

Appendix I Comments and Responses on the Draft Environmental Document

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Introduction to Comments and Responses

Appendix I presents comments received on the SR 84 Expressway Widening Project and the responses to those comments. Any text changes resulting from the comments are summarized in the responses and have been incorporated into the text of the Final Environmental Document (FED).

I.1.1 Comment Period

The Draft Environmental Document (DED) was circulated for public review beginning on October 15, 2007, and ending on November 16, 2007. A public notice announcing the availability of the DED and the public information meeting was distributed two weeks before the meeting to more than 8,500 property owners, elected officials, city staff, special interest organizations, libraries, neighborhood groups, and local media. The DED was also made available on Caltrans and ACTIA websites and at the Livermore Public Library.

A public information meeting on the DED was held at Smith Elementary School in Livermore on October 30, 2007. Approximately 86 people attended the public meeting and submitted 29 comment cards. Based on numerous requests from the public, the public comment period was extended to December 28, 2007. In total, approximately 150 comments were submitted during the comment period.

I.1.2 Responses to Comments

State, regional, and local agencies and representatives; private organizations and businesses; and members of the public submitted comments. Each comment card, letter, e-mail, or note that was received was reviewed and substantive comments were identified. Responses to each comment are organized and presented in the following sections of Appendix I:

- I2, Master Responses to Comments
- I3, Summary of Comments
- I4, Comments from State Agencies
- I5, Comments from Regional Agencies and Organizations
- I6, Comments from Local Agencies and Officials
- I7, Comments from Businesses
- I8, Comments from Individuals

To locate a Master Response, comment, or comment response, see the Table of Contents. Reference materials cited in this appendix are included in Chapter 6.

Master Responses to Comments

This section provides an overview of the most prevalent topics and issues that emerged from the body of comments received on the DED. These issues (Comment Summaries) were identified by a number of commenters and are summarized and shown in italics below by resource area (Air Quality, Community Impacts, General, Noise, Traffic, and Visual Resources) and topic. Following each issue summary is a response.

The order of the following Master Responses does not reflect the importance of any single issue in relation to all of the others.

I.1.3 Air Quality (AIR)

AIR-1 Pollution Concerns

Comment Summary: The extra traffic on the widened SR 84 will create additional pollution and fumes for nearby residents. Additional trucks on the route will increase diesel pollution in the area. Cases of asthma and respiratory problems will increase among children and the elderly. Even those in good health may be affected by fumes.

The project's potential effects on air quality were evaluated in detail in the Air Quality Analysis report (Baseline Environmental Consulting 2008). The report used data from an extensive analysis performed as part of the traffic study (Fehr and Peers 2006) to determine the change in traffic as a result of the project.

Project-Related Air Quality Changes

The DED indicates that additional traffic shifting to SR 84 will result in an increase in carbon monoxide (CO) and “mobile source air toxics” (MSATs)—a subset of criteria air pollutants that originate from human-made sources such as vehicles. As described in Section 2.14.5, MSATs are emitted to the air when fuel evaporates or passes through the engine unburned, from the incomplete combustion of fuels, and as secondary combustion products.

In the immediate vicinity of SR 84, future CO concentrations would increase slightly with the proposed project (between 0 to 0.7 parts per million [ppm] depending on location for a 1-hour period) compared with the No Build modeling results for the morning and afternoon/evening peak periods. The project would not, however, result in localized CO “hot spots” at intersections or exceed an air quality standard. In addition, localized CO concentrations are predicted to decrease (improve) between 2005 and 2030, with or without the project, from future improvements in fuel

formulations, strengthened vehicle emission controls, and retirement of older, higher-polluting vehicles. Overall, the maximum 0.7 part per million increase in CO from the project would not exceed the air quality standards established to protect human health.

An estimate of MSATs was performed in accordance with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidance, using vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as a unit of measure (see Section 2.14.5). The VMT estimated for the proposed project is slightly higher than that for the No Build Alternative, because the additional capacity on SR 84 would increase the efficiency of the roadway and attract trips from local streets and elsewhere in the transportation network. This increase in VMT would lead to an increase in MSAT emissions along the SR 84 corridor and a corresponding decrease in MSAT emissions on other routes. However, the overall increase in emissions would be somewhat offset by the fact that MSAT emissions generally decrease as speed increases. In addition, because the estimated VMT varies by 5 percent or less between the proposed project and the No Build Alternative, no appreciable difference in overall MSAT emissions is expected. Finally, independent of this project, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) programs are projected to reduce MSAT emissions by 57 to 87 percent between 2000 and 2020, and would benefit the project area regardless of any increase in VMT.

Particulate Matter and Diesel Exhaust

The primary pollutants in diesel emissions are particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, and sulfur oxides. Nitrogen oxides and sulfur oxides form additional particulate matter when they interact with other atmospheric agents. Diesel engines emit a large amount of particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM_{2.5}), which can cause respiratory problems, especially for children, the elderly, and people with pre-existing respiratory conditions. As described in DED Section 2.14.2.2, the Bay Area is designated as unclassified/attainment of Federal standards and nonattainment of State standards for PM_{2.5}. Nonetheless, the proposed project is not expected to have any adverse effects on microscale particulate levels (see Section 2.14.3.2).

Independent of this project, some reduction in particulate matter is expected to result from recently implemented USEPA standards for diesel fuels and new diesel engines. The rules mandate the use of lower-sulfur fuels in diesel engines beginning in 2006 for highway diesel fuel (used in most trucks and buses) and 2007 for nonroad diesel fuel (used in off-road construction equipment). As stated above, sulfur combines with

other airborne material to form particulate matter. Sulfur also contributes to the distinctive odor of diesel fumes.

Starting in October 2006, the sulfur content of most highway diesel fuel was reduced from a standard of 500 parts per million to 15 parts per million, about 3 percent of its former level. Old diesel engines burning the cleaner fuel are expected to reduce particulate emissions by 10 percent. New diesel engines with improved controls, which were required for all diesel engines sold after January 1, 2007, are expected to cut this particulate pollution by more than 95 percent.

Air quality improvements resulting from the new USEPA rules and program will become more evident over time as older vehicles are retired from use and are replaced by new, cleaner-burning models. In the meantime, however, air quality impacts from the proposed project would be minimal and are not expected to result in effects to human health.

I.1.4 Community Impacts (CI)

CI-1 Quarry Access Change

Comment Summary: The quarry mining access should be located away from SR 84 and preferably limited to Stanley Boulevard, which is not residential. The consolidated quarry entrance at SR 84/Concannon Boulevard will increase existing noise and traffic directly across from a residential neighborhood. Sand and gravel debris will fall from the trucks on a daily basis like it currently does on Stanley Boulevard.

The project vicinity has multiple quarries and quarry operators, some with access to SR 84 and some with access to Stanley Boulevard. Upgrading SR 84 to expressway standards requires eliminating direct private driveway access from the roadway and allowing access only at intersections. The project would remove the existing SR 84 driveway access points and consolidate them to a single shared access road on the west side of the Concannon Boulevard intersection.

The two quarry driveways on SR 84 that would be replaced belong to Pleasanton Gravel Company/Vulcan Materials and Cemex/Utility Vault. Vehicle counts were recorded to determine the traffic effects of replacing the driveways with the Concannon Boulevard access road (Zone 7 Water Agency 2006). The number of vehicles using the existing driveways ranges from approximately 6 to 120 vehicles per day, depending on the time of year. Mining operators use other points of access to transport mined materials from the quarry sites. The majority of vehicles using the SR

84 quarry access driveways are cars, light trucks, and service trucks. T-axle tractor trailers carrying mechanical equipment use the SR 84 quarry access points approximately twice a year. When mining is completed (circa 2030), the quarries will be reclaimed and managed by Zone 7 for potable water storage and flood management purposes. At that time, the average daily traffic is projected to range from less than 10 trips (cars and light trucks) to 50 trips (cars, light trucks, service vehicles, and semi-trailers). These volumes of current and future quarry truck traffic represent an insignificant proportion of overall traffic on SR 84 (shown in Table 1-2). Therefore, the consolidated quarry access at Concannon Boulevard is not expected to result in increased congestion on SR 84.

Furthermore, the consolidated access will comply with Caltrans expressway standards and provide improved safety for ingress and egress for vehicles traveling between the quarry sites and SR 84. An alternative access point is provided on Vineyard Avenue (east) for Cemex quarry traffic.

Other alternative access points at Stanley Boulevard were considered and rejected due to physical constraints including Arroyo del Valle and County-permitted limits of mining. Encroaching on mining limits would affect the mining rights of the quarry operators and incur a significant added cost to compensate the quarry operators for lost mineral resources. The added cost would far exceed available funding for the project.

Alternative locations for a shared access road are also limited by a City of Livermore ordinance that restricts trucks that weigh 3 tons or more to SR 84 (along with the existing Kitty Hawk Road to Airway Boulevard route to I-580) and East Stanley Boulevard.

If debris falling from trucks becomes a recurring problem, the quarry operators will be required by the State to provide street sweeping service on a regular basis.

I.1.5 General (GEN)

GEN-1 Alternatives

Comment Summary: The DED should have presented a broader range of alternatives. Other alternatives should have been analyzed in more detail.

Because the project proposes to widen SR 84, there are only two alternatives – the No Build and Build Alternatives. The alternatives are documented in the DED in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National

Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. Before deciding on the Build Alternative, numerous design concepts were evaluated by a multidisciplinary team from Caltrans District 4, ACTIA, the Cities of Livermore and Pleasanton, the Zone 7 Water Agency, and consultant engineers and planners. Design options were considered for (a) the SR 84 alignment between Ruby Hill Drive and Vallecitos Road, (b) the Vallecitos Road intersection, and (c) the Stanley Boulevard intersection. These options are summarized in Section 1.5. Appendix B provides additional documentation comparing the design options and the reasons for rejecting them.

The DED proposed to relocate and realign the SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection 450 feet to the north. As a result of public comments that expressed concern about the impacts of this intersection change on vineyard land and individual property owners, the other design options were reconsidered to assess whether the impacts could be avoided. The Department subsequently determined that SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection Option A, in which the intersection would remain in its current location, could be skewed to reduce the potential for high-sided vehicles to overturn. Additional modifications were made to Option A to further improve safety and enhance traffic operations, including eliminating the left-turn movement from SR 84 to Vallecitos Road. As a result, the Build Alternative was changed to include the revised Option A.

GEN-2 EIS/EIR

Comment Summary: An Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration/ Environmental Assessment was not the appropriate environmental document for the proposed project—an EIS/EIR should be prepared. The DED provided insufficient information to support the findings that the project would have no significant impacts. A new environmental document should be prepared by an independent third party, not by Caltrans or Caltrans-paid consultants.

Determination of Project-Related Effects

CEQA requires a lead agency to prepare an EIR if there is substantial evidence, in light of the whole record, that the project may have a significant effect on the environment (California Public Resources Code Sections 21080(d), 21082.2(d); CEQA Guidelines Section 15064). NEPA requires an EIS to be prepared when the proposed federal action (project) as a whole has the potential to “significantly affect the quality of the human environment.” Under NEPA, significance is a function of both context and intensity (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1508.27).

The determination that the proposed project would not have significant environmental effects was based on a detailed and comprehensive review of each technical study area. Environmental studies for the proposed project began in January 2005 and included preparation of the 15 technical reports listed in Chapter 7 of the DED. The technical reports addressed noise, traffic, air quality, cultural resources, biological resources, community impacts, hydraulics and water quality, hazardous waste contamination, geology, and visual impacts. These studies were prepared by consultant experts in each subject and were reviewed by experienced Caltrans environmental or engineering staff before the studies could be approved for reference and inclusion in the DED. It is important to note that the same technical studies must be prepared whether the ultimate environmental document is an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment or an EIS/EIR. It makes no difference to the individuals preparing or reviewing the technical study whether the DED that summarizes the study is an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment or an EIS/EIR. Thus, preparing an EIS/EIR would not change the content or nature of any of the technical studies.

The decision to complete an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment as the DED was based on the technical studies' findings that no significant impacts would result, or that impacts would be avoided. The reasons that any potentially significant effects of the project were avoided were summarized in the DED.

Details to Support Determination of No Significant Impact

The DED was circulated for public review and comment on October 15, 2007, and the public comment period was extended from November 15 to December 28 to ensure that all interested individuals had the opportunity to submit their comments. The Department considered all written and verbal comments received at the public hearing and by telephone, postal mail, and e-mail. The following information has been included in the FED to address comments requesting additional detail.

- Additional long-term, multiple-day noise measurements were taken near the intersection of SR 84 and Vallecitos Road, as some commenters requested further evaluation of current and future conditions as a result of the modifications to this intersection in 2007. Measurements were conducted at three of the 2005 monitoring locations for at least two full days to develop a daily average descriptor. The new noise level data showed minimal differences from 2005 levels, ranging from a decrease of 1.4 A-weighted decibels (dBA) to an increase of 0.8 dBA. These data were determined to not affect the conclusions of the

original analysis. This information has been added to Sections 2.15.2.1 and 2.15.3.1 of the FED.

- In response to comments requesting more information about noise levels at the second stories of residences on SR 84, noise measurements were collected to determine whether additional soundwalls could feasibly and reasonably reduce exterior second-story noise levels. Based on measurements taken at the heights of second-story residences adjacent to the roadway and soundwalls modeled for those locations, additional soundwalls along SR 84 would provide limited effectiveness in reducing noise at second-story levels. In general, noise reduction from the soundwalls would be less than 5 dBA and in most cases only 2 dBA to 3 dBA. Therefore, no additional locations were identified for which soundwalls would provide feasible and reasonable noise abatement.
- In response to comments that requested specific information about changes in truck traffic, additional data were gathered to test the modeling and projections used in the traffic studies. The data show that the project would result in minor increases in future truck volumes of 100 to 175 trucks per day over No Build conditions. Overall, however, the project would have a slightly lower proportion of trucks to automobiles—3.3 percent of average daily traffic on SR 84, compared to 4.0 percent with the No Build Alternative. Therefore, the project would not result in a significant increase in truck traffic on SR 84. This information has been added to the FED in Sections 2.7.2.4 and 2.7.3.3.
- To address comments that requested information about how potential increases in truck traffic would affect noise levels, additional data were gathered to determine the amount of heavy truck traffic required to approach or exceed the Federal noise abatement criteria at nearby homes, with the project in the year 2030. The study showed that the heavy truck percentage on SR 84 would have to range from 5 to 40 percent, depending on the roadway segment, to reach the 66 dBA threshold at which noise abatement must be considered. According to the future truck percentage data described in Section 2.7.3.3, trucks would account for an average of 3.3 percent of all traffic in the project limits except for one segment. Between Vallecitos Road and Vineyard Avenue, trucks would account for 5 percent of all traffic, but 2030 noise levels for that segment would be below 60 dBA. These truck volumes would not result in noise levels that approach or exceed the Federal noise abatement criteria at any residences along the project limits. This information has been added to Sections 2.15.2.1 and 2.15.3.1.
- The Department reconsidered design options for the SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection in response to concerns about the effects of the proposed relocation

and realignment of the intersection on vineyard land and individual property owners. Additional technical studies were conducted and subsequently identified that the intersection could remain in its current location if skewed to reduce the potential for high-sided vehicles to overturn and if additional modifications are made to further improve safety and enhance traffic operations. As a result, the project design was changed to maintain the SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection in its current location.

The additional study or evaluation of these issues did not change the conclusion that no significant effects would result from project implementation.

Who Is Responsible for Preparing Environmental Documents

Under CEQA and NEPA, the public agency proposing an action that would result in direct or indirect physical change is responsible for the CEQA/NEPA process, including research and preparation of the required environmental documents. The technical studies and DED were prepared in accordance with CEQA and NEPA requirements and under the same process that would apply to any other proposed project by a public agency. In this case, all studies prepared by consultants were subject to the review of the Lead Agency, Caltrans. Other members of the Project Development Team also reviewed the reports. No studies were finalized until they were approved by Caltrans. As with any other project, the technical studies for this project are available for public review, and any substantive project issues or concerns must be addressed in the FED.

GEN-3 Property Values

Comment Summary: Making SR 84 into an expressway will hurt residential property values in the project vicinity.

Residential property values are influenced by many factors, including:

- Property attributes (such as age, size, number of bathrooms and bedrooms, condition, lot size, and additional amenities such as a pool or spa)
- Locational attributes (such as access to shopping and services, commuting distance to key employment areas, and quality of local schools)
- Market conditions (such as interest rates, employment growth, amount of new residential construction, depreciating/appreciating housing markets, and vacancy rates)

Residential development occurs along freeways, highways, and local roads in the project area in response to the continued demand for housing. The SR 84 roadway already exists, is well traveled, and is visible to some homes. If SR 84 had an adverse effect on property values, that would already be reflected in the property values to some extent with or without the project. More than just widening the roadway, the proposed project would improve circulation, reduce future congestion, and add landscaping. All of these factors theoretically may or may not influence property values in terms of home cost. Therefore, the project cannot be assumed to substantially influence home values along SR 84.

Under CEQA, the economic or social effects of a project are not treated as significant effects on the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15131). Under FHWA NEPA guidelines, agencies must consider possible adverse economic, social, and environmental effects—including property value losses—and make final decisions on the project in the best overall public interest, taking into consideration the need for fast, safe, and efficient transportation; public services; and the costs of eliminating or minimizing such adverse effects (23 USC 109[h]). Concerns about property values are acknowledged, and every feasible effort to balance the needs of the nearby community with long-term transportation goals for the region will be considered.

GEN-4 *Lack of Project Information*

Comment Summary: Ruby Hill residents were not aware that SR 84 backing their properties could become such a large thoroughfare. Area residents weren't informed until after work began.

SR 84 was added to the State's freeway and expressway system in 1959. In 1960, the California Highway Commission adopted an alignment for SR 84 that extended along Isabel Avenue from Vallecitos Road to I-580, to reduce congestion in downtown Livermore. Construction of the Isabel Avenue Extension (the current roadway) was completed in 2001.

In 2003, a Route Transfer Agreement between the City of Livermore and Caltrans was executed to transfer the designation of SR 84 through downtown Livermore (First Street) to the Isabel Avenue corridor. The City of Livermore conducted a publicly noticed meeting on August 11, 2003, to allow the public to comment on the proposed transfer and relinquishment of SR 84.

Environmental studies for the SR 84 Expressway Widening Project began in January 2005. A public open house was advertised and held at the Smith Elementary School

(about two blocks from Isabel Avenue) on July 28, 2005. Mailers were sent to owners of all properties along Isabel Avenue to inform them about the proposed project and invite them to the open house. More than 4,750 mailers were sent to residents, property owners, and elected officials, and advertisements were placed in local newspapers. In addition, the mailers advised residents on how to stay informed about the project. The meeting provided an opportunity to obtain information and ask questions about the project. Comments from the public open house were recorded and considered in the development of the DED.

The DED was circulated for public review and comment on October 15, 2007. A public notice announcing the availability of the DED and the October 30, 2007, public meeting was distributed two weeks before the meeting to the project mailing list, which included more than 8,500 property owners, elected officials, city staff, special interest organizations, libraries, and neighborhood groups. A public notice announcing the availability of the DED and the public meeting was published in the Livermore Independent (10/18), Tri-Valley Herald (10/15), Pleasanton Weekly (10/19), and Valley Times (10/15). Project information was also posted on the Caltrans and ACTIA websites. The review period was extended to December 28, 2007, to ensure that all interested parties had adequate time to submit comments.

GEN-5 Quality of Life

Comment Summary: The proposed project will decrease the quality of life for residents who live near SR 84 or for the Livermore Valley in general.

Some commenters have associated quality-of-life concerns with the potential for project-related changes in air quality, noise, property values, and the aesthetic quality of the project area. These issues are addressed in detail in Master Responses AIR-1, NOI-1, GEN-3, and VIS-1, respectively. The DED identifies measures to minimize effects such as construction dust, traffic noise, and disturbance to landscaping. Additional measures can be considered during the final project design phase.

Quality of life is an intangible factor that cannot be measured in the same way as other physical changes to the environment. Under CEQA, economic or social effects are not treated as effects on the environment unless they result in a physical change (CEQA Guidelines Section 15131). Under FHWA NEPA guidelines, agencies must consider possible adverse economic, social, and environmental effects such as perceived changes in quality of life from a proposed project. The guidelines require agencies to make final decisions on the project in the best overall public interest,

taking into consideration the need for fast, safe, and efficient transportation; public services; and the costs of eliminating or minimizing such adverse effects (23 USC 109[h]). These impacts will be considered in balancing the needs of the nearby community with long-term transportation goals for the region.

GEN-6 Segmentation of the Three SR 84 Projects in the Livermore Area

Comment Summary: The proposed project should have been evaluated in the same environmental document as the I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project and the Pigeon Pass Safety Project. Dividing the project into “subprojects” doesn’t adequately account for the projects’ cumulative environmental effects.

FHWA regulations outline three general principles that are used to define a transportation project. According to 23 CFR 771.111(f), a project should:

1. Connect logical termini and be of sufficient length to address environmental matters on a broad scope;
2. Have independent utility or independent significance, i.e., be usable and be a reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements in the area are made; and
3. Not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements.

Logical termini are defined as (1) rational end points for a transportation improvement, and (2) rational end points for a review of the environmental impacts. Independent utility, or independent significance, is defined as being a usable and reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements in the area are made.

The proposed project meets all three of the FHWA criteria.

Logical Termini and Sufficient Length

The SR 84 Expressway Widening Project has rational end points for a transportation improvement: Jack London Boulevard and Ruby Hill Drive, which represent the southern limit of the I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project and the approximate northern limit of the Pigeon Pass Safety Project, respectively. The I-580/Isabel Avenue and Pigeon Pass projects are separately funded projects that will be completed before the proposed project.

The SR 84 Expressway Widening Project also has rational end points for environmental impact review, as the different settings of the three projects each dictate a different set of environmental concerns. The Pigeon Pass Safety Project is in a predominantly rural area with little development and sensitive biological resources. The SR 84 Expressway Widening Project area contains single-family homes, mining operations, vineyards, recreational facilities, commercial uses, and undeveloped land. The I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project area contains a greater concentration of commercial and industrial land uses with some residential, agricultural, and transportation uses, including the Livermore Municipal Airport.

The length of the SR 84 Expressway Widening Project is based on its logical termini. No minimum length exists for roadway projects, and some projects that must undergo environmental review are less than a mile long. Moreover, the length is sufficient for an adequate consideration of alternatives. Section 1.5 and Appendix B of the DED discuss the other build alternatives that were evaluated but eliminated from consideration. Existing and planned development, including conservation areas and mining operations, impose constraints on alignments for a build alternative. That would remain true whether the proposed project was considered alone or together with the I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project and Pigeon Pass Safety Project.

Independent Utility

Although the three projects are ultimately intended to upgrade SR 84 to expressway design standards and to provide a continuous four- to six-lane facility between Pigeon Pass and the I-580/Isabel Avenue interchange, each project addresses needs that have specific independent utility:

- The Pigeon Pass Safety Project is needed to improve the safety and operation of the segment of SR 84 through the Vallecitos Hills/Pigeon Pass area, which has steep grades, winding sections with limited sight distances and reduced speed limits, congestion during peak hours, a higher collision rate than the statewide average, and no passing/climbing lanes or pullouts. The project is under construction, and completion is scheduled for 2009.
- The SR 84 Expressway Widening Project is needed to accommodate existing and future local traffic circulation by adding capacity on SR 84 in this more developed area. The addition of new travel lanes in each direction has been planned for this segment since it was originally constructed. The planned lanes were included and discussed in the *Isabel Avenue Extension Environmental Impact Report* (2001), which provided the decision-making basis for the current alignment and design of

SR 84. To meet the needs for added capacity, the project will also upgrade SR 84 to an expressway by providing controlled access (eliminating private driveway access) and relocating private utilities out of State right-of-way, and improve pedestrian and bicycle access by connecting multiuse trails.

- The I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project is needed to improve access to I-580 by replacing the partial interchange at Portola Avenue with a full interchange at Isabel Avenue and to improve local traffic circulation north and south of I-580 by increasing the number of local freeway crossings. No direct access to I-580 currently exists from Isabel Avenue, and therefore vehicles must use frontage roads to access connections to the freeway. Project construction will begin in 2009.

Each project would yield traffic circulation and operational improvements over the No Build scenario. Each project can function independent of the other and independent of other transportation projects.

Other Reasonably Foreseeable Transportation Improvements

The SR 84 Expressway Widening Project would not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements. Other transportation projects planned in the vicinity are identified in Section 2.21.3.

Cumulative Impact Assessment

The cumulative effects of the SR 84 Expressway Widening Project together with the Pigeon Pass Safety Project and the I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project are considered in Section 2.21.3. Traffic would increase along SR 84 as a result of the cumulative projects, but no exceedances of an air quality standard are predicted, and future noise levels would increase but remain within the thresholds established by FHWA and the Department. The SR 84 Expressway Widening Project would remove trees at the southern extent of the alignment, which would contribute to oak woodland impacts from the Pigeon Pass Safety Project. With required avoidance measures and replanting/landscaping, cumulative impacts to biological resources would be offset or mitigated. Cumulative changes in stormwater runoff volume and the viewshed are also considered in Section 2.21.3 and would not be significant.

I.1.6 Noise (NOI)

NOI-1 Noise Increases from the Project

Comment Summary: The project will cause a significant increase in traffic noise for nearby residents. Traffic noise in the area is already a problem.

A Noise Study Report (Wilson, Ihrig and Associates 2007) was prepared for this project to evaluate potential noise impacts to sensitive land uses along SR 84 within the project limits. The report was prepared following the guidelines set forth in the Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol (<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/noise/index.htm>). The findings of this report are summarized in Section 2.15 of the DED. A copy of the Noise Study Report is also available for review at the City of Livermore Planning Department.

The study projected maximum noise levels and increases that might occur along SR 84 for traffic conditions in the year 2030, with and without the project improvements in place. Future noise levels with and without the project were compared to determine the potential future maximum increases in noise with the project compared to those without the project. Between approximately Jack London Boulevard and Alden Lane, the predicted increases ranged from 0 to 2 dBA, except for a location in Ida Holm Park (maximum 4 dBA increase). Along the Ruby Hill development, increases were predicted to range from 3 to 5 dBA at the tennis courts and adjacent recreation field to Sangro Court/Norante Court, and from 0 to 2 dBA from Donata Court to the southern project limits, south of Ruby Hill Drive.

Maximum predicted noise levels at residential properties, with the project in place and traffic projected to year 2030 conditions, ranged from 51 to 65 dBA. Higher levels were predicted at nonresidential areas, such as along the multiuse trail directly adjacent to SR 84, up to 72 dBA (a 2 dBA increase over the No Project conditions of 70 dBA). Predicted noise levels with and without the project are listed in Table 2.15-3 of the DED.

As described in the Noise Study Report, people generally cannot perceive changes in environmental noise levels of 3 decibels or less. A change of 5 decibels is usually clearly perceptible by most people, and an increase of 10 decibels is usually perceived as a doubling in loudness (Wilson, Ihrig and Associates 2007, Section 4.3, p. 15).

The noise study concluded that noise levels are not expected to approach or exceed the Federal noise abatement criteria at nearby homes with the project in place. Most homes may already benefit from traffic noise reduction provided by existing berms and walls that were constructed as part of the Isabel Avenue Extension project (2001). The criteria for consideration of noise abatement are based on the Federal noise abatement criteria. For residential areas, noise levels of 66 dBA or an increase in 12 dBA due to project implementation would require consideration of noise abatement.

None of the residential locations studied met or exceeded these criteria. In accordance with the Federal criteria that apply to this project, noise abatement measures were not carried forward for further consideration.

The study did show noise levels of 66 dBA (which meets the definition of “approaching” the Federal noise abatement criteria) at a recreation area in Ruby Hill. Therefore, a barrier was studied at that location and a 6-foot-high soundwall was identified as a measure that could reduce noise from SR 84 traffic. This finding was included in the DED for further consideration, but the DED also noted that this barrier would affect existing views. Resident and public input on the soundwall was solicited during the DED review period. After consideration of “reasonableness” factors, the soundwall has been determined to be not reasonable and will not be included in the project.

Rubberized asphalt concrete pavement will be used throughout the project limits to reduce tire noise. Other methods that can reduce noise levels will be considered during the final project design phase, including signage to deter use of engine brakes. Additional public outreach will be conducted during the final design and construction phases to share updated project information with the public.

I.1.7 Traffic (TR)

TR-1 Trucks

Comment Summary: The project will attract more trucks to SR 84 and increase noise, pollution, traffic congestion, and accidents in the nearby neighborhood. A complete ban should be imposed on 18-wheel or nonpassenger trucks on SR 84, similar to that in place for a segment of Interstate 580 in San Leandro and Oakland. At least consider restricting the times when trucks can use SR 84 to avoid evening and/or night hours. Charge commercial truck drivers a toll to pay for the addition of lanes and development on SR 84. Heavy truck traffic on SR 84 will have a negative effect on the way the Ruby Hill development and other nearby communities are perceived.

In December 2003, SR 84 was transferred to Isabel Avenue. As a result of this route transfer, SR 84 was designated as a truck route, and truck routes on First Street, Vallecitos Road north of Isabel Avenue, Holmes Street, Livermore Avenue, and Stanley Boulevard east of Isabel Avenue were removed to limit cut-through traffic and prohibit through truck traffic in downtown Livermore.

The Department cannot restrict truck traffic on any roadway as part of a project, and therefore truck restrictions cannot be applied by the State as an avoidance or

mitigation measure for this project. Under the California Vehicle Code, a local agency may petition to prohibit certain vehicles from using a highway or impose vehicle weight restrictions for a roadway. The process for truck restriction involves a number of steps and requires the local agency to initiate and justify the proposal and identify an alternate truck route. For complete details of the truck restriction process, see: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/trucks/routes/restrict-process.htm>.

The Department will consider installing signage that advises drivers of large trucks to use freeway routes for regional travel and avoid SR 84 between I-680 and I-580.

TR-2 Other Regional Traffic Improvements

Comment Summary: The proposed project has not been timed well. What good will it do to widen SR 84 between Pigeon Pass and the I-580/Isabel Avenue interchange if the interchange has not been completed? A more effective use of the project funding would be to improve the I-580/I-680 interchange and add a lane to I-580 between Pleasanton and Livermore. With no improvement to I-580 from Airway Boulevard east, the proposed project will result in more traffic backing up on SR 84 through Livermore.

Several projects are planned on I-580 between I-680 and the Altamont Pass to improve traffic congestion, including the addition of carpool lanes in each direction and auxiliary lanes between interchanges to improve operations of merging and diverging traffic. Specifically:

- The I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project will extend and widen SR 84 north of Jack London Boulevard and provide a new interchange connection for SR 84 to I-580. The I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project will be completed before the proposed project.
- Construction of an eastbound I-580 carpool lane from Tassajara Road to Greenville Road is scheduled for completion in 2010. Construction of a westbound I-580 carpool lane from Greenville Road to San Ramon Road is scheduled for completion in 2012.
- A separate study to improve the I-580/I-680 interchange began in 2006 to identify improvements for regional traffic operations on those freeways.

Providing direct access to I-580 via the new interchange and widening SR 84 are expected to reduce congestion on local streets in the Cities of Pleasanton and Livermore that currently experience a high level of cut-through traffic. When constructed, the operational improvements on I-580 and I-680 will further improve

local circulation. Separate studies have been conducted to show the cumulative benefits of these projects. Additional information can be obtained from the Alameda County Congestion Management Authority.

TR-3 Speed

Comment Summary: The project should limit the speed on SR 84 to reduce noise to nearby residences. The speed limit should be 40 mph; 50 mph is too high in a populated area with small children around. At least lower the speed limit on SR 84 to 45 mph from Vineyard Avenue to the Ruby Hills entrance to decrease traffic noise.

The speed limit on an expressway is set by State law at 55 mph. In areas with traffic congestion, signalized intersections, or pedestrian and bicycle traffic, the speed limit can be lowered by 5 mph (the existing condition, 50 mph) without undergoing a legally mandated process. The process to lower the speed limit by more than 5 mph (to 45 mph) requires technical engineering and traffic surveys that focus on safety, driver expectations, and traffic. The results of these studies would need to support a lower speed limit. Because conditions do not indicate the need for these studies at this time, the posted speed limit on SR 84 will remain at 50 mph, and all intersections will remain signalized. Options for monitoring and enforcing speed will be considered during the final project design phase.

TR-4 Signal Timing

Comment Summary: Signal timing on SR 84 is an issue in the project area, particularly at the following intersections:

- *Concannon Boulevard, which has delays in the early morning and poor signal timing of left-hand turns from Concannon onto Isabel Avenue*
- *Vallecitos Road*
- *The left-hand turn from Vineyard Avenue to SR 84*

How and when will signal timing be reassessed? Does the project include funding to synchronize traffic lights from Vineyard Avenue to 580? Will the signal timing account for heavy trucks, which have longer acceleration and deceleration time than cars? Finally, the existing signal intersections should be maintained to calm traffic and minimize speeds. Also consider adding more signaled intersections to reduce noise, speed, and pollution concerns.

Traffic signal timing and queue storage requirements will be addressed during the final project design phase to provide acceptable traffic operations throughout the day.

After the project is constructed, Caltrans and the City of Livermore will coordinate to monitor and update signal timing, if warranted.

The proposed project will set signal timing and provide adequate storage for queuing vehicles at the SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection and other signal intersections within the project limits.

The existing signal intersections will be maintained. No additional signal intersections are currently planned within the project limits.

I.1.8 Visual Resources (VIS)

VIS-1 Landscaping Plan

Comment Summary: Caltrans should provide enough landscaping to help reduce noise and absorb carbon dioxide (or carbon monoxide) from traffic. Additional landscaping is essential to make SR 84 visually compatible with the beauty of the surrounding area and vineyards. The landscaping should include large trees such as redwoods, shrubs such as evergreens, and native plants.

The conceptual landscaping plans for SR 84 propose to keep the native vegetation south of Vineyard Avenue to maintain the rural setting. As part of the reclamation plan between Alameda County and the quarry owners, landscaping is proposed along the quarry frontages on SR 84 and Stanley Boulevard. Landscaping was installed north of Concannon Boulevard on the east side of SR 84 as part of the Isabel Avenue extension project (constructed 2001).

Landscaping will be installed under a separate project immediately following the main construction project. Funds for the project include the cost of installing the landscaping and maintaining it for three years. After three years, landscape maintenance and funding will be provided by Caltrans, the City of Livermore, and the quarry operators. Landscape maintenance and funding obligations will be documented in maintenance agreements among these entities.

For safety reasons, fixed objects such as trees cannot be placed within 30 feet of traffic lanes on an expressway facility.

Although landscaping is not considered a noise abatement or air quality improvement measure, it is included in the project as an aesthetic element.

Landscape plans for the SR 84 Expressway Widening Project are preliminary, and will be further developed during the project design phase. Public input will be included through focused neighborhood meetings.

VIS-2 Landscaped Median

Comment Summary: The proposed project includes a concrete barrier. It would look much better and be more consistent with the visual surroundings to have a landscaped median instead. The concrete barrier will make the area look like a freeway.

The proposed project includes a 22-foot median with a concrete safety barrier from north of Vallecitos Road to Jack London Boulevard except at intersections. The main reason that a median barrier is included rather than an island is safety, both for the motorist and the highway workers who must maintain it. In addition, the median is not wide enough to accommodate an island more than 2 feet wide. Due to the design of SR 84, safety policies dictate that trees or other fixed objects not be placed within 30 feet of traffic. Aesthetic treatments (color, texture, and pattern) will be considered for the concrete safety barrier to make it more visually consistent with the surrounding area.

Summary of Comments

The comments addressed a wide range of topics that are summarized as follows.

- Concerns that the DED findings indicate that the project would have no significant impacts, and whether an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment was the appropriate type of environmental document (see Master Response GEN-2)
- Concerns about relocation of SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection and related impacts, considering that the intersection was reconstructed in 2007 (see FED Section 1.5.2)
- Concerns about existing noise levels and future increases from the project, and requests for noise abatement for nearby residences (see Master Response NOI-1)
- Requests for full landscaping, including in the median, to improve the visual quality of the corridor (see Master Responses VIS-1 and VIS-2)
- Concerns about air pollution (particularly from diesel trucks) related to increased traffic from the project (see Master Response AIR-1)
- Concerns about increased truck traffic and associated noise, pollution, traffic congestion, and safety (see FED Sections 2.7.3.3 and 2.15.3.1; Master Response AIR-1)
- Concerns that project funding is being used to address regional traffic congestion while other bottleneck locations such as the I-580/I-680 interchange remain unchanged (see Master Response TR-2 and the response to Comment I-112-3)
- Requests to limit truck access and reduce the speed limit on SR 84 (see Master Responses TR-1 and TR-3, respectively)
- Concerns about increased noise and traffic related to the consolidated quarry access at SR 84 and Concannon Boulevard (see Master Response CI-1 and the response to Comment I-83-4)
- Concerns that the project will affect property values and quality of life in the project area (see Master Responses GEN-3 and GEN-5)
- Concerns about level of public notification given for the project (see Master Response GEN-4 and the response to Comment I-32-1)
- Concerns over segmentation of SR 84 projects, including the I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project and the Pigeon Pass Safety Project (see Master Response GEN-6)

Comments from State Agencies

Comment S-01 California Public Utilities Commission, Kevin Boles

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



November 1, 2007

Ed Pang
Caltrans District 4
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623

RE: State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project, SCH# 2007102077

Dear Mr. Pang:

S-01-1

The State Route Widening Project includes a modification to the Union Pacific Railroad underpass just north of Stanley Boulevard in Livermore and therefore is legally required to obtain authority from the Commission to modify the rail crossing. Since this a modification of an existing grade-separation structure and not a proposal for a new crossing, it will require a General Order 88-B staff-level application.

