

Memorandum

Tab 32

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: January 22, 2015

Reference No.: 2.2b
Action

From: SUSAN BRANSEN
Interim Executive Director

Subject: **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (DEIR/EA) FOR THE INTERSTATE 680 (I-680) NORTHBOUND HIGH OCCUPANCY VEHICLE (HOV)/EXPRESS LANE PROJECT**
04-SCL-680, PM 6.5/9.9, 04-ALA-680, PM 0.0/12.4 (PPNO 0177, 0587E, TCRP Project #4)

ISSUE:

Should the Commission, as a Responsible Agency, provide comments in response to the DEIR/EA for the I-680 Northbound HOV/Express Lane Project in Santa Clara and Alameda Counties?

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission make no comments relative to the alternatives or environmental impacts addressed in the DEIR/EA. However, staff recommends that a letter be sent to Caltrans that states the following:

- The Commission has no comments with respect to the alternatives or environmental impacts addressed in the DEIR/EA.
- The Commission recommends that Caltrans and its partners identify and secure the necessary funding to complete the project.
- As this project is programmed in the 2014 State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) and the Traffic Congestion Relief Program (TCRP), and actions under the purview of the Commission are anticipated, upon completion of the final environmental document, notification should be provided to the Commission as a Responsible Agency.

BACKGROUND:

Caltrans is the designated CEQA/NEPA Lead Agency responsible for the environmental review of the project. The I-680 Northbound HOV/Express Lane Project will construct an approximately 15-mile HOV/Express Lane on northbound I-680 from south of State Route (SR) 237 in Santa Clara County to north of SR 84 (Vallecitos Road) in Alameda County. For additional project information and summaries of the alternatives and environmental impacts please see Caltrans' memorandum included as agenda item 2.2b.

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS
CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CTC Meeting: January 22, 2015

Reference No.: 2.2b.
Action Item

From: NORMA ORTEGA
Chief Financial Officer

Prepared by: Katrina C. Pierce, Chief
Division of
Environmental Analysis

Subject: **COMMENTS ON DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORTS**

RECOMMENDATION:

The California Department of Transportation (Department) recommends that the California Transportation Commission (Commission) review and comment at the January 2015 Commission meeting on the following Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR):

ISSUE:

04-SCI-680, PM 6.5/9.9, 04-ALA-680, PM 0.0/12.4

This project in Santa Clara and Alameda Counties will construct a high occupancy vehicle/express lane on northbound Interstate 680 (I-680), and rehabilitate the existing roadway. The project is programmed in the Traffic Congestion Relief Program and the 2014 State Highway Operation and Protection Program. The project is not fully funded. Depending on the alternative selected, the total estimated cost is approximately \$380,500,000 for capital and support. Depending on the availability of funding, construction is estimated to begin in Fiscal Year 2016-17.

Alternatives considered for the proposed project include:

- Build Alternative – This alternative proposes to construct, in multiple phases, an HOV/express lane facility on northbound I-680 from State Route 237 to State Route 84.
- No Build Alternative.

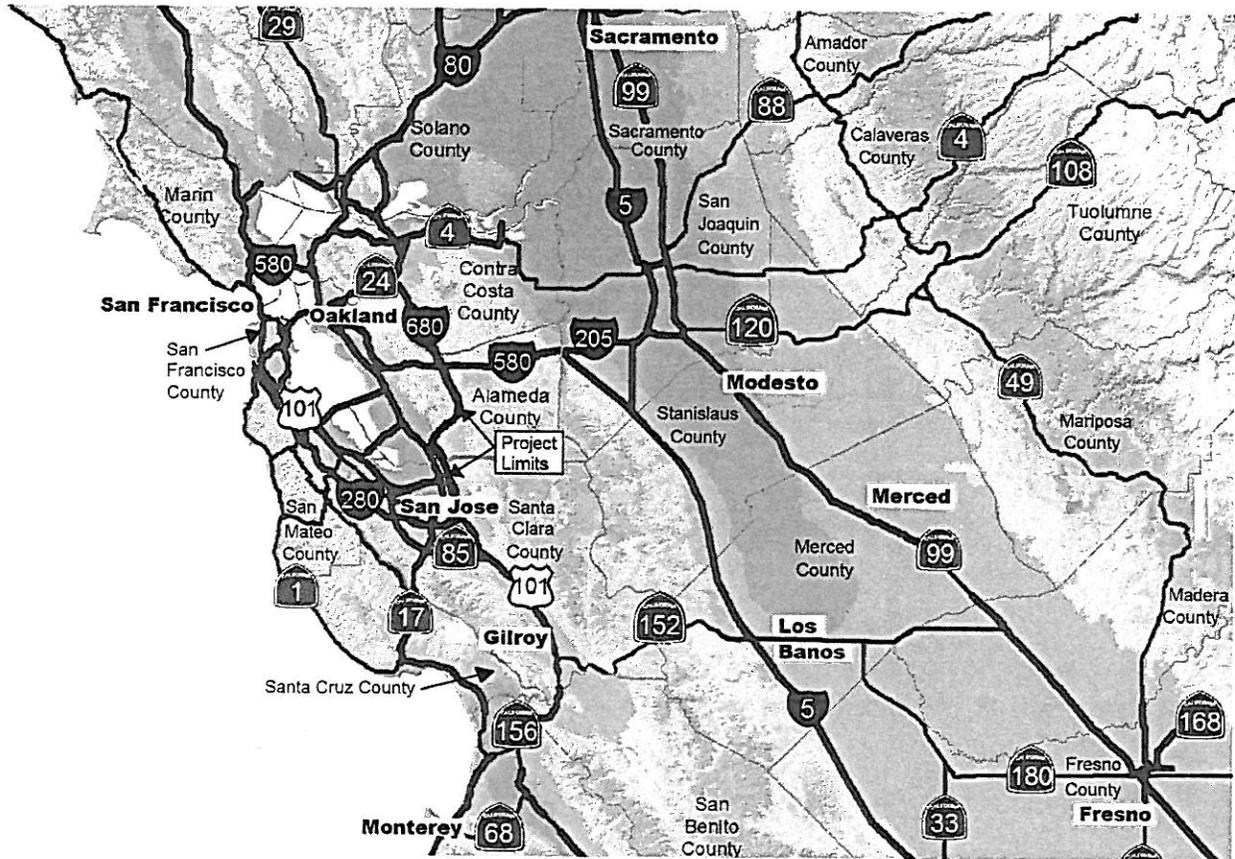
The decision to prepare an EIR was made due to a substantial amount of public controversy surrounding the project associated with the proposed removal of five historic trees. Impacts of the project include:

