moisture, temperature or climate).

A project is deemed to be of statewide, regional, or areawide significance if it would interfere with the attainment or maintenance of CAAQS or NAAQS. The MBUAPCD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines state that emissions from a transportation project must be consistent with the emissions budget in the AQMP. Transportation projects are defined as roadways, roadway improvements and transit improvements. For a project to be consistent with the AQMP, the project emissions must have been accounted for in the emissions budget in the 2000 AQMP. If this is not the case, the project is considered inconsistent with the AQMP (unless project-related emissions are totally offset). This would represent a significant project-related and cumulative environmental impact, since it would impede attainment of the CAAQS for ozone within the NCCAB.

Long-term impacts to air quality associated with the implementation of the three plans will be considered significant if it results in mobile source emissions that exceed existing levels. In this case, the key pollutants of concern are ozone, CO and PM_{10}.

Conformity with SIP / Consistency with AQMP

Conformity with the federally-mandated regional air quality plan (part of the State Implementation Plan) is required of the 2005 MTP under the "conformity" requirements of the CAAA. Transportation Conformity addresses the federal ozone standards, and a conformity determination is made by comparing MTP travel data with assumptions used to generate the mobile source emission inventory for the federal air quality plan prepared by MBUAPCD. As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization within the region, the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) is responsible for conformity findings for transportation plans.

Chapter VI of the 2005 Monterey Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Plan contains a conformity analysis which indicates that implementation of the financially constrained Action Elements of the 2005 MTP, 2005 MCRTP and 2005 SCCRTP would result in the generation of air pollutants well below the established "budget" values for 2010, 2020 and 2030, and that the 2005 MTP, 2005 MCRTP and 2005 SCCRTP are, therefore, in conformity with the State Implementation Plan.

For the purposes of the conformity analysis, AMBAG has used the following values for estimated vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per day and vehicle trips per day in 2010, 2020 and 2030 in each of the three counties of the North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB):

Year 2010	VMT	Vehicle Trips

Monterey County	12,245,000	2,082,000
San Benito County	2,027,000	352,000
Santa Cruz County	7,058,000	1 532,000
NCCAB Total	**21,329,000**	**3,966,000**

Year 2020	VMT	Vehicle Trips
Monterey County	13,339,000	2,404,000
San Benito County	2,255000	449,000
Santa Cruz County	7,423,000	1,709,000
NCCAB Total	**23,070,000**	**4,562,000**

Year 2030	VMT	Vehicle Trips
Monterey County	14,723,000	2,719,000
San Benito County	2,399,000	543,000
Santa Cruz County	7,764,000	1,880,000
NCCAB Total	**24,886,000**	**5,140,000**

In summary, the conformity analysis conducted by AMBAG has estimated the following emission levels relative to the established emission budgets for 2010, 2020 and 2030, in tons per day:

Year 2010	Reactive Organic Gases (ROG)	Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)
Modeled Emissions		
Monterey County	7.41	16.94
San Benito County	1.01	2.64
Santa Cruz County	5.32	8.39
Subtotal NCCAB	**13.74**	**27.97**
Adjustment for Commuter Rail	-0.02	less than 0.01
NCAAB Total	**13.72**	**27.97**
NCCAB Emissions Budget	39.09	43.14
Modeled Emissions as Percentage of NCCAB Emissions Budget	35.1%	64.8%

Year 2020	Reactive Organic Gases (ROG)	Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)
Modeled Emissions		
Monterey County	3.98	7.96
San Benito County	0.60	1.15
Santa Cruz County	2.84	3.69
Subtotal NCCAB	**7.41**	**12.80**
Adjustment for Commuter Rail	-0.01	less than 0.01
NCAAB Total	**7.40**	**12.80**
NCCAB Emissions Budget	39.09	43.14
Modeled Emissions as Percentage of NCCAB Emissions Budget	18.9%	29.7%

Year 2030	Reactive Organic Gases (ROG)	Nitrogen Oxides (NOx)

Modeled Emissions		
Monterey County	2.34	4.04
San Benito County	0.37	0.52
Santa Cruz County	1.62	1.92
Subtotal NCCAB	**4.32**	**6.49**
Adjustment for Commuter Rail	-0.01	less than 0.01
NCCAB Total	**4.31**	**6.49**
NCCAB Emissions Budget	39.09	43.14
Modeled Emissions as Percentage of NCCAB Emissions Budget	11.0%	15.0%

The MBUAPCD uses consistency with the AQMP to address a project's cumulative impact on regional air quality. Consistency addresses State ozone standards (which are more stringent than federal ozone standards), and the determination of consistency is made by comparing travel data in the three plans with the assumptions used to generate the mobile source emission inventory for State air quality plans prepared by MBUAPCD. The source of the 2000 AQMP growth assumptions was the 1997 AMBAG Regional Population Forecast, and there are inconsistencies between the travel demand model-generated vehicle miles of travel used in the three plans analyses and the 2000 AQMP travel activity data. The 2004 AQMP uses the same 2004 population projections for the period through 2030 as do the three plans. Therefore, the travel activity data used in the three plans analyses are consistent with the 2004 Air Quality Management Plan, adopted in September 2004.

Short-Term Construction-Related Effects

Construction activities associated with some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in temporarily increased levels of PM_{10} downwind of construction sites. The MBUAPCD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines indicate that construction projects using typical construction equipment such as dump trucks, scrapers, bulldozers, compactors and front-end loaders which temporarily emit precursors of ozone (VOC and NO_x) are accounted for in the emissions inventories of AQMPs, and would not have a significant impact on the attainment or maintenance of CAAQS and NAAQS. However, the CEQA Air Quality Guidelines also indicate that the MBUAPCD should be consulted regarding emissions from non-typical equipment (e.g., grinders and portable equipment).

