

Memorandum

Tab 42

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: March 20, 2014

Reference No.: 2.2b. (1)
Action

From: ANDRE BOUTROS
Executive Director

Subject: **DRAFT RECIRCULATED SECTIONS - 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 sections of the Draft Environmental Impact Report/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 re-circulated sections of 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.

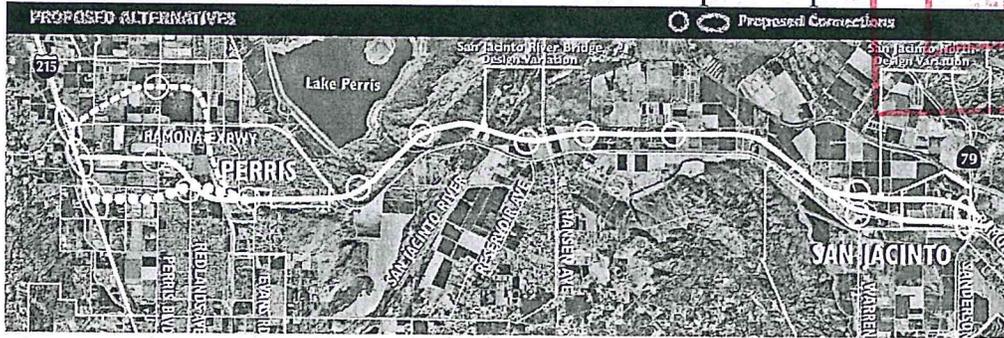
BACKGROUND:

The proposed project is located in western Riverside County and will construct a 16 mile transportation corridor between Interstate-215 (I-215) and State Route (SR) 79 connecting the Cities of San Jacinto and Perris with a divided highway including on and off ramps and interchanges at I-215 and SR-79. The alternatives evaluated in the RDEIR/RDEIS include three Build Alternatives and two No-Build Alternatives. RCTC, as CEQA lead agency, is re-circulating the Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Climate Change and Summary of Effects sections of the RDEIR/RDEIS to incorporate additional analyses that have been prepared.

Attachment - Notice of Availability

MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of Availability of Recirculated Sections of the Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report



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 in the west and State Route 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. This 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 (Alternatives 4 Modified, 5 Modified, and 9 Modified) and two No Build Alternatives (1A and 1B).

WHY THIS NOTICE?

In January 2013, RCTC, Caltrans, and FHWA circulated a Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which examined the potential environmental impacts of alternatives being considered for the MCP project.

RCTC, as the Lead Agency under CEQA, has prepared additional quantitative analyses of potential air quality and greenhouse gas emissions and climate change effects of the MCP Build Alternatives and has revised four parts of Chapter 4.0, California Environmental Quality Act Evaluation (Sections 4.4.III, Air Quality; 4.4.VII, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, 4.5, Climate Change; and Table 4.10; Summary of Effects) from the EIR to incorporate those additional analyses. Because only certain sections of the Recirculated Draft EIR that have been revised and replaced are being circulated, reviewers should limit their comments to these revised sections of the Recirculated Draft EIR only, consistent with Section 15088(f)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines. Furthermore, previous comment letters submitted on the Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS during the prior public review period on non-recirculated chapters need not be resubmitted.

WHAT IS AVAILABLE?

Revised Sections 4.4.III, 4.4.VII, 4.5, and Table 4.10 in Chapter 4.0 of the Recirculated Draft EIR are available for viewing at the following locations during regular business hours:

RCTC, 4080 Lemon Street 3rd Floor, Riverside, CA 92501
FHWA, 650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100, Sacramento, CA 95814
Caltrans District 8 Office, 464 W. 4th Street, San Bernardino, CA 92401
Perris Public Library, 163 E. San Jacinto Avenue, Perris, CA 92507
San Jacinto Public Library, 500 Idyllwild Drive, San Jacinto, CA 92583
Moreno Valley Public Library, 25480 Alessandro Boulevard, Moreno Valley, CA 92553

You may also view and comment on revised Sections 4.4.III, 4.4.VII, and 4.5, and Table 4.10 at www.midcountyparkway.org.

WHERE YOU COME IN

Revised Sections 4.4.III, 4.4.VII, and 4.5 and Table 4.10 are available for public review and comment between January 31, 2014 and March 17, 2014. The purpose of the public review and comment period is to give interested parties the opportunity to provide their input on the additional analyses conducted by RCTC as the CEQA Lead Agency. Comments received during the public review period for these revised Sections of the Recirculated Draft EIR will be formally responded to in the Final EIR/EIS. Comments on revised Sections 4.4.III, 4.4.VII, and 4.5, and Table 4.10 may be submitted online at www.midcountyparkway.org, or in writing and mailed to: Mr. Alex Menor, RCTC, P.O. Box 12008, Riverside, CA 92502. All comments must be received no later than 5 PM on March 17, 2014.