- Biological Resources
- Noise
- Paleontological Resources

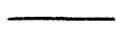
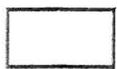
The following measures would be incorporated to minimize impacts of the project:

- Compensatory mitigation for jurisdictional water features.
- Compensatory mitigation for the California Tiger Salamander.
- Compensatory mitigation for the California Red-Legged Frog.
- Compensatory mitigation for the Alameda Whipsnake.
- Compensatory mitigation for Oak Woodlands.
- Potential compensatory mitigation for central California coast steelhead.
- Noise abatement measures as required.
- A Paleontological Evaluation Report will be prepared and, if needed, a Paleontological Mitigation Plan will be prepared and implemented.

Attachment



Legend

-  Project Study Limits
-  Major Highway
-  State Highway
-  County Boundary

0 10 20 30 40 50 Miles



X:\680_NB_Express\000_CAD\user\k.vander.sen\l\esca1\con_Map\VICINITYMAP.DGN

OCTOBER 2013
NO SCALE

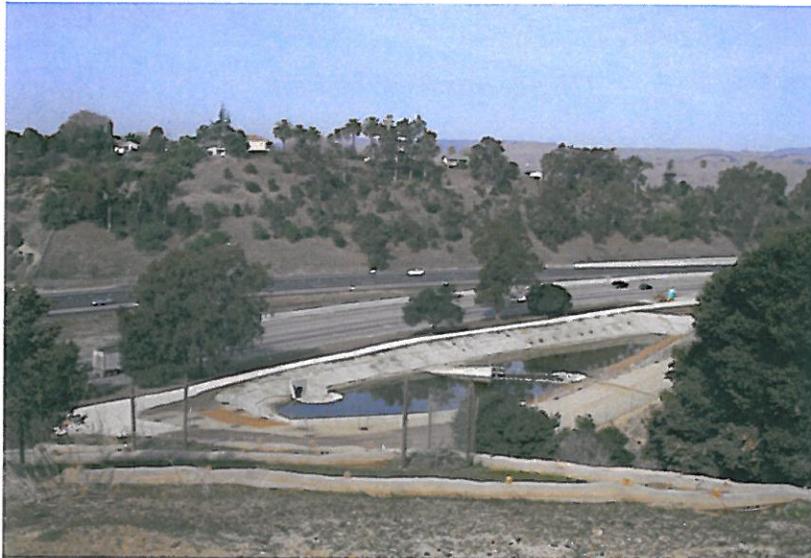
**I-680 NB HOV/EXPRESS LANE
PROJECT VICINITY MAP**

**Figure
B-2**

I-680 Northbound HOV/Express Lane Project

SANTA CLARA AND ALAMEDA COUNTIES, CALIFORNIA
DISTRICT 04 - SCL-680 (PM 6.5/9.9) – ALA-680 (PM 0.0/12.4)
EA 04-4G0500/0412000437

Draft Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA)



Prepared by the State of California Department of Transportation

The environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable Federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried out by Caltrans under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 USC 327.



Caltrans

November 2014

This page intentionally left blank.

To conserve resources this document was printed on recycled paper. Please recycle!



General Information About This Document

WHAT'S IN THIS DOCUMENT

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), has prepared this Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA), which examines the potential environmental impacts of the alternatives being considered for the proposed project located in Alameda and Santa Clara Counties, California. Caltrans is the lead agency for preparing the environmental document in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The document tells you why the project is being proposed, alternatives considered, how the existing environment could be affected by the alternatives, the potential impacts of each of the alternatives, and the proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:

- Please read the document
- This document is available in electronic format at:
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/envdocs.htm>
- Additional copies of this document are available for review at:
 - Caltrans District 4, 111 Grand Avenue, Oakland, CA
 - Alameda County Transportation Commission, 1333 Broadway, Suite 300, Oakland, CA
 - City of Fremont, Planning Division, 39550 Liberty St, Fremont, CA
 - City of Pleasanton, Planning Division, 200 Old Bernal Avenue, Pleasanton, CA
 - City of Milpitas, Planning Division, 455 East Calaveras Boulevard, Milpitas, CA
- Attend the public meetings scheduled for:

JANUARY 8, 2015 6:30-8:30 PM

Mission High School

41717 Palm Avenue

Fremont, CA 94539

JANUARY 13, 2015 6:30-8:30 PM

Hearst Elementary School

5301 Case Avenue

Pleasanton, CA 94566

- We would like to hear what you think. If you have any comments regarding the proposed project, please attend the public meeting and/or send your written comments to Caltrans by the deadline.
- Submit comments via postal mail to:
 - California Department of Transportation, District 4
 - Attn: Wahida I. Rashid
 - 111 Grand Avenue
 - Office of Environmental Analysis, MS-8B
 - Oakland, CA 94612
- Submit comments via email to: wahida.rashid@dot.ca.gov

Be sure to submit comments by the deadline: Friday, January 23, 2015

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, Caltrans, as assigned by the FHWA, may: (1) give environmental approval to the proposed project, (2) do additional environmental studies, or (3) abandon the project. If the project is given environmental approval and funding is appropriated, Caltrans could design and construct all or part of the project.

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document can be made available in Braille, in large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write to California Department of Transportation, Attn: Wahida I. Rashid, 111 Grand Avenue, Office of Environmental Analysis MS-8B, Oakland, CA, 94612; (510) 286-5935, Voice, or use the California Relay Service TTY number, 711.

SCH No. 2012092028
DISTRICT 04-SCL-680 PM 6.5/9.9
04-ALA-680 PM 0.0/12.4
EA 04-4G0500/Project No. 0412000437

Construct an approximately 15-mile High Occupancy Vehicle/express lane (HOV/express lane) project on northbound Interstate 680 (I-680) from south of State Route (SR) 237 in Santa Clara County to north of SR 84 (Vallecitos Road) in Alameda County.