IMPACT 3.3.1: Construction-Related Emissions. Construction associated with most of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in emissions from equipment, additional emissions from delayed vehicles and fugitive dust. Construction projects using typical construction equipment (e.g., dump trucks, scrapers, bulldozers, compactors and front-end loaders) which temporarily emit precursors of ozone (i.e., VOC and NO_x) are accommodated in the emission inventories of State- and federally-required air plans, and would not have a significant impact on the attainment and maintenance of ozone AAQS. Using the potential thresholds identified in the MBUAPCD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines (June 2004, page 5-3, Table 5-2), construction sites involving minimal earthmoving over an area of 8.1 acres or more per day, or involving grading and excavation over an area of 2.2 acres or more per day would be

expected to entail potentially significant effects associated with the generation of PM_{10}. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) those involving the construction of new roadways, new transit/rail facilities, new parking areas, new bike paths or pedestrian trails, and the widening of existing roadways. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with those projects which involve construction activity.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.3.1: Construction Emission Control Measures/Scheduling

A. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, apply MBUAPCD-recommended measures for reducing construction emissions for specific transportation system improvement projects involving minimal earthmoving over an area of 8.1 acres or more per day, or involving grading and excavation over an area of 2.2 acres or more per day. Specific measures shall, where appropriate, be approved by the MBUAPCD as part of the permitting process, and shall, where appropriate, include (but not be limited to) the following, as appropriate:

- Water all construction areas at least twice daily. Frequency should be based on the type of operation, soil, and wind exposure;
- Prohibit all grading activities during periods of high winds (over 15 MPH);
- Apply chemical soil stabilizers on inactive construction areas (disturbed lands within construction projects that are unused for at least four consecutive days);
- Apply non-toxic binders (e.g., latex acrylic copolymer) to exposed areas after cut and fill operations and hydroseed areas;
- Haul trucks shall, where appropriate, maintain at least two feet of freeboard;
- Cover all trucks hauling dirt, sand and/or loose materials;
- Plant tree windbreaks on the windward perimeter of construction projects if adjacent to open land;
- Plant vegetative cover in disturbed areas as soon as possible;
- Cover inactive storage piles;
- Install wheel washers at the entrance to construction sites for all exiting trucks;
- Pave all roads on construction sites;
- Sweep street if visible soil material is carried out from the construction site;
- Post a visible sign which specifies the telephone number and person to contact regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond to complaints and take corrective action within

48 hours. The phone number of the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District shall, where appropriate, be visible to ensure compliance with Rule 402 (Nuisance); and/or

- Limit the area under construction at any one time.

B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that ground disturbance is phased to the extent possible to minimize the creation of fugitive dust.

C. If the use of non-typical construction equipment (e.g., grinders and portable equipment) is contemplated, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, consult with the MBUAPCD, and shall, where appropriate, ensure that the Best Available Control Technology (BACT) is implemented to reduce short-term NOx emissions during construction activity, where appropriate. BACT measures shall, where appropriate, include two-degree timing retard, high pressure fuel injectors and reformulated diesel fuel, if available. These measures shall, where appropriate, be noted on all construction plans, and the local jurisdiction shall, where appropriate, perform periodic site inspections.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The use of the dust control measures identified above could generally be expected to reduce the construction-related air quality impacts associated with the implementation of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans to a level of less than significant.

Carbon Monoxide Hotspots

Although implementation of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans would be expected to have a generally positive effect on overall levels of carbon monoxide (since average vehicle speeds would be increased), it is possible that some of the proposed roadway improvement projects could result in local increases in carbon monoxide concentrations. Under MBUAPCD CEQA Air Quality Guidelines (June 2004, page 5-5, Table 5-3), specific projects that degrade LOS at an intersection/road segment from D or better to E or F or increases the V/C ratio at an intersection/road segment at LOS E or F by 0.05 or more or increases delay at an intersection at LOS E or F by 10 seconds or more or decreases reserve capacity at an unsignalized intersection at LOS E or F by 50 or more could have potentially significant effects associated with carbon monoxide emissions.

Modeling should be conducted to determine whether a specific project would cause of substantially contribute (550 pounds per day) to exceedance of carbon monoxide AAQS (if not, such a project would not have a significant impact). Additional project-level environmental evaluation of the major roadway improvement projects listed in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans should provide a more detailed analysis of the project-specific carbon monoxide impacts which may be associated with these particular projects.

IMPACT 3.3.2: Carbon Monoxide Emissions. Individual projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may have an adverse effect on local carbon monoxide levels, particularly where the construction of airport, rail stations and park-and-ride lots may result in increased traffic congestion in the vicinity. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.3.2: Prevention of Carbon Monoxide Hot Spots

Where implementing agencies propose transportation system improvement projects that may cause an exceedance of MBUAPCD thresholds for CO modeling, the local jurisdiction shall, where appropriate, improve the circulation system in which the project is proposed such that all roadways and intersections affected by the project maintain an acceptable level of service, or shall, where appropriate, conduct CO modeling to demonstrate that the concentration of CO will remain below the relevant CO AAQS. This may involve a reduction in the size of the project, relocation of the project or a reconfiguration of project elements.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

This mitigation measure could reduce this potential impact which may be associated with the implementation of specific transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans to a level of less than significant.

Toxic Air Contaminants

IMPACT 3.3.3: Toxic Air Contaminant Emissions. Implementation of some transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in increased exposure of sensitive receptors to toxic air contaminants (TACs) associated with the construction and operation of these improvements, including (but not limited to) the particulate fraction of diesel exhaust. Diesel exhaust from construction activity may have chronic and/or acute risks, depending on the duration of construction activity, proximity to sensitive receptors, and the amount and type of construction equipment to be used. The health risks associated with exposure to diesel exhaust is greatest for children, the elderly and the chronically or acutely ill, and an increase in the exposure of sensitive receptors to TACs could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** that might be associated with projects that involve construction involving diesel-powered equipment, an increase in the use of diesel-fueled vehicles within a limited area, or along roadways that could experience an increase in diesel-fueled vehicle traffic as a result of the implementation of transportation system improvement projects. Such projects could include those involving earth-moving or the use of diesel-powered construction equipment, transit stations served by diesel-fueled vehicles, transit maintenance and parking facilities, and those projects resulting in increased diesel train service, either along existing rail lines or on proposed future rail lines, as well as projects that would increase roadway capacities.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.3.3: Reduction in Diesel Emissions

Individual transportation system improvement projects that involve construction activity requiring the use of diesel-powered equipment, truck idling, train idling or increased diesel-fueled traffic shall, where appropriate, be subject to a screening level risk assessment by the implementing agency, then to a full risk assessment where warranted following the screening risk assessment. If these project-specific assessment procedures (outlined in the MBUAPCD CEQA Guidelines, Appendix C) indicate that a project would exceed the MBUAPCD's cancer risk threshold of 10 per million, or the chronic hazard index is above one, then the following mitigation measures should be applied to such projects, where appropriate:

Construction-Related Diesel Exhaust

- Prior to initiating construction activity, the implementing agency should consult with the MBUAPCD to identify the types of grading, demolition and construction equipment that will be used for the project. Once the characteristics of specific equipment to be used have been identified, the MBUAPCD should provide recommendations for measures that can be implemented to reduce diesel emissions associated with such equipment (e.g., the substitution of diesel-powered equipment with non-diesel-powered equipment, the installation of exhaust controls, staggering construction activity at the project site, etc.).