If you have any questions in this matter, please call Kevin Schumacher at (415) 703-1208.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Boles".

Kevin Boles
Environmental Specialist
Rail Crossings Engineering Section
Consumer Protection and Safety Division

cc: Terrel Anderson, Union Pacific Railroad

Responses to Comment S-01

S-01-1

The project will not impact Union Pacific operations or modify the Union Pacific railroad underpass, which was constructed as part of the Isabel Avenue Extension Project (2001) to accommodate widening of Isabel Avenue/SR 84 to six lanes. However, the Department will require access control rights for the segment of Union Pacific right-of-way fronting the intersection of Stanley Boulevard and the Stanley connector ramp to SR 84. Union Pacific will be consulted during the final project design, and any required approvals or permits will be obtained.

Comments from Regional Agencies and Organizations

Comment R-01 East Bay Regional Park District, Jim Townsend



November 9, 2007

Caltrans District 4, Office of Environmental Analysis
 Attn: Ed Pang
 111 Grand Avenue
 Oakland, CA 94610

RE: East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) Comments
 State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project
 Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration/Environmental Assessment

Dear Mr. Pang:

Thank you for providing East Bay Regional Park District ("District") with a copy of the Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration/Environmental Assessment (IS/EA) for the State Route (SR) 84 Expressway Widening Project. Caltrans, ACTIA, and the City of Livermore propose to widen and upgrade SR 84 to expressway standards (55 miles per hour) from Ruby Hill Drive to Jack London Boulevard. The purpose of the project is to improve SR 84 as a regional route, improve traffic circulation, upgrade SR 84 to an expressway facility, and improve bicycle and pedestrian access by connecting trails.

The District manages and operates several regional parks and planned regional trails in the project area, including Shadow Cliffs Regional Recreation Area and Del Valle Regional Park. Regional trails provide multi-use non-motorized transportation and recreation corridors which connect residential neighborhoods, shopping areas, business parks, schools, multi-modal transportation facilities, and parks. The project references the City of Livermore extending (under a separate construction contract) the Isabel Trail southward from Alden Lane on the east side of SR 84 to provide a continuous Class I bikeway from Jack London Blvd. to Vineyard Ave. and connect with the District's planned Shadow Cliffs to Del Valle Regional Trail, which will cross SR 84 at this location.

R-01-1

In the north end of the project area, the District and the City of Livermore are interested in the extension of the Iron Horse Regional Trail eastward. In the project area, an existing asphalt trail (considered an interim alignment of the Iron Horse Trail) extends along the south side of Stanley Blvd. from Shadow Cliffs Regional Recreation Area to Isabel Ave. The City of Livermore is currently reviewing a draft feasibility study for the Iron Horse Trail to extend eastward from Isabel Ave. six miles to Greenville Rd. The District is also considering potential trail alternatives for realigning the Iron Horse Trail to the north of Stanley Blvd. to the west in the future. The IS indicates that in the vicinity of Stanley Blvd. and Isabel Ave., SR 84 would be widened to six lanes, primarily by widening the highway west of its current configuration and that trail connections to the trail along Stanley Blvd. and the existing Arroyo Mocho Trail would be maintained. It also states that the existing bridge structure at Arroyo Mocho would be widened, and a new separate bridge would be provided on the west side of the highway to facilitate service access to the Arroyo Mocho.

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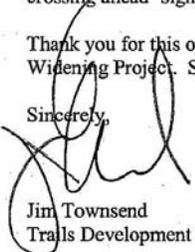
R-01-1, Cont. The project should include widening the Arroyo Mocho and Arroyo Del Valle bridges to incorporate a 10-foot multi-use trail. The new service bridge across Arroyo Mocho should also be designed to allow for public pedestrian and bicycle use, in addition to service vehicles. This would allow multi-use trail connections on the west side of Isabel from the Oaks Business Park (and future development at Jack London Blvd.) to the potential alignment of the Iron Horse Trail to the west along Arroyo Mocho and a potential spur trail connection to the existing Stanley Blvd. trail.

R-01-2 The existing multi-use loop trail under Stanley Blvd. and the railroad along Isabel Ave. is to be retained as part of the project, and will be critical to maintaining a grade-separated trail connection to the future eastward extension of the Iron Horse Trail. The project should consider providing sufficient headroom and width under the Stanley Blvd. overpass (west side of Isabel Ave., above the proposed retaining wall) and along the west side of Isabel Ave. between Stanley Blvd. and Arroyo Mocho (on the proposed service road) to allow for a future trail connection to the existing Stanley Blvd. trail as well as a potential Iron Horse Trail alignment to the west along the Arroyo Mocho. Any work along the east side of Hwy 84 in this area should be designed to not preclude a potential trail connection between the existing Hwy 84 multi-use trail and a future potential Iron Horse Trail route along the Arroyo Mocho.

R-01-3 Further south, the District will be constructing the Shadow Cliffs to Del Valle Regional Trail along the north side of Vineyard Avenue within an existing District right of way. The trail crossing at the intersection of SR 84 (Isabel Ave.) at Vineyard Ave. should include a pedestrian-activated signalized crossing. Caltrans and ACTIA should work with the City of Livermore Traffic Engineering Department for the inclusion of traffic safety features including 'trail crossing ahead' signs and other appropriate trail crossing treatments once the trail is completed.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the (IS/EA) for the State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project. Should you have any questions, I can be reached at (510) 544-2602.

Sincerely,


Jim Townsend
Trails Development Program Manager

cc: Mohammed Pournia, Transportation Manager-City of Livermore Engineering Division
Ingrid Rademacher, Planner, City of Livermore Planning Department

Responses to Comment R-01

R-01-1

The proposed project does not preclude future trail crossings under the Arroyo Mocho and Arroyo del Valle bridges. A new trail connection will be provided across Arroyo del Valle on a private bridge. Trail access is currently provided across the Arroyo Mocho Bridge. The new service bridge across Arroyo Mocho will not preclude access for bicyclists and pedestrians.

R-01-2

The existing trail on the east side of SR 84 under the Stanley Boulevard bridges will remain and the existing headroom clearance maintained. Future trail access on the west side of SR 84 under the Stanley Boulevard bridges is not currently proposed but will be considered during the final project design phase in coordination with City of Livermore and East Bay Regional Park District staff as well as the quarry owners.

R-01-3

The project proposes pedestrian-activated signals at this location together with crosswalks and other safety features to accommodate non-motorized traffic. These improvements will be installed so as not to preclude construction of the future regional trail on Vineyard Avenue (west of SR 84). Trail signs would be installed under the future regional trail project.

Comment R-02 Tri-Valley Conservancy, Sharon Burnham



Michele - Please pass on
to Consultants -
Art

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BY: DR

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NOV 13 2007
ACTIA

Sharon
Executive
Board of
Jim P.
Rik Hansen
Karl Wente
Jean King
M:
Miri:
Michael Pr
Mary
Bill

November 12, 2007

Ed Pang
Department of Transportation, District 4
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

Re: Route 84/Isabel Widening/Vallecitos intersection

Dear Mr. Pang,

Tri-Valley Conservancy (TVC) holds a conservation easement on the property located at the northeast corner of SR 84/Isabel Avenue and Vallecitos Road Intersection in the City of Livermore (Property). Fee title to the Property is owned by Randy and Shannon L. Reeser. As you are aware TVC and the City of Livermore are co-holders of conservation easements on land adjacent to the eastern side of Route 84/Isabel Avenue between Ruby Hill Drive and Vineyard Avenue.

I am writing to summarize TVC's position on the proposed improvements currently under study by the California Department of Transportation in cooperation with the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority - specifically the relocated intersection proposed at Vallecitos Road and Isabel Avenue.

We respectfully submit these comments to help ensure that CalTrans fully complies with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code § 21000 et seq. (and CEQA Guidelines, Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.), and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq., with respect to the State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project.

R-02-1

After carefully reviewing the Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration/Environmental Assessment for the State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project, we have concluded that as described below, it fails in numerous respects to comply with the requirements of CEQA and NEPA. Specifically, because the Project (even with the proposed migration) will significantly impact agricultural land, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must be prepared.

7721

R-02-1,
Cont.

CEQA provides that a lead agency may issue a negative declaration and may avoid preparing an EIR only if “[t]here is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the lead agency, that the project may have a significant effect on the environment.” (Pub. Res. Code § 21080(c)(1); see also CEQA Guidelines § 15070(a), (b)(2)). An initial study must provide the factual basis, with analysis included, for making the determination that no significant impact will result from the project. (CEQA Guidelines § 15063(d)(3)). In making this determination, the agency must consider the direct and indirect impacts of the project as a whole (CEQA Guidelines § 15064(d)), as well as the project’s growth-inducing and cumulative impacts. (See City of Antioch v. City Council of Pittsburg (1986) 187 Cal.App.3d 1325, 1333).

An agency must prepare an EIR whenever it is presented with a “fair argument” that a project may have a significant effect on the environment, even if there is also substantial evidence to indicate that the impact is not significant. (No Oil, Inc. v. City of Los Angeles (1974) 13 Cal.3d 68, 75; CEQA Guidelines § 15064(f)(1)). Where there are conflicting opinions regarding the significance of an impact, the agency must treat the impact as significant and prepare an EIR. (CEQA Guidelines § 15064(f)(1); Stanislaus Audubon Society v. County of Stanislaus (1995) 33 Cal.App.4th 144, 150-151). An agency must prepare an EIR even in “marginal cases” if there is a “disagreement among expert opinion” over the significance of an environmental effect. (CEQA Guidelines § 15064(g)).

While a negative declaration may include mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant impacts, the agency must prepare an EIR if there is a fair argument that the proposed mitigation measures will not reduce environmental impacts to a less-than-significant level. (San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society v. Metropolitan Water District (1999) 71 Cal.App.4th 382, 389-390). A negative declaration is also inappropriate where an agency has failed to “gather information and undertake . . . environmental analysis.” (City of Redlands v. County of San Bernardino (2002) 96 Cal.App.4th 398, 406). Furthermore, negative declarations cannot rely on the presumed success of mitigation measures that have not been formulated at the time of project approval. (Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino (1988) 202 Cal.App.3d 296, 306-307). The “CEQA process demands that mitigation measures timely be set forth, that environmental information be complete and relevant, and that environmental decisions be made in an accountable arena.” (Oro Fino Gold Mining Corporation v. County of El Dorado (1990) 225 Cal.App.3d 872, 885). The CEQA Guidelines state that a mitigated negative declaration is appropriate *only* if the mitigation measures would “mitigate the effects to a point where *clearly* no significant effects would occur.” CEQA Guidelines § 15070(b)(1) (emphasis added).

R-02-2

The Property was formerly part of a 230-acre parcel that possessed considerable potential for lucrative residential and commercial development. In 1992, as a condition of approval of a master planned development for residential, recreational, and agricultural uses known as “Church-Topham,” the developer of the 230-acre parcel subdivided the property into eleven 20+/- acre parcels and recorded agricultural conservation easements on 18 +/- acres of each new parcel for the benefit of the City of Livermore and the

- R-02-2, Cont. County of Alameda. The easement was subsequently transferred to Tri-Valley Conservancy and the City of Livermore as co-holders.
- The conservation easement imposed a permanent prohibition on residential or commercial development in the 18 acre areas of each parcel in Church-Topham. **The only permissible use of the property is for agriculture and uses or activities directly relating to agriculture.** The 3.2 acres Caltrans proposes to take is entirely within the 18-acre conservation easement area of the Property.
- By taking part of the property you diminish the value of farming the land. The mitigation you recommend is too vague and will not mitigate the impacts. It is suggested in the EIR document (see 2.3.4 page 2-20): *"The existing right-of-way that would be abandoned as a roadway and would be available to replace the conservation easement land required as a result of the intersection shift. In terms of acreage, this would more than offset the total amount of conservation easement affected by the proposed right-of-way.*
- However, the remaining land associated with the lands to the north may or may not be viable for cultivation as a vineyard because the parcel would be split. Where Vallecitos Road connects with SR 84m, the existing vineyard is topographically above the existing roadway elevation."*
- R-02-3 Once the new road is put through the middle of the vineyards the resulting damage to the remaining vineyards is increased ten fold. The roadway will be right next to the vineyards. Car exhaust is already a problem for the vines at this location. Trying to farm a plot of land that is split by a road is next to impossible. The cost for the maintenance alone will increase. People driving by will toss their garbage on the agricultural lands. Saying that by restoring the abandoned roadway you have mitigated for the loss of acreage and accounted for the problems of farming is ludicrous. It is unreasonable to think this option will work.
- R-02-4 In addition, the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared by CalTrans violates NEPA as this Project requires a full Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS") that adequately analyzes the Project's environmental impacts, as well as a reasonable range of alternatives to, and mitigation for, those impacts. NEPA requires that the environmental analysis must demonstrate that the agency took a "hard look" at the environmental impacts of the Project. (See The Steamboaters v. FERC, 759 F.2d 1382, 1393 (9th Cir. 1985); Foundation for North American Wild Sheep v. USDA, 681 F.2d 1172, 1178 (9th Cir. 1982).) Moreover, where a document concludes that the impacts of a project are less than significant, it must include a "convincing statement of reasons why potential effects are insignificant." (The Steamboaters, 759 F.2d at 1393; Save the Yaak Committee v. Block, 840 F.2d 714, 717 (9th Cir.1988); see Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project v. Blackwood, 161 F.3d 1208, 1214 (9th Cir. 1998) (EA must contain evidence and references supporting its conclusion of no significant impact).) A detailed EIS is required where the Environmental Assessment and other information in the record raise "substantial questions" as to whether the project "may have a significant effect upon the human environment." (Found. for N. Am. Wild Sheep v. USDA, 681 F.2d at 1178 (9th

R-02-4, Cont. Cir. 1982) (emphasis added).) The EA prepared for this Project fails to comply with NEPA's mandate.

Here, the EA fails to provide meaningful analysis of the Project's impacts and a convincing statement of reasons why those impacts are not significant. You make the following statement totally disregarding the real impacts taking this property will have. Fair market value compensation **never** mitigates for the loss of farmland nor does the EA allow for unmitigated impacts that will happen.

R-02-5 *"The proposed project would have no significantly adverse effect on biological resources and farmlands, because the following mitigation measures would reduce potential effects to insignificance: Mitigate the unavoidable loss of vineyard/Conservancy lands and quarry mining lands through purchase of replacement easements or through fair market compensation."*

The conclusory statements in the document, wholly lacking in supporting evidence, fail to meet NEPA's requirement to take a "hard look" at the Project's environmental impacts. (See The Steamboaters, 759 F.2d at 1393.)

R-02-6 The EA also fails to provide an adequate range of alternatives (see 40 C.F.R. § 1508.9(b); Bob Marshall Alliance v. Hodel, 852 F.2d 1223, 1229 (9th Cir. 1988).) NEPA requires that an EA consider a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed project that would achieve the project's purpose. (See 42 U.S.C. § 4332(2)(E); 40 C.F.R. § 1508.9(b); Bob Marshall Alliance, 852 F.2d at 1229; Native Ecosystem Council v. U.S. Forest Service, 428 F.3d 1233, 1245-46 (9th Cir. 2005).) Although analyzing a minimum number of alternatives is not required, the environmental document must analyze and explain "all reasonable alternatives." (See Native Ecosystem Council, 428 F.3d at 1245-46.)

R-02-7 Both NEPA and CEQA require analysis of the cumulative impacts of the Project in conjunction with all past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. (Idaho Sporting Congress v. Rittenhouse, 305 F.3d 957, 973 (9th Cir. 2002); 40 C.F.R. §§ 1508.7, 1508.27(a)(7); Pub. Res. Code § 21083(b); CEQA Guidelines § 15064(i)). CEQA unequivocally requires lead agencies to disclose and analyze a project's "cumulative impacts," defined as "two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." CEQA Guidelines § 15355. These impacts may result from a number of separate projects, and occur when "results from the incremental impact of the project [are] added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects," even if each project contributes only "individually minor" environmental effects. *Id.* § 15355(a)-(b). A lead agency must prepare an EIR if a project's possible impacts, though "individually limited," may be "cumulatively considerable." Pub. Res. Code § 21083(b); CEQA Guidelines § 15064(i).

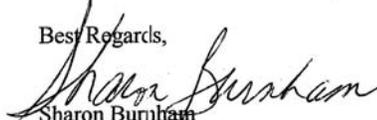
R-02-8

Easements are written to be in perpetuity. It is our mandate to protect the conservation values of the properties under easement in perpetuity. We will not, and cannot, give permission for any use of the property not allowed in the easement.

The easement states that: *"It is the purpose of this easement to ensure that the property will be retained forever in its present agricultural and open space condition"*
It further states under prohibited uses that *"the legal or de facto subdivision of, or other sale of partial interests in, the Property for any purpose... .."*

Therefore, TVC **vehemently objects** to any roadway reconfiguration that goes through or otherwise negatively impacts property on which TVC holds a conservation easement.

Best Regards,



Sharon Burnham
Executive Director

Cc: ~~Arthur Dao, ACTIA~~
Mike Mikasa, City of Livermore Engineering Department
Paul Spence, City of Livermore Planning Department
Tamara Galanter, TVC attorney
Mr. and Mrs. R. Reeser, property owners

Responses to Comment R-02

R-02-1 through R-02-5

The agricultural land identified in the comment is the partial parcel that would have been affected by the relocation and realignment of the SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection proposed in the October 2007 DED. The parcel is under a Tri-Valley Conservancy easement. As indicated in this FED, the Department has reconsidered one of the eliminated design options following additional technical studies and subsequently identified that the SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection could remain in its current location if specific design changes are incorporated. These include adjusting the angle of the Vallecitos Road approach to the intersection to reduce the potential for high-sided vehicles to overturn and additional modifications to further improve safety and enhance traffic operations. With these modifications to the proposed project design, the Vallecitos Road intersection will remain at its current location, and acquisition of the parcel identified in this comment will be avoided.

As modified, the Build Alternative will not require acquisition of cultivated agricultural land, nor will it impact the parcel and the Tri-Valley Conservancy's easement.

R-02-6

See Master Response GEN-1 in regard to the range of alternatives analyzed in the DED.

R-02-7

The City of Livermore Planning Department reviewed the DED's discussion of cumulative impacts (Section 2.21) and concluded that the discussion is complete and includes the appropriate projects. Under CEQA (CEQA Guidelines Section 15125[a]), an environmental document must include a description of the existing physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project at the time the notice of preparation is published, or if no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis is commenced. As described in Section 3.1 of the DED, environmental analysis for the project began in 2005.

Nonetheless, Section 2.21 has been revised to include additional planned development approved after environmental analysis for the SR 84 Expressway Widening Project commenced.

R-02-8

The comment is noted. See the response to Comments R-02-1 through R-02-5.

Comments from Local Agencies or Officials

Comment L-01 Alameda County Board of Supervisors, Scott Haggerty



SCOTT HAGGERTY
PRESIDENT
SUPERVISOR, FIRST DISTRICT

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

FILE
ACT 12/24

Env. Comments

*PDF to T. Lee
LWS*

November 14, 2007

Mr. Bijan Sartipi
District Director
Caltrans District 4
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

Subject: Route 84 Expressway Widening Project in Livermore
Environmental Document Comments

Dear Bijan:

As an Alameda County Supervisor for District 1, which includes the Route 84 project area, and as a Board Member on the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority, I am voicing strong opposition to the proposed relocation for the recently reconstructed Vallecitos Road intersection with Route 84 (Isabel Avenue) as shown in the Draft Environmental Document (DED) for the proposed Route 84 Expressway Project. This proposed relocation of the intersection would result in significant loss of agricultural land protected by a conservation easement and bisect a recently purchased residential parcel on those same lands. In my view, this is an impact that cannot be mitigated and a course of avoidance is requested.

L-01-1

Our office has received strong objections to relocating the intersection from the affected property owner, the City of Livermore, and the Tri Valley Conservancy. After reviewing the DED and carefully considering public and local agency reaction, I am concerned about the negative impacts of the proposed intersection relocation and urge the State to revisit the option to modify the existing intersection facility as shown in Design Option B as shown in Appendix B of the DED.

Alameda County has an active policy to encourage preservation easements for farmland and viticulture as an important element in the predominantly agriculturally-zoned unincorporated rural areas of the county. Alameda County residents have long-supported these land-uses and in 2000 reaffirmed their support in the voter approved Measure D prohibiting development in rural unincorporated areas. I strongly believe that this interest needs to be protected.

L-01-2

In addition, the State recently approved the relocation of the intersection to its current location and the City of Livermore fully funded construction of the facility. The DED does not present any significant safety or operational benefit to relocating the existing intersection and results in significant loss of irreplaceable conservation lands in Alameda County and undue hardship to a property owner. This is not a responsible use of public funds.

1221 OAK STREET • SUITE 536 • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612 • 510 272-6691 • FAX 510 208-3910
4501 PLEASANTON AVENUE • PLEASANTON, CALIFORNIA 94566 • 925 551-6995 • FAX 925 484-2809

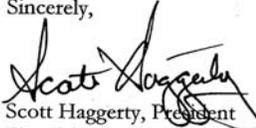
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November 14, 2007
Mr. Bijan Sartipi
Page 2

L-01-3 [Moreover, it is our understanding the acquisition of the right of way needed for Caltrans' proposed relocation of the Vallecitos Road/Isabel Avenue intersection will be fraught with complication with the recent passage of SB 1210, which mandates additional requirements in the public project right of way acquisition process. From a project delivery perspective, my concern is that the relocation of the intersection will delay the construction of this much needed project, in addition to the potential higher costs due to the delay.

L-01-4 [While we support the project because it is needed to relieve traffic congestions in the area, we seek your reconsideration of the decision to relocate the Vallecitos Road/Isabel Avenue intersection currently in the project proposal. I am available to meet with you and the appropriate parties at your earliest convenience to discuss the resolution of this issue prior to the conclusion of the environmental process.

Sincerely,


Scott Haggerty, President
First District Supervisor

Cc: Representative Ellen Tausher
Representative Jerry McNerney
Senator Don Perata
Assembly Member Guy Houston
Mayor Marshall Kamena, City of Livermore
Christine Monsen, Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority
Dennis Fay, Alameda County Congestion Management Agency
Sharon Burnham, Tri-Valley Conservancy
Ed Pang, Caltrans District 4

Responses to Comment L-01

L-01-1 through L-01-4

The Department has noted and acknowledged the strong opposition to the Vallecitos Road intersection relocation and realignment expressed in the public review comments, primarily from the Tri-Valley Conservancy, the City of Livermore, and others.

The Department has taken another look at previously eliminated design options to determine whether the impact to the agricultural easement area could be avoided. Subsequently, it was determined that the angle at which the Vallecitos Road intersection connected to SR 84 could be skewed to reduce the potential for high-sided vehicles to overturn and thereby allow this intersection to remain in its current location. Additional modifications to Option A to further improve safety and enhance traffic operations include elimination of the left-turn movement from southbound SR 84 to Vallecitos

Road. The existing and future traffic volumes for this movement are insignificant and can be accommodated by the SR 84/Vineyard Avenue intersection without additional traffic impacts. Removal of this movement would also reduce conflicting turning movements at the intersection, further improve safety, and allow for a two-phase traffic signal to improve traffic operations. Additional signing and striping would also be installed to increase driver awareness of the intersection configuration and speed requirements for safe turning maneuvers. With these modifications to the proposed project, the Vallecitos Road intersection can remain at its current location, with no additional right-of-way required.

The Department also responded directly to this comment in the attached letter.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

111 GRAND AVENUE
P. O. BOX 23360
OAKLAND, CA 94612
PHONE (510) 286-5900
FAX (510) 286-5903
TTY 711



*Flex your power!
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March 20, 2008

Mr. Scott Haggerty, Supervisor
First District - Alameda County Board of Supervisors
1221 Oak Street, Suite 536
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Supervisor ^{Scott}Haggerty:

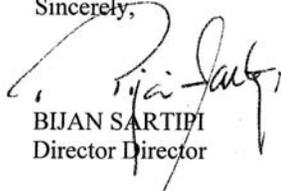
Thank you for your letter providing comments on the Draft Environmental Document (DED) for the State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project, including your concern about the relocation of the Vallecitos Road / Isabel Avenue (Vallecitos) intersection.

Pursuant to the meeting that was held on February 27, 2008 at the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority's (ACTIA) office between you, the California Department of Transportation (Department), ACTIA, and the City of Livermore, I would like to inform you that the Department supports the Vallecitos intersection improvement Option "A" that was presented at the meeting, provided that this option can be designed to meet expressway standards.

It is our understanding that this design option will reconstruct the existing Vallecitos intersection at its current location to avoid the need for additional right of way property. However, the intersection design geometry will have a skewed angle which will eliminate the left turn movement from southbound State Route 84 to Vallecitos Road.

We look forward to working with ACTIA and the City of Livermore to build this important project in our region. Should you have any further questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at (510) 286-5900.

Sincerely,


BIJAN SARTIPI
Director Director

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"

77789

Mr. Haggerty
March 20, 2008
Page 2

- c: Representative Ellen Tausher
- Representative Jerry McNerney
- Senator Don Perata
- Assembly Member Guy Houston
- Mayor Marshall Kamena, City of Livermore
- Christine Monsen, ACTIA
- Dennis Fay, ACCMA
- Sharon Burnham, Tri-Valley Conservancy

**Comment L-02 Alameda County Community Development Agency,
Bruce Jensen**



ALAMEDA COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

James E. Sorensen
Agency Director

Chris Bazar
Planning Director
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Hayward
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510.785.8793

www.acgov.org/cda

November 14, 2007

Mr. Ed Pang
California Department of Transportation, District 4
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

Subject: Response to Initial Study and Environmental Assessment, Proposed Negative Declaration, State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project.

Dear Mr. Pang:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the environmental review for the State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project (the project). Below, please see comments from the Alameda County Planning Department on the project.

L-02-1

1. Section 2.1, Land Use: On Page 2-9, the document correctly identifies the East County Area Plan (ECAP) as the governing General Plan for unincorporated areas of Alameda County. The document also correctly characterizes the policies of the ECAP as encouraging expansion of viticulture in the affected area, although ECAP also encourages, at least in the general sense, the preservation of open space. It should be noted that the "update...in 2000" that is referred to in the document was the result of a voter-approved initiative, commonly referred to as Alameda County Measure D; and in view of this mandate, any project proposed at the private or County level would require additional voter approval unless it can be shown to be in conformance with all specific and applicable ECAP policies.

Policy 13 of the ECAP states that, "The County shall not provide nor authorize public facilities or other infrastructure in excess of that needed for permissible development consistent with the Initiative [meaning Measure D]. This policy shall not bar 1) new, expanded or replacement infrastructure necessary to create adequate service for the East County, 2) maintenance, repair or improvements of public facilities which do not increase capacity..."

Although the improvements to the roadway being proposed in the Project do involve an increase in capacity, it is also true that the current demand for transportation along this corridor exceeds the capacity available during certain key travel periods; thus, the project is necessary to create adequate service for the East County, and would therefore appear to be in general conformance with this guiding policy of the ECAP.

The document is also correct in stating (Paragraph 2.1.2.2 on page 2-13) that the proposed upgrade is generally consistent with the [ECAP].

L-02-2

2. Section 2.3, Farmlands/Timberlands: County staff agrees with the findings of this section and supports the mitigation measures proposed to offset the loss of farmland resulting from the project. However, County staff believes that it would be appropriate to include a minimum acreage value in the mitigation measure as written to guarantee both that sufficient farmland could be preserved to offset the loss, and that a similarly sufficient area could actually be successfully replanted.

Mr. Ed Pang, Caltrans
State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project
November 14, 2007

L-02-2
Cont.

In regard to Williamson Act Contract obligations, it is imperative that if all or a portion of a contract must be cancelled, then the remainder of the parcel left after project occupation is of adequate size to meet State minimum standards for size and agricultural quality/use. In most cases, this parcel size has traditionally been approximately 40 acres, with some variations for specific circumstances. It is not clear from the discussion how much acreage would remain on the parcel that would potentially lose up to 6.1 acres of agriculturally viable land area. *County staff requests a statement of the remaining land area after loss of the 6.1 acres, and a statement in the mitigation measure that the State will work cooperatively with the County to either revise the existing Williamson Act Contract, to cancel the existing contract and replace it with a new contract, or if the remaining parcel cannot be brought under a new contract, that the State will cooperate with the County to develop an alternative method of preserving the land, through such methods as conservation easements or the equivalent.*

L-02-3

3. Section 2.4, Mineral Resources: County staff generally agrees with the findings of this section and supports the mitigation measure proposed to offset the loss of mining resource resulting from the project. However, County staff also points out that, because this area is a recognized Regionally Significant Aggregate Resource Area under the State Dept. of Conservation, the impact of the loss of the material as a result of necessary land acquisition goes beyond the loss of revenue to the operator. The loss of the resource directly represents an impact to the ability to extract a valuable construction material, and puts some minor amount of pressure on other resources to make up the loss. It is even conceivable (albeit unlikely due to substantial remaining County resources), that this loss could induce extractors to seek other sources of aggregates in-County to make up for the resulting unavailability of the material. The discussion should address this issue and determine whether the loss of the resource is significant.

Further, for any project that threatens the potential to extract minerals in an area designated as a Regionally Significant Aggregate Resource area, the State Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) requires that findings be made by the lead agency pursuant to Public Resources Code Sections 2762 and/or 2763 prior to permitting the use. The findings must include a discussion of balancing the mineral resource values against the new use and consideration of the value of these minerals to the region as a whole. County staff believes this requirement should be included as a mitigation measure, and ideally that the discussion which must ultimately support these findings be included in the environmental document.

L-02-4

4. Section 2.8, Visual/Aesthetics: It is not clear to County staff from the description in this section or the project description whether landscaping would be provided along the west side of the improved roadway between Vineyard Avenue and Stanley Boulevard. County staff have emphasized verbally at meetings that the County believes that substantial landscaping along the west side of Isabel Avenue in this area is important to buffer views of the quarry operations and to provide travelers and homes along this section of roadway with a soft foreground view. We have worked with the quarry operators to begin funding and establishing a landscape strip in this area, however, due to the development of this project, we have delayed finalizing the landscape plans for this roadway edge until we understand the final form of the Project. The County is willing to share a right-of-way with other relocated utilities along the segment of the roadway, provided that the willingness is mutual, and that once landscaping is established, any utility work performed would also replace or repair damage done to the landscaping in that right-of-way.

Therefore, in this section, we would like to see some mention of the County's efforts to provide landscaping along this segment of roadway, and a mitigation measure that guarantees that adequate space will remain after roadway construction to accommodate a landscape right-of-way of reasonable width (up to 20 feet), especially in view of the potential to lose a narrow strip of quarry boundary to the project. The mitigation measure should also specify

Mr. Ed Pang, Caltrans
State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project
November 14, 2007

L-02-4, Cont. | that the State will work with the County to establish harmonious and effective landscaping along this segment of roadway.

5. All Sections: The County's plan for the mining of the resources in this region, the Specific Plan for Livermore-Amador Valley Quarry Area Reclamation (LAVQAR Plan) appears to have not been consulted. In summary, this Plan describes how the Chain-of-Lakes is to be developed, through mining, for ultimate use as a regional water management facility for use by Alameda County Flood Control and Conservation District, Zone 7 (Zone 7), in their efforts to provide both a source of potable water for nearby communities, and to control flood water during winter storm events. Without consultation of this document, it is hard to accept that the Project as described could be said to be consistent with all applicable County Plans and Policies. County Staff encourages Caltrans to delay approval of this environmental document until the LAVQAR Plan can be fully considered.

L-02-5 | It is clear to County staff that project will have a number of local effects on the ultimate design of the Chain-of-Lakes, as the Project directly affects frontage on four of the proposed lakes (Lake A, east of Isabel Avenue just north of Vineyard; lake B, west of Isabel just north of Vineyard; and Lakes C and D, both on the west side of the roadway between Lake B and Stanley Boulevard). Zone 7, and as a result their customers, have vital future interests all along this segment of the route, and those interests include preservation of water quality in the lakes; preservation of land margins in excellent and stable condition; adequate access by Zone 7 all along the edges of its future lakes for routine and emergency access; and guarantees that future hydrologic connections, both natural and man-made, will be able to be installed and functional, without additional Project-induced physical restrictions or Project-induced costs to Zone 7 or Alameda County ratepayers.

County staff understands that Zone 7 is submitting a separate letter under its own cover that describes in more technical terms its requirements and its recommendations for project design considerations and mitigation measures. County Staff encourages Caltrans staff to carefully consider the needs of that agency and its customers in construction of the new facility and the need for adequate access by Zone 7 to its facilities.

This concludes comments by the Alameda County Planning Department. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at (510) 670-6527 or at bruce.jensen@acgov.org. Once again, thank you for permitting us to comment on this document.

Very truly yours,



Bruce Jensen
Senior Planner

Cc: Elizabeth McElligott, Assistant Deputy Director, Policy Planning
Dennis Gambs, Zone 7
Doug Reynolds, Vulcan Materials
Jack Blanton, Cemex
Don Kahler, Pleasanton Gravel

Responses to Comment L-02

L-02-1

The text of Section 2.1.1.2, under the "Alameda County" subheading, has been revised to include a reference to Measure D, as the comment requests.

L-02-2

The project has been modified to avoid impacts to farmland, as described in the response to Comments R-02-1 through R-02-5. No impacts to Williamson Act contract lands will occur, and therefore mitigation is not required.

L-02-3

As shown in Table 2.1-1 of the FED, the project would require partial acquisition of quarry parcels from Cemex and Pleasanton Gravel Company that are currently vacant. The partial acquisitions are needed for widening SR 84 and constructing the consolidated quarry access at Concannon Boulevard. One partial parcel (0.52 acre) owned by the Pleasanton Gravel Company is within mining limits.

The comment states that the impact of lost mineral resources goes beyond the loss of revenue to the operator. Approximately 0.27 acre of encroachment into the approved mining limits is required to accommodate truck turning movements for the new consolidated quarry access at SR 84 and Concannon Boulevard. This encroachment into the approved mining limits was discussed with the quarry operators and Zone 7 staff at a meeting on June 6, 2006. No other mineral resources would be affected by the project, and no evidence exists that the loss would put pressure on other resources or result in the need for extractors to seek mineral resources elsewhere in the county. To offset the value of lost mineral resources, surplus State right-of-way (approximately 2 acres) is available north of the proposed quarry access at Concannon Boulevard. Relinquishment of a portion of this excess land is an option that will be considered during the right-of-way process. The Department has and will continue to coordinate with the quarry operators to avoid or minimize potential effects to existing and future mining operations.

Because the loss of mineral resources would be limited to the 0.52 acre that is within mining limits, the partial acquisition of the parcel is not expected to put pressure on other resources or result in the need for extractors to seek mineral resources elsewhere in the county. Section 2.4 has been revised to include this information.

As stated in the comment and in Section 2.4.1, the project area includes land containing construction aggregate resources of regional significance. Under the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act, the entity that is responsible for approving the reclamation plan for the mineral resources must make findings pursuant to California Public Resources Code Sections 2762 and 2763 before permitting a use that could affect those resources. In this case, the entity (or “lead agency” under Public Resources Code Section 2728) is Alameda County, which approved the 1981 Specific Plan for Livermore-Amador Valley Quarry

Area Reclamation (LAVQAR Plan). According to Public Resources Code Section 2762, Alameda County must prepare a statement specifying its reasons for permitting the proposed use, forward a copy to the State Geologist and Reclamation Board for review, and provide public notice of the availability of its statement. This would occur during the final design phase for the project.

In conformance with Policy 15 of the LAVQAR Plan, the Department has coordinated and will continue to coordinate with Alameda County on the environmental review for this project. During the final project design phase, the Department will coordinate with Alameda County staff to verify that the project does not impact mineral resources. At the current level of design, no significant impact is anticipated.