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Public Resources Code
(Federal) 42 USC 4332(2)(C)

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation

And

Cooperating Agency: Alameda County Transportation Commission

11-14-14

Date of Approval



Bijan Sanjipi, District Director
California Department of Transportation
NEPA and CEQA Lead Agency

The following persons may be contacted for additional information concerning this document:

California Department of Transportation
Attn: Wahida I. Rashid
Office of Environmental Analysis
111 Grand Avenue, MS-8B
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 286-5935

Alameda County Transportation Commission
Attn: Stewart D. Ng
1111 Broadway, Suite 800
Oakland, CA 94607
(510) 208-7437

This page intentionally left blank.

SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

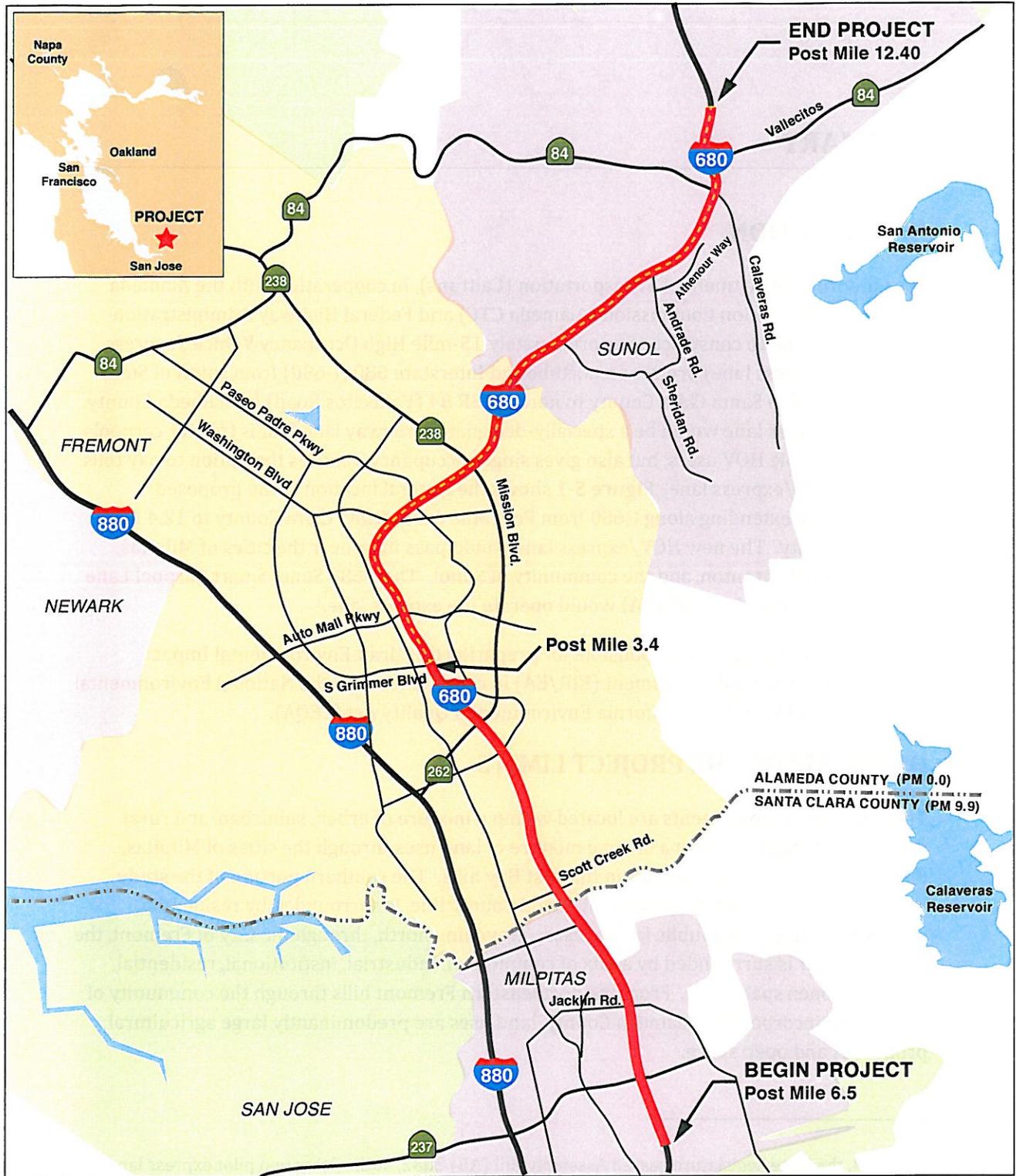
The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in cooperation with the Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), propose to construct an approximately 15-mile High Occupancy Vehicle/express lane (HOV/express lane) project on northbound Interstate 680 (I-680) from south of State Route (SR) 237 in Santa Clara County to north of SR 84 (Vallecitos Road) in Alameda County. The HOV/express lane would be a specially-designated freeway lane that is free for carpools and other eligible HOV users, but also gives single-occupancy-vehicles the option to pay tolls to use the HOV/express lane. **Figure S-1** shows the general location of the proposed improvements extending along I-680 from Post Mile 6.5 in Santa Clara County to 12.4 in Alameda County. The new HOV/express lane would pass in or near the cities of Milpitas, Fremont, and Pleasanton, and the community of Sunol. The I-680 Sunol Smart Carpool Lane Joint Powers Authority (SSCLJPA) would operate the express lane.¹

Caltrans is the lead agency responsible for preparing this draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT LIMITS

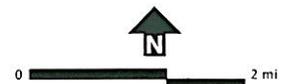
The proposed improvements are located within a mixture of urban, suburban, and rural development patterns, with a diverse mixture of land uses through the cities of Milpitas, Fremont, and other communities in the East Bay hills. The southern portion of the study area, from SR 237 in Milpitas to the Alameda County line, is surrounded by residential, commercial, office, and public facility uses. Travelling north, through the City of Fremont, the I-680 corridor is surrounded by a mix of commercial, industrial, institutional, residential, parks and open space uses. From the northeastern Fremont hills through the community of Sunol, in unincorporated Alameda County, land uses are predominantly large agricultural properties and open space.