Truck Idling Facilities

- Provide a minimum buffer zone of 300 meters between truck traffic and sensitive receptors;
- Re-route truck traffic by adding direct off-ramps for the truck traffic or by restricting truck traffic on certain sensitive routes;
- Improve traffic flow by signal synchronization;
- Enforce truck parking restrictions;
- Develop park and ride programs;
- Restrict truck idling;
- Restrict operation at the truck idling facility to "clean trucks";
- Electrify service equipment at facility;
- Provide electrical hook-ups for trucks that need to cool their load;
- Use "clean" street sweepers;

- Provide onsite services to minimize truck traffic in or near residential areas, including, but not limited to, the following services: meal or cafeteria service, automated teller machines, etc.; and
- Require or provide incentives to use low-sulfur diesel fuel with particulate traps.

Train Idling

- Change railroad operating practices to reduce idle time;
- Employ idle reduction technologies (such as auxiliary power units); and
- Employ new engine technologies (such as modification of fuel injectors).

Generally, transit operators within the Monterey Bay region should consider the use of alternative fuels, where appropriate and available, as a means of reducing diesel emissions associated with transit vehicles.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Depending on the project-specific diesel emission characteristics, this mitigation measure could be expected to reduce diesel particulate material emissions which may be associated with the implementation of specific transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans to some extent, most often to a level of less than significant. However, for a few projects where identified measures intended to reduce diesel particulate material emissions cannot be effectively implemented to reduce these emissions to a level below the MBUAPCD's cancer risk threshold or to obtain a chronic hazard index of one or less, this impact could remain **significant and unavoidable**.

Odors

IMPACT 3.3.4: Increased Exposure to Diesel Exhaust Fumes. Implementation of some of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans involving an increase in diesel exhaust levels at construction sites, within limited areas (e.g., transit stations, transit maintenance and parking facilities, along rail lines which would support increased train service, etc.) or along roadways that could experience an increase in diesel-fueled vehicle traffic as a result of the implementation of transportation system improvement projects could result in potential exposure of sensitive receptors to objectionable odors. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact**.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

Same as **MITIGATION MEASURE 3.3.3: Reduction in Diesel Emissions**

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Depending on the project-specific diesel emission characteristics, the effective implementation of **MITIGATION MEASURE 3.3.3** could be expected to reduce odors associated with project-specific diesel emissions to some extent, most often to a level of less than significant. However, for a few projects where identified measures intended to reduce diesel particulate material emissions cannot be effectively implemented to reduce these emissions to a level below the MBUAPCD's cancer risk threshold or to obtain a chronic hazard index of one or less, this impact could remain **significant and unavoidable**.

3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

3.4.1 SETTING

The Monterey Bay region is rich in plant and animal life, and contains some of California's most valued natural habitats within its coastal, mountain, riparian and other areas. The region is dominated by coastal mountain ranges, including the Santa Cruz range north of the Bay, the Santa Lucia range to the south, the Gabilan range east of the Salinas Valley, and the inland Diablo range, which forms the eastern edge of San Benito County. Within the coastal ranges north of Watsonville and south of Monterey, dense coniferous forests are prevalent, with many stands of redwood trees. Between these densely forested areas, along the eastern slopes of the Coast Ranges, and further eastward, the forests are thinner and trend toward chaparral habitats. Most of the central valleys and lowlands have been in agricultural use for over a hundred years. The region's indigenous animals include various types of raptors and other birds, mountain lions, bobcats, deer, foxes, squirrels, raccoons, and sea otters, sea lions. The extremely rare California condor, the largest bird in North America, is being reintroduced to the coastal ranges, and both humpback and gray whales can be seen periodically from the shoreline. Monarch butterflies migrate toward the coast in December, and congregate spectacularly at Natural Bridges State Beach near Santa Cruz and in Pacific Grove in Monterey County.

The region contains a number of federally-protected lands and waters, including Pinnacles National Monument, the California Sea Otter Game Refuge, and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, which includes all of Monterey Bay. The Los Padres National Forest covers a vast area of the Santa Lucia mountain range, including the region's highest peak, Junipero Serra Peak west of Greenfield. Specially protected coastal habitat areas include Elkhorn Slough, and a marine laboratory owned and managed by the University of California at Santa Cruz.

There are numerous animal species identified as threatened and endangered within the region, including the California Brown Pelican, California Clapper Rail, Western Snowy Plover, Bank Swallow, Least Bells Vireo, Tidewater Goby, San Joaquin Kit Fox, Santa Cruz Long-Toed Salamander, Arroyo Southwestern Toad, California Red-Legged Frog, Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp, and Smith Blue Butterfly. Threatened and endangered plants in the region include the Adobe Sanicle, Santa Cruz Tarplant, Beach Layia, Menzies' Wallflower, Yadon's Wallflower, Coastal Dunes Milk-Vetch, Tidestrom's Lupine, Pacific Grove Clover, Santa Lucia Mint, Monterey Spineflower, Robust Spineflower, Butterworth's Buckwheat, Sand Gilia, Hickman's Cinquefoil, Seaside Bird's Beach, Dudley's Lousewort, Mexican Flannelbush, and Little Sur Manzanita.

Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) are being developed and/or implemented in several areas within the region, and the general plans of each County include policies to preserve natural wildlife habitats, including environmentally significant areas, and to develop HCPs where necessary.

3.4.2 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Implementation of the three plans could have a significant environmental impact if it were to result in:

- A substantial adverse effect (either directly or through habitat modifications) on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- A substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- A substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means;
- Substantial interference with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species;
- Substantial interference with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors;
- Substantial impediment to the use of native wildlife nursery sites;
- Any conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance; or
- Any conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

Although adoption of the three plans would not, in and of itself, have any effect on biological resources within the region, construction of several of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Element might be expected to entail adverse effects.

Habitat

While some projects would not necessarily create significant impacts to biological resources, the introduction of more human activity into potentially sensitive areas would increase the potential for conflicts with sensitive plant and wildlife species. Several of the bikeway projects in the Santa Cruz harbor area could increase human activity in the vicinity of potentially sensitive riparian and coastal habitats. Generally, the widening of existing roadways would not be expected to have impacts on

habitat for candidate, sensitive, or special status species, due to the disturbed nature and low biological value of habitat immediately adjacent to roadways (although the construction of new roads and the widening of existing roadways could include the removal of various tree species and grasslands, and burrowing owls can frequently be found inhabiting burrows only a few feet from agricultural fields, sidewalks or roads). The construction of some projects identified in the three plans would involve the disturbance of agricultural/grazing lands, and lands with non-native grassland vegetation associations, which can provide habitat for special status species such as the San Joaquin kit fox, burrowing owl and California tiger salamander. Some projects with bridge components could impact swallows, roosting bats and special status aquatic species such as the California red-legged frog and western pond turtle. Nesting raptors in the vicinity of some projects may also be impacted by project-related construction activity. Transportation system improvement projects in coastal zones could result in impacts on natural and man-made habitats that support sensitive biological resources.