L-02-4

Detailed landscaping plans are not typically included in a DED and are developed during the final project design phase in coordination with the affected agencies, including Alameda County. Based on public input on the DED, a more densely landscaped corridor may also be considered, but a final landscape design will be developed in coordination with the public and affected agencies during the project design phase. Section 2.8.4 has been revised to note that the Department will coordinate with Alameda County to ensure the highway landscape concept will be harmonious with landscaping installed by the quarry operators as part of a separate project. Note that landscaping is a project design element and is therefore not considered mitigation.

L-02-5

Section 2.1.1.2 has been revised to include a description of the LAVQAR Plan, and Section 2.1.2.2 has been revised to discuss the project's consistency with the plan. Since project scoping began in 2005, the Department has coordinated with Zone 7 on the project design to avoid or minimize impacts to future water supply and flood management facilities. One outcome of this consultation was the elimination of full and partial interchange designs considered for the SR 84/Stanley Boulevard intersection, as described in DED Section 1.5.3. The width required for the roadway widening was also reduced to further minimize impacts to quarry lands. Although acquisition of up to approximately 2 acres of quarry properties would be required for the project, the acquired areas represent a fraction of the 3,820-acre area governed by the LAVQAR Plan. Therefore, the project is not expected to result in impacts to LAVQAR Plan implementation, Zone 7, or water customers.

Comment L-03 City of Livermore, Cheri Sheets



November 14, 2007

Caltrans District 4, Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang
111 Grand Avenue
Oakland, CA 94610

SUBJECT: Route 84/Isabel Widening; Initial Study / Environmental Assessment

Dear Mr. Pang:

The City has reviewed the project's Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration / Environmental Assessment dated October 2007, and would like to comment on the proposed State Route 84 / Isabel Avenue and Vallecitos Road intersection relocation.

L-03-1

The proposed new State Route 84 / Isabel Avenue and Vallecitos Road intersection will bisect an active vineyard. This property is within the Tri-Valley Conservancy easement, which the City of Livermore is a co-signatory; and is under a Williamson Act contract. The Tri-Valley Conservancy was formed to work with property owners to acquire conservation easement from willing landowners. The conservation easement places permanent restrictions on future use in order to maintain the property's agricultural, scenic or habitat values in perpetuity.

L-03-2

The City of Livermore does not endorse the proposed intersection alignment, but supports Option B, shown on Figure B-3 in Appendix B with the lower superelevation to improve the design speed for turning vehicles at this intersection, and to reduce the potential for high-sided vehicles from overturning.

The City of Livermore looks forward to your response, and appreciates the opportunity to work with Caltrans and the rest of the Project Design Team in the development and delivery of this project.

If you have any questions, please contact Mike Mikasa at (925) 960-4533.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cheri R. Sheets".

Cheri R. Sheets
City Engineer

City Hall

1052 South Livermore Avenue · Livermore, CA 94550

www.ci.livermore.ca.us

Responses to Comment L-03

L-03-1, L-03-2

The Department has acknowledged and noted the strong opposition to the Vallecitos Road intersection relocation and realignment expressed in the public review comments, primarily from the Tri-Valley Conservancy, the City of Livermore, and others.

The Department has taken another look at previously eliminated design options to determine whether the impact to the agricultural easement area could be avoided. Subsequently, it was determined that the angle at which the Vallecitos Road intersection connected to SR 84 could be skewed to reduce the potential for high-sided vehicles to overturn and thereby allow this intersection to remain in its current location. Additional modifications to Option A to further improve safety and enhance traffic operations include elimination of the left-turn movement from southbound SR 84 to Vallecitos Road. The existing and future traffic volumes for this movement are insignificant and can be accommodated by the SR 84/Vineyard Avenue intersection without additional traffic impacts. Removal of this movement would also reduce conflicting turning movements at the intersection, further improve safety, and allow for a two-phase traffic signal to improve traffic operations. Additional signing and striping would also be installed to increase driver awareness of the intersection configuration and speed requirements for safe turning maneuvers. With these modifications to the proposed project, the Vallecitos Road intersection can remain at its current location, with no additional right-of-way required.

Comment L-04 Zone 7/Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Mary Lim



ALAMEDA COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

100 NORTH CANYONS PARKWAY, LIVERMORE, CA 94551-9486 PHONE (925) 454-5000

November 15, 2007

Mr. Ed Pang
Caltrans District 4, Office of Environmental Analysis
111 Grand Avenue
Oakland, CA 94610

Re: State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration/Environmental Assessment

Dear Mr. Pang:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration/Environmental Assessment for the State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project ("Project"). Zone 7 has reviewed this document in the context of Zone 7's mission to provide drinking water, non-potable water for agriculture/irrigated turf, flood protection, and groundwater and stream management within the Livermore-Amador Valley. We offer the following comments for your consideration.

As a general comment, it is noted that there does not appear to have been consideration of the impact that the proposed alignment will have upon Zone 7's contractual right to acquire the quarry pits upon completion of quarrying activities and Zone 7's planned uses of the pits as water supply and flood management facilities. Further, the impacts to Zone 7's flood control channels and facilities likewise have not been addressed.

L-04-1

1) The Chain of Lakes was established by adoption of the November 1981 Specific Plan for the Livermore-Amador Valley Quarry Area Reclamation ("Specific Plan") by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors in November 1981. Per the Specific Plan and through agreements between Zone 7 and the quarry operators, the gravel pits will be converted into interconnected lakes ("Chain of Lakes") for Zone 7 use for water management and flood protection. As the future property owners of the Chain of Lakes, Zone 7 will be responsible for their operation and maintenance.

A few lakes will be impacted by the Project. Lake A is located on the eastern boundary of Route 84 north of Vineyard Avenue on the Arroyo del Valle. Lakes B, C, and D are located on the western boundary of Route 84 between Vineyard Avenue and Stanley Blvd. The following summarizes impacts of the Project to these lakes.

a) **Setback impacts**

L-04-2

The Alameda County Surface Mining Ordinance requires that there be a minimum 50-foot setback from the top of bank to a public road right of way. In addition, the Alameda County Surface Mining Permit (SMP-16) requires landscaped areas along the quarry, which may need to be up to 20 feet wide. Further, the agreements between Zone 7 and the gravel quarry owners provide that Zone 7 be given fee ownership of a 25 foot wide strip of land from top of bank around the perimeter of each lake. This project does not currently provide the required 50-foot setback in all areas, including the areas between stations 323+00 to 335+00 nor does it consider the fact that, at a minimum, the first 25 feet from top of bank will be within Zone 7's ownership upon completion of quarrying activities. This is necessary to facilitate Zone 7's use of the quarry pits for its water supply and flood management protection purposes. A

Mr. Pang
Caltrans
November 15, 2007
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L-04-2,
Cont.

maintenance road will be located within this 25 foot strip for Zone 7 to access the lake in order to maintain bank slopes that would be up to 240 feet in depth. Therefore, impinging upon this 50-foot set back would pose a significant impact to Zone 7's ability to access and maintain these lakes to carry out its water and flood protection management activities. Furthermore, subsequent geotechnical studies done in this area indicate that much larger setbacks are advisable in certain areas.

Currently, there are existing utilities that are within the 50-foot setback in certain areas around the lake. These include a 24-inch PG&E gas line, 42-inch storm drain, overhead electrical lines, cable television and phone lines. The Project proposes to relocate utilities, including 24-inch PG&E gas line and a 15-inch sanitary sewer line, within the 50-foot setback area. The proposed Negative Declaration does not contain plans with enough detail to determine if the Setback Area can accommodate all the utilities and uses, within the Setback Area without conflicting with existing and future planned uses. Without more detailed design plans, which show existing utilities with the proposed uses as well as an understanding of all the utility owners' easement requirements (particularly PG&E) Zone 7 cannot evaluate the impacts on the planned uses for the Chain of Lakes.

Zone 7 requests that the Project provide a minimum 50-foot setback from the Route 84 right of way to the top of bank of any lake, in accordance with the Alameda County Mining Ordinance. At this time, Zone 7 recommends that no new utilities be relocated within this 50-foot setback area, particularly within the minimum 25 feet from top of bank which will be owned by Zone 7 upon completion of quarrying activities and that is necessary to facilitate the planned use of the lakes for water supply and flood protection purposes

b) **Water Quality Impacts to Chain of Lakes**

L-04-3

As stated above, the Chain of Lakes will be used for Zone 7's water management activities including groundwater recharge for the Livermore-Amador Valley Main Groundwater Basin. The Main Basin, in addition to surface water supplies, provides potable water for residents within the Livermore-Amador Valley. Any drainage into the Chain of Lakes Area will likely pose an impact to the water quality in the lakes. Therefore, Zone 7 requests that there be no drainage flow from the Route 84 right of way into the Chain of Lakes property.

In addition, for water quality purposes, any relocated sewer or recycled water lines shall be installed in accordance with all Department of Public Health standards, and utilizing methods that ensure that there be no leakage of flows into the Chain of Lakes because the lakes will be used for groundwater recharge.

c) **Geotechnical Impacts**

L-04-4

Section 2.12.2.3 Geologic Hazards briefly discusses landslides and states that much of the project area has relatively flat topography, implying that there is negligible hazard from slope movement. The topography is not currently flat in the quarry area adjacent to the Project and the pits are under active mining that will quarry them to up to 240 feet in depth. Also, there is no mention of the existing landslide at Lake A. This should be noted in the document. Subsequent geotechnical investigations in other areas within the quarries suggest that additional setbacks are warranted because similar landslide dangers exist adjacent to the lakes/quarry pits. A geotechnical investigation should be conducted during design to ensure

Mr. Pang
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- that similar potential landslide conditions do not exist within the areas adjacent to the alignment of the Project.
- L-04-4, Cont.** A geotechnical study assessing risk to the existing and future access road and utilities from slope failure has not been done. The study should also assess potential slope failure of the Chain of Lakes banks as a result of the Project, and should include an analysis of static, pseudo-static, and rapid drawdown conditions. Any identified risk associated with relocated utilities or other project improvements must be mitigated as part of the Project. The Project should not drain any surface run-off from the Route 84 right-of-way onto the Chain of Lakes property or cause drainage to flow over the Chain of Lakes banks to prevent slope erosion and to avoid compromising water quality. Proposed bio-swales and irrigated landscape can saturate the bank area causing undue loading that leads to slope failure and thus may not be appropriate in this area.
- d) Other Impacts**
- L-04-5** i) CEMEX (quarry operator) is responsible for constructing a spillway between Lakes A and B and a conduit between Lakes A and C. The Project needs to accommodate this future spillway and conduit and should be addressed in the Negative Declaration. The proposed new bridge needs to be constructed in a manner that does not preclude construction of the planned spillway and the proposed roadway/bridge should be designed and constructed to accommodate the planned conduit.
- L-04-6** ii) The Negative Declaration proposes financial compensation for property taken from the quarry owners/operators. However, financial compensation would not be appropriate or sufficient to mitigate impacts to Zone 7's water management and flood protection activities that would result from loss of property.
- L-04-7** iii) The designation of "Vacant" as the current property use for certain quarry properties in Table 2.1-1 does not acknowledge the Specific Plan designation of "Water Management" for the property. Please revise accordingly.
- L-04-8** iv) Typical cross sections shown on the project plans denote a "Zone 7 Easement Area." This designation is misleading. Upon completion of quarrying activities, Zone 7 will own, at a minimum, 25 feet from top of bank in fee simple around the perimeter of each lake.
- L-04-9** 2) In Section 2.1.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures, it states that "[t]he [P]roject is consistent with existing and proposed land uses . . ." The proposed uses identified in the Specific Plan, referenced above, should be incorporated as well as the agreements between Zone 7 and the gravel quarry operators.
- L-04-10** 3) The Project will be impacting several access points to the quarries and Chain of Lakes. These include the following:
- a) A number of points of access to the quarry mining area along the west side of Route 84, adjacent to the future Lakes C and D are being consolidated at the intersection of Concannon Blvd. In addition, an emergency access point located between Lakes C and D at Station 371+00 (see Sheet 6-12) is being proposed as part of the Project.

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L-04-10
Cont.

- b) The existing gate located on the east side of Route 84 north of the Arroyo del Valle, near Station 325+00, will be closed off and would be offset by the access off of Alden Lane as proposed in the Project. The existing gate provides access to the portion of Lake A where the inlet facilities for the future conduit connecting Lakes A and C will be located. Zone 7 recommends that this mitigation include granting Zone 7 an easement to use the road from Alden Lane for accessing Lake A.
- c) The existing gate on the east side and an existing access point on the west side of Route 84 at Vineyard Avenue will be closed off and new accesses off of Vineyard Avenue are shown on the Project plans.

Zone 7 recommends noting in the Negative Declaration that all these new access points be included as part of the Project and are required to mitigate for closing existing access to the quarries and Chain of Lakes.

L-04-11

- 4) Zone 7 owns two 36-inch water transmission pipelines that cross the Project. One is located within Vineyard Avenue, while the other is located within Jack London Boulevard and Kittyhawk Road. Appurtenances to these facilities may be impacted by the proposed expressway widening project. Please coordinate with Zone 7 to minimize and/or mitigate any impacts to these facilities and provide plans for further review and comment as they are developed. Any work impacting Zone 7's pipeline will require a Zone 7 encroachment permit.

L-04-12

- 5) Chapter 2.10 states that Caltrans reviewed FEMA FIRMs and FISs to identified flood areas subject to 100-yr flood events. Please note that because these studies may not be done using the most up-to-date topographic or hydrology data, the information in them may not be representative of existing or future buildout conditions. Zone 7 utilizes 100-yr design flows based on ultimate buildout conditions. Zone 7 requests that Caltrans consider analyzing hydrology/hydraulics based on Zone 7 ultimate design flows for the creeks list on this page.

Zone 7's ultimate design flows are as follows:
Arroyo Mocho (Line G) – 4,799 cfs
Arroyo del Valle (Line E) – 7,000 cfs

L-04-13

- 6) Chapter 1.4.1.4 states that existing bridges at Arroyo del Valle and Arroyo Mocho would be widened to accommodate the project. Zone 7 owns and maintains the portion of the Arroyo Mocho that adjacent to SR84. We understand the existing bridge over Arroyo Mocho was constructed with two sets of continuous pier supports located at the toes of the channel. The proposed bridge widening should be designed to have no adverse impact to the existing and future 100-yr water surface elevation and not trap drift debris. A hydraulic analysis must be submitted to Zone 7 for review and approval. A minimum of 2 feet between the soffit of the bridge and the ultimate 100-yr water surface elevation should also be maintained. Any bridge proposal shall meet Zone 7's requirements for bridges. During construction, all temporary false work shall be removed from channel areas prior to the beginning of the rainy season. In addition, an encroachment permit from Zone 7 is required.

L-04-14

- 7) Chapter 1.4.1.4 also states that a new bridge should be constructed across Arroyo del Valle and Arroyo Mocho to accommodate private access roads. Any bridge proposal should meet Zone 7's bridge clearance of 14 feet, to allow Zone 7 vehicles to fully utilize the existing maintenance access roads. The bridge must also be clear-spanned and designed to HS-20 loading as required by Zone 7. As mentioned above, a minimum of 2 feet be maintained between the bridge soffit and the water

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- L-04-14, Cont.** surface elevation; temporary false work be removed prior to rainy season and submit a hydraulic analysis for Zone 7's review and approval.
- L-04-15** 8) Chapter 1.4.1.5 states an existing private access just south of Arroyo Mocho that serves Zone 7 Water Agency would be closed with respect to direct entrance onto SR84. Zone 7 currently has two existing access points, one located south of Arroyo Mocho and one located in the north, that have direct entrance onto SR84. These entrances are the only access points Zone 7 has to each sides of the Arroyo Mocho west of SR84 for our inspection, routine maintenance or emergency work. These access points cannot be closed off without first provided with alternative access points. Entry to access roads shall be at least 24 feet wide with a minimum inside turning radius of 35 feet. Permanent access points shall also meet this requirement.
- L-04-16** 9) The project is subject to Zone 7's Special Drainage Area (SDA) 7-1 Drainage Fees for the creation of new impervious areas per the ACFC&WCD Ordinance 0-2002-24. Caltrans will need to complete a Zone 7 SDA 7-1 Impervious Surfaces Worksheet, submit an improvement plan identifying and quantifying all new proposed impervious areas, and submit a payment for the proposed impervious surfaces.
- L-04-17** 10) Zone 7 requests to review any existing hydrology and/or hydraulic studies for this proposed project to determine impacts on Zone 7's regional flood control system. Recent findings in the development of Zone 7's Stream Management Master Plan (SMMP) indicate the need for consideration and analysis of the impacts of development to the regional flood control system and the identification of appropriate mitigations. Therefore, during the interim period, before full implementation of the regional water storage plan contemplated by the SMMP, Caltrans should consult with Zone 7 prior to undertaking the impact and mitigation analysis. Future improvements to the flood control system are planned, thus, it is imperative that Caltrans provide a technical analysis to identify any impacts to the regional flood control system that may occur both upstream and downstream of the proposed project in the interim period.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on this document. We request that Caltrans continue to work closely with Zone 7 staff as detailed plans for the Project develop to ensure impacts to Zone 7 facilities are addressed at the earliest possible time. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience at 925-454-5036 or via email at mlim@zone7water.com.

Sincerely,


Mary Lim
Environmental Services Program Manager

Cc: Jill Duerig, Kurt Arends, Amy Naamani, Karla Nemeth, Joe Seto, YK Chan, Jim Horen,
Matt Katen, Carol Mahoney, Colleen Winey, Dennis Gambs
Bruce Jensen, Alameda County Planning
Ken Ross, City of Livermore
Jack Blanton, CEMEX
Doug Reynolds, Vulcan Materials Co.
Don Kahler, Pleasanton Gravel Co.
Randy Burton, PG&E

Responses to Comment L-04

L-04-1

See the response to Comment L-02-5 in regard to impacts to lands within the LAVQAR Plan. During the environmental planning phase, several coordination meetings were held with Zone 7 staff to ensure that the LAVQAR Plan areas for the Chain of Lakes and flood control channels (Arroyo del Valle and Arroyo Mocho) would not be affected by

the proposed project. All comments received from Zone 7 staff were addressed, and coordination with Zone 7 staff will continue during the final design phase to ensure that Zone 7's interests are met in full.

L-04-2

The approved mining limits (a 50-foot setback from the existing right-of-way limits) will not be affected by the project except as stated in the response to Comment L-02-3. The arrangement of access roads, landscaping, drainage, and utilities within the setback area has been and will continue to be coordinated with Zone 7 staff during final project design. The 50-foot setback is shown on the plans in Appendix A and is annotated as "Limit of Mining."

L-04-3

Roadway drainage will be directed away from Chain of Lakes property and pass through approved best management practice (BMP) facilities before outfalling to natural watercourses. Section 2.11.4 summarizes the water quality BMPs that will be implemented as part of the project.

L-04-4

A geotechnical investigation will be conducted during the final project design phase, and slope stability issues will be addressed. The installation of inclinometers will be considered at strategic locations adjacent to the quarries to monitor the stability of slopes adjacent to SR 84.

L-04-5

The project does not preclude future construction of these facilities. Section 2.1.2.2 of the FED has been revised to include this information.

It is assumed that the conduit mentioned in the comment is the future flood bypass structure proposed to connect Lakes A and C.

L-04-6

The comment is noted. Agreements between Zone 7 and the Department will be coordinated during the final project design phase.

L-04-7

Table 2.1-1 of the FED has been revised to reflect current and future land uses.

L-04-8

Zone 7 easement areas will be coordinated with Zone 7 and Alameda County staff during the final project design phase.

L-04-9

See the response to Comment L-02-5.

L-04-10

Existing access points will not be closed by the project; they will be relocated using consolidated driveways to controlled intersections to comply with Caltrans safety standards for an expressway facility. The consolidated driveway system proposed by the project will be engineered to a higher standard than the existing facilities, and ancillary improvements such as drainage, fences, and gates will be provided. The scope of the access improvements will be coordinated with the affected owners during final project design.

L-04-11

The comment is noted. Zone 7 is requested to provide accurate mapping showing the location of its water transmission lines so they can be coordinated with the proposed highway improvements during the final design phase. Once located, every effort will be made to avoid these facilities and protect them in place, if necessary.

L-04-12

A Location Hydraulic Study was prepared for the DED and analyzed the flood flows provided in the Zone 7 comment. During final project design, a detailed hydraulic analysis will be performed at both bridge crossing locations to verify that the 100-year floodplain is not affected by the proposed bridge improvements.

L-04-13, L-04-14

Zone 7 specifications will be applied in the design of new bridges crossing Zone 7 bridge facilities, and a hydraulic analysis will be submitted to Zone 7 for review and approval.

L-04-15

Zone 7 access south and north of Arroyo Mocho (on the west side of SR 84) will be maintained. Existing access points will be closed to meet Caltrans expressway standards and relocated via a new bridge across Arroyo Mocho to connect to Discovery Drive. Details of the access relocation will be coordinated with Zone 7 staff during the final design and right-of-way engineering phases of the project.

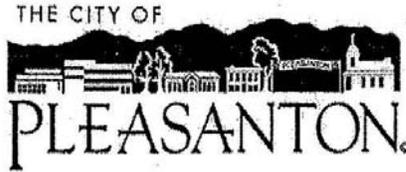
L-04-16

The comment is noted. This matter will be coordinated with Zone 7 staff during the final project design phase.

L-04-17

A Location Hydraulic Study was prepared for the DED and analyzed the flood flows provided in the Zone 7 comment. During final project design, a detailed hydraulic analysis will be performed at both bridge crossing locations to verify that the 100-year floodplain is not affected by the proposed bridge improvements.

Comment L-05 City of Pleasanton, Joshua Pack



PUBLIC WORKS TRANSMITTAL

Date: December 11, 2007

To: Tim Lee -- URS Corporation
55 S. Market Street Suite 1500
San Jose, CA 95133

From: Joshua H. Pack, P.E.
Senior Transportation Engineer
City of Pleasanton

Subject: City of Pleasanton Comments -- SR84 Expressway Widening Project Initial Study

I have attached the original copy of the SR84 Expressway Widening Project Initial Study with comments from the City of Pleasanton. Due to the lateness of this review I did not have time to make copies of my comments. When responding, please make copies of my comments and return them to me.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joshua H. Pack", is written over the typed name.

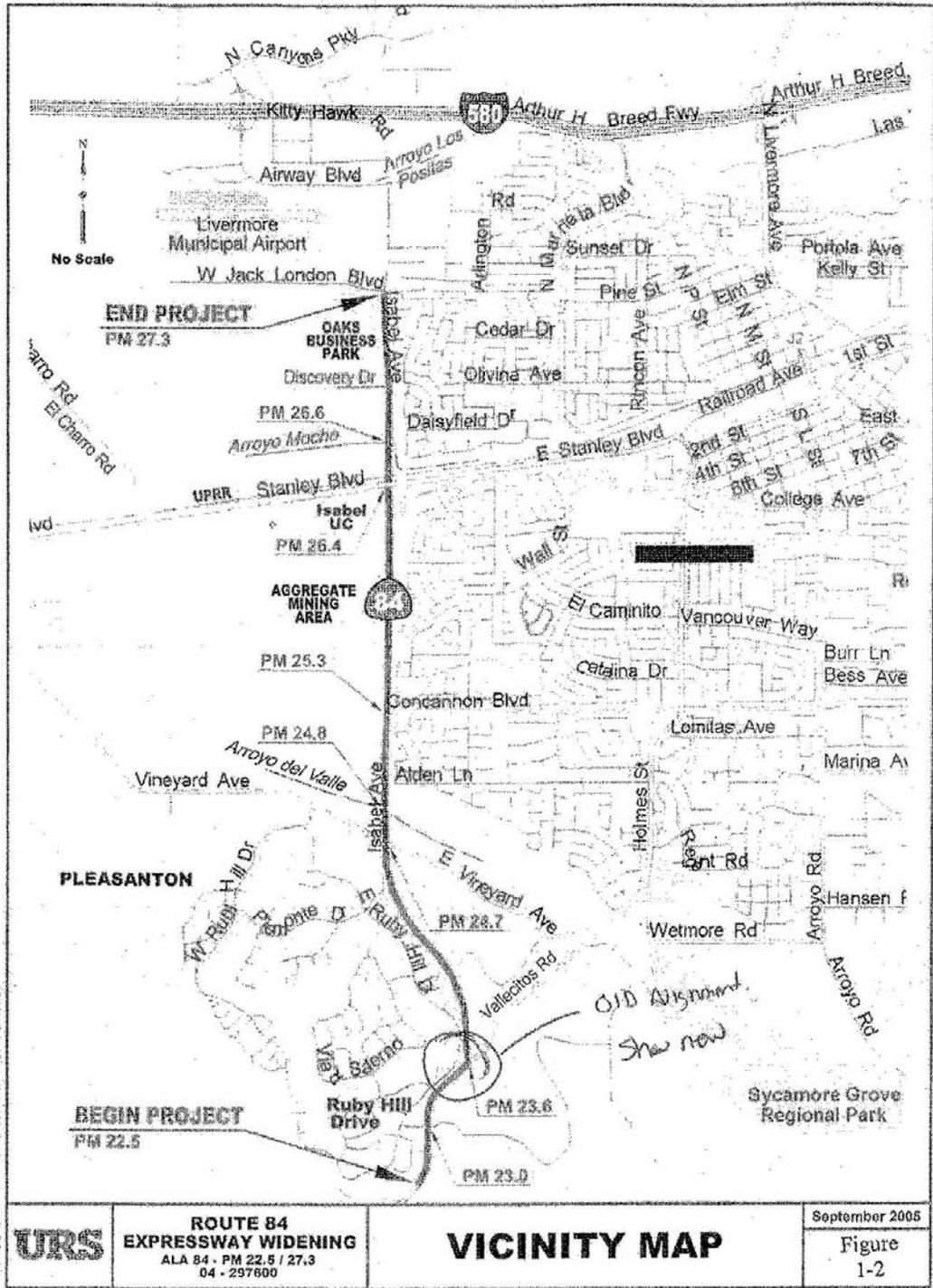
Joshua H. Pack, P.E.
Senior Transportation Engineer
City of Pleasanton
(925) 931-5667
jpack@ci.pleasanton.ca.us

RECEIVED

DEC 17 2007

URS CORPORATION

L-05-1



1.3.2. Improve Local Traffic Circulation

Heavy congestion on I-680 and I-580 has forced regional travelers to find alternative routes in the Tri-Valley area. Local streets in the Cities of Livermore, Pleasanton, and Dublin experience congestion from regional traffic diverting from freeways to avoid congestion there, as well as local and sub-regional traffic that would otherwise use the freeway corridors.

The Department and the City of Livermore recognized the importance of removing traffic from downtown Livermore with the transfer of SR 84 from Central Livermore (Vallecitos Road and First Street) to the Isabel Avenue corridor in December 2003.

The City of Pleasanton has also indicated that widening SR 84 is needed to reduce the impacts of regional traffic diverting from I-580 and I-680 onto local city streets. ~~For example, the City of Pleasanton has reported that 60 percent of traffic exiting I-680 at Sunol Boulevard travels to regional destinations using Stanley Boulevard or Santa Rita Road.~~

L-05-2



Remove

SR 84 is currently a two-lane facility within the project limits. The proposed improvements would provide additional lanes on SR 84 and improve the operations at existing intersections, thereby improving ingress and egress for local traffic. Widening SR 84 within the project limits in combination with adjacent corridor improvements⁵ would also divert truck and commute traffic from residential and commercial areas in the cities of Livermore and Pleasanton to SR 84.

1.3.3. Improve SR 84 to Expressway Standards Within Project Limits

As part of the Cooperative Agreement for Transfer and Relinquishment of SR 84 between the City of Livermore and the Department,⁶ future improvements on the section of SR 84 between Vallecitos Road and Jack London Boulevard must improve the route to expressway standards to the extent feasible and in accordance with State statutes.

The proposed project would meet those requirements by:

⁴ The Project Report prepared for the proposed project provides additional future year traffic data and operating conditions.

⁵ Caltrans SR 84 Pigeon Pass Safety Project and City of Livermore/Caltrans I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project.

⁶ Cooperative Agreement #1979-C.

address safety concerns for an expressway facility, the Vallecitos Road intersection would be relocated approximately 450 feet to the north of its current location. At the request of the City of Pleasanton, no widening of Vineyard Avenue west of SR 84 is proposed to deter regional traffic from using Vineyard Avenue as a detour route.

The Isabel Trail, a multiuse trail located on the east side of SR 84 between Jack London Boulevard and Alden Lane, may require closure for safety reasons for temporary periods during construction but would be reopened following completion of the project. The Isabel Trail will ultimately be extended from Alden Lane south to Vineyard Avenue under a separate construction contract.

Who where is it? Isabel/Vallejo reassignment project mentioned?? This project is already complete by CT + Livermore

L-05-3

The roadway cross section would consist of 12-foot traveled lanes, 10-foot shoulders, and a 22-foot median. The median would include a concrete safety barrier from north of Vallecitos Road to Jack London Boulevard except at intersections. Roadway side slopes would vary in steepness depending on safety requirements. The roadway median at intersections would be widened to accommodate left-turn lanes.

The planned improvements are illustrated in the map sheets and cross section diagrams in Appendix A.

1.4.1.2. Drainage and Utilities

Roadway runoff would be conveyed by gutters to existing drainage systems. The outfalls for the drainage systems are at Arroyo del Valle, Arroyo Mocho, and Arroyo las Positas. An existing stormwater pump station is located between the Stanley Boulevard bridges. Minor modifications to this facility would be required to accommodate the roadway widening.

To meet expressway standards, some existing gas, sanitary sewer, storm drain, electrical, cable, telephone, and recycled water utilities within the proposed right-of-way for the project would be relocated. The study limits for the proposed project include adequate area to relocate these private utilities. The affected major utilities would include a 24-inch gas line (Pacific Gas and Electric Company [PG&E]), 12 kilovolt (kV) and 60kV electrical overhead lines (PG&E), and a 15-inch to 39-inch sanitary sewer line (City of Livermore).

1.4.1.3. Right-of-Way Requirements

The existing right-of-way along SR 84 generally accommodates the proposed widening with minor exceptions. The majority of right-of-way requirements involve acquisition of portions (or slivers) of vacant parcels. Construction access, permanent easements,

L-05-4

- The interchange footprint would significantly reduce the available water storage for planned elements of the Zone 7 Water Agency's future flood control facility.
- The State would not support a partial interchange configuration unless full interchange construction is available in the future. Partial access also results in driver confusion. Remove? Awkward sentence

Close Stanley Boulevard Connector to SR 84

- Traffic would divert to alternate routes, resulting in additional congestion on local streets and intersections.
- Emergency access between SR 84 and Stanley Boulevard would be removed and result in increased response time to incidents.

1.5.4. Vineyard Avenue Intersection

L-05-5

The City of Pleasanton wants the heavy left-turn movement from eastbound Vineyard Avenue to northbound SR 84 reduced during the evening peak period. The City has already made strong efforts to discourage use of Vineyard Avenue as a regional travel route by restricting its capacity through signal timing adjustments and slower travel speeds by using traffic calming measures. ~~Visitors are advised~~

To eliminate left-turn movements at the Vineyard Avenue intersection, the design option of closing the median at this location was considered and withdrawn since diverted traffic would result in additional congestion on local streets and intersections, and access to commercial, retail, and residential uses in this area would be unduly affected.

1.6. Permits and Approvals Needed

Table 1-3 summarizes the regulatory permits and approvals needed for project construction.

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Water Agency. Access to the flood district and quarry lands will be provided by consolidated access roads that connect to SR 84 opposite Concannon Boulevard or indirectly from local streets.

Commercial and Business

Commercial uses in the study area include Oaks Business Park, currently under development and located along the west side of Isabel Avenue between Jack London and Arroyo Mocho. It will provide space for light industrial, research and development, office, and ancillary commercial uses. A small park that will provide direct access to the regional trail system will be located at this business park. Another parcel (formerly known as the Ashwill parcel), located near the Oaks Business Park, is also designated for commercial development and was purchased in 2006 for development by Wal-Mart. Piazza Rubino, a small shopping center located at the southeast corner of Vineyard and Isabel Avenues, was constructed in 2005/2006.

Parks and Recreation

The Livermore Area Recreation and Parks District manages the public parks in the City of Livermore. The City of Livermore has 40 parks of various sizes, and Ida Holm Park is the only park located along the project corridor. In addition, several multiuse trails are located within the City of Livermore. The Isabel Trail and the Arroyo Mocho trail are located in the project area.

The City of Pleasanton offers 40 community and neighborhood parks, approximately 21 miles of trails and over 330 acres of undeveloped open space. No public parks are located in Ruby Hill; however, walking paths, a small neighborhood park and tennis court, and an 18-hole golf course are located within the development but are private facilities. No parks are located in the unincorporated portions of the project corridor.

what about DO Trail on South Side of Vineyard that connects to Isabel?
Pedestrian Access and Trails installed as part of Ruby Hills/Piazza Rubino projects.
SR 84/Isabel Avenue currently has a pedestrian crossing at Jack London Boulevard. The City of Livermore would like to retain this crossing with the proposed project.

L-05-6

The City of Livermore plans to extend the existing multiuse trail along the east side of SR 84 south of Alden Lane to Vineyard Avenue once mining operations are completed. The City does not want the SR 84 widening project to preclude adding the trail extension in the future.

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2.1.2. Environmental Consequences

2.1.2.1. Land Use Changes

With some exceptions, the existing SR 84 right-of-way provides sufficient space for adding additional lanes. Table 2.1-1 lists the parcels affected by the project and the potential project right-of-way needs. As discussed in Section 1.4.1, the project includes changes in access at some locations to meet expressway design standards.

The proposed project would closely follow the existing SR 84 roadway and has been specifically designed to avoid right-of-way acquisition and impacts to the existing environmental conservancy area along the creek (between approximately Ruby Hill Drive and the Vallecitos Road/SR 84 intersection). Acquisition of slivers or portions of parcels would be necessary along the Ruby Hill development, but none of these takes would affect continued use of the properties.

L-05-7

At Vallecitos Road, the intersection with SR 84 would be moved north by about 450 feet to meet design standards and safety needs with respect to vehicle turning maneuvers. This change in the intersection location would require acquisition of some private lands that are active vineyards (estimated at 3.2 acres of directly affected vineyard). Through a contract agreement with the landowner, the Tri-Valley Conservancy holds an easement over these lands for the purpose of maintaining vineyard and open space use. The requirement for maintaining a vineyard has now expired; however, changes to land uses within the easement must be in accordance with the requirements of the Tri-Valley Conservancy agreement with the landowner. Impacts to vineyards are also addressed in Section 2.3.

Already been done?

Between Vallecitos Road and Stanley Boulevard, the project would eliminate the existing access to SR 84 from the former Orchid Ranch located at 1330 Isabel Avenue in Livermore. However, the property owner plans to construct residences on the parcel, with access to SR 84 from the new homes via local streets. Therefore, loss of direct access from SR 84 would not constitute a permanent land use impact of the project. Access to the quarry mining area on the west side of SR 84 would be maintained but consolidated to connect to the Concannon Boulevard intersection; impacts to the existing mining properties are discussed in Section 2.4. The existing multiuse path on the east side of SR 84 would require localized realignment and would be temporarily affected during construction, but long-term access would be maintained.

particularly as home prices have risen.¹⁵ Now, a greater variety of housing is being constructed, including townhomes, condominiums, and small-lot single-family homes.

Development pressures have been so strong that in November 2000 the residents of Alameda County passed Measure D, which is designed to preserve agriculture and open-space lands from development pressures. The East County Area Plan and the City of Livermore's General Plan now include urban growth limits that reflect Measure D. The City of Pleasanton's General Plan already included an urban growth limit.

2.2.3. Development Trends

Approximately 30 percent of the housing units in the corridor were constructed after 1990. It is unlikely that significant residential growth will occur along the corridor in the near future, since vacant land along the corridor is already designated as sand and gravel pits (which have contracts for continued mineral extraction until 2030) and vineyards that are protected through conservation easements. The one exception, the Ruby Hill development located at the southwest end of the corridor, provides for up to 850 homes. As of 2006, 60 sites remained for future residential development. As noted previously, new commercial developments are under way and planned between Jack London Boulevard and Arroyo Mocho (the ~~Oaks Business Park and the Wal-Mart parcel~~ at the corner of Jack London Boulevard and SR 84).

Don't mention Walnut.

L-05-8

Table 2.2-1 shows that the population growth rate in the study area and in Livermore is higher than the projected population growth in Pleasanton or Alameda County. While the study area could increase in population from 6,479 to 8,085 (an increase of nearly 25 percent) between 2000 and 2010, Alameda County is forecasted to grow approximately 6 percent during the same time period.

¹⁵ The Association of Bay Area Governments describes smart growth as development that revitalizes central cities and older suburbs, supports and enhances public transit, promotes walking and bicycling, and preserves open spaces and agricultural lands.