¹ In 2004, the State Legislature passed Assembly Bill (AB) 2032, authorizing two pilot express lanes in Northern California. The Streets and Highway Code Section 149.5, established the SSCLJPA, and further authorized the SSCLJPA and its members, consisting of Alameda CTC (formerly ACCMA and ACTIA), and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) to conduct, administer, and operate a value pricing HOV program in the I-680 corridor in Alameda and Santa Clara counties.



Legend

- █ Project Study Limits
- - - Phase 1 Project Study Limit



Project Location Map

Figure **S-1**

PROJECTS IN THE STUDY AREA

There are 27 planned developments within the communities adjacent to the project limits, which are predominately residential development projects (refer to **Section 2.4.2, Cumulative Analysis**). Other planned development projects include several institutional, commercial, and mixed-use commercial/residential land uses. Construction is also underway for two new Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) stations in the Warm Springs area of Fremont and in downtown Milpitas.

Planned and approved transportation improvements along local routes may be implemented by local agencies or under other projects (see **Section 2.4.2, Cumulative Analysis**, for a detailed discussion). Such projects include the following:

- I-680 Ramp Metering Project
- I-680 Pavement Rehabilitation Project
- I-680 Northbound Express Lane Extension (from SR 84 to south of Alcosta Boulevard)
- I-680 Express Lanes Project, Bay Area Infrastructure Financing Authority (BAIFA) (HOV conversion from Rudgear Road to Alcosta Boulevard in the southbound direction and from Alcosta Boulevard to Livorna Road in the northbound direction)
- SR 84 Expressway Widening Project (Ruby Hills Drive to Jack London Boulevard)
- SR 84 Expressway Widening Project (I-680 to Pigeon Pass)
- I-680/I-880 Cross Connector
- I-580 Express Lanes (east of I-680)
- Mission Boulevard Streetscape Improvements (between Verde Way and Mission Creek, Fremont)

PURPOSE AND NEED

PURPOSE

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Transportation 2035 Plan establishes the implementation of a regional express lanes network to effectively improve throughput and reduce delays on the major travel corridors within the San Francisco Bay Area, including northbound I-680. To address these issues, the proposed project would fulfill the following goals:

- Increase the efficiency of the transportation system on northbound I-680 between SR 237 and SR 84 to accommodate current and future traffic demand
- Improve travel time and travel reliability for all users, including HOV and transit users
- Optimize freeway system management and traffic operations
- Maintain consistency with the provisions defined in California State Assembly Bill (AB) 2032 and AB 574 to implement an HOV/express lanes system in Alameda County

NEED

- **Capacity and Transportation Demand.** The existing roadway features and freeway mainline capacity of northbound I-680 within the project limits are inadequate to accommodate the existing traffic demand.² The result is traffic congestion and delay during afternoon peak travel periods, when the corridor serves as a major commute route for people who work in Silicon Valley and live in eastern Alameda County, Contra Costa County, or the northern part of the San Joaquin Valley.³ **Tables 2.1.7-1 and 2.1.7-2, in Section 2.1.7, Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities,** of this EIR/EA summarize current and forecast mainline and ramp operations along I-680 within the traffic study area, respectively. A substantial number of drivers divert off of I-680 and use local roads. The additional traffic diverted from the freeway is resulting in traffic congestion on city streets during peak commute periods.

Projections of future conditions on the I-680 corridor within the project limits indicate that the demand for travel is expected to far exceed the available capacity during peak periods, adversely affecting travel speeds and creating bottlenecks at constrained locations. It is projected that the number of vehicles using this segment of I-680 will increase by up to 28 percent, and the period of LOS F conditions will extend for more than six hours by the year 2040.⁴

- **Travel Time Delay for all Users.** Current data on corridor travel speeds indicate that travelers experience substantial delays during the peak period; the time required to traverse the corridor is twice as long as during off-peak periods, and each traveler experiences delays of 15 to 20 minutes when compared to free-flowing conditions. Forecasted conditions indicate a level of traffic congestion that is also expected to reduce transit service reliability.

² The freeway “mainline” refers to the general mixed-flow travel lanes that are open to all drivers.

³ According to 2011 traffic count data, the weekday three-hour peak commute period for the project corridor occurs from 3:45 to 6:45 PM, with the heaviest hour of traffic occurring from 5:15 to 6:15PM.

⁴ Caltrans, 2014n. *I-680 Express Lane, Traffic Operations Analysis Report*.

- **Traffic Diversion and Unused Capacity.** Based on fall 2011 traffic counts at all of the ramps, there is a sharp increase in traffic using the Sheridan Road off-ramp and a very similar spike in traffic using the Andrade Road on-ramp on weekdays between the 5:00 and 7:00 PM time period. This indicates a substantial number of drivers (approximately 600 vehicles in the peak hour alone) are choosing to divert off of I-680 and use local roads to avoid congestion on the freeway. Similarly, a large amount of traffic diversion occurs on Mission Boulevard, between SR 262 and SR 238, and on Calaveras Road, between SR 237 and SR 84. In the case of Mission Boulevard, the additional traffic diverted from the freeway is resulting in traffic congestion (LOS F conditions) on city streets during peak commute periods. Traffic diversion is likely to further increase as freeway traffic conditions worsen with anticipated growth, creating even more congestion on city streets during peak commute periods.

Because this corridor primarily serves commuters that tend to follow similar daily and weekly travel patterns, the experience with the southbound HOV/express lane indicates that there is a demand for this type of facility in the northbound direction. Based on future traffic forecasts, the HOV lane usage for the majority of the project limits would be in the range of 700 to 1,300 vehicles per hour during the peak commute periods in year 2020, while the capacity of an HOV lane is approximately 1,650 vehicles per hour. These numbers indicate that while there is substantial demand for an HOV lane, there would be unused capacity in the HOV lane, where the potential exists to “sell” the available capacity to toll-paying single-occupancy-vehicles.

- **Legislation.** On January 1, 2005, AB 2032 authorized the Alameda CTC and VTA to implement express lanes on 280 miles of freeway network. As part of a demonstration program, AB 2032 authorized both agencies to conduct, administer, and operate value pricing programs on two of their congested transportation corridors, including the I-680 corridor within the project limits. AB 2032 originally included a sunset provision that authorized the pilot program to operate for a period not to exceed four years after the agency first collects revenues. California State AB 574; approved October 11, 2007, eliminated the sunset provision in AB 2032, authorizing the program to operate indefinitely. The enabling legislation stipulates that revenue collected from the express lanes will be reinvested in projects and services that provide traffic congestion relief within the express lane corridor.