IMPACT 3.4.1: Modification of Habitat. Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could be expected to result in the modification of areas which currently provide habitat for candidate, sensitive, or special status species, and could interfere with the movement of resident or migratory fish or wildlife species. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) construction of the new roadways, bridge widenings, roadway widenings, rail improvements on rail lines not currently utilized by trains and the development of transportation-related facilities in coastal zones. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.4.1: Avoidance and Design Modification

For each project identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans where habitat modification may be anticipated, the following measures may be used by the implementing agency to reduce modification of areas which currently provide habitat for candidate, sensitive, or special status species, and interference with the movement of resident or migratory fish or wildlife species::

A. Prior to the finalization of project design, the area in which the project is proposed should be thoroughly surveyed to determine the presence or absence of habitat for candidate, sensitive, or special status species, and to determine the extent to which project construction may interfere with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species. If special status species are known to occur or have the potential to occur, appropriate resource agency contacts shall, where appropriate, be made and mitigation developed in consultation with a qualified biologist and the resource agencies.

B. If initial biological assessments for a proposed project identified in one of the three plans determine the presence or potential presence of a state or federally listed species on the site, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, consult with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), respectively, for guidance on whether or not the project can avoid impacts to the species. The project shall, where appropriate, avoid impacts through re-design or realignment, wherever possible.

C. During site-specific environmental review, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, evaluate the effects of project-related noise, light and activity on any environmentally sensitive habitat areas, both during and after construction, and shall, where appropriate, identify appropriate mitigation measures, where feasible.

D. In those instances where it is not possible to avoid sensitive habitat areas through design measures, the USFWS and the CDFG may need to be contacted in order to achieve compliance with the appropriate endangered species protection regulations through the implementation of site-specific mitigation measures prior to project approval.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Avoiding completely those areas identified as habitat for candidate, sensitive, or special status species of plants and animals, or those areas which are important in providing free movement for resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, would reduce this potential impact to a level of less than significant for most projects. However, depending on the location, character and purpose of a proposed project, it may not be possible to design it in such a way so as to completely avoid these areas. In these instances, this potential impact would need to be mitigated to the satisfaction of the appropriate regulatory agencies prior to the issuance of the permits necessary to allow project construction to proceed, although impacts associated with a few projects could be expected to remain **significant and unavoidable**.

Wetlands

Several projects would involve construction, reconstruction or widening of bridges over rivers, creeks and sloughs, while other projects would involve the development of bicycle paths or recreational trails along riparian corridors. Construction of these facilities could have both direct impacts due to the disturbance of riparian flora and fauna, and indirect impacts due to increased erosion and sedimentation that could adversely affect downstream water quality.

A number of regulatory mechanisms are in place to address construction-related impacts to wetlands. Disturbance within any “waters of the United States” would require a Section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which would place certain requirements for avoidance or replacement of lost wetland habitat. When a project would alter the natural flow or bed, channel or bank of any river, stream or lake, a Section 1601 Streambed Alteration Agreement would need to be formalized with the CDFG. Like the Section 404 permit, this agreement would be expected to

include measures that would reduce impacts to riparian habitats. Preparation and implementation of the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs) required under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act would reduce potential indirect impacts related to increased erosion, sedimentation and runoff.

IMPACT 3.4.2: Modification of Riparian Areas/Wetlands. Construction of some projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could be expected to result in the modification of riparian areas or wetlands. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the construction of new bridges, the replacement of existing bridges, and projects that result in an increase in impermeable surface areas that may require additional infrastructure for stormwater runoff collection and treatment. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.4.2: Avoidance/Permitting/Precautions During Construction

The following measures may be used by the implementing agencies to reduce modification of riparian areas or wetlands:

A. The proposed projects should be designed to avoid construction in riparian areas or wetlands to the extent practicable.

B. In those instances where it is not possible to avoid riparian areas or wetlands through design measures, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game shall, where appropriate, be contacted in order to achieve compliance with the appropriate regulations and to obtain all required permits prior to project approval. The granting of the required permits may be conditional on the implementation of site-specific measures designed to mitigate any modification of riparian areas or wetlands which may result from construction of the projects.

C. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that all removed and excess material is disposed of off-site and away from the flood plain, outside areas subject to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction.

D. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that construction activities in drainages occur during the dry season when channels are at low flow.

E. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that no fueling or maintenance of equipment takes place in any channel. Mechanical equipment shall, where appropriate, be serviced in designated staging areas located outside of any creek bed and associated wetland habitat. Water from equipment washing or concrete wash down shall, where appropriate, be prevented from entering any channel.

F. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that any equipment adjacent to any channel is checked and maintained daily, to prevent leaks of materials that if (eventually) introduced to water could be deleterious to aquatic life. Petroleum products and other substances that could be hazardous to aquatic life shall be prevented from contaminating the soil and/or entering the adjacent waters. CDFG shall, where appropriate, be notified immediately of any spills, and shall, where appropriate, be consulted regarding clean-up procedures.

G. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that construction activities minimize increases in turbidity to the maximum extent possible.

H. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that following construction, disturbed banks are re-vegetated using locally-occurring, drought-resistant native species and erosion control grass seed, in consultation with a qualified biologist.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Avoiding completely riparian areas or wetlands through design measures would reduce this potential impact to a level of less than significant for most projects. However, depending on the character and purpose of a proposed project, it may not be possible to design it in such a way as to completely avoid these areas. In these instances, this potential impact would need to be mitigated to the satisfaction of the appropriate regulatory agencies prior to the issuance of the permits necessary to allow project construction to proceed, although impacts associated with a few projects could be expected to remain **significant and unavoidable**.

Wildlife Movement

IMPACT 3.4.3: Interference with Wildlife Movement. Development of projects identified in the three plans involving roadways located in previously undeveloped areas, such as new road construction and roadway extensions, has the potential to substantially interfere with wildlife movement if established wildlife movement corridors are located within or in the vicinity of the proposed roadway improvements. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact**.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.4.3: Avoidance and Design Modification

During site-specific environmental review for projects located in wildlife movement corridors, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, conduct biological field investigations to document existing conditions and assess site-specific impacts upon wildlife that may be affected by the project. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, develop new roadway alignments and extensions to avoid or minimize disturbance of wildlife movement corridors to the maximum extent feasible. If

impacts cannot be avoided, project-specific mitigation measures shall, where appropriate, be developed in consultation with responsible agencies (USFWS and/or CDFG, as appropriate).