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The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly referred to as the Williamson Act, enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return, the landowners receive lower property tax assessments based upon farming and open space use instead of the potential market value's highest and best use. A number of parcels with Williamson Act contracts are located in the project area.

Due to the importance of the farmland in the area, the Tri-Valley Conservancy was formed to work with property owners to acquire conservation easements from willing landowners. A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a property owner and the Conservancy. The easement places permanent restrictions on future use in order to maintain the property's agricultural, scenic, or habitat values. As a legal deed restriction, the easement applies to the property in perpetuity. The Conservancy acquires conservation easements through purchase or donation.

2.3.3. Environmental Consequences

The only property currently in agricultural use that would be potentially affected by the project is located along SR 84 north of the current intersection with Vallecitos Road. This partial parcel acquisition (3.2 acres) is currently part of an active vineyard. A very small (0.04 acre) triangle of land that is in Conservancy stewardship would also require acquisition, but that parcel is not in active cultivation.¹⁷

As a result of consultation with the NRCS, the total amount of farmlands potentially affected was estimated at up to 6.1 acres in the event that an additional portion cannot be cultivated after being separated from the remainder of the parcel. The farmland parcel potentially affected is within the Tri-Valley Conservancy and is under a Williamson Act contract. Assuming that only 3.2 acres would be acquired but up to 6.1 acres could be affected, between 9.9 and 26.4 tons of grapes per annum could be lost.

L-05-9

The Williamson Act requires certain findings when a public project affects parcels under contract.¹⁸ The SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection would be realigned to meet the design requirements for a roadway of this type (see Section 1.4). Cost associated with acquiring land for the intersection was not a factor in determining the design of

Done?

¹⁷ The 3.2-acre parcel take would be from Assessors Parcel Number 99-1361-004. The 0.04-acre take would be from Parcel 950-0010-007.

¹⁸ California Government Code Section 51292.

Chapter 2 Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Access to several existing land uses would be changed to meet expressway design standards. The affected parcels are Vulcan Materials (a quarry operator), a local utility (PG&E), the City of Livermore, and the Zone 7 Water Agency. The changes in access to these parcels are not significantly adverse, and alternative access is proposed in the project design.

Employment

The proposed project could have positive impacts on the regional economy and improve travel conditions. During the construction period, the project would generate additional construction-related jobs in the region and would lead to secondary and tertiary employment impacts throughout the area. While it is expected that construction would create a significant number of jobs, it is assumed that there are sufficient workers in the San Francisco Bay Area to fill these jobs and that the project not require in-migration to the area.

2.5.1.4. Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures

The project would result in the loss of direct access to SR 84 between Stanley Boulevard and Vineyard Avenue for the mining operators, Vulcan Materials and Cemex, but new driveway access to SR 84 would be provided at Concannon Boulevard. This allows vehicles leaving or entering the Vulcan Materials and Cemex sites to travel through a signalized intersection (at SR 84/Concannon Boulevard) to access SR 84, which would improve traffic operations and safety.

L-05-10

The project would result in closure of the existing PG&E, City of Livermore, and Zone 7 Water Agency gated driveways. The project includes provision of new alternative access/driveways for the affected properties.

2.5.2. Environmental Justice

2.5.2.1. Regulatory Setting

All projects involving a Federal action (funding, permit, or land) must comply with Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, signed by President Clinton on February 11, 1994. This Executive Order directs Federal agencies to take the appropriate and necessary steps to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse effects of Federal projects on the health or environment of minority and low-income populations to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law. Low income is defined based on the Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. For 2006, this was \$20,000 for a family of four.

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All considerations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes have also been included in this project. The Department's commitment to upholding the mandates of Title VI is evidenced by its Title VI Policy Statement, signed by the Director, which is included in Appendix F.

2.5.2.2. Affected Environment

Based on Census data averages, the estimated 2005 median income of an average household in the project corridor is \$104,677, significantly higher than Alameda County's estimated 2005 average median income of \$66,218, and the City of Livermore's estimated 2005 median household income of \$88,746. In addition, an average of 84 percent of households own their own homes in the study area in comparison to Livermore, in which 72 percent of households own their own homes. This number drops to 54 percent for Alameda County. Furthermore, the estimated average median home value in 2005 for the study area was \$630,442 in comparison to \$504,216 in Livermore and \$472,198 in Alameda County.

L-05-11

The racial composition of the population in the study area is approximately 83 percent Caucasian, about 8 percent Asian, less than 2 percent African American, and the remaining 7 percent Native Americans, Pacific Islanders, and people with two or more races. About 9.5 percent of the population is Hispanic. Hispanics comprise a much lower percentage of the population in the corridor area than in Alameda County (20.7 percent) or in the City of Livermore (15.6 percent).

2.5.2.3. Environmental Consequences

No minority or low-income populations have been identified that would be adversely affected by the proposed project as determined above. Therefore, this project is not subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12898.

2.5.2.4. Avoidance, Minimization, or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures are required.

Math Doesn't work
Please remedy or reword

83%
+ 8%
+ 2%
+ 7%
+ 9.5%
<u>109.5%</u>

2.6. Utilities and Emergency Services

This section summarizes the utilities and emergency services discussion from the Community Impacts Technical Study (Vernazza Wolfe Associates, June 2006).

2.6.1. Affected Environment

2.6.1.1. Utilities

The proposed project would affect utilities. Existing gas, sanitary sewer, storm drain, electrical, cable, and telephone utilities lie within the existing and proposed right-of-way for the project and would need to be relocated to meet expressway standards.

The Department requires all longitudinally occurring utilities (such as the PG&E regional gas line) to be relocated outside of the proposed right-of-way of the new expressway facility. The 24-inch gas main (PG&E), 12 kV and 60kV electric overhead lines (PG&E), overhead telephone and cable TV lines (AT&T), 15-inch to 39-inch sanitary sewer line (City of Livermore), 42-inch-storm drain (City of Livermore), and recycled water line (City of Livermore) located along portions of SR 84 affected by the proposed project improvements would need to be relocated to meet Department expressway standards. The utilities would be relocated to areas within the study limits for the proposed project.

2.6.1.2. Law Enforcement, Fire Protection, and Hospitals

No emergency service provider is located within the project corridor. Police protection in the project vicinity is provided by the Livermore Police Department, the Pleasanton Police Department, and the Alameda County Sheriff's Department. The Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department is the primary provider of fire protection in the project vicinity. Fire protection is also provided by the Alameda County Fire Department. The Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory has its own fire department on-site. Valley Memorial Hospital is the only hospital in the project vicinity.

2.6.2. Environmental Consequences

During construction, some utilities would be relocated, but no utility and emergency services would be interrupted. All service impacts would be avoided. The project, when completed, would provide additional traffic capacity to SR 84, which should help maintain or possibly improve emergency service response times.

L-05-12

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L-05-13

Utility relocations include shifting power lines to accommodate the roadway widening or necessary minor realignments of SR 84. Along the project alignment, including some segments near the Ruby Hill development and north of Vineyard Avenue, the distance between power lines and some residences may be reduced slightly. Any existing electromagnetic field (EMF) exposure from the power lines to these residences would be relatively low and would not change.

Why aren't these being undergrounded
Are they high volt
Discuss w/ water authority as an option

2.6.3. Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Emergency service providers will be notified of the construction scheduling for the overall project work and utility relocation work.

2.7. Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

This section summarizes the findings of the Traffic Operations Report (Fehr and Peers, October 2006).

2.7.1. Regulatory Setting

The Department, as assigned by FHWA, directs that full consideration should be given to the safe accommodation of pedestrians and bicyclists during the development of Federal-aid highway projects (see 23 CFR 652). It further directs that the special needs of the elderly and the disabled must be considered in all Federal-aid projects that include pedestrian facilities. When current or anticipated pedestrian and/or bicycle traffic presents a potential conflict with motor vehicle traffic, every effort must be made to minimize the detrimental effects on all highway users who share the facility.

The Department is committed to carrying out the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act by building transportation facilities that provide equal access for all persons. The same degree of convenience, accessibility, and safety available to the general public will be provided to persons with disabilities.

2.7.2. Affected Environment

2.7.2.1. Roadways and Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities

Isabel Avenue/SR 84 is a two-lane north-south roadway on the western edge of the City of Livermore that extends between Jack London Boulevard to the north and

L-05-14

add Decatur Drive (new entry)

Vallecitos Road to the south. It is a designated Regional Route of Significance and provides access between I-680 and I-580. Cross-streets that intersect SR 84 within the project limits include, from north to south, Jack London Boulevard (a four-lane roadway), Stanley Boulevard (a four-lane expressway), Vineyard Avenue (a two-lane roadway), Vallecitos Road (a two-lane roadway), and Ruby Hill Drive (a two-lane circular access roadway to the Ruby Hill development).

A paved bicycle and pedestrian trail parallels the eastern side of SR 84 from Jack London Boulevard to just north of Vineyard Avenue. No pedestrian facilities exist from Alden Lane to Vallecitos Road. Although there are no designated bike facilities south of Alden Lane, the roadway shoulders are wide enough to accommodate bicyclists. Bike lanes or paths connect to Isabel Avenue from Jack London Boulevard, the unpaved Arroyo Mocho Trail, Stanley Boulevard, and Concannon Boulevard.

2.7.2.2. Traffic Conditions in 2010 (No Build Alternative)

In 2010 with the No Build Alternative, most intersections along SR 84 or nearby would function relatively well, at Level of Service (LOS) A, B, or C (see Figure 2.7-1). The exceptions are the Isabel Avenue/Ruby Hill Drive and Isabel Avenue/Vallecitos Road intersections, which would function at LOS F in the PM and AM periods, respectively. The intersections of Airway Boulevard and the I-580 westbound ramps and First Street and the I-580 eastbound ramps would also function at LOS F in the PM period, and the intersection of Livermore Avenue and the I-580 westbound ramps would function at LOS F in the PM and LOS D in the AM period.

The construction of the SR 84 Pigeon Pass Safety Project will deliver more northbound traffic on SR 84 to the Vallecitos Road/Ruby Hill Drive intersection. This traffic would converge from two northbound lanes to one just past Ruby Hill Drive, causing a queue to extend through the Vallecitos Road/Ruby Hill Drive intersection. In 2010, this intersection would function at LOS F in the PM period under the No Build Alternative.

Anticipated metering of the I-580 ramps would result in LOS F conditions at the Airway Boulevard/I-580 westbound ramps and First Street/I-580 eastbound ramps in the PM peak hour under the No Build Alternative. Arterial congestion caused by ramp metering would result in only 90 to 95 percent of the traffic demand reaching the Isabel Avenue corridor.

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- By 2010, the SR 84/Jack London Boulevard intersection would operate at LOS B or better with the No Build Alternative. By 2030, the project would increase traffic volumes and congestion at the intersection, which would deteriorate from LOS D conditions with the No Build Alternative to LOS F and E during the AM and PM peak hours, respectively. This assumes that SR 84 will have six lanes north of Jack London Boulevard, and Jack London Boulevard will be extended west to El Charro Road. The poor operations at this intersection would be largely due to heavy east-west traffic on Jack London Boulevard. SR 84 would operate at LOS D or better in the AM and PM peak hours.

Does this assume a 2-lane or 4-lane JLB from SR84 to El Charro?

Table 2.7-2 lists the operating conditions for I-580 ramp intersections. Again, levels of service shown in bold indicate a predicted change in 2030 conditions with the project.

Table 2.7-2 Ramp Intersection Level of Service

Ramp Intersection Location	Existing (2005)	Year 2010 No Build	Year 2010 Build	Year 2030 No Build	Year 2030 Build
	AM (PM) Peak Hour LOS				
SR 84/Airway Blvd.	C (B)	C (C)	C (D)	D (C)	D (C)
I-580/Airway Blvd. – EB	C (B)	B (B)	B (B)	C (A)	C (B)
I-580/Airway Blvd. – WB	A (A)	A (F)	A (F)	B (F)	C (F)
I-580/SR 84 – EB	N/A	A (A)	A (A)	A (C)	A (A)
I-580/SR 84 – WB	N/A	A (A)	B (B)	B (F)	A (F)
I-580/First St.– EB	A (A)	B (F)	B (F)	A (F)	A (D)
I-580/First St.– WB	B (A)	A (A)	A (A)	F (D)	F (C)
I-580/Livermore Ave. – EB	B (C)	A (C)	A (C)	A (F)	A (F)
I-580/Livermore Ave. – WB	C (C)	F (D)	F (D)	F (D)	F (E)
I-580/Vasco Rd.– EB	A (A)	N/A	N/A	C (F)	C (F)
I-580/Vasco Rd.– WB	B (A)	N/A	N/A	F (D)	F (D)

IS future Ramp meters accounted for?
Meters in EB to be activated in early 08
WB before 2010

L-05-16

Source: Fehr and Peers 2006
EB = eastbound
WB = westbound

The following ramps would be affected by the project.

- The project would improve the First Street/I-580 eastbound ramps intersection from LOS F in the PM period with the No Build Alternative to LOS D. The poor

Potential Impacts to Views from Adjacent Properties

No substantial visual impacts are expected to occur. However, the proposed project would remove existing landscaping at the intersections at the Sandhurst community entrance on Concannon Boulevard and at the Ruby Hill community entrance on Ruby Hill Drive. Between Ruby Hill Drive and Vallecitos Road, the project would add new retaining walls and potentially a 6-foot-high soundwall (considered for the Ruby Hill tennis and recreation facilities). However, the project would follow the existing roadway alignment and would not substantially change the existing setting. Some overhead electrical poles (PG&E) would also be relocated in this area and moved closer to residential development, but these existing electrical lines are already visible. The project would remove native oak trees and a portion of a vineyard.

The reconstruction of the Vallecitos Road intersection 450 feet to the north was identified as an adverse but not substantial change in the visual setting.

Potential Impacts to Views for Recreational Users

No substantial visual impacts are expected to occur. The project would create a wider roadway adjacent to the recreational trails and may require safety barriers that would introduce a change in the existing setting. Views from Ida Holm Park would remain relatively unchanged as the roadway widening would take place outside of this facility. A 6-foot-high, 930-foot-long soundwall was determined to be a feasible abatement measure for SR 84 traffic noise at the Ruby Hill tennis courts and adjacent recreation field. However, the soundwall would also block scenic views from these facilities, resulting in adverse impacts to park users.

Potential Impacts to Views for Motorists

The 6-foot-high soundwall on the right-of-way line would be visible to motorists, and their views of the recreational areas would be replaced with a masonry wall, resulting in adverse impacts.

2.8.4. Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following measures are recommended for the proposed project.

- To avoid or minimize impacts on adjacent properties, retaining walls will be constructed. The walls' color and textures could have a variety of features that would soften the impact of the walls in a natural environment. Treatments for soundwalls and retaining walls would be included as part of the project.

L-05-17

Discuss replacement of lost landscaping from Sandhurst & Ruby Hill, 11/2/2016

Table 2-15-3 Noise Model Results – Comparison of Existing to 2030 With Project and 2030 No Build

Study Area	Receiver ID / Position	Crit'n NAC	Peak Hour Noise Level (L _{eq}), dBA				Noise Level Increases			
			Existing	Method ⁽¹⁾	2030 No Build ⁽²⁾	2030 w/ Project ⁽³⁾	With Project		w/o Project	
							Over No Build	Over Existing	Over Existing	
Vineyard Avenue to Ruby Hill Drive ⁽⁴⁾	19 Tennis Courts	67	61	i/c	62	66	4	5	1	
	20 Ruby Hill Park	67	61	i/c	63	66	3	5	2	
	21 566 Cento Ct - res backyard	67	55	i/c	56	61	5	6	1	
	21A Future Vineyard Estate (3rd lot south of E. Vineyard Ave)	67	54	i/c	55	59	4	5	1	
	22 491 Trebbiano Pl - res backyard	67	55	m	57	60	3	5	2	
	23 583 Montori Ct - res backyard	67	53	i/c	54	58	4	5	1	
	24 463 Cabonia Ct - res backyard	67	51	m	51	56	5	5	0	
	E. Ruby Hill Dr - res front yard btwn Sangro Ct & Norante Ct	67	54	i/c	54	58	4	4	0	
	25 Norante Ct - res sideyard	67	48	c	52	54	2	6	4	
	27 Donata Ct - res sideyard (higher pad elevation)	67	53	c	56	58	2	5	3	
	E. Ruby Hill Dr - res btwn Donata Ct & Bricco Ct	67	55	c	57	57	0	2	2	
	28 E. Ruby Hill Dr - res btwn Bricco Ct & Germano Way (area with 5ft wall)	67	53	c	55	57	2	4	2	
	29 Campina Pl - res south of E. Ruby Hill Dr	67	51	c	55	55	0	4	4	
	30		67	51	c	55	55	0	4	4

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- (1) Method used to establish existing peak hour L_{eq}.
- (m) measured = based on linear average of typical peak hour L_{eq} data measured at that location.
- (i) interpolated = based on measured data at representative location(s).
- (c) calculated = based on existing PM peak hour volumes provided by Fehr & Peers Associates.
- (i/c) calculated and scaled based on difference between measured data vs. calculated data at nearby location.
- (2) 2030 No Build condition includes modified grading around Vallecitos Road.
- (3) Assumes 2% HT, 2% MT, 2% MC, 50 mph vehicle speed on SR 84.
- (4) Due to the transitory use of the path, not considered a noise-sensitive receptor for purposes of this study.

While not dramatic, noise levels increase w/ the project. Is there an opportunity to use existing technologies (i.e., open graded AC, reinforced AC, increased landscaping, etc) to offset the noise increase near residential areas?

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maintain safe sight distance clearances for motorists turning at the intersections. Furthermore, a masonry wall built along the pedestrian/bike path would be aesthetically undesirable and would "wall in" the expressway and path.

At the former Orchid Ranch, peak noise levels from traffic on SR 84 currently exceed the residential NAC and would continue to do so with or without the project. The Orchid Ranch currently does not qualify for abatement because it is a commercial use. The property is planned for future conversion to residential use but has not received final discretionary approvals from the City of Livermore. The City of Livermore should require, and the property owner should include, mitigation for traffic noise levels in the design for any residential development plans for this location.

Roadway noise abatement measures such as the use of "quiet pavement" materials have received attention in recent years, and their effectiveness and application have been studied by the Department and others. At this time, the use of specific roadway surfaces is not yet supported as a noise abatement measure per policy established by FHWA and the Department.²⁶ Various studies have shown differences in noise levels on the order of 2 to 5 dBA between different types of pavement surfaces, but research is still ongoing to determine the extent to which pavement types contribute to the overall traffic noise levels, and the nature of any performance benefit throughout the surface life of the roadway. For instance, noise reduction benefits can be lost when roadway surface voids fill and aggregate becomes "polished" from wear. Pavement referred to as "open graded" can typically provide 3 to 5 dBA reductions compared with conventional dense-graded asphalt pavements. However, tests have found no significant differences between conventional and rubberized open-graded asphalt pavements. Although not considered an abatement measure for purposes of this study, the possibility of applying pavement surfaces that have a noise-reduction benefit, are cost-effective, and meet safety and maintenance requirements, can be considered at the time of final project design and development of contract specifications.

L-05-19

A final decision on noise abatement will be made upon the completion of the Final Environmental Document.

The proposed dBA decrease should offset only increase due to the increased traffic. Consider requiring "quiet pavement" near residential areas.

²⁶ FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Analysis and Abatement Policy and Guidance, June 1995, and Caltrans Pavement Advisory PSTPA-02, September 6, 2005.

Responses to Comment L-05

L-05-1

Figure 1-2 will be updated to show the current location of the SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection, which was relocated by the City of Livermore in summer 2007.

L-05-2

The text of Section 1.3.2 has been revised as suggested.

L-05-3

The prior realignment of the SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection is discussed in Section 1.5.2.

L-05-4

The sentence has been deleted as recommended.

L-05-5

The text of Section 1.5.4 has been revised as suggested.

L-05-6

The FED has been revised to include this decomposed granite (DG) trail and state that crosswalks will be provided at the SR 84/Vineyard Avenue intersection.

L-05-7

The relocation of the SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection discussed in Section 2.1.2.1 of the DED is separate from the realignment project that was completed in 2006. Since the DED was circulated in October 2007, the project design has been changed to maintain the intersection in its current location, with the additional modifications discussed in Section 1.5.2.1 of the FED. Section 2.1.2.1 and the rest of the FED have been updated to reflect this change.

L-05-8

The text of Section 2.2.3 has been revised as suggested.

L-05-9

The project design has been modified to avoid cultivated agricultural land; therefore no Williamson Act lands would be affected (see the response to Comment L-05-7).

L-05-10

The text of Section 2.5.1.4 has been revised as suggested.

L-05-11

The text of Section 2.5.2.2 has been revised to state that the percentage listed for the study area's Hispanic population reflects how respondents identified themselves (either exclusively as Hispanic or in combination with other races). Respondents who select a

combination of races in the Census are counted under each race, resulting in totals that are tallies of responses, rather than percentages of respondents.

L-05-12

The text of Section 2.6.2 has been revised as suggested.

L-05-13

The project does not include funding to relocate existing overhead utilities underground. All telephone poles and other overhead utilities will be relocated out of State right-of-way to meet expressway standards. The text of Section 2.6.2 has been revised to state that the project will not relocate existing overhead utilities underground.

L-05-14

The text of Section 2.7.2.1 has been revised as suggested.

L-05-15

The traffic operations analysis assumed Jack London Boulevard would be widened (as planned) to four lanes between El Charro Road and SR 84 for both the 2010 and 2030 study years.

L-05-16

The traffic analysis and Table 2.7-2 included ramp metering in forecasts for 2010 and 2030 conditions.

L-05-17

Existing landscaping affected by the roadway widening will be restored. During the final design phase, the property owners with affected landscaping will be consulted to coordinate any modifications to their existing landscaping.

Section 2.8.4 has been revised to include more detailed information about the conceptual landscaping plan.

L-05-18, L-05-19

Rubberized asphalt concrete will be used throughout the project limits. The project includes a landscaping plan, but note that landscaping is not considered a noise abatement measure.

Comments from Businesses

Comment B-01 Pleasanton Gravel Company, via Reed Smith LLP, John Lynn Smith

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November 13, 2007

Mr. Ed Pang
Department of Transportation, District 4
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

VIA HAND DELIVERY
VIA OVERNIGHT MAIL

Re: Comments regarding Proposed Negative Declaration/Environmental Assessment

Dear Mr. Pang:

We write on behalf of Pleasanton Gravel Company ("PGC") to raise issues and concerns regarding the Proposed Negative Declaration/Environmental Assessment ("PND/EA") for the planned widening of existing State Route ("SR") 84 from two to four lanes between Ruby Hill Drive and Stanley Boulevard and from two to six lanes between Stanley Boulevard and Jack London Boulevard in the City of Livermore (the "Project").

By way of background, PGC owns property in unincorporated Alameda County adjacent to existing SR 84 from Vineyard Avenue to Stanley Boulevard that will be impacted by the Project. This property is referred to in the PND/EA as property occupied by CEMEX and Vulcan Materials, and has been designated on applicable general and specific plans, and recognized at the state and county levels, as valuable mineral resources property. Indeed, the PND/EA states that the California Geological Survey has classified much of the Project area as land containing construction aggregate resources of regional significance. PND/EA 2-21.

The PND/EA recognizes the regional significance of the property owned by PGC, and acknowledges that the Project will have significant impacts on that property and the environment. However, the California Department of Transportation (the "Lead Agency") concludes, based on unsupported assumptions and without adequately considering all of the foreseeable impacts, that the impacts the Project may have on the environment are either insignificant or can be rendered insignificant through the mitigation measures set forth in the PND/EA. See PND/EA 2-21 through 2-22. Contrary to the Lead Agency's conclusions, however, a review of all of the foreseeable impacts the Project may have on the environment reveals that those impacts are significant and cannot be rendered insignificant through mitigation. Because various aspects of the Project may have a significant impact on the environment, even after mitigation, the Lead Agency was – and is – legally required to prepare an Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") instead of a negative declaration to satisfy the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"). It was also required to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement to satisfy the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA").

B-01-1

I. CEQA's Fair Argument Standard and NEPA's Significant Effect Standard

Under CEQA, the lead agency must prepare an EIR if a fair argument can be made that the proposed project may have a significant impact on the environment (the "Fair Argument Standard"). See *Laurel Heights Improvement Assoc. v. Regents of the Univ. of Cal.*, 6 Cal. 4th 1112, 1123 (1993); *No Oil, Inc. v. City of Los Angeles*, 13 Cal. 3d 68, 75, 82 (1974); *Friends of "B" Street v. City of Hayward*, 106 Cal. App. 3d 988, 1000-3 (1980). The Fair Argument Standard sets a low threshold for

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requiring preparation of an EIR. See *County Sanitation Dist. No. 2 v. County of Kern*, 127 Cal. App. 4th 1544, 1579 (2005). The lead agency must find that the proposed project has a significant impact on the environment if, among other things, the proposed project has the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, the proposed project has the potential to cause long-term, negative environmental effects, or the proposed project and other related projects produce impacts that are cumulatively considerable. See Cal. Pub. Res. C. § 21083; 14 Cal. Code Regs. § 15065.

The lead agency may prepare a mitigated negative declaration (“MND”) instead of an EIR, only if all potentially significant impacts of the proposed project will be avoided or reduced to insignificance through mitigation. See Cal. Pub. Res. C. § 21080(c)(2); 14 Cal. Code Regs. § 15070(b). However, if the lead agency fails to evaluate all of the foreseeable impacts of the proposed project, the lead agency may not support a MND (or in this case, the lower level negative declaration) by asserting that there is no substantial evidence of a significant impact. See *Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino*, 202 Cal. App. 3d 296, 311 (1988) (“[the lead] agency should not be allowed to hide behind its own failure to gather relevant data”); see also *Gentry v. City of Murietta*, 36 Cal. App. 4th 1359, 1382 (1995) (absence of evidence that impacts are insignificant supports fair argument of significance).

Similarly, under NEPA, the lead agency must prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”) if the proposed project has the potential to significantly affect the quality of the human environment. 42 U.S.C. § 4332(C). In determining whether a proposed project will significantly affect the quality of the human environment, the lead agency must consider, among other things, all the foreseeable impacts the proposed project may have on the entire affected region and society as a whole, whether the project will have a significant adverse impact on any resource, and whether the proposed project is related to other projects with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts. 40 C.F.R. § 1508.27.

B-01-1,
Cont.

Like CEQA, NEPA law has evolved to allow the lead agency to prepare a Mitigated Finding of No Significant Impact (“Mitigated FONSI”), which is similar to a MND under CEQA, when an environmental assessment (“EA”) indicates that the impacts of a proposed project are potentially significant, but with mitigation, can be reduced to less-than-significant levels. However, the mitigation measures proposed in an EA used to justify a Mitigated FONSI must be tangible and specific, not vague and illusory.

Here, the PND/EA prepared by the Lead Agency fails to adequately discuss the multiple impacts the Project will have on mineral resources and mining operations in the Project area and plans by Zone 7 to develop PGC’s mineral resources property for purposes of water storage and flood control, the cumulative impacts of the Project and other related projects, and the individual impacts of the Project on everything from traffic, to noise, to global warming, to utilities and the Tri-Valley Conservancy easement. Further, the PND/EA fails to provide a sound basis for concluding that the proposed mitigation measures will reduce these impacts to insignificant levels. Indeed, an adequate analysis of those impacts and proposed mitigation measures supports the existence of a fair argument that various aspects of the Project may have a significant effect on the environment that cannot be mitigated to insignificant levels, and supports the preparation of an EIR instead of a negative declaration under CEQA and an EIS instead of a Mitigated FONSI under NEPA.

A. The PND/EA Fails to Adequately Consider the Impacts of the Project on Mineral Resources and Mining Operations

B-01-2

Aggregate is a vital component for the construction and maintenance of homes, schools, hospitals, shopping centers, office buildings and roadways throughout California. According to reports

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issued by the California Geological Survey (“CGS”), the permitted aggregate resources in the south San Francisco region¹ decreased by 19% from 2001 to 2006, while the projected 50-year demand for aggregate increased by 3% in that region during the same period.² Thus, the CGS concluded that the south San Francisco region is currently “in short supply of aggregate.”³ Moreover, the CGS determined that of the thirty-one aggregate areas in California, the south San Francisco region is one of the five with the “greatest projected future need for aggregate,” estimated to be more than one billion tons in the next 50 years. Aggregate Availability Report at p. 3. The currently permitted aggregate resources in this region constitute only 37% of this 50-year demand projection. *See id.* at p. 13.

CGS also discusses the critical role of transportation in the cost and environmental impacts associated with providing aggregate to the construction projects where it is needed: “Aggregate is a low-unit-value, high-bulk-weight commodity, and it must be obtained from nearby sources to minimize both the dollar cost . . . and other environmental and economic costs associated with transportation. *Id.* at p. 15. Specifically, the CGS points out that “[t]ransporting aggregate from distant sources also results in increased fuel consumption, air pollution, traffic congestion, and road maintenance.” *Id.* Lastly, the Aggregate Availability Report noted that due to shortages and the resulting price increase for sand in the south San Francisco region, aggregate is being shipped from Canada to San Francisco Bay, then loaded onto trucks for delivery. *See id.* at p. 14.

B-01-2
Cont.

The PND/EA appears to acknowledge the importance of aggregate in the region, as it references that “[t]he California Geological Survey (CGS) has classified much of the project area as land containing construction aggregate resources of regional significance.” *See* PND/EA 2-21. The PND/EA also recognizes that the Project will have a significant impact on PGC’s mineral resources property, and would result in the substantial loss of these valued resources unless adequately mitigated. *See* PND/EA 2-21 through 2-22. However, the proposed mitigation fails to address all impacts and relies on assumptions that lack factual support. Further, the PND/EA fails to adequately consider the totality of the impacts and seriously underestimates the loss of mineral resources in the Project area and the Project’s effect on mining operations.

The PND/EA proposes an expansion of SR 84 that would encroach upon PGC’s mineral resources property located on the west side of SR 84 between Stanley Boulevard and Vineyard Avenue. *See id.* Although the expansion of SR 84 would create a significant impact by effectively eliminating access to at least 100 feet of PGC’s mineral resources property on each side of SR 84,⁴ the PND/EA concludes, without substantive discussion, that such an impact would be rendered insignificant if PGC is compensated for lost mineral resources. *See* PND/EA 2-22. Notwithstanding the fact that compensating

¹ The south San Francisco aggregate region includes Alameda, Contra Costa, northern Santa Clara, San Francisco and San Mateo counties.

² Aggregate Availability in California 2006, Susan Kohler of the California Geological Survey, pp. 9-10 (“Aggregate Availability Report”); available at: http://www.consrv.ca.gov/cgs/information/publications/ms/Documents/MS_52.pdf.

³ California Non-Fuel Minerals 2006, Susan Kohler of the California Geological Survey, p. 1; available at: http://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/minerals/min_prod/Documents/non_fuel_2006.pdf.

⁴ The proposed expansion of SR 84 would require the condemnation of approximately 50 feet of mineral resources property on each side of SR 84. However, because of Alameda County’s set-back requirements, at least an additional 50 feet of mineral resources property on each side of SR 84 would be rendered inaccessible for mining. Thus, at least 100 feet of mineral resources property on each side of SR 84 would be rendered inaccessible for mining.

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B-01-2
 Cont.

PGC for lost mineral resources may not be financially feasible,⁵ simply compensating PGC for lost mineral resources will not mitigate, to an insignificant level, the Project's impacts because the loss of those resources has broad affects. An adequate analysis of measures to mitigate the loss of mineral resources, at a minimum, must include a discussion of the replacement of lost minerals and the environmental impacts associated therewith. For example, if mining operations on PGC's mineral resources property are prevented, Bay Area construction projects will need to get mineral resources from more distant sources, requiring additional and longer truck traffic trips, increased consumption of fossil fuels and greater energy needs, none of which is addressed in the PND/EA. Indeed, the California Department of Conservation, as part of its California Geological Survey, issued a report in February 2007 documenting a dwindling supply of accessible mineral resources and urging local government to "consider the issue of access to mineral resources when planning for growth and development." The PND/EA fails in this respect to properly address the actual environmental and financial impacts caused by the Project not only on the known mineral resources, but also as to the impacts on traffic, energy consumption, air quality, and climate change caused by builders that are forced to travel much greater distances for mineral resources. Further, the PND/EA completely ignores the cumulative impact on gravel resources from other planned or approved projects, including the recently approved El Charro Specific Plan/Prime Outlets Development, which will also diminish gravel supplies.

B-01-3

Also, as mentioned, the SR 84 expansion and the operation of Alameda County's set back requirements effectively eliminates access to at least 100 feet of mineral resources property on each side of SR 84. However, the PND/EA is completely silent on the relationship between the Project and Alameda County's set-back requirement, the magnitude of the impact the Project and Alameda County's set-back requirement will have on existing gravel mining operations, gravel mining facilities, and private services roads, and whether those operations, facilities and roads have to be relocated due to the Project and Alameda County's set-back requirement.

B-01-4

Additionally, the PND/EA fails to adequately consider the impacts associated with eliminating PGC's private access roads that connect SR 84 to mineral resources property between Stanley Boulevard and Vineyard Avenue, and replacing those roads with one alternate access driveway on Concannon Boulevard. See PND/EA 2-24. The PND/EA summarily concludes, without providing any evidence, that the creation of the alternate access driveway on Concannon Boulevard will improve traffic operations and safety. *Id.* Further, the PND/EA is completely silent on what kind of impact replacing PGC's private access roads with one alternate access driveway on Concannon Boulevard will have on energy consumption, air quality, and other environmental conditions, what kind of impact replacing those private access roads will have on existing gravel mining operations, facilities and private service roads, and whether those operations, facilities and roads need to be relocated. To properly assess actual impacts of the Project as required by CEQA and NEPA, the PND/EA must consider the possibility and extent of these impacts in much greater detail.

Further, the PND/EA fails to discuss the Project's impacts on mining operations caused by the anticipated increased traffic on SR 84 during construction associated with the Project. In particular, the PND/EA fails to discuss, which roads will be accessible to mining truck traffic during construction, whether limiting the roads mining trucks have access to will impact traffic, noise, air quality, aesthetics, and other environmental conditions, and whether increased energy consumption will result from increased truck travel times. The Lead Agency must also address these impacts to properly gauge the impacts of the Project.

⁵ The Lead Agency has yet to calculate the amount of compensation it must pay PGC for lost mineral resources; the PND/EA simply states that "[c]ompensation for [lost mineral resources] would be determined during the right-of-way acquisition."

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B. The PND/EA Fails to Adequately Consider the Impacts of the Project on the Zone 7 Plan

B-01-5

The PND/EA acknowledges that mining operations are permitted to continue on PGC's mineral resources property until 2030, but that Zone 7 will eventually implement a reclamation plan that will create a deep basin, "chain of lakes," access roads, landscaping and other facilities on that property for purposes of groundwater recharge and flood control (the "Zone 7 Plan"). PND/EA 2-7. However, the PND/EA fails to analyze the impacts the Project may have on the Zone 7 Plan. Specifically, the PND/EA fails to analyze how much land devoted to the Zone 7 Plan will be affected by the Project, to what degree future efforts by Zone 7 to recharge the groundwater and control floods in the Project area will be affected, whether there are any significant cumulative impacts associated with the Project and the Zone 7 Plan, and whether there are any feasible measures to mitigate the significant impacts the Project may have on the Zone 7 Plan. At a minimum, the Lead Agency must consider the impacts the Project may have on the Zone 7 Plan in order to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the actual impacts associated with the Project.

C. The PND/EA Fails to Adequately Consider Cumulative Impacts

B-01-6

Proper cumulative impact analysis is vital because the full environmental impact of a proposed project cannot be gauged in a vacuum. One of the most important environmental lessons learned in recent years is that environmental damage often occurs incrementally from a variety of small sources. These sources appear insignificant when considered individually, but assume threatening dimensions when considered collectively with other sources with which they interact. Accordingly, a lead agency must find that a proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment and must prepare an EIR if the proposed project's potential environmental impacts, when examined together with the environmental impacts of other projects, are cumulatively considerable. *See* Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 21083(b); 14 Cal. Code Regs. § 15065(a)(3).

Here, the PND/EA only provides very general descriptions of past, present and future projects that were considered for cumulative impacts. *See* PND/EA 2-104 through 2-105. After providing these very general project descriptions, the PND/EA finds, without providing any evidentiary support, that cumulative impacts do not exist or cumulative impacts that are produced could be mitigated to insignificant levels. *See id.* Such conclusory findings fail to provide the in-depth, detailed analysis of cumulative impacts and related mitigation measures required by CEQA and NEPA, and make it impossible to properly gauge the full impact the Project will have on the environment.