AB 2032 also includes provisions that require HOV/express lanes to operate at level of service (LOS) C conditions.^{5,6} This LOS C requirement generally corresponds to a minimum average operating speed of 45 miles per hour (mph) for HOV/express lanes with a speed limit of 50 mph or higher.⁷ The minimum LOS C requirement is intended to provide HOV/express lane users with reliable travel times.

PROPOSED ACTION

This section describes the proposed action and the design alternatives that were developed to meet the previously identified project purpose and need, while avoiding or minimizing environmental impacts. The alternatives are the “Build Alternative” and the “No-Build Alternative”.

Other alternatives were considered but eliminated as none were deemed viable because of physical constraints and feasibility, or because they did not meet the project’s purpose and need. See **Section 1.3.3, Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Discussion**. Caltrans and ACTC are continuing to evaluate additional design refinements that may reduce the project footprint and minimize environmental effects.

BUILD ALTERNATIVE

The Build Alternative proposes to construct a new HOV/express lane facility on northbound I-680 from SR 237 (Calaveras Road) in Santa Clara County to SR 84 (Vallecitos Road) in Alameda County, a distance of approximately 15 miles. The Build Alternative is anticipated to be constructed in multiple phases and represents the long-term vision for build out of the HOV/express lane facility on northbound I-680 from SR 237 to SR 84. The Build Alternative would consist of the following primary improvements, discussed in detail further below:

- addition of a new HOV/express lane in the northbound direction on I-680 extending from SR 237 in Santa Clara County to SR 84 (Vallecitos Road) in Alameda County
- installation of electronic tolling equipment and signage
- widening of existing paved surfaces in the median and to the outside of the mainline

⁵ California Streets and Highways Code Section 149.5(b); LOS D operating conditions in the HOV lane are only allowed with written approval of Caltrans.

⁶ Level of Service (LOS) is a measure of traffic conditions and the perception of such conditions by motorists. There are six LOS ratings, ranging from LOS A (free traffic flow with low volumes and high speeds, resulting in low vehicle densities) to LOS F (traffic volumes exceeding the capacity of the infrastructure, resulting in forced flow operations, slow speeds, and high vehicle densities). LOS E or F is typically considered unacceptable by Caltrans, and indicates a need for improvement. Refer to **Section 2.1.7, Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities**, for a detailed discussion of LOS criteria.

⁷ USC Title 23, Section 166(d)(2)

- construction of auxiliary lanes at various locations on northbound I-680 to improve weaving operations at both ramp locations and express lane access points
- widening or modification of overcrossing and undercrossing structures to accommodate freeway widening
- demolition and replacement of the Sheridan Road overcrossing
- widening the east side of Alameda Creek Bridge
- construction of retaining walls at various locations to accommodate the northbound widening
- new and replacement sound walls, as required
- modification of existing ramp metering and Traffic Operations System (TOS) facilities
- pavement rehabilitation on northbound I-680 between Auto Mall Parkway and Koopman Road

Appendix G includes detailed exhibits of the improvements that would be constructed under the Build Alternative.

Phase 1 – Initial Construction Phase

The Build Alternative is anticipated to be constructed in multiple phases and represents the long-term vision for build out of the HOV/express lane facility on northbound I-680 from SR 237 to SR 84. A first phase of the Build Alternative (Phase 1) would include the construction of a new HOV/express lane facility on northbound I-680 from Auto Mall Parkway to SR 84 (Vallecitos Road), a distance of approximately 8 miles, and an auxiliary lane between the Washington Boulevard on-ramp and SR 238 (Mission Road) off-ramp. **Figure S-1** shows the general location of the proposed improvements within Phase 1, extending along I-680 from Post Mile 3.4 to Post Mile 12.4, in Alameda County.⁸

Chapter 2.0, Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures, of this environmental document evaluates the potential effects of the full Build Alternative, including the initial phase of construction (Phase 1). Where appropriate, the environmental consequences and avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures specific to the Phase 1 segment are identified.

⁸ The Phase 1 limits start at South Grimmer Boulevard (PM 3.4) to include an approximately 1-mile-long auxiliary lane leading up to the start of the HOV/express lane construction at Auto Mall Parkway.

CONSTRUCTION COST

The estimated construction cost of the proposed improvements, in 2014 dollars, for the Build Alternative and Phase 1 is \$299,374,000 and \$205,789,000, respectively. The breakdown of the cost is provided in **Table S-1**.

Table S-1 Construction Cost Estimate Summary

	Build Alternative	Phase 1
Roadway	\$162,650,000	\$97,319,000
Structures	\$45,399,000	\$38,853,000
Pavement Rehab	\$ 14,068,000	\$ 14,068,000
Time Related Overhead	\$2,063,000	\$1,375,000
Contingency (20%)	\$44,840,000	\$30,320,000
Right-of-way	\$264,000	\$264,000
Utility Relocation	\$7,290,000	\$7,290,000
Environmental Mitigation	\$7,800,000	\$6,300,000
Tolling System Integration (design, installation, and maintenance)	\$15,000,000	\$10,000,000
Total Cost	\$299,374,000	\$205,789,000

Source: WMH Corporation, 2014

NO-BUILD (NO ACTION) ALTERNATIVE

Under the No-Build Alternative, none of the project features described above would be constructed. The freeway travel lanes along the I-680 corridor would remain as they currently exist. No bridge structures would be widened or replaced. Under the No-Build Alternative, the planned and approved transportation improvements described below may be implemented by local agencies or under other projects (see **Section 2.4.2, Cumulative Analysis**, for a detailed discussion).

The No-Build Alternative includes the potential for these improvements to be implemented through design year 2040. The No-Build Alternative is the baseline for comparing environmental impacts under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).⁹

⁹ Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the baseline for environmental impact analysis consists of the existing conditions at the time the Notice of Preparation (NOP) or at the time the environmental studies began. Near-term impacts (2020) and long-term impacts (2040) are also considered under CEQA; similar to the No-Build baseline used for NEPA.