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Avoiding completely wildlife movement corridors through design measures would reduce this potential impact to a level of less than significant for most projects. However, depending on the character and purpose of a proposed project, it may not be possible to design it in such a way as to completely avoid these areas. In these instances, this potential impact would need to be mitigated to the satisfaction of the appropriate regulatory agencies prior to the issuance of the permits necessary to allow project construction to proceed, although impacts associated with a few projects could be expected to remain **significant and unavoidable**.

Wildlife Nurseries

None of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans would be expected to have adverse effects on sites which have been formally identified as native wildlife nurseries.

Ordinances and Policies to Protect Biological Resources

Construction activities in some areas would have the potential to adversely affect individual trees or other biological resources which have been afforded protection by local jurisdictions. Such trees may include large oaks, riparian species, or even special status trees such as the Monterey cypress and Monterey pine. Impacts to such trees may occur as a result of direct removal for transportation system improvement project construction or roadway widening projects, or from construction near or within the root zone of individual specimens located nearby.

IMPACT 3.4.4: Conflicts with Protective Ordinances and Policies. Depending on the specific features of local ordinances and policies which are designed to protect biological resources within each jurisdiction, it is possible that implementation of some projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could conflict with such ordinances and policies. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) construction of new roadways and rail improvements on rail lines that are not currently used by trains. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.4.4: Modify Design to Achieve Compliance/Tree Replacement/Tree Protection Plans

A. Where it is clear that the implementation of a specific project would result in a conflict with local ordinances or policies intended to protect biological resources, the appropriate agency responsible for the actual implementation of the proposed project should modify the design of the project to achieve compliance with the applicable ordinances or policies, where feasible.

B. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that trees that are removed for construction of specific projects are replaced with native tree species at a minimum 2:1 ratio, under the direction of a certified arborist. Special status trees or trees located in sensitive habitats may require higher replacement ratios to mitigate the specific function and value impacted. Tree replacement ratios shall, where appropriate, be consistent with the local jurisdictions in which impacts occur. As part of the overall revegatation and monitoring plan, these replacement tree plantings shall, where appropriate, be monitored over time based on the recommendations of a qualified revegetation specialist.

C. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that a tree protection plan is required for construction around trees. The plan may include (but need not be limited to) setbacks for trees, use of protective fencing, restrictions regarding grading and paving near trees, directions regarding pruning and restrictions regarding digging/trenching within root zones of trees.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Depending on the character and purpose of a proposed project, it may not be possible to modify it in such a way as to completely avoid disturbing protected trees or other biological resources that may be protected within a specific local jurisdiction. In these instances, this potential impact would need to be mitigated to the satisfaction of the appropriate local jurisdiction prior to the issuance of the permits necessary to allow project construction to proceed, although impacts associated with a few projects could be expected to remain **significant and unavoidable**.

Habitat Conservation Plans

Several projects could involve construction of transportation infrastructure that could potentially affect the species and habitat that is (or may be) protected under existing Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) in the Seascape Uplands area and the Quail Hollow Quarry area or HCPs currently in development (in San Benito County, the Pajaro River/Salispuedes Creek area and at the former Fort Ord, which already has an approved installation-wide, multi-species Habitat Management Plan). Depending on the timing of the proposed projects and final design, these improvements could be subject to the requirements of HCPs.

IMPACT 3.4.5: Conflicts with Habitat Conservation Plans. It is possible that implementation of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could conflict with the provisions of approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plans. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the construction of new roadways or bike paths. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.4.5: Modify Design to Achieve Compliance

For projects located within the boundaries of an HCP, the appropriate jurisdiction shall, where appropriate, ensure that the project is reviewed for consistency with the HCP, and that specific mitigation measures and/or alternative alignments are identified to avoid conflicts with the HCP and its protected species and habitats.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Implementation of this mitigation measure could reduce the impact to a level of less than significant.

3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

3.5.1 SETTING

In Monterey and Santa Cruz counties, Native American archaeological sites are found on the coastal terrace, on terraces adjacent to seasonal wetlands, on valley terraces and midslope terraces, frequently adjacent to or between seasonal and perennial watercourses, on ridgelines and associated spurs and midslope terraces, and in areas associated with rock outcrops. Many of these areas were intensively used by Native Americans. In San Benito County, Native American prehistoric archaeological sites are situated in large valleys on terraces adjacent to major watercourses, frequently at a confluence to a seasonal watercourse and at the base of hills adjacent to a watercourse, in small valleys on terraces adjacent to seasonal watercourses and springs, on midslope terraces adjacent to seasonal watercourses and springs, on ridgelines and spurs, and in areas associated with outcroppings of rock. Native American archaeological sites expected for these three counties would include shell middens along the coast where shellfish and marine mammals were processed, residential areas, temporary camps, cemeteries/burial grounds, and the areas used for special activities such as hunting and seed/plant processing.

The Spanish, Mexican and American Periods are represented in all three counties. The Monterey Bay area included several missions and many land grants, many of the towns in the three counties were established by the mid-1850s. It is anticipated that numerous historic buildings, structures, objects and historic archaeological deposits such as building foundations and debris deposits associated with residential, commercial, industrial and recreational activities reflecting various forms and stages of settlement are located within the three counties.

Monterey County contains 43 sites that have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition to those sites, the County has identified approximately 220 sites on the Monterey County Historic Inventory. To date, over 1,700 archaeological sites have been identified in Monterey County.

San Benito County has just over 200 archaeological sites that have been recorded with the State of California. There are 10 structures or places within the County that have been listed on the National register of Historic Places.

Over 300 archaeological and historic sites have been formally documented within Santa Cruz County. Hundreds of other sites probably exist throughout the County. There are 39 structures or places in the County that have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

3.5.2 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Implementation of the three plans could have a significant environmental impact if it were to result in:

- The physical demolition, destruction, relocation or alteration of a historical resource or its immediate surroundings to the extent that those physical characteristics which convey the historical significance and justify the identification of the historic resource (or the eligibility for such identification) would be materially altered;
- The physical demolition, destruction, relocation or alteration of a unique archaeological resource;
- The direct or indirect destruction of a unique paleontological resource;
- The direct or indirect destruction of a unique geological feature; or
- The disturbance of any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

Although adoption of the three plans would not, in and of itself, have any effect on cultural resources within the region, construction of several of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements might be expected to entail adverse effects. Transportation system improvement projects have the potential to result in disturbance of, or damage to, prehistoric or historic cultural resources when they are located within an area of known cultural resources or in areas identified as high or moderate archaeological sensitivity zones where surveys have not been completed.