Further, the Lead Agency has a duty to consider cumulative impacts produced by all past, present and future projects. As mentioned, however, it appears that the Lead Agency did not satisfy this duty because the Zone 7 Plan is not listed in the PND/EA as a project considered for cumulative impacts. Further, it appears that the cumulative impact analysis in the PND/EA is outdated because the PND/EA states that:

[t]he following [cumulative impacts section] discusses the planned growth and projects in the regional area that were evaluated for cumulative impacts in the City of Livermore's Environmental Impact Report for their General plan update in 2004, summarized from the I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project environment document (Caltrans 2005). PND/EA 2-104.

Conducting a cumulative impact analysis for the Project based on a cumulative impact evaluation conducted in 2004 does not account for changes to project specifications and environmental conditions, and introduction of new projects that may have occurred between 2004 and the present. For

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B-01-6 Cont. example, a cumulative impact analysis conducted in 2004 would not have considered Wal-Mart's purchase of the Ashwill parcel in 2006 and the cumulative impacts associated with the construction and maintenance of a Wal-Mart store on the Ashwill parcel. See PND/EA 2-8. The fact remains that the cumulative impact analysis provided in the PND/EA is incomplete, outdated, makes conclusions based on unsupported assumptions regarding the effectiveness of mitigation measures, and does not satisfy the requirements of CEQA and NEPA.

D. The PND/EA Fails to Adequately Consider the Impacts of the Project on Traffic

The PND/EA fails to adequately discuss the impact the construction associated with the Project will have on the environment. The PND/EA devotes all of two sentences to the discussion of those impacts. PND/EA 2-32. The PND/EA simply states that construction related to the Project will temporarily disrupt traffic flow where lane shifts or closures are required, and that a construction staging plan will be developed to maintain traffic flow. *Id.* The PND/EA provides no further information regarding the length and location of the temporary disruptions in traffic flow, the plan that will be developed to maintain traffic flow, anticipated traffic loads on SR 84 during construction, the impacts of such traffic loads, which roads will be accessible to mining trucks during construction, and what kind of impacts will result from redirecting mining trucks, all in violation of CEQA and NEPA, which require the lead agency to consider all foreseeable impacts at an early stage.

B-01-7 Further, the construction on and around SR 84 is anything but temporary. The Project is really one piece of a three piece construction project that will "improve" traffic flow through SR 84 from I-680 to I-580. The other two pieces of this greater project are the SR 84 Pigeon Pass Safety Project and the I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Construction Project. The SR 84 Pigeon Pass Safety Project is currently under construction and scheduled for completion in 2009 and the I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Construction Project is scheduled to begin construction in 2009. PND/EA 2-106. Thus, the construction on and around SR 84 will directly impact the environment for several years and such impacts will persist for several more years after construction on all three projects is completed. Given the duration of construction activities on and around SR 84 for the next several years, it is imperative that the Lead Agency analyze all foreseeable impacts of the construction related to the Project and immediately develop mitigation measures that will efficiently maintain traffic flow and reduce those impacts.

Finally, the PND/EA fails to discuss the impact the Project will have on traffic in the Project area due to the increased number of truck trips that will be required to transport aggregate from other sources to supply local construction activities. In addition to transporting aggregate from other locations in California, the Project may cause an increase in truck trips from Bay Area ports to construction sites in the region, as more aggregate may be brought in from Canada via barges to make up for the shortfall in the south San Francisco aggregate region. As discussed above, transporting aggregate has significant environmental impacts, including increased fuel consumption, air pollution, traffic congestion and road maintenance. See Aggregate Availability Report at p. 15.

E. The PND/EA Fails to Adequately Consider the Impacts of the Project on Global Warming

B-01-8 The California Legislature has found that "[g]lobal warming poses a serious threat to the economic well-being, public health, natural resources, and the environment in California." Cal. Health & Safety Code § 38501(a). To address the threat of global warming, the Legislature and the Governor have passed bills and issued orders, such as Assembly Bill 1493 and 32 and Executive Orders S-3-05 and S-20-06, that call for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Despite the enactment of such bills and issuance of such orders, the PND/EA does not disclose the impacts of the Project on emissions of greenhouse gases, makes no attempt to quantify or even estimate the current levels of greenhouse emissions in the Project area, makes no attempt to quantify or even estimate the increases in greenhouse

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B-01-8
 Cont. gas emissions that the execution of the Project will cause, makes no attempt to analyze the effects of those increases on global warming or the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions required by various Assembly Bills and Executive Orders, fails to adopt measures to mitigate the Project's impact on greenhouse gas emissions and global warming, and fails to make findings supported by substantial evidence that mitigation measures are not feasible, all in violation of CEQA and NEPA.

Of particular concern, the Air Quality section of the PND/EA discusses the National and State air quality standards in effect for the Bay Area air basin, but cites standards that are out of date. First, the table on page 2-66 lists the 8-hour attainment status for ozone under the California standards to be "unclassified."⁶ However, BAAQMD's website lists the current status for this pollutant as "non-attainment," a designation that was approved on April 28, 2005 and which took effect on May 17, 2006.⁷ Second, the PND/EA states that the 24-hour National standard for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) is a concentration of 65 ug/m³ and the attainment status is "attainment." In reality, the U.S. EPA lowered the 24-hour PM_{2.5} standard to 35 ug/m³ in 2006, and the attainment status is currently "unclassified." Third, the PND/EA lists the attainment status for visibility reducing particles under the California standards to be "attainment." By contrast, BAAQMD's website lists the current status for this pollutant as "unclassified."

Given the various environmental impacts associated with the transportation of aggregate discussed above, particularly air pollution from truck traffic and roadway congestion, the PND/EA's use of outdated air quality standards for the Bay Area air basin renders the analysis of the Project's impacts on air pollution and global warming legally inadequate.

F. The PND/EA Fails to Adequately Consider the Impacts of the Project on Utilities

B-01-9 The PND/EA acknowledges that the Project will significantly impact utilities, such as gas mains, sanitary sewer lines, storm drains, electrical lines, cable lines and telephone lines, but concludes, without much explanation, that such impact would be rendered insignificant because those utilities would be relocated to areas within the Project area. PND/EA 2-26. The PND/EA, however, does not identify the new locations for those utilities, what construction and/or excavation activities are required to move those utilities, the length of time required to move those utilities, and what individual and cumulative impacts moving those utilities will have on energy consumption, traffic, air quality, noise, aesthetics, safety, and other environmental conditions. The failure of the PND/EA to adequately discuss these potential impacts is a violation of CEQA and NEPA, and makes it impossible to analyze the full environmental impact of the Project.

G. Impact on Tri-Valley Conservancy Easement

B-01-10 The PND/EA also acknowledges that the Project will significantly impact portions of the Tri-Valley Conservancy easement just north of Vallecitos Road, but concludes that such impact would be mitigated by the dedication of comparable property, or compensation or funding for the purchase of comparable property. PND/EA 2-13 through 2-14. The PND/EA, however, fails to identify comparable property that could replace the portions of the Tri-Valley Conservancy easement that would be affected by the Project. The PND/EA also fails to specifically discuss the impact the Project will have on various aspects of the biological environment, such as surrounding natural communities, wetlands and waters,

⁶ The PND/EA lists the source of this information as the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, or "BAAQMD," and notes that the information is dated July 14, 2005.

⁷ BAAQMD Chart of Ambient Air Quality Standards & Bay Area Attainment Status, updated January 4, 2007; available at: http://www.baaqmd.gov/pln/air_quality/ambient_air_quality.htm.

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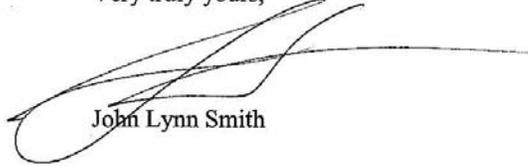
and plant and animal species, if portions of the Tri-Valley Conservancy easement had to be replaced with comparable property. Without identifying the location of the comparable property, or even its availability, and without analyzing the effects of replacing portions of the Tri-Valley Conservancy easement, a complete analysis of the impacts of the Project, and the effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures, is impossible.

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B-01
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PGC urges the Lead Agency to prepare a full and complete EIR under CEQA and EIS under NEPA. This is particularly necessary to fully inform the approving agency before it chooses between the Project, alternatives to the Project, and measures to mitigate impacts to the environment, and is required by CEQA and NEPA. We thank you for the opportunity to comment on the PND/ED and we look forward to your response. In the meantime, should you have any questions, please contact me.

Very truly yours,



John Lynn Smith

JS:rp

Responses to Comment B-01

B-01-1

See Master Response GEN-2 in regard to the comment that an EIS/EIR should have been prepared.

The last complete paragraph on page 2 of the comment letter states that the DED fails to address project impacts and mitigation for the following resources. The locations of the responses that address each issue are included in parentheses below.

- Mineral resources and mining operations (B-01-2)
- The plan for Zone 7's future use of the quarry area for water storage and flood control (B-01-5)
- Cumulative impacts (B-01-6)
- Traffic (B-01-4 and B-01-7)
- Noise (Master Response NOI-1)
- Global warming (B-01-8)
- Utilities (B-01-9)
- Tri-Valley Conservancy easement (B-01-10)

B-01-2

The project would not eliminate access to Pleasanton Gravel Company property. The project would improve existing access roads and access points to SR 84 by consolidating them to connect to signalized intersections. Consolidating the access routes would improve the safety and operations of these facilities and conform to Caltrans expressway standards.

The driveway improvements would not affect mineral resources because most work would be done outside of the approved limits of mining. Construction of the quarry access at Concannon Boulevard would encroach into the mining area; however, surplus State right-of-way is available north of this location to mitigate for this loss.

Construction activities will be coordinated with the quarry operators to ensure that mining operations are not adversely affected. The proposed access road improvements were reviewed by Pleasanton Gravel Company, Vulcan, Cemex, and Utility Vault staff during DED development and all comments were addressed in the current design. Additional coordination will be undertaken during the final design phase to ensure the access improvements are coordinated with existing and future operations of the Pleasanton Gravel Company property.

B-01-3

The LAVQAR Plan requires minimum 50-foot setbacks from public streets around all reclamation areas. The setbacks will be maintained except in one parcel owned by the Pleasanton Gravel Company (item 14 in FED Table 2.1-1), where an area of 0.52 acre within current mining limits would be acquired to construct the consolidated quarry access at SR 84 and Concannon Boulevard. The FED has been revised to include this information in Sections 2.1.2.2 and 2.4. Also see the response to Comment L-04-2.

The project design was discussed with Pleasanton Gravel Company, Vulcan, Cemex, and Utility Vault staff during DED development. All comments were addressed in the current design. Additional coordination will be undertaken during the final design phase to ensure that highway improvements do not affect existing and future operations of the Pleasanton Gravel Company property.

B-01-4

Master Response CI-1 discusses the basis for the conclusion that replacing the existing quarry driveways with a consolidated access at Concannon Boulevard would not have significant impacts.

Relocation of the access roads was considered in the study area evaluation. The traffic operations analysis accounted for the closure of the access roads and construction of a new consolidated access at SR 84/Concannon Boulevard, and data from this analysis were used to evaluate impacts to air quality, noise, and energy. No impacts would result from the access relocation.

B-01-5

The comment provides no specifics regarding project-related impacts. The actual acreages that would be affected by the project are listed in Table 2.1-1. The proposed design accounts for future use of the affected quarry property by Zone 7 for groundwater recharge and flood control. Coordination with the quarry owner, quarry operators, and Zone 7 will be maintained during detailed design and construction phases of the project.

B-01-6

The City of Livermore Planning Department reviewed the DED's discussion of cumulative impacts (Section 2.21) and concluded that the discussion is complete and includes the appropriate projects. Under CEQA (CEQA Guidelines Section 15125[a]), an environmental document must include a description of the existing physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project at the time the notice of preparation is published, or if no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis is commenced. As described in Section 3.1 of the DED, environmental analysis for the project began in 2005.

Nonetheless, Section 2.21 has been revised to include additional planned development approved after initiation of the environmental analysis for the SR 84 Expressway Widening Project.

The comment mentions Wal-Mart's 2006 purchase of the Ashwill parcel and cumulative impacts associated with construction and operation. In March 2007, the Livermore City Council approved an ordinance to bar large retail developments in Livermore. The ordinance prohibits any superstore larger than 90,000 square feet with at least 5 percent of the sales floor area devoted to nontaxable goods such as groceries. The construction of Wal-Mart was blocked and not included in Section 2.21.

B-01-7

A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be prepared during final design, in accordance with Caltrans requirements and guidelines. The TMP will address construction-related traffic impacts from staged construction and detours as well as specific traffic handling concerns. Two-way traffic on public roads and existing access to SR 84 will be

maintained during construction. Short-term closures required for specific construction operations will occur during nighttime hours. Press releases will be distributed and other forms of outreach will be conducted to adequately inform the public about project construction and its associated traffic impacts.

B-01-8

The proposed project is intended to improve local traffic circulation and reduce delays. As described in Section 2.22, the San Francisco Bay Area's Regional Transportation Plan (MTC 2005) states that implementation of proposed regional improvements, including the proposed project, would reduce average travel time and improve traffic flow, resulting in reduced carbon dioxide emissions within the overall regional area. Carbon dioxide is a component of GHG emissions. The project's contributions to reducing travel times, travel distance, and congestion would be beneficial toward reducing these emissions.

Under CEQA, an environmental document must include a description of the existing physical environmental conditions in the project vicinity at the time the notice of preparation is published, or if no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis is commenced (CEQA Guidelines Section 15125[a]).

Environmental analysis for the proposed project began in 2005. The changes in air quality standards and attainment status listed in the comment took effect in or after 2006. Those changes do not affect the conclusions of the analysis. Nonetheless, Table 2.14-1 has been revised to include the updated information.

B-01-9

To meet expressway standards, private utilities must be relocated outside of the State right-of-way. In the vicinity of Pleasanton Gravel Company, underground utilities will be relocated within the quarry's buffer area, approximately 35 feet from the limits of mining. Details for utility installation will be developed during the final project design phase, and utilities will be relocated using construction methods approved by the utility owner and in coordination with the quarry owner, quarry operator, Zone 7, and Alameda County. Construction of the utility relocations will be coordinated with the quarry operators to avoid impacts to quarry operations. Outside of the quarry areas, a traffic handling plan will be developed during final design for utility installation. Avoidance measures for construction-related air quality impacts are documented in Section 2.14.6.

B-01-10

The Build Alternative has been modified to avoid impacts to the property covered by the Tri-Valley Conservancy easement.

B-01-11

See Master Response GEN-2.

Comment B-02 Ruby Hill Board of Directors, Katherine Fonte



Sent Via Electronic Mail to epang@dot.ca.gov

November 14, 2007

Caltrans District 4, Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang
111 Grand Avenue
Oakland, CA 94610

Re: Route 84 Expressway – Widening Project

Dear Mr. Pang:

It is our understanding that the State of California, through the Initial Study/Environmental Assessment (IS/EA), is proposing to conduct the project under a Negative Declaration (ND), thereby forgoing the need for a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

B-02-1

Our office has received numerous comments concerning the Highway 84 Widening Project, both in opposition to and support of the project. However, the most legitimate concerns raised are about the impending noise increase that will be generated.

B-02-2

We understand that after the completion of the widening of Highway 84 (from Interstate 580 to Vallecitos Road), the projected vehicle traffic will increase from 36,000/day to 60,000/day and of this traffic, 8% will account for semi-trucks.

The ND indicates that noise levels would increase between 1 to 6 dBA from current levels and would not exceed the FHWA/Department Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) at any residence. However, noise levels at the tennis courts and recreation fields (adjacent to Highway 84) would approach the NAC levels. The information suggests that because of these results, sound abatement measures have not been considered.

Although we abstain from taking an official position concerning the project, we realize the noise increase may adversely affect many homeowners who reside along Highway

November 14, 2007
Re: Route 84 Expressway – Widening Project
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**B-02-2,
Cont.**

84 and also includes those individuals who enjoy the Community Center for social and celebratory gatherings.

We request that every sound attenuation measure be considered to reduce the amount of disruption to Ruby Hill residents and their property values, including sound walls and rubberized asphalt.

B-02-3

The Board would like to meet with the individual(s) who is directly responsible for any noise studies that have, or will be, conducted. We would like to make certain that our concerns are duly noted and addressed during the initial public comment period. Please contact Katherine Fonte at the Community Center Office number below to schedule a meeting to provide this information.

We appreciate your attention concerning this matter.

Sincerely,
For the Board of Directors



Katherine Fonte
Association Manager
Katherine@peachtreecas.com

cc: Brigetta Smith, Caltrans (via e-mail to brigetta_smith@dot.ca.gov)
Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA (via e-mail to adao@actia2022.com)

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Responses to Comment B-02

B-02-1

See Master Response NOI-1 for a discussion of noise level changes from the proposed project.

B-02-2

Sound mitigation for these recreation areas was considered in the DED (Section 2.15.4) and the Noise Study Report (Wilson, Ihrig and Associates 2007). As noted in the comment, the field south of the Ruby Hill tennis courts and north of the northernmost residence fronting SR 84, and the two tennis courts and soccer field north of these tennis courts are exposed to SR 84 traffic noise levels that would approach the Federal noise abatement criteria (Receiver IDs 19 and 20 in Table 2.15-3). A 6-foot-high soundwall at

the SR 84 right-of-way fronting these facilities was considered feasible both acoustically and from a cost standpoint. However, the soundwall would block views from the affected recreation areas to the northeast, across the existing vineyard areas, the Arroyo del Valle drainage channel, and distant views. The Ruby Hill development, when originally constructed, included an open metal fence along the edge of the development above SR 84 that allows for this view. Resident and public input on the soundwall was solicited during the DED review period. After consideration of “reasonableness” factors, the soundwall has been determined to be not reasonable and will not be included in the project.

No residences or the Community Center would have noise levels that exceed the noise abatement criteria for consideration of soundwalls (see Master Response NOI-1). The noise evaluation included all potentially sensitive land uses along the SR 84 corridor. Because the future noise levels with the project are not predicted to exceed the Federal criteria for noise abatement at any location along the project route, soundwalls were not included in the project or considered further in the evaluation.

The use of rubberized asphalt pavement can reduce tire noise, although the FHWA and the Department do not consider it a traffic noise abatement measure. Any effective noise reduction from rubberized asphalt varies by application and tends to diminish over time. Although it cannot qualify as noise mitigation under Federal criteria or procedures, it will be used throughout the project limits as part of the project design.

B-02-3

A meeting will be coordinated with representatives of the Ruby Hill development during the final project design phase. Comments from meeting(s) with concerned groups will be documented and considered in future decisions on the project.

Comment B-03 Union Pacific Railroad, Gerard Sullivan



November 13, 2007

Via UPS Overnight
Department of Transportation,
District 4
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, California 94623-0660
Attn: Ed Pang

Re: Comments on Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration /
Environmental Assessment State Route 84 Expressway Widening
Project

Dear Mr. Pang:

Union Pacific Railroad Company ("UP") recently became aware of the State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project (the "Project") by receiving a copy of the "Initial Study with Negative Declaration / Environmental Assessment" dated October, 2007 (the "Study"). UP does have serious concerns about this Project and provides the following comments.

B-03-1

As a preliminary matter, of great concern to UP, is the fact that UP was not identified by the Department of Transportation as a party interested in, or affected by, the Project. UP has a significant interest in the proposed construction at Stanley Blvd and Isabel Ave, as well as in any proposed widening of SR 84 under the UP bridge.

Stanley Blvd. lies immediately adjacent to a 200 foot wide rail corridor owned by UP, on which we currently operate UP's Oakland Subdivision main line (the "UP main line"). Any widening of Stanley Blvd. to the north would have to impact UP ownership. The proposed widening of SR 84 under the existing railroad bridge will also have substantial impact on UP. Yet UP's property is not even listed in Table 2.1-1 of the Study as an affected property. Given the proximity of the UP Main Line to the Project drives the conclusion that UP should have been notified of the Study and its participation been sought long before the Project got to this point.

B-03-2

UP operates freight services, and the Altamont Commuter Express ("ACE") operates passenger services, on the UP main line. The UP main line experiences a very high volume of rail traffic, as it serves the metropolitan Bay Area and is a major transportation corridor through Northern California. ACE is currently doing a study on a proposal to lay a separate track for passenger service through the area near Stanley Blvd. and Isabel Ave, so there would be two (2) rail lines paralleling each other.

Gerard Sullivan
General Attorney

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gsullivan@up.com

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UP Comments on SR 84 Widening
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B-03-2,
Cont.

This Project will have substantial impact on UP and ACE and their rail operations, and would appear to have to involve seeking certain property rights from UP in widening Stanley Blvd. and in widening SR 84 under our bridge. Yet the only mention found of UP was a one line reference in Section 1.4.1.6 of the Study.

B-03-3

Due to the Study's failure to consider the impacts to rail operations and the UP Main Line and to list UP as an affected property owner, we believe the Study is defective and the adoption of a Negative Declaration would be improper. The Project must take into consideration protecting the continued traffic on the UP main line and also allow for the future construction of another bridge to serve ACE. Disruption of rail operations has the potential to have regional and national impacts affecting other railroads as well as UP, and mitigations must be undertaken to avoid this.

B-03-4

Please give notice to UP of all future developments with respect to the Project as follows:

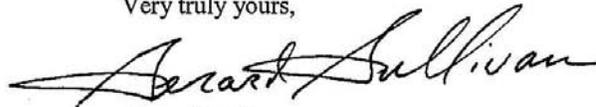
Mr. Terrel Anderson
Manager of Industry and Public Projects
Union Pacific Railroad Company
10031 Foothills Boulevard
Roseville, California 95747-7101

With a copy to:

Ms. Donna Coltrane
Union Pacific Railroad Company
1400 Douglas Street - STOP 1580
Omaha, Nebraska 68179-1580

We look forward to being involved in this Project going forward. Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,



Gerard Sullivan
General Attorney

Responses to Comment B-03

B-03-1

Section 3.3 has been revised to identify that Union Pacific is a highly interested party in the project. Although SR 84 will be widened between the abutments of the existing bridge structure, Union Pacific was not listed in DED Table 2.1-1 because no land acquisition is proposed from Union Pacific property. The Department will, however,

require access control rights for the segment of Union Pacific right-of-way fronting the intersection of Stanley Boulevard and the Stanley Connector Ramp to SR 84. Table 2.1-1 of the FED has been modified to include the Union Pacific parcels for which access control is required.

B-03-2

The project will not require modification of the existing Union Pacific structure, and construction will not impact Union Pacific tracks or affect Union Pacific and ACE operations. The Department will require access control rights for the segment of Union Pacific right-of-way fronting the intersection of Stanley Boulevard and the Stanley Connector Ramp to SR 84.

B-03-3

The proposed project will not affect rail operations.

B-03-4

The project will be coordinated with Union Pacific during the final design phase and all Union Pacific concerns and requirements will be addressed.

Comment B-04 Miller Starr Regalia, Kristina Lawson



**MILLER STARR
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December 28, 2007

VIA E-MAIL (ED_PANG@DOT.CA.GOV) AND REGULAR MAIL

Ed Pang
Department of Transportation
District 4
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

Re: State Route 84 Expressway Widening Project, Alameda County, California -
District 04-ALA-84, PM 22.5/27.3 EA 297600
*Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration/Environmental
Assessment*

Dear Mr. Pang:

B-04-1

This office represents a number of concerned citizens who reside in the general vicinity of State Route 84 ("SR 84") in the Livermore and Pleasanton areas of Alameda County, California. On behalf of our clients, we have reviewed the Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration/Environmental Assessment ("IS/ND/EA") prepared by Caltrans in connection with a proposed widening and upgrade of SR 84 to expressway standards between Jack London Boulevard and Ruby Hill Drive (Post Mile 22.5 to 27.30). As set forth in more detail below, our substantive legal review and analysis of the IS/ND/EA reveals that the document fails to comply with numerous mandatory requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"; Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21000 et seq.), and the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA"; 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4347).¹

B-04-2

At the most fundamental level, we are unable to clearly understand Caltrans' basis and rationale for its determinations and conclusions (and in some instances we are unable to determine what conclusions have been reached) because of the lack of information included in and poor organization of the IS/ND/EA. As an example of the difficulty we had with the document, in our attempt to review and analyze the initial study to determine whether it is adequate, we reviewed Appendix D of the

¹ While the reason for preparation of a joint CEQA/NEPA document does not appear to have been disclosed in the IS/ND/EA, we assume that the project must be reviewed under NEPA because it will also be carried out, financed, or approved in part by a federal agency. Accordingly, the IS/ND/EA must meet the requirements of both CEQA and NEPA. (See, e.g., 14 Cal. Code Regs., §§ 15220 et seq.)

Offices: Walnut Creek / Palo Alto

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Cont.

IS/ND/EA, which consists of a completed CEQA Guidelines Appendix G environmental checklist form. However, this form only includes bare conclusions and does not include the information required to be included in an initial study by CEQA Guidelines section 15063(d). (14 Cal. Code Regs., § 15063(d).) Instead of including references to supporting data and evidence within the checklist form (as is common CEQA practice), page D-1 of the IS/ND/EA states that all supporting documentation for the initial study is included in Chapter 2 of the IS/ND/EA. Apparently, the relevant data and supporting evidence for each checklist conclusion is included somewhere in Chapter 2's 110 pages.

B-04-3

Upon review of Chapter 2, there is no clear evidentiary basis for many of the checklist's conclusions, and the absence of this information makes it impossible for the public to adequately assess the significance of the project's impacts. (See, e.g., *Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino* (1988) 202 Cal.App.3d 296.) Moreover, Chapter 2 appears to identify numerous impacts not identified in the checklist (i.e., traffic and aesthetic impacts, discussed below). In light of these fatal problems, the environmental review of the project is fundamentally flawed. A sufficient environmental review must be conducted to clearly identify, analyze, and mitigate the project's potentially significant environmental effects, in addition to addressing the issues identified below.

B-04-4

1. **Caltrans Must Analyze The Potentially Significant Effects Of The Whole Of The Action, And May Not Divide The Project Into Subprojects To Avoid Considering The Project's Environmental Effects.**

Pursuant to CEQA, Caltrans cannot treat one interrelated project as a succession of smaller projects, none of which, by itself, causes significant impacts. (*Citizens Association for Sensible Development of Bishop Area v. County of Inyo* (1985) 172 Cal.App.3d 151.) "Piecemealing proposed highway improvements in separate environmental statements should be avoided." (*Daly v. Volpe* (1975) 514 F.2d 1106, 1109.) Contrary to the express direction of both CEQA and NEPA, the IS/ND/EA itself admits that it has reviewed only a portion of the "whole of the action."

The IS/ND/EA first suggests (on page i), that the project reviewed is the proposed widening and upgrade of SR 84 to expressway standards between Jack London Boulevard and Ruby Hill Drive (Post Mile 22.5 to 27.30). The IS/ND/EA then reveals, without including any environmental analysis, that this approximately 5 mile long roadway segment widening is in fact part of a comprehensive, large-scale effort to "[i]mprove SR 84 as a regional connection between I-680 and I-580, consistent with other programmed projects, by completing a continuous four- to six- lane facility between Pigeon Pass and the I-580/Isabel Avenue interchange." (IS/ND/EA, p. 1-2; see also IS/ND/EA, p. 1-8 ["In mid-2007, the Department will begin to construct a project to realign and widen over 2 miles of SR 84 from Ruby Hill Drive to south of Pigeon Pass with two lanes in each direction over the summit. The City of

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Livermore and the Department also plan to extend SR 84 from Jack London Boulevard to I-580 via a new interchange connection to I-580 between Airway Boulevard and Portola Avenue. Construction of this interchange project is scheduled to begin in Spring 2009. [¶] These two programmed projects, together with the proposed project, would complete a continuous four- to six- lane facility on SR 84 between Pigeon Pass and I-580..."; IS/ND/EA, p. 1-10 ["The widening would generally follow the existing roadway alignment, and would conform to the SR 84 Pigeon Pass Safety Project to the south and the City of Livermore/Caltrans I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project to the north."]; IS/ND/EA, Figure 2.1-1 [identifying I-580/Isabel Interchange and Pigeon Pass projects as "separate projects"].)

Caltrans' failure to fully and completely analyze the effects of the whole of the action – including the related "other programmed projects" (IS/ND/EA, p. 1-2) - is an example of "piecemealing" a project to avoid preparation of an environmental impact report ("EIR"). (See 14 Cal. Code Regs., § 15378(c).) The entirety of the project must be considered and analyzed in order to ensure the resulting environmental document is sufficient to inform the public and decisionmakers of the environmental consequences of the project.

B-04-4,
Cont.

A public agency is not permitted to subdivide a single project into smaller individual subprojects in order to avoid the responsibility of considering the environmental impact of the project as a whole. "The requirements of CEQA, "cannot be avoided by chopping up proposed projects into bite-size pieces which, individually considered, might be found to have no significant effect on the environment or to be only ministerial."

(*Orinda Assn. v. Board of Supervisors* (1986) 182 Cal.App.3d 1145, 1171.)

In the context of road projects, specific criteria exist for evaluating the sufficiency of an environmental review document that analyzes only a portion of a larger roadway project. In *Del Mar Terrace Conservancy, Inc. v. City Council* (1992) 10 Cal.App.4th 712, 732-733 ("*Del Mar*"), the Fourth District Court of Appeal relied on the rule articulated in *Daly v. Volpe, supra*, 514 F.2d at 1109-1110, which provides that a highway section would be entitled to separate environmental review where the following four criteria are present:

- (1) The highway section is "(a) of substantial length and (b) between logical terminal points (termini) (defined as major crossroads, population centers, major traffic generators, or similar major highway control elements."
- (2) The highway section has "independent utility."

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Cont.

(3) The length selected for review "assures adequate opportunity for the consideration of alternatives."

(4) The highway section "seems to fulfill important state and local needs, such as relieving particular traffic congestion."

Unlike the project at issue in *Del Mar*, none of the above referenced criteria can be satisfied by the project reviewed in the IS/ND/EA. This project reviewed in the IS/ND/EA is a small roadway project designed for the sole purpose of connecting two other substantial road projects. In and of itself, it has no "independent utility" whatsoever. As is evident on the face of Figure 2.1-1 of the IS/ND/EA, the other road projects must be constructed in order for the project to make any sense. Moreover, if the project was implemented in the absence of the two other projects referenced in the IS/ND/EA, the purpose of the project – "...to improve SR 84 as a regional connection between I-680 and I-580" (IS/ND/EA, p. v) – could not be achieved.

Cumulatively, the three individual "subprojects" referenced in the IS/ND/EA could have disastrous permanent environmental consequences. Until such time as the whole of the action has been properly analyzed under CEQA and NEPA, the environmental review of the project is inadequate.

2. **In Addition To Impermissibly Segmenting The Project, Caltrans Has Failed To Properly Define And Adequately Describe All Components Of The Project.**

B-04-5

The IS/ND/EA omits a description of various components of the project in its project description and is therefore inadequate. "An accurate project description is necessary for an intelligent evaluation of the potential environmental effects of a proposed activity." (*McQueen v. Board of Directors* (1988) 202 Cal.App.3d 1136, 1143.) "[O]nly through an accurate view of the project may the public and interested parties and public agencies balance the proposed project's benefits against its environmental cost, consider appropriate mitigation measures, assess the advantages of terminating the proposal, and properly weigh other alternatives..." (*City of Santee v. County of San Diego* (1989) 214 Cal.App.3d 1438, 1454.)

Here, Caltrans has left various key components undefined and undescribed. For example, page 2-38 of the IS/ND/EA notes that landscaping is a component of the project, but that "a planting design" will be developed at some point in the future. Similarly, the IS/ND/EA indicates that existing bridges will be widened and new piers may be added, but the IS/ND/EA never describes the extent of the proposed improvements. (IS/ND/EA, p. 2-49.) The selection and description of roadway noise abatement measures is also omitted from the IS/ND/EA. (IS/ND/EA, p. 2-84.)

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 Cont.

Because the IS/ND/EA does not "adequately apprise all interested parties of the true scope of the project for intelligent weighing of the consequences of the project," informed decisionmaking is precluded. (*City of Santee v. County of San Diego, supra*, 214 Cal.App.3d at pp. 1454-1455.) The project description included in the IS/ND/EA is inaccurate and incomplete, and must be revised. (See *San Joaquin Raptor/Wildlife Rescue Center* (1994) 27 Cal.App.4th 713, 734.)

B-04-6

3. **The IS/ND/EA Fails To Comply With CEQA's Requirements for Negative Declarations.**

Our review of the IS/ND/EA also indicates that the "Proposed Negative Declaration" fails to comply with numerous technical requirements of CEQA. As a first matter, we are unclear as to the purpose of the "Proposed Negative Declaration," which, on its face, states that it is "subject to modification based on comments received by interested parties and the public." When can the public expect to see this document in final form, including all of the components listed in section 15071 of the CEQA Guidelines? (See 14 Cal. Code Regs., § 15071.) The "Proposed Negative Declaration" is currently missing a complete list of the proposed mitigation measures (14 Cal. Code Regs., § 15071(e)), and an understandable initial study documenting reasons to support the proposed "determination" (14 Cal. Code Regs., § 15071(d)).

B-04-7

4. **The IS/ND/EA Is Not Sufficient For The Approval Of The Project And An EIR Must Be Prepared.**

Caltrans apparently purports to satisfy the requirements of CEQA through the IS/ND/EA. However, the environmental review conducted contains erroneous determinations and assumptions and fails to address environmental issues unique to the project, and is therefore inadequate. The resulting IS/ND/EA consequently contains a number of defects, and any approvals granted based on the IS/ND/EA would be overturned by a reviewing court. In light of the project's potentially significant environmental impacts, a complete EIR must be prepared if the project is to move forward.

B-04-8

A. **Standard For Determining Whether An EIR Is Necessary.**

CEQA contains a strong presumption in favor of preparing an EIR. That presumption is reflected in the "fair argument" standard which requires an agency to prepare an EIR whenever there is substantial evidence in the record supporting a fair argument that a project may have a significant effect on the environment. (*Laurel Heights Improvement Assn. v. Regents of the University of California* (1993) 6 Cal.4th 1112; *No Oil, Inc. v. City of Los Angeles* (1974) 13 Cal.3d 68; *Friends of "B" Street v. City of Hayward* (1980) 106 Cal.App.3d 988.) Accordingly, if the project may cause a significant effect on the environment, Caltrans must prepare and certify an EIR.

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B-04-8,
Cont.

The requirement to prepare an EIR may be dispensed with only if Caltrans finds no substantial evidence in the initial study or elsewhere in the record that the project, including mitigation measures, may significantly impact the environment. A mitigated negative declaration (which is apparently what is proposed here) is appropriate only where mitigation measures are incorporated into a project to mitigate significant project impacts. (14 Cal. Code Regs., § 15064(f)(2).)

B. Substantial Evidence In The Record Supports A Fair Argument That Unmitigated Significant Impacts Will Result From The Project.

B-04-9

We have identified the following substantial evidence that the project as proposed may have potentially significant environmental impacts. Set forth below is an identification of specific effects, explanation of the reasons these effects will occur, and an explanation regarding the significance of the identified effects. (See 14 Cal. Code Regs., § 15204.) Because no adequate mitigation measures have been proposed to mitigate these potentially significant impacts, the proposed IS/ND/EA is inadequate.

- The mitigation proposed to mitigate the project's conversion of oak woodlands fails to comply with section 21083.4 of the Public Resources Code. Section 21083.4 requires very specific mitigation to mitigate the significant effect of the conversion of oak woodlands. The very general mitigation proposed in connection with the project (see IS/ND/EA, p. H-6), fails to comply with section 21083.4's mandate.
- The IS/ND/EA has not analyzed the project's potentially significant effects on the "environment." As defined by CEQA Guidelines section 15360:

B-04-10

'Environment' means the physical conditions which exist within the area which will be affected by a proposed project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historical or aesthetic significance. The area involved shall be the area in which significant effects would occur either directly or indirectly as a result of the project. The 'environment' includes both natural and man-made conditions.

(14 Cal. Code Regs., § 15360.) The IS/ND/EA's "Growth" section (Section 2.2) provides a illustrative example of the document's failure to analyze the project's potentially significant effects on the "environment." In Section 2.2 of the IS/ND/EA (beginning on page 2-14), the "environment" is improperly limited to Alameda County, Livermore, and Pleasanton. As explained on page 1-1 of the IS/ND/EA, SR 84 provides "an alternative east-west link between the Central Valley and the San Francisco Bay Area..." Accordingly,

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Cont.

at a minimum, potential growth inducing effects on the Central Valley should have been identified, analyzed, and mitigated in the IS/ND/EA.

B-04-11

- The IS/ND/EA fails to analyze the impacts of the proposed mitigation measures. For example, the mitigation measures include acquisition of additional rights-of-way. Because this process is time consuming and often difficult, the IS/ND/EA should have explained whether the acquisition of the necessary rights-of-way is feasible, whether it can be timely accomplished, and whether an alternative plan exists in the event the necessary rights-of-way cannot be acquired. This is a particularly significant omission in light of the fact that a portion of the right-of-way that must be acquired is currently under Williamson Act contract, and includes prime farmland. Additionally, it is not clear that funding is available for any aspect of the project, including, but not limited to, payment for the 16 properties which must be acquired before the project may proceed. (IS/ND/EA, pp. 2-11- 2-12.) If this property cannot be acquired, what is Caltrans' alternative plan and what are the impacts of that plan?