- I-680 Ramp Metering Project
- I-680 Pavement Rehabilitation Project¹⁰
- I-680 Northbound Express Lane Extension (from SR 84 to south of Alcosta Boulevard)
- I-680 Express Lanes Project, Bay Area Infrastructure Financing Authority (BAIFA) (HOV conversion from Rudgear Road to Alcosta Boulevard in the southbound direction and from Alcosta Boulevard to Livorna Road in the northbound direction)
- SR 84 Expressway Widening Project (Ruby Hills Drive to Jack London Boulevard)
- SR 84 Expressway Widening Project (I-680 to Pigeon Pass)
- I-680/I-880 Cross Connector
- I-580 Express Lanes (east of I-680)

Traffic volumes within the project corridor would increase under the No-Build Alternative. The No-Build Alternative would not achieve the project purpose of increasing the efficiency of the transportation system by adding capacity on northbound I-680 between SR 237 and SR 84 to accommodate current and future traffic demand. In addition, the increased traffic volumes without capacity improvements would worsen the traffic congestion and slow traffic flow on the highway and local roadway network, resulting in increased potential for traffic congestion-related collisions.

JOINT CEQA/NEPA DOCUMENT

The proposed project is a joint project by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and is subject to state and federal environmental review requirements. Project documentation, therefore, has been prepared in compliance with both the CEQA and the NEPA. Caltrans is the lead agency under NEPA and CEQA. In addition, FHWA's responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried-out by Caltrans under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 United States Code (USC) 327.

Some impacts determined to be significant under CEQA may not lead to a determination of significance under NEPA. Because NEPA is concerned with the significance of the project as a whole, quite often a "lower level" document is prepared for NEPA. One of the most common joint document types is an EIR/EA. After receiving comments from the public and reviewing agencies, a final EIR/EA will be prepared. Caltrans may prepare additional environmental and/or engineering studies to address comments. The Final EIR/EA will include responses to comments received on the draft EIR/EA and will identify the preferred alternative. If the

¹⁰ Excluding the segment between Auto Mall Parkway (PM M4.0) to Koopman Road (PM R12.4) that would be rehabilitated under Phase 1 of the Build Alternative.

decision is made to approve the project, a Notice of Determination (NOD) will be published for compliance with CEQA, and Caltrans will decide whether to issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for compliance with NEPA. A Notice of Availability (NOA) of the FONSI will be sent to the affected units of federal, state, and local government, and to the State Clearinghouse in compliance with Executive Order 12372.

PROJECT IMPACTS

Table S-2 summarizes the adverse effects of the Build Alternative in comparison with the No-Build Alternative. The proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures to reduce the effects of the Build Alternative are also presented. This environmental document evaluates the potential effects of the full Build Alternative, including the initial phase of construction. Where appropriate, the environmental consequences and avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures specific to the Phase 1 segment are identified. For a complete description of potential adverse effects and recommended measures, please refer to the specific sections within **Chapter 2.0, Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures**.

Table S-2 Project Impacts

Environmental Topic	No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Phase 1	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
Land Use				
Division of and established community	None expected	None expected	None expected	None
Consistency with State, Regional, and Local Plans and Programs	Low	High consistency	High consistency	None
Compatibility with habitat conservation plan	No Conflict	No Conflict	No Conflict	None
Located in a Coastal Zone	No	No	No	None
Located near Wild and Scenic Rivers	No	No	No	None
Parks and Recreation Facilities				
No Effect				
Growth				
Growth-inducing	No	Indirectly, but within planned and forecasted growth	Same as Build Alternative	None
Farmlands				
Farmland acquisition	None expected	Low (1.21 acres of Unique Farmland)	Same as Build Alternative	None
Williamson Act Property Acquisition	None expected	Low (0.07 acres of land under a Williamson Act contract)	Same as Build Alternative	Measure FRM-1: Comply with Government Code Section 51293(d); land surface disturbed for the relocation of utilities would be restored to its original conditions

Environmental Topic	No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Phase 1	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
Community Impacts				
Community Character and Cohesion	None expected	None expected	None expected	None
Relocations and Real Property Acquisition	None expected	No relocations; Acquisition of portions (or slivers) of 13 parcels	Same as Build Alternative	Measure CMN-1: Implement community outreach program with affected property owners Measure TRA-1: a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) will be given one to two weeks in advance to emergency response services to address detours and roadway/street closures
Environmental Justice	None expected	None expected	Same as Build Alternative	None
Utilities/Emergency Services				
Utilities	None expected	Some relocations of existing gas and electric transmission lines	Same as Build Alternative	Measure UTL-1: Coordination and verification with the affected utility service providers Measure TRA-1: Implement TMP with notifications of delays and/or detours during construction
Emergency Services	None expected	Short-term operational effects to police, fire, and emergency service during construction	Same as Build Alternative	
Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities				
Conflict with applicable plans, ordinances, policies, or programs	Yes	None	None	None
Increase traffic congestion	Yes	Will reduce traffic congestion	Same as Build Alternative	Measure TRA-1: Implement TMP with notifications of delays and/or detours during construction

Environmental Topic	No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Phase 1	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
Increase hazards as a result of a design feature	None expected	None	None	None
Visual/Aesthetics				
Adverse effect on scenic views/damage scenic resources	None expected	None	None	None
Degradation of existing visual character or quality	None expected	Potential visual quality lost	Same as Build Alternative	Measures VIS-1 through VIS-5: Roadway design would adhere to Caltrans final design requirements in cooperation with the Caltrans District Landscape Architect
Create a new source of light or glare	None expected	New nighttime lighting; temporary construction lighting	Same as Build Alternative	Measure VIS-6: Lighting would adhere to Caltrans Standard Specifications Implement construction light and glare screening measures
Cultural Resources				
Create an adverse change in the significance of a historical resource	None expected	No effect	No effect	None
Create an adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource	None expected	Potential due to excavation and construction activities	Same as Build Alternative	Measure CUL-2: If unidentified cultural materials are unearthed during construction work shall be halted in that area. Measure CUL-3: An ESA and AMA Action Plan has been prepared to specify avoidance areas and areas requiring monitoring during construction to avoid all impacts to known archaeological resources

