

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: March 5, 2013

Reference No.: 2.2b. (1)
Action

From: BIMLA G. RHINEHART
Executive Director

Subject: **DRAFT RECIRCULATED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT**

ISSUE:

Should the Commission, as a Responsible Agency, provide comments in response to the Re-circulated Draft Environmental Impact Report/Re-circulated Draft Environmental Impact Statement (RDEIR/RDEIS) for the Mid County Parkway Project located in Riverside County?

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission make no comments regarding the environmental issues addressed in the RDEIR/RDEIS. However, staff recommends that a letter be sent to the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) that states:

- The Commission has no comments with respect to the project's purpose and need, the alternatives studied, the impacts to be evaluated, and the evaluation methods used.
- The Commission recommends that the RCTC and its partners identify and secure the necessary funding to complete the project.
- If, in the future, funds or other actions under the purview of the Commission are anticipated, notification should be provided to the Commission as a Responsible Agency.

BACKGROUND:

The proposed project is located in western Riverside County. The project will construct a 16 mile west-east transportation corridor between Interstate-215 (I-215) and State Route (SR) 79 connecting the Cities of San Jacinto and Perris. The project will consist of a divided highway including three lanes in each direction with on and off ramps as well as freeway-freeway type interchanges at I-215 and SR-79. The alternatives evaluated in the RDEIR/RDEIS include three Build Alternatives and two No-Build Alternatives.

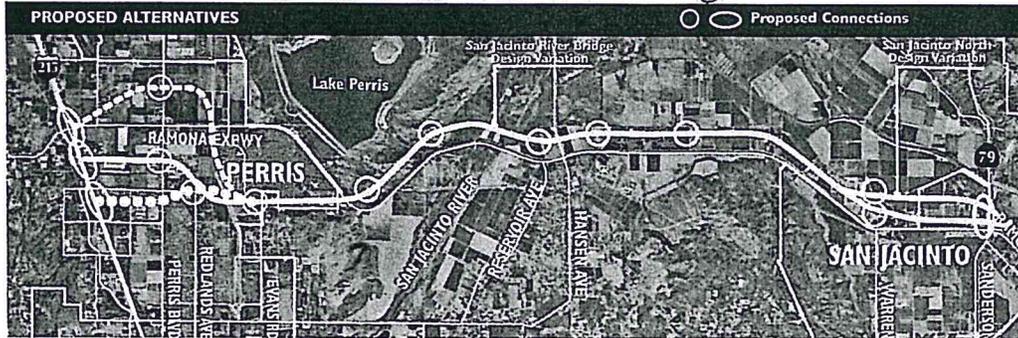
Attachment

- Notice of Availability

REC'D BY CTC
JAN 28 2013

MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of Availability of a Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report/Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Notice of a Public Hearing



WHAT IS BEING PLANNED?

The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) are proposing a project to improve west-east transportation in western Riverside County between Interstate 215 (I-215) in the west and State Route 79 (SR-79) in the east. RCTC is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and FHWA is the Lead Agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), in cooperation with Caltrans. The Mid County Parkway (MCP) project is a proposed 16-mile transportation corridor designed to relieve local and regional traffic congestion between the cities of Perris and San Jacinto and surrounding Riverside County communities. The corridor was identified as part of the Riverside County Integrated Project, a region wide planning effort to ensure mobility and protect the environment and quality of life as the area continues to grow. The project alternatives consist of three Build Alternatives (4 Modified, 5 Modified, and 9 Modified) and two No Build Alternatives (1A and 1B).

WHY THIS NOTICE?

The Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report/Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (RDEIR/SDEIS), that was prepared pursuant to Federal and State environmental laws, examines the potential environmental impacts of the alternatives being considered for the proposed MCP project. The document describes why the project is being proposed, the project alternatives, and the existing environment that could be affected by the project, the potential environmental impacts of each of the proposed alternatives, and the proposed avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures. Potential benefits from future implementation include increased accessibility for residents and businesses and relieving traffic congestion on the regional and local transportation network. Key issues include impacts to community character and cohesion, land use, farmlands, growth-related effects, biological resources, aquatic resources, cultural resources, aesthetics, park lands, open space, residential relocations, business relocations, traffic, noise, air quality, climate change, and temporary construction effects. The proposed work involves sites on a list enumerated under Section 65962.5 of the Government Code to hazardous wastes. One or more of the alternatives being evaluated will have an effect on the historic properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The United States Army Corps of Engineers is a Cooperating Agency under NEPA and intends to use the MCP EIS as the supporting documentation for its future Section 404 permitting action.

The RCTC is hosting a public hearing to provide the community with information about the RDEIR/SDEIS. The public hearing will be held on February 20, 2013, at Lakeside Middle School located at 27720 Walnut Street, Perris, CA 92571. At this open house style meeting, you may attend anytime between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. There will be no formal presentation at this meeting, however the public is invited to make oral comments to a court reporter or talk with staff about the project. Written comments will be accepted at the meeting and through the public comment period ending March 11, 2013.

WHAT IS AVAILABLE?

The RDEIR/SDEIS and technical studies are available for viewing at the following locations during regular business hours: 1) RCTC, 4080 Lemon Street 3rd Floor, Riverside, CA 92501; 2) FHWA, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100, Sacramento, CA 95814; 3) Caltrans District 8 Office, 464 W. 4th Street, San Bernardino, CA 92401; 4) Perris Public Library, 163 E. San Jacinto Avenue, Perris, CA 92507; 5) San Jacinto Public Library, 500 Idyllwild Drive, San Jacinto, CA 92583; and 6) Moreno Valley Public Library, 25480 Alessandro Boulevard, Moreno Valley, CA 92553. You may also view and comment on the RDEIR/SDEIS at www.midcountyparkway.org.

WHERE YOU COME IN

The RDEIR/SDEIS is available for public review and comment between January 25, 2013 and March 11, 2013. The purpose of the public review and comment period is to give interested parties the opportunity to provide their input on the proposed project and the environmental analysis for the project. Public and agency comments previously submitted for the October 2008 Draft EIR/EIS will be included in the MCP Administrative Record, but no formal responses will be prepared. Any comments received during the public review period of the RDEIR/SDEIS will be formally responded to in the Final EIR/EIS. Comments may be submitted in person at the public hearing, online at www.midcountyparkway.org, or mailed to: Ms. Cathy Bechtel, RCTC, P.O. Box 12008, Riverside, CA 92502. All comments must be received no later than 5 PM on March 11, 2013.

CONTACT/SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

For individuals who require special accommodations (American Sign Language or other lingual interpreter, documentation in alternate formats, etc.), please call (951) 787-7141 or write to: Ms. Cathy Bechtel, RCTC, P.O. Box 12008, Riverside, CA 92502, before March 11, 2013.