B-04-12

- The IS/ND/EA improperly defers formation of mitigation until after project approval. As explained on page H-2 of the IS/ND/EA, "landscaping plans will be developed during the project design phase." Further, "[t]he final design of the project will include provisions to handle additional runoff from the increase in impervious area, such as through a series of roadside ditches and drainage systems." (IS/ND/EA, p. H-3.) The IS/ND/EA also improperly defers formulation of noise mitigation to the future. (IS/ND/EA, p. H-5.) (See 14 Cal. Code Regs., § 15126.4(b) ["...Formulation of mitigation measures should not be deferred until some future time..."]; see also *San Joaquin Raptor Rescue Center v. County of Merced* (2007) 149 Cal.App.4th 645, 669-671.)

"A negative declaration requiring formulation of mitigation measures at a future time violates the rule that members of the public and other agencies must be given an opportunity to review mitigation measures before a negative declaration is approved." (1 Kostka & Zisckhe, Practice Under the California Environmental Quality Act (Cal CEB), § 6.72; Pub. Resources Code, § 21080(c)(2); 14 Cal Code Regs., § 15070(b)(1).) As set forth in section 15070(b)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines, a mitigated negative declaration is only appropriate where revisions in the project plans (i.e., proposed mitigation measures) have been agreed to by the project proponent before the proposed mitigated negative declaration and initial study are released for public review. (14 Cal. Code Regs., § 15070(b).) Because the proposed revisions to the project have not yet been formulated, Caltrans and the project proponents have failed to comply with this clear requirement of CEQA.

LGHV468591722071.1

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B-04-13

- The IS/ND/EA fails to adequately identify, analyze, and mitigate the project's significant visual impacts. Page D-2 of the IS/ND/EA states that all aesthetics impacts will be less than significant. However, among other things, the IS/ND/EA fails to analyze the visual impacts of retaining walls that "would vary in height up to a maximum of 30 feet." (IS/ND/EA, p. 1-12.) The IS/ND/EA also fails to analyze the visual impacts of views from private residences, and public trails. Numerous area residents, and our clients, have indicated in comments to Caltrans that the project (particularly in the absence of any landscaping plan whatsoever) will have significant adverse aesthetic impacts. These residents have directly and personally observed the areas proposed to be affected by the project. (See *Pocket Protectors v. City of Sacramento* (2004) 124 Cal.App.4th 903.)

Interestingly, the visual simulations provided in Figure 2.8-1 of the IS/ND/EA fail to include the concrete median which is described as a component of the project on page 1-11. In that respect, Figure 2.8-1 is misleading and fails to disclose the true visual impact of the project for purposes of analysis.

B-04-14

- The IS/ND/EA fails to adequately identify, analyze, and mitigate the project's significant traffic impacts. As noted on page I-9 of the IS/ND/EA, "[w]idening of SR 84 within the project limits in combination with adjacent corridor improvements would also divert truck and commute traffic from residential and commercial areas in the cities of Livermore and Pleasanton to SR 84." While the impact is clearly identified – diversion of truck and commute traffic – the potentially significant effects related to this identified impact are not analyzed or proposed to be mitigated by the MND.

Additionally, the traffic analysis contained in the IS/ND/EA appears to be out-of-date in that it appears to be based on a 2006 study. (See IS/ND/EA, p. 2-27; see also IS/ND/EA, p. 2-30, Table 2.7-1 [identifying "existing" conditions as those conditions existing in the year 2005].) By basing its analysis on a study that was completed well over a year ago, the IS/ND/EA may have failed to identify potentially significant environmental impacts. We further note that the public has no ability to review the base data or the project baseline used in the IS/ND/EA because Caltrans' failed to include the supporting study as an attachment to the IS/ND/EA.²

B-04-15

4. **Conclusion.**

In light of the substantial evidence presented above, approval of the IS/ND/EA by Caltrans and any subsequent commencement of the project would fail to comply with CEQA and NEPA and would be an abuse of discretion. Until such time as

² The use of out-of-date traffic data also impacts the IS/ND/EA's air quality and climate change analyses. Once the appropriate data has been collected and analyzed, all affected sections of the IS/ND/EA must be updated.

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**B-04-15,
Cont.**

complete and proper environmental review has been conducted by Caltrans or another appropriate agency, the project may not proceed. We look forward to receiving and reviewing the project EIR once it has been prepared.

Very truly yours,

MILLER STARR REGALIA



Kristina D. Lawson

KDL:kdl

cc: Clients
Michael E. DiGeronimo, Esq.

Responses to Comment B-04

B-04-1

This introductory comment is addressed in the responses to the following specific points made by the commenter. The Department believes that the Draft Environmental Document (DED) complies with and addresses CEQA and NEPA requirements.

Regarding footnote 1, the Department has been assigned environmental review and consultation responsibilities under NEPA pursuant to 23 United States Code (USC) 327, as stated at the beginning of Chapter 1. This means that the Department is now responsible for the FHWA's responsibilities under NEPA as well as consultation and coordination responsibilities under other Federal environmental laws. The project affects resources that are subject to Federal consultation and coordination (see Section 1.6), and thus a joint CEQA/NEPA document was prepared.

B-04-2

The DED's organization and format is in accordance with the standard Caltrans template for an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment, which is used State-wide for transportation projects. The template was developed to comply with CEQA and NEPA requirements.

The CEQA environmental checklist in Appendix D provides the context for the significance determinations presented in the DED. The DED complies with 14 California Code of Regulations (CCR) 15063(d) by including the completed checklist and briefly providing evidence to support the entries, in narrative form, in Chapter 2. To aid in

understanding the basis for the DED's determinations of significance, a table has been added after the checklist in Appendix D providing explanations of each determination and page number citations to supporting data in the DED.

B-04-3

This introductory comment is addressed specifically in the following responses. See also the response to Comment B-04-2.

B-04-4

The project does not have a "sole purpose" of connecting two other substantial road projects. As discussed in Master Response GEN-6, the project has logical termini, independent utility, and adequate length for consideration of alternatives. Improving SR 84 as a regional connection between I-680 and I-580 is listed as one of the general purposes of the project; other purposes include improving local traffic circulation by adding capacity on SR 84, upgrading SR 84 to an expressway by providing access control and relocating private utilities out of State right-of-way, and providing the opportunity to improve pedestrian and bicycle access by connecting multiuse trails.

The first three of the four criteria in *Daly v. Volpe* correspond to the FHWA regulations (23 CFR 771.111[f]) for defining a transportation project, and are addressed in Master Response GEN-6. The fourth criterion, for the highway section "to fulfill important state and local needs, such as relieving particular traffic congestion," is supported by the findings of the detailed traffic study completed for the project (Fehr and Peers 2006). The proposed project would improve future operating conditions at several intersections within the project limits (Table 2.7-1) and divert regional through-traffic away from local streets.

The cumulative effects of the three projects are considered in Section 2.21.3.

B-04-5

The project description in the DED accurately identifies the project scope. Not all components of a project are typically specified in detail until later during the final design phase.

Section 2.8.4 identifies the locations and types of landscaping that are proposed as well as the timing of landscape design and installation. Detailed landscaping plans with exact species and planting locations/patterns will be developed during the project design phase. The description of landscaping in the DED provides a sufficient level of detail for public understanding of the project.

The widening of two existing bridges and provision of new crossings at Arroyo del Valle and Arroyo Mocho are described in general terms because the design of these features was in draft form at the DED phase. However, the DED accounts for the bridge work using worst-case assumptions about potential effects of the bridge widening and construction as developed in the Draft Advance Planning Studies. The survey and inventory of biological species included a wide study area around the Arroyo del Valle and Arroyo Mocho bridges. The structure widths were based on standard lane and shoulder widths required for this type of project. New piers to support the additional bridge width were included in the amount of potential fill in these analyses. Potential effects of the bridge work are discussed in Sections 2.9.2.5 (historic resource evaluation), 2.10 (hydrology and floodplains), 2.11 (water quality and stormwater runoff), 2.12 (ground shaking, liquefaction and lateral spreading), 2.13 (asbestos potential), 2.15 (pile driving noise from pile installation), 2.17 (wetlands and other waters of the U.S.), and 2.18 (plant and animal species). Section 1.4.1.4 has been updated to include additional details about the bridges.

Noise abatement measures are required for a project when forecasted noise levels exceed the applicable Federal noise abatement criteria for the land use. The detailed noise analysis, which was conducted in accordance with State and Federal guidelines, concluded that noise levels would not exceed the applicable criteria. Therefore, noise abatement measures were not included as part of the project. As described in Section 2.15.4, a soundwall was considered for the one location where the noise level will approach Federal noise abatement criteria. The soundwall was determined to be not reasonable and will not be included in the project. See Master Response NOI-1 for additional discussion.

The project description provides adequate detail about these project features to allow for informed decision making.

B-04-6

As described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15073, the Negative Declaration is labeled “proposed” when it is circulated for public review. After a DED is circulated, the public comments are considered, the document is reviewed, and the proposed Negative Declaration is approved if, on the basis of the whole record (including the DED and any comments received), there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment.

As stated in the introduction to Chapter 1, the Department has been assigned environmental review and consultation responsibilities under NEPA pursuant to 23 United States Code (USC) 327. The Department is acting as the FHWA for purposes of carrying out these responsibilities, and conducts its own standard review of the FED as well as an internal NEPA quality control review to ensure that the FED complies with FHWA policies and guidance and the requirements of all applicable federal laws, executive orders, and regulations. Following approval of the FED, the Department would then file a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse. Electronic files of the FED will be available on the Caltrans District 4 website (www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm) or at www.actia2022.com.

The proposed Negative Declaration in the DED complies with the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15071 for contents of a Negative Declaration and includes “Mitigation measures ... in the project to avoid potentially significant effects.” As stated in CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4(a)(3), mitigation measures are not required for effects that are found not to be significant. Measures that avoid or further minimize an effect that is not by itself significant are not considered mitigation. Likewise, measures that are implemented as part of standard Department practice, such as landscaping installation, the water quality best management practices in Section 2.11.4, and the construction dust control practices in Section 2.14.6, are not considered mitigation. They are standard practices under Caltrans procedures and are implemented on every project as part of construction contractor obligations. The DED includes such measures as well as measures that are labeled as mitigation. The mitigation measures identified in the Negative Declaration are part of the project and are implemented as part of standard Department practice.

The original project design was modified to avoid potential adverse impacts, as summarized in Section 1.5 and described in more detail in Appendix B. Specifically, the current project alignment in the southern portion of the project limits, between Ruby Hill Drive and Vallecitos Road, avoids significant impacts to a creek and environmental conservation area that were proposed in the initial design in the SR 84 Project Study Report (Caltrans 2003). The proposed intersection configuration at Stanley Boulevard minimizes impacts to quarry lands west of SR 84 compared to the initial Project Study Report design. These changes are not considered mitigation because they were prior to the project design presented in the DED. After the DED was circulated in October 2007, the proposed relocation of the SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection was eliminated from the project to further avoid potential impacts to agricultural land. Again, this change does not constitute mitigation because it is part of the project design. The construction

contractor is to build the project as designed, and since the project avoids these impacts, no mitigation is necessary.

B-04-7

We do not concur that the IS/ND/EA is not sufficient and an EIR must be prepared.

B-04-8

The Initial Study/Environmental Assessment is appropriate. In light of the whole record, there is no substantial evidence that the project would significantly impact the environment. California Public Resources Code Section 21082.2(c) states that “Argument, speculation, unsubstantiated opinion or narrative, evidence which is clearly inaccurate or erroneous, or evidence of social or economic impacts which do not contribute to, or are not caused by, physical impacts on the environment, is not substantial evidence. Substantial evidence shall include facts, reasonable assumptions predicated upon facts, and expert opinion supported by facts.”

See the response to Comment B-04-6.

B-04-9

Specific measures for oak woodland impacts are included in Section 2.16.3.

California Public Resources Code Section 21083.4 states that a county shall determine whether a project in its jurisdiction may result in a conversion of oak woodlands that will have a significant effect on the environment. The county can require the lead agency to conserve oak woodlands through conservation easements, plant an appropriate number of trees, contribute to the Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund, or implement other mitigation measures developed by the county.

Alameda County will be consulted regarding the project’s impacts to oak woodlands and the proposed measures. If measures other than those listed in Section 2.16.3 are necessary, they will be substituted or incorporated into the project design.

It should be noted that California Public Resources Code Section 21083.4 applies to oaks that are 5 inches or more in diameter at breast height (DBH). The measures proposed in Section 2.16.3 apply to oaks that are 1 inch or more in diameter DBH. Of the up to 26 oaks that could be affected by the project, approximately 5 are less than 5 inches DBH and would not be subject to the provisions of California Public Resources Code Section 21083.4.

B-04-10

The comment states that the DED improperly limits the analysis of the project’s environmental effects to Alameda County, Livermore, and Pleasanton, and that potential growth-inducing effects on the Central Valley should have been considered.

The primary mechanism of growth inducement would be the increased capacity of SR 84. Some drivers use SR 84 as a regional route and will continue to do so in the future with or without the proposed improvements. The project will add capacity to SR 84, resulting in an increased volume of automobile and truck traffic, some of which would come from the Central Valley via the Altamont Pass.

Traffic modeling for year 2030 conditions shows the following peak-hour volumes on SR 84 for vehicles coming from the Altamont Pass (in the AM) or going to the Altamont Pass (in the PM), with and without the project:

Altamont Pass Traffic on SR 84 (Peak Directions)

Location	AM (southbound)		PM (northbound)	
	No Build	With Project	No Build	With Project
North of Vallecitos Road	110	270	600	640
South of Vallecitos Road	110	270	710	1,020

Source: Fehr & Peers data, 2008

Based on these forecasts, the project would increase the number of vehicles on SR 84 traveling from or to the Altamont Pass compared to the No Build Alternative. In the AM peak hour, the project would add 160 vehicles (270–110=160); in the PM peak hour, the project would add 40 vehicles (640–600=40) north of Vallecitos Road and 310 vehicles (1,020–710=310) south of Vallecitos Road.

The modeling also indicates that in the AM peak hour, with the project, 150 of the 270 vehicles on SR 84 coming from the Altamont Pass originate from local street traffic that would shift to the widened SR 84. In the PM peak hour, with the project, 310 of the Altamont Pass-bound vehicles would shift from using local streets onto SR 84. Thus, approximately half of the traffic on the widened SR 84 would be from local street detours.

The increases in future traffic with the project represent nearly the same number of vehicles traveling from or to the Altamont Pass that would use SR 84 rather than local street detours (150 vehicles in the AM peak and 310 vehicles in the PM peak). Attracting regional traffic away from local streets is a stated purpose of the project, and the resulting shift onto SR 84 would reduce congestion in other parts of the roadway network. Without

the project, the 150 vehicles in the AM peak and 310 vehicles in the PM peak traveling from or to the Altamont Pass would simply continue using local streets.

The increases in traffic volumes used in the traffic analyses for this project are based on growth estimates from regional planning documents, which are the basis for transportation planning. The Department has a responsibility to plan for growth using forecasts from Regional Transportation Plans, Regional Transportation Improvement Programs, and other plans. The traffic forecasting therefore indicates that the project would benefit local and regional traffic by shifting traffic from local streets onto SR 84. A portion of that traffic is associated with the Central Valley, consistent with the description of SR 84 as a regional route. But at 150 to 310 vehicles during the peak hour, the shift is not high enough to suggest that widening SR 84 would remove a barrier to growth or measurably induce growth in the Central Valley.

B-04-11

Right-of-way acquisition is not considered mitigation; it is part of the project and subject to Department and State requirements. Table 2.1-1 lists the acreages and parcels to be acquired as well as the parcel owners, current land use, and process by which the property would be acquired (“Impact Description” column). The right-of-way appraisal and acquisition process is undertaken after the environmental document process. If a property owner and the Department cannot agree on the terms of the sale, the Department would initiate a condemnation process (for more information, see <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/row/acquisition/index.htm>).

As described in the FED, the project has been modified to maintain the SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection in its current location; therefore, the acquisition of this property is no longer required. As modified, the project will not acquire agricultural land or affect a Williamson Act contract, and no mitigation is required.

Full funding for the project is available with construction beginning in 2011.

B-04-12

As stated in the response to Comment B-04-6, measures that are implemented as part of standard Department practices are not mitigation. Detailed plans for landscaping are developed as part of the project design phase. Measures to control and/or treat surface water runoff are implemented to comply with State and regional permit requirements. The development of these plans does not constitute a change to the project or deferred mitigation.

No State or Federal noise criteria would be exceeded by the project, therefore no noise abatement is required. As described in Section 2.15.4, a soundwall was considered for the one location where the noise level will approach Federal noise abatement criteria. The soundwall has been determined to be not reasonable and will not be included in the project. The DED also discusses the potential use of “quiet pavement” but notes that it has not been approved by the Department or FHWA as an abatement measure. Therefore, no abatement has been deferred.

B-04-13

The project’s impacts to visual resources are described in Section 2.8.3, including views from private residences, public trails, and motorists. The statement that the retaining walls and other project features would not result in a substantial change to the visual setting is based on the detailed assessment presented in the Visual Resources Impact Report (Haygood and Associates 2007) prepared for the project. As described in the Visual Resources Impact Report, the highest retaining walls (up to 30 feet), which would be between Ruby Hill Drive and Vineyard Avenue, would not be visible to residences because the walls would be at the bottom of an embankment and beyond sight lines. Two walls between Stanley Boulevard and Jack London Boulevard would vary in height from 6 feet to 22 feet, but walls already exist in this segment and the new walls are not expected to have additional visual impacts.

The relocation of the Vallecitos Road intersection proposed in the DED would have required the acquisition of 3.2 acres of active vineyard land, resulting in an adverse but not substantial change in the visual setting. As described in the FED, the project has been revised to maintain the SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection in its current location with modifications to further enhance safety; therefore, the acquisition of the vineyard property is no longer required. Fill and retaining walls will be required to elevate the Vallecitos Road approach to the SR 84 intersection by up to 15 feet in a localized area to comply with State highway design standards. The increased elevation of the intersection would be an adverse but not substantial visual impact since the fill slopes would blend in with the much higher existing slopes of the adjacent vineyard property. Landscaping will be provided to screen the proposed fill slopes and retaining walls needed for the modified intersection. The remaining walls in the project are 4 feet high or less, and no adverse visual impacts are expected.

Section 2.8.4 describes design measures to enhance the appearance of the retaining walls. Additional treatments will be considered, such as planting vines to soften the walls’ appearance.

There is no information or data to support a finding that significant adverse aesthetic impacts will result from the project.

The project will include landscaping, as noted in the response to Comment B-04-5 and Master Response VIS-1.

Figure 2.8-1 shows SR 84 between Ruby Hill Drive and Vallecitos Road, with and without the proposed project. As stated in Section 1.4.1.1, the concrete median barrier would extend north from Vallecitos Road to Jack London Boulevard except at intersections. Therefore, the roadway segment shown in Figure 2.8-1 would not have a concrete median barrier, consistent with the project description.

B-04-14

The comment appears to refer to the effect of the increased truck and commute traffic on SR 84. The forecasted volume of the diverted traffic was incorporated into the detailed traffic, air quality, and noise analyses, and the results are summarized in the DED.

According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(a), an environmental document must describe the existing physical environmental conditions in the project vicinity at the time the notice of preparation is published, or if no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis is commenced. As described in Section 3.1, environmental analysis for the project began in 2005. Therefore, the timeliness of the traffic analysis and the evaluations of air quality and climate change are sufficient with regard to CEQA. Moreover, the traffic data are projected out to the future build year of 2010 and 20 years after (2030). Annual growth is included in these projections, well beyond 2005/2006.

The Traffic Operations Report (Fehr and Peers 2006) and other technical studies listed in Chapter 7 of DED are available for public review at the City of Livermore Planning Department.

B-04-15

As stated in the response to Comment B-04-8, “substantial evidence” must include facts, reasonable assumptions predicated upon facts, and expert opinion supported by facts. The comments provided do not support the “fair argument” standard that would require preparation of an EIR. Additional clarification has been included in the responses to these comments. The technical research and analysis performed for the DED was complete and adequate and had the same scope and level of detail if the environmental document was an EIR. See Master Response GEN-2 for additional discussion.

Comments from Individuals

Comment I-01 Adams



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

COMMENT CARD

Comment sheets may be deposited in the comment box tonight or mailed to:

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang, Senior Environmental Planner
111 Grand Avenue/Mail: PO Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94610

To view or obtain a copy of the
Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Adams Date: 11-2-07

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: Campina Place

I-01-1

Comment/Question: Please provide enough landscaping to help reduce + absorb the extra carbon dioxide that will be put out by the cars + trucks. This is the single most important factor that will affect the quality of air to all Ruby Hill residents - children + adults.

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

Responses to Comment I-01

I-01-1

See Master Response VIS-1 for details about landscaping in the project area.

Comment I-02 Ed Arndt



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

COMMENT CARD

Comment sheets may be deposited in the comment box tonight or mailed to:

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang, Senior Environmental Planner
111 Grand Avenue/Mail: PO Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94610

To view or obtain a copy of the Environmental Document, visit www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Ed Arndt Date: 10/30/07

Affiliation (if applicable): Rudy Hill Resident

Address: 434 Sangro Court, Pleasanton 94566

Comment/Question: I live 3 houses away from the proposed project. The existing noise from route 84 is problematic, particularly early in the morning (5-8AM) during commute times. During the summer, I like my windows open at night and wake up when the traffic noise becomes bothersome (5AM) to close my windows. I would like some kind of sound mitigation to offset this noise. I am afraid of the 84 expansions impact on my property value and my families quality of life. I want to sit outside on my patio and not be forced inside by excessive noise.

I-02-1

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

I-02-1,
Cont.

I looked at the environmental impact report and understand the noise study was conducted in 2005 and averaged the sound ^{level} over 24 hours. They should be considering peak periods where traffic is most bothersome. Currently, noise is not an issue from 10AM to 2 PM.

Another consideration is looking at the possibility of restricting traffic to cars only. Large tractor trailers and gravel trucks are especially problematic when they either climb the grade or descend Pigeon Pass.

Responses to Comment I-02

I-02-1

See Master Response NOI-1 for a discussion of noise level changes from the proposed project.

Traffic noise levels increase with vehicle speed. The maximum noise level along a roadway occurs when the highest volume of traffic can travel at the maximum speed (generally the posted speed limit). Traffic engineers or analysts refer to this maximum volume of traffic at the speed limit as Level of Service "C." As traffic increases during peak travel periods, conditions become more congested, the average speed declines, and the average noise level generated by the traffic declines. In comparison, during highly congested traffic conditions, when cars are traveling slowly, traffic noise levels are relatively low. The traffic noise model used on this project is designed to predict this maximum traffic noise level based on the greatest number of vehicles that can travel the roadway at the greatest speed, in accordance with established Federal and Caltrans procedures. Twenty-four-hour measurements were taken along the route to determine when the existing maximum peak noise period occurs, and these levels were used to calibrate the noise model. Traffic conditions during early morning periods such as that mentioned in the comment are typically the most audible or sensitive to residents because traffic volumes are at or reaching maximum speed and volumes, and other background noise is still relatively low. Understanding these concepts, the methods, traffic volumes, noise measurements, and modeling locations are all performed to predict a maximum

traffic noise level that would occur adjacent to SR 84 at the residential properties and other noise sensitive land uses within the project limits.

Master Response NOI-1 describes how the study evaluated noise levels against established criteria for noise abatement. For information on truck restrictions for SR 84, see Master Response TR-1. Master Responses GEN-3 and GEN-5 discuss the assessment of property devaluation and quality of life, respectively.

Comment I-03 Deb and Jim Barr



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

COMMENT CARD

Comment sheets may be deposited in the comment box tonight or mailed to:

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang, Senior Environmental Planner
111 Grand Avenue/Mail: PO Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94610

To view or obtain a copy of the
Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Deb and Jim Barr Date: 11/13/07

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 4346 Campina Place Pleasanton CA 94566

Comment/Question: _____

I-03-1

The proper, sound barriers should be installed along side of Ruby Hill adjacent to 84 in order to minimize the traffic noise the expansion will cause. Additionally a median containing trees and shrubbery should be installed to help provide for noise reduction and absorb the Carbon Dioxide from the additional traffic. A reduction in speed from 50 - 40 would help the noise factor as well. *Deb*

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

Responses to Comment I-03

I-03-1

See Master Response NOI-1 for a discussion of noise level changes from the proposed project. The noise study included the Ruby Hill development, and concluded that the

existing and future noise levels were below the criteria for including sound abatement, such as barriers or walls, in the project (see Section 2.15.2.2). Rubberized asphalt concrete pavement will be used throughout the project limits to reduce tire noise. Other noise abatement measures will be considered during the final project design phase.

For an explanation of why a concrete safety barrier is proposed, see Master Response VIS-2. Master Response TR-3 discusses why the speed limit on SR 84 will remain at 50 mph.

Comment I-04 David Barry

ACTIA

LIVERMORE

CALTRANS

ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

COMMENT CARD

California Dept of Transportation
Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang, Senior Environmental Planner
111 grand Ave/Mail: PO Box 23860
Oakland, Ca 94610

To view or obtain a copy of the Environmental Document, visit:
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdoc.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday November 15, 2007

Name: David Barry Date: November 11, 2007

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 10 Terra Way Livermore CA 94550

Comment/Question:

- I-04-1 **1. Why can't you leave the Quarry mining access solely to Stanley Blvd, which is not a residential area? Please explain why an access must be provided on 84 and why it is best at Concannon & 84. Also, please identify the plans to remove the daily debris that falls from these trucks as currently is seen on Stanley Blvd.**

- I-04-2 **2. Since the plan does not include the final decision on noise abatement, how do we know what will be implemented? Once these decisions are made, will there be a public comment period?**

- I-04-3 **3. With no improvement to I580 from Airway east, won't this project just result in traffic backing up on 84 through Livermore? What is the plan to prevent cut-through traffic in Livermore?**

- I-04-4 **4. The plan calls for 84 starting with 6 lanes, then dropping to 4, then dropping to two with a climbing lane. Isn't this double bottle-neck a recipe for a daily morning traffic jam?**

- I-04-5 **5. Has any thought been given to make 84 auto only from Stanley Blvd. to the GE lab? This would increase the flow of traffic, reduce noise, and reduce pollution.**

- I-04-6 **6. One option that was abandoned was to swing 84 further west from Stanley Blvd. to Vineyard. The reason for this was due to existing mining operations at the Quarry. This option would greatly reduce the permanent increase in noise and pollution suffered by residents along the proposed plan. Why is a quarry mining operation more important than the residents of Livermore?**

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at 510-286-5820 or Arthur Dao, ACTIA at 510-267-6104

ACTIA LIVERMORE CALTRANS

ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

COMMENT CARD, Continued

- I-04-7 [7. For the past 20 years, there has been a triathlon series that uses Isabel Ave. Will this still be allowed?
- I-04-8 [8. The plan calls for bike paths to be installed. Bike paths generally limit use to <15mph. Isabel Ave. is currently used significantly by road riders who go faster than is safe on a bike path, and ride in groups. What is the plan to allow continues use of this road for bike riders?

Responses to Comment I-04

I-04-1

See Master Response CI-1 regarding the consolidated quarry access.

I-04-2

Responses to all public comments are provided in the FED. Additional public comments received after circulation of the FED will be considered and addressed during the final project design phase.

I-04-3

See Master Response TR-2 for a discussion of regional traffic improvements and elimination of cut-through traffic on Livermore streets.

I-04-4

A detailed traffic study performed for the project showed that widening SR 84 between Ruby Hill Drive and Jack London Boulevard, as well the improvements proposed for Pigeon Pass Safety Project and I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project, would improve future traffic operations over the No Build scenario (2030 conditions). Six lanes will be provided on SR 84 from I-580 to Stanley Boulevard, and four lanes will be provided between Stanley Boulevard and south of Pigeon Pass, where SR 84 will conform to two lanes. A future project is planned to complete widening of SR 84 to four lanes to I-680. A copy of the traffic study is available for review at the City of Livermore Planning Department.

I-04-5

The project would not impose vehicle restrictions on SR 84. See Master Response TR-1 for additional discussion.

I-04-6

The project proposes to widen SR 84 away from residential property. The quarries between Stanley Boulevard and Vineyard Avenue have mining rights to within 50 feet of the existing State right-of-way. The 50-foot-wide buffer to the mining limits will be used for a private access road, landscaping, and utility facilities. Shifting SR 84 farther west would involve reconstructing the roadway and compensating the quarry owners for the loss of mineral resources. This would increase the cost of the project significantly and far exceed the funds available.

I-04-7

This question should be referred to the triathlon organizers.

I-04-8

Bicyclists will continue to be permitted to ride on the outside shoulder of the widened SR 84 in both directions. At intersections, additional lane width will be provided to accommodate bicyclists.

Comment I-05 Fred Bens



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

COMMENT CARD

Comment sheets may be deposited in the comment box tonight or mailed to:

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang, Senior Environmental Planner
111 Grand Avenue/Mail: PO Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94610

To view or obtain a copy of the
Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November
15, 2007.

Name: Fred Bens Date: 10/30/07

Affiliation (if applicable):

Address: 1777 Altamir Ave.

I-05-1 [Comment/Question: I think allowing
some trucks on 84 is a bad idea.

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or
Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

Responses to Comment I-05

I-05-1

See Master Response TR-1 regarding truck use of SR 84.

Comment I-06 Anju Bhatia



Public Information Meeting
Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

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Oakland, CA 94610

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Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: ANJU BHATIA Date: 11/26/07

Affiliation (if applicable):

Address: 1188 PIEMONTE DRIVE

I-06-1

Comment/Question: Ruby till Residents were not aware that SR backing their properties would become so significant a thoroughfare.

If it has to be happen, the quality of materials used and sound barriers should be highly effective.

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

Responses to Comment I-06

I-06-1

Master Response GEN-4 discusses the history and public notification steps for the proposed project. See Master Response NOI-1 in regard to noise on SR 84.

Comment I-07 Steve and Laura Black

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ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

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Attn: Ed Pang, Senior Environmental Planner
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Oakland, Ca 94610

To view or obtain a copy of the Environmental Document, visit:
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdoc.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday November 15, 2007

Name: Steve and Laura Black Date: November 8th
Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 46 Cascata Ct., Livermore, CA 94550

Comment/Question:

- I-07-1 [1. Why can't you leave the Quarry mining access solely to Stanley Blvd, which is not a residential area? Please explain why an access must be provided on 84 and why it is best at Concannon & 84. The fact of adding traffic to this area is not very good planning.
- I-07-2 [2. I believe it is imperative to provide trees and dense high foliage to the multi-use path along 84 to provide privacy, absorb carbon dioxide and screen the unsightly highway for community bikers, joggers, etc
- I-07-3 [3. Have you explored alternatives to the proposed realignment of the multi-use path during construction, estimated for 2030!!! Please provide us some alternatives. This shows a lack of planning.
- I-07-4 [4. What can be done to minimize the projected increase in noise for homeowners on Aria Ct, Cascata Ct & Tourmaline Ct. Please offer some suggestions.
- I-07-5 [5. Where will the 3.2 acres of vineyards being removed to move 84 at Vallecitos be replaced or replanted?
- I-07-6 [6. When and how often will you assess changes to turn signals at 84/Concannon to minimize delays on Concannon. (e.g. - early mornings)
- I-07-7 [7. What can be done about the increased dirt, dust and pollution that will invade our homes as a result of the projected traffic increases?

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at 510-286-5820 or Arthur Dao, ACTIA at 510-267-6104

ACTIA LIVERMORE CALTRANS

ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

COMMENT CARD, Continued

- | | | |
|---------|--------------------------|---|
| I-07-8 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Have you thought about making the route a passenger vehicle route only? |
| I-07-9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. What thought has been put in for those that will lose value on their homes? |
| I-07-10 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. Has there been thought to enhance or give an allowance to enhance the sound proof windows to those who back up to the 84? |
| I-07-11 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. Has a full environmental impact study been performed? |
| I-07-12 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. What is the timetable for funding for this project? |
| I-07-13 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13. Why not upgrade the 580, which was designed to handle this type of traffic? |
| I-07-14 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14. What kind of sound reducing landscaping or allowance is going to be provided to those that back up to the 84? |
| I-07-15 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 15. The impact of this highway seems to be under estimated and rushed. My thoughts are that this was passed under the radar for a reason. |

Responses to Comment I-07

I-07-1

The project vicinity has multiple quarries and quarry operators, some with access to SR 84 and some with access to Stanley Boulevard. Upgrading SR 84 to expressway standards requires eliminating direct private driveway access from the roadway and allowing access only at intersections. The project would remove the existing SR 84 driveway access points and consolidate them to a single shared access road on the west side of the Concannon Boulevard intersection.

The two quarry driveways on SR 84 that would be replaced belong to Pleasanton Gravel Company/Vulcan Materials and Cemex/Utility Vault. Vehicle counts were recorded to determine the traffic effects of replacing the driveways with the Concannon Boulevard access road (Zone 7 Water Agency 2006). The number of vehicles using the existing driveways ranges from approximately 6 to 120 vehicles per day, depending on the time of year. Mining operators use other points of access to transport mined materials from the quarry sites. The majority of vehicles using the SR 84 quarry access driveways are cars, light trucks, and service trucks. T-axle tractor trailers carrying mechanical equipment use the SR 84 quarry access points approximately twice a year. When mining is completed

(circa 2030), the quarries will be reclaimed and managed by Zone 7 for potable water storage and flood management purposes. At that time, the average daily traffic is projected to range from less than 10 trips (cars and light trucks) to 50 trips (cars, light trucks, service vehicles, and semi-trailers). These volumes of current and future quarry truck traffic represent an insignificant proportion of overall traffic on SR 84 (shown in Table 1-2). Therefore, the consolidated quarry access at Concannon Boulevard is not expected to result in increased congestion on SR 84.

Furthermore, the consolidated access will comply with Caltrans expressway standards and provide improved safety for ingress and egress for vehicles traveling between the quarry sites and SR 84. An alternative access point is provided on Vineyard Avenue (east) for Cemex quarry traffic.

Other alternative access points at Stanley Boulevard were considered and rejected due to physical constraints including Arroyo del Valle and County-permitted limits of mining. Encroaching on mining limits would affect the mining rights of the quarry operators and incur a significant added cost to compensate the quarry operators for lost mineral resources. Alternative locations for a shared access road are also limited by a City of Livermore ordinance that restricts trucks that weigh 3 tons or more to SR 84 (along with the existing Kitty Hawk Road to Airway Boulevard route to I-580) and East Stanley Boulevard.

I-07-2

The conceptual landscaping plans for SR 84 propose to keep the native vegetation south of Vineyard Avenue to maintain the rural setting. As part of the reclamation plan between Alameda County and the quarry owners, landscaping is proposed along the quarry frontages on SR 84 and Stanley Boulevard. Landscaping was installed north of Concannon Boulevard on the east side of SR 84 as part of the Isabel Avenue extension project (constructed 2001).

Landscaping will be installed under a separate project immediately following the main construction project. Funds for the project include the cost of installing the landscaping and maintaining it for three years. After three years, landscape maintenance and funding will be provided by Caltrans, the City of Livermore, and the quarry operators. Landscape maintenance and funding obligations will be documented in maintenance agreements among these entities.

For safety reasons, fixed objects such as trees cannot be placed within 30 feet of traffic lanes on an expressway facility.

Although landscaping is not considered a noise abatement or air quality improvement measure, it is included in the project as an aesthetic element.

Landscape plans for the SR 84 Expressway Widening Project are preliminary, and will be further developed during the project design phase. Public input will be included through focused neighborhood meetings.

I-07-3

Short-term closures of the Isabel Trail would require a detour route to be provided. Trail realignment may also be constructed in phases to allow pedestrian and bicycle access around the work area (provided this can be done in a safe manner). A Traffic Management Plan for the Isabel Trail will be developed during the final project design phase, and suitable trail detours will be coordinated with City of Livermore staff. The project contractor will be required to comply with the terms and conditions of the Traffic Management Plan.

I-07-4

Noise levels on properties adjacent to SR 84 in this area are anticipated to increase by 4 to 5 dBA over existing noise levels by the year 2030, and the project would increase noise levels by an additional 1 to 2 dBA. Since the noise levels do not approach or exceed 67 dBA or increase noise levels by 12 dBA, these properties do not qualify for noise mitigation or abatement. See Master Response NOI-1 for additional information.