Disturbance of Cultural Resources

IMPACT 3.5.1: Disturbance of Cultural Resources. Construction of some projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in the disturbance of, or in damage to, prehistoric or historic cultural resources. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) bridge improvements and construction new roadways or rail improvements on rail lines that are not currently used by trains. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.5.1: Cultural Resource Surveys/Modifications

A. The implementing agency for a project involving substantial earth disturbance, the removal or disturbance of existing buildings, or the construction of permanent above-ground structures or roadways shall ensure that the following elements are included in the project's environmental review:

B. A map defining the Area of Potential Effects (APE) shall, where appropriate, be prepared for transportation system improvements that involve substantial earth disturbance, the removal or disturbance of existing buildings, or construction of permanent above-ground structures. This map will indicate the areas of primary and secondary disturbance associated with construction and operation of the facility and will help in determining whether known cultural resources are located within the impact zone.

C. A preliminary study of each project area, as defined in the APE, shall, where appropriate, be completed to determine whether or not the project area has been studied under an earlier investigation, and to determine the impacts of the previous project.

D. If the results of the preliminary studies indicate additional studies are necessary, development of field studies and/or other documentary research shall, where appropriate, be completed (Phase I studies). Negative results would result in no additional studies for the project area.

E. Based on positive results of the Phase I studies, an evaluation of identified resources shall, where appropriate, be completed to determine the potential eligibility/significance of the resources (Phase II studies).

F. Phase III mitigation studies shall, where appropriate, be coordinated with the Office of Historic Preservation, as the research design will require review and approval from OHP. In the case of prehistoric or Native American related resources, the Native American Heritage Commission and/or local representatives of the Native American population shall, where appropriate, be contacted and permitted to respond to the testing/mitigation programs.

G. If development of a specific project requires the presence of an archaeological monitor, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that a certified archaeologist/paleontologist monitors the grading and/or other ground altering activities. The schedule and extent of monitoring will depend on the grading schedule and/or extent of the ground alterations. This requirement can be accomplished through placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

H. The implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that materials recovered over the course of any given improvement are adequately cleaned, labeled and curated at a recognized

repository. This requirement can be accomplished through placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

J. Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that mitigation for potential impacts to significant cultural resources includes on or more of the following:

- Realignment of the project right-of-way (avoidance - the most preferable method);
- Capping of the site and leaving it undisturbed;
- Addressing structural remains with respect to NRHP guidelines (Phase III studies);
- Relocating structures per NRHP guidelines;
- Creation of interpretive facilities; and/or
- Development of measures to prevent vandalism.

K. A qualified archaeologist shall, where appropriate, monitor all earth moving activities within native soil. In the event that archaeological and historic artifacts are encountered during project construction, all work in the vicinity of the find will be halted until such time as the find is evaluated by a qualified archaeologist and appropriate mitigation (if necessary) is implemented.

L. As required under CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, to prepare for the possibility of an accidental discovery of significant buried cultural resources during transportation system improvement project construction, the following measures shall, where appropriate, be taken:

- Due to the possibility that significant buried cultural resources might be found during construction, the following language shall, where appropriate, be included in any permits issued for the project site, including (but not limited to) building permits for future development, subject to the review and approval of the implementing agency: "If archaeological resources or human remains are discovered during construction, work shall be halted at a minimum of 200 feet from the find and the area shall be staked off. The project developer shall notify a qualified professional archaeologist. If the find is determined to be significant, appropriate mitigation measures shall be formulated and implemented."
- Due to the possibility that an accidental discovery or recognition of human remains in a location other than a dedicated cemetery may occur, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that this language is included in all permits in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e): "If human remains are found during construction, there shall be not further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until the County Coroner is contacted to determine that no investigation of the cause of death is required. If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. The Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the person or

persons it believes to be the most likely descendent of the deceased Native American. The most likely descendent may then make recommendations to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating and disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The landowner or his authorized representative shall rebury the Native American human remains and associated grave goods with appropriate dignity on the property in a location not subject to further disturbance if a) the Native American Heritage Commission is unable to identify a most likely descendent or the most likely descendent failed to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the commission; b) the descendent identified fails to make a recommendation; or c) the landowner or his authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the descendent, and the mediation by the Native American Heritage Commission fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner."

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

These measures could reduce the potential impact to a level of less than significant.

Unique Paleontological Resources / Unique Geologic Features

Implementation of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans would not be expected to result in the direct or indirect destruction of any unique paleontological resource or unique geological feature.

3.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.6.1 SETTING

The Monterey Bay region is characterized by coastal sea bluffs, sand dunes and river valleys, the Santa Cruz, Gabilan and Santa Lucia mountain ranges, and the Diablo range along the eastern border of the region. Most of the region is mountainous, with the highest elevation (5,860 feet above sea level) at Junipero Serra Peak. Several major earthquake faults pass through the region (including the San Andreas fault), and the area has a long history of seismic activity.

3.6.2 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Implementation of the three plans could have a significant environmental impact if it were to result in:

- The exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault;
- The exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death involving strong seismic ground shaking;
- The exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction;
- The exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death involving landslides;
- Substantial soil erosion;
- The loss of topsoil;
- Development located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable (or that would become unstable as a result of the project) and which could potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse;
- Development located on expansive soil, creating substantial risks to life and property; or

- Development in areas where soils are incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater.

Although adoption of the three plans would not, in and of itself, entail any impacts associated with geology or soils, construction of several of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Element might be expected to entail adverse effects.

Seismic Hazards

Due to the presence of active fault systems within the region, transportation system improvement projects identified in the three plans may be subject to severe (magnitude 7.0+) earthquakes and associated ground shaking during their design life. Such shaking can cause severe damage to transportation facilities. Although a function of earthquake intensity, ground shaking effects can be greatly magnified by the underlying soils and geology, which may amplify shaking at great distances. It is difficult to predict the magnitude of ground shaking following an earthquake, as shaking can vary widely within a relatively small area. More damage from ground shaking would occur in areas underlain by thick, unconsolidated, fine-grained, water-soaked alluvial sediments than an area underlain by firm, dry, rigid bedrock.

Fault rupture can occur along (or immediately adjacent to) faults during an earthquake. Fault rupture is characterized by ground cracks and displacement that could endanger life and property. Damage is typically limited to areas close to the moving fault.

Bridge-type structures are most susceptible to earthquake ground shaking and fault rupture, although roadways may also be damaged by either phenomenon.