Environmental Topic	No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Phase 1	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
Disturbance to human remains	None expected	None expected	Same as Build Alternative	Measure CUL-1: If human remains discovered, activity will stop (State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5). If the remains are thought to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission will be contacted (Public Resources Code Section 5097.98)
Hydrology and Floodplain				
Within a 100-year floodplain	Yes	Yes	Yes	Measure HYDR-1: Implement re-vegetation, storm water treatment, or other requirements as designated by the relevant permits
Expose people/structures to a significant risk of loss	None expected	Low risk; minimal increases in storm water runoff (less than 0.6-percent) and changes in the 100-year water surface elevations (approximately 0.1 foot)	Similar to Build Alternative; minimal increases in storm water runoff (less than 0.1 percent) and changes in the 100-year water surface elevations (approximately 0.1 foot)	None
Water Quality and Storm Water Runoff				
Result in substantial drainage pattern alteration	None expected	Modification/removal of existing drainage structures	Same as Build Alternative	Measure WQ-1: Comply with Caltrans National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit and Storm Water Management Plan
Violation of water quality standards	None expected	Potential due to excavation and construction activities	Same as Build Alternative	Measure WQ-1: Implement Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan

Environmental Topic	No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Phase 1	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
Change to groundwater supply or groundwater recharge	None expected	None Expected	Same as Build Alternative	None
Substantially degrade water quality	None expected	Potential construction and operational effects	Same as Build Alternative	Measure WQ-2 and WQ-3: Implement Design Pollution Prevention and Treatment Best Management Practices
Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography				
Expected likelihood of seismic related issues, including ground shaking and liquefaction	Same as Build Alternative	High potential for ground shaking, liquefaction potential varies	Same as Build Alternative	Measure GEO-1: Implement Caltrans' seismic design standards, and preparation of geotechnical design reports
Expose people or structures to potential adverse effects	None expected	Worker safety	Same as Build Alternative	Measure GEO-2: Comply with Occupational Safety and Health Act Section 5(a)(1)
Mineral Resources	None expected	None expected	None expected	None
Paleontology				
Destruction of paleontological resources (i.e., fossil remains and sites) as a result of ground disturbance	None expected	Potential due to excavation and construction activities in previously undisturbed fossiliferous geologic formations	Same as Build Alternative	Mitigation Measure PAL-A: Preparation and implementation of a Caltrans-approved paleontological monitoring and mitigation program.
Hazardous Waste/Materials				
Create a hazard to the environment	None expected	Potential due to excavation and construction activities	Same as Build Alternative	Measures HAZ-1 through HAZ-5: Additional subsurface sampling and proper management of soil/groundwater contaminants; Site Safety Plan; Lead Compliance Plan Follow regulations requiring abatement of asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint.

Environmental Topic	No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Phase 1	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
Create a hazard to the public	None expected	None expected	Same as Build Alternative	Measures HAZ-1 through HAZ-5: Additional subsurface sampling and proper management of soil/groundwater contaminants; Site Safety Plan; Lead Compliance Plan Follow regulations requiring abatement of asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint
Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites, and, as a result, would create a hazard to the public or environment	Same as Build Alternative	Varies throughout project limits, sites on several lists	Same as Build Alternative	Measures HAZ-1 through HAZ-5: Additional subsurface sampling and proper management of soil/groundwater contaminants; Site Safety Plan; Lead Compliance Plan Follow regulations requiring abatement of asbestos-containing materials and lead-based paint
Air Quality				
Operational Emissions	Greater than Build Alternative	Regional and project-level conformity achieved, No considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant (no localized carbon monoxide violations, 3 percent increase in diesel particulate matter, and no substantial increase in emissions for all other Mobile Source Air Toxics)	4 percent increase in diesel particulate matter; no substantial increase in emissions for Mobile Source Air Toxics	None

Environmental Topic	No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Phase 1	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
Emissions from construction equipment	Unknown	Temporary increases in daily maximum construction emissions (reactive organic gases = 8.1 pounds (lbs)/day; nitrogen oxides = 39.3 lbs/day; exhaust particulate matter (10 microns) = 2.3 lbs/day; exhaust particulate matter (2.5 microns) = 2.0 lbs/day)	Same as Build Alternative	Measures AIR-1 through AIR-3: Implement Caltrans Standard Specifications and control measures for construction emissions from the BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines
Noise				
A substantial increase in permanent noise levels	None expected	Potential permanent noise level increases ranging from 0 to 15 dBA (varies throughout project limits)	Same as Build Alternative	Mitigation Measure NOI-A: Potential noise abatement measures
A substantial increase in temporary noise levels	None	Potential due to construction activities	Same as Build Alternative	Measure NOI-1: Compliance with Caltrans Standard Specifications for construction equipment; restricted construction hours
Energy				
No Effect				
Biological Resources				
Effects to habitat or sensitive natural communities	None	Potential affects to oak woodland habitat (1.22 acres) during and post construction activities	Same as Build Alternative	Measure BIO-33: Avoid/minimize impacts to Oak Woodland; Mitigation Measure BIO-E: Compensatory mitigation for oak woodlands

Environmental Topic	No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Phase 1	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
Effects to wetlands and other waters	None	<p>Potential direct impacts (0.26 acres) and indirect water quality effects to wetlands and other waters.</p> <p>A total of 0.14 acres of impacts, all located within Phase 1, are likely to be subject to a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (1602)</p>	<p>Potential direct impacts (0.14 acres) and indirect water quality effects to wetlands and other waters.</p> <p>A total of 0.14 acre of impacts, all located within Phase 1, are likely to be subject to a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (1602)</p>	<p>Measures WQ-1 through WQ-3: Temporary and permanent best management practices to protect water quality</p> <p>Mitigation Measure BIO-A: Compensatory Mitigation for Jurisdictional Water Features</p>
Effects to sensitive or special status species	None	<p>Direct impacts to habitat types (90.27 acres of temporarily and permanently disturbed habitat, 64.01 acres of which is urbanized/landscaped; 1,074 trees trimmed or removed) with the potential to support Western burrowing owl, Western pond turtle, American badger, dusky-footed woodrat, migratory birds, and bat species</p> <p>See Table 2.3.1-1</p>	<p>Similar to Build Alternative (60.31 acres of temporarily and permanently disturbed habitat, 40.28 acres of which is urbanized/landscaped; 920 trees trimmed or removed)</p> <p>See Table 2.3.1-1</p>	<p>Measures WQ-1 through WQ-3: See above</p> <p>Measures BIO-1 through BIO-23, BIO-29, and BIO-32: Requirements for qualified biological monitor(s) during construction, worker environmental awareness training, preventing inadvertent entrapment of animals during construction, implementing seasonal restrictions and work windows for certain construction activities, conducting pre-construction species surveys, minimization of bat and bird disturbance, proper vehicle use near sensitive natural communities, limiting nighttime construction and artificial nighttime lighting, maintaining good housekeeping practices regarding food-related trash items and pets, restricting firearms, implementing local tree</p>