I-07-5

The DED proposed to relocate and realign the SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection 450 feet to the north, which would require acquisition of 3.2 acres of active vineyard land. As a result of public comments that expressed concern about the impacts of this intersection change on vineyard land and individual property owners, the other design options were reconsidered to assess whether the impacts could be avoided. The Department subsequently determined that SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection Option A, in which the intersection would remain in its current location, could be skewed to reduce the potential for high-sided vehicles to overturn (see Section 1.5.2). Additional modifications were made to Option A to further improve safety and enhance traffic operations. As a result, the Build Alternative was changed to include the revised Option A, thereby avoiding impacts to 3.2-acre vineyard parcel identified in the comment.

I-07-6

Traffic signal timing and queue storage requirements will be addressed during the final project design phase to provide acceptable traffic operations throughout the day. After the

project is constructed, Caltrans and the City of Livermore will coordinate to monitor and update signal timing, if warranted.

The proposed project will set signal timing and provide adequate storage for queuing vehicles at the SR 84/Vallecitos Road intersection and other signal intersections within the project limits.

The existing signal intersections will be maintained. No additional signal intersections are currently planned within the project limits.

I-07-7

Numerous industry-standard measures to minimize dirt, dust and pollution during construction are detailed in the DED (see Section 2.14.6) and will be incorporated into the contract documents prepared for the project.

I-07-8

In December 2003, SR 84 was transferred to Isabel Avenue. As a result of this route transfer, SR 84 was designated as a truck route, and truck routes on First Street, Vallecitos Road north of Isabel Avenue, Holmes Street, Livermore Avenue, and Stanley Boulevard east of Isabel Avenue were removed to limit cut-through traffic and prohibit through truck traffic in downtown Livermore.

The Department cannot restrict truck traffic on any roadway as part of a project, and therefore truck restrictions cannot be applied by the State as an avoidance or mitigation measure for this project. Under the California Vehicle Code, a local agency may petition to prohibit certain vehicles from using a highway or impose vehicle weight restrictions for a roadway. The process for truck restriction involves a number of steps and requires the local agency to initiate and justify the proposal and identify an alternate truck route. For complete details of the truck restriction process, see:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/trucks/routes/restrict-process.htm>.

The Department will consider installing signage that advises drivers of large trucks to use freeway routes for regional travel and avoid SR 84 between I-680 and I-580.

I-07-9

Residential property values are influenced by many factors, including:

- Property attributes (such as age, size, number of bathrooms and bedrooms, condition, lot size, and additional amenities such as a pool or spa)

- Locational attributes (such as access to shopping and services, commuting distance to key employment areas, and quality of local schools)
- Market conditions (such as interest rates, employment growth, amount of new residential construction, depreciating/appreciating housing markets, and vacancy rates)

Residential development occurs along freeways, highways, and local roads in the project area in response to the continued demand for housing. The SR 84 roadway already exists, is well traveled, and is visible to some homes. If SR 84 had an adverse effect on property values, that would already be reflected in the property values to some extent with or without the project. More than just widening the roadway, the proposed project would improve circulation, reduce future congestion, and add landscaping. All of these factors theoretically may or may not influence property values in terms of home cost. Therefore, the project cannot be assumed to substantially influence home values along SR 84.

Under CEQA, the economic or social effects of a project are not treated as significant effects on the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15131). Under FHWA NEPA guidelines, agencies must consider possible adverse economic, social, and environmental effects—including property value losses—and make final decisions on the project in the best overall public interest, taking into consideration the need for fast, safe, and efficient transportation; public services; and the costs of eliminating or minimizing such adverse effects (23 USC 109[h]). Concerns about property values are acknowledged, and every feasible effort to balance the needs of the nearby community with long-term transportation goals for the region will be considered.

I-07-10

Soundwalls and berms are the normal forms of noise protection that the Department can offer to residences. The Department may consider insulation for nonprofit public institutions (schools, hospitals, etc.). If, after a project is completed, noise levels are 75 decibels or greater, or the project causes an increase of 30 decibels or more, the Department may then consider funding noise insulation of private property. However, the highest noise level predicted in the future (year 2030, with traffic and truck growth) is 72 dBA (along the pedestrian path on SR 84), with a maximum increase of 12 dBA (see Table 2.15-3 and Section 2.15.3). The highest future noise level predicted at any residence along the project route, with the project and future growth in traffic, is 65 dBA. These levels do not qualify for installation of sound proofing at structures along the project route, and therefore it was not considered or included as part of the project.

I-07-11

A detailed and comprehensive environmental review was conducted as part of the preparation of the DED. Environmental studies for the proposed project began in January 2005 and included preparation of the 15 technical reports listed in Chapter 7 of the DED. The technical reports addressed noise, traffic, air quality, cultural resources, biological resources, community impacts, hydraulics and water quality, hazardous waste contamination, geology, and visual impacts. These studies were prepared by consultant experts in each subject and were reviewed by experienced Caltrans environmental or engineering staff before the studies could be approved for reference and inclusion in the DED. It is important to note that the same technical studies must be prepared whether the ultimate environmental document is an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment or an EIS/EIR. It makes no difference to the individuals preparing or reviewing the technical study whether the DED that summarizes the study is an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment or an EIS/EIR. Thus, preparing an EIS/EIR would not change the content or nature of any of the technical studies.

See Master Response GEN-2 for additional discussion of the environmental impact analysis.

I-07-12

Full funding for the project is available with construction beginning in 2011.

I-07-13

Several projects are planned on I-580 between I-680 and the Altamont Pass to improve traffic congestion, including the addition of carpool lanes in each direction and auxiliary lanes between interchanges to improve operations of merging and diverging traffic. Specifically:

- The I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project will extend and widen SR 84 north of Jack London Boulevard and provide a new interchange connection for SR 84 to I-580. The I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project will be completed before the proposed project.
- Construction of an eastbound I-580 carpool lane from Tassajara Road to Greenville Road is scheduled for completion in 2010. Construction of a westbound I-580 carpool lane from Greenville Road to San Ramon Road is scheduled for completion in 2012.
- A separate study to improve the I-580/I-680 interchange began in 2006 to identify improvements for regional traffic operations on those freeways.

Providing direct access to I-580 via the new interchange and widening SR 84 are expected to reduce congestion on local streets in the Cities of Pleasanton and Livermore that currently experience a high level of cut-through traffic. When constructed, the operational improvements on I-580 and I-680 will further improve local circulation. Separate studies have been conducted to show the cumulative benefits of these projects. Additional information can be obtained from the Alameda County Congestion Management Authority.

I-07-14

Landscaping is not considered a noise abatement measure and is included in the project as an aesthetic element. Landscaping will be provided following project construction. A landscape design is normally not developed in detail until the final project design stage. Public input will be included in the development of landscape planting and features.

I-07-15

As discussed in the response to Comment I-07-11 and Master Response GEN-2, a detailed and comprehensive environmental review was conducted as part of the preparation of the DED.

The Department's intention has always been to make all project information readily available to everyone. Environmental studies for the SR 84 Expressway Widening Project began in January 2005, and a public open house was advertised and held at the Smith Elementary School (about two blocks from Isabel Avenue) on July 28, 2005. Mailers were sent to owners of all properties along Isabel Avenue to inform them about the proposed project and invite them to the open house. More than 4,750 mailers were sent to residents, property owners, and elected officials, and advertisements were placed in local newspapers. In addition, the mailers advised residents on how to stay informed about the project. The meeting provided an opportunity to obtain information and ask questions about the project. Comments from the public open house were recorded and considered in the development of the DED.

The DED was circulated for public review and comment on October 15, 2007. A public notice announcing the availability of the DED and the October 30, 2007, public meeting was distributed two weeks before the meeting to the project mailing list, which included more than 8,500 property owners, elected officials, city staff, special interest organizations, libraries, and neighborhood groups. A public notice announcing the availability of the DED and the public meeting was published in the Livermore Independent (10/18), Tri-Valley Herald (10/15), Pleasanton Weekly (10/19), and Valley

Times (10/15). Project information was also posted on the Caltrans and ACTIA websites. The review period was extended to December 28, 2007, to ensure that all interested parties had adequate time to submit comments. Each comment was carefully read and addressed. All comments and their responses are presented in this FED.

Comment I-08 Ken Bradley



Public Information Meeting
Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

COMMENT CARD

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California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang, Senior Environmental Planner
111 Grand Avenue/Mail: PO Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94610

To view or obtain a copy of the
Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Ken Bradley Date: 10/30/07

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 1332 Concaanon Blvd, Livermore 94558

I-08-1 [**Comment/Question:** Discovery Dr should be closed
and traffic routed to Jack London

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or
Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

Responses to Comment I-08

I-08-1

Discovery Drive is currently under construction and will have access to SR 84 and Jack London Boulevard. SR 84 access was approved by the Department under a separate project. Closing SR 84 access would cause traffic impacts on Jack London Boulevard and at the intersection of Jack London Boulevard and SR 84.

Comment I-09 Don Briemle

10/17/07

This is a question regarding the widening and upgrading of state route 84 etc.

Question:

I-09-1

What good will it do to improve the route from four to six lanes between pigeon pass and the I-580 interchange UNLESS THE INTERCHANGE IS COMPLETE? WHICH ACCORDING TO THE FLYER IT WILL NOT BE.....
THE ONLY CHANGE I CAN SEE FROM THIS IMPROVEMENT IS MUCH MORE TRAFFIC ON THE SURFACE STREETS OF LIVERMORE. WHAT IS BEING DONE TO COMPENSATE FOR THIS INCREASE IN TRAFFIC.

DON BRIEMLE 97 TOURMALINE
LIVERMORE CALIF 94550
9254475890

Responses to Comment I-09

I-09-1

See Master Response TR-2 for a discussion of regional traffic improvements and elimination of cut-through traffic on Livermore streets.

Comment I-10 Jane Brogna



Public Information Meeting
Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project
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Oakland, CA 94610

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Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Jane Brogna Date: 10-30-07

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 551 Montori Ct, Pleasanton CA 94566

Comment/Question: _____

I-10-1

I live very close to Isabel Ave and I am ~~am~~ very concerned about the amount of noise the project will generate. I feel very strongly that I should be able to enjoy my backyard without the constant noise of traffic.

In addition, I am concerned about the amount of pollution the additional traffic will cause.

I bought my house 11 years ago and purposely avoided

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

buying a home that backed up to a busy street.

I think that every effort needs to be made to minimize the impact of noise and pollution the residents of Ruby Hill.

Responses to Comment I-10

I-10-1

See Master Responses NOI-1 and AIR-1 in regard to project-related noise and pollution, respectively.

Comment I-11 Otto Bulich



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

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Oakland, CA 94610

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Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Otto Bulich Date: 10/30/07

Affiliation (if applicable): Resident

Address: 480 Montosi Ct Pleasanton

I-11-1

Comment/Question: The homes on the perimeter of the project must be protected by sound abatement material and design. Sound walls and appropriate road surfaces should be utilized in the Design. Will there be a safety barrier to allow bicycling traffic to utilize the road with vehicles? This is a popular route currently along the Isabel corridor. Will this be

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

I-11-1,
Cont.

a passenger car only route - i.e. highway
SR 84 thru Oakland. Current pollution
is already significant and will naturally
or stone abatement walls improve the
CO₂ levels at the perimeter.

and other pollutants

Lighting is currently inadequate.
even at 50mph at night with animal
traffic - in the area this is a dangerous
route. This increased lighting is it
addressed in the environmental plan?

Responses to Comment I-11

I-11-1

Soundwalls were evaluated as discussed in Master Response NOI-1. Rubberized asphalt concrete pavement will be used throughout the project limits to reduce tire noise.

The project does not include a barrier to separate bicycle and automotive traffic, but bicyclists will continue to be permitted to ride on the outside shoulder of the widened SR 84 in both directions. At intersections, additional lane width will be provided to accommodate bicyclists.

No plans exist to restrict trucks from using SR 84, as discussed in Master Response TR-1.

Natural or stone abatement walls are not considered air quality improvement measures. Levels of CO and other pollutants are expected to increase slightly with the project in place but would not exceed any standards established to protect human health.

Lighting will be considered, if appropriate, in the final project design phase. There are currently no plans for overhead lighting. Lighting may be provided at intersections or pedestrian locations where there are safety concerns.

Comment I-12 Maureen and Kevin Carroll



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

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Oakland, CA 94610

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Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Maureen + Kevin Carroll Date: 11/6/07

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 439 Moulton Court Pleasanton CA 94566

Comment/Question:

I-12-1

speed limit

We are dismayed by the problems with widening Rte 84 in Livermore/Pleasanton. We want to see sound barrier landscaping, break down lanes 40mph many more times. We want it to be part of our neighborhood - NOT a freeway. We moved here for the silence. I wish we had known more about how this was going to occur. Please listen to the concerns of our Ruby Hill community. Thank you.

Please continue on back if necessary

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

Responses to Comment I-12

I-12-1

Soundwalls were evaluated as discussed in Master Response NOI-1. Rubberized asphalt concrete pavement will be used throughout the project limits to reduce tire noise.

See Master Response VIS-1 for details about landscaping in the project area.

The project includes 10-foot shoulders in both directions, which would accommodate disabled vehicles.

The speed limit on SR 84 will remain at 50 mph in accordance with state law, as discussed in Master Response TR-3.

Public coordination for the project began in 2005 and is described in greater detail in Master Response GEN-4. Additional outreach will be conducted with Ruby Hill and other area residents to make sure their concerns are heard.

Comment I-13 Andy Chiu



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

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Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Andy Chiu Date: 11/6/07

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 656 Varese Court, Pleasanton, CA 94566

Comment/Question: _____

I-13-1

- 1) please install proper sound barriers alongside all of Ruby Hill which is adjacent to route 84.
- 2) Speed Limit should reduce to 40 mph when passing by Ruby Hill to help reduce noise level.
- 3) please provide enough landscaping to help reducing noise level and absorb the extra Carbon Dioxide from the extra cars that will be passing by Ruby Hill.

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

Responses to Comment I-13

I-13-1

Soundwalls were evaluated as discussed in Master Response NOI-1.

See Master Response TR-3 in regard to the speed limit on SR 84. Master Response VIS-1 discusses landscaping in the project area.

Comment I-14 Charles Choi



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

COMMENT CARD

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California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang, Senior Environmental Planner
111 Grand Avenue/Mail: PO Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94610

To view or obtain a copy of the
Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Charles Choi Date: 11/03/07

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 560 Rosso Ct, Pleasanton, CA 94566

Comment/Question: _____

We definitely need the Sound Barrier because you can see our houses (inside Ruby Hill), while driving on 84 Now. The noise level as of now already has increased dramatically from 5AM ever since the redirection of Valecitos (x 84) recently !!!

Please continue on back if necessary.

I-14-1

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

Response to Comment I-14

I-14-1

The noise study included the Ruby Hill development and concluded that the existing and future noise levels were below the criteria for including sound abatement, such as barriers or walls, in the project. Additional data have been collected in the vicinity of the Vallecitos Road intersection to reflect conditions since the realignment was constructed in 2007. Additional noise measurements collected in December 2007 indicate that there have been no significant changes in noise levels at this location.

Comment I-15 Jon Christensen



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

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Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: JON CHRISTENSEN Date: 10/30/07

Affiliation (if applicable):

Address: 1878 SAVANNA PLACE, PLEASANTON, CA 94566

Comment/Question:

I-15 -1

1 HABITAT PRESERVATION: THANK YOU FOR PRESERVING THE HABITAT TO THE EAST OF SR84 NEAR RUBY HILL EAST GATE. ALL TOO OFTEN THIS GETS LOST IN THE SHUFFLE.

I-15 -2

2 SOUND MITIGATION: PLEASE USE LOW-DECIBEL (OPEN PORE) ASPHALT TO REDUCE NOISE EMISSION FROM TRAFFIC. THE ROUTE IS DIRECTLY ADJACENT TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS WHERE A QUIET AND PASTORAL SETTING IS A VALUED ASSET. Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

(over) ↓

- I-15
-3
- ③ OVERNIGHT TRAFFIC: CURRENTLY FEW REGION-TO-REGION TRIPS USE SR84 LATE AT NIGHT BECAUSE THE FREEWAY OPTION IS FASTER THEN. A SMOOTHER, HIGHER-SPEED SR84 WILL AFFECT THIS BALANCE, ENCOURAGING MORE THROUGH TRAFFIC TO USE SR84 IN THE WAKE HOURS AND INCREASING NOISE IN THE SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE TRADITIONALLY QUIET MIDNIGHT HOURS.
- I-15
-4
- ④ TRUCK TRAFFIC: SR84 IS CURRENTLY TOUGH FOR TRACTOR TRAILER RIGS DUE TO ITS TIGHT ALIGNMENT. A STRAIGHTER SR84 WILL INVITE MORE TRUCKS TO USE THE ROUTE, INCREASING BOTH THE AMOUNT AND NATURE OF SOUND PRODUCED. PLEASE RESTRICT THROUGH TRUCK TRAFFIC, PARTICULARLY DURING OVERNIGHT HOURS.

Responses to Comment I-15

I-15-1

The comment is noted.

I-15-2

Rubberized asphalt concrete pavement will be placed on SR 84 between Ruby Hill Drive and Jack London Boulevard.

I-15-3

The posted speed limit on SR 84 will remain at 50 mph, and all intersections will remain signalized. Rubberized asphalt concrete pavement is expected to reduce tire noise. Due to the undulating terrain on SR 84, particularly over Pigeon Pass, I-580 and I-680 will provide shorter travel times for regional traffic compared to Route 84.

I-15-4

See Master Response TR-1 regarding truck restrictions on SR-84.

Comment I-16 Jeff Cohen



Public Information Meeting

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Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: JEFF COHEN Date: 11/13/07

Affiliation (if applicable):

Address: 592 ROSSO COURT, PLEASANTON

Comment/Question: MY BACKYARD IS ALONG ISABEL AVE.

I AM NOT OPPOSED TO PROGRESS, BUT I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR EFFORTS TO MINIMIZE THE NOISE + DISRUPTION BY THIS PROJECT.

- PLEASE INSTALL SOUND BARRIERS ALONGSIDE RUBY HILL

- PLEASE USE TREES + SHAUBS IN PLACE OF CONCRETE BARRIERS.

- REDUCE SPEED TO 40 TO LIMIT NOISE

Please continue on back if necessary.

I-16-1

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

I-16-1,
Cont.

- PLEASE PROVIDE LANDSCAPING TO MINIMIZE
NOISE + CARBON DIOXIDE.

THANK YOU

JOSEPH M COHEN



Responses to Comment I-16

I-16-1

Soundwalls were evaluated as discussed in Master Response NOI-1. Rubberized asphalt concrete pavement will be used throughout the project limits to reduce tire noise.

For an explanation of why a concrete safety barrier is proposed instead of trees and shrubs, see Master Response VIS-2. See Master Response TR-3 in regard to the speed limit on SR 84. Master Response VIS-1 discusses landscaping in the project area.

Comment I-17 Mike and Katherine Couture

ACTIA

LIVERMORE

CALTRANS

ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

COMMENT CARD

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Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday November 15, 2007

Name: Mike and Katherine Couture Date: November 9th, 2007
Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 93 Raccolio Way, Livermore, CA 94550

Comment/Question:

- I-17-1 1. Why can't you leave the Quarry mining access solely to Stanley Blvd, which is not a residential area? Please explain why an access must be provided on 84 and why it is best at Concannon & 84. The fact of adding traffic to this area is not very good planning.
- I-17-2 2. I believe it is imperative to provide trees and dense high foliage to the multi-use path along 84 to provide privacy, absorb carbon dioxide and screen the unsightly highway for community bikers, joggers, etc
- I-17-3 3. Have you explored alternatives to the proposed realignment of the multi-use path during construction, estimated for 2010!!! Please provide us some alternatives. This shows a lack of planning.
- I-17-4 4. What can be done to minimize the projected increase in noise for homeowners on Aria Ct, Cascata Ct & Tourmaline Ct. Please offer some suggestions.
- I-17-5 5. Where will the 3.2 acres of vineyards being removed to move 84 at Vallecitos be replaced or replanted?
- I-17-6 6. When and how often will you assess changes to turn signals at 84/Concannon to minimize delays on Concannon. (e.g. - early mornings)
- I-17-7 7. What can be done about the increased dirt, dust and pollution that will invade our homes as a result of the projected traffic increases?

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at 510-286-5820 or Arthur Dao, ACTIA at 510-267-6104

ACTIA LIVERMORE CALTRANS

ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

COMMENT CARD, Continued

- I-17-8 8. Have you thought about making the route a passenger vehicle route only?
- I-17-9 9. What thought has been put in for those that will lose value on their homes?
- I-17-10 10. Has there been thought to enhance or give an allowance to enhance the sound proof windows to those who back up to the 84?
- I-17-11 11. Has a full environmental impact study been performed?
- I-17-12 12. What is the timetable for funding for this project?
- I-17-13 13. Why not upgrade the 580, which was designed to handle this type of traffic?
- I-17-14 14. What kind of sound reducing landscaping or allowance is going to be provided to those that back up to the 84?
- I-17-15 15. The impact of this highway seems to be under estimated and rushed. My thoughts are that this was passed under the radar for a reason.

Responses to Comment I-17

I-17-1 through I-17-15

See the responses to Comments I-07-1 through I-07-15.

Comment I-18 Anne-Marie De Boeva



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

COMMENT CARD

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Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Anne-Marie De Boeva Date: 10-30-07

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 479 Montoni Court, Pleasanton

I-18-1

Comment/Question: My husband and myself and all our neighbors are very concern about the noise coming from the traffic on 84. Every morning we are ^{very early} already disturbed by the ^{noise of the} circulation on 84-Isabela avenue. We really want that you will respect the plan that says that there will do some "noise protection" covering the road as promised. Anne Boeva

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

Response to Comment I-18

I-18-1

Rubberized asphalt concrete pavement will be placed on SR 84 between Ruby Hill Drive and Jack London Boulevard.

Comment I-19 Cindy England

ACTIA LIVERMORE CALTRANS

ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

COMMENT CARD

California Dept of Transportation
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Oakland, Ca 94610

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www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdoc.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday November 15, 2007

Name: Cindy England Date: November 8th
Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 167 Campo Ct., Livermore, CA 94550

Comment/Question:

- I-19-1 **1. Why can't you leave the Quarry mining access solely to Stanley Blvd, which is not a residential area? Please explain why an access must be provided on 84 and why it is best at Concannon & 84. The fact of adding traffic to this area is not very good planning.**
- I-19-2 **2. I believe it is imperative to provide trees and dense high foliage to the multi-use path along 84 to provide privacy, absorb carbon dioxide and screen the unsightly highway for community bikers, joggers, etc**
- I-19-3 **3. Have you explored alternatives to the proposed realignment of the multi-use path during construction, estimated for 20~~70~~!!! Please provide us some alternatives. This shows a lack of planning.**
- I-19-4 **4. What can be done to minimize the projected increase in noise for homeowners on Aria Ct, Cascata Ct & Tourmaline Ct. Please offer some suggestions.**
- I-19-5 **5. Where will the 3.2 acres of vineyards being removed to move 84 at Vallecitos be replaced or replanted?**
- I-19-6 **6. When and how often will you assess changes to turn signals at 84/Concannon to minimize delays on Concannon. (e.g. - early mornings)**
- I-19-7 **7. What can be done about the increased dirt, dust and pollution that will invade our homes as a result of the projected traffic increases?**

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at 510-266-5820 or Arthur Dao, ACTIA at 510-267-6104

ACTIA LIVERMORE CALTRANS

ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

COMMENT CARD, Continued

- I-19-8 **8. Have you thought about making the route a passenger vehicle route only?**
- I-19-9 **9. What thought has been put in for those that will lose value on their homes?**
- I-19-10 **10. Has there been thought to enhance or give an allowance to enhance the sound proof windows to those who back up to the 84?**
- I-19-11 **11. Has a full environmental impact study been performed?**
- I-19-12 **12. What is the timetable for funding for this project?**
- I-19-13 **13. Why not upgrade the 580, which was designed to handle this type of traffic?**
- I-19-14 **14. What kind of sound reducing landscaping or allowance is going to be provided to those that back up to the 84?**
- I-19-15 **15. The impact of this highway seems to be under estimated and rushed. My thoughts are that this was passed under the radar for a reason.**

Responses to Comment I-19

I-19-1 through I-19-15

See the responses to Comments I-07-1 through I-07-15.

Comment I-20 Earl and Terrie Evens



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

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Environmental Document, visit
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Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Earl & Terrie Evens Date: 11/6/07

Affiliation (if applicable): Resident - Ruby Hill

Address: 566 Cento Ct., Pleasanton, CA 94566

Comment/Question:

We view the 84 widening project with mixed emotions. Although not wanting to stand in the way of progress, we moved to Pleasanton from San Jose to escape the neighborhood traffic congestion. That said we trust, we expect, the results of the project to maintain the quality standard and basic nature of Pleasanton/Livermore.

Please continue on back if necessary.

Cont. over →
→
→

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

I-20-1

To that end we ask of you...

- To do proper landscaping on the sides and in the median strip for beautification and noise abatement.
- Post a speed limit that is moderate — that keeps the traffic moving but without an Indy 500 sound.
- Sound barriers — a must — please!

In the 2 years we've lived @ our current address we've noticed an increase in noise. We are very concerned with the additional lanes — what that will do to pollution, congestion, noise, house/property values & overall quality of life!

Thanks for your consideration ...

Carl & Terrie

The Evens

Responses to Comment I-20

I-20-1

The comment is noted.

Master Response VIS-1 discusses landscaping in the project area. For an explanation of why a concrete safety barrier is proposed instead of a landscaped median, see Master Response VIS-2. See Master Response TR-3 in regard to the speed limit on SR 84. Soundwalls were evaluated, as discussed in Master Response NOI-1. Quality-of-life issues are addressed in Master Response GEN-5.

Comment I-21 Chris Feduniw



Public Information Meeting
Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

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Oakland, CA 94610

To view or obtain a copy of the
Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Chris Feduniw Date: 10/30/07

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 1591 Arrio Ct Livermore CA 94550

Comment/Question: _____

I-21-1

1) The noise assessment needs to take more into account the number of trucks that will utilize hwy 84 after it is widened and Quarry Entrance is moved.

I-21-2

2) If road project goes through it should also include putting ~~power poles~~ utilities underground and remove poles.

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

Responses to Comment I-21

I-21-1

In response to comments that requested specific information about changes in truck traffic, additional data were gathered to test the modeling and projections used in the traffic and noise studies. With the project, truck volumes would increase slightly over the

No Project condition in the year 2030. The total increase ranges from 100 to 175 trucks per day, depending on the roadway segment. This increase would not result in the exceedance of Federal noise abatement criteria for sensitive receptors in the project corridor.

I-21-2

This request will be coordinated with the private utility companies during the final design phase of the project.

Comment I-22 Chris and Indie Feduniw

ACTIA LIVERMORE CALTRANS

ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

COMMENT CARD, Continued

ACTIA LIVERMORE CALTRANS

ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

COMMENT CARD

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Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday November 15, 2007

Name: Chris & Indie Feduniw Date: 11/12/2007

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 1591 Aria Court Livermore CA 94550

Comment/Question:

- I-22-1 1) Does the project include funding to move all utilities under-ground which would not only improve the landscaping of the hwy and homes surrounding it would reduce risk of traffic accidents due to vehicle impact or down power lines striking a vehicle or pedestrian.
- I-22-2 2) Does the project include funding to synchronize all the traffic lights from Vineyard to 580 thus reducing the number of start/stops vehicles need to make which results in increase road noise
- I-22-3 3) Why can't you leave the Quarry mining access solely to Stanley Blvd, which is not a residential area? Please explain why an access must be provided on 84 and why it is best at Concannon & 84
- I-22-4 4) I believe it is imperative to provide trees and dense high foliage to the multi-use path along 84 to provide privacy, absorb carbon dioxide and screen the unsightly highway for community bikers, joggers, etc
- I-22-5 5) The noise impact study was based on average noise during the period which indicated project traffic noise would still be within levels that do not require sound barriers. Can CalTrans also present what will be the projected peak noise levels that can be expected at any point in time e.g. rush hour with lot's of semi-trucks stopping
- I-22-6 6) Did the noise impact study take into account the fact that today the majority of semi-trucks coming up 680 use the 680/580 interchange to get onto 580. If the proposed modifications to hwy 84 go through there is a very good probability a large portion of these semi-trucks will use the 84/580 interchange instead resulting in significantly more trucks/noise than what the study used in their forecast. Can

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at 510-286-5820 or Arthur Dao, ACTIA at 510-267-6104

ACTIA LIVERMORE CALTRANS

ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

COMMENT CARD, Continued

- I-22-6, Cont. [CalTrans conduct a survey of the number of trucks using the 680/580 interchange and validate those numbers align with the hwy 84 noise assumptions
- I-22-7 [7) Have you explored alternatives to the proposed realignment of the multi-use path during construction, estimated for 2030!!! Please provide us some alternatives.
- I-22-8 [8) What can be done to minimize the projected increase in noise for homeowners on Aria Ct, Cascita Ct & Tourmaline Ct. Please offer some suggestions.
- I-22-9 [9) How does CalTran plan to fund the on-going maintenance and support that will be required to maintain the larger hwy and proposed landscaping?
- I-22-10 [10) Where will the 3.2 acres of vineyards being removed to move 84 at Vallecitos be replaced or replanted?
- I-22-11 [11) When and how often will you assess changes to turn signals at 84/Concannon to minimize delays on Concannon. (e.g. - early mornings)
- I-22-12 [12) What can be done about the increased dirt, dust and pollution that will invade our homes during road construction?
- I-22-13 [13) What will be the impact and for how long to current traffic flow during the construction of hwy 84 widening?

Responses to Comment I-22

I-22-1

The project does not include funding to relocate overhead utilities underground. All poles will be relocated out of state right of way to meet expressway standards.

I-22-2

The need for signal synchronization between intersections will be addressed during final project design.

I-22-3

See the response to Comment I-07-1.

I-22-4

Master Response VIS-1 discusses landscaping in the project area.

I-22-5

The noise study was conducted in accordance with FHWA and Caltrans standards. These standards require the prediction of future noise levels in the worst-case condition, which occurs during peak noise hours. Peak noise hours do not necessarily coincide with the hour with the highest volume of vehicles but usually occur at the hour preceding or following it. These peaks can be clearly seen in the long-term noise data obtained for the

proposed project. The need to provide abatement measures such as soundwalls is also based on these predicted worst-case future noise levels.

In addition, the around-the-clock, long-term measurements conducted for over four continuous days indicate diurnal variations in hourly equivalent noise levels on the order of 3 to 4 decibels, which are typically perceived as barely noticeable changes.

It should be noted that the metric used in all traffic noise studies for the evaluation of current conditions and for the prediction of future conditions is the “hourly equivalent noise level,” which is the level that a steady sound must have to be equivalent to that of the continuously varying environmental noise. Although the metric encompasses all noises occurring during a full hour, including those from trucks, it does not single out or describe the noise produced by an individual truck.

I-22-6

Additional traffic studies were conducted to address this comment, and the findings are described in Sections 2.7.2.4 and 2.7.3.3 of the FED. In general, future truck volumes will increase slightly under the proposed project, by 100 to 175 trucks per day. The majority of regional truck traffic currently uses I-580 heading to and from the Port of Oakland. This route for truck traffic is not expected to change.

I-22-7

See the response to Comment I-07-3.

I-22-8

See the response to Comment I-07-4.

I-22-9

Landscaping will be installed under a separate project, immediately following the main construction project. Funds for the project include the cost of installing the landscaping and maintaining it for three years. After three years, Caltrans, the City of Livermore, and the quarry operators will provide landscape maintenance and funding. Landscape maintenance and funding obligations will be documented in maintenance agreements among these entities.

I-22-10

See the response to Comment I-07-5.

I-22-11

See the response to Comment I-07-6.

I-22-12

See the response to Comment I-07-7.

I-22-13

Construction could temporarily disrupt traffic flow where lane shifts or closures are required. These disruptions would occur periodically during the estimated construction period of 2011–2013. See the response to Comment B-01-7 for additional information about traffic management during construction.

Comment I-23 Christopher Feduniw

----- Forwarded by Jeff Zimmerman/Oakland/URSCorp on 10/18/2007 09:01 AM -----



Tim Lee/SanJose/URSCorp
10/16/2007 04:08 PM

To c.colwick@circlepoint.com, brigetta_smith@dot.ca.gov,
mbellows@envirotransolutions.com, epang@dot.ca.gov,
issa_bouri@dot.ca.gov,
cesar_p_san_buenaventura@dot.ca.gov,
nestor_perez@dot.ca.gov, Jeff
Zimmerman/Oakland/URSCorp@URSCORP
cc Sean Charles/SanJose/URSCorp@URSCorp, Edujie
Anjorin/SanJose/URSCorp@URSCorp
Subject SR 84 Expressway Widening Project - Public Comments

FYI - I have received three calls from residents on the east side of Route 84 between Concannon Blvd. and Alden Lane.

1. Noor Lodhi, 1809 Vetta Drive, Livermore, CA 94550 (925) 858-0780.

Mr Lodhi is concerned about increased noise levels as a result of the project. He maintains the existing noise levels are an issue and he hears traffic from inside his house. I told him that properties in the area where he lives already have a soundwall adjacent to Route 84.

Mr Lodhi maintains the soundwall does not shield his property from the noise.

He wants the road to be moved further away from his home and a berm constructed where the multi-use trail is currently located, with the trail relocated to the top of the berm.

Mr Lodhi indicated that a number of his neighbors have similar concerns.

Mr Lodhi requested an electronic copy of the noise report.

I informed Mr Lodhi that the DED was circulated yesterday and copies were available at Caltrans website.

I also informed Mr Lodhi of the date and time of the public information meeting.

Mr Lodhi indicated he would submit his written comments prior to the public information meeting.

2. Jerry Lau, 25 Cascato Court, Livermore, CA Livermore, CA 94550-6079

Mr Lau has concerns on existing noise levels

I informed Mr Lau of the date and time of the public information meeting.

I-23-1 [3. Christopher Feduniw, 1591 Aria Ct, Livermore, CA 94550-6077.
Mr Feduniw noted that the portion of the multi-use trail is an easement through his property.
I informed Mr Feduniw of the date and time of the public information meeting.

We need to be prepared to answer a lot of questions on noise at the upcoming public meeting.

Regards

Tim

This e-mail and any attachments are confidential. If you receive this message in error or are not the intended recipient, you should not retain, distribute, disclose or use any of this information and you should destroy the e-mail and any attachments or copies.

Responses to Comment I-23

I-23-1

This information has been forwarded to the right-of-way consultant for the project and will be addressed during the final project design phase.

Comment I-24 John and Cheryl Flebut



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

COMMENT CARD

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Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dlst4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: John + Cheryl Flebut Date: 11/3/07

Affiliation (if applicable): Ruby Hill homeowner

Address: 4310 Campinia place Pleasanton 94566

Comment/Question: We are all very concerned about the widening 84 project. We are demanding the following actions be implemented:

- * Proper sound barriers be installed alongside all of Ruby Hill which is adjacent to Route 84
- * There should be no concrete dividers in a neighborhood such as ours having residential neighborhoods + vineyards. Instead, you should provide a median containing trees + shrubbery which exists all over

Please continue on back if necessary.

I-24-1

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

I-24-1,
Cont.

Pleasanton + Livermore

* Reduce the speed limit which is currently 50 to 40mph to help reduce the noise level.

* Provide enough landscaping so as to help reduce noise levels, but most importantly, help absorb the extra carbon dioxide that will be spewed out of all of the thousands of extra cars that will now be passing our beautiful homes.

We do not want our home values, ^{and} quality of life to change due to this project.

Thanks a million,

John + Cheryl Flebit
(925) 399-3781

Responses to Comment I-24

I-24-1

The Noise Study Report (Wilson, Ihrig and Associates, April 2007) and the DED evaluated the need for noise barriers along the project limits, and the findings are summarized in Master Response NOI-1. For an explanation of why a concrete safety barrier is proposed, see Master Response VIS-2. See Master Response TR-3 in regard to the speed limit on SR 84. Master Response VIS-1 discusses landscaping in the project area. For a discussion of potential project effects on home values, see Master Response GEN-3.

Comment I-25 Jim and Jannell Gladen

Jim & Jannell Gladen
1556 Aria Court
Livermore CA 94551-3964

November 13, 2007

Caltrans District 4
Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang
111 Grand Avenue
Oakland CA 94610

Dear Mr. Pang

We sincerely request that a full EIR be done on the 84 widening project and that the comment period be extended. Here are my concerns that have not been addressed in the environmental assessment that has been prepared and presented to the public.