IMPACT 3.6.1: Increased Exposure to Seismic Hazards. In those instances where projects are proposed in proximity to known earthquake faults (as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault), construction of some of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in the increased exposure of people or structures to the risk of loss, injury or death involving fault rupture or other seismic hazards. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) road widenings, bridge improvements and the construction of new roadways or other transportation infrastructure. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.6.1: Building Code Compliance/Avoidance of Known Earthquake Faults

Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that all structures, including (but not limited to) roadway improvements, bridges and pedestrian/bike facilities, are designed and constructed to the latest geotechnical standards (including the UBC Zone 4 guidelines) to limit potential hazards to the public after project completion. In most cases, this will necessitate site-specific geologic and soils engineering investigations to exceed the code for high groundshaking zones.

Where transportation system improvement projects involve bridges or passenger stations, implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, ensure that such structures are placed in areas outside of fault rupture zones. If avoidance is not possible, detailed geologic and seismic studies must be completed to locate active or potentially active fault traces. Structures shall, where appropriate, then be placed outside of an appropriate setback distance.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Implementation of these mitigation measures could reduce the impact to a level of less than significant.

Landslides

Transportation system improvement projects in areas of steep slopes (i.e., mountainous areas or streambanks) are subject to landslides, particularly when adjacent to areas of unstabilized cut or fill. Landslides (including rockfalls) can damage the facility itself and vehicles using the facility, and can put lives at risk. Landslides can cause temporary road closures to allow for cleanup and repair, which would necessitate detours that might cause temporary congestion on detour routes.

IMPACT 3.6.2: Increased Exposure to Landslides. Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in the increased exposure of people or structures to the risk of loss, injury or death involving landslides. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the construction of new roadways and improvements to existing roadways that pass through hilly terrain. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.6.2: Project-Specific Geotechnical Investigations

A. The implementing agency shall, where appropriate, require that design-level geotechnical analyses are prepared for all transportation system improvement projects, and that all recommendations contained in the geotechnical reports are incorporated into project design.

B. If a particular transportation system improvement project involves cut slopes over 20 feet in height, or is located in an area of bedded or jointed bedrock, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that specific slope stabilization studies are conducted. Possible stabilization methods include buttresses, retaining walls and soldier piles.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The implementation of site-specific slope stabilization measures and incorporation of other geotechnical recommendations could be expected to reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant.

Soil Erosion

Soil erosion is the removal of soil by water and wind. The rate of erosion is estimated for four soil properties: texture, organic matter content, soil structure and permeability. Other factors that influence erosion potential include the amount of rainfall and wind, the length and steepness of the slope, and the amount and type of vegetative cover. The construction of structures and facilities on soils subject to erosion could result in increased erosion rates.

IMPACT 3.6.3: Increased Erosion and Loss of Topsoil During Construction. Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans could result in increased soil erosion and loss of topsoil during construction. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the construction of new roadways and the widening of existing roadways. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.6.3: Grading and Erosion Control Plans

If a particular transportation system improvement project involving deep foundations or underground areas is located in an area of moderate or high erosion potential, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, prepare a grading and erosion control plan that minimizes erosion and sedimentation prior to the issuance of grading permits. The grading and erosion control plan must include the following:

A. Methods such as retention basins, drainage diversion structures, spot grading, silt fencing/coordinated sediment trapping, straw bales and sand bags shall, where appropriate, be used to minimize erosion on slopes and siltation into waterways during grading and construction activities.

B. Graded areas shall, where appropriate, be revegetated within four weeks of grading activities with deep-rooted, native, drought-tolerant species to minimize slope failure and erosion potential. Geotextile binding fabrics shall, where appropriate, be used, if necessary, to hold slope soils until vegetation is established.

C. Exposed areas shall, where appropriate, be stabilized to prevent wind and water erosion using methods approved by the MBUAPCD. These methods may include the importation of topsoil to be spread on the ground surface in areas having soils that can be transported by the wind, and/or the mixing of highly erosive sand with finer-grained materials (silt or clay) in sufficient quantities to prevent its ability to be transported by wind. As a minimum, six inches of topsoil or silt/clay mixture is to be used to stabilize wind-erodable soils.

D. Landscaped areas adjacent to structures shall, where appropriate, be graded so that drainage is away from structures.

E. Grading on slope steeper than 5:1 shall, where appropriate, be designed to minimize surface water runoff.

F. Fills placed on slopes steeper than 5:1 shall, where appropriate, be properly benched prior to placement of fill.

G. Brow ditches and/or berms shall, where appropriate, be constructed and maintained above all cut and fill slopes, respectively.

H. Cut and fill benches shall, where appropriate, be constructed at regular intervals.

I. Retaining walls shall, where appropriate, be installed to stabilize slopes where there is a 10-foot or greater difference in elevation between the base of the proposed structure and adjacent lots.

J. Excavation and grading shall, where appropriate, be limited to the dry season of the year (typically April 15 to November 1, allowing for variations in weather) unless an approved erosion control plan is in place and all measures identified therein are in effect.

Additional measures which may be applied to reduce erosion during the construction of transportation system improvement projects include (but are not limited to) the following:

K. Limiting disturbance of soils and vegetation removal to the minimum area necessary for access and construction.

L. Confining all vehicular traffic associated with construction to the right-of-way or to designated access roads.

M. Limiting access routes and stabilizing access points.

N. Adhering to construction schedules designed to avoid periods of heavy precipitation or high winds.

O. Ensuring that all exposed soil is provided with temporary drainage and soil protection when construction activity is shut down during the winter periods.

P. Stabilizing denuded areas as soon as possible with seeding, mulching or other effective methods.

Q. Protecting adjacent properties with vegetative buffer strips, sediment barriers or other effective methods.

R. Delineating clearing limits, easements, setbacks, sensitive areas, vegetation and drainage courses by marking them in the field.

S. Stabilizing and preventing erosion from temporary conveyance channels and outlets.

T. Using sediment controls and filtration to remove sediment from water generated by dewatering or collected on-site during construction.

U. Informing construction personnel prior to construction and periodically during construction activities of environmental concerns, pertinent laws and regulations, and elements of the grading and erosion control plans.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The effective implementation of grading and erosion control plans could reduce this impact to a level of less than significant.

Unstable Soils

Liquefaction potential is widespread throughout the region, particularly in lower-lying valleys overlaid by alluvium. Such areas are typically characterized by high groundwater, and is most prevalent in coastal areas.

Expansive soils have a clay content and mineralogy that renders them susceptible to volume increase upon absorption of water and volume decrease upon desiccation. Repeated cycles of wetting and drying of expansive soils can cause “shrink-swell” damage to roadways, foundations and concrete flatwork.