Environmental Topic	No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Phase 1	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
<p>Effects to sensitive or special status species (Continued)</p>	<p>Potential effects to the California tiger salamander (24.76 acres), California red-legged frog (26.26 acres) and Alameda whipsnake (26.09 acres)</p> <p>Potential effects to central California coast DPS steelhead habitat, if downstream anadromous fish passage in Alameda Creek is restored prior to completion of the Build Alternative.</p>	<p>Potential effects to central California coast DPS steelhead habitat, if downstream anadromous fish passage in Alameda Creek is restored prior to completion of the Build Alternative.</p>	<p>Similar to Build Alternative; Potential effects to the California tiger salamander (19.81 acres), California red-legged frog (20.03 acres) and Alameda whipsnake (19.92 acres)</p>	<p>preservation policies, and implementing colonial bird nesting deterrence plan</p> <p>Measure BIO-28: complying with the Executive Order on Invasive Species (EO 13112).</p> <p>Measures WQ-1 through WQ-3: See above</p> <p>Measures BIO-1 through BIO-23, BIO-29 and BIO-32: see above</p> <p>Measures BIO-24 through BIO-27: adherence to the conservation measures and terms of the biological opinion, suspend construction activities if special-status species observed in construction areas, implementing seasonal restrictions and work windows for certain construction activities, and restrict the use of plastic monofilament netting (erosion control matting)</p> <p>Mitigation Measures BIO-B, BIO-C, and BIO-D: Compensatory mitigation for impacts to California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog, and Alameda whipsnake</p>

Environmental Topic	No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative	Phase 1	Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures
Effects to sensitive or special status species (Continued)				Mitigation Measure BIO-F: potential compensatory mitigation for impacts to central California coast DPS steelhead habitat
Conflict with local policies/plans	None	None	None	None

COORDINATION WITH PUBLIC AND OTHER AGENCIES

NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND SCOPING

“Scoping” is the process of determining the scope, focus, and content of an environmental document. The scoping process allows agencies and other interested parties to provide input on the proposed project, range of alternatives, topics being evaluated, environmental effects, methods of assessment, and mitigation measures being considered.

Scoping for this project included the use of several channels of communication, including the Notice of Preparation (NOP), mailers, internet, and newspaper ads. In addition, two public scoping meetings were held to solicit comments from agencies and the community. All efforts were conducted to meet Caltrans Title VI goals to prevent discrimination. The scoping meetings were held on Wednesday, October 3, 2012 at Hearst Elementary School in Pleasanton between 6:30 PM and 8:30 PM and on Thursday, October 4, 2012 at Chadbourne Elementary School in Fremont from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM.

A Public Attendee Observation Tally Sheet was completed by Caltrans staff for each scoping meeting. The tally sheet is used to obtain statistical data on the people attending the meetings. Observation on gender, ethnicity, disabilities, and age were made and documented. Based on personal observation and the information recorded on the tally sheets, a total of 22 people attended both meetings; 5 females and 17 males, of which, all were non-Hispanic ethnicity. No attendees had a physical disability. All attendees were over the age of 40 except for one individual.

The scoping meetings were organized in open house format, with informational stations displaying exhibit boards staffed by representatives from Caltrans, Alameda CTC and its consultant staff. The exhibit boards portrayed the following subjects: project map, description of proposed project, how express lanes work, express lane access options being studied, the environmental process, environmental studies to be performed, project timeline, and proposed improvements throughout the I-680 corridor. The public was encouraged to ask questions and to fill out and submit comment sheets at the meeting, or by mail or e-mail before the close of the scoping period (October 16, 2012).

A total of 20 comments were submitted at the meetings, by mail, or by email. Meeting attendees also provided verbal comments to the project team. Additionally, two letters were received from local agencies, including the Alameda County Water District and the City of Pleasanton. Common issues raised during the scoping process included aesthetics, air and water quality, the environmental document, the auxiliary lanes, noise, funding, timeline, safety, and traffic. Relevant CEQA and NEPA-related comments are addressed in **Chapter 2.0, Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures** and **Chapter 3.0, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Evaluation** of this draft EIR/EA.

The concern of downstream traffic, air quality, and noise, impacts, as well as traffic congestion along and through Pleasanton was raised by the City of Pleasanton during the scoping process. The evaluation of downstream impacts and effects on the local circulation system within Pleasanton has been evaluated and is presented in **Chapter 4.0, Comments and Coordination**.

NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS

Table S-3 identifies the permits/approvals that would be required for project construction.

Table S-3 Permits and Approvals

Agency	Permit/Approval	Status
United States Army Corps of Engineers	Section 404 Permit – Nationwide	Issued during the final design phase
United States Fish and Wildlife Service	Biological Opinion	Issued prior to project approval
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement	Issued during the final design phase
	Incidental Take Permit	Issued during final design phase
Regional Water Quality Control Board	Section 401 Certification	Issued during the final design phase
State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)	Concurrence on Eligibility Determinations/Finding of No Adverse Effect with Standard Conditions – Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA)	Concurrence issued January 13, 2014
Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Air Quality Conformity Task Force/ Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)	Regional Air Quality Conformity	MTC Determination July 18, 2013 FHWA Determination August 12, 2013
	Project-Level Air Quality Conformity	MTC Determination October 25, 2012 FHWA Determination Pending
Department of Conservation	Notification of Public Acquisition of Williamson Act Land	Notification Letter Sent October 30, 2014

Source: Circlepoint, 2014

This page intentionally left blank.