- I-25-1 [Currently, 84 from Jack London south to 680 is two lanes. The proposal will increase the section north of Stanley to 6 lanes and add the new interchange at 580. At the Oct. 30th meeting, it was stated that the new interchange was designed to **encourage truck traffic to take the 84 cut-through to 680 rather than taking the 580/680 interchange**. In addition, the section of 84 east of Pigeon Pass will remain two lanes because of environmental issues. The already clogged commute through Pigeon Pass will certainly become worse and more dangerous with added semi-truck traffic. In addition, that blockage with the 'inviting' 6 lane section will encourage even more traffic to cut-through Pleasanton and onto Stanley. There are already accidents at the Isabel intersections with Jack London and with Concannon. Now mix in multiple lanes, traffic lights and more semi-trucks, and the accidents will certainly increase. On Oct. 30th, Caltrans said that the signals will be timed to minimize the impact of the multiple lanes. However, heavy trucks with longer acceleration and deceleration times cannot have the same perfect timing as cars. The noise and pollution from the increased car and truck traffic 'encouraged' to avoid the 680 interchange will certainly be significant. I disagree with the conclusions in your environmental assessment and **request that a full EIR be done to study these issues in more detail**. These highway funds should be spent on improving the 580/680 interchange and not encourage truck traffic next to residential neighborhoods.
- I-25-2 [
- I-25-3 [

Sincerely,

Jim & Jannell Gladen

Responses to Comment I-25

I-25-1

The public comment period was extended to December 28, 2007. See Master Response GEN-2 in regard to the request for preparation of an EIR.

The proposed project discussed in this document addresses only the segment of SR 84 from Jack London Boulevard to Ruby Hill Drive. The reconstructed I-580/Isabel Avenue

interchange is a separate project and the subject of a separate environmental process and document.

The extension of Isabel Avenue from I-580 to Vineyard Avenue (completed in 2001 and designated as part of SR 84 in 2003), the construction of the I-580/Isabel Avenue interchange, and the proposed project all share the purpose of shifting regional traffic away from local streets. Although the number of trucks that use SR 84 will increase somewhat, the overall percentage of trucks is unlikely to change significantly from current conditions. Additional traffic studies conducted in response to public comments on the DED indicate that future truck volumes will increase by 100 to 175 trucks per day. This information has been reported in the FED (see Sections 2.7.2.4 and 2.7.3.3).

Master Response TR-2 discusses other regional traffic improvements that are expected to reduce cut-through traffic on local streets. The climbing lanes being constructed on SR 84 in the Pigeon Pass area will improve safety by allowing faster-moving vehicles an additional lane to pass trucks and other slow-moving vehicles.

I-25-2

Signal timing on SR 84 will account for the longer acceleration and deceleration times of heavy trucks. After project construction, Caltrans and the City of Livermore will coordinate, monitor, and update signal timing, as warranted.

I-25-3

The DED and its supporting technical studies concluded that slight changes to noise and air quality would occur as a result of the project; however, these changes were found not to be significant under State or Federal criteria. See Master Responses NOI-1 and AIR-1, respectively, for additional discussion.

Master Response GEN-2 describes why an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment was prepared for the proposed project. It is important to note that the technical background research that was conducted for the DED was the same that would have been prepared for an EIR. Additionally, the DED's conclusions about the levels of significance of project impacts are based on the same criteria that would apply to an EIR (see the CEQA checklist in Appendix D).

Note that the proposed project is part of a series of regional traffic improvements designed to reduce congestion on local streets as well as on I-580 and I-680. A separate study of the I-580/I-680 interchange began in 2006 to identify improvements for regional traffic operations on those freeways. See Master Response TR-2 for additional details.

Comment I-26 Mehrdad Gomroki



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

COMMENT CARD

Comment sheets may be deposited in the comment box tonight or mailed to:

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang, Senior Environmental Planner
111 Grand Avenue/Mail: PO Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94610

To view or obtain a copy of the
Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Mehrdad Gomroki Date: 11/2/07

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 1214 GERMANO WAY, PLEASANTON, CA 94566

Comment/Question: _____

1- I DO NOT want any 18 wheelers
 Pass through our homes at *ANY* Time.
 They are responsible for majority of traffic
 jams and fatal accidents.

2- Sound barriers is a *MUST* have
 and I am shocked to hear to the contrary.

3- How is it that most highways in bay area
 are landscaped but highway through a

Please continue on back if necessary.

I-26-1

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or
Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

~~Area~~ neighborhood such as Ruby Hill, is not?
Is it because the county ~~isn't~~^{would} ask
the Ruby Hill Association (Home Owners)
to pay for it?

I-26-1,
Cont.

■ We need to make sure the need of
community is reflected in the meeting.

I did not pay multi-million dollars
for a home that would have
18 wheelers pass through its
back door and I am convinced
I will face a tremendous challenge
when I plan to sell my home!

* NO on 18 wheelers at any time of
day or night

* NO on lack of sound barriers

* NO on lack of landscaping

* We ~~must~~^{must} put a stop to this current
plan. you can call me at 408-667-5028
for any additional comments.

Responses to Comment I-26

I-26-1

The comment about 18-wheelers on SR 84 is noted. Truck restrictions could be pursued independent of the proposed project, as described in Master Response TR-1.

The DED and its supporting technical studies concluded that noise increases would occur as a result of the project. Except for one location, the increases were not at a level that

would require consideration of mitigation in the form of soundwalls under State or Federal criteria. See Master Response NOI-1 for additional discussion.

The project includes a landscaping plan that would be funded as part of the project budget, as described in Master Response VIS-1.

The request to consider the needs of the community is acknowledged. The public comment period was extended by 45 days to allow members of the community to provide input on the DED. Additional public outreach will also be conducted during the final project design and construction phases to ensure the public is kept informed of project developments.

See Master Response GEN-3 in regard to the issue of property devaluation.

Comment I-27 Cindy Greci

ACTIA

LIVERMORE

CALTRANS

ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

COMMENT CARD

California Dept of Transportation
Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang, Senior Environmental Planner
111 grand Ave/Mail: PO Box 23660
Oakland, Ca 94610

To view or obtain a copy of the Environmental Document, visit:
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdoc.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday November 15, 2007

Name: Cindy Greci Date: November 8th
Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 68 Alden Lane., Livermore, CA 94550

Comment/Question:

I-27-1

1. Why can't you leave the Quarry mining access solely to Stanley Blvd, which is not a residential area? Please explain why an access must be provided on 84 and why it is best at Concannon & 84. The fact of adding traffic to this area is not very good planning.

I-27-2

2. I believe it is imperative to provide trees and dense high foliage to the multi-use path along 84 to provide privacy, absorb carbon dioxide and screen the unsightly highway for community bikers, joggers, etc

I-27-3

3. Have you explored alternatives to the proposed realignment of the multi-use path during construction, estimated for 2010!!! Please provide us some alternatives. This shows a lack of planning.

I-27-4

4. What can be done to minimize the projected increase in noise for homeowners on Aria Ct, Cascata Ct & Tourmaline Ct. Please offer some suggestions.

I-27-5

5. Where will the 3.2 acres of vineyards being removed to move 84 at Vallecitos be replaced or replanted?

I-27-6

6. When and how often will you assess changes to turn signals at 84/Concannon to minimize delays on Concannon. (e.g. - early mornings)

I-27-7

7. What can be done about the increased dirt, dust and pollution that will invade our homes as a result of the projected traffic increases?

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at 510-286-5820 or Arthur Dao, ACTIA at 510-267-6104

ACTIA LIVERMORE CALTRANS

ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

COMMENT CARD, Continued

- I-27-8 [8. Have you thought about making the route a passenger vehicle route only?
- I-27-9 [9. What thought has been put in for those that will lose value on their homes?
- I-27-10 [10. Has there been thought to enhance or give an allowance to enhance the sound proof windows to those who back up to the 84?
- I-27-11 [11. Has a full environmental impact study been performed?
- I-27-12 [12. What is the timetable for funding for this project?
- I-27-13 [13. Why not upgrade the 580, which was designed to handle this type of traffic?
- I-27-14 [14. What kind of sound reducing landscaping or allowance is going to be provided to those that back up to the 84?
- I-27-15 [15. The impact of this highway seems to be under estimated and rushed. My thoughts are that this was passed under the radar for a reason.
- I-27-16 [16. Alder Lane Residents who purchased homes across from "the lakes" paid lot premiums for views of vineyards + open space - 4 lanes at the bridge will drastically reduce values of homes and quality of living. Noise impact needs to be reviewed for these homes as well as the top story bedrooms face the road and noise is already an issue, but will be compounded drastically. Windows - sound filters with landscape all need to be addressed for these homes also -

Responses to Comment I-27

I-27-1 through I-27-15

See the responses to Comments I-07-1 through I-07-15.

I-27-16

Master Response GEN-3 discusses property value effects from the proposed project.

Noise abatement is only considered when noise impacts are predicted for areas of frequent human use where lowered noise levels would be of benefit. Primary consideration is given to exterior areas. The Department normally does not design noise abatement for second-floor receivers. If, however, noise abatement can be designed to

provide a 5-decibel noise reduction for the second-floor level and is within the allowable cost per benefited residence, it may be considered reasonable, provided the noise barrier does not exceed the prescribed maximum height (CaTNAP 2.8.1).

In response to comments requesting more information about noise levels at the second stories of residences on SR 84, noise measurements were collected to determine whether additional soundwalls could feasibly and reasonably reduce exterior second-story noise levels. Based on measurements taken at the heights of second-story residences adjacent to the roadway and soundwalls modeled for those locations, additional soundwalls along SR 84 would provide limited effectiveness in reducing noise at second-story levels. In general, noise reduction from the soundwalls would be less than 5 dBA and in most cases only 2 dBA to 3 dBA. Therefore, no additional locations were identified for which soundwalls would provide feasible and reasonable noise abatement.

Landscaping is not considered to aid in sound abatement. For more information, see Master Response VIS-1.

Comment I-28 Horst Groneberg



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

COMMENT CARD

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111 Grand Avenue/Mail: PO Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94610

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Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: HORST GRONEBERG Date: 11/5/07

Affiliation (if applicable):

Address: 3237 E, RUBY HILL DR, PLEASANTON, CA 94566

Comment/Question: I AM OPPOSED TO RT. 84 WIDENING

- 1. IT WILL CREATE TRAFFIC BOTTLENECKS AT BOTH ENDS OF THE PROJECT MERGING TO SINGLE LANE.
2. IT WILL CREATE MORE TRAFFIC NOISE FOR RUBY HILL RESIDENTS.
3. IT WILL BE ANOTHER UGLY ROADWAY WITH NO LANDSCAPING.
4. IT WILL BECOME A MAJOR TRUCK ROUTE (SHORTCUT) ADDING TO DIESEL POLLUTION IN OUR AREA.

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

I-28-1

I-28-1, Cont.

- 5. IT WILL INCREASE THE DANGER TO PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLE RIDERS CROSSING RT 84 AT VINEYARD AVE.

Responses to Comment I-28

I-28-1

The commenter's opposition to the project is noted.

Projects to increase capacity of the adjacent segments of SR 84 to the north and south of the proposed project are either under way or will be constructed before the proposed project. The I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange Project will widen SR 84 to six lanes from I-580 to Jack London Boulevard. Climbing lanes and other improvements will be made to SR 84 in the Pigeon Pass area, and a future project is planned to complete widening of SR 84 to four lanes to I-680.

The increase in traffic noise for Ruby Hill residents is addressed in Section 2.15.3 and summarized in Master Response NOI-1. Landscaping is included in the project, as described in Master Response VIS-1.

Additional traffic data were collected in the project limits in July 2007 to determine the vehicle mix between automobiles and trucks (with two, three, four, five, or more than five axles). The data were used to forecast the vehicle mix along different project segments in 2030 under the No Build and Build Alternatives. The total increase ranges from 100 to 175 trucks per day, depending on the roadway segment (see Sections 2.7.2.4 and 2.7.3.3 of the FED). The data also indicate that a significant portion of these trucks are serving the community, not transiting through the corridor.

As discussed in Master Response AIR-1, the DED acknowledges that the project is expected to result in slight increases in some air contaminants, but no additional air quality standards would be exceeded.

The project proposes crosswalks and pedestrian-activated signals at Vineyard Avenue/SR 84 intersection as well as other safety features to accommodate non-motorized traffic.

Comment I-29 Amanda Groves and David Liss



Public Information Meeting
Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

COMMENT CARD

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Oakland, CA 94610

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Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Amanda Groves & David Liss Date: 11/4/07

Affiliation (if applicable): concerned citizens & 84 neighbors.

Address: 4340 Campina Place, Pleasanton CA

I-29-1

Comment/Question: We are very concerned about the sound, pollution and aesthetics for the 84 widening on Isabel. The streets surrounding Isabel (vineyard, Conannon) have attractive ^{medians} ~~barriers~~ w/ landscaping that compliment the surrounding vineyards & hills. We do not want that "look & feel" totally disrupted by a concrete barrier through Isabel. We support and understand the need to help traffic along this route but strongly oppose the concrete barrier!

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

Responses to Comment I-29

I-29-1

See Master Responses NOI-1 and AIR-1 in regard to project-related noise and pollution, respectively. The project will have some effect on the visual quality of the SR 84 corridor, as described in the DED, and DED Section 2.8.4 proposes measures to

minimize these effects. For an explanation of why a concrete safety barrier is proposed, see Master Response VIS-2.

Comment I-30 Randy and Ellen Gruebele



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

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111 Grand Avenue/Mail: PO Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94610

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Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Randy & Ellen Gruebele Date: 11-3-07

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 1041 Germano Way

Comment/Question: We would be extremely upset if there was a significant increase in noise due to the widening of 84, without consideration of sound barriers and additional landscaping. Our street is right off of E. Ruby Hill which is parallel to 84. We would be highly affected. The other problem is the pollution and how that would affect my 8 year old son who has breathing problems. The child across the street also has asthma, but for that matter, everyone else who has good general health will not benefit from all the fumes created from 84. The

Please continue on back if necessary.

I-30-1

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

I-30-1,
Cont.

other concern is the aesthetics of the area. The Livermore side is lined with vineyards, open space, and wineries. The small retail center on the corner of Vineyard and 84, which is new, was carefully designed to fit the environment. The Pleasanton side has 1 million to 5 million dollar homes, also restricted with guidelines as to the exterior appearance. We moved to this area specifically for the "country feel" of the surroundings. Hopefully Caltrans will work with the people of these communities to uphold the values of this area.

Sincerely,
Randy and Ellen Grebeke

Responses to Comment I-30

I-30-1

As shown in Table 2.15-3, the project would increase year 2030 noise levels in the vicinity of the commenters' address (Receiver IDs 27 through 30) by 2 dBA to 5 dBA over existing levels. This increase is not considered significant, and the resulting sound levels would not approach or exceed the Federal threshold requiring the consideration of soundwalls (see Master Response NOI-1). Rubberized asphalt concrete pavement will be used throughout the project limits to reduce tire noise.

The project will include landscaping, as described in Master Response VIS-1.

The project would result in a slight increase in CO and other contaminants but would not violate any standards established to protect human health. See Master Response AIR-1 for a summary of air quality effects related to the project.

The importance of maintaining the visual quality of the project area is recognized. A landscaping plan will be developed during the project design phase, and public input will be included through focused neighborhood meetings.

Comment I-31 Steve and Sylvia Hans

ACTIA LIVERMORE CALTRANS

ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

COMMENT CARD

California Dept of Transportation
Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang, Senior Environmental Planner
111 grand Ave/Mail: PO Box 23660
Oakland, Ca 94610

To view or obtain a copy of the Environmental Document, visit:
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdoc.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday November 15, 2007

Name: Steve and Sylvia Hans Date: November 13th
Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 196 Summertree Drive, Livermore, CA. 94551

Comment/Question: _____

- I-31-1 [1. Our desire is to prevent further development on Highway 84. As concerned long term citizens of the Tri-Valley community we feel that this will have a detrimental effect on Livermore and Tri-Valley economy due to the negative impact on property values and that destruction of local vineyards and other crops; which are an economic lifeline to many Pleasanton and Livermore business owners.
- I-31-2 [2. Why weren't the residents in the area informed until after work began?
- I-31-3 [3. I believe it is imperative to provide trees and dense high foliage to the multi-use path along 84 to provide privacy, absorb carbon dioxide and screen the unsightly highway for community bikers, joggers, etc
- I-31-4 [4. What is being done regarding displacement of wildlife and disruption to the ecosystem?
- I-31-5 [5. This will have a negative effect on property value not only for Livermore but also for Pleasanton (especially Ruby Hill).
- I-31-6 [6. Where will the 3.2 acres of vineyards being removed to move 84 at Vallecitos be replaced or replanted?
- I-31-7 [7. Which county tax payer group will be paying for this development?
- I-31-8 [8. How will the congestion be mitigated?

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at 510-286-5820 or Arthur Dao, ACTIA at 510-267-6104

I-31-9 [P.S. We live 5 miles (or less) from Highway 84 and ^{both} work in silicon valley. We do not support the expansion. In fact we purposefully do not drive on 84.]

ACTIA LIVERMORE CALTRANS

ROUTE 84 EXPRESSWAY WIDENING PROJECT

COMMENT CARD, Continued

- I-31-10 9. Any non-passenger vehicles should not be allowed on this road.
- I-31-11 10. What is the weight limit going to be on the trucks taking this new route?
- I-31-12 11. Has there been thought to enhance or give an allowance to enhance the sound proof windows to those who back up to the 84?
- I-31-13 12. Has a full environmental impact study been performed?
- I-31-14 13. What is the timetable for funding for this project?
- I-31-15 14. Why not upgrade the 580, which was designed to handle this type of traffic?
- I-31-16 15. There should be toll required by all commercial truck drivers to pay for the construction (addition of lanes and development)
- I-31-17 16. The impact of this highway seems to be under estimated and rushed. My thoughts are that this was passed under the radar for a reason.
- I-31-18 17. What studies have been performed that allowed for this choice verse improving the 580/680 interchange?
- I-31-19 18. What is the Livermore and Pleasanton City counsels' option on this issue?

Responses to Comment I-31

I-31-1

As discussed in DED Section 2.2, the project would not change land use designations along SR 84, create a new transportation corridor, or provide new access. The parcels along SR 84 are already designated for residential, commercial, industrial/mining, agriculture, and other uses. With or without the project, residential growth within the regional area will continue to be limited by an Urban Limit Line (a geographic boundary limiting land use changes), authorized by Alameda County’s Measure D and incorporated into the East County Area Plan. Vineyards and other agricultural areas in the project vicinity are also protected by Tri-Valley Conservancy conservation easements and Williamson Act contracts (see Section 2.3.2). As the project would not result in additional development on SR 84, no local or regional economic changes are expected. The project’s effects on property values are discussed in Master Response GEN-3.

I-31-2

The environmental studies for the proposed project began in 2005, but no construction has taken place. Two public meetings on the project have been held, and mailers announcing the project and advertising the meetings were sent to area residents, as discussed in Master Response GEN-4.

I-31-3

Master Response VIS-1 discusses the planned landscaping for the project area.

I-31-4

Extensive field studies were conducted during the environmental phase to assess wildlife conditions in the project area and potential project impacts. Two roadway alignments south of Vallecitos Road were originally considered for the project, and the proposed roadway alignment was selected primarily because it would have the smallest potential effect on natural habitat. The Department is also conducting ongoing consultation with environmental resource agencies including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. As a result of that consultation, avoidance measures will be agreed on and implemented to further protect wildlife and habitat in the project area. Measures could include preservation of wildlife passages, preconstruction surveys, and high-visibility fencing to clear the construction zone of sensitive species, and provision of on-site or off-site biological mitigation sites.

I-31-5

See Master Response GEN-3 in regard to property values in the vicinity of SR 84.

I-31-6

See the response to Comment I-07-5.

I-31-7

The project includes a mixture of local, State, and Federal funds, as shown in Section 1.4.1.7 of the FED. Local funds will be provided by the ACTIA Measure B Program.

I-31-8

Widening the highway will add capacity to SR 84 and attract regional traffic currently diverting to local streets, thereby improving local circulation and reducing congestion at intersections (see Section 2.7.3 of the DED). Master Response TR-2 discusses regional traffic improvements planned or under way in the project vicinity.

I-31-9

The comment is noted.

I-31-10

The comment is noted. Truck restrictions could be pursued independent of the proposed project, as described in Master Response TR-1.

I-31-11

Weight limits for trucks will remain the same as those on all State highways where no special restrictions are required. The structural section of the roadway pavement will be designed to accommodate loadings from existing and future truck traffic.

I-31-12

See the response to Comment I-07-10.

I-31-13

See Master Response GEN-2.

I-31-14

See the response to Comment I-07-12.

I-31-15

See the response to Comment I-07-13.

I-31-16

The Department does not currently support tolling commercial trucks on state highways except at the eight San Francisco Bay Area bridge toll plazas.

I-31-17

See the response to Comment I-31-2.

I-31-18

See Master Response TR-2 regarding improvements to the I-580/I-680 interchange. The SR 84 Expressway Widening Project was studied separately as part of a series of improvements to upgrade the route to expressway standards, improve local circulation in Livermore, and improve connectivity to I-580. Both projects would improve traffic circulation in the area and are not related.

I-31-19

The Cities of Livermore and Pleasanton support the proposed project and have provided staff to participate as members of the Project Development Team throughout the planning process.

Comment I-32 Gary and Nancy Harrington (1 of 4)



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

COMMENT CARD

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Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Nancy & Gary Harrington Date: 10/30/07

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 444 Caberria Ct.

Comment/Question: _____

See Attached

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

Nancy & Gary Harrington
October 31, 2007
444 Cabonia Court
Pleasanton, CA 94566

COMMENTS:

I-32-1

The public information meeting held at Smith Elementary School last evening was ineffective. We believed the speakers would tell about the details of this project—not just that the expressway was being built, which we knew. It was by “accident” that we found out 1) the road to Livermore (Holmes) was being moved; 2) concrete barriers will be placed in the middle of the expressway; 3) a large part of the slope (by Ruby Hills) will be cut away and a retaining wall built. There was no specific information given on the environmental ‘noise’ study that had been completed. Most questions asked by the audience were not addressed but were referred to a specific person who could be reached later, or to the Environmental Report, itself. Remember, most of the people in attendance were not engineers and had difficulty interpreting the maps. It was your job to explain the information. It was obvious that people were getting upset because no answers were provided, except that the expressway was going to be built. We know that. It’s been planned for a very long time and it needs to be built. However, the information meeting should have provided much more information. It seemed like information was being ‘hidden’—not a good feeling for our community.

I-32-2

This area along 84 and Vineyard is a beautiful, quiet and peaceful community. The vineyards provide an aura, reminiscent of the Napa Valley. The area teems with birds, turkeys, raccoons, possums, red fox, deer, squirrels and other animals. The idea of an Expressway causes anxiety because of the disturbance it may cause to this environment. It seems to us that the approach needs to be more of creating an Expressway that is conducive to, and that enhances, our environment, as much as is possible. To us this means creating a median island (no more than 4 feet wide—see Concannon—because of the width of the expressway) with some trees, shrubs and rock or brick. Landscaping the hillside by Ruby Hills with evergreens and native plants (to beautify and reduce noise). Do not put sound walls where they are not needed (by Ruby Hills park/pool area). By utilizing this philosophy of ‘enhancing the environment’, Caltrans will create an Expressway that the community will accept and will feel they were listened to and heard. Isn’t this what you’re all about? Isn’t that why Public Informational Meetings are held?

We hope you will take our comments seriously. We have lived here over 30 years and love our community and want to see it continue to improve itself.

I-32-3

The other two issues in our minds is the increase in truck use of this roadway and the speed limit. The increased truck use is a problem not only because of the noise some of these trucks make and their pollution, but also because Isabel(84) is our only access road to other roads to Pleasanton or Livermore. Otherwise we must use a 2 lane road (Vineyard) and go out of our way to get to our destination. We have already expressed our concerns to the City of Pleasanton about the need to extend Jack London Blvd. through Pleasanton, so that hopefully they will make the best decisions about roadways for the entire community. Currently, we rarely use 580 due to the number of trucks, their speed and the 'boxing in' they create due to their numbers. This is very dangerous. Somehow the size/kind of trucks using the expressway needs to be limited. Also, we feel lowering the speed limit on the expressway to 45 MPH from Vineyard to Ruby Hill's Entrance on 84 will help decrease the noise of the traffic. My husband and I are going to pursue these two issues through our Assemblymen, Congressmen, Senators and the Governor.

Responses to Comment I-32

I-32-1

The commenters' opinions are noted. The Department's intention has always been to make all project information readily available to everyone. The concerns of nearby residents and the project's environment are integral to the Department's ultimate decision on how the project will be implemented. To address these concerns, the Department requires public outreach meetings and consideration of all public comments on transportation projects, which is the primary reason why the October 30, 2007, meeting was held. In addition, the public comment period was extended by 45 days, to December 28, 2007, to ensure that all interested members of the public had the opportunity to provide input and ask questions. Each comment was carefully read and addressed. All comments and their responses are presented in this FED.

I-32-2

Extensive field studies have been conducted to assess wildlife conditions in the project area and potential impacts that wildlife could experience. Two roadway alignments south of Vallecitos Road were originally considered for the project, and the current proposed roadway alignment was selected primarily because it would have the smallest potential effect on the natural habitat. The Department is also consulting with environmental

resource agencies including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on avoidance measures to further protect wildlife and their habitat in the project area. These measures could include preservation of wildlife passages, preconstruction surveys, and high-visibility fencing to keep sensitive species out of the construction zone.

The Department understands the importance to nearby residents of maintaining the scenic quality of the SR 84 corridor. A median barrier is included rather than an island for safety—both for motorists and the highway workers who must maintain it. In addition, the roadway median is not wide enough to accommodate an island that is more than 2 feet in width. Due to the relatively high speed limit on the roadway, safety policies dictate that trees or other fixed objects not be placed within 30 feet of traffic. However, aesthetic treatments such as color, texture, and pattern options will be considered for the concrete safety barrier to make it more visually harmonious with the surrounding area.

The conceptual landscaping plans for SR 84 propose to keep the native vegetation south of Vineyard Avenue to maintain the rural setting. Input on the landscaping plan will be sought from the community and local agencies.

In regard to placing soundwalls only where they are needed, the comment mentioned one is not necessary by the Ruby Hill park/pool area. The noise studies conducted for the DED indicated that this is the only area of the project corridor where noise levels will approach (but not exceed) the Federal criteria for abatement after project construction. As described in Section 2.15.4, a 6-foot-high soundwall was considered to reduce traffic noise in this area. The soundwall has been determined to be not reasonable and will not be included in the project.

I-32-3

Over time, the number of vehicles that use SR 84 will increase due to projected regional growth. This project will increase capacity on SR 84 to help accommodate this future growth and improve existing congestion on local streets. In response to comments that requested specific information about changes in truck traffic, additional data were gathered to test the modeling and projections used in the traffic studies, and this information is provided in the FED (see Sections 2.7.2.4 and 2.7.3.3). The data show that although truck volumes increase slightly over the No Build condition between 2007 and 2030, a significant portion of these trucks are servicing the community, not transiting through the corridor.

The issue of extending Stoneridge Drive or Las Positas Boulevard to Jack London Boulevard is not within the scope or study limits of this project. We suggest that you forward these comments to the Cities of Pleasanton and Livermore.

In regard to the comment that lowering the speed limit to 45 mph on SR 84 from Vineyard Avenue to the Ruby Hill entrance would decrease traffic noise, see Master Response TR-3.

Comment I-33A Nancy Harrington (2 of 4)



Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

COMMENT CARD

Comment sheets may be deposited in the comment box tonight or mailed to:

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang, Senior Environmental Planner
111 Grand Avenue/Mail: PO Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94610

To view or obtain a copy of the Environmental Document, visit www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Nancy Harrington Date: 10/30/07

Affiliation (if applicable):

Address: 444 Cabania Ct.

I-33A -1

Comment/Question: The part of the expressway that passes Ruby Hills needs to be constructed so that the least amount of noise infiltrates our close neighborhood. This includes 'rubberizing' the roadway, soundwalls where they'll do the most good, and the planting of numerous evergreens along the hillside.

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

Responses to Comment I-33A

I-33A-1

The comment is noted. Soundwalls were evaluated in the area of Ruby Hill where noise levels with the project would approach Federal noise abatement criteria, as discussed in Master Response NOI-1. Rubberized asphalt concrete pavement will be used throughout

the project limits to reduce tire noise. Landscaping is included in the project as an aesthetic element and is not considered a noise abatement measure.

Comment I-33B Nancy and Gary Harrington (3 of 4)



Public Information Meeting
Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Route 84 Expressway Widening Project

COMMENT CARD

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California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
Office of Environmental Analysis
Attn: Ed Pang, Senior Environmental Planner
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Environmental Document, visit
www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm

Please submit comments by the close of the comment period, Thursday, November 15, 2007.

Name: Nancy & Gary Harrington Date: 10/30/07

Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Address: 444 Caboria Ct.

I-33B
-1

Comment/Question: Re: the exit/entrance to Ruby Hills from 84. There are 2 lanes next to the entrance. Cars on 84 are using the right hand lane as a passing lane. This is extremely dangerous for Ruby Hill residents. Exiting from Ruby Hills, turning right, these passing cars on the right have almost hit me more than once. That right lane coming into Ruby Hills should be "for Right Turn only." Please consider changing this for safety.

Please continue on back if necessary.

For more information, contact Brigetta Smith, Caltrans at (510) 286-5820 or Arthur L. Dao, ACTIA at (510) 267-6104.

Responses to Comment I-33B

I-33B-1

SR 84 currently has lane drops on either side of the Ruby Hill intersection. These will be removed by the project. For traffic entering and exiting the Ruby Hill development, additional pavement will be provided at the intersection to accommodate vehicle acceleration and deceleration.

Comment I-34 Joe and Lisa Hartley

November 12, 2007

Department of Transportation
Attn: Ed Pang
P. O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

Mr. Pang

I am a Pleasanton resident and concerned parent who lives on the border of Livermore and Pleasanton and I wish to register my opposition to the Environmental Report on the proposed Route 84 Expressway Widening Project.

I-34-1 [After reading the Environmental Impact document and attending the "Public Meeting" on October 30, I have concluded that the report is a charade designed to steamroll a decision and the quality of life in the Livermore valley. We will diminish the air, life and noise quality in the Livermore valley so that even more homes can be built in the central valley thus absorbing whatever temporary capacity improvement. This is the twisted logic that only real estate developers and Caltrans could understand.

In my view, the Caltrans sponsored study (versus that by an independent third party), and by a Caltrans paid private consultant is:

I-34-2 [Not objective and sets assumptions and conclusions to suit the final purpose of justifying the expansion, without regard to the safety, traffic, air quality and crime concerns of directly affected citizens whose home line the highway. The argument that the proposed extension will not significantly affect quality of air, noise and life is based upon very a limited study with limited data that probably starts with assumptions that the project is voter approved and so is a good idea. The analysis was not even done after the diversion of the old 84 from downtown.

I-34-3 [Not comprehensive in nature and includes linear extrapolations of current data to project environmental conditions after the expansion is completed. It is my opinion and projection that Noise, Air Quality and Quality of Life will follow a non linear degrading model and the Caltrans model must consider more studies to prove the projections.

I-34-4 [There is a very cursory study of and followed by an outright rejection of

I-34-4, Cont. [alternate routes in the same corridor. The lack of a proposal for and the rejection of alternate road proposals, ones that lead away from tranquil residential areas, along the same corridor, is a significant weakness in the study. Why are we spending all these funds to create a freeway through a residential neighborhood instead of solving the problem of the 580/680 corridors where freeways currently exist?

I-34-5 [There is no discussion or study of machined/ground asphalt for reduced noise, a longer Sound wall, Reduced speed areas, Signaled intersections, or a discussion of how speed will eventually be regulated.

I-34-6 [Data needs to be collected along the streets, yards and homes of directly affected residents, those whose homes line the proposed extension and followed by comprehensive projection models and analysis.

I-34-7 [I request that a new Environmental Study be conducted by an independent third party with more comprehensive analysis of alternatives, with projections based upon the new data on the quality of life along the expansion route, with more direct data relating to the residents.

Regards,

Joe & Lisa Hartley

1601 Orvieto Court

Pleasanton, CA 94566

Responses to Comment I-34

I-34-1

The commenter's opposition to the DED is noted.

The purpose of the DED and the project is not to stimulate growth in the Central Valley or elsewhere by adding capacity on SR 84. As described in Section 1.3.2, existing congestion on I-580 and I-680 is causing regional, sub-regional, and local traffic to divert to local streets in the Cities of Livermore, Pleasanton, and Dublin. Sections 2.7.2.2 and 2.7.2.3 of the DED describe local roadway conditions without the proposed project in place for 2010 and 2030. The project in combination with other regional traffic improvements would lessen existing and future congestion on local streets.

I-34-2

The DED analyzed potential effects to traffic, air quality, and other resources in accordance with the CEQA standards of significance, which are included verbatim in

Appendix D. The determinations of significance were based on a detailed and comprehensive review of each technical study area to evaluate all potential project effects in accordance with CEQA standards. The project's potential effects on air quality and noise were evaluated in accordance with State and Federal standards. Additional information about changes in truck traffic and noise levels has been included in the FED in response to public comments. See Master Response GEN-2 for a description of the additional information and a detailed explanation of the DED's impact determinations.

The statements about crime and quality-of-life concerns related to the project are difficult to address without additional detail. No information or data are included in the comment about the potential for crime rates to change as a result of the project. Other commenters have discussed quality-of-life impacts in relation to noise, as addressed in Master Response NOI-1.

It should be noted that the diversion of SR 84 from downtown Livermore took place in 2003, and environmental studies for the proposed project began in 2005. Therefore, the analysis accounts for conditions along the current SR 84 alignment. Additional noise measurements were collected near the intersection of SR 84 and Vallecitos Road to reflect modifications to the intersection that were completed in 2007.

I-34-3

The comment that the DED is not comprehensive and relies on linear extrapolations of current data to project future environmental conditions and that noise, air quality, and quality-of-life effects will follow a nonlinear degrading model does not specify which data are being questioned. The project's potential effects on air quality and noise were evaluated in accordance with State and Federal standards.

Project-related air quality changes were modeled using CALINE4 (California LINE Source Dispersion Model, version 4) 1.31, the standard Caltrans modeling program used to assess the dispersion of air pollutants near transportation facilities. The methods used for the analysis are reported in detail in the Air Quality Analysis (Baseline Environmental Consulting 2008). CALINE4 is a nonlinear model that predicts worst-case concentrations of pollutants based on future maximum levels of traffic and maximum exposure of the nearest potentially impacted sensitive location. The worst-case levels were added to maximum measured background levels. The results showed levels well below applicable air quality standards, which were the basis for the conclusion that the project would have a less-than-significant impact.

Future noise levels were predicted in accordance with the Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol (Caltrans 2006) using the FHWA's Traffic Noise Model version 2.5. The overall procedure consists of developing a computer model of existing conditions, calibrating the model with field measurements, and modifying the model based on the proposed project changes to calculate expected future noise levels. The FHWA model is also nonlinear and accounts for site-specific conditions including terrain, existing barriers, and surface conditions. The model and the techniques used in the noise study have been developed over decades of use and refinement. The model's accuracy is tested during the study by comparing predicted levels at measured locations with modeled outputs, and, if necessary, calibration factors are used to ensure that the levels are accurate. Maximum future traffic levels (including maximum future truck traffic) are then applied in the model to predict future worst-case noise levels. The methods used for the analysis are reported in detail in the Noise Study Report (Wilson, Ihrig and Associates 2007).

The evaluations were conducted by qualified consultants and reviewed by Caltrans environmental or engineering staff. Additional noise data have been collected as discussed in Master Response GEN-2. Quality of life is an intangible factor that cannot be modeled (see Master Response GEN-5).

I-34-4

Other build alternatives were considered, as discussed in Section 1.5 and Master Response GEN-1. Potential project alignments were constrained by ongoing and future gravel mining operations, an environmental conservation easement, existing residential and commercial development, and other factors. The proposed alignment presented the fewest adverse effects of the options considered. Appendix B provides additional documentation comparing the design options and the reasons for rejecting them.

Separate improvements are planned or under way for the I-580 and I-680 corridors, as discussed in Master Response TR-2.

I-34-5

The use of quiet pavement materials is discussed in DED Section 2.15.4. Rubberized asphalt concrete will be used throughout the project limits. Soundwalls were evaluated as discussed in Master Response NOI-1.

Signalized intersections within the project limits are listed in Section 1.4.1.1. All signalized intersections will remain in place.

See Master Response TR-3 in regard to the speed limit and enforcement on SR 84.

I-34-6

Additional data for noise levels and traffic volumes have been collected in the project area, as described in Master Responses NOI-1 and GEN-2. Those data have been considered in the FED.

I-34-7

Under CEQA and NEPA, the public agency proposing an action that would result in direct or indirect physical change is responsible for the CEQA/NEPA process, including research and preparation of the required environmental documents. In this case, the public agency is Caltrans. That is why Caltrans rather than a third party prepared the DED.

The technical studies and DED were prepared in accordance with CEQA and NEPA requirements and under the same process that would apply to any other proposed project by a public agency. The studies prepared by consultants were subject to the review of Caltrans.

The responses to Comments I-34-4 and I-34-6 address the analysis of project alternatives and additional data collected for the FED, respectively.