Compressible soils include soils with a high organic content, those with a low density and fine-grained porous texture, and uncompacted or poorly compacted fill. Soil "collapse" (also referred to as "hydroconsolidation") is a term descriptive of the relatively rapid settlement of certain soils upon saturation. Soils prone to collapse include low-density, porous sands and silts deposited in an arid or semi-arid environment. The effect of soil compression or collapse is settlement of the ground surface with a resultant potential to damage foundations of structures and other improvements.

IMPACT 3.6.4: Construction on Unstable Soils. Construction of some of the projects identified in the financially constrained Action Element of the three plans on soils that are unstable (or that could become unstable as a result of such construction) could result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse, possibly resulting in substantial risks to life and property. Examples of projects which might involve such impacts may include (but are not necessarily limited to) the construction of new roadways and rail improvements along rail lines not currently used by trains. This could represent a **potentially significant environmental impact** associated with these types of projects.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.6.4: Project-Specific Soils Analysis

A. If a particular transportation system improvement project is located in an area of moderate to high liquefaction potential, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that such improvements are designed based upon appropriate soil studies. Possible design measures include deep foundations, removal of liquefiable materials and dewatering.

B. If a particular transportation system improvement project is located in an area of highly expansive, collapsible or compressible soils, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that a site-specific investigation and appropriate design factors are implemented.

C. If a particular transportation system improvement project involving deep foundations or underground areas is located in an area of high groundwater potential, the implementing agency shall, where appropriate, ensure that appropriate construction techniques (i.e., dewatering, special water proofing and deeper foundations) are included in the design of the facility.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Site-specific soil studies should be able to recommend appropriate mitigation measures which may reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant.

Septic Suitability of Soils

None of the transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans would be expected to require wastewater disposal in areas where

soils are incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater.

3.7 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

3.7.1 SETTING

With extensive agricultural operations characterizing large portions of the Monterey Bay region, agricultural chemicals comprise the bulk of all potentially hazardous materials in the area by volume, although other types of potentially hazardous materials can also be found in urbanized areas where employed in industrial, commercial and residential uses. A number of industrial operations conducted in the Monterey Bay region may involve the routine use of hazardous materials as part of the production process, which presents the possible risk of hazardous emissions in the event of an accident. Potentially hazardous materials are also transported on the regional transportation system, which also poses a potential hazard associated with the possible release of toxic substances as a result of an accident.

The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) provides a database of sites where hazardous materials have been released (Calsites), and oversees cleanup pursuant to the California Health and safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.8. Listed sites include a variety of land uses including agricultural, petroleum processing, chemical production, auto wrecking, landfills, active and former military facilities, etc.

Aerial-deposited lead is often encountered on roadway shoulders along older and heavily-traveled highways. Construction project waste with lead levels greater than 1,000 mg/kg for total lead or 5 mg/l for soluble lead are considered hazardous, and waste which meets these criteria normally must be disposed of at a Class 1 hazardous waste landfill.

Naturally occurring asbestos is a fibrous material found in serpentine and other ultramafic rock. Caltrans is now required to address potential hazards related to exposure to naturally occurring asbestos on all of that agency's projects.

The region has six publicly-owned civil aviation airports and several civil aviation helipads, each of which could represent a potential hazard to those living and/or working in the surrounding area in the event of a major aircraft accident.

Individual jurisdictions within the Monterey Bay area have developed emergency response plans and evacuation plans, which will be implemented in the event of an emergency or natural disaster.

Much of the land within the Monterey Bay region remains undeveloped. Those undeveloped areas which are unsuitable for cultivation are often used for grazing, although vast areas are not suitable even for this low-intensity agricultural use. The vegetation in these areas may present a risk of wildland fires, which may be particularly critical in areas where these areas adjoin urban or suburban development.

3.7.2 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Implementation of the three plans could have a significant environmental impact if it were to result in:

- The creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transportation, use or disposal of hazardous materials;
- The creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment;
- Hazardous emissions within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school;
- The handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school;
- Development located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (if such development would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment);
- Development located in an area covered by an airport land use plan (or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport), if it would result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area;
- Development within the vicinity of a private airstrip, if it would result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area;
- Impairment or physical interference with the implementation of an adopted emergency response plan;
- Impairment or physical interference with the implementation of an adopted emergency evacuation plan; or
- Exposure of people or structures to significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires (including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands).

Exposure to Hazardous Materials

IMPACT 3.7.1: Potential to Create a Significant Hazard to the Public or Environment. The development of some transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Elements of the three plans may have the potential to be affected by Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) Calsites, aerial deposited lead, naturally occurring

asbestos and other hazardous materials. In the absence of appropriate precautions and/or cleanup efforts, such projects may create the potential for exposing construction workers, the public or the environment to hazardous materials, a **potentially significant environmental impact**.

RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURE

MITIGATION MEASURE 3.7.1: Site-Specific Analysis for Hazardous Materials/ Remediation/Cleanup

Implementing agencies shall, where appropriate, investigate the potential for transportation system improvement projects to be located at, or in the vicinity of, identified Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) hazardous material sites, or to be located in areas that contain aerial deposited lead, naturally occurring asbestos or other hazardous materials. Site-specific evaluation should include a historical assessment of past uses, and soil sampling should be conducted when determined appropriate by the implementing agency. In those instances where a specific project site is found to be contaminated by hazardous materials, the site shall, where appropriate, be cleaned up to the standards of the appropriate regulatory agency, and appropriate remediation measures to ensure worker safety during construction shall, where appropriate, be identified prior to the commencement of earthmoving activities, subject to the review and approval of DTSC.

RESULTING LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Implementation of this mitigation measure could reduce potential impacts to a level of less than significant.

Transport of Hazardous Materials

Construction of transportation system improvement projects identified in the financially constrained Action Element of the three plans would most likely involve the use of solvents, biocides and fuels that can be considered hazardous if not used, stored or disposed of properly. However, all transport and use of hazardous materials at construction sites would be subject to myriad federal, state and local regulations, and as long as these requirements are met, potential impacts would be considered less than significant.

With the expansion of the regional transportation network envisioned under the three plans to accommodate additional vehicular traffic, the chances of an accidental release of hazardous materials into the environment will be increased. All transport of hazardous materials is subject to federal, state and local regulations intended to minimize public safety risks. As required under law, the transportation of hazardous materials and wastes is monitored to ensure the notification of local jurisdictions in the event of a release.

The number of hazardous materials shipments carried along the regional transportation system is a largely a function of the production of (or the demand for) hazardous materials